School Heads and Teachers' Practices on School Performance

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ABSTRACT

Teachers and school administrators play a crucial role in the operation of schools and the education of students. Effective leadership and instructional strategies are essential for fostering a positive learning environment that enhances student achievement. This study posits that the combined efforts of school heads and teachers can improve overall school performance through collaboration, professional growth, and a supportive environment. It aimed to determine the level of school heads' and teachers' practices on school performance in selected districts within the Division of Bukidnon for the school year 2023-2024. Specifically, it sought to describe the respondents' profiles, assess the level of school heads' and teachers' practices, evaluate school performance, examine the relationship between school heads' and teachers' practices and school performance, test for significant differences in practices based on respondents' profiles, and develop a school improvement plan based on the findings.

A descriptive-correlational research design was employed to measure the relationship between school heads' practices, teachers' practices, and school performance. The study utilized total population sampling for 100 school heads and purposive sampling for 200 teacher respondents across seven districts in the Division of Bukidnon. Structured questionnaires adapted from validated sources such as the OECD TALIS Database (2018) and DepEd Memorandum 066, s. 2021, were used as research instruments. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage) for profiling respondents and measuring practices, Pearson Correlation for examining relationships, and ANOVA for determining significant differences.

Findings revealed that school heads' highest-rated practices included building connections and focusing on instructional leadership, while teachers excelled in clarity of instruction and classroom management. A significant positive relationship was found between school heads' and teachers' practices and overall school performance, highlighting the importance of effective leadership and pedagogy in educational success. However, variability was observed in how school heads utilized research findings to drive innovation. No significant differences were found in leadership practices based on educational attainment, though years of experience influenced leadership effectiveness.

The study recommends that school heads enhance collaboration with teachers in strategic planning and decision-making while continuously engaging in professional development. Teachers should receive training in innovative teaching strategies and enhanced classroom management techniques. Schools should actively involve the community and stakeholders in recognition programs to build motivation and support. Lastly, a School Improvement Plan (SIP) should be used to align the practices of school heads and teachers with educational priorities and evolving challenges.

Keywords: School heads and Teachers' Practices, School Performance

INTRODUCTION

School leaders and educators drive academic success through strong leadership and effective teaching. Principals foster professional development and guide their teams in navigating modern education. This study examines the connection between leadership approaches and teaching methods, focusing on their impact on overall school performance.

In the evolving K to 12 landscapes, administrators must implement adaptable strategies that address students' changing needs while ensuring quality education and inclusivity. Medford and Brown (2022) highlight the challenges newly appointed school leaders face in adjusting to their roles, particularly in unfamiliar school settings. Limited preparation may hinder instructional leadership, affecting school improvement efforts.

Effective leaders articulate a clear vision to foster collaboration and continuous learning (Aas et al., 2020). Understanding educators' experiences and professional needs helps shape targeted development programs that enhance instructional quality. Hashim (2020) emphasizes that school heads play a critical role in shaping schools as dynamic learning communities. While leaders influence educational strategies, teachers directly impact student performance, making their empowerment essential for academic success (Elmazi, 2018).

This research provides evidence-based insights to inform professional development strategies, addressing challenges and improving educational practices. Strengthening leadership and instructional development fosters inclusive, effective learning environments, ensuring long-term student success.

LITERATURE AND RELATED STUDIES

This section presents a comprehensive review of related literature and previous studies pertinent to the current research. It covers key aspects such as the demographic and professional profiles of the respondents, including their teaching experience, current position, and highest educational attainment. Additionally, it explores the leadership practices of school heads in areas such as strategic direction, operational management, instructional leadership, and community engagement. Furthermore, it examines teachers' instructional practices, emphasizing classroom management, instructional clarity, cognitive engagement, and the promotion of active learning. The review also incorporates findings from studies identifying characteristics of schools recognized for their strong focus on student learning.

School Heads - Respondents' Profile

Recent research underscores the value of examining respondents' demographic and professional characteristics in educational studies. For example, Tus (2020) investigated how students' study attitudes and habits influence their academic performance, employing a descriptive- correlational approach to analyze the relationship between these variables. Similarly, Francisco (2020) highlighted the relevance of demographic factors—such as gender and length of service—in shaping and improving educational systems. Meanwhile, Johnson and Young (2021) argued that ongoing professional development significantly impacts student achievement more than teaching experience alone, emphasizing the need to prioritize continuous learning for educators.

Number of Years as School Head

Zorlu and Arseven (2020) analyzed leadership styles from both principals' and teachers' perspectives, revealing discrepancies in how instructional leadership was perceived, particularly based on tenure. Cheng and Ma (2021) identified skillfulness, competence, and effectiveness as key traits influencing a principal's ability to inspire and support educators and students. Their study emphasized problem-solving as essential

for strategic decision-making. Similarly, Senol and Lesinger (2019) found that longer-serving principals exhibited stronger instructional leadership, highlighting seven characteristics of successful schools, including a clear mission, high expectations, and positive school-home relationships.

School Heads' Position

Chen (2019) examined the causal link between school leadership and institutional performance, concluding that a school head's age does not significantly impact the relationship between leadership and school success. The findings emphasized that transformational and principal leadership are critical in enhancing school leaders' effectiveness. Strengthening school heads' instructional leadership and managerial capabilities contributed positively to overall school performance.

In contrast, a study by Kramer et al. (2020) presented differing results. Their research on high-performing secondary schools suggested that various contextual factors can influence the effectiveness of a school head's leadership style. The study highlighted concerns regarding the performance of some female school leaders, particularly in areas related to teacher supervision and support. Teachers under their leadership reported limited motivation, insufficient encouragement during classroom observations, and a lack of consistent feedback. Moreover, there was a noted absence of guidance in implementing updated teaching strategies and accessing instructional resources. These findings underline the importance of leadership competence, regardless of gender. The study ultimately suggested that male school heads demonstrated higher levels of effectiveness in specific leadership areas.

School heads' Highest Educational Attainment

Gurley and Dozier (2020) examined strategic leadership, comparing principals' self-assessments with teachers' feedback. While leadership styles did not significantly vary based on educational attainment, differences emerged in how leadership behaviors were perceived across school settings.

Similarly, Castaño and Litao (2021), aligning with Haryati et al. (2020), emphasized the role of school principals in instructional supervision and school management. Their findings suggest that principals with advanced qualifications perform better due to their familiarity with standards and evaluation tools, leading to more structured teacher support. In Philippine public schools, instructional leadership is shared between principals and master teachers.

Yassin and Mustafa (2020) underscored the importance of instructional supervision, advocating for competent, ethical, and experienced educators in leadership roles to effectively support teaching staff and curriculum delivery

Teacher-Respondents Profile

Jimenez and Ramos (2021) found that experienced teachers adapt well to leadership styles, enhancing classroom performance and learner outcomes. Morales et al. (2022) highlighted that postgraduate education boosts instructional competence, innovation, and curriculum effectiveness, positively impacting student achievement.

Santos and Del Mundo (2023) noted that female teachers actively engage in peer mentoring during Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, improving instructional practices. Cruz and Tadena (2024) emphasized that professional development, including DepEd training, helps teachers align their methods with school leaders' improvement plans, leading to better student performance in assessments.

Beltran and Navarro (2025) introduced ICT competency as a crucial factor in post-pandemic education, showing that digitally skilled teachers enhance blended learning and student engagement. Collectively, these studies highlight how experience, education, and digital literacy shape instructional effectiveness and school performance.

Teaching Experience

The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (OECD, 2019) shows that veteran teachers generally excel in instructional metrics, but early-career educators often face more demanding environments, affecting comparisons. While experience can enhance classroom quality, findings remain mixed, as newer teachers sometimes match or surpass their senior counterparts in management, student support, and instructional effectiveness.

Mockler (2020) highlights the importance of tailored professional development for all teachers, advocating individualized learning beyond initial training. Mid-career support—especially around four to five years in—significantly strengthens instructional quality.

Teacher's Position

Francisco (2020) emphasized that demographic characteristics, including teaching position and tenure, are vital to an effective educational system. Experience often brings maturity and refined teaching approaches. However, gender-related factors may also influence teaching style and effectiveness. Francisco's findings suggest that while years of service contribute to improved student performance, other variables—such as training and professional development—may have an equally significant impact.

This idea is echoed in the work of Graham et al. (2020), who found minimal differences in the effectiveness of teachers with 0–3 years of experience versus those with over five years. Their findings were reinforced by Johnson and Young (2021), who asserted that ongoing professional development plays a more crucial role in student achievement than tenure alone. Their research revealed that continuous learning, paired with adaptation to emerging pedagogical methods, often results in more favorable academic outcomes regardless of how long a teacher has been in service.

Teacher's Highest Educational Attainment

Curry, Reeves, McIntyre, and Capps (2018) found that students taught by teachers with master's degrees outperformed peers in reading and mathematics (NEAPP). This supports the idea that higher qualifications enhance student achievement (Balanquit et al., 2023). Abarro (2018) further linked teachers' academic credentials and performance ratings to student success.

Miranda (2020) emphasized graduate-level education's role in equipping teachers with advanced skills to meet K to 12 demands. Diaconu-Gherasima et al. (2019) defined teacher competence as a blend of skills, knowledge, and behaviors essential for effective teaching. Continuous learning and advanced education strengthen instructional quality, improving student outcomes.

School Heads Practices

In a 2024 study, Olasiman and Torreon examined how school leaders' practices impact teaching effectiveness. Their research found a strong positive correlation between leadership styles and teachers' accomplishments, indicating that effective school leadership is crucial in enhancing instructional success. Similarly, a 2020 quantitative investigation explored how instructional leadership practices predict school leaders' self-efficacy. The study revealed that supervising instruction, aligning the curriculum, and tracking student progress significantly boosted leaders' confidence and effectiveness. These findings highlight the critical nature of these leadership functions in shaping school performance and leader capability.

Leading Strategically

Dellomas (2022) emphasizes the crucial role of school heads in shaping institutional direction, overseeing operations, and implementing academic programs. Pont (2020) reinforces this, noting that leadership transforms educational quality while evolving policies redefine leadership expectations.

Maheshwari (2021) highlights leadership's impact on teacher motivation and student outcomes, as effective school leaders drive performance and job satisfaction. Muzaqi (2018) adds that strong leadership is reflected in competencies, management styles, and fostering collaboration.

Lynch et al. (2020) stresses that educational leadership must uphold ethical standards while adapting to technological advancements, requiring curriculum updates and innovative pedagogical approaches.

Managing School Operation

Noureen (2020) outlined five essential administrative functions for school heads: planning, organizing, controlling, commanding, and coordinating. Aquino et al. (2021) expanded on these, emphasizing clear goal-setting, continuous professional development, and a supportive work environment.

Effective control requires empathy, as teacher well-being directly impacts school success. Commanding fosters excellence and teamwork, while coordination ensures collaboration, communication, and adherence to best practices.

Strong governance builds trust and enhances student performance. Leithwood et al. (2020) highlighted leadership's role in stakeholder partnerships, while Fields et al. (2019) and Simmons et al. (2019) found that engaged administrators improve productivity and learning environments. Gumus (2019) reinforced that school heads shape all aspects of school operations.

Focusing on Teaching and Learning

Ampofo et al. (2019) emphasized that school leaders should actively review student performance data, classroom assignments, and assessments to ensure teaching objectives are effectively met. Khan et al. (2019) reinforced the importance of instructional assessments in evaluating teaching efficacy and student learning.

Masters (2018) highlighted assessment as a key monitoring tool, urging principals to track school performance, conduct evaluations, and maintain thorough student records. Otieno and Magoma (2022) found that collaboration between school leaders and teachers in analyzing assessment results provides deeper insights into student progress. They recommended involving teachers, school heads, and parents in monitoring student outcomes and planning interventions.

Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) stressed that structured, timely, and personalized feedback is crucial for student-centered learning, helping learners identify strengths and areas for improvement to foster meaningful academic growth.

Developing Self and Others

The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) highlights "Developing Self and Others" as a key domain, emphasizing school leaders' role in fostering both personal and professional growth. This principle supports teachers' continuous development, leading to improved educational outcomes.

Reyes (2021) stressed that school heads engaging in professional development cultivate a culture of learning, boosting teacher confidence and instructional quality. Similarly, Dela Cruz and Mateo (2022) found that transformational leadership—through coaching, peer mentoring, and reflective dialogue—enhances collaboration among educators, improving key metrics like NAT scores and dropout rates.

Santos et al. (2023) demonstrated that sustained Learning Action Cell (LAC) engagement strengthens teaching strategies and collective responsibility for student success. Valerio and Punzalan (2024) highlighted how school heads modeling lifelong learning inspire teachers to seek professional development, reinforcing a culture of excellence that drives instructional and school-wide improvement.

Ignacio and Ramos (2025) introduced a leadership framework tailored to rural schools, where resource limitations heighten the importance of capacity-building. Leadership strategies rooted in the PPSSH—such as inclusive planning and structured feedback—enhanced teaching practices, strengthened school-community ties, and increased student participation. These findings underscore the essential role of professional development in cultivating thriving learning environments and advancing school performance.

Building Connection

Building meaningful relationships is essential for effective school leadership. Will (2019) advised school heads to prioritize authentic connections with teachers, engage teacher-leaders, and avoid abrupt changes upon joining a new school, emphasizing visibility and approachability. Collins (2023) cited Carise Echols, who stated, "A good principal never forgets what it's like to be in the classroom," reinforcing the importance of collaborative leadership and applying teaching experience to school-wide initiatives.

Lucero (2023) highlighted the value of fostering strong ties with families, staff, and students to enhance community engagement. Fournier et al. (2019) found that trust and positive staff relationships boost professional growth, reduce attrition, and model respectful interactions for students, strengthening both academic and social development.

Effective teaching relies on instructional strategies like clear communication, engaging content, cognitive activation, and structured management, all of which drive student success. Empowering teachers through evidence-based practices enhances school performance.

School leadership in basic education is multifaceted, involving strategic management, instructional supervision, and professional relationship-building. The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) outlines these responsibilities. Lepore et al. (2020), Pascoe et al. (2021), and Santos and Alonzo (2023) emphasized that strong school heads not only manage operations but also uphold core values, sustain excellence, and promote shared leadership and inclusivity.

Teachers Practices

Instructional practices are shaped by teachers' professional competencies, which directly impact student outcomes. Didion et al. (2020) emphasize that continuous professional learning enhances instructional precision, leading to improved student performance.

The quality of education depends on teachers' instructional approaches, qualifications, and expertise. Scholars highlight that content knowledge informs teaching effectiveness and responsiveness to student needs. Sofianidis and Gallery (2021) assert that ongoing professional development strengthens instructional quality and student achievement.

Borgoños (2022) stresses the need for educators to adopt innovative, theory-based strategies that enhance learning. Effective implementation requires understanding pedagogical intent and engaging in reflective practice. Classroom observations and feedback provide external perspectives that drive meaningful instructional improvements.

Classroom Management

Classroom management is a fundamental challenge for teachers, as it directly impacts both academic success and student well-being. Slifko (2022), referencing Bohanon et al. (2021) and Braun et al. (2020), affirms that effective management creates a structured, engaging, and responsive learning environment, requiring pedagogical expertise and an understanding of students' needs (James et al., 2021).

Foster (2022) emphasizes that a well-managed classroom fosters a safe, inclusive space that encourages participation, trust, and focus while minimizing disruptions. Bozkuş (2021) outlines key aspects of

classroom management, including organizing materials, setting rules, maintaining discipline, and designing activities that promote engagement.

Snoke (2021) highlights the importance of proactive behavioral planning, recommending either teacher-established or collaboratively developed rules to enhance classroom harmony. Al-Zahrani et al. (2019) found that structured classroom management significantly reduces disruptive behaviors, improving student focus and academic performance. Evidence-based strategies remain crucial for fostering an effective learning environment.

Clarity of Instruction

Teacher clarity is essential in interactive classrooms, ensuring students fully understand lessons and expectations. Hattie and Donoghue (2019) and Bakar (2020) highlight its role in boosting student engagement and fostering supportive learning environments.

Research by Mason & Beauchamp (2020) and Larkin (2021) confirms that clear explanations, relevant examples, and well-structured lessons enhance cognitive and emotional engagement, strengthening teacher-student rapport. Benton et al. (2021) found that higher clarity reduces student anxiety, improving academic outcomes.

Titsworth (2023) describes teacher clarity as involving checking for understanding, giving students thinking time, using illustrative examples, and offering advance organizers. Mitchell et al. (2020) and Maulana et al. (2019) identified clarity and classroom management as key drivers of student success.

Bakar (2019) further linked pedagogical, social, and professional competencies to academic achievement, reinforcing the importance of effective teaching practices in shaping student performance.

Cognitive Activation

Cognitive activation refers to instructional techniques that challenge students to engage in higher-order thinking processes such as analysis, evaluation, and critical reflection. In literature instruction, for example, reading complex texts often requires students to question prior beliefs, slow their thinking, and reconstruct understanding—key aspects of deep learning (Koek et al., 2019).

Cognitive activation is recognized as a core dimension of instructional quality in German-speaking academic literature. It is viewed as essential for initiating meaningful learning (Groß-Mlynek et al., 2022). This teaching dimension positively correlates with improved student motivation and interest across multiple subjects and grade levels.

Despite the potential of cognitively demanding instruction, Groß-Mlynek et al. (2022) caution that student responses to such stimuli vary greatly. Thus, instruction must be carefully designed to engage diverse learners without overwhelming them, ensuring all students benefit from cognitively rich lessons.

Enhanced Activity

Munna et al. (2021) emphasized that no single teaching strategy fits all learners, necessitating varied instructional methods. Blended learning—combining online and face-to-face instruction with experiential techniques like peer tutoring, educational games, and mnemonic devices—enhances student engagement and minimizes behavioral issues.

Comi et al. (2020) examined ICT integration in education, stressing that successful implementation depends on teachers' ability to effectively incorporate technology into their pedagogy, rather than merely having access to digital tools.

The literature consistently highlights the role of school leadership and teacher practices in improving student performance and fostering collaborative learning environments. Strategically designed, engaging activities create a dynamic and effective educational experience for all learners

Objectives

The main objective of this study was to determine the level of practice among school heads and teachers on school performance in selected districts, Division of Bukidnon, for the School Year 2023-2024. Specifically, this aimed to describe the profile of the respondents, assess the practices of school heads such as leading strategically, managing school operations, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections, and practices of teachers on classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activity, examine the level of the school performance about the performance rating of the school head, significant accomplishment in fostering learning, impact of accomplishment in making learning happen, innovation in enhancing learners achievement, and awards, and ultimately design a School Improvement Plan on school heads and teachers' practices.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in Ludwig von Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory (GST). He interpreted "systems" to mean complexes of elements standing in interaction. The theory investigates the components of a phenomenon, examines the interaction between the components, and examines the relationship between the components and their larger environment.

Moreover, Ampofo et al. (2019) cited that the GST recognizes the interdependencies and interrelationships among the parts of the educational system. Thus, any changes in one part of the education system will likely affect other parts. In the school setting, variation in a particular component is likely to result in variations in the interdependence between the other components.

Sieniutycz (2020) theorizes the GST as a science investigating general laws for arbitrarily complex arrangement systems that constitute functional integrities. The most typical components of the systems theory include basic definitions, system thinking, system topologies, life cycles, system performance, conceptual design, current state evaluations, related sciences, solving methods, creative solutions, system synthesis, system analysis, optimization, and solution assessment, virtual optimizing, system engineering, and evaluation of knowledge in economy and society.

Dissanayake (2021) pointed out GST as an open system where learning sets the key energy in this system. Its elements are all the components- including all inputs, processes, outputs, feedback mechanisms, and interactions. Inputs are the students, faculty and staff, finances, machines/equipment, and other infrastructure that mark the resources entering the process. Thinking is its ability to understand and address systems issues. Systems thinking is one of the key management competencies for the 21st century. As our world becomes ever more tightly interwoven globally and as the pace of change continues to increase, we will all need to become increasingly system-wise.

Conceptual Framework

The Republic Act (RA) 9155, also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, provides the overall framework for principal empowerment by strengthening principal and leadership goals and local school-based management with transparency and local accountability (Bermudez & Punzalan, 2018). However, a school leader needs to be aware of their impact through instructional leadership practices and be engaged in self-reflection to better understand their instructional leadership practices. School principals are the leaders who impact the direction of schools through their thinking, practices, and relationships; reiterating the idea of leaders thinking in the long term, looking outside and inside to influence constituents, is vital.

The study examines the relationships between the independent variables—teacher practices and profiles—and the dependent variable, which encompasses the practices of school heads. The independent variables

are assessed using the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). The dependent variable is grounded in the principles outlined in the PPSSH, emphasizing inclusivity and recognizing the unique needs of individuals and groups within educational and work environments. This framework acknowledges and accommodates diversity related to religious, cultural, linguistic, and gender differences, establishing a public statement of accountability for school heads. The PPSSH outlines the knowledge, skills, and values expected of school heads as they advance in their careers.

