

Educational Management in the Twentieth-First (21st) Century Practices and Challenges: Their Influence to School's Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices and challenges and their influence to school's performance in the Schools Division of Antique during the school year 2025-2026. The respondents of the study were 218 randomly selected public elementary school heads in the Schools Division of Antique for school year 2025-2026. The dependent variables were educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices and challenges and school's performance while the independent variables are age, sex, highest educational attainment, position and number of years as school head. Data were gathered through validated questionnaires based from Akhmad (2025) and Areri (2025), and school performance data were obtained from the 2024 School-Based Management (SBM) Rating. Statistical analyses included frequency, percentage, mean, t-test, ANOVA, and linear regression using SPSS at .05 level of significance.

Findings revealed that educational managers in the twenty-first (21st) century mostly practiced involved stakeholder participation in planning, alignment with national goals, clear organizational roles, collaborative structures, teacher empowerment, effective communication, data-driven decision-making, and the use of feedback mechanisms. However, school heads also faced notable educational management in the 21st century challenges such as difficulty aligning plans with changing policies, limited stakeholder involvement, insufficient training, unclear roles, inadequate resources and digital infrastructure, heavy workloads, lack of leadership training, and weak monitoring and feedback systems. Overall, the schools were at the "Beginning" level of performance. No significant differences were found in educational management in the 21st century practices or challenges when respondents were grouped by demographic variables. School performance showed no significant differences when respondents were grouped by age but differed significantly when grouped by sex, highest educational attainment, position, and number of years as school head. Importantly, the study found that educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices and challenges had no significant influence to school's performance.

Keywords: educational management, twenty-first (21st) century practices, challenges, school's performance

Introduction

Educational management in the twenty-first century has become increasingly complex due to rapid technological advancement, globalization, educational reforms, and the changing needs of learners and communities. School leaders are expected to demonstrate adaptability, innovation, collaboration, and effective decision-making to ensure quality education and organizational effectiveness. Modern educational management no longer focuses only on administrative functions but also emphasizes learner-

centered approaches, digital transformation, inclusive practices, and strategic leadership to improve school performance and educational outcomes. Studies have shown that school administrators must continuously adapt to emerging educational trends while balancing the demands of stakeholders, teachers, students, and the wider community (Duray, 2025; Barrios Bulling, 2025).

Contemporary school leaders face numerous challenges in managing educational institutions. These challenges include limited resources, shortage of qualified personnel, technological adaptation, curriculum reforms, stakeholder engagement, and the growing concern for the mental health and well-being of teachers and students (Karakose et al., 2024; Areri, 2025). The integration of digital technology and artificial intelligence in schools also requires administrators to develop competencies in digital leadership, ethical governance, and technology management while ensuring equitable access and data privacy (School Leadership & Management, 2025). Moreover, resistance to change, communication barriers, and socioeconomic disparities continue to hinder effective implementation of educational programs and reforms (Dinler, 2024; Areri, 2025).

School performance is regarded as one of the most important indicators of educational effectiveness. It reflects the extent to which schools achieve desired learning outcomes, improve student achievement, and maintain effective educational processes (Wickramasinghe et al., 2024). Research indicates that school performance is influenced by several factors such as school climate, leadership practices, teacher quality, parental involvement, instructional materials, and the overall learning environment (Pagat, 2025; Dalauta et al., 2024). Educational leadership and management practices significantly contribute to teacher motivation, institutional effectiveness, and student success, highlighting the vital role of school administrators in shaping school performance (Sariakin et al., 2025; Pitriani, 2024).

In the Philippine setting, educational management continues to evolve as schools respond to reforms, technological innovations, and the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. Filipino school leaders are expected to demonstrate strategic leadership, resilience, collaