

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY MODEL FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS ADMINISTERED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF BANGKOK ARCHDIOCESE

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Abstract

This study examined how teachers perceived professional learning community (PLC) practices in their schools to develop a PLC model for schools administered by the Education Department of Bangkok Archdiocese (EDBA). To achieve this, a three-phase mixed-methods design was utilized. In the first phase, surveys were conducted with 351 teachers across five representative EDBA schools. The survey findings revealed high overall ratings for all six PLC characteristics in Catholic schools. However, special concerns emerged around stakeholder participation, distributed leadership, inquiry depth, evidence use, and available conditions. To explain these variations, Phase 2 gathered qualitative data using semi-structured interviews with 21 participants from four representative EDBA schools. The results showed that the Catholic mission, leadership capacity, time, workload, trust, and resources influenced PLC implementation in their schools. Based on the integrated results of the survey and interview, a PLC model for teachers in EDBA schools was developed, grounded in shared mission, collaboration, shared leadership, reflective growth, use of evidence, and structures that support PLC development. In Phase 3, a two-round Delphi process, using the Context-Input-Process-Product (CIPP) framework, was conducted to validate the proposed model. Findings suggest that sustaining PLC implementation in EDBA schools requires gradual PLC adoption, stronger distributed leadership, dedicated collaboration time, and a clear evaluation system.

Keywords: Catholic education, Education Department of Bangkok Archdiocese, professional development, professional learning community

Introduction

Thailand's recent educational reforms have placed considerable pressure on schools to rethink instructional approaches and the nature of teacher professional development. At the policy level, learner-centered pedagogy, inquiry-based



learning, and technology-enhanced instruction are promoted as pathways for cultivating critical thinking, collaboration, and adaptability in students (Prachagool & Nuangchalem, 2021). The Ministry of Education has directed schools to enhance creativity, communication, collaboration, and digital competence (Office of the Education Council [OEC], 2023), while teachers are expected to attend to students' cognitive, social, moral, and technological development simultaneously. As a result, these educational reforms demand a fundamental shift. Instead of treating teachers as passive transmitters of knowledge, schools need to focus on student-centered learning, continuous instructional adaptation, and ongoing professional development.

In response, the Thai government officially established Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) as a primary strategy for teacher development (OEC, 2023). PLCs are now at the center of teachers' professional responsibilities, linking top-down policy directives to actual classroom practice. In fact, the national teacher development framework explicitly incorporates PLC participation to support continuous academic progress and professional advancement (OEC, 2023).

Structurally, a PLC operates as a collaborative loop. Educators engage in collective inquiry, reflective dialogue, problem-solving, and research-based decision-making to improve student performance (Hord, 1997; DuFour et al., 2006; Fred et al., 2020). Rather than relying on isolated external workshops, PLCs integrate professional learning within daily routines through peer observation, joint analysis of student work, and shared accountability (DuFour et al., 2006; Fred et al., 2020).

For schools overseen by the Education Department of Bangkok Archdiocese (EDBA), PLC implementation presents a dual challenge. These institutions must comply with national regulations while also maintaining their unique Catholic educational identity. Catholic schools are committed to communal responsibility, common values, and the well-rounded student development - intellectually, morally, spiritually, and socially (Congregation for Catholic Education [CCE], 2002, 2007). At the same time, the core aspects of PLCs – including common purpose, teamwork, reflection, and joint responsibility – correspond with these principles. Recent research shows that PLCs offer a feasible framework to connect professional learning with faith-based educational goals (Wahyudhanti et al., 2025).

The government's official policy and philosophical commitment, however, do not guarantee smooth classroom execution. In practice, Thai teachers still struggle to implement learner-centered approaches, especially those intended to promote higher-order thinking skills. Insufficient professional training, heavy workloads, and erratic leadership consistently hamper progress (Mhunpiew & Asavisanu, 2023). As a result, national reform initiatives have yet to improve instructional quality reliably, and broader student achievement remains stagnant, as indicated by continuously low PISA and O-NET scores (Namwong, 2021).

PLC development across Thailand is still in its infancy. Most schools operate without evidence-based, locally tailored models that can sustain long-term execution (Janjang et al., 2024). Due to authorities' top-down approaches to introducing PLCs, guidelines seem to be vague and application varies from school to school (Sriklaub & Ruengtrakul, 2022). These structural flaws create fragmented routines that stall school-wide improvement. In particular, when collaboration time is inadequate and inconsistent, leadership stays hierarchical, and teachers struggle

to develop reflective plans that match learning objectives. Together, these impediments may significantly diminish the power of PLCs to advance teaching standards and improve student learning (Dokmai et al., 2023; Janjang et al., 2024).

Catholic schools encounter identical challenges. Time constraints, significant administrative responsibilities, overlapping roles, and staffing shortages obstruct sustained inquiry (Koelsch, 2016; Madden, 2020; Beltramo et al., 2021). These difficulties are compounded by norms of teacher isolation, the heavy dual burden of spiritual and academic leadership, tight budgets, and the complexity of measuring holistic student growth objectively (Fernandez, 2017; Rufus, 2023; Mariani-Petroze, 2023). Without locally adapted frameworks to safeguard time collaboration and anchor systematic inquiry, PLC efforts in Catholic schools will likely remain fragmented or inconsistent (Wahyudhanti et al., 2025).