Furthermore, the PPSSH underscores the importance of school heads in understanding and addressing the problems and issues within their institutions. They are expected to consider the needs and concerns of learners, teachers, parents, the community, and other stakeholders, enabling them to respond effectively to these challenges.

On the other hand, the independent variable is shaped by the K to 12 Reform (RA 10533), which transformed the requirements for teacher quality in the Philippines. This reform emphasizes the need for high-quality teachers who are well-equipped to fulfill their roles within the K to 12 frameworks defined by the PPST. Former DepEd Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones articulated that the PPST establishes clear expectations for teachers at various stages of professional development, encourages ongoing proficiency efforts, and provides a standardized measure for assessing teacher performance, identifying needs, and supporting professional development.

The independent variable in this study includes the profile of the respondents based on their highest educational attainment, teaching positions, and years of service, which may influence the practices of school heads and their impact on the dependent variable.

The primary dependent variable is evaluated through a survey questionnaire focusing on school head practices in areas such as managing school operations, focusing on teaching and learning, and building effective connections. The results would be a foundation for developing a Professional Development Plan to improve educational practices.

Statement of the Problem

This study intended to determine the level of school heads and teachers' practices and their influence on school performance in selected districts, Division of Bukidnon, during the School Year 2023-2024. The result of the study would be the basis for a School Improvement Plan.

Specifically, this paper sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the school heads in terms of the number of years as school head, position, and highest educational attainment, and the profile of teachers in terms of teaching experience, position, and highest educational attainment?
2. To what level are the school heads' practices as to leading strategically, managing school operations, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections?
3. To what level are the teachers' practices as to classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activity?
4. To what level is the school performance, as assessed by the school head, significant accomplishment/s in fostering learning, impact of accomplishment in making learning happen, innovation in enhancing learner's achievement, and awards?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the school heads' practices and the school performance on the search for the most learning-focused school?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' practices and the school's performance in the search for the most learning-focused school?

7. Is there a significant difference between school heads and teachers' practices when grouped according to their profile?

8. Based on the findings of the study, what school improvement plan for school heads and teachers' practices can be designed?

Significance of the Study

The outcomes of this study are expected to offer valuable insights for a variety of educational stakeholders: The results will serve as foundational data for school administrators in crafting effective intervention programs for professional development. These findings can also inform the development of tools and frameworks for instructional supervision, enhancing school leadership, and monitoring processes.

The study's results may help teachers achieve and sustain high teaching performance standards. The research encourages reflective practice, motivating educators to assess their instructional and classroom management approaches. It also promotes personal and professional growth by inspiring the development of innovative teaching strategies that may lead to improved performance ratings and higher student achievement.

This study strengthens parents' and other stakeholders' confidence in the teaching staff and the overall school system. When educators are equipped with effective practices, this reflects positively on learners' academic progress, fostering trust and active engagement from the community.

Students, as the primary beneficiaries, stand to gain the most. A nurturing and well-managed learning environment, supported by competent and motivated teachers, can lead to better academic performance and increased interest in learning. These conditions are conducive to long-term educational success.

Finally, this study's findings can serve as a useful reference for future research, particularly for scholars interested in exploring the relationship between instructional leadership, teaching practices, and school performance.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study focused on the practices of school heads and teachers regarding school performance for most learning-focused schools in the Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023-2024. The respondents were one hundred (100) elementary school heads and two hundred (200) elementary teachers in the selected district of Bukidnon.

The independent variables are limited to the practices of the school heads and teachers. School head practices deal with leading strategically, managing school operations, focusing on teaching and learning, building self and others, and building connections. At the same time, teachers practice classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activity.

The dependent variables dealt with school performance in the search for the most learning-focused school based on the performance rating of the school head, significant accomplishments in fostering learning, impact of accomplishments in making learning happen, innovation in enhancing learners' achievement, and awards.

METHODOLOGY

This part deals with the methods and procedures used in the study: the research design, study setting, research respondents, the sampling technique, the data gathering procedure, and the statistical techniques needed to analyze the data gathered in the study.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationship between school heads' practices, teachers' practices, and school performance. Unlike experimental research, a descriptive-correlational design utilizes various research methods to analyze one or more variables without manipulating them. Instead, the researcher observes and measures variables as they naturally occur.

According to Stangor (2019), a correlational research design measures two or more variables as they exist and establishes whether a relationship between them is present. This study used the descriptive method to describe school heads' and teachers' practices and performance. Meanwhile, the correlational approach was applied to determine the extent of the relationship between school heads' practices and school performance.

Furthermore, inferential statistical tools were employed to strengthen the analysis. A correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between variables, while an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was utilized to determine significant differences among the variables. These statistical approaches provided a deeper understanding of the patterns and connections between leadership practices, teaching strategies, and overall school performance.

Study Setting

The research was conducted across several strategically selected districts in the northern region of Bukidnon, specifically in Impasugong Districts I and II, Manolo Fortich Districts I and II, Sumilao District, Lantapan District, and Cabanglasan District. These areas are located in the northeastern quadrant of the province, a zone recognized for its extensive land area, cultural richness, and educational diversity. As part of Region X under the Department of Education, the Division of Bukidnon is one of the largest in Mindanao regarding land coverage and the number of schools. Administratively, it is divided into two central congressional districts—Northern and Southern Bukidnon—with this study focusing exclusively on the northern sector.

The northern districts are notable for their dynamic socio-cultural and economic environments. They are inhabited by a mixture of Indigenous peoples and settlers from other regions of the Philippines. Indigenous communities, including the Talaandig, Higaonon, and Bukidnon tribes, are essential to the province's identity. These groups are known for their strong cultural heritage, distinct dialects, and community-driven social systems. Their role in sustainable land use, community cohesion, and cultural continuity has significantly shaped the region's development trajectory.

With an estimated population of over 1.5 million, Bukidnon plays a vital role in the socioeconomic structure of Northern Mindanao. The selected districts contribute considerably to this population, particularly in education and agriculture. Agriculture remains the backbone of the local economy. The province's fertile highlands make it a critical food producer—hence its designation as the "Food Basket of Mindanao." Corn, rice, sugarcane, coffee, and pineapples are key crops grown. Livestock farming is also prominent, especially in municipalities such as Manolo Fortich and Lantapan, where cattle raising and dairy production are thriving industries.

In addition to agriculture, small-scale enterprises, handicrafts, and trading activities supplement household incomes. These varied livelihood sources contribute to the region's economic resiliency and provide a multifaceted context for educational development.

The schools in this study were chosen to reflect the broad spectrum of educational environments within the Division of Bukidnon. The selection process considered factors such as school size, geographic location, accessibility, and the availability of relevant data. Participation was also based on the schools'

consent and commitment to supporting the research process. This purposive sampling strategy ensured that the findings would be comprehensive and reflective of the actual conditions in the field, thereby enhancing the credibility and generalizability of the results.

To provide a clearer understanding of the research coverage, Figure 2 illustrates the 47 school districts within the Division of Bukidnon, emphasizing the specific northern districts where the study was conducted. This geographical mapping highlights the scope of the research and reinforces its relevance in understanding educational practices and school performance across diverse contexts in Northern Bukidnon.

Source: Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office
Figure 2. Location Map of Northern Bukidnon

Research Respondents

The study's respondents were the one hundred (100) public elementary school heads and the two hundred (200) teachers in the selected district, the Division of Bukidnon. They currently work and teach in the seven (7) districts in the table below. Moreover, the distribution of respondents by district and school is reflected in Appendix G. The distribution of the respondents by district is shown in Table A.

Table A
Distribution of Respondents

District / School	School Heads	Teacher	Total
Impasugong District I	21	42	63
Impasugong District II	13	26	39
Manolo District I	12	24	36

Manolo Fortict II	13	22	35
Sumilao District	12	24	36
Lantapan District	13	22	35
Cabanglasan District	16	40	56

Sampling Technique

The study's respondents were one hundred (100) Public Elementary School Heads and two hundred (200) teachers in selected districts in, Division of Bukidnon. The researcher used a total population sampling procedure to obtain the number of school heads (100) in the districts above. This means that all school heads in the population were involved. While choosing and identifying the teacher respondents, a purposive sampling procedure was employed based on the population and the researcher's judgment.

Research Instruments

The research instrument utilized in this study was a structured tool that was adopted, customized, and organized into three main sections to suit the research objectives.

Part I focused on the demographic and professional profiles of the respondents, differentiating between school heads and teachers. This section collected information for school heads regarding their current position, number of years in service as school heads, and highest educational attainment. Similarly, it gathered data on teachers' teaching experience, job positions, and academic qualifications.

Part II assessed the professional practices of both school heads and teachers. For school heads, the instrument evaluated leadership competencies in areas such as strategic direction, management of school operations, instructional leadership, personal and professional development, and community engagement. Meanwhile, teacher practices regarding classroom management, instructional clarity, cognitive engagement, and the implementation of enriched learning activities were examined. The items used to measure teacher practices were adapted and validated from the Teaching and Learning International Survey (OECD TALIS 2018 Database), ensuring relevance and reliability. On the other hand, the components assessing school head practices were derived from the work of Dellomas and Deri (2022), with necessary contextual modifications made for the local setting.

Part III dealt with evaluating school performance within a learning-focused educational environment. It gathered data on various performance indicators, including the official performance ratings of school heads, noteworthy initiatives that promoted learning, the outcomes of such accomplishments on learner achievement, the implementation of innovative teaching strategies, and awards or recognitions received by the schools.

The study involved a total of three hundred (300) participants—comprising one hundred (100) public elementary school heads and two hundred (200) teachers—from the seven (7) targeted districts in the Division of Bukidnon. These districts were purposively selected to represent diverse school contexts comprehensively.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher adhered to ethical and procedural guidelines when conducting the study. Initially, a formal letter of recommendation was secured from the Dean of Graduate Studies at Cagayan de Oro College, located in Cagayan de Oro City. Upon obtaining this endorsement, the researcher sought approval from the Division Superintendent of Schools to conduct research within the selected districts.

Following this, a letter of request was issued to the respective Public school district Supervisors to gain authorization to administer the survey across identified schools. With the support of the school principals,

the researcher was able to secure the full cooperation and participation of both school heads and teachers. During the data collection phase, the researcher emphasized the voluntary nature of participation and assured all respondents of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. To facilitate data gathering, the survey instrument was physically distributed, and an online survey link was provided. Respondents were allotted 20 to 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Before the survey, respondents received clear and concise instructions to ensure smooth access to the online form. The survey commenced immediately after the orientation, and the researcher served as the primary facilitator throughout the process, overseeing the distribution, monitoring response submission, and retrieving completed data for analysis.

Statistical Treatment of Data

After collecting and recording data, the following statistical tools were used:

Problem 1: The profiles of the teachers and school heads were evaluated using frequency and percentage.

Problem 2 evaluates the strength of teachers' practices;

Problem 3 on school heads' practices;

and Problem 4 on the school performance, mean and standard deviation were used.

Problem 5, which examined the significant relationship between teachers' practices and school performance, and

Problem 6, which examined the significant relationship between the school heads' practices and school performance, used the Pearson Correlation.

Problem 7 involved the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Tukey's Multiple Comparison Test to determine the significant difference in the school performance when grouped according to teachers' experience, position, and highest educational attainment.

Similarly, Problem 8 used Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Tukey's Multiple Comparison Test to identify significant differences in school performance when grouped according to school heads' experience, Position, and highest educational attainment.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

The questionnaire used in the study underwent a rigorous validation process involving five expert validators, all of whom hold doctoral degrees in the field of education. A standardized validation tool provided by the Graduate School was utilized to assess the appropriateness and relevance of the items in the instrument. Each of the identified experts was furnished with this tool to facilitate a systematic evaluation of the questionnaire content.

After a period of one week, the researcher collected the completed validation forms and referred the results to a separate expert, who was responsible for consolidating and synthesizing the feedback. Based on this consolidated analysis, necessary revisions were made to improve clarity, grammar, and alignment of the questionnaire items with the study's independent and dependent variables. Items that were deemed ambiguous or misaligned were reworded or replaced to ensure content accuracy and coherence.

A Certificate of Content Validity was subsequently issued by one of the expert validators. This certificate affirmed that the instrument had been thoroughly reviewed, analyzed, and evaluated for its relevance and validity as a tool for data collection in the context of the dissertation. It was further recommended that the validated instrument be subjected to pilot testing.

In line with this recommendation, the researcher conducted a pilot test involving 30 teachers from two districts within the Division of Bukidnon. These participants were not included in the main study sample.

The pilot testing aimed to ensure the clarity, consistency, and reliability of the questionnaire prior to its formal administration.

To assess the instrument's reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was computed, yielding values between 0.818 and 0.910. These results indicate that the instrument demonstrated "Good" to "Excellent" internal consistency, confirming its suitability for use in the main study. Cronbach's Alpha is a widely recognized statistical method for determining the reliability of a scale by comparing the shared variance (covariance) of items against the total variance. A high degree of covariance relative to variance indicates strong reliability, which was evidenced in this study.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout this study, a strong commitment to ethical standards was upheld by following the protocols set by the Office of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. A key component of this commitment involved a thorough ethics review process to ensure adherence to ethical guidelines.

Explicit permission was obtained for the use of questionnaires, ensuring that the research tools were authorized and aligned with ethical requirements. Additionally, informed consent was prioritized, with participants fully briefed on the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and their right to participate voluntarily. Further, the study also included measures to protect participants' identities, with a strict commitment to anonymity to safeguard their privacy. Confidentiality was maintained at all times, ensuring that information provided by participants was kept secure and inaccessible to unauthorized individuals. Moreover, the study followed the principles of precaution, carefully assessing and minimizing potential risks throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results and discussion on school heads and teachers' practices on school performance in the Division of Bukidnon. The data are presented in tabular form for better appreciation.

Results

Problem 1. What is the profile of school heads in terms of the number of years as school head, position, and highest educational attainment, and the profile of teachers in terms of teaching experience, position, and highest educational attainment?

This section further explores the profiles of school principals and teachers, highlighting key parts of their professional experiences. For school heads, the analysis includes the number of years in leadership, their present positions, and their highest levels of educational attainment. These characteristics help to demonstrate the experience, status, and academic credentials that influence their leadership ability.

Similarly, teachers' profiles are evaluated based on their years of teaching experience, positions in the school hierarchy, and educational achievements. Understanding these fundamental characteristics of both school principals and teachers sheds light on their preparedness and efficacy in creating a positive learning environment and increasing student achievement.

Table 1

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Number of years as a school head	26 years and above	1	1
	16-20 years	29	29
	11-15 years	43	43

	10 years below	25	25
	Total	**100**	**100**
Position	Principal III	0	0
	Principal II	12	12
	Principal I	48	48
	Head Teacher III	28	28
	Head Teacher II	6	6
	Total	**100**	**100**
Highest Educational Attainment	Doctorate Degree	6	6
	Doctorate's Degree Units	25	25
	Master's Degree	40	40
	Master's Degree Unis	29	29
	Bachelor degree	0	0
	Total	**100**	**100**

Distribution of School Head-Respondents' Profile

able 1 presents the school profile, such as the years as a school head, position, and educational attainment. The data shows that regarding frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents in terms of the number of years in the service as a school head, the data display that the highest frequency of school head-participants, comprising 43 (43%), had 11 to 15 years of school head experience. This means that most of the school head respondents were not novices in terms of the number of experiences they had as school heads. This suggests that most of them are not newly hired or inexperienced in their roles as school heads. According to DepEd Order No. 43 s. 2017, experienced school heads have 10 or more years of experience in the public school system, with further classifications for experienced school heads.

According to Brunzell et al. (2020), school heads with over 10 years of experience provide numerous benefits, including stability, deep expertise, and informed leadership. However, this extensive tenure also comes with challenges, such as a potential resistance to innovation and an increased risk of burnout. These findings underscore the importance of cultivating balanced leadership teams that integrate seasoned leaders' wisdom with the fresh perspectives of newer members. Such a blend can foster a dynamic and adaptive educational environment, promoting continuity and the ability to innovate effectively.

In contrast, the lowest frequency of years as a school head, comprising 1 (1%), was 26 years and above. This indicates that only a few school heads in the Division of Bukidnon had extensive experience as school leaders. It implies they had a comprehensive understanding of the school's culture, history, and community and likely had advanced leadership and management skills honed over many years. They had earned the respect and trust of students, parents, staff, and the community. As observed, these school heads were more able to mentor and develop future leaders because of their long years of service. However, during the interview, they answered that they wanted to retire due to the demanding nature of the role over a prolonged period.

Cheng and Ma (2021) affirmed that long-serving school heads can benefit their schools significantly through stable leadership, deep institutional knowledge, and strong community relationships. However, they must actively work to avoid the pitfalls of stagnation and resistance to change. By fostering a culture

of continuous improvement and innovation, delegating responsibilities, and planning for succession, long-term school heads can ensure that their tenure remains productive and beneficial for the school community. Moreover, the position of a school head that obtained the highest frequency of 48 (48%) was Principal I. This means that these principals should have strong leadership, effective management, and a commitment to continuous improvement in all aspects of school operations and student education. This implies that Principal I in the Department of Education had a crucial leadership role in managing school operations, improving instructional quality, and fostering community engagement. It requires a combination of educational qualifications, experience, and leadership skills and is a foundational position for further career advancement in school administration.

Epstein (2019) stated that principals are expected to be learning focused on curriculum implementation, teacher supervision, and professional development. They must ensure the effective delivery of the K to 12 curricula, conduct regular classroom observations, and provide constructive feedback to teachers. They are tasked with facilitating ongoing professional development so that teachers are equipped with current pedagogical strategies and content knowledge, directly impacting student learning. Aside from that, the principal's task is to extend to efficient school management, which includes resource allocation, scheduling, and maintaining school facilities.

On the contrary, the lowest frequency among school head positions, comprising 6 (6%), was Head Teacher I. This means that a small proportion of the school head participants held the lowest rank of administrative responsibility. This suggests that these individuals may benefit from additional exposure to administrative roles and experiences to enhance their expertise. Head Teacher: I would benefit from further training and seminars to improve my effectiveness in my role.

DepEd states that the role of the Head Teacher I is critical in providing foundational leadership and support within schools. While facing challenges related to administrative experience, HT-Is have significant opportunities for growth through targeted training, mentorship, and professional development initiatives. Enhancing their capabilities not only strengthens school management but also contributes to improving overall educational outcomes and student success.

Regarding educational attainment, the highest number of school head respondents, 40 (40%), had obtained a master's degree. This reveals that most school heads place a high value on advancing their education. Such attainment reflects their belief that higher education enhances their qualifications for promotions and leadership roles while increasing their eligibility for higher-level positions. Moreover, school heads who pursued graduate studies were observed to have a more remarkable ability to conduct and contribute to research projects, fostering innovation and evidence-based practices in their schools. They also expanded their academic and professional networks by engaging with peers and faculty, enriching their leadership perspectives and skills. This dedication to professional growth highlights their commitment to improving the quality of education and leadership within their schools.

In the DepEd, one of the criteria for ranking for promotions is the educational attainment of the applicants (DO No. 6, 2022). This can be attributed to the fact that those teachers who have earned or have just completed the academic requirements of their MA can be qualified to apply for promotion as school head. The Department of Education stipulates the qualification for school heads as identified in DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2022 titled "The revised guidelines on selection, promotion, and designation of school heads." The educational qualification is one of the specific requirements of the Department of Education for the teachers to be qualified to apply for promotion with a weight of twenty (20) points for education and

training. Hence, school heads take time to pursue post-graduate studies. Besides, having a master's degree has both personal and professional benefits for teachers.

In contrast, the lowest frequency for educational attainment, comprising only 6 (6%), is on the doctorate. This indicates that a minority of school heads in the Division of Bukidnon have achieved the highest academic qualification awarded by universities. This implies that these individuals possess high expertise, innovation, and leadership. They demonstrate an enhanced capability to conduct, evaluate, and apply advanced research, contributing to new knowledge and innovations. Observations suggest that school heads with doctorate degrees exhibit excellent communication skills, enabling them to present complex ideas clearly and persuasively to diverse audiences. Additionally, they have a greater capacity to collaborate across disciplines and engage with various stakeholders, including academia, industry, and government.

According to Ismael (2019), school heads with advanced education demonstrate a more substantial commitment to high ethical standards in research and professional practice. They also exhibit high levels of integrity and accountability in all their professional activities. Further, the study of Budiongan and Corpuz (2024) highlighted the importance of the highest educational attainment, particularly PhD or EdD degrees, as a predictor of cognitive work engagement. Teachers with these advanced degrees were found to have higher levels of mental engagement, which is crucial for effective teaching and learning.

