

## Managing educational institutions: School heads' leadership practices and teachers' performance

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### ABSTRACT

School heads are agents of change who contribute a major impression on the educational milieu through their information-sharing methods, creating supportive social connections, participating in mentoring programs, and fostering progress. Hence, this study ascertained the interrelation between the public school head's leadership practices and teachers' performance. As correlation research, simple random sampling was used to calculate the sample size for teachers, while total enumeration was used for school heads. A structured questionnaire was developed to gather the necessary information that reinforced the theme of this analysis. Weighted mean was used to ascertain the level of leadership practices of school heads and the level of teacher performance. T-test, F-test, post-hoc test, and Pearson  $r$  were employed to establish the degree of association between and among variables. This study concluded that the variation in leadership practices experienced by school heads and teachers is absolutely vital, confirming that their reactions are fundamentally better. Teachers' performance is consistent irrespective of age, educational achievement, or significant contributions. In terms of teaching status and number of years of experience, head teachers have improved teaching efficiency than teachers and master teachers. Teachers with shorter relevant experience showed poorer educational quality relative to those who spent more time in the school system. School heads who have obtained their doctorate degrees get a greater level of leadership practices than the holders of master's degrees. The very productive performance of teachers stays the same, regardless of whether the school heads exhibit a very high degree of authentic leadership.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, all governments around the world are concerned with advancing their educational systems and making them more effective and meaningful. Education provides the basis for the development of the skills of the human capital designed to accomplish the strategic goals. As such, education must be fundamental. Successful schools are the results of competent governance demonstrated by the school heads in collaborative partnerships with relevant stakeholders [1], [2]. This is comparable to the argument of Pont, Nusche, and Moorman [3] that the primary role of school leadership is to encourage, gauge, and enrich the efficiency of teachers. Further, school officials are those who have the power to produce and disseminate new

information quickly and to maximize their access to educational opportunities and networks [4], [5]. As such, productive schools have school administrators who dedicate a significant amount of time to planning and overseeing instruction; are extremely visible in the school, and remain loyal to the learning environment [6].

The school head is the axis around which many elements of the school take precedence. He is responsible for every dimension of the operation of the system, be it academic or administrative. The school head must be inclined to make almost all of the school's decisions [7]. Thus, the school head must be a director, a planner, and a judgment-maker. A trustworthy school head would use collaboration as a working technique by establishing teams and smaller units of team members to examine proposals or tactics [8]. Therefore, it is up to the school head to be a strong team player to impact the quality of instruction [9], [10].

Becoming an inspiring school leader is by no means an easy task, regardless of the context of service. However, the core operational concepts for educational leadership remain the same [11]. There is an argument that leadership cannot just be attributed only to a single individual; essentially, it is a mixture of unique reasons. The effective and sustainable governance of any institution depends on the willingness of the school officials to develop and implement initiatives that might guarantee a continuous increase in efficiency and a pleasant professional relationship between the administration and its constituents [12]. Consequently, efficiency is what school heads are requesting from their teachers in the educational sectors.

To perform efficiently and effectively, school heads must perform five functions [13], [14]. These include planning (delineating priorities, determining goals, and implementing action-coordinated plans); staffing (scouting the right teacher with the necessary skills and expertise that are required for the success of the organization); organizing (assembling and successfully implementing to achieve the organizational objectives, to decide which tasks are to be carried out, how duties are to be divided, who communicates to whom and when actions are to be taken); controlling (tracking and reviewing performance and ensure that expectations are met and achieved); and, directing (responding positively after outcomes have been linked to future potential, the justification for difference, and trying to make teachers reasonably strengthen their productivity) [12], [15].

Recognizing the value of improving the leadership skills of the school head is closely related to the need for organizations to recruit and retain high-performing teachers. The heart of successful leadership practice includes personal skills (advancement of self-awareness, critical and complex management of stress and well-being and conflict resolution); interpersonal skills (building relationships through constructive communication, gaining authority and strength, promoting productivity, and resolving and reclosing tensions); and group skills (inspiring and empowering others, building successful performance, and leading progressive adjustment) [16]. Stirred by the work of Whetten [17], Kouzes and Posner [18] had published five outstanding leadership practices that provide the foundation for organizational performance by suggesting what attitudes and behaviors school officials need to accomplish to become successful leaders. These include: i) Modeling the way (creating expectations of success and providing a precedent for everyone to follow); ii) Inspiring a shared vision (coming up with new ideas and generating an ideal and distinctive picture of what an organization should become); iii) Challenging the process (looking at challenges as tools for learning); iv) Enabling others to act (fostering cooperation, establishing trust, and generating momentum); and v) Encouraging the heart (creating and maintaining elevated expectations, keeping the people committed to them by preserving the connection between incentives and performance). Driven by these abilities, a school head is likely to succeed.