A clear divide persists between national policy and classroom reality within EDBA schools, despite government endorsement of PLCs and the clear philosophical harmony between PLC principles and Catholic educational values. Recent studies identify six key PLC characteristics in Catholic schools: shared purpose for student learning, collaborative teams, reflective collective learning, shared leadership, results orientation, and supportive conditions (Wahyudhanti et al., 2025). However, no framework currently exists to translate these theoretical traits into actionable, daily structures tailored specifically for EDBA-managed schools.

This study aims to address that gap. It seeks to develop a practical model that integrates national mandates, the unique Catholic mission, and everyday realities encountered by EDBA schools. This research offers guidance to help EDBA schools apply PLC concepts to daily practice in ways that support teaching and learning in their specific contexts.

This study, therefore, explores how teachers view existing PLC practices in their schools to help shape a PLC model specifically for the EDBA context. It also evaluates whether the proposed model can be realistically and sustainably implemented. Two central questions guide this investigation: (1) How do teachers perceive PLC practices in their schools? (2) How can a PLC model be developed and validated for teachers in EDBA-managed schools?

Research Objectives

The main objectives of this research study are as follows:

1. To examine teachers' perceptions of professional learning community practices in the schools administered by the Education Department of Bangkok Archdiocese.
2. To develop and validate a model of professional learning communities for teachers in the schools administered by the Education Department of Bangkok Archdiocese.

Literature Review

This literature review draws on three areas of literature: PLCs in Catholic school settings, the opportunities and challenges shaping PLC implementation in Thai Catholic schools, and leadership capacity and professional development frameworks that inform PLC model development. These areas establish the

theoretical and contextual groundwork necessary to analyze how PLCs are implemented and sustained in Catholic schools.

PLCs for Teacher Learning in Catholic Schools

PLCs run well because they turn professional growth into a daily routine. Instead of relying on sporadic, isolated workshops, PLCs embed teamwork, problem-solving, and self-reflection directly into the school's day-to-day practice. This collaborative approach enables teachers to respond to classroom challenges together, linking their own growth directly to student outcomes (Hord, 1997; DuFour et al., 2006).

To understand this dynamic, this study blends the PLC models of Hord (1997) and DuFour et al. (2006). Both frameworks show how school culture shapes professional teamwork, but they approach it differently. Hord (1997) highlights shared vision and supportive leadership as cultural foundations. In contrast, DuFour et al. (2006) focus on the operational side, prioritizing collective inquiry and continuous attention to results. By merging both perspectives, this study suggests that effective PLCs require a balance between a shared mission and practical structures that support collaboration.

In Catholic schools, the way PLCs work is shaped by the values and traditions of the Catholic faith. These schools often organize their communities around shared beliefs, co-responsibility, and students' growth in all domains of life (CCE, 2007). PLCs in these schools are not limited to academic outcomes; they are also viewed as spaces for teachers to develop both professionally and spiritually. Wahyudhanti et al. (2025) describe six main features that define Catholic school PLCs: a clear focus on student learning; collaborative teams for achievement; shared leadership to build capacity; reflective collective learning to improve practice; results-oriented strategies for lasting development; and supportive conditions which include structures, collegiality, and staff capacity. This approach tries to connect broader PLC ideas with what matters most in Catholic schools.

Turning these ideas into reality, though, is not always straightforward. For PLCs to become established in Catholic schools, there needs to be trust among teachers, practical support from school leaders, and adequate time designated for teachers to work together and reflect on their professional practices (Admiraal et al., 2021; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Honest conversations can be tough, but they are critical for professional growth. Furthermore, connecting with teachers from other schools can offer fresh perspectives and extra support (Admiraal et al., 2021). Overall, building strong PLCs is a continuous process that relies on teachers' everyday collaboration, leadership, and collective commitment throughout the school.

PLC Opportunities and Challenges in the Thai Catholic School Context

Thailand's national policy formally recognizes PLC participation as both a professional development activity and a requirement for teacher license renewal (OEC, 2023). This policy creates an institutional incentive for schools, including Catholic institutions, to integrate collaborative learning into regular professional practice. In Thai Catholic schools, such a policy context aligns well with a mission-driven view of teacher formation. Evidence suggests that targeted professional development can strengthen teacher competency and collaborative capacity

(Mhunpiew & Asavisanu, 2023). However, teacher formation in Catholic schools extends beyond instructional technique. Teachers are also expected to model compassion, service, and the integration of faith, life, and culture (CCE, 2007). For this reason, PLCs may provide a meaningful structure for ongoing teacher growth through collaborative inquiry, reflective dialogue, and continuous learning (Owen, 2014; Fred et al., 2020; Wahyudhanti et al., 2025).

Barriers to PLC implementation in Thailand remain evident in spite of the opportunities. Communication about policy does not always reach every school clearly, which can result in different approaches across schools (OEC, 2023). Teachers often receive full workloads and administrative responsibilities, which may limit chances for collaborative work or open discussion with colleagues (Sriklaub & Ruengtrakul, 2022; Worapun et al., 2022). Likewise, Catholic schools report obstacles such as insufficient time for collaboration, excessive duties, and inadequate staff, especially in smaller schools (Koelsch, 2016; Madden, 2020; Beltramo et al., 2021). Other factors, such as teachers' need for independence, leaders who balance educational and religious responsibilities, tight budgets, and the challenge of measuring broad learning goals, can make matters even more complicated (Fernandez, 2017; Rufus, 2023; Mariani-Petroze, 2023). If schools lack routines that protect time for teamwork and support teachers in reflecting together, efforts to build effective PLCs are unlikely to succeed (Wahyudhanti et al., 2025).