The profile of the teachers serves as a foundational tool for analyzing the demographic composition of teachers, offering a snapshot of their collective experience, educational qualifications, and roles within the academic framework. By examining these demographic dimensions, stakeholders in education can identify trends, assess workforce capabilities, formulate strategies to enhance professional development initiatives, and support the continuous improvement of teaching quality and effectiveness.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Teaching Experience	26 years and above	5	2.5
	21-25 years	63	31.5
	16-20 years	77	38.5
	11-15 years	31	15.5
	10 years and below	24	12.0
	Total	**200**	**100**
Position	Master Teacher II	2	1.0
	Master Teacher I	21	10.5
	Teacher III	50	25.0
	Teacher II	51	25.5
	Teacher I	76	38.0
	Total	**200**	**100**
Highest Educational Attainment	Doctorate Degree	0	0
	Doctorate's Degree with Units	16	8.0
	Master's Degree	54	27.0
	Master's Degree with Units	73	36.5
	Bachelor degree	57	28.5
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Table 2 Distribution of Teacher-Respondents' Profile

Table 2 presents a professional profile of the teachers, such as teaching experience, educational attainment, and position. The data reveal that most teachers have accumulated 16-20 years of teaching experience, indicating significant professional tenure. This means that these teachers are not newly hired or have recently entered the teaching service. According to DepEd Order No. 43, series of 2017, experienced teachers are defined as those with 11-15 years and above of experience in the public-school system, further categorized based on their tenure and contributions.

Robinson (2020) affirmed that teachers with 16-20 years of experience play a vital role in the educational system, combining their expertise, leadership qualities, and dedication to enhancing student success. Research and literature exploring their influence offer valuable perspectives on effective teaching methods, professional growth strategies, and educational achievement advancements.

Conversely, the most minor proportion of teachers, comprising 5 (2.5%), had 26 years of teaching experience or more. This indicates that only a few teachers have remained in the profession for an extended period. These veteran educators are often considered desirable, reaching a stage where they prioritize health and well-being over professional stressors. Their extensive experience is invaluable as they bring knowledge, mentorship, and stability to the educational environment. Despite the challenges associated with long-term service, such as burnout and health concerns, these teachers often serve as role models and provide continuity within the school community. Their commitment to education underscores the importance of supporting veteran teachers through wellness programs and flexible work arrangements to retain their professional expertise and dedication.

Hellinger (2020) stated that teachers who have been teaching for an extended period or are nearing retirement often reflect on their careers, highlighting milestones, challenges overcome, and contributions to student learning and school communities. They were more concerned with financial preparedness, health care arrangements, and emotional readiness. Schools and administrators must play a role in supporting this transition phase of the teachers.

Moreover, as to the highest educational attainment, 73(36.5%) have earned units in their Master's Degree. This reveals that most teachers value the advancement of their education and strive for promotion in their professional careers. This result shows that more than half of the teacher-respondents who earned units of master's degrees or had just completed the academic requirements of their MA can be qualified to apply for promotion. Further, educational qualification is one of the Department of Education's requirements for teachers to be qualified to apply for promotion. Besides, having a master's degree has both personal and professional benefits for teachers.

Advanced degree programs give teachers insight into the theoretical and practical backgrounds that drive their professions, learning how knowledge of education theory positively impacts their teaching practices. Teachers benefit from seeing their students excel in the classroom by applying theory to teaching methods. According to "Master's Degrees and Teacher Effectiveness: New Evidence from State Assessments," conducted by Arroyo Research Services, teachers who earn master's degrees demonstrate greater teaching effectiveness than those who do not. The study found that students whose teachers held a master's degree performed better in reading and writing tests. Researchers examined over 4,000 teachers and 205,000 students, discovering that knowledge gained in a master's program does lead to improved student outcomes (Masters in Education: Advancing the skills of educators, 2020).

Furthermore, the lowest number of teachers, 16 (8%), earned a doctorate. This means that the percentage of teachers with doctorate degrees is small. Their presence can have significant implications for educational leadership, innovation, and professional development within the teaching profession.

Supporting and encouraging educators to pursue advanced degrees can foster a more robust and dynamic educational workforce.

Furthermore, teachers with PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) degrees are highly educated professionals with extensive knowledge and expertise in a specific subject area or discipline. Their advanced academic background gives them research skills, critical thinking abilities, and a deep understanding of theoretical frameworks relevant to their specialization. These educators frequently assume leadership roles within educational institutions, such as department heads or curriculum developers, and often mentor other teachers to enhance their teaching methods and professional development. They actively conduct original research, publish academic papers, and participate in scholarly conferences to advance educational knowledge and practices (Kennedy,2019).

Finally, concerning teacher positions, Teacher I comprised the highest percentage at 76 (38%). This means that a significant portion of the teaching workforce is at the entry level, suggesting that many teachers are either new to the profession or have not yet progressed to higher ranks. This could reflect challenges in career progression within DepEd, where teachers might face barriers to advancing to higher positions such as Teacher II, Teacher III, or Master Teacher roles. The workforce composition was heavily skewed towards Teacher I positions, implying a need for more experienced teachers in higher positions to mentor and guide less experienced colleagues. To address this, DepEd could implement more robust professional development programs to help teachers acquire the skills and qualifications needed for promotion, establish mentorship programs where experienced teachers can support and guide Teacher I staff, and ensure that there are clear and attainable career pathways with transparent criteria for promotions and advancements.

The findings of Comon and Corpuz (2024) emphasize the predominant role of entry-level teaching positions within the surveyed population. This insight sheds light on the composition of the teaching workforce, suggesting a significant presence of educators at the initial stage of their teaching careers. The high proportion of entry-level teachers highlights the need for targeted professional development and mentorship programs to support these educators in their career progression. By addressing the challenges faced by entry-level teachers and providing clear pathways for advancement, DepEd can enhance teacher retention, motivation, and overall educational quality.

Conversely, the most minor frequency regarding the position was Master Teachers, comprising only 2 (1%). This means that Master Teachers represent a minority among the participants in this study. This implies that DepEd in many countries typically has fewer positions at the Master Teacher level than other teaching positions such as Teacher II or Teacher III. This can be attributed to several reasons, such as positions like Master Teacher, which are higher-level roles that require extensive experience, advanced qualifications, and demonstrated leadership in teaching and educational innovation (Saracoglu & Tasci, 2020).

Delfin (2020) provides a comprehensive overview of the qualifications and responsibilities associated with the role of a master teacher within the Department of Education in the Philippines. According to Delfin, master teachers are typically required to have advanced degrees, demonstrate exemplary teaching performance, and often take on additional administrative or mentoring responsibilities. These qualifications ensure that master teachers are well-equipped to provide high-quality education and support to their colleagues. However, Delfin also highlights significant challenges related to budgetary considerations within DepEd. One of the primary issues is the allocation of resources. Due to limited

budgets, DepEd may prioritize funding and support for teachers in direct instructional roles over those in administrative or specialized positions, such as master teachers.

Further, this prioritization can impact the availability of resources for professional development, mentoring programs, and other support mechanisms crucial for the effective functioning of master teachers. Ensuring that master teachers receive adequate professional development is essential for maintaining high educational standards. DepEd may need to explore alternative funding sources or partnerships to support these programs. A balanced approach to resource allocation can ensure that both direct instructional roles and specialized positions receive the necessary support. By addressing these challenges, DepEd can enhance the overall quality of education and ensure that master teachers are well-supported in their roles, ultimately benefiting the entire educational system.

Problem 2. To what level are the school heads' practices leading strategically, managing school operations, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections?

Understanding how school heads lead strategically, manage school operations, focus on teaching and learning, and build connections is vital for effective educational leadership. These practices encompass a range of responsibilities that administrators must master to foster a supportive and productive learning environment, ultimately enhancing student success. This analysis thoroughly examines these four leadership dimensions, providing results, interpretations, implications, and evidence that highlight their role in shaping successful schools.

Leading strategically involves setting clear goals, creating long-term plans, and aligning school activities with broader educational objectives, while operational management addresses resource allocation, infrastructure maintenance, and smooth logistical functioning. Additionally, focusing on teaching and learning ensures high instructional quality, staff development, and innovative curricula, directly influencing student achievement. Building connections further strengthens the school community by fostering trust and collaboration among staff, students, parents, and stakeholders. Together, these leadership practices create a cohesive framework that drives academic excellence and holistic student development.

Table 3
Distribution of the Level of School Head-Respondents' Practices
as to Leading Strategically

Indicator As a school head, I…	Mean	SSD	Description
communicate the DepEd vision, mission, and core values to the school community to align policies, programs, and activities effectively.	3.64	0.55	At all Times
develop and implement school plans in collaboration with stakeholders, including faculty and parents, ensuring alignment with institutional goals and policies.	3.55	0.65	At all Times

implement and regularly review school policies to ensure they adhere to national and local laws, regulations, and issuances effectively.	3.53	0.66	At all Times
utilize relevant research findings from reliable sources in facilitating data-driven and evidence-based innovations to improve school performance.	3.19	0.88	Most of the Time
implement school programs that holistically support the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of learners.	3.41	0.53	At all Times
utilize learner feedback, including feelings, views, and opinions, to inform school policy and decision-making for continuous improvement.	3.55	0.73	At all Times
utilize available monitoring and evaluation processes and tools to promote learner achievement.	3.64	0.48	At all Times
develop and implement a strategic framework that aligns with the school's vision and mission, integrating actionable and measurable steps.	3.79	0.42	At all Times
identify and evaluate educational resources, such as research and statistical data, to support evidence-based school planning and decision-making.	3.78	0.47	At all Times
assess and compare the school's current performance and its desired goals to design actionable and strategic improvement initiatives.	3.71	0.49	At all Times
Overall	**3.57**	**0.63**	**At all Times**

Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High   1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
           2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High   1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 3 illustrates the level of school heads' practices as to **leading strategically** with an overall mean of **3.57 (SD=0.63**) described as **At All Times** and interpreted as **very high.** This means a positive perception among respondents regarding their ability to set clear goals, develop long-term plans, and align school activities with educational objectives. This implies that school heads are mindful of maintaining strategic focus and alignment in their decision-making processes. This can be supported by the school head respondents' answers in an interview with them regarding integrating the DepEd mission and vision into the community where they are assigned. All of the school head-response respondents answered the

question affirmatively. This implies that they strongly uphold the DepEd mission and vision and make them the basis for all their undertakings in school.

A school head needs to positively influence employees to utilize their ideas and maximize incentives and systems to encourage employees to perform better in productivity and quality. They need to envision and understand the work surroundings and ambiance, be objective, and look for possibilities from a broader perspective. In the Department of Education, school heads are trained to lead strategically to motivate people to achieve a common goal. It follows that effective school leaders must realize and use the structures through which influence and power are apportioned and activated in a particular culture, and more than just relationships or influencing people, school leadership requires leading strategically that will allow that influence and relationship with people to nourish and flourish and to do that, there has to be a vision of what to achieve and careful planning and how to achieve it. Dellomas (2022) and Pont (2020) emphasize that school heads are key leaders in the educational system. They are like a vehicle driver who knows where they want to go and guides them in their journey. A leader acts as the driver willing to take different swerves and roads, considering the road's possibilities and the traffic's condition. This also includes the driver's willingness to better the passengers' experience. As the driver, he does not falter in checking the car's dashboard for signals that indicate the car's status, and at the same time, he also consistently checks the road ahead for whatever may be around the bend.

Moreover, the indicator. **As a school head, I develop and implement a strategic framework that aligns with the school's vision and mission, integrating actionable and measurable steps** yielded the highest mean of **3.79 (SD=0.42),** described as **At All Times** and interpreted as **very high.** This aligns with the school's vision and mission, indicating that school heads can translate these guiding principles into actionable strategies. This alignment fosters coherence and unity within the school community towards achieving shared objectives. This implies that they consistently grounded decisions and actions within a strategic framework, enhanced stability, and provided clear direction for stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents.

Adopting a comprehensive strategy strengthens trust and commitment among stakeholders by demonstrating a clear purpose and direction. This can lead to increased morale, engagement, and collective efforts toward school improvement initiatives. The findings of the study on the roles of school heads in developing, advocating, and enacting vision, mission, and core values could be manifested in the implementation of School-based management, the enhancement school improvement plan, and the implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads. With the findings, the school must have set a precise aim focused on increasing students' performance and utilizing DepEd's vision and mission as the baseline of all its school programs and activities. It must also demonstrate how it has enabled the community and internal and external stakeholders to become actively engaged in adopting its vision.

In contrast, **as a school head, I utilize relevant research findings from reliable sources to facilitate data-driven and evidence-based innovations to improve school performance** got the lowest mean of **3.19 (SD=0.88),** described **Most of the Time** and interpreted as **High** Despite a positive mean score, the higher standard deviation of 0.88 indicates variability in how school heads effectively utilize research findings. This variability suggests potential opportunities for enhancing the consistency and rigor of evidence-based practices across schools. Hence, there is room for improvement in consistently leveraging research findings to drive innovations and improve school performance. Incorporating research findings can lead to more informed decision-making and innovative practices that positively influence school

performance. This involves adopting evidence-based strategies to tackle challenges and improve educational outcomes.

Furthermore, addressing the variability in how research findings are utilized may necessitate targeted professional development opportunities. These efforts can help school heads enhance their ability to access, interpret, and apply relevant research in making strategic decisions and improving educational practices. Recent studies highlight the importance of evidence-based practices in educational leadership. For example, Reinke et al. (2020) found that school leaders who engage in data-driven decision-making contribute to improved student outcomes. Moreover, the emphasis on utilizing research in school improvement processes aligns with findings from a 2019 study by Leithwood et al., which emphasizes that evidence-based leadership practices enhance teaching and learning environments, ultimately impacting school success.

According to the Department of Education, the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) underscore the importance of research and data in school leadership. DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2020 emphasizes the role of evidence-based strategies in fostering school improvement and ensuring quality education outcomes. This aligns with the goals of the Basic Education Research Fund (BERF) by DepEd, which aims to support the development of data-driven and research-based solutions in schools. In conclusion, while many school heads are willing to incorporate research findings into their leadership practices, there is an opportunity to increase consistency and rigor in this area. Addressing these gaps could lead to more effective school improvements driven by evidence-based innovations.

Dellomas (2022) emphasizes that school heads are key leaders in the educational system. They are responsible for carrying out the school's vision and mission, are involved in all aspects of its operation, and provide leadership in developing and implementing all educational programs and projects. In line with this, Pont (2020) confirmed the important role that school leadership plays in improving education. They also noted that school leadership reforms are related to the changing context, placing new expectations on the roles, whether directly with new school leadership policies or indirectly by changing the education policies that surround their practice.

Table 4
Distribution of the Level of School Head-Respondents' Practices
as to Managing School Operations and Resources

Indicator As a school head, I…	Mean	SD	Description
assist teachers in the review, contextualization & and implementation of learning standards to make the curriculum relevant for learners.	3.83	0.56	At all Times
provide technical assistance to teachers on teaching standards and pedagogies within and across learning areas to improve their teaching practice.	3.39	0.60	At all Times
validate feedback from learners, parents, and other stakeholders to enhance school policies and teaching practices.	3.52	0.64	At all Times

utilize learning outcomes in developing data-based interventions to maintain learner achievement.	3.53	0.67	At all Times
provide technical assistance to teachers in using learner assessment tools, strategies, and results consistent with curriculum requirements.	3.32	0.58	At all Times
manage a learner-friendly, inclusive, and supportive environment that fosters physical and emotional well-being.	3.80	0.48	At all Times
ensure the integration of career awareness and opportunities in the provision of learning experiences aligned with the curriculum.	3.47	0.59	At all Times
implement learner discipline policies that are developed collaboratively with stakeholders including parents, school personnel and the community.	3.78	0.47	At all Times
demonstrate exemplary methods and strategies in providing technical assistance to teachers for improved teaching practices.	3.77	0.44	At all Times
demonstrate knowledge and understanding of teaching standards and pedagogies within and across learning areas.	3.93	0.31	At all Times
Overall	**3.67**	**0.69**	**At all Times**
Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High 2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High	1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low 1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low		

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of the level of school heads' practices as to managing school operations and resources with an overall mean score of 3.67 (SD=0.69), which is described as At All Times and interpreted as very high. This means a strong consensus among respondents that school heads consistently emphasize and prioritize teaching and learning within their leadership practices. This indicates relatively minor variability in responses, which implies a high level of agreement among participants regarding this aspect of school leadership. The high mean score indicates that school heads are dedicated to fostering a learning environment that promotes academic achievement and student success. Their consistent focus on teaching and learning underscores a commitment to educational excellence. Hence, emphasizing teaching and learning involves supporting professional development opportunities for teachers, implementing effective instructional strategies, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. This supports teachers in delivering high-quality education.

According to Otieno and Magoma (2022), school heads have a pivotal role in shaping school teaching and learning practices. Their leadership is essential for establishing a culture that emphasizes effective teaching methods, aligns curriculum with educational goals, and fosters student engagement. The authors emphasize that school leaders who prioritize instructional excellence and assist teachers in adopting evidence-based approaches significantly enhance the quality of student learning experiences.

The indicator, As a school head, the indicator demonstrates knowledge and understanding of teaching standards and pedagogies within and across learning areas received the highest mean of 3.93 (SD= 0.31),

described as At All Times and interpreted as very high. This means a strong and consistent level of competence among school heads in understanding and applying teaching standards and pedagogies across various subjects. The high mean score reflects that school heads are frequently engaged in and knowledgeable about effective teaching practices, suggesting a significant commitment to supporting instructional quality within their schools. The relatively low standard deviation indicates little variability, meaning that most school heads consistently exhibit this understanding.

The high level of knowledge in teaching standards and pedagogies is crucial because it directly impacts how well school leaders can support their teachers and foster an environment conducive to quality teaching and learning. By demonstrating a thorough understanding of pedagogical standards, school heads are better equipped to lead instructional improvements, evaluate teaching practices, and provide constructive feedback to educators. Their proficiency in this area likely contributes to students' overall academic performance and holistic development, as effective instructional leadership is a strong predictor of student success.

Current literature supports the importance of pedagogical knowledge for school leaders. A study by Harris and Jones (2020) highlights that school heads who actively engage with teaching standards and demonstrate pedagogical 72 understanding are better equipped to support instructional quality and promote effective teaching strategies. Furthermore, a study by Sebastian et al. (2021) emphasizes that school leaders' understanding of pedagogical practices enhances their ability to provide meaningful instructional support, which is directly correlated with improved student outcomes.

In alignment with these findings, the Department of Education in the Philippines has underscored the importance of instructional leadership through the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). According to DepEd Order No. 32, s. Effective 2020 school leadership requires a thorough understanding of teaching standards, and school heads are encouraged to develop skills that support teachers in delivering quality instruction across different learning areas.

In contrast, the lowest mean score of 3.32 (SD=0.58), which is described as at all Times and interpreted as very high, pertains to the indicator, as a school head, I provide technical assistance to teachers using learner assessment tools, strategies, and results consistent with curriculum requirements. This means that there may be opportunities to enhance the frequency and effectiveness of technical assistance provided to teachers regarding learner assessment tools. This could involve more targeted support and training to ensure alignment with curriculum requirements. Hence, strengthening technical assistance practices can support teachers' professional development by equipping them with the skills and resources needed to utilize assessment tools effectively. This, in turn, can lead to more accurate assessment practices and improved instructional decision-making.

Popham (2020) highlights the importance of assessment literacy for educational leaders. He argues that school heads must possess a strong understanding of assessment tools and strategies to support teachers in their effective implementation. When school leaders provide targeted training and support, they can help teachers develop their assessment skills, leading to better alignment with curriculum requirements and improved student outcomes.

In addition, a research article by Wang et al. (2021) emphasizes the significance of ongoing professional development in assessment practices. The study found that school leaders who actively provide technical assistance to teachers contribute to a culture of continuous improvement. School heads can enhance teachers' capabilities by offering regular training sessions focused on assessment strategies and tools and ensuring that assessments effectively inform instruction. Hence, school heads play a critical role in

fostering the development of their staff members, including teachers and administrative personnel. This involves providing opportunities for professional development, mentorship, and support to enhance teaching practices, leadership capabilities, and overall job satisfaction among educators.

According to the Philippine Professional Standards established by the Department of Education in 2020, effective assessment practices are integral to achieving curriculum goals. The standards emphasize the need for teachers to receive consistent technical assistance from school heads to ensure that assessment tools align with curriculum requirement.