Best quality instruction and teacher competence can be directly or indirectly influenced by the leadership style of their school leaders [19]-[21]. Leadership practice is the mode of conduct that the leader embraces in affecting the performance of the teacher because educational success could only be accomplished by fulfilled and inspired teachers [22]. Authentic leadership is a pattern of actions that school leaders display in influencing teachers' conduct towards achieving organizational and personal expectations [23]. A successful form of management is thus essential to inspire teachers and enhance their productivity in schools [2], [24].

Researches have shown that the standard of leadership creates a peculiarity between the gains and losses of a school [25], [26]. In high-efficiency educational institutions that have overcome the pattern of lower productivity and decreasing performance, school officials set the benchmark by directing and encouraging teachers and employees to reach their highest potentials [27]. Schools, as such, make a significant difference to educational outcomes; the motivational strategies of school heads are among the reasons that contributed to student success [28]. Other school-related considerations that should be addressed by the school heads due to their impact on students' learning and educational aspirations include the teacher's extent of coaching and supervised learning, the degree, and nature of the ability groupings, the standards of teachers, the method of leadership and teaching practices, the size of a school, as well as the trends and practice and attributes of the school setting [29]. The motivation of teachers represents a potential age difference, experience, and educational background. Mustafa and Othman [30] have found that there can be a

clear connection between efficiency and teachers' work performance. They noted that teachers showed better performance if the intensity of commitment is better. Thus, when teachers are incredibly motivated, the success of their work becomes significant [31].

Teachers are inspired by a teacher-centered approach to educational management. Teacher-centered operational leadership style is distinguished by greater engagement in decision-making; reduced tight monitoring of teachers; never-ending directorial sustenance for teacher development; good social relationships; and open interactions [32]-[34]. This philosophy is only achievable when the school heads as school administrators, beyond or above their management positions, strive to meet as many specific preferences as necessary and guide teachers with extreme respect and a great mindset and involvement in their wellbeing. Led by this principle, the school heads establish a working relationship that is characterized by a strong culture of harmony, engagement, consensus, and respect for teachers [19].

On the premise of these claims and results, the researchers were encouraged to investigate the leadership practices of school heads, the performance of teachers, and their role in maintaining quality factors in school administration. Specifically, this study sought to: i) Describe the level of school heads' leadership practices and level of teachers' performance; ii) Determine if there are significant differences in the level of school heads' leadership practices along with planning, organizing, controlling, commanding, and coordinating; iii) Determine if there are significant differences in the level of teachers' performance and level of school heads' leadership practices when they were grouped according to their academic profile; and iv) Determine if there is a significant relationship between the school heads' leadership practices and teachers' performance.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The correlation research was used in this study which was conducted in the selected secondary schools of the Department of Education, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines. Simple random sampling was used to calculate the sample size for teacher-respondents (n=195) while purposive sampling was used for school heads (n=17). A structured questionnaire was developed to gather the necessary information that reinforced the theme of this analysis. To conform to the normal standards and practice of research, the researchers sought permission from the Schools Division Superintendent for the conduct of this study. Further, permission was also pursued to go through the records of the Division Statistician for the performance of teachers through their individual performance commitment and review (IPCR). The administration and retrieval of the research instrument were done by the researchers.

Weighted means were employed to establish the levels of leadership practices of school leaders and the performance of teachers. To decide how different variables are associated with each other, the T-test, F-test, post-hoc tests, and Pearson  $r$  were utilized.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Level of school heads' leadership practices

Table 1 shows the level of school heads' leadership practices as evaluated by themselves and their teachers in terms of planning, organizing, controlling, commanding, and coordinating. Table 1 presents the level of leadership practices of school heads as observed by themselves and their teachers. Results revealed the following:

- i) Planning: School heads were considered to have regularly exhibited remarkable leadership practices in the planning dimension, giving priority to a well-defined target and making it clear to their workers, concentrating on strategic results, and identifying necessary steps to achieve their objectives.
- ii) Organizing: School heads have been measured to consistently demonstrate remarkable leadership practices in terms of organizing with a focus on providing continuing education, recognizing strengths and limitations, and establishing a stable atmosphere for a functioning professional relationship amongst teachers.
- iii) Controlling: School heads have been reported to continually show remarkable leadership strategies in the field of controlling organizational priority, reacting to the needs and challenges that impact teachers, guaranteeing that they follow the school's rules, and track the success of all school activities.
- iv) Commanding: School heads have been examined to consistently demonstrate remarkable leadership behaviors along the command dimension, with a focus on quality performance and unity in the workforce.
- v) Coordinating: School heads have been found to regularly show impressive leadership strategies throughout the coordinating axis by being completely mindful of the needs of each teacher, balancing input and resolving problems, and updating them with improvements.