Leadership Capacity and Professional Development for PLC Implementation

For PLCs to function well and be sustained, schools require more than just good intentions. The schools should view leadership as broad-based participation in inquiry, collaboration, and reflective practice to enhance student outcomes (Lambert, 2003). Leaders play a key role by making sure teachers receive the necessary support and autonomy to engage in collaborative learning and innovation. Rather than leaving all the decision-making to principals or administrators, this approach encourages teacher involvement and shared responsibility for professional learning.

Professional development is also essential for PLCs to run effectively in schools. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), teachers learn best when training is practical and experiential. Professional learning is designed to provide opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues, receive feedback, and reflect on their practice. PLCs can facilitate these principles by allocating regular time for teachers to meet, share their experiences, and, in concert, address challenges. This approach brings learning into the day-to-day work of teaching, instead of treating it as isolated from the classroom (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; DuFour et al., 2006; Stoll et al., 2006).

Guskey (2002, 2014) recommends evaluating professional development through multiple dimensions, including teachers' responses to new ideas, their learning outcomes, the level of school support, the implementation of new practices, and the changes in student outcomes. It entails that participation in a PLC alone is not enough. Other crucial factors need to be in place, such as the support provided to teachers and the extent to which their involvement produces tangible changes in teaching and student learning.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 gives a visual summary of the framework used in this study. The approach builds on ideas from PLC frameworks, leadership capacity, and professional development to create a model tailored for teachers in schools overseen by the EDDBA. In particular, it draws from the work of Hord (1997) and DuFour et al. (2006) to identify six characteristics of PLCs that fit the Catholic school setting: Shared Purpose of Student Learning, Collaborative Teams for Improved Student Achievement, Shared Leadership for Capacity Building, Reflective Collective Learning for Better Professional Practice, Results-Oriented Learning for Sustained Development, and Supportive Conditions: Structures, Collegiality, and Staff Capacity (Wahyudhanti et al., 2025). These six features shaped how the study explored teachers' views and experiences with PLC practices, which was the main focus of the research. The design of the PLC model also drew on Lambert's (2003) concept of leadership capacity and Guskey's (2002, 2014) work on professional development, highlighting joint responsibility, organizational support, ongoing reflection, and professional learning geared toward improvement.

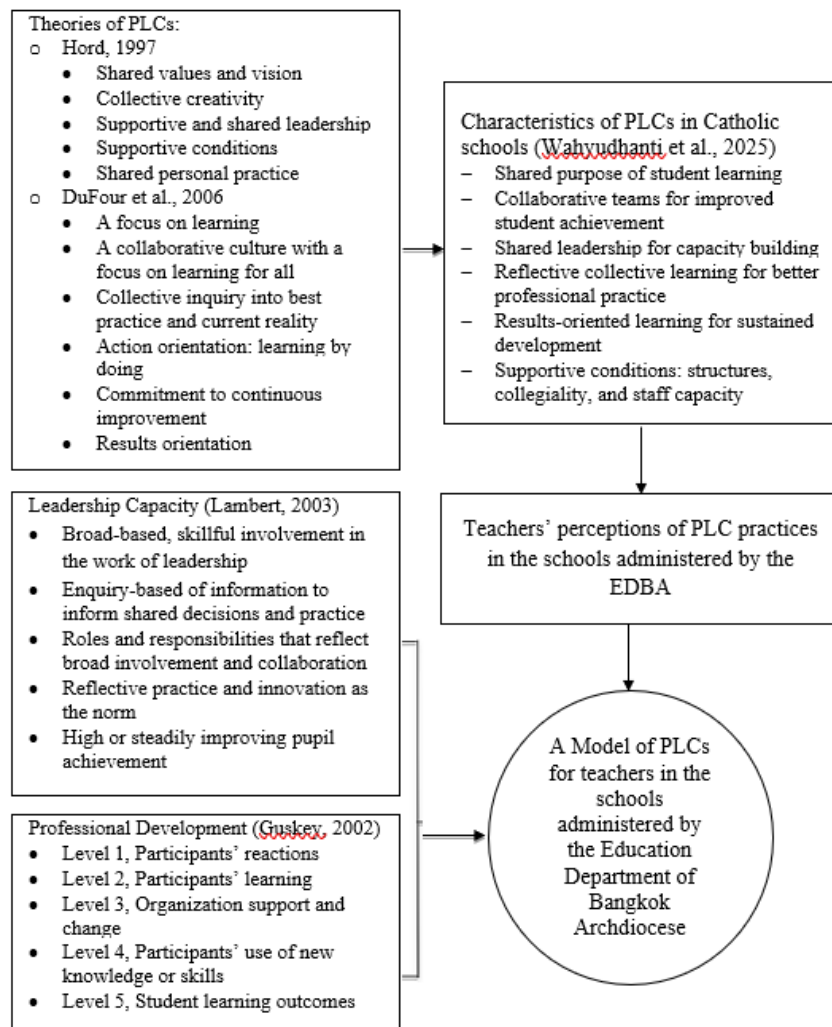


Figure 1. Conceptual framework: A model of PLCs for Teachers in schools administered by the EDDBA

Method

A mixed-methods design was employed to address the research objectives: (1) to examine teachers' perceptions of PLC practices in schools administered by the EDBA, and (2) to develop and validate a PLC model for teachers in these schools, drawing on the findings from the first objective. The research design comprised three phases: a quantitative survey, a qualitative inquiry for model development, and expert validation.