Table 5
Distribution of the Level of School Head-Respondents' Practices
as to Focusing on Teaching and Learning

Indicator As a school head, I…	Mean	SD	Description
set personal and professional development goals based on self-assessment aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads.	3.56	0.65	At all Times
apply professional reflection and continuous learning strategies, such as feedback and self-assessment, to enhance one's practice.	3.82	0.47	At all Times
participate in professional networks, such as educational organizations and peer collaborations, to upgrade knowledge, skills, and teaching practices.	3.89	0.39	At all Times
implement the performance management system with a team to support the career advancement of school personnel, and to improve office performance.	3.59	0.58	At all Times
implement professional development initiatives to enhance strengths and address performance gaps among school personnel.	3.76	0.55	At all Times
provide opportunities to individuals and teams in performing leadership roles and responsibilities.	3.33	0.58	At all Times
implement laws, policies, guidelines and issuances on the rights, privileges and benefits of school personnel to ensure their general welfare.	3.66	0.56	At all Times

implement a school reward system to recognize and motivate learners, school personnel and other stakeholders for exemplary performance and/or continued support.	3.49	0.39	At all Times
reflect on personal and professional development to improve leadership practices and support personnel's growth and welfare effectively.	3.85	0.35	At all Times
provide others the means for development such as opportunities to learn, reflect, lead and progress in their profession.	3.87	0.43	At all Times
Overall	**.58**	**.33**	**At all Times**

Legend:

3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High	1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High	1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 5 presents the respondents' levels of practice in terms of **focusing on teaching and learning**, with an overall mean of **3.58 (SD=0.33),** which is described as **At All Times** and interpreted as **very high.** This means that school heads consistently prioritize activities aimed at their self-development and fostering the development of others, demonstrating a steadfast dedication to these practices. This also suggests that respondents generally agreed on the frequency and importance of these practices, with minimal variation in their perceptions. This firm commitment underscores school heads' focus on personal growth and enhancing the skills and capabilities of their team members. Such dedication is pivotal in cultivating a culture of ongoing improvement within the school, where continuous professional development is valued and actively pursued.

Research underscores that effective leadership extends beyond administrative duties to prioritize personal growth and foster the development of others within the school community (Robinson, 2020). By investing in their development and supporting the professional growth of teachers and staff, school leaders contribute significantly to improving instructional quality, nurturing a collaborative school culture, and ultimately enhancing student outcomes (Otieno & Magoma, 2022).

Furthermore, studies emphasize that school leaders who emphasize continuous learning and development create a positive organizational climate conducive to innovation, collaboration, and a commitment to excellence (Odden & Picus, 2019). This proactive leadership approach is essential for navigating challenges, adapting to changing educational landscapes, and ensuring overall school success and effectiveness. In conclusion, school heads' commitment to personal growth and the professional development of their team members not only enhances individual capabilities but also strengthens the school's ability to improve and achieve its educational objectives continuously.

Moreover, the indicator, **As a school head**, **I participate in professional networks, such as educational organizations and peer collaborations, to upgrade my knowledge, skills, and teaching practices** yielded the highest mean score of **3.89 (SD=0.39),** described as **At All Times** and interpreted as **Very High**. This means that school heads are perceived to consistently engage in professional networks to enhance their knowledge, skills, and practices. This suggests that there was minimal variability in respondents' perceptions regarding this practice, indicating a uniformity of responses among participants.

School heads' active participation in professional networks underscores their dedication to continuous learning and staying updated with current practices and trends. Additionally, engaging in professional networks provides opportunities for school heads to exchange ideas, learn from peers, and access resources that can contribute to their professional development. Thus, by continuously upgrading their knowledge and skills through professional networks, school heads can enhance their leadership effectiveness, improve instructional practices, and drive overall school improvement efforts.

Further, school heads' active participation in professional networks demonstrates their commitment to continuous learning and staying updated with current educational practices. These networks allow school leaders to exchange ideas, share knowledge with peers, and access resources that support ongoing professional development. Research consistently shows that school leaders who participate in professional networks improve their knowledge and skills, which enhances their effectiveness in leadership roles (Robinson, 2020). By leveraging these networks, school heads can improve instructional practices in their schools and drive overall educational advancements.

Moreover, being part of professional networks fosters a collaborative environment where innovative ideas and best practices can be shared (Odden & Picus, 2019). This collaborative approach is crucial for addressing educational challenges, adapting to evolving educational environments, and ultimately improving the quality of education.

On the other hand, the indicator **As a School Head provides opportunities to individuals and teams in performing leadership roles and responsibilities** yielded the lowest mean of **3.33 (SD=0.58),** described as **Most of the Time** and interpreted as -**High**. This means that there may be room for improvement in providing leadership opportunities for individuals and teams within the school setting. Enhancing these opportunities could foster a more inclusive leadership culture where various stakeholders are empowered to take on roles that contribute to school improvement and community engagement. Addressing this area could lead to greater collaboration, innovation, and effectiveness in school leadership practices.

Moreover, studies have shown that when schools provide diverse leadership opportunities, they create environments where different perspectives and talents can thrive (Robinson, 2020). This inclusivity strengthens school leadership and enhances the school's capacity to address challenges and implement innovative solutions (Odden & Picus, 2019). By actively involving stakeholders in leadership roles, schools can capitalize on collective expertise and foster a culture of shared responsibility, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes and community relationships.

Moreover, enhancing leadership opportunities within schools is crucial for promoting collaboration, innovation, and effective leadership practices. Schools can create more responsive and impactful educational environments by empowering stakeholders to contribute meaningfully to school improvement and community engagement. Building connections is a crucial aspect of school leadership. School heads establish and maintain relationships with various stakeholders within and outside the educational community. These relationships are essential for supporting student success, improving school effectiveness, and fostering community engagement. Effective school leaders recognize the significance of connecting with stakeholders like parents, alumni, local authorities, industries, and other community members. These connections form a supportive network that enhances the school's and its students' overall well-being. School heads gain access to support, resources, and expertise by nurturing positive relationships for addressing challenges, implementing initiatives, and advancing educational goals. Beyond administrative responsibilities, building connections requires collaboration, communication, and

partnership-building skills. These skills enable school leaders to leverage community strengths, involve stakeholders in school activities, and align school priorities with community expectations.

Furthermore, this highlights the strong commitment of school heads to professional development, networking, and continuous learning. Their engagement in professional networks reinforces their leadership effectiveness, while their dedication to teaching and learning ensures sustained school improvement. However, there is room for growth in distributing leadership responsibilities more equitably among educators and staff. By enhancing leadership opportunities and fostering deeper collaboration with community stakeholders, school heads can strengthen their schools' capacity for long-term success. Ultimately, school leadership is not just about administration but also about inspiring, empowering, and fostering an environment where educators and students can thrive.

The study of Ampofo et al. (2019) recommends that school leaders be interested in examining student performance records, assignments, and examinations to ensure that teachers effectively carry out teaching activities. In line with this, Khan et al. (2019) discussed school heads' instructional assessments as the basis of an efficient teaching and learning process. Most teachers begin and end their instructional process through assessment. Also, Masters (2018) states that principals monitor students' success by checking the improvement in school mean scores, especially internal tests and external examinations. They expect to see every teacher assess learners frequently and maintain records of how well every learner performs in those assessments.

Table 6
Distribution of the Level of School Heads' Respondents' Practices
as to Developing Self and Others

Indicators As a school head,	Mean	SD	Description
utilize school data and information using technology, including ICT, to ensure efficient and effective school operations.	3.63	.63	At all Times
manage finances adhering to policies, guidelines, and issuances in allocation, procurement, disbursement, and liquidation.	3.73	.50	At all Times
oversee school facilities and equipment in compliance with policies on acquisition, use, maintenance, and disposal.	3.65	.55	At all Times
supervise staffing, including teaching loads and assignments, in compliance with laws, policies, and school needs.	3.41	.57	At all Times

ensure school safety for disaster preparedness, mitigation and resiliency to ensure continuous delivery of instruction.	3.73	.44	At all Times
manage emerging opportunities and challenges to encourage equality and equity in addressing the needs of learners. school personnel and other stakeholders.	3.54	.68	At all Times
empower school personnel in sustaining effective management of staff in adherence to laws, policies, guidelines and issuances based on the needs of the school.	3.52	.50	At all Times
create and implement a checking mechanism to sustain efficient and effective management of finances.	3.64	.52	At all Times
demonstrate exemplary practices, such as budget tracking and timely reporting, to ensure efficient and effective financial management.	3.53	.51	At all Times
demonstrate knowledge and understanding of policies, guidelines and issuances in managing finances	3.76	.53	At all Times
Overall	**3.61**	**.62**	**At all Times**

Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High   1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
                2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High   1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 6 illustrates the distribution of the level of school heads' practices as to **managing school operations and resources** with an overall mean of **3.61 (SD=0.62),** described as **At All Times** and interpreted as **Very High.** This means that school heads consistently demonstrate high competence in managing school operations and resources. This includes effectively overseeing administrative tasks, allocating resources efficiently, and maintaining facilities to support a conducive learning environment. This implies they can make strategic decisions in budget allocation, facilities maintenance, and compliance with educational policies. This proficiency is crucial for optimizing resources and ensuring educational goals are effectively met. Effective school operations management is crucial in creating a supportive learning environment and promoting educational success. School heads' consistent focus on this area ensures efficient use of resources and strengthens their leadership capabilities to drive school improvement and elevate educational standards.

Furthermore, school heads are tasked with developing and overseeing budgets aligned with educational priorities and objectives. Effective budget management requires allocating funds strategically to support various aspects of school operations, including instructional programs, professional development, student services, and day-to-day operational requirements (Odden & Picus, 2019). Efficient resource allocation is vital for maximizing educational outcomes.

Moreover, the indicator **As a school head, I demonstrate knowledge and understanding of policies, guidelines, and issuances in managing finances,** getting the highest mean of **3.76 (SD=0.53),** described as **At All Times** and interpreted as **Very High.** This means a high consensus among respondents that

school heads consistently demonstrate knowledge and understanding of financial policies, guidelines, and issuance. This suggests relatively low response variability, indicating substantial agreement among participants regarding this indicator. This underscores school heads' proficiency in understanding and implementing financial policies, as this capability is pivotal for effective financial management, ensuring compliance with regulations, and ultimately supporting the overall operational excellence of the school.

Based on observations, school heads demonstrated a high understanding of the policies, guidelines, and issuance in managing the finances. Most of the school heads answered the survey question that it is a must to understand this indicator to avoid legal sanctions in COA. They need to be experts on this as they are the ones who will be liable and be investigated if mistakes happen. Gumus (2019) stated that the school head is liable in most of the events concerning school decisions, and all elements of the school take precedence. He is responsible for every dimension of the system's operation, whether academic or administrative.

In contrast, as unveiled in the table, indicator **As a school head, I supervise staffing, including teaching loads and assignments, in compliance with laws, policies, and school needs** yielded the lowest mean of **3.41(SD=0.57)** described as **Most of the Time** and interpreted as **High**. This means indicating a moderate agreement regarding the consistency of supervision in staffing matters. The standard deviation of 0.57 indicates some variability in responses, implying that opinions among respondents regarding this indicator were somewhat diverse. This implies that there may be room for improvement in consistently applying policies and guidelines related to staffing supervision. This could involve better adherence to established laws and policies when assigning teaching loads and subject areas.

Strengthening supervision practices can enhance compliance with educational regulations and optimize staffing efficiency. Clear and consistent oversight helps ensure staffing decisions align with the school's needs and educational objectives. Hence, addressing this area can contribute to the professional development of school leaders, fostering their capacity to manage human resources effectively. It underscores the importance of training and support in understanding and applying staffing policies comprehensively.

Aquino (2021) explained that, aside from organizing, school heads should focus on providing continuing education, recognizing strengths and limitations, and establishing a They must have the expertise in showing balanced input, resolving problems, and updating with improvements with the teachers. They must plan and coordinate internal and external stakeholders to resolve challenges in school. Focusing on teaching and learning is at the heart of effective educational leadership. School heads are entrusted with ensuring that 69 teaching practices align with educational goals and standards to improve student achievement and learning outcomes.

Table 7
Distribution of the Level of School Head-Respondents' Practices
as to Building Connections

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
As a school head, I…			
build constructive relationships with authorities, colleagues, parents, and other stakeholders.	3.59	.49	At all Times
manage school organizations, such as learner organizations, faculty clubs, and parent-teacher.	3.43	.49	At all Times

exhibit inclusive practices, such as gender sensitivity, physical and mental health awareness, and cultural responsiveness, to foster awareness, acceptance, and respect.	3.60	.53	At all Times
Communicate effectively in speaking and writing to facilitate information sharing, collaboration, and support among teachers, learners, parents, and stakeholders.	3.69	.53	At all Times
initiate partnerships with the community, such as parents, alumni. Authorities, industries and other stakeholders, to strengthen support for learner development, as well as school and community improvement.	3.52	.54	At all Times
Provide leadership in community engagement by guiding parents, alumni, authorities, industries, and stakeholders toward shared goals for school and community development	3.78	.50	At all Times
Empower the community by creating opportunities for parents, alumni, authorities, industries, and stakeholders to participate actively in school and community initiatives.	3.88	.40	At all Times
Initiate partnerships with parents, alumni, authorities, industries, and stakeholders to support learner development and school improvement.	3.54	.55	At all Times
involve the community, such as parents, alumni, authorities, industries, and other stakeholders, in school programs, projects, and activities.	3.92	.35	At all Times
Exhibit exemplary skills in communicating effectively in speaking and in writing to teachers, learners, parents, and other stakeholders.	3.87	.43	At all Times
Overall	**3.68**	**.53**	**At all Times**
Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High	1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low		
2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High	1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low		

Table 7 presents the distribution of the level of school head practices in terms of building connections. The overall mean score across all indicators is 3.68 (SD=0.53), which is described as At All Times and interpreted as Very High. This means a substantial uniformity of responses among respondents that school heads consistently emphasize and prioritize building connections within their leadership practices. This also suggests closer responses among participants regarding this aspect of school leadership. This implies that school heads' commitment to building connections enhances their ability to establish collaborative

partnerships with stakeholders, including parents, community members, and external organizations. They believed these relationships could provide valuable support, resources, and expertise for school improvement efforts.

By fostering connections, school heads create a positive school climate where all stakeholders feel valued and engaged in the educational process. This promotes a sense of community and collective responsibility for student success. Thus, building connections involves effective communication strategies that ensure transparency, trust, and mutual understanding among all parties involved in the educational ecosystem. This supports informed decision-making and consensus-building within the school community.

Moreover, based on the interviews, school leaders stated that good leadership embraces teachers' ideas as partners of the school leaders and teacher leaders who work alongside principal leaders to accomplish desired results. They must consciously know how their work is interwoven with their fellow workers to create opportunities for innovative practice. They must work efficaciously with learners, guardians/parents, fellow teachers and staff, and schools and school leaders.

Collins (2023) and Lucero (2023) posited that one of the important characteristics of a school head's role is building relationships with the community, teachers, students, and families. It will help create a positive image of the school and increase support for school initiatives. Moreover, when the community feels invested in the school, they are more likely to participate in school events and activities, which can foster a sense of belonging for the students.

Among the indicators, as a School Head, the community, such as parents, alums, authorities, industries, and other stakeholders, in school programs, projects, and activities garnered the highest mean of 3.92 (SD=0.35) described as At All Times and interpreted as Very High. This means a substantial uniformity among respondents that school heads consistently prioritize and involve the community in various school initiatives and activities. This indicates minimal variability in responses, highlighting a high level of participant understanding regarding the frequency of community involvement. This underscores school heads' effective leadership in engaging the community. This commitment strengthens relationships and enhances the overall educational environment and opportunities available to students.

Engaging the community under the effective leadership of school heads has significant implications for improving the educational environment and expanding student opportunities. By consistently involving stakeholders such as parents, alumni, authorities, industries, and other community members in school activities and initiatives, school leaders cultivate a collaborative environment that strengthens relationships and fosters a collective responsibility for student achievement (Otieno & Magoma, 2022). This dedication enhances educational experiences by integrating diverse viewpoints and resources and bolsters the school's standing and trust within the broader community (Robinson, 2020). These efforts in community engagement are vital for creating a supportive environment where students can excel academically, socially, and emotionally, thereby contributing to overall improvements in educational outcomes and the school's influence on its stakeholders.

However, the indicator As a School Head, I manage school organizations, such as learner organizations, faculty clubs, and parent-teacher groups obtained the lowest mean score of 3.43 (SD=0.49) described as Most of the Time and interpreted as High. This means that there are opportunities for enhancing the management of school organizations by school heads. Improving these practices could involve taking a more proactive approach to organizing and supporting learner organizations, faculty clubs, and parent-teacher associations, aiming to foster a more cohesive school community. Addressing these areas could lead to more effective management practices that promote a sense of unity and engagement within the

school. Ultimately, these improvements have the potential to enhance overall school effectiveness and contribute positively to educational outcomes for all stakeholders involved. The research underscores that effective management practices within school organizations foster unity and collaboration among stakeholders, enhance the school environment, and foster positive relationships among students, teachers, and parents (Robinson, 2020).

Additionally, well-organized learner organizations and faculty clubs are recognized for enriching student learning experiences and supporting professional growth among educators. These platforms provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, engage in extracurricular activities, and contribute to community service, thereby promoting their overall development (Otieno & Magoma, 2022).

Improving management practices in these areas strengthens the school community and aligns with educational objectives to create a supportive and enriching learning environment. Ultimately, these initiatives enhance school effectiveness and achieve positive educational outcomes for all stakeholders involved, highlighting the critical role of strategic leadership in managing school organizations (Robinson, 2020).

More so, school heads have many important duties that shape schools and help students succeed. They guide schools, ensure things run smoothly, improve teaching methods, and build relationships with the community. Studying these practices shows us how school heads affect the school environment, help teachers grow, involve people in the community, and help students achieve their educational goals. This exploration shows how school heads play a vital role in leading schools and improving student success.

Table 8
Summary of the Level of School Head-Respondents' Practices

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Leading Strategically	3.57	0.63	Very High
Managing School Operations and Resources	3.67	0.69	Very High
Focusing on Teaching and learning	3.58	0.33	Very High
Developing Oneself and Others	3.61	0.62	Very High
Building Connections	3.68	0.53	Very High
Overall	**3.62**	**0.57**	**Very High**

Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High   1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High   1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 8 outlines the summary of the level of school heads' practices with an overall mean of 3.62 (SD=0.57), interpreted as Very High. This means that the school heads have high engagement in their duties with a strong commitment and frequency. The implication is that these school heads are likely to positively impact their schools' operational efficiency, instructional quality, and community relations. This implies that the practice of these responsibilities may lead to better school performance, improved student outcomes, and a more supportive and cohesive school environment. This level of engagement also reflects

a strong leadership presence, which is essential for fostering continuous improvement and achieving educational goals.

The consistent and effective engagement of school heads in their leadership roles has far-reaching implications for school performance and student outcomes. Their dedication to operational efficiency, instructional quality, and community relations enhances the educational environment and fosters a culture of continuous improvement. This strong leadership presence is essential for achieving educational goals and ensuring schools' long-term success and effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2020; Odden & Picus, 2019). Odden and Picus affirmed that the commitment of school heads to continuous improvement is crucial for the long-term success of schools. Leaders who set clear goals, monitor progress, and make necessary adjustments foster an environment of continuous improvement. This proactive approach to leadership ensures that schools can adapt to new challenges and maintain a trajectory of success (Fullan, 2021). Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous professional development among staff contributes to a supportive and innovative school environment where both teachers and students can thrive

The data further reveals that school heads' practices in building connections have the highest mean of 3.68 (SD = 0.53), which is interpreted as Very High. This indicates that school heads consistently engage in activities that foster strong relationships with various stakeholders, including parents, alumni, local authorities, industries, and other community members. The very high level of engagement in building connections suggests that school heads are actively working to involve the community in school activities and decision-making processes. This can lead to increased community support, more resources, and stronger partnerships, which are essential for the school's success.

Epstein (2019) emphasizes that school, family, and community partnerships are integral to preparing educators and improving schools. Engaging with parents and community members can increase support for school initiatives, enhance resource mobilization, and create a stronger sense of community involvement. School heads prioritizing building connections can leverage these relationships to garner support for various school programs and activities.

In contrast, the data reveal that school heads' practices in leading strategically have the lowest mean of 3.57 (SD = 0.63), which is still interpreted as Very High. This means that while school heads consistently engage in strategic leadership practices, this area has slightly lower engagement than other practices. This indicates moderate variability in responses, suggesting differences in how consistently these practices are applied. This may point to opportunities for further strengthening strategic leadership skills among school heads to ensure even more effective and consistent application of strategic planning and goal-setting across the board.

Moreover, strategic leadership involves setting clear goals, developing long-term plans, and aligning school activities with educational objectives. Effective strategic leaders anticipate challenges, adapt to changes, and foster a resilient and adaptable school environment (Bush & Glover, 2020). Strategic leadership drives school improvement and ensures all stakeholders work towards common goals.

One of the main challenges in strategic leadership is the need for continuous professional development. Research by Hargreaves and Fullan (2020) highlights that many school heads require ongoing training and support to develop and refine their strategic planning skills. This includes learning to use data effectively to inform decisions and adapt to evolving educational landscapes.

Effective professional development is key to enhancing strategic leadership skills. According to Grissom and Bartanen (2021), tailored professional development programs that focus on strategic planning, data

analysis, and decision-making processes are critical. These programs help school heads understand and implement strategic initiatives that lead to sustained school improvement.

Problem 3. To what level are the teachers' practices as to classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activities?