Table 1. Level of leadership practices of school heads

Dimensions of leadership practices	Mean rating		Overall	Level of leadership practices
	School heads	Teachers		
Planning	3.83	3.60	3.72	Very high
Organizing	3.85	3.52	3.69	Very high
Controlling	3.80	3.51	3.66	Very high
Commanding	3.91	3.55	3.73	Very high
Coordinating	3.90	3.57	3.74	Very high
Grand mean	3.86	3.55	3.70	Very high

Range: 3.24–4.00 (Very high); 2.50–3.24 (High); 1.75–2.49 (Low); 1.00–1.74 (Very low)

In each institution, supervision is a fundamental requirement. It is among the approaches to most corporate problems [35], [36]. Bolden, Petrov, and Gosling [37] expressed that a school leader is one who governs academic policies, administration, decision-making, processes, methods, and distribution of resources. As such, successful school leaders must accurately forecast possibilities and devise plans to resolve vulnerabilities [38], [39]. Martensson and Roxå [40] also shared their view of a school leader as somebody with whom teachers talk, consult, and take directions and feedback on educational matters.

In their analysis, Fields, Kenny, and Mueller [5] provided a paradigm for establishing leadership practices as having five principles: affective qualities (displaying modesty, demonstrating compassion and consideration, maintaining confidence, and fascinating relationship-building); mentoring and empowerment (embracing transition, risk-taking, long-term development facilitation, implementation and monitoring of new educational projects); action-orientation (facilitating teachers to improve their teaching and learning processes, encouraging and guiding peers, exchanging resources, establishing growth potential, communicating knowledge and guidance, and drawing peers together); teaching excellence (enabling student-centered learning, encouraging and strengthening the interest of learners, resolving conflicts to learning, becoming model leaders, engaging effectively with students, enhancing learning opportunities for students); and research and scholarship (study engagement, promotion of teaching and learning scholarships). This framework supports Pont, Nusche, and Moorman's [3] argument that school leaders need to pursue the planned path, strengthen their capacity to create organizational objectives and development targets, and analyze success, and gain information on quality standards.

### 3.2. Level of teachers' performance

Table 2 reflects the level of performance on teachers based on the results of their IPCR. Findings in Table 2 indicate that teachers displayed a very satisfactory teaching efficiency. This further implies that they exhibited a very reasonable teaching performance. Effective learning occurs when teachers assume that their learners have varying degrees of development and are skilled at achieving success [41]. To be successful, Ashiedu and Scott-Ladd [42] stated that teachers need to meet the varying learners' needs by leveraging various teaching activities and structures that motivate and persuade them to perform tasks in their specific ways. In the same way, Tominez and Dela Cruz [43] articulated that in all teaching characteristics, the successful teacher must perform effectively. If effective teaching is to be achieved, it is important to fashion research-based knowledge to extract articulatory frameworks and sources for teacher improvement.

Table 2. Level of teachers' performance

Range	Mean	Frequency	Percentage	Level of teacher's performance
4.50–5.00	4.52	53	27.2	Outstanding
3.50–4.49	3.83	139	71.3	Very satisfactory
2.50–3.49	3.18	3	1.54	Satisfactory
Total		195	100	
Grand mean	3.84			Very satisfactory

### 3.3. Comparison in school heads' leadership practices along with planning, organizing, controlling, commanding, and coordinating

Table 3 compares the level of school heads' leadership practices in the areas of planning, organizing, controlling, commanding, and coordinating. Table 3 reflects that all the five dimensions of leadership practices of school heads were found to be very significant. The findings indicate that there have been substantial variations in terms of the various dimensions of the leadership practices of school leaders as witnessed by themselves and their teachers. That is, the difference between the leadership practices of school heads as observed by themselves and their teachers is highly significant which indicates that the responses of

both sector-respondents are significantly different in terms of the different dimensions of leadership practices. These results further indicate that although both the school heads and their teachers have different views, they still observed that the level of the leadership practices of the school heads appeared to be very high. This further implies that the observations made by school heads and teachers as regards the leadership practices are incomparable. Kusumadewi, Sudja, and Sujana [44] stressed that successful leaders rely on an advancement process framework, which means that the leader must integrate strong use of connectivity, inspiration, management skills, constructive decision-making, and influence. Naeem and Khanzada [45] clarified that leaders with a democratic leadership style are committed to empowering their workers to be more confident and accountable, with outcomes that can improve productivity and enhance work performance [46], [47].