Phase 1

Phase 1 examined teachers' perceptions of PLC practices in EDBA-administered schools. A 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire was developed based on six characteristics identified by Wahyudhanti et al. (2025) – shared purpose of student learning, collaborative teams, shared leadership, reflective collective learning, results-oriented development, and supportive conditions.

The questionnaire, consisting of 65 items, was reviewed by five experts, who suggested changes to make the questions clear and relevant. After these revisions, 30 full-time teachers at St. Peter's School in Region 5 took part in a pilot study to assess the instrument's reliability. Table 1 presents the reliability results in Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which ranged from 0.840 to 0.963. The scores indicated that the questionnaire items were internally consistent and suitable for large-scale data collection.

Table 1. Internal consistency reliability Cronbach's α (Alpha) coefficient (N = 30)

Characteristics/Variables	No. of Items	Alpha (α)
Shared purpose of student learning	10	0.840
Collaborative teams for improved student achievement	10	0.918
Shared leadership for capacity building	10	0.894
Reflective collective learning for better professional practice	10	0.904
Results-oriented learning for sustained development	10	0.944
Supportive conditions:	15	0.963
Structure	5	0.871
Collegiality	5	0.912
Staff capacity	5	0.929

Note. The instrument's reliability was assessed using data from a pilot study involving 30 teachers.

Out of 3,048 teachers working in 36 EDBA schools, a sample of 346 teachers was drawn based on Krejcie and Morgan's guidelines. Proportional stratified random sampling was then utilized to purposefully select five schools from Regions 1 to 5. The schools were selected because they offered full K-12 programs and had larger numbers of teaching staff, making comparisons more reliable. Schools in Region 6 were excluded, as they did not meet these requirements.

Of 362 questionnaires sent out, 351 were completed and returned, which gave a 96.96% response rate, exceeding the target sample size. See Table 2 below for detailed results.

Table 2. Distribution and return rates of questionnaires by school representatives

Schools	Samples Required	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Returned	Response Rate (%)
St. Raphael	42	46	46	100
Pramanda Nichanukhro	83	86	75	87.21
Phra Mae Sakolsongkro	55	59	59	100
Marialai	59	60	60	100
Joseph Upatham	107	111	111	100
Total	346	362	351	96.96

Note. A total of 351 responses were received, surpassing the target of 346 and resulting in a 96.96% response rate.

Responses from these surveys were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, mean, and standard deviation. These analyses summarized teachers' views on PLC practices in the EDBA-overseen schools and were used to guide the next phase of the study.

Phase 2

The second phase aimed to create a PLC model for teachers in EDBA-administered schools. Insights obtained from this phase helped interpret the quantitative findings and identify what conditions were needed for a model that fit the local context.

Subsequent to the questionnaire survey, this study carried out semi-structured interviews with 17 teachers and 4 leaders from four of the school representatives. The interview questions included four dimensions: understanding PLCs, challenges in implementing PLCs, leadership roles, and support for professional development. The responses collected were coded and reviewed for common themes, highlighting both what supports and what hinders PLC implementation.

The PLC model was designed by combining qualitative findings, survey data, and insights from Lambert's (2003) leadership capacity perspectives and Guskey's (2002, 2014) professional development frameworks. This integration was achieved through explanatory sequential analysis.

Phase 3

Phase 3 included validating the proposed PLC model, developed based on Phase 2 findings. Validation employed a two-round Delphi process, guided by the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation framework (Hsu & Sandford, 2007; Stufflebeam, 2014).

Fifteen experts in Catholic education, PLCs, leadership, and evaluation reviewed the model's structure, contextual alignment, and feasibility and provided open-ended feedback during Round 1. Then, they rated the revised model on a 5-point Likert scale for each CIPP dimension in Round 2. The results from both rounds informed subsequent revisions and the finalization of the validated PLC model.

Ethical considerations

All ethical procedures were observed. These procedures included authorities' research approvals, voluntary participation in surveys and interviews,

and assurance of participants' confidentiality and anonymity. Moreover, interview excerpts were coded, and participants were permitted to withdraw at any stage without penalty.

Findings

Teachers' Perceptions of PLC Practices in Schools Administered by the EDBA

A questionnaire survey of 351 teachers from the five school representatives indicated that all six PLC characteristics were perceived at a high level, with an overall mean of 4.31 (SD = 0.548). As detailed in Table 3, Shared Purpose of Student Learning had the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.37, SD = 0.537), followed by Results-oriented Learning for Sustained Development ($\bar{x}$ = 4.36, SD = 0.570) and Reflective Collective Learning for Better Professional Practice ($\bar{x}$ = 4.33, SD = 0.606). In contrast, teachers rated Collaborative Teams for Improved Student Achievement and Supportive Conditions as the lowest areas (both $\bar{x}$ = 4.26). There was also less agreement in Shared Leadership for Capacity Building (SD = 0.691, $\bar{x}$ = 4.31).

Table 3. Teachers' perceptions of PLC practices in schools administered by the EDBA (N = 351)

PLC Characteristics	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation
Shared Purpose of Student Learning	4.37	0.537	High
Collaborative Teams for Improved Student Achievement	4.26	0.632	High
Shared Leadership for Capacity Building	4.31	0.691	High
Reflective Collective Learning for Better Professional Practice	4.33	0.606	High
Results-oriented Learning for Sustained Development	4.36	0.570	High
Supportive Conditions: Structure, Collegiality, Staff Capacity	4.26	0.618	High
Average	4.31	0.548	High

Note. Mean scores indicate that all six PLC characteristics were perceived as high, and standard deviations suggest generally low to moderate variation in teachers' responses across dimensions.