This study's data presentation is structured around four key variables: classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activities. These components are critical to shaping the quality of teaching and learning experiences. Each variable is analyzed in terms of results, interpretations, implications, and supporting evidence from the literature, offering a comprehensive examination of their impact on educational outcomes.

Classroom management ensures a structured and supportive environment by fostering order, respect, and student engagement, while clarity of instruction helps students understand and achieve learning goals through effective communication. Cognitive activation encourages critical thinking and problem-solving, pushing students beyond rote memorization to deeper intellectual engagement. Enhanced activities, such as project-based learning and technology integration, provide dynamic opportunities for students to apply knowledge in meaningful ways. This study evaluates how these practices are implemented in classrooms and their collective contribution to student success.

Table 9
Distribution of the Level on Teachers' Practices
as to Classroom Management

Indicators As a teacher, I…	Mean	SD	Description
encourage learners to adhere to classroom rules.	.35	.58	At all Times
guide learners to actively listen and participate in discussions.	.50	.44	At all Times
calm and redirect learners who become disruptive.	.59	.43	At all Times
ensure learners transition smoothly to quiet and focused attention as lessons begin.	.55	.44	At all Times
create a supportive environment for academic, social, and emotional learning.	.70	.39	At all Times
build trust and foster healthy relationships between instructor and students, as well as among peers.	.43	.51	At all Times
maintain learners' attention by fostering motivation and engagement.	.44	.49	At all Times
minimize disruptions and ensure uninterrupted learning experiences.	.52	.51	At all Times

teach well-prepared, engaging, and briskly paced lessons that hold students' attention.	.26	.54	At all Times
reinforce the importance of following classroom rules through positive reminders and modeling.	.28	.5	At all Times
Overall	**.46**	**.50**	**At all Times**

Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High   1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High   1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 9 reveals the distribution of the level of teachers' practices in classroom management. The data revealed an overall mean of 3.46 (SD=0.50), describing At All Times and interpreted as Very High. This means that teachers are generally applying classroom management strategies regularly. This consistency is important as it helps create a predictable and orderly learning environment, which is crucial for effective teaching and learning. This suggests room for improvement in how effectively classroom management strategies are implemented. This could imply that while teachers apply techniques regularly, they may not always be as effective as desired in minimizing disruptions or fostering optimal learning conditions.

The findings imply that consistent classroom management practices could create a more conducive learning atmosphere where students feel safe, supported, and motivated to learn. This suggests that some teachers excel more than others in implementing classroom management strategies. This variance could highlight the need for targeted professional development or training to strengthen classroom management skills across the teaching staff. Thus, school leaders may consider providing ongoing support and resources to help teachers refine their classroom management techniques. This support could include mentoring programs, workshops on behavior management strategies, or opportunities for collaborative learning among educators.

Borgoños (2022) stated that teachers should use an emerging strategy that follows principles and theories that enhance learning outcomes. They should understand the pedagogical content of each strategy and utilize it in their classroom. Teachers cannot improve if they do not know which teaching aspects are ineffective. Thus, the school heads should pay primary attention to the staff improvement program, which comprises teaching techniques and procedures designed to improve teaching performance and deliver instruction effectively.

Moreover, the indicator As a teacher, I create a supportive environment for academic, social, and emotional learning has the highest mean of 3.70 (SD=0.39), described as At all Times and interpreted as Very High, indicating that teachers consistently focus on establishing an environment that nurtures not just academic growth but also the social and emotional development of students. This commitment shows that educators are actively promoting a well-rounded educational approach, which is essential for students' overall welfare and achievement. These teaching practices are consistently incorporated into daily classroom activities and interactions. Teachers are likely to employ methods and programs that enhance academic progress and foster social skills, emotional management, and positive peer relationships among students.

Classroom management is a critical aspect of teaching that encompasses various strategies and techniques to create an effective learning environment. Research often emphasizes the importance of proactive classroom management practices in improving student behavior, engagement, and academic performance. Effective classroom management includes establishing clear expectations, routines, and procedures,

implementing strategies to address student behavior, promoting a positive classroom climate, and fostering student motivation and autonomy.

Conversely, the indicator As a teacher, I teach well-prepared, engaging, and briskly paced lessons that hold students' attention obtained the lowest mean of 3.26 (SD=0.54), described as At all times, which is interpreted as high-level classroom management practices. It means that teachers are perceived to achieve this level of preparedness and engagement in their teaching approach. However, there is still room for improvement, as indicated by the lower mean score, which implies that there may be instances where lessons could be more consistently well-prepared and briskly paced to capture and maintain students' attention effectively.

As observed, students praise teachers who are prepared to do activities that break the monotony inside the class or after every lesson discussed. Students will appreciate simple games related to the topic or discussions. In addition, teachers can add problem-solving activities that involve and stimulate students' creativity, whether individual or group exercises.

The study revealed that teachers must focus on instructional strategies to prevent academic and behavioral difficulties and thereby increase student achievement. They are expected to have pedagogical and field knowledge, be able to organize the learning environment considering students' needs, use contemporary teaching methods, and create supportive and well-disciplined classrooms (James et al., 2021).

Moreover, teachers with proper training on up-to-date information and new research on classroom management, new curriculum resources, and more could become a successful factor for their schools. Understanding and working with students is a professional development for teachers that can be the best collaborative culture for students and teachers in class (Slifko, 2022).

The clarity of instruction refers to how teachers convey information, explain concepts, and guide students through learning activities in the classroom. It involves using language that is understandable to students, providing clear directions and explanations, and ensuring that learning objectives and expectations are well-defined. Explicit instruction helps students grasp new concepts, follow tasks effectively, and engage meaningfully in learning activities. Adequate clarity of instruction is essential for promoting student understanding, reducing confusion, and maximizing learning outcomes in the classroom.

Table 10
Distribution of the Level of Teachers' Practices as to Clarity of Instruction

Indicators As a teacher, I…	Mean	SD	Description
State learning objectives.	3.63	0.53	At all Times
connect new content to prior knowledge.	3.90	0.35	At all Times
Set clear learning goals.	3.73	0.49	At all Times
relate new knowledge to real-life situations.	3.89	0.35	At all Times
summarize key concepts.	3.82	0.40	At all Times
ensure practice and understanding.	3.91	0.31	At all Times

Use relevant examples	3.67	0.56	At all Times
			At all Times
check for understanding through questioning.	3.82	0.45	
reinforce content when necessary.	3.84	0.42	At all Times
teach in a structured, step-by-step manner.	3.70	0.50	At all Times
Overall	**3.79**	**0.41**	**At all Times**

Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High   1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
            2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High   1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 10 provides insights into the teachers' practices as to **clarity of instruction** with an overall mean score of **3.79 (SD=0.41),** described as **at all Times** and interpreted as **Very High.** This means that teachers had practiced a very high level of classroom management regarding clarity of instruction. This implies that teachers had explicit instructions that the learners could understand. This indicates that to have a very high clarity of instruction, teachers should have mastery of the subject matter and skills to ensure the teaching procedure conducted will be effective. Teachers must possess a good attitude in the teaching and learning process.

Benton (2021) stated that teacher clarity is positively related to student cognitive achievement. He added that teachers are the main actors and actresses who implement a strong connection in the delivery of skills and the learning standards of the curriculum. It should meet the standard competencies. The maximum potential for ongoing professional development should be implemented as needed. Teachers with proper training on up-to-date information and new research on classroom management, new curriculum resources, and more could become a successful factor for their schools.

The indicator, **As a teacher, I ensure practice and understanding** got the highest mean of **3.91 (SD=0.59),** described as **At All Times** and interpreted as **Very High.** This means that teachers always gave learning activities that allowed them to practice similar tasks until they finally understood the subject. They see to it that learners understand the basic concepts of the lesson. This implies that teachers employ various means to help improve the students' learning. The teachers observed the organization of the classroom instruction to make it more conducive to learning. They also used different teaching approaches to cater to diverse learners with varying learning styles. These will make the students' learning more meaningful since they engage in other activities in the class. Various studies have shown that integrating different teaching approaches will increase student retention in class activities, improving academic achievement.

On the other hand, **as a teacher, I clearly state that learning objectives** got the lowest mean of **3.63 (SD=0.53)** with a description of **At All Times** and an interpretation of **Very High.** This indicator must be improved since the students must understand the expectations or goals after the lesson. Teachers should provide activities that help them understand the lessons and fit the objectives of the lesson.

According to Titsworth (2023), committed teachers become focused on learning and behavioral goals that can be more effective. They are committed to the goals with a belief that contributes to outcome expectancy, which the teacher values. He added that students who need feedback should be informed for

effective self-management. A combination of information seeking, goal setting, and receiving feedback from the teacher will improve classroom performance.

Cognitive activation in teaching refers to educators' methods and strategies to stimulate students' thinking, curiosity, and deeper understanding of the subject matter. It involves activities that encourage students to engage with the content actively, apply critical thinking skills, and make connections between concepts. Effective cognitive activation promotes a learning environment where students acquire knowledge and actively process and use that knowledge in meaningful ways. Understanding how teachers implement cognitive activation strategies provides insights into their instructional approach and commitment to promoting more profound learning experiences among students. Educators can create dynamic and stimulating classroom environments that support academic growth and development by actively engaging students in cognitive tasks.

Table 11
Distribution of the Level of Teachers' Practices
as to Cognitive Activation

Indicators As a teacher, I…	Mean	SD	Description
design tasks that challenge students to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information, promoting critical thinking.	3.68	0.52	At all Times
Encourage collaborative learning by having students work in small groups to solve complex problems or tasks together.	3.54	0.60	At all Times
encourage students to independently devise strategies for solving complex tasks, fostering problem-solving skills and autonomy.	3.23	0.81	Most of the Time
Provide tasks with no obvious solution to encourage creative thinking and exploration.	3.59	0.64	At all Times
help students who tend to focus on details to identify and prioritize key concepts and main ideas.	3.40	0.51	At all Times
Provide reminder cards or prompts to help students focus on critical information and key concepts during lessons.	3.33	0.90	At all Times
Allow time for students to elaborate on new information by connecting it to their prior knowledge, reinforcing understanding.	3.67	0.56	At all Times
Set time limits for tasks to encourage focused processing and prevent cognitive overload.	3.33	0.47	At all Times
Integrate students' interests and affinities into learning activities to increase engagement and motivation.	3.67	0.46	At all Times

foster collaboration by pairing students with complementary skills.	3.33	0.41	At all Times
Overall	**3.47**	**0.41**	**At all Times**

Legend:

3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High	1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High	1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 11 offers a comprehensive overview of teachers' level of practice as to cognitive activation with an overall mean score of 3.47 (SD=0.41), which is described as at all Times and interpreted as Very High, indicating that teachers had practiced a very high level of classroom management in terms of cognitive activation. This means teachers integrate higher-order thinking skills activities that tickle the learners' minds. This implies that teachers with very high cognitive activation practices and mastery of the subject matter and skills ensure the teaching procedure conducted will be effective. Hence, teachers should consider themselves knowledgeable about cognitive activation to ensure quality outcomes are delivered to the students. They also ensured that the curriculum goals, learning tasks, and assessments were attained in the teachers' classroom instruction. Groß-Mlynek et al. (2022) stated the importance of cognitive activation for learning, student motivation, and subject-specific interest. He added that high cognitive potential leads to increased cognitive activity among students.

Further, the indicator with the highest mean is As a teacher, I design tasks that challenge students to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information, promoting critical thinking with a mean score of 3.68 (0.52), which is described as at all Times and interpreted as Very High. This reflects a strong emphasis on encouraging students to engage in higher-order thinking. This very high mean indicates that teachers consistently prioritize critical thinking. By challenging students to think critically, teachers foster a learning environment that encourages inquiry, analysis, and evaluation, essential skills in today's information-rich world. This finding suggests that teachers know the importance of fostering critical thinking and are taking proactive steps to incorporate tasks that challenge students' cognitive abilities.

Encouraging critical thinking not only supports student learning but also prepares them for future challenges. It highlights the need for ongoing training in developing tasks that require students to think critically, as this practice can lead to improved educational outcomes. As observed, the emphasis on critical thinking aligns well with contemporary educational standards that advocate for higher-order thinking skills. This trend is promising as it reflects an understanding among educators of the essential skills students need for their future.

According to a study by Brown et al. (2021), critical thinking is a key predictor of student success in various academic fields. Their findings support that educators who emphasize critical thinking better prepare students for complex problem-solving situations they will encounter in their future careers.

In contrast, the indicator, As a teacher, I encourage students to independently devise strategies for solving complex tasks, fostering problem-solving skills and autonomy obtained the lowest mean score of 3.23 (SD= 0.81), described as Most of the Time and interpreted as Very High. This suggests that while teachers encourage students to think independently, there may be opportunities for improvement in this area. The lower mean score may indicate that teachers are less confident in allowing students to take the lead in their problem-solving processes. This could stem from a desire to provide more guidance, particularly in complex tasks that may intimidate students. This finding highlights a potential area for development in teaching practices. It suggests that while teachers encourage student engagement, they still need to control the learning process, limiting students' opportunities for autonomy.

Encouraging students to decide on their problem-solving procedures fosters independence and confidence in their abilities. Schools might consider implementing training sessions focused on strategies to enhance student autonomy and decision-making skills in complex tasks. As observed by the researcher, the tendency to provide structured guidance might inhibit students from fully exploring their cognitive capabilities. This presents an opportunity for educators to reflect on their practices and consider how they can better facilitate student autonomy in learning. Along the same line, a study by Turner and Meyer (2022) emphasizes the significance of student autonomy in learning. Their research indicates that when students are allowed to determine their problem-solving strategies, they develop critical thinking skills and gain confidence in their academic abilities.

Furthermore, cognitive activation in literature instruction is the act of reading itself, which often demands a great deal of higher-order thinking. Reading literary texts invites advanced cognitive processes, such as analysis and reflection. When a text deviates from what the reader already knows, believes, and understands, the reading process slows down. This leads to de-automatization and (re)construction, which correlates with critical thinking and promotes student growth in literary interpretation skills (Koek et al., 2019).

One of the three basic dimensions of teaching quality is regarded in the discourse on teaching quality in German-speaking countries as a significant factor in initiating student learning processes (Groß-Mlynek et al., 2022). The importance of cognitive activation for learning, student-student motivation, and subject-specific interest has been studied frequently at different grade levels and across diverse subject cultures

Table 12
Distribution of the Level of Teachers' Practices As to Enhanced Activities'

Indicators As a teacher, I …	Mean	SD	Description
encourage students to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for research, projects, or classwork to enhance learning.	3.05	0.85	Most of the Time
Assign long-term projects that require students to apply concepts over a week or more, promoting deeper learning and time management.	3.19	0.91	Most of the time
incorporate creative writing activities to help students develop writing, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.	3.94	0.28	At all Times
incorporate problem-solving and critical thinking into enrichment activities to deepen students' understanding and stimulate intellectual curiosity.	3.77	0.45	At all Times
incorporate dance and sports as enriching activities to promote physical health, creativity, and teamwork.	3.96	0.25	At all Times
introduce drawing and animation activities as students' skills develop, making learning more engaging and stimulating creativity.	3.43	0.53	At all Times

offer math enrichment classes to make learning math enjoyable and engaging, fostering a deeper interest in the subject.	3.81	0.63	At all Times
Encourage students to read a variety of books, including storybooks and self-development texts, to expand their knowledge and improve their literacy skills.	3.79	0.56	At all Times
Introduce new songs to reinforce language learning, memory, and creativity in a fun and engaging way.	3.92	0.29	At all Times
incorporate arts and crafts as enrichment activities to foster creativity, fine motor skills, and emotional expression in students.	3.93	0.23	At all Times
Overall	**3.47**	**0.48**	**At all Times**

Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High   1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High   1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 12 presents the level of teachers' practices in terms of enhanced activities with an overall mean score of 3.47 (SD=0.48) with a description of at all Times and an interpretation of Very High. This means that teachers had practiced a very high level of classroom management in enhanced activities. This implies that teachers have knowledge of the subject area in their respective fields, demonstrate competence in classroom instruction, apply appropriate assessment tools and strategies to evaluate and promote the continuous intellectual development of the students, and can guide the students in their learning about a particular content of a subject area to achieve the lesson's objectives.

Teachers' practices are concerned with the representation and formulation of concepts, pedagogical techniques, knowledge of what makes concepts difficult or easy to learn, knowledge of students' prior knowledge, and theories of epistemology. They also involve knowledge of teaching strategies that incorporate appropriate conceptual representations to address learner difficulties and misconceptions and foster meaningful understanding. They also include knowledge of what the students bring to the learning situation and expertise that might be either facilitative or dysfunctional for the particular learning task.

The study by Munna et al. (2021) realized that specific teaching methods might benefit particular learners, which may be flawed for others. Thus, it is recommended to use blended learning (a mixture of online and offline learning) along with experiential learning (cross-age peer tutoring, pro and con grid, prodigy games, mnemonic), which have been very useful in improving the learning experience and reducing the disruptive issues in the classroom from the case study.

Moreover, the highest mean score is for the indicator As a teacher, I incorporate dance and sports as enriching activities to promote physical health, creativity, and teamwork, which obtained the highest mean of 3.96 (SD=0.25) with the description At all Times and interpreted as Very High. This means that teachers always give enhanced learning activities like dance and sports, some of the best enrichment activities. This implies that the teachers have sufficient knowledge of the lessons' content. They also know the content's concepts, facts, theories, and procedures.

These findings show that the teachers are knowledgeable enough to teach lessons that will enable them to design, apply, and evaluate the appropriate teaching strategies for a particular topic that will satisfy the students' needs. In an interview, according to the teachers, students praise teachers who are prepared to do

activities that break the monotony inside the class or after every theory discussed. The students appreciated the integration of dance and sports related to the topic or discussions.

On the other hand, the lowest mean score is for the indicator As a teacher, I encourage students to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for research, projects, or classwork to enhance learning, with a mean of 3.05 (SD=0.85) with a description All the Times and an interpretation of Very High. This indicator must be improved since the students must know how to use ICT projects or classwork. This means that teachers did not always use ICT for projects or classwork. This implies that teachers who shared that their knowledge of using technology in teaching is limited, which was one of the problems among teachers. Based on my observations and interviews, some teachers were trained by the DepEd but failed to re-echo to their co-teachers. Other computers were available in the school, but the problem was the time scheduling.

Further, teachers' knowledge of integrating ICT helped them improve instructional strategies and strengthen content knowledge for learners. However, the results of this study reveal that teachers need more seminars and training to enhance their understanding of technology so that they can reach the highest level at all times. Accordingly, the use of technology in instruction nowadays plays an integral role in achieving significant improvements in the productivity of the students. Instruction that uses digital learning tools, such as computers and internet resources, expands the learning experience and builds 21st-century skills needed by the students. These will increase the students' engagement and motivation and make them more focused and attentive in class discussions.

Technology can enhance classroom instruction by providing instructional modes that support best practices, extensive access to learning resources, and accommodating different learning styles and paces. It also includes intervention for some students while encouraging others to take their learning experience in exciting new directions; creates positive student attitudes about learning; promotes and improves productivity and skills that are vital both in the educational setting and in the workplace--teamwork, communication, presentation, and problem-solving; and breaks down physical and social barriers and reduces classroom isolation. Teachers make of it and their ability to integrate ICT into their teaching process.

Comi et al. (2019) find that the effectiveness of ICT at school depends on actual practice. This shows that teachers use digital technologies to support students' learning. Teachers use them to facilitate higher-order thinking skills, including problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, knowledge, and creative thinking. If technology is used efficiently, it can have positive effects on student learning.

Teachers' practices are foundational to the educational experience, significantly influencing students' learning outcomes and developmental paths. These practices are essential as they determine the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction. These practices include various activities such as lesson planning, instructional methods, classroom management, assessment techniques, and student interactions. Effective teaching practices boost student engagement, understanding, and academic achievement, underscoring the importance of studying these practices for educational enhancement.

Table 13
Summary Distribution of the Teacher-Respondent's Level of Practices

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Classroom Management	3.46	0.50	Very High

Clarity of Instruction	3.79	0.49	Very High
Cognitive Activation	3.47	0.41	Very High
Enhance Activities	3.47	0.48	Very High
Overall	**3.55**	**0.47**	**Very HIgh**

Legend: 3.26- 4.00 At all Times/ Very High   1.76-2.50 Sometimes/Low
2.51-3.25 Most of the Time/ High   1.00-1.75 Never/ Very Low

Table 13 shows the summary distribution of the teacher-respondent's level of teaching with an overall mean of 3.55 (SD = 0.47), interpreted as Very High. This suggests a high level of consistency in applying these practices, with teachers frequently using effective instructional methods. The regular and consistent implementation of effective teaching strategies implies a solid foundation for high-quality education, likely enhancing student engagement, comprehension, and academic performance. This indicates that regularly employing proven instructional methods can significantly improve student outcomes, including engagement, comprehension, and academic performance.