Table 3. Significant differences in the dimensions of school heads' leadership practices

Dimensions	Respondents	Mean	Mean difference	Computed t-value	p-value	Remarks
Planning	School heads	3.83	0.23	6.58	.000*	Very significant
	teachers	3.60				
Organizing	School heads	3.85	0.33	9.08	.000*	Very significant
	teachers	3.52				
Controlling	School heads	3.80	0.29	7.14	.000*	Very significant
	teachers	3.51				
Commanding	School heads	3.91	0.36	9.98	.000*	Very significant
	teachers	3.55				
Coordinating	School heads	3.90	0.33	7.96	.000*	Very significant
	teachers	3.57				

\*p<.0001

#### 3.4. Comparison in the level of teachers' performance when grouped according to their academic profile

Table 4 presents the comparison on the teachers' performance when grouped in terms of their age, highest educational attainment, teaching position, number of years in teaching, and outstanding achievement. Computed results in Table 4 show that the performance of teachers was not significantly different when they were grouped according to age, higher educational achievement, and outstanding achievement, suggesting that there were no substantial variations in the performance of teachers when they were clustered according to the academic characteristics. This ensures that, regardless of age, educational attainment, and exemplary accomplishments, the output of teachers remain the same. Research results corroborate Fabelico and Afalla [41], that the very satisfactory performance of teachers is not affected by any variable of the teacher.

However, the performance of teachers is substantially different when they have been categorized according to teaching position and number of years of teaching. The findings indicate that there are considerable differences in the degree of productivity of teachers when they are classified according to their teaching position and number of years of teaching.

Table 4. Significant differences in the level of teachers' performance when grouped according to the academic profile

Academic profile variables	Df	Computed F-values	p-value	Remarks
Age	4, 190	2.37	.054	Not significant
Highest educational attainment	1, 193	1.65	.201	Not significant
Teaching position	7, 187	3.74*	.001	Significant
Number of years in teaching	4, 190	2.76**	.029	Significant
Outstanding achievement	5, 189	1.81	.112	Not significant

\*\*significant at .05; \*significant at .01

Further analysis was carried out to determine which of the teaching positions influences the teaching performance of teachers. Results indicate that the teaching performance of Head Teacher 1 (HT1) and HT5 has higher performance when compared to Teacher 1 (T1), T2, T3, Master Teacher 1 (MT1), MT2, HT3. It could be assumed that such teachers who have been upgraded to HT1 and HT5 have a greater level of dedication and motivation, thereby demonstrating a very satisfactory classification.

Furthermore, although the level of teaching performance of teachers is very satisfactory, teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience have relatively lower mean as compared to teachers with 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 21 years, and above teaching experiences. Findings suggest that teachers with less teaching experience have shown poorer teaching output relative to someone who has spent long years in the

education system. Consequently, the teaching performance of the teachers could be distinguished based on their teaching position and their years of experience as teachers.

The findings are consistent with previous findings drawn by Tominez and Dela Cruz [43] that higher-level teachers represent higher educational success in creating a healthy learning atmosphere, resolving individual differences, transmitting learning priorities, and determining learning outcomes. They also clarified that more qualified teachers are prepared to demonstrate improved preparation skills, including a far more organized representation of their educational resources. In the same way, seasoned teachers seem to perceive their students' talents, preferred styles, educational needs, and motivation as more skilled than inexperienced teachers. Likewise, there are several factors identified to be in association with teacher performance: teacher certification, teacher preparation, teacher coursework, teacher experience, and professional regulatory examination [48].

### 3.5. Comparison in the level of school heads' leadership practices of when they are grouped according to their academic profile

Table 5 compares the leadership practices of school heads according to their academic profile such as age, highest educational attainment, and number of years as administrator, outstanding achievement, and type of school being managed. Results in Table 5 specify that the level of leadership practices implemented by school administrators are not significantly different when they were grouped according to age, number of years as an administrator, outstanding achievement, and the type of school being managed. These results suggest that the level of leadership practices of school heads is comparable when the respondents are grouped according to the profile variables mentioned earlier.