At the item level, Shared Purpose of Student Learning was reflected in high ratings for school leaders' involvement in vision-shaping (Item 4, $\bar{x}$ = 4.59) and learning expectations (Item 6, $\bar{x}$ = 4.55). However, stakeholder participation (Item 9, $\bar{x}$ = 3.98) and research-driven decision-making (Item 10, $\bar{x}$ = 3.85) were rated lower. For Collaborative Teams for Improved Student Achievement, embedding collaborative processes (Item 20, $\bar{x}$ = 4.36) was perceived positively. In contrast, trust and mutual respect (Item 13, $\bar{x}$ = 4.17) and identification of teaching-learning issues (Item 18, $\bar{x}$ = 4.14) received comparatively lower ratings.

In terms of Shared Leadership for Capacity Building, proactive support (Item 22, $\bar{x}$ = 4.38) and delegation (Item 21, $\bar{x}$ = 4.35) received relatively high ratings, while teacher involvement in decision-making (Item 25, $\bar{x}$ = 4.26) and time for collaboration (Item 26, $\bar{x}$ = 4.26) were rated lower. In Reflective Collective Learning for Better Professional Practice, adapting learning to student needs (Item 40, $\bar{x}$ = 4.48) was notable, whereas collective inquiry (Item 31, $\bar{x}$ = 4.18) was less prominent.

Within the Results-oriented Learning category, ongoing assessment (Item 41, $\bar{x} = 4.56$) and using results to improve teaching (Item 45, $\bar{x} = 4.52$) received high ratings, while parental involvement (Item 49) and access to technology or funding (Item 63) as part of supportive conditions were rated low, with means of 4.11 and 4.00, respectively.

Overall, teachers viewed PLC practices positively, especially when it came to Shared Purpose of Student Learning and Results-oriented Learning for Sustained Development. There was less consensus on involving stakeholders, having reliable support systems, and sharing leadership responsibilities. These findings helped shape the interview phase and the development of the PLC model.

PLC Model Development for Teachers in Schools Administered by the EDDBA

The interviews provided further insights into the survey findings by showing how PLCs were implemented in everyday school contexts. Participants identified several strengths, including a strong emphasis on student learning, consistent collaboration, engagement in reflective practice, collegial relationships, and the role of Catholic identity. Nevertheless, they also reported persistent challenges, such as limited involvement from stakeholders, low relational trust, ambiguous leadership roles, inconsistent use of data, and inadequate structural support. Participants expressed the need for more clearly defined leadership responsibilities, enhanced opportunities for reflection, increased data use in planning, allocated time for collaboration, and improved organizational supports.

Table 4 presents a summary of the main strengths and challenges. The findings showed that while vision and routines existed, broader engagement and follow-up were often missing. Collaborative activities at times became repetitive, with meetings concluding quickly without meaningful discussion. Leadership support was uneven, and schools that relied mainly on principals reduced opportunities for teacher involvement. Even when teachers reflected on or used data, it rarely led to changes in classroom practice. These issues also helped explain why some PLC practices did not last over time in EDDBA-administered schools.

Table 4. Integrated synthesis of mixed-methods findings and PLC model implications (N = 21)

PLC Characteristic	Key Survey Findings	Interview Insight	PLC Model Implication
Shared Purpose of Student Learning	Strong leadership vision and high expectations (Items 4, 6), but weaker stakeholder input and research use (Items 9, 10)	Mission was valued, but belief in student potential and agreement on PLC aims were uneven (School Leader #1, Teacher #2).	Strengthen shared commitment, stakeholder participation, and evidence-based goal-setting.
Collaborative Teams for Improved Student Achievement	Everyday collaboration was embedded (Item 20), but trust and problem identification were weaker (Items 13, 18).	Collaboration was systematic, yet openness to feedback and deeper problem-solving were limited (Teacher #8, Teacher #3).	Build inquiry-oriented teamwork, trust, and open dialogue on classroom problems.
Shared Leadership for Capacity Building	Proactive support and delegation were strong (Items 22, 21), but teacher	Distributed leadership was valued, but PLC work often remained	Promote distributed leadership, teacher

PLC Characteristic	Key Survey Findings	Interview Insight	PLC Model Implication
Reflective Collective Learning for Better Professional Practice	voice and collaboration time were weaker (Items 25, 26). Adapting instruction and peer observation were stronger (Items 40, 37), but open dialogue and feedback were weaker (Items 31, 38).	principal-dependent (Teacher #15, School Leader #4). Reflection often remained descriptive, and changing mindsets was difficult (School Leader #2, Teacher #1).	voice, and shared responsibility. Strengthen inquiry, feedback, and deeper reflective analysis.
Results-oriented Learning for Sustained Development	Use of learning evidence and results-based improvement were strong (Items 41, 45), but external benchmarking and parental cooperation were weaker (Items 48, 49).	Data were reviewed, but translation into action was inconsistent (Teacher #7, School Leader #1)	Strengthen the link between learning evidence, action planning, and instructional response.
Supportive Conditions: Structure, Collegiality, Staff Capacity Catholic identity integration	Job-embedded PD was strong (Item 65), but time, technology, and funding were weaker (Items 51, 63). Mission-centered commitment was strong, but links between Catholic values and inquiry were less explicit.	Workload, limited time, and inadequate resources reduced sustainability (Teacher #10, Teacher #6) Faith supported purpose and relationships, but was not always linked to teaching reflection (School Leader #2, Teacher #11)	Provide protected time, adequate resources, and stronger structural support. Integrate Catholic identity into reflection, dialogue, and instructional improvement.