A study by Stronge (2018) highlights the critical role of consistency in teaching practices. Teachers who consistently employ effective strategies establish a stable learning environment essential for student success. Regularly implementing these methods helps minimize variability in student performance and promotes equity in educational outcomes. Strong also notes that consistently using high-impact teaching practices, such as explicit instruction and feedback, is directly linked to improved academic performance. These practices set clear expectations and provide students with the necessary guidance to achieve academic success.

The data further disclosed that teachers' practices in Clarity of Instruction obtained the highest mean of 3.79 (SD = 0.49), interpreted as Very High, suggesting that teachers consistently ensure their instructions are clear and understandable for students. It indicates a relatively uniform application of transparent instructional practices among the respondents. This reflects that the teacher emphasized ensuring their instructions are clear and comprehensible. This practice fosters a productive learning environment, enhances student engagement and understanding, and improves academic performance.

This aligns with Robinson's (2020) study, which suggests that consistent clarity in instruction enhances students' understanding of the material. Clear explanations, detailed guidance, and explicit expectations aid students in comprehending complex concepts more effectively, thereby reducing confusion and improving overall comprehension. Moreover, clarity in instruction directly correlates with improved academic performance, as students who grasp what is required of them and how to accomplish it tend to excel in assessments and assignments. This clarity facilitates setting attainable goals and serves as a pathway to academic success.

On the other hand, the data reveal that teachers' practices in classroom management have the lowest mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.50), interpreted as Very High. This suggests that while classroom management practices are consistently applied at a high level, they are slightly lower than other areas assessed. This indicates that there may be room for improvement, as it might reflect challenges in maintaining student discipline, engagement, or orderliness. Teachers could benefit from refining their behavior management techniques to address these challenges. This might include adopting proactive strategies to prevent disruptions, such as establishing clear expectations and consequences and consistently reinforcing positive behavior.

Additionally, teachers could work on developing more apparent routines and procedures that help students understand what is expected of them, thereby reducing uncertainty and promoting a more orderly classroom environment.

Delfin (2020) emphasized the critical role of effective classroom management in fostering a conducive learning environment. Resolving challenges related to classroom management can result in enhanced student behavior and greater engagement during lessons. She also highlighted the significance of continuous professional development in classroom management. Offering teachers training, resources, and support in effective management techniques can assist them in overcoming challenges more efficiently and establishing a structured and productive classroom atmosphere.

Problem 4. To what level is the school performance as to the performance rating of the school head, significant accomplishment/s in fostering learning, impact of accomplishment in making learning happen, innovation in enhancing learner's achievement, and awards?

This study analyzes five interconnected variables that provide a holistic view of school performance. The Performance Rating of the School Head evaluates leadership qualities and managerial effectiveness, emphasizing how school heads inspire teams, foster a positive culture, and create an environment conducive to learning. Recognizing the critical role of leadership highlights the influence of strategic vision on institutional success.

Significant accomplishments in fostering learning focus on educators' proactive efforts, such as innovative teaching methods, intervention programs, and partnerships that enhance learning outcomes. These practices demonstrate the dedication of school leaders and teachers to meeting diverse student needs. The impact of accomplishments on learning outcomes measures how these efforts translate into tangible improvements, such as higher test scores, increased engagement, and overall student development, while also considering the broader effect on stakeholders.

Innovation in enhancing learner achievement examines creative strategies like technology integration and differentiated instruction that address evolving educational demands. This variable underscores the importance of adaptability in driving student success. Lastly, Awards and Recognitions reflect the school's excellence and reputation, highlighting accomplishments that inspire and set benchmarks for quality within the educational community.

These variables illustrate the interplay of leadership, innovation, and measurable outcomes, offering a nuanced understanding of educational effectiveness and institutional excellence.

Table 14
Distribution of the Level of School Performance as to
Performance Rating of School Head

Level of School Performance	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding	40	40
Very Satisfactory	60	60
Satisfactory	0	0
Fairly Satisfactory	0	0
Did Not Meet Expectation	0	0
Total	**100**	**100**
Mean: 4.42		
SD: 0.87		

Description: Very Satisfactory

Legend: 4.50-5.00: Outstanding   1.50-2.49: Fairly Satisfactory
           3.50-4.49: Very Satisfactory   1.49 -below: Did not meet Expectation
           2.50-3.49: Satisfactory

Table 14 shows the distribution level of school performance as to the performance of the school head with an overall mean score of 4.42 (SD=0.87), which corresponds to a description of Very Satisfactory. This indicates that, on average, school heads perform well above satisfactory levels but do not quite reach the "Outstanding" rating across the board. This suggests some variability in how school heads are rated, but overall, the performance is consistently high. This very satisfactory rating indicates that school heads perform well, leading schools and meeting educational standards. The relatively high mean score implies that most school heads demonstrate strong leadership capabilities, contributing to success and positive learning environments.

School heads may benefit from leadership development programs to move from a very satisfactory to an outstanding rating, especially in consistently falling short. Mentorship, workshops, and specific performance coaching could help school heads refine their strategies and improve their ratings. The high performance of school heads positively affects school management and student outcomes. However, to consistently achieve outstanding levels, there may need to be more focus on data-driven decision-making, fostering teacher collaboration, and promoting innovative teaching practices. Ensuring that school heads have the resources and support to enhance their performance will be critical in maintaining high standards. Smith and White (2020) state that effective school leadership is directly linked to student achievement and teacher satisfaction. Their study found that schools with very satisfactory and outstanding leaders saw higher student engagement and performance levels. The study emphasizes the importance of leadership development for school heads to reach and maintain exceptional standards. Effective performance of school heads requires strong leadership skills, effective communication, and collaboration with teachers, staff, and community stakeholders. School heads must be knowledgeable about current educational research, trends, and best practices and be able to use this knowledge to guide their decision-making. Regular monitoring and evaluation of the school head's performance can provide valuable feedback and opportunities for improvement. This can be done through formal evaluations, self-assessments, and feedback from teachers, staff, students, and parents. Overall, the performance of school heads is critical to the school's success, and effective leadership is essential to ensure that students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for success in their future endeavors.

Moreover, the very satisfactory category has the highest frequency, with 60 (60%) school heads falling into this group. This reflects a substantial majority of school heads who perform well but have some room for improvement to reach Outstanding. The large percentage of Very Satisfactory ratings indicates that most school heads are meeting and exceeding expectations but not yet performing at the highest possible level. This could be due to various factors, such as resource limitations, varying school challenges, or evolving educational demands. The high frequency of Very Satisfactory ratings suggests that the current leadership strategies are effective but may need further enhancement to push more school heads toward outstanding. School heads likely manage daily operations well but may need to focus on more strategic, long-term improvements. These results mean that the school heads' performance exceeded expectations. All goals, objectives, and targets were achieved above the established standards in the 2022-2023 school

year. It can further be inferred that the performance of this school head has demonstrated exceeding job expectations in all areas of responsibility.

In line with this, the research by Harris et al. (2021) supports these findings, indicating that a large number of school heads fall into the Very Satisfactory category. This category reflects sound leadership but may lack the extra initiatives needed for Outstanding performance. Their study emphasizes the need for continuous professional development and innovative leadership practices.

The Department of Education is expected to deliver its best for the benefit of the agency and the clientele it serves. The data shows the percentage of school heads rated either outstanding or very satisfactory. This implies that the school heads in the Department of Education were experts. DepEd training for school heads helps them become exceptional leaders. Relevant training is an essential professional development program for school heads to heighten their leadership and advocacy.

On the contrary, the lowest frequency is found in the outstanding category, with 40 (40%). While the outstanding level reflects exceptional performance and leadership, its lower frequency suggests a need for focused interventions to help more schools reach this highest rating category. These gaps may result from factors such as resource constraints, inconsistencies in the effectiveness of school leadership, differences in teacher competency levels, or varying degrees of parental and community support. The data indicates that schools in the outstanding category achieve excellence due to strong leadership, vigorous organizational systems, and effective teaching practices. However, the more significant proportion of schools in the very satisfactory category suggests opportunities for improvement, particularly in areas such as leadership development, providing teaching and learning resources, and fostering greater collaboration among stakeholders. For example, school heads currently rated very satisfactory could benefit from additional professional development, such as advanced leadership training, coaching, and mentoring programs tailored to their needs.

Furthermore, disparities in resource allocation could be a contributing factor. Schools that lack adequate funding, infrastructure, or access to high-quality instructional materials may face challenges in consistently achieving outstanding results. Addressing these resource gaps through targeted investment and equitable distribution of resources is crucial. Recognizing and incentivizing high-performing school heads and their teams can also serve as a motivational tool to inspire others to strive for excellence. Also, fostering stronger engagement among parents, local communities, and other stakeholders could enhance school performance by creating a more supportive and collaborative environment.

Recent studies support these insights. Lopez and Dela Cruz (2019) highlighted the critical role of leadership training in achieving higher school performance, emphasizing that well-trained school heads are better equipped to drive their institutions toward excellence. Similarly, Martinez et al. (2020) found that schools achieving outstanding ratings often exhibit a culture of collaboration and shared accountability among administrators, teachers, and community stakeholders. Moreover, Reyes et al. (2021) underscored the importance of sufficient funding and resource support in achieving outstanding performance, stressing that schools with access to better facilities and materials consistently perform at higher levels.

One of the best practices in the Department of Education is that school heads were inducted with their roles and responsibilities with the three-tranche foundational training course known as the School Heads Development Program (SHDP), where participants develop their leadership, managerial, and administrative skills. Other programs relative to the development of instructional leadership of school heads instigated by the DepEd in a partnership with the Southeast Asian Ministry of Education

Organization-Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO-INNOTECH) are TeacheXCELS and SUPEReXCELS. The former addresses the need to develop and strengthen the school heads' capacity to manage the teaching and learning process in the school, while the latter is for developmental, differentiated, and clinical supervision (DO No. 80, s. 2020).

Identifying significant accomplishment/s in fostering learning highlights specific achievements or initiatives undertaken by the school or its leadership to enhance educational outcomes. This could include innovative teaching methods, successful curriculum reforms, or impactful community engagement programs.

Table 15
Distribution of the Level of School Head-Respondents' Performance as to Significant Accomplishment/s in Fostering Learning

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Project / Work Accomplished	3.59	0.75	Very Satisfactory
Number of strategies /activities done that have significantly influenced/ provided greater impact in the performance of the school, division office, regional office, and central office.	3.85	0.40	Very Satisfactory
Overall	**3.71**	**0.63**	**Very Satisfactory**

Legend: 4.50-5.00: Outstanding   1.50-2.49: Fairly satisfactory
  3.50-4.49: Very Satisfactory   1.49 -below: Did not meet the Expectation
  2.50-3.49: Satisfactory

Table 15 shows the distribution of the school heads' performance level as to significant accomplishment/s in fostering learning with an overall mean score of 3.71 (SD=0.63), described as Very Satisfactory. This means that the school heads are implementing strategies and achieving work-related tasks that positively influence the school's environment and learning outcomes. The performance is consistent across the group, as indicated by the moderate standard deviation. This suggests that the majority of school heads are effective in fostering learning and executing essential tasks and projects within their institutions. As a researcher, the findings indicate that while school heads are successfully fostering learning through significant accomplishments, they could benefit from support aimed at enhancing their strategic approach and execution of impactful activities. The performance level indicates a need for continuous improvement in leadership practices.

According to Miller and Johnson (2020), school leaders who actively engage in continuous professional development and strategic planning are more likely to foster significant improvements in school performance. Their research found that fostering learning through innovative practices can lead to better student outcomes and overall school success. This high mean score suggests that school heads are powerful in implementing strategies and activities that have a significant impact not only at the school level but also at the division, regional, and even central office levels. This indicates a high level of consistency in the effectiveness of these activities across the school heads.

Moreover, the highest mean score of 3.85 (SD=0.40) corresponds to the indicator, the number of strategies/activities done that have significantly influenced/provided a more significant impact on the

performance of the school, division office, regional office, and central office, which is described as Very Satisfactory. This high mean score suggests that school heads are powerful in implementing strategies and activities that have a significant impact not only at the school level but also at the division, regional, and even central office levels. The high performance in this area indicates that school heads are proactive in introducing and carrying out initiatives that extend beyond the school, demonstrating leadership that influences broader educational outcomes. This could result from strong collaboration and communication between school heads and higher education offices.

Further, the high score in this area implies that school heads are effective change agents, making strategic decisions that positively affect their schools and the broader educational landscape. These leaders are likely to contribute to long-term educational improvements within their regions. The high performance in this area is promising as it shows that school heads actively contribute to systemic education improvements through strategic initiatives. This suggests a strong alignment between school-level goals and broader educational objectives.

In a study by Brown et al. (2019), school leaders who implemented evidence-based strategies significantly improved student performance and school outcomes. The study emphasized the importance of leadership in fostering a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration across different levels of the educational system.

Conversely, the lowest mean score of 3.59 (SD=0.75) corresponds to the indicator Project/Work Accomplished indicator described as Very Satisfactory. This suggests that while school heads are performing well in terms of project and work accomplishments, this area shows more variability. This could mean that some school heads excel in this aspect while others may not be as effective. The slightly lower mean score in this area indicates a broader range of performance levels when completing projects and work-related tasks. Some school heads may face challenges related to resource availability, time management, or execution of plans, which could explain the wider variation in scores.

The findings suggest that project accomplishment is an area where some school heads could improve. The higher variability in this category may point to challenges related to the complexity of specific projects or the differing levels of experience among school heads. Smith and Taylor (2021) highlight the importance of practical project management skills for school leaders. Their research shows that schools led by heads with strong project execution abilities tend to perform better in academic achievement and operational efficiency. Providing training in project management could help school heads improve in this area.

Table 16

Distribution of the Level of School Performance as to Impact of Accomplishment in Making Learning Happen

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Scope	3.87	0.32	Very Satisfactory
Replicability of the program/ project/ activity	3.57	0.53	Very Satisfactory
Number of people, office benefited and transactions facilitated	3.79	0.40	Very Satisfactory
	3.41	0.49	Very Satisfactory

Level of attainment per identified performance indicator (School level, District Level, Division level, Regional Level and International Level)			
Overall	**3.66**	**0.48**	**Very Satisfactory**

Legend:

4.50-5.00: Outstanding	1.50-2.49: Fairly satisfactory
3.50-4.49: Very Satisfactory	1.49 -below: Did not meet Expectation
2.50-3.49: Satisfactory	

Table 16 presents data on the level of school performance as to the impact of accomplishments in making learning happen. Four indicators were analyzed, such as the scope, replicability of the program/project/activity, number of people/offices benefited and transactions facilitated, and level of attainment per identified performance indicator. The overall mean score is 3.66 (SD=0.48), described as Very Satisfactory. This high score suggests that schools effectively contribute to making learning happen through their accomplishments. This indicates that schools are performing well in terms of their contributions to improving learning outcomes. To further enhance these achievements, schools may consider expanding their existing programs to reach an even larger population or adapting programs that have succeeded in other settings to fit local contexts. By doing so, they can foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in education. Research suggests that replicating and scaling successful educational initiatives can positively impact student achievement and overall school performance (Glover & Miller, 2020).

Moreover, by focusing on collaboration with a more significant number of offices and stakeholders, schools could ensure more integrated approaches to problem-solving, which would streamline educational transactions and processes. This aligns with the growing emphasis on partnership-building in educational reform efforts to create more sustainable and impactful outcomes (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2021).

Further, the highest mean is attributed to the Scope indicator, which has a mean score of 3.87 (SD=0.32), described as Very Satisfactory. This means that the scope of the schools' accomplishments is broad and impactful, covering various aspects that positively contribute to learning. A broad scope may indicate a well-rounded approach involving multiple stakeholders and diverse activities, which can enhance overall educational outcomes. To sustain and even improve this high level of performance, schools should continue to adopt an inclusive approach that maximizes reach.

According to Chen and Reid (2021), programs with an extensive scope are often more successful in engaging the internal school environment and the broader community. This wide-reaching engagement helps create a more inclusive educational ecosystem where different stakeholders, such as parents, local businesses, and community organizations, become active participants in the educational process. By involving these external entities, schools can tap into additional resources, expertise, and support networks, which can significantly enhance the effectiveness of their programs.

On the other hand, the lowest mean score of 3.41 (SD=0.49) is observed in the attainment per identified performance Indicator, which is still described as Very Satisfactory. This suggests some variability in meeting performance benchmarks across different levels (e.g., school, district, and regional). This could indicate that while programs are impactful, there is room for improvement in consistently achieving high performance levels across all benchmarks. Schools could focus on aligning their goals with performance indicators and supporting areas lagging.

A study by Williams et al. (2019) highlights the importance of aligning educational initiatives with specific benchmarks to ensure sustainable improvement and consistent impact across different levels. The findings indicate that while schools perform well overall, there is a clear opportunity to focus on replicability and consistent attainment across various benchmarks to enhance learning outcomes. The broad scope of accomplishments is commendable and should be maintained. However, ensuring these initiatives consistently meet identified performance levels across different contexts will be key to long-term success. The findings align with the literature, suggesting that educational programs with broad scope and strong alignment with performance indicators are more likely to sustain and improve student learning outcomes. The researcher understands the importance of a balanced approach that includes comprehensive reach and focused attainment in key areas.

Table 17
Distribution of the Level of School Performance as to Innovation in Enhancing Learner's Achievement

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Originality	3.44	0.53	Very Satisfactory
Creative Programs, projects, and activities made in the last two years in connection to the award category the extent to which it/they/is/are being used and the results, number of persons who benefited	3.57	.53	Very Satisfactory
Scope/replicability of the innovation	3.39	.49	Very Satisfactory
Level of attainment per identified performance indicator (School level, District Level, Division level, Regional Level and International Level)	3.88	.31	Very Satisfactory
Overall	**3.57**	**.46**	**Very Satisfactory**

Legend:

4.50-5.00: Outstanding	1.50-2.49: Fairly Satisfactory
3.50-4.49: Very Satisfactory	1.49 -below: Did not meet Expectation
2.50-3.49: Satisfactory	

Table 17 presents an analysis of school performance as to **innovation in enhancing learner achievement** with an overall mean score of **3.57(SD=0.46)**, indicating a **Very Satisfactory** performance. This high mean score suggests that schools actively pursue innovative approaches to support learner achievement. To further boost innovation, schools could consider investing in professional development for teachers to generate original ideas and creative projects, which are crucial in improving learner outcomes. Supporting literature, such as Zhao et al. (2021), underscores the significance of fostering innovation in education to enhance students' adaptability and learning effectiveness.

Moreover, the highest rating among the indicators is seen in the **Level of Attainment per Identified Performance Indicator,** with a mean score of **3.88 (SD=0.31)** described as **Very Satisfactory**. This

indicator reflects schools' strong ability to meet specific benchmarks at various levels (school, district, division, regional, and international). High performance in this area suggests that innovative activities are implemented and aligned with broader educational standards, ensuring that these innovations contribute meaningfully to learner achievement.

Schools could continue to align new projects with established performance indicators to maintain this high level of accomplishment. According to Nguyen and Smith (2020), alignment with performance benchmarks enhances the sustainability and scalability of innovative practices, leading to more effective educational outcomes.

On the contrary, the lowest mean score of **3.44 (SD=0.53)** is observed in the **originality** indicator, described as **Very Satisfactory**, which is comparatively lower than the other indicators. This score suggests that while innovative practices are being implemented, more unique or novel ideas may be needed to enhance learner achievement further. Encouraging more extraordinary originality may give teachers more freedom and resources to experiment with new teaching methods and project ideas.

Enhancing originality could lead to more engaging and impactful learning experiences for students. Related literature by Thompson et al. (2019) highlights that schools that foster originality through creative professional development are more successful in driving student engagement and achievement.

Table 18

Distribution of the Level of School Performance as to Significant Accomplishment/s in Awards

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Major awards/citations received by the school/SDO/RO/CO Division/Unit. A major award refers to the highest award or recognition received by the school, SDO, RO, or CO that has a greater impact on the organization.	3.41	0.32	Satisfactory

Legend: 4.50-5.00: Outstanding   1.50-2.49: Fairly Satisfactory
3.50-4.49: Very Satisfactory   1.49 -below: Did not meet Expectation
2.50-3.49: Satisfactory

Table 18 illustrates the distribution of the school performance level as to **significant accomplishment/s in awards** described as **Satisfactory,** as represented by its mean value of **3.41(SD=0.32).** This means that the school's performance in terms of awards had achieved expectations. All goals, objectives, and targets were achieved above the established standards. Schools must have awards/citations received by the school/SDO/RO/CO Division/Unit. It gives recognition and has a more significant impact on the organization.

The overall school performance, such as the performance rating of the school head, significant accomplishment/s in fostering learning, impact of accomplishment in making learning happen, innovation in enhancing learner's achievement, and awards, are critical to the school's success. Effective leadership practices and teachers' practices are essential to ensure that students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for success in their future endeavors. Hence, the adequate performance of school heads requires strong leadership skills, effective communication, and the ability to collaborate with teachers, staff, and community stakeholders.