Conversely, the school heads' level of leadership practices is significantly different when they were grouped based on their highest educational attainment. The result indicates that the level of leadership practices of school heads is incomparable when their highest educational attainment is taken into account. This further implies that school heads that pursued their doctorate degrees have a higher level of leadership practices than those holders of master's degrees. This is in support of Pihie, Sadeghi, and Elias [39] assertion that to be successful, school leaders should learn as much as possible of leadership effectiveness by engaging in professional development to regularly demonstrate their transformational leadership to handle organizational change. Besides, school leaders must determine the school's progression and promote a positive learning environment to foster and strengthen the motivation and commitment of teachers to enable change in stressful conditions [13].

Table 5. Differences in the level of school heads' leadership practices when they were grouped according to their academic profile

Profile variable	Df	F values	p-value	Remarks
Age	4, 12	2.93	.067	Not significant
Highest Educational attainment	1, 15	5.56**	.032	Significant
Number of years as an administrator	3, 13	2.72	.088	Not significant
Outstanding achievement	4, 12	1.34	.312	Not significant
Type of school being managed	4, 12	1.34	.312	Not significant

\*\*significant at .05

### 3.6. Relationship between the school heads' leadership practices and teachers' performance

Table 6 shows the relationship between the leadership practices of school heads and teaching performance of teachers. Results in Table 6 show that the dimensions of the school heads' leadership practices such as planning, organizing, and controlling are slightly correlated with teachers' performance. Moreover, supervisory practices that involve commanding and coordinating are moderately associated with teachers' efficiency. Finally, the school heads' level of leadership practices is discreetly linked with teachers' effectiveness. However, none of the dimensions, likewise with the overall leadership practices, are found to be statistically significant. Results indicate that there are no significant relationships between the quality of leadership skills implemented by school heads and the success of teachers. These findings suggest that the school heads' leadership practices are independent of teachers' performance or vice-versa. That is, regardless of the leadership practices carried out by school heads, the performance of teachers remains the same.

Table 6. Relationship between the school heads' leadership practices and teachers' performance

Variables correlated	Correlation coefficient	p-values	Remarks
Planning practices and performance	.328	.199	Not significant
Organizing practices and performance	.219	.399	Not significant
Controlling practices and performance	.321	.209	Not significant
Commanding practices and performance	.431	.084	Not significant
Coordinating practices and performance	.451	.069	Not significant
Overall leadership practices and performance	.452	.068	Not significant

School leadership covers the training of both teachers and learners. Sustained advanced knowledge is a key aspect of helping teachers to respond to changing expectations and to develop their professional skills [20]. Successful leadership requires both explicit and implicit methods to boost the work environment [44]. School leaders need to address the school climate both by fostering the impact of teachers on climate-related initiatives and by directly accepting accountability for these responsibilities. The main task of school leaders is to direct teachers and provide the capacity to resolve common problems about security and educational expectations [21], [49]. Leadership practices of school administrators have significant effect on teacher engagement, efficiency, productivity, and better educational achievement [50]-[53].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The school heads have been found to regularly show impressive leadership strategies in the fields of planning, organizing, regulating, directing, and unifying, teachers exhibited a very satisfactory teaching quality. The explanations made by school heads and teachers on the excellent leadership strategies of school heads are unparalleled. The distinction in leadership practices experienced by school heads and their teachers is absolutely vital, confirming that the reactions of both sectors-respondents are fundamentally better.

Teachers' performance is consistent irrespective of age, educational achievement, or significant contributions. However, when teachers are categorized according to their teaching status and number of years of experience, there are great disparities in their productivity. This expounds that head teachers have improved teaching efficiency than teachers and master teachers. In comparison, teachers with shorter relevant experience showed poorer educational quality relative to those who spent more time in the school system. School heads who have obtained their doctorate degrees get a greater level of leadership practices than those holders of master's degrees.

The very effective performance of teachers remains constant, regardless of whether the school heads carry out a very high authentic leadership. The researchers forward several recommendations. The Department of Education may resolve the following intervention activities to further improve the leadership practices of its school heads that lead to an excellent performance of their schools, teachers, and pupils, such as: i) Regular crafting and implementation of professional development for school heads and teachers; ii) Further review of prevailing leadership practices of school heads to further enhance the performance of teachers and pupils; iii) Orientation and re-orientation of teachers on their duties and responsibilities; and iv) Revisiting the essential values of Department of Education. Future researchers may investigate other approaches of this study and come up with related studies giving considerations on the inclusion of other variables and widening its scope.

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