Note. This table synthesizes mixed-method findings, demonstrating how the survey findings are clarified by interview findings and translated into elements of the proposed PLC model.

Building on the findings above, the PLC model was created to retain existing strengths while also responding to the challenges that at times hindered consistency and sustainability. The model, therefore, preserves the six foundational PLC characteristics, reworking them into six practical strands that reinforce shared purpose, collaborative inquiry, teacher-led leadership, reflective habits, evidence-driven action, and the necessary structures for lasting PLC work. Rather than treating Catholic identity as an isolated element, the model integrates it throughout, recognizing its role as a unifying thread. Interview data indicated that, although faith and moral purpose often supported collaboration, they were not always clearly linked to reflective practice or evidence-based inquiry. In response, the proposed model weaves Catholic identity into every strand.

To make these six strands part of everyday school life, the model introduces a set of activation levers – practical tools that are designed to encourage collaboration, foster deeper inquiry, facilitate meaningful feedback, anchor the use of evidence, and safeguard time for joint work. These mechanisms are designed to help PLC routines persist even when schools face obstacles like heavy workloads, fragmented policies, or rigid hierarchies. In addition, an evaluative layer, grounded in Guskey’s backward planning, links professional learning to organizational support, shifts in teaching practice, and, ultimately, student achievement. The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP) shapes and guides the process as a whole,

offering a reflective, faith-centered approach that values context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation.

The proposed PLC model is not intended as a top-down solution applied from outside the school. Instead, it represents an evidence-based response shaped by each community's unique context. The goal is not to add to teachers' responsibilities. Rather, the model aims to reshape current PLC practices by encouraging alignment with the school's mission, deeper inquiry, broader participation, stronger shared leadership, and the creation of conditions for sustainable growth.

PLC Model Validation and Finalization

The validation of the proposed PLC model for teachers in EDBA-administered schools was conducted through a two-round Delphi process involving 15 experts in Catholic education, educational leadership, and professional development. In the initial round, experts recognized the model's conceptual robustness and its alignment with the Catholic mission. They also suggested simplifying terminology, enhancing implementation supports, and refining the visual structure. These recommendations informed subsequent revisions to the model before the second round of review.

In Round 2, presented to the experts, the revised model received relatively high mean ratings across all CIPP domains, ranging from 4.60 to 4.68, with low standard deviations. See the details in Table 5. These results reflect a notable degree of expert agreement regarding the model's perceived validity, contextual relevance, feasibility, and expected outcomes. In particular, the ratings suggest that the revised model was regarded as structurally clear, contextually grounded, and practical within the realities of EDBA schools, with the potential to support teacher professional growth and holistic student development.

Table 5. Expert consensus on the proposed PLC model across the CIPP domains (N = 15)

CIPP Domain	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation	Expert Insight
Context	4.62	0.25	Strong, valid	The model aligns with the Catholic school mission and appears suitable for the intended context.
Input	4.68	0.31	Strong, valid	Experts viewed the structure as clear and practical, with feasible mechanisms for implementation.
Process	4.63	0.21	Strong, valid	The proposed professional development plan was considered workable, and the integration of IPP was generally affirmed.
Product	4.60	0.28	Strong, valid	The model shows potential to support teacher development and contribute to student growth.

Note. The mean ratings with relatively low standard deviations suggest a consistent level of agreement among the experts. Overall, the responses support the perceived validity of the proposed PLC model and indicate its contextual relevance, practical feasibility, and potential contribution to teacher and student growth.

According to Table 5, the experts viewed the Context score as evidence of strong alignment between the model and both the Catholic mission and the realities of EDBA schools. For Input, most experts found the six strands and activation levers to be clear and workable. The Process score affirmed the feasibility of the professional development framework, with the IPP continuing to serve as an organizing principle. As for Product, the experts agreed that the model could support teacher collaboration, instructional quality, and student development. Drawing on this feedback, the model was finalized as a framework responsive to the needs and context of teachers in EDBA schools.

Figure 2 below shows the final version of the validated PLC model – a layered, mission-oriented framework that demonstrates the integrative logic of its development. At its center are six foundational PLC characteristics: shared purpose of student learning, collaborative teams, shared leadership, reflective collective learning, results-oriented learning, and supportive conditions. These core characteristics are encircled by six operational strands - Shared Mission Integration, Collaborative Team Building, Distributed Leadership and Change, Collective Professional Growth Cycle, Data-Informed Learning, and Inclusive Opportunity Structures. Each strand translates the core PLC characteristics into school-based practice. Expert feedback led to a stronger implementation layer, now including ten activation levers such as Cluster Network Exchanges, Parent-Partner Feedback Loops, and Shared Mission Alignment Reviews. These additions focus attention on collaboration between schools, involvement of parents, and maintaining alignment with the mission.