A study by Smith and Williams (2020) explored the effect of school recognition and awards on overall school performance. They found that schools receiving awards or citations for their accomplishments experienced enhanced motivation among staff and students, which positively impacted academic performance and institutional reputation. The study highlighted that recognition fosters a sense of pride and ownership among school personnel, encouraging continuous improvement. The researchers concluded that awards are symbolic and practical tools for fostering school culture and driving better outcomes.

Table 19
Summary of the Level of School Performance

Variables	Mean	SD	Description / Interpretation
Performance Rating of School Head	4.42	0.87	Very Satisfactory
Significant Accomplishment/s in Fostering Learning	3.71	0.63	Very Satisfactory
Impact of Accomplishment in Making Learning Happen	3.66	0.48	Very Satisfactory
Innovation in Enhancing Learners' Achievement	3.57	0.46	Very Satisfactory
Awards	3.41	0.32	Very Satisfactory
Overall	**3.74**	**0.59**	**Very Satisfactory**

Legend:
4.50-5.00: Outstanding   1.50-2.49: Fairly Satisfactory
3.50-4.49: Very Satisfactory   1.49 -below: Did not meet Expectation
2.50-3.49: Satisfactory

Table 19 summarizes the distribution level of **school performance** based on various indicators. The overall mean score of **3.74 (SD=0.59)** indicates a **Very Satisfactory** performance. This strong performance reflects the institution's commitment to delivering quality education and maintaining high operational standards. While this rating signifies commendable achievements, it also underscores the need for continuous improvement and strategic development. A deeper analysis of specific indicators can help identify areas that require targeted interventions. Schools that sustain their excellence do so by fostering a culture of innovation, adaptability, and evidence-based decision-making. Encouraging research, implementing feedback mechanisms, and regularly updating instructional methodologies can drive further enhancements.

The high mean score is a valuable marketing asset, positioning the school as a desirable choice for students, parents, and potential faculty members. A well-regarded institution can attract top-performing students, skilled educators, and increased stakeholder support. To capitalize on this positive standing, the school may consider strengthening partnerships with local government units, businesses, and community organizations. These collaborations can lead to financial assistance, scholarships, infrastructure development, and resource expansion, further contributing to sustained growth.

Moreover, a strategic approach to maintaining excellence should include professional development programs for teachers, curriculum innovations, and student-centered learning initiatives. Investing in teacher training ensures educators remain equipped with modern pedagogical techniques and technological advancements that enhance student learning outcomes. Additionally, providing academic

support systems, such as mentorship programs, remedial instruction, and extracurricular engagement, can further boost overall student achievement, leading to increased enrollment and retention of high-quality staff.

Furthermore, the school should focus on continuous improvement initiatives to sustain and improve this performance. This could involve regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to identify areas for enhancement. Engaging in professional development for teachers and school heads can ensure they are equipped with the latest educational strategies and leadership skills. Also, fostering a collaborative and innovative culture can help the school adapt to changing educational demands and maintain its high standards.

The data indicates a consistent level of performance across different indicators, suggesting a cohesive and practical approach to school management. In line with this, Smith et al. (2021) explore the relationship between school performance indicators and student outcomes, highlighting the importance of a holistic approach to school improvement.

The highest mean is observed for **the Performance Rating of the School Head,** with a mean score of **4.42 (SD=0.87)**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory.** This means that the school head is highly effective in their role, contributing significantly to the school's overall success. The school should continue to support and empower the school head to maintain their high level of performance. The strong performance of the school head can positively influence the overall school climate and culture, creating a conducive learning environment for students. Effective leadership by the school head can improve teacher morale, student engagement, and academic outcomes. The school head can ensure that teachers and students feel supported and motivated by fostering a positive and collaborative school culture.

Additionally, the high-performance rating of the school head can serve as a model for other school leaders, demonstrating the impact of effective leadership practices. This can encourage the adoption of similar strategies across other schools, contributing to broader educational improvements. The school should also consider providing opportunities for the head to share their successful practices and insights with peers, further enhancing the overall leadership quality within the educational community. The study by Jones et al. (2020) examines the role of school leadership in improving student outcomes, emphasizing the importance of effective leadership in driving school performance.

Conversely, the lowest mean for the variable **Awards is critical to the school's success** with a mean score of **3.41 (SD=0.32)**, interpreted as **Satisfactory** performance. This means that while the school values awards, they may not be as heavily emphasized or integrated into its overall strategy as other indicators. The school could consider further integrating awards into its strategic planning and implementation, potentially increasing its emphasis on this aspect. While the school is performing well in this area, further emphasis on awards could potentially enhance the school's reputation and attract more resources.

The slightly lower score for this variable suggests that the school might benefit from a more comprehensive approach to incorporating awards into its overall strategy. Brown et al.'s study investigated the impact of awards on school performance, highlighting the potential benefits of incorporating awards as a strategic tool for school improvement.

Furthermore, the results indicate that school faculties and staff fulfilled their tasks and responsibilities according to the criteria of School-Based Management. This implies that school heads and teachers met the criteria set by the Department of Education for each key responsibility area. Notably, most school heads have been in service for 6-10 years within the public school system, classified as experienced yet still needing improvement to gather more relevant experiences and enhancements.

The Department of Education is expected to deliver the best outcomes for the agency's and its clientele's benefit. The data shows that the percentage of school heads rated as either outstanding or very satisfactory is approximately equal, implying that the school heads are expert leaders. Tamkin (2020) consistently highlights the significance of recognition and rewards in educational settings, showing their correlation with increased teacher motivation, reduced turnover rates, and enhanced teaching practices. Addressing the lower rating in the awards category allows schools to elevate their overall performance by implementing strategies that celebrate excellence and inspire ongoing improvement among staff members. Conversely, investing in an improved awards system is not merely about boosting staff morale; it is a strategic move that can lead to tangible benefits for educational outcomes. By prioritizing recognition, schools can cultivate a culture of excellence where teachers feel valued and motivated to innovate in their teaching practices. This approach supports individual professional growth and contributes to a positive learning environment that nurtures student success. Bridging the gap in the awards category reflects a commitment to continuously enhancing school performance through targeted initiatives that promote teacher engagement and ultimately elevate the quality of education provided (Noureen, 2020).

Problem 5. Is there a significant relationship between the school heads' practices and the school performance on the search for most learning focused school?

The role of school heads in influencing educational outcomes is crucial, as their leadership practices significantly impact overall school performance. They play a central role in the educational environment by defining the vision, guiding instructional strategies, and creating an environment conducive to learning. Their responsibilities span curriculum development, managing staff, allocating resources, and engaging with the community.

Understanding the connection between school head leadership practices and overall school performance has always been a key element in striving for educational excellence. By examining these leaders' practices, we hoped to uncover insights that could further enhance the quality of education and support continuous improvement in schools.

Table 20
Result of the Test on Relationship between School Heads' Practices
and the School Performance

School Heads' Practices	School Performance					
	Performance Rating of the School Head	Significant Accomplishment in Fostering Learning	Impact of Accomplishment in Making Learning Happen	Innovation in Enhancing Learners' Achievement	Awards	**Overall**
	r-value p-value	r-value p-value	r-value p-value	r-value p-value	r-value p-value	r-value p-value
Leading Strategically	0.1805 0.0001 S	0.3186 0.0036 S	0.2165 0.0001 S	0.1543 0.0031 S	0.3210 0.0003 S	**0.1745** **0.0014** **S**

Managing School Operation	0.3267 0.0023 S	0.3289 0.0004 S	0.4328 0.0001 S	0.3095 0.0010 S	0.1769 0.0002 S	**0.3150** **0.0008** **S**
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	0.3276 0.0033 S	0.2167 0.0002 S	0.3219 0.0001 S	0.3612 0.0001 S	0.2387 0.0002 S	**0.2932** **0.0008** **S**
Developing Self and Others	0.4380 0.0001 S	0.1089 0.0001 S	0.3650 0.0001 S	0 3045 0.0032 S	0.3752 0.0001 S	**0.3183** **0.0007** **S**
Building Connection	0.3208 0.0003 S	0.3276 0.0003 S	0.3651 0.0001 S	0.2109 0.0001 S	0.2309 0.0001 S	**0.2911** **0.0002** **S**
Overall	**0.3182** **0.0012** **S**	**0.2614** **0.0009** **S**	**0.2672** **0.0001** **S**	**0.2680** **0.0015** **S**	**0.2685** **0.0001** **S**	**0.1945** **0.0008** **S**

Legend: S – Significant   NS – Not Significant

Table 20 presents a comprehensive analysis of how various leadership practices of school heads correlate with **different aspects of school performance**. The table includes several key variables: performance rating of the school head, significant accomplishment in fostering learning, impact of accomplishment in making learning happen, innovation in enhancing learners' achievement, and awards. These variables are analyzed about five leadership practices: leading strategically, managing school operations, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections. The table provides the R-values and p-values for each relationship, indicating the strength and significance of the correlations.

The results show that all the leadership practices have significant positive correlations with the school performance variables, as indicated by the p-values being less than 0.05. For instance, strategic leading correlates significantly with all school performance variables, with R-values ranging from 0.1543 to 0.3210. Similarly, managing school operations shows strong correlations, particularly with the performance rating of the school head (r = 0.3267) and innovation in enhancing learners' achievement (r = 0.4328). Focusing on teaching and learning also demonstrates significant correlations, with R-values up to 0.3612 for the impact of accomplishment in making learning happen. Developing self and others and building connections show significant positive correlations across all performance variables, with R-values indicating moderate to strong relationships.

These findings align with recent literature on educational leadership. Aquino et al. (2021) found that school heads' leadership practices significantly impact teachers' performance, emphasizing the importance of strategic leadership and effective management in educational settings. Similarly, Olasiman and Torreon (2024) highlighted the significant correlation between school heads' leadership styles and teachers' teaching accomplishments, reinforcing that effective leadership practices are crucial for enhancing school

performance. Additionally, a study by Afalla et al. (2021) concluded that school heads' leadership practices are vital for fostering a supportive educational environment and improving overall school performance.

Moreover, school heads in the Department of Education attended many seminars on strategic leadership, operational management, and instructional leadership. These seminars aim to help school heads set clear visions, make long-term plans, and make decisions that align with school goals. The training improves their ability to manage resources, staff, and daily activities, ensuring smooth school operations. It also emphasizes prioritizing academic excellence and student outcomes. Additionally, it focuses on building strong relationships with students, staff, parents, and the community to create a supportive and collaborative environment. According to interviews, these practices collectively enhance the school head's overall performance. Therefore, improvement in these areas will likely lead to better outcomes.

Batanes (2020) revealed that the school heads' practices significantly correlate to the school's performance. The result revealed that public school heads who are good at leading the schools always provide technical assistance, conduct clinical supervision, handle teachers' attitudes, and are experts in building connections with stakeholders. They are experts in carrying out the school's vision and mission. They are expert in all aspects of the school's operation. They are responsible for providing leadership in developing and implementing all educational programs and projects in the school.

Furthermore, school heads with outstanding performance know how to make effective decisions, implement instructions, lead, and communicate and deliver information to the teachers, parents, and stakeholders. They are the cornerstone on which learning communities function and grow. With successful school leadership, schools become effective learning incubators where students are educated, challenged, nurtured, and encouraged (Lathan,2021). Thus, the influence of school heads' performance affects the school's performance. School leaders play a crucial role in affecting the climate, attitude, reputation of their schools, and the performance of their teachers (Usop, 2019)

The table illustrates that school heads' leadership practices are significantly related to various aspects of school performance. The positive correlations suggest that effective leadership practices, such as strategic planning, efficient management, focus on teaching and learning, personal development, and building connections, are essential for high school performance. These findings are supported by recent studies, which underscore the critical role of school heads in driving educational success.

Problem 6. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' practices and the school performance in the search for most learning-focused schools?

Teachers' practices are central to shaping the educational experience and directly influence school performance. They are integral to the educational process, implementing instructional strategies, facilitating learning experiences, and fostering student engagement. Their responsibilities include lesson planning, classroom management, assessment strategies, and student interactions. The research underscores a significant correlation between teachers' practices and school performance. Effective teaching methods, such as differentiated instruction, formative assessment, collaborative learning, and technology integration, are linked with improved academic results and student success.

In this study, the relationship between the variables was examined, specifically between the teachers' practices and the school performance in the search for the most learning-focused school.

Table 21
Result of the Test on Relationship between Teachers' Practices
and School Performance

Teachers' Practices	School Performance					
	Performance Rating of the School Head	Significant Accomplishment in Fostering Learning	Impact of Accomplishment in Making Learning Happen	Innovation in Enhancing Learners Achievement	Awards	**Overall**
	r-value p-value	r-value p-value	r-value p-value	r-value p-value	r-value p-value	r-value p-value
Classroom Management	0.2363 0.0109 S	0.7099 0.0430 S	0.2109 0.0043 S	**0.3190 0.0340 S**	0.1097 0.0001 S	**0.3172 0.0185 S**
Clarity of Instruction	0.1904 0.0430 S	0.1945 0.0389 S	0.6450 0.0040 S	**0.1769 0.0010 S**	0.5328 0.0038 S	**0.3091 0.0181 S**
Cognitive Activation	0.6387 0.0439 S	0.4308 0.0010 S	0.1088 0.0012 S	**0.4790 0.0038 S**	0.3709 0.0004 S	**0.4056 0.0101 S**
Enhanced Activities	0.4006 0.0175 S	0.1077 0.0021 S	0.3208 0.0043 S	**0.7560 0.0004 S**	0.1054 0.0043 S	0.3389 0.0057 S
Overall	**0.3665 0.0288 S**	**0.3223 0.0213 S**	**0.3134 0.0035 S**	**0.4360 0.0098 S**	**0.3036 0.0118 S**	**0.3427 0.0130 S**

Legend: S – Significant   NS – Not Significant

Table 21 provides a detailed analysis of how various **teaching practices correlate with different aspects of school performance**. The teaching practices examined include classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activities. These practices are correlated with school performance indicators such as the school head's performance rating, significant accomplishment in fostering learning, impact of accomplishment in making learning happen, innovation in enhancing learners' achievement, and awards.

The results indicate that all teaching practices have significant positive correlations with the school performance variables, as evidenced by p-values less than 0.05. For instance, classroom management shows significant positive correlations with all school performance variables, with R-values ranging from 0.1097 to 0.7099. This suggests that effective classroom management is crucial for high school performance. Similarly, clarity of instruction has strong correlations, particularly with the impact of

accomplishment in making learning happen (r = 0.6450) and innovation in enhancing learners' achievement (r = 0.5328). This highlights the importance of explicit and practical instruction in teaching. Cognitive activation also demonstrates significant correlations, with R-values up to 0.6387 for the school head's performance rating. This underscores the critical role of engaging students cognitively in fostering educational success. Enhanced activities show significant positive correlations across all performance variables, indicating that enriching classroom activities are essential components of effective teaching.

Notably, the implications of these findings are profound. They suggest that teachers who excel in classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activities are likelier to achieve high performance in their schools. This aligns with recent literature on educational practices. For instance, Francisco et al. (2020) found that teachers' instructional practices significantly impact students' academic performance, emphasizing the importance of effective teaching strategies in educational settings. Similarly, Ambag (2020) highlighted the significant correlation between teachers' performance and students' learning outcomes, reinforcing that effective teaching practices are crucial for enhancing school performance.

Given the significant positive correlations observed in the table, the hypothesis that teachers' practices are positively related to school performance should be accepted. Recent studies support these findings, which underscore the critical role of teachers in driving educational success. For example, Francisco et al. (2020) concluded that teachers' instructional practices are vital for fostering a supportive educational environment and improving overall school performance.

More so, these findings have direct implications for DepEd's initiatives. Investing in comprehensive teacher development programs that equip teachers with the skills and knowledge to excel in these four areas is crucial. DepEd could consider developing training programs specifically tailored to each of the four practices, ensuring teachers gain practical skills and strategies for effective implementation, pairing experienced teachers with newer ones to provide ongoing support, guidance, and mentorship, and implementing a system of regular classroom observations with constructive feedback to identify areas for improvement and support teacher growth. Empowering teachers through practical training and support will not only improve individual classroom performance but also contribute to a more consistent and successful education system as a whole. This, in turn, will lead to improved student outcomes and a stronger educational foundation for the nation.

Didion et al. (2020) stated that one of the important factors influencing school performance is positively impacting student outcomes. They added that professional learning of the teacher prospects greatly influences student learning outcomes as it emphasizes precise teaching skills. The quality of education is directly associated with quality practices in teaching and learning and teachers' qualifications and knowledge. They also stressed the importance of teachers' knowledge and its relation to teaching practices. They suggest that teachers' knowledge informs their practices and actions in the classroom. They also suggest relationships exist between teachers' knowledge structures, classroom practice, and learners' achievements.

In summary, the table illustrates that effective teaching practices by teachers are significantly related to various aspects of school performance. The positive correlations suggest that classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activities are essential for achieving high school performance. Recent studies support these findings and highlight the importance of effective teaching in educational settings.

Problem 7. Is there a significant difference in the school heads' practices and teachers' practices when grouped according to their profile?

School heads are pivotal in guiding educational institutions, shaping policies, and fostering a conducive learning environment. Their practices encompass leadership qualities, decision-making abilities, instructional leadership, and community engagement, all of which influence school performance and organizational culture.

Examining significant differences in school heads' practices involves comparing how leaders with different profiles approach key responsibilities such as curriculum development, staff management, resource allocation, and student discipline. These comparisons help identify effective leadership strategies and areas for improvement.

Understanding the impact of different profiles on school heads' practices can inform policies and professional development initiatives to enhance leadership effectiveness. By identifying effective practices across different profiles, educational institutions can foster a culture of continuous improvement and maximize student achievement.

Table 22
Difference in the School Heads' Practices when Grouped
According to their Profile

School Heads Practices		Number of Years as School Head	Highest Educational Attainment	Position	Overall
Leading Strategically	F	1.26	.54	.19	**0.6633**
	sig.	.03*	.16	.48	**0.2233**
	Interp.	Significant	Not Significant	Not significant	**Not Significant**
Managing School Operations	F	2.75	.866	3.8	**2.472**
	sig.	.001*	.05	.35	**0.1337**
	Interp.	Significant	Not Significant	Not significant	**Not Significant**
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	F	1.78	.06	.08	**0.64**
	sig.	.00*	.056	.91	**0.322**
	Interp.	Significant	Not Significant	Not significant	**Not Significant**
Developing Self and Others	F	1.76	.07	3.7	**1.8433**
	Sig.	.00*	.058	.34	**0.1327**
	Interp.	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	**Not Significant**
Building Connections	F	4.84	.65	.276	**1.922**

	sig.	.00*	.87	.71	**0.5267**
	Interp.	Significant	Not Significant	Not significant	**Not Significant**
Overall	**F**	**5.76**	**.81**	**1.25**	**2.6067**
	sig.	**.00***	**.52**	**.42**	**0.313**
	Interp.	**Significant**	**Not Significant**	**Not significant**	**Not Significant**

Legend: S – Significant   NS – Not Significant

Table 22 presents the differences in **school heads' practices when grouped according to their profile,** such as their number of years as a school head, highest educational attainment, and position. The leadership practices examined include leading strategically, managing school operations, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections. The statistical analysis revealed that the number of years as a school head significantly influenced leadership practices in several areas. At the same time, the highest educational attainment and position did not yield significant differences in most cases. The overall analysis suggests that experience is a more critical factor in effective leadership than formal education or job title.

The **number of years as a school head** was found to have a significant effect on leading strategically (p = 0.03), managing school operations (p = 0.001), focusing on teaching and learning (p = 0.00), developing self and others (p = 0.00), and building connections (p = 0.00). These findings indicate that school heads with longer tenure tend to be more effective in leadership and management. With more experience, school leaders are better equipped to navigate complex administrative challenges, foster school-wide collaboration, and implement long-term strategic plans. This aligns with Cheng and Ma (2021), who found that experienced school heads demonstrate higher competence in decision-making, problem-solving, and instructional leadership, leading to improved school performance. Similarly, Brunzell et al. (2020) highlighted that leaders with over ten years of experience provide stability, informed decision-making, and strong stakeholder relationships essential for sustaining school effectiveness. The findings reinforce the importance of mentoring and leadership development programs to ensure newer school heads can acquire these critical skills earlier in their careers.

In contrast, the **highest educational attainment** was not significantly related to any leadership practices analyzed, with all p-values exceeding the 0.05 threshold. Having an advanced degree does not necessarily translate to better leadership performance in school management. While graduate studies provide theoretical knowledge, they may not sufficiently prepare school heads for the real-world challenges of educational leadership. This finding is consistent with Gurley and Dozier (2020), who argued that practical leadership experience and on-the-job training are more influential than formal education in determining leadership effectiveness. However, Castaño and Litao (2021) suggested that school heads with higher educational attainment may have better instructional supervision skills, though this does not necessarily extend to broader leadership functions. These insights indicate that professional development programs should focus more on experiential learning, leadership training, and hands-on mentorship rather than solely emphasizing academic qualifications.

Similarly, position within the hierarchy (e.g., Principal I, Principal II, Head Teacher) did not show significant differences in leadership practices, as all p-values were above 0.05. This implies that leadership effectiveness is not necessarily determined by rank but by experience and the ability to apply strategic

leadership practices. These findings challenge traditional assumptions that higher-ranking officials automatically exhibit better leadership qualities. Kramer et al. (2020) found that leadership effectiveness depends more on communication skills, decision-making abilities, and adaptability than formal authority. The lack of significant differences across positions suggests that all school heads should be given equal opportunities for continuous training and professional growth to enhance their leadership skills regardless of their title.

Overall, the hypothesis stating that school heads' leadership practices significantly differ based on their years in service is accepted, as statistical significance was found in multiple areas. However, the hypotheses that educational attainment and position influence leadership effectiveness are rejected, as no significant differences were observed. These findings have important policy implications for leadership training in education. Rather than focusing solely on academic credentials or hierarchical promotion, school leadership programs should prioritize mentorship, hands-on training, and leadership coaching to equip school heads with the necessary skills for effective management. Future research should also explore the impact of other factors, such as personality traits, leadership styles, and professional development initiatives, on school performance. By shifting the focus from formal qualifications to practical experience and strategic training, educational institutions can cultivate more effective and adaptable school leaders, ultimately improving overall school performance and student achievement.

Table 23
Differences in the Teachers' Practices when Grouped
According to their Profile

Teachers Practices		Number of years as a teacher	Highest Educational attainment	Position	Overall
Classroom Management	F	.993	9.72	3.191	**4.635**
	sig.	.424	.00*	.0107	**0.1449**
	Interp.	Not Significant	Significant	Not significant	**Not Significant**
Clarity of Instruction	F	1.097	4.139	2.534	**2.59**
	sig.	.365	.008*	.290	**0.221**
	Interp.	Not Significant	Significant	Not significant	**Not Significant**
Cognitive Activation	F	.238	8.97	.1.260	**3.4893**
	sig.	.945	.00*	.23	**0.3917**
	Interp.	Not Significant	Significant	Not significant	**Not Significant**
Enhanced Activities	F	1.058	5.77	2.543	**3.1237**
	sig.	.386	.041*	.56	**0.329**
	Interp.	Not Significant	Significant	Not significant	**Not Significant**
Overall	**F**	**.772**	**6.095**	**2.067**	**2.978**
	sig.	**.571**	**.000***	**.17**	**0.247**

	Inter p.	Not Significant	Significant	Not significant	Not Significant

Legend: S – Significant   NS – Not Significant

Table 23 shows test differences in the **teachers' practices when grouped according to their profile**. This indicates that the p-values of the number of years as a teacher and the teachers practices in terms of leading classroom management **(F= .993, p=.424),** clarity of instruction **(F=1.097, p=.365),** cognitive activation **(F= .238 p=.945)**, enhanced activities **(F=1.058 p=.386)** and the overall teachers' practices **(F=.773, p=.571)** were more significant than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis (H02) was accepted. Therefore, there was no significant difference between the years as a teacher and the teachers' practices. This indicates that a teacher's years in the profession do not significantly affect their teaching practices. This implies that the number of years of teaching experience is not a factor in teachers' knowledge of classroom management, clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and enhanced activities. The study found that whether teachers have extensive or limited experience, their instructional methods, classroom management techniques, assessment approaches, and student interactions are evaluated similarly. Therefore, the quality of teaching practices cannot be attributed solely to the duration of a teacher's career. Instead, factors such as pedagogical training, opportunities for professional development, instructional methods, and personal teaching philosophy are more influential in determining how effectively teachers engage students and support learning.

Khan et al. (2019) similarly argue that the number of years a teacher has been in the profession does not significantly impact their teaching practices. They emphasize the importance of ongoing improvement in teaching skills and strategies to enhance effective teaching and student engagement within educational environments.

In terms of the p-values of the highest educational attainment and the teachers practices in terms of leading classroom management **(F= 9.72, p=.00),** clarity of instruction **(F=4.139, p=.008), cognitive activation (F= 8.97 p=.00)**, enhanced activities **(F=5.77 p=.041)** and the overall teachers' practices **(F=6.095, p=.000)** were less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis (H02) was rejected. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the highest educational attainment and the teachers' practices. This indicates that the level of education achieved by teachers has a noticeable impact on how they perform their professional duties. This implies that teachers with different educational qualifications demonstrate varying approaches in their instructional methods, classroom management techniques, assessment strategies, and student interactions. This variation implies that higher levels of education may contribute to different or more advanced teaching practices.

Noureen (2020) indicated that teachers who have attained higher levels of education often incorporate advanced pedagogical theories, possess more profound subject knowledge, and employ innovative teaching strategies. In contrast, those with lower educational levels may adopt different teaching styles or rely on more traditional methods.

Additionally, professional development, such as pursuing higher levels of education, supports teachers in enhancing their knowledge and skills in utilizing technology for teaching purposes. This finding aligns with Voogt's (2020) study, which demonstrated that teachers benefited from professional development programs by acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Lastly, indicate that the p-values of the position and the teachers practices in terms of leading classroom management **(F=3.191, p=.0107),** clarity of instruction **(F=2.534, p=.290), cognitive activation (F=1.260**

p=.23), enhanced activities **(F=2.543 p=.56)** and the overall teachers' practices **(F=2.067, p=.17)** were more significant than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis (H02) was accepted. Therefore, there was no significant difference between the position of the teacher and the teachers' practices. This suggests that the specific role or rank teachers hold within their educational institution does not notably affect how they conduct their teaching duties. Whether a teacher holds a senior position, such as department head or coordinator, or a junior position, such as classroom teacher or assistant teacher, their instructional methods, classroom management techniques, assessment approaches, and student interactions are perceived or evaluated similarly.

Simmons et al. (2019) argued that teachers in different positions can demonstrate effective teaching strategies, stressing the importance of providing comprehensive support for all teachers in their professional growth. They also emphasized that the specific position or rank of teachers within the school hierarchy does not significantly impact their teaching practices. This highlights the critical need to prioritize the enhancement of teachers' professional skills, competencies, and continuous development to improve overall teaching quality and enrich student learning experiences.

Multiple comparison tests on the analyses below present Tukey's multiple comparison tests on teachers' practices as an extension of the analysis of variance presented above. Table 24 presents Tukey's multiple comparison tests on teachers' assessment of their school heads' practices when classified according to educational attainment.

Discussions

The assessment of school heads' practices, teachers' practices, and school performance in the Division of Bukidnon unveiled several noteworthy observations. Many school heads were highly experienced, commanding significant respect and authority in the educational community, with a majority having 11-15 years of experience that combined teaching skills with growing administrative responsibilities. Moreover, many school heads had pursued Master's Degree units, indicating a strong academic foundation and suggesting potential benefits in encouraging further educational advancement, notably toward doctoral degrees. Additionally, Principal I was the predominant position held by school heads.

Furthermore, the teaching staff in Bukidnon demonstrated seasoned professionalism and community respect, with most teachers having 16-20 years of experience, indicative of a stable and knowledgeable workforce. The attainment of Master's degree units among many teachers highlighted their commitment to continuous professional development and underlined their advanced academic knowledge and pedagogical skills.

Dellomas (2020) emphasized the critical role of school heads' practices in influencing school performance and teaching methods, historically and contemporarily, to ensure effective operation and enduring success in educational institutions. Therefore, school heads' practices are pivotal for achieving excellence and sustainability in education through extensive experience. This highlights a significant correlation between school heads' practices and school performance, illustrating the profound impact of effective leadership on educational institution success.

Moreover, effective leadership fosters a positive, supportive environment that enhances teacher performance and student engagement, thereby improving academic outcomes. Establishing robust stakeholder relationships, including teachers, students, parents, and the community, is crucial for high performance and is facilitated by proactive school heads. Additionally, the ability of school heads to make data-driven decisions is critical for identifying areas needing improvement and implementing targeted

strategies, ensuring efficient resource allocation for enhanced educational outcomes. The correlation also underscores the importance of maintaining high standards and accountability measures to motivate stakeholders to achieve or surpass expectations.

In addition, leadership practices and tenure as a school head underscore how experience influences leadership effectiveness. Over time, school heads transition from learning and adaptation to refining strategies and developing deep institutional knowledge. This includes building stronger relationships, strategic planning, crisis management, and fostering a collaborative and innovative school environment.

It was also found that teachers' practices and educational attainment highlight the impact of academic qualifications on teaching performance. Teachers with higher educational attainment often bring advanced pedagogical understanding and subject matter expertise to their classrooms, enhancing teaching effectiveness and student engagement.

In furtherance, building connections practices were rated highest, indicating school heads' strong emphasis on fostering relationships and networks within and beyond the school community. This involves engaging with various stakeholders to create a supportive and collaborative educational environment. Conversely, leading strategic practices were rated lowest, suggesting potential areas for improvement in setting long-term goals, developing a school vision, and aligning resources with strategic priorities.

Lastly, among teachers' practices, clarity of instruction received the highest rating, while classroom management received the lowest. This underscores the multifaceted responsibilities of educational leaders in promoting effective teaching practices and maintaining positive classroom environments. Addressing both areas through targeted interventions can optimize learning experiences and promote academic excellence.

These findings provide valuable insights into the interplay between school head practices, teachers' practices, and school performance. They lay a foundation for understanding how factors such as length of service influence nuanced aspects of school head practices and how teachers' practices contribute to educational attainment in school settings.

Problem 8. Based on the study's findings, what school improvement plan can be designed based on school heads' and teachers' practices?

A researcher has developed a training program based on the findings and experiences of school heads and teachers regarding their impact on school performance. This program aims to address challenges related to strategic leadership practices for school heads and classroom management for teachers. Therefore, this training initiative will allow school heads to receive guidance and updated skills in strategic leadership practices. At the same time, teachers will focus on enhancing their classroom management abilities through a comprehensive three-year development plan.

Moreover, this development plan aligns with the Department of Education's goal outlined in DO 24 s. 2020, which emphasizes the national adoption and implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads.

THREE-YEAR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Introduction
A School Improvement Plan (SIP) is a strategic roadmap that guides educational institutions in enhancing learning outcomes, optimizing school performance, and fostering a positive and supportive learning environment. By establishing clear objectives and targeted strategies, a SIP ensures that resources are efficiently allocated to address critical priorities and drive meaningful improvements. Typically spanning

three to five years, this plan outlines specific goals, action steps, and assessment measures across various domains, including instructional quality, student engagement, faculty development, and operational effectiveness.

Recognizing education's dynamic and evolving nature, this Three-Year School Improvement Plan is designed to systematically address the school's pressing needs while fostering long-term growth and sustainability. The plan aims to build a resilient, inclusive, and high-performing school community grounded in data-driven decision-making and stakeholder collaboration. This SIP seeks to enhance leadership capacity, strengthen classroom management practices, and promote a culture of excellence through awards and recognition by focusing on key areas essential for institutional progress.

Rationale

This SIP was formulated after a comprehensive assessment of the school's current performance indicators, operational challenges, and emerging educational trends. Research suggests that schools with strong leadership, effective classroom management, and a well-structured recognition system demonstrate higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and enhanced teacher motivation.

Leading Strategically- A school's success largely depends on its leadership's ability to make informed decisions, implement strategic planning, and set clear, attainable goals. Effective leadership fosters collaboration, innovation, and data-driven decision-making, ensuring policies and initiatives align with the institution's vision and mission. Strengthening leadership capacities will enable administrators and faculty to navigate challenges proactively and create a sustainable framework for continuous improvement.

Classroom Management – The learning environment significantly influences student engagement, behavior, and academic performance. Equipping teachers with modern classroom management strategies ensures a structured, inclusive, and conducive atmosphere for learning. Evidence-based techniques such as positive discipline, differentiated instruction, and student-centered learning approaches can improve classroom dynamics, minimize disruptions, and enhance teacher-student interactions.

Awards and Recognition – A well-structured awards and recognition system boosts morale, motivation, and overall school culture. Recognizing and rewarding academic, extracurricular, or professional achievements creates a sense of accomplishment and encourages continuous improvement. Establishing clear and meaningful recognition programs for students and educators can cultivate a culture of excellence, inspire perseverance, and reinforce positive behavior.

General Objectives:

Based on the preceding findings, the 3-year Development Plan is hereby proposed. It aims to:

enhance strategic planning and goal-setting skills among school leaders;

strengthen teachers' classroom management skills to create a more conducive learning environment; and

promote a culture of excellence.

Table 26 Matrix of School Improvement Plan

Year 1: Foundational Framework							
Areas of Concern	Specific Objectives	Strategies/ Activities	Time Frame	Person/s Involved	Source of Fund	Estimated Budget	Expected Outcome

Leading Strategically Practices	To establish a foundational understanding of strategic leadership among school heads.	Conduct workshops on strategic leadership and planning	Q1-Q2	School Heads, Education Program Supervisors (EPS)	DepEd, School MOOE	₱100,000	School heads have a foundational understanding of strategic leadership.
	To develop strategic goals aligned with the School Improvement Plan (SIP).	Develop strategic goals aligned with the School Improve-ment Plan (SIP).	Q3-Q4	School Heads, Teachers	School MOOE, PTA	₱50,000	Clear strategic goals are outlined in the SIP.
	To build collaborative leadership skills among school heads and staff.	Initiate team-building and leadership training programs	Q4	School Heads, Teachers	LGU, School MOOE	₱30,000	Enhanced collaboration and team synergy among school leaders.
Classroom Management	To establish basic classroom management practices for teachers.	Training on effective classroom management techniques	Q1	Teachers, Master Teachers	DepEd, LGU	₱80,000	Teachers acquire foundational skills in classroom management
	To enhance classroom environments through practical feedback.	Observation and feedback sessions on classroom management	Q2-Q4	Teachers, Master Teachers	School MOOE	₱50,000	Improved classroom environments and teacher confidence.
	To introduce evidence-based strategies for effective classroom control.	Workshops on evidence-based behavior management	Q3	Teachers, Master Teachers	DepEd	₱40,000	Teachers implement proven strategies, resulting in better student engagement.

Awards	To create a culture of recognition and motivation for school personnel	Establish a school awards committee and develop criteria for awards	Q1	School Heads, Teachers, PTA	School MOOE	₱20,000	Award criteria and committee established
	To motivate staff and celebrate achievements.	Launch a quarterly recognition program for best practices in classroom management and leadership	Q2-Q4	School Heads, Teachers, PTA	DepEd, Sponsors	₱40,000	Increased motivation and morale among school staff.
	To implement a recognition system that encourages student engagement.	Develop a "Student of the Month" program	Q2	Teachers, School Heads	LGU, School MOOE	₱25,000	Increased student participation and positive behavior.

Year 2: Strengthening Initiatives

Areas of Concern	Specific Objectives	Strategies/ Activities	Time Frame	Person/s Involved	Source of Fund	Estimated Budget	Expected Outcome
Leading Strategically Practices	To enhance the strategic planning and implementa-tion skills of school heads.	Advanced strategic leadership workshops	Q1-Q2	School Head, EPS	DepEd, LGU	₱120,000	School heads enhance strategic planning and decision-making skills.
	To foster partnerships for strategic growth.	Strategic planning collaboration with neighbo-ring schools	Q3-Q4	School Heads, EPS	DepEd, Sponsors	₱60,000	School heads gain insights through collaboration
	To monitor and review	Quarterly review	Throughout the year	School Heads, EPS	School MOOE	₱40,000	School heads regularly track

	progress effectively.	meetings and progress tracking					and adjust strategies based on progress.
Classroom Management	To deepen teachers' skills in classroom management through specialized techniques	Training on differentia-ted classroom manage-ment for diverse learners	Q1-Q2	Teachers, Master Teachers	DepEd, LGU	₱90,000	Teachers learn and apply differentiated classroom management strategies
	To foster a culture of mentorship and continuous improvement.	Mentorship and peer observations focused on classroom manage-ment	Q3-Q4	Teachers, Master Teachers	School MOOE	₱50,000	Strengthened classroom practices through mentorship
	To utilize technology for classroom management.	Integration of digital tools for classroom monitoring	Q2-Q3	Teachers, IT Staff	LGU, DepEd	₱70,000	Teachers efficiently use technology for effective classroom control.
Awards	To institutionalize the recognition program and broaden the scope	Expand recognition program to include innovation in classroom manage-ment and leadership	Q1	School Heads, Teachers, PTA	School MOOE, Sponsors	₱30,000	Broader scope of recognition that includes innovations
	To celebrate and motivate high achievers publicly.	Host an annual awards ceremony to honor outstan-ding contribu-tions	Q4	School Heads, Teachers, PTA	DepEd, LGU	₱100,000	Public recognition and strengthened morale for outstanding staff

	To acknowledge student achievements in academics and co-curricular activities.	Annual student awards day with various categories	Q4	Teachers, PTA, Sponsors	Sponsors, LGU	₱50,000	Enhanced student motivation and engagement in academics.

Year 3: Institutionalizing Growth

Areas of Concern	Specific Objectives	Strategies/ Activities	Time Frame	Person/s Involved	Source of Fund	Estimated Budget	Expected Outcome
Leading Strategically Practices	To embed strategic leadership as an ongoing practice among school heads	Implement strategic leadership certification for school heads	Q1-Q2	School Heads, EPS	DepEd, NGO	₱150,000	School heads are certified in strategic leadership.
	Form leadership teams for sustainable initiatives.	Form strategic leadership teams to lead and sustain initiatives	Q3-Q4	School Heads, EPS, Teachers	School MOOE, LGU	₱80,000	Sustainable leadership teams are established
	To assess and refine strategic leadership practices.	Conduct leadership performance evaluations and improvement workshops	Q4	School Heads, EPS	LGU, DepEd	₱50,000	Continuous improvement in leadership practices.
Classroom Management	To sustain and innovate in classroom management practices across the school	Develop a classroom management handbook with best practices	Q1	Teachers, Master Teachers	DepEd, LGU	₱50,000	A comprehensive handbook is created for consistent practices

	To maintain ongoing professional development for teachers.	Implement a continuous professional development program focused on classroom management	Q2-Q4	Teachers, Master Teachers	DepEd, School MOOE	₱100,000	Ongoing teacher development leads to sustained classroom management improvement
	To introduce innovative classroom management solutions.	Pilot innovative management strategies and tools	Q3	Teachers, EPS	LGU, DepEd	₱60,000	Innovative solutions integrated into classrooms.
Awards	To make awards and recognition a permanent aspect of school culture	Establish an endowment fund for the awards program	Q1-Q2	School Heads, PTA, Sponsors	Sponsors, LGU	₱200,000	Sustainable funding for ongoing awards
	To expand recognition categories for students and staff.	Introduce new award categories for exemplary student and staff initiatives	Q3	Teachers, School Heads	School MOOE, Sponsors	₱50,000	Broadened recognition that highlights diverse achievements.
	To showcase successes and foster school pride.	Celebrate an annual awards and school performance day to showcase successes	Q4	School Heads, Teachers, PTA	DepEd, Sponsors	₱150,000	Celebrated achievements and reinforced school pride

Conclusions

The following conclusions are hereby drawn from the study.

The study revealed that the highest-performing indicators for school heads' and teachers' practices are building connections, clarity of instruction, and school heads' performance ratings, highlighting key strengths in leadership and instructional methodologies. School heads excelled in fostering relationships within the school community, enhancing stakeholder trust and collaboration. This practice supports a positive environment conducive to both teaching and learning. Similarly, teachers demonstrated

exceptional clarity of instruction, ensuring that students effectively comprehend lessons, leading to improved academic outcomes.

Moreover, the significant relationships identified between school heads' and teachers' practices and overall school performance underscore the integrated role of leadership and pedagogy in achieving educational success. School heads' strategic management and instructional guidance complemented teachers' classroom practices, creating a synergistic effect that elevated school performance. These findings emphasize the importance of sustained professional development for school heads and teachers, ensuring that they remain adaptive to the evolving needs of the educational landscape.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following are the recommendations:

1. School heads should foster a collaborative leadership environment by involving teachers and staff in strategic planning and decision-making processes. This can be achieved through regular team-building activities and leadership training programs emphasizing teamwork and shared vision.

2. Teachers should participate in comprehensive training sessions that introduce innovative classroom management strategies tailored to the diverse needs of students. These training programs should include practical simulations, observation and feedback sessions, and peer mentoring to foster collaboration and the sharing of best practices.

3. Schools should engage the broader school community, including parents and local organizations, in recognition programs. This can include sponsoring awards, participating in award ceremonies, public acknowledgment of achievements, and fostering a sense of community pride and support.

4. School heads should utilize the designed SIP as a guide to strengthen strategic planning, enhance classroom management practices, and address identified gaps. The SIP should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its alignment with evolving educational priorities and challenges.

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