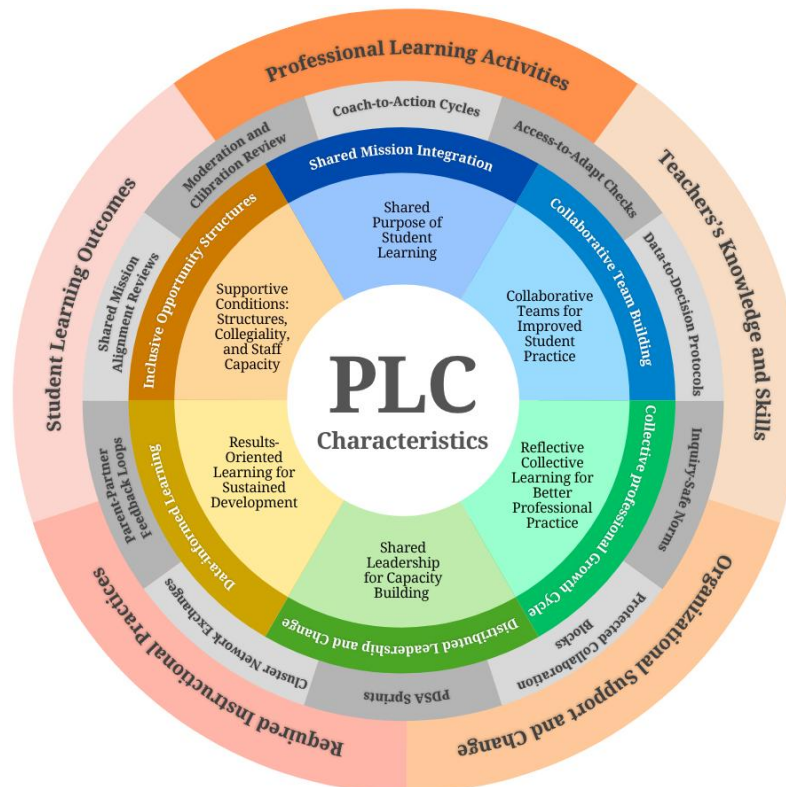


Figure 2. Validated PLC model for teachers in schools administered by the EDBA

The outermost layer incorporates Guskey's backward-planning and evaluation framework, which links professional learning to teacher growth, organizational support, instructional methods, and student outcomes. Although the IPP's reflective and faith-informed approach no longer appears in the diagram – mainly to avoid repeating elements from Guskey's cycle – it continues to inform the framework in practice. This approach focuses on context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation. These changes were made to ensure the model is grounded in evidence, attentive to context, and reflective of Catholic identity. It is designed as a practical tool to address the needs of EDBA-administered schools, not just a theoretical construct.

Discussion

Cultivating PLC Practices in Schools Administered by the EDBA

Teachers in EDBA-administered schools described PLCs as successful when centered on a shared goal of supporting student growth. Many stated that their teamwork focused more on helping enhance student achievement than on administrative requirements. As one teacher put it, “The purpose is always student achievement and potential” (Teacher #7). This statement reflects the importance of shared goals and reflective dialogue.

However, the quality of collaboration differed across schools and teams. While regular meetings, joint lesson planning, and peer exchanges were commonly implemented, these practices often focused on exchanging resources rather than exploring teaching practices in depth. A group of teachers noted that, although collaboration was regular, it did not always lead to meaningful professional inquiry or problem-solving. This gap may explain why collaborative routines sometimes failed to drive collective problem-solving or significant instructional improvement (Owen, 2014; Fred et al., 2020).

Regarding the use of evidence and reflective practices, both teachers and school leaders stated that they took part in reviewing student data. However, the connection between this process and subsequent modifications in instructional approaches was not always evident. As one teacher observed, “We looked at test scores, but sometimes it was just numbers – so what?” (Teacher #11). Additionally, other teachers acknowledged, “Reflection was similarly described as limited, with several teachers mentioning a tendency to agree quickly rather than engage in critique” (Teacher #9; Teacher #3). Such tendencies suggest that strong collegial ties did not necessarily foster the trust and openness required for more profound professional inquiry.

Leadership practices exerted a considerable influence on the development of PLC activities. In some EDBA-administered schools, teachers were encouraged to take initiative and assume shared leadership roles, whereas in others, teachers relied primarily on principals' direction. This variation indicates that leadership support, while evident, was not contextually institutionalized through teacher agency, shared facilitation, or dedicated collaborative time. These results are consistent with previous research, which emphasizes the importance of distributed leadership in sustaining collaborative professional learning (Sriklaub & Ruengtrakul, 2022). Therefore, implementing leadership practices that establish organizational structures to foster broader teacher participation in leadership roles may be beneficial for the development of PLCs in schools.

Catholic identity also played a major role in shaping how PLCs functioned. In this context, many teachers perceived cooperative endeavors as essential not only for enhancing academic achievement but also for fostering students' holistic growth. These findings correspond with the Catholic viewpoint that schools function as communities in which faith, culture, and daily life are integrated through shared responsibility for the whole person (CCE, 2007; Catholic Education Council of Thailand [CECT], 2018). However, this study revealed that certain obstacles, most particularly limited trust among colleagues, inconsistent participation, and ambiguity regarding leadership distribution, occasionally hindered the extent to which this mission could be achieved.

In view of the findings presented above, three interrelated shifts are recommended to enhance PLCs within EDBA-administered schools. Rather than being treated as separate areas of reform, these shifts should be understood as mutually reinforcing processes. The first involves cultural transformation, which is essential for fostering trust, shared responsibility, and ethical commitment among teachers. Such a foundation enables teachers to work toward a collective moral purpose and engage more meaningfully in evidence-based inquiry. The second shift – analytical transformation – builds on this cultural foundation by positioning PLCs as a coherent instructional orientation directed toward specific and measurable educational goals. Concurrently, the third dimension – structural transformation – provides conditions to sustain this work, including dedicated time, consistent routines, necessary resources, and access to technology. Overall, these changes – cultural, analytical, and structural – should occur simultaneously to strengthen PLCs in schools managed by the EDBA.

To facilitate these shifts, the validated PLC model provides a practical and contextually responsive structure. This model frames professional learning around key dimensions, including shared mission, inquiry, leadership, use of evidence, and supportive conditions. Successful implementation of the model largely depends on the extent to which schools can safeguard time for collaboration, reinforce distributed leadership, and integrate reflection and evidence-informed practice into routine teamwork. Importantly, the model is not designed to introduce additional tasks; rather, it seeks to enhance the coherence, focus, and sustainability of collaborative practices already established in schools.

Within this broader process, the IPP contributes to implementation by offering a faith-based approach to reflective inquiry tailored to contextually responsive instructional practices. While the IPP is not depicted as a separate visual layer in the final model, its cyclical structure – encompassing context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation – encourages teachers to move beyond routine reporting and instead engage in discernment and intentional instructional response (Jesuit Schools Network of North America, 2015). In doing so, PLC activities remain congruent not only with initiatives for school improvement but also with the Catholic mission of fostering holistic student formation. This mission-based orientation aligns with Catholic educational principles that highlight shared responsibility, moral purpose, and the integration of faith, culture, and daily life (CECT, 2018; Wahyudhanti et al., 2025).

The findings underscore the need for ongoing professional development (PD) to sustain PLC implementation. Ideally, PD related to PLCs should be embedded within teachers' everyday responsibilities, structured according to stages

of professional growth, and directly address authentic classroom challenges, rather than being delivered in isolated workshops. In EDBA schools, professional learning opportunities may include coaching, mentoring, peer observation, demonstration lessons, facilitation of skill development, and cultivation of data literacy. These strategies aim to move teachers beyond routine collaboration to deeper inquiry and intentional instructional improvement. This implication is supported by the study's interview findings and broader literature, which indicate that impactful PD is inherently collaborative, reflective, supported by coaching, and sustained over time (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

The effectiveness of PD, however, depends on consistent structural supports. Participants pointed to protected meeting time, adequate funding, access to technology and materials, manageable workload, and systematic follow-up. In addition, practical supports such as interdisciplinary co-planning, regular job-embedded inquiry, structured feedback, and ongoing mentorship were also identified as crucial to effective implementation. These needs correspond to the validated PD framework, which incorporates regular PLC sessions, extended collaborative periods, PD opportunities, and cycles of coaching and observation. Most notably, such structural supports are also substantiated by evidence showing that sustained engagement in PLCs contributes to improved instructional competence and continued professional growth (Dumandan & Paglinawan, 2025).

In summary, the validated model presents a practical and contextually responsive approach to strengthening professional learning in EDBA-administered schools. Its primary value lies not in adding new tasks, but in enabling schools to organize existing PLC practices with clearer direction and purpose. By grounding collaborative efforts in a shared mission, reflective inquiry, evidence-informed action, distributed leadership, and supportive conditions, the model provides a coherent pathway for improving instructional practice while cultivating Catholic educational mission.

Conclusion

This study investigated how teachers perceived PLC practices in schools overseen by the EDBA. It also sought to create a PLC model tailored for these educational settings. Survey responses and semi-structured interview data indicated that teachers generally rated all six PLC characteristics highly. Most notably, strong practices emerged in areas such as fostering a shared purpose for learning, engaging in reflective collective learning, and focusing on results-oriented development. By contrast, stakeholder participation, distributed leadership, inquiry depth, and supportive conditions appeared less consistent. Qualitative findings further suggested that these inconsistencies were influenced by leadership capacity, Catholic mission, and structural constraints, especially limited time, heavy workload, and scarce resources. In light of these findings, the study introduced and validated a PLC model responsive to the context. The model brings together elements of mission, collaboration, leadership, reflective growth, reliance on evidence, and supportive structures. It offers a structured approach for strengthening professional learning and, by extension, promoting holistic student development in EDBA-administered schools.

To facilitate impactful and sustained adoption of the validated PLC model, this study proposes several recommendations. First, schools should introduce the

model in stages, starting with a designated time for collaborative inquiry and reflection. Such an approach helps integrate PLC activities into daily routines rather than treating them as additional work. Second, leadership should be broadened by allowing teachers and headteachers to guide PLC processes. This shift can reduce reliance on principals and foster a greater sense of shared responsibility. Third, PLC routines should move beyond task completion toward dialogue informed by evidence, collective problem-solving, and instructional advancement. This approach is intended to ensure that reflection and data use lead to tangible changes in practice. Fourth, the Catholic mission should be intentionally woven into PLC activities. Doing so may reinforce shared moral purpose, psychological safety, and authentic professional dialogue among teachers. Fifth, schools should strengthen stakeholder involvement, particularly by building partnerships with parents and encouraging collaboration across schools. Sixth, EDBA can support ongoing progress by developing a system for evaluation built on clear indicators, regular reviews, and responsive feedback. Lastly, the long-term success of the model depends on leadership development, mentoring, training in facilitation, and opportunities for respectful communication and joint reviews. These supports can help schools adapt the model to suit their particular contexts, while maintaining alignment across EDBA-administered schools.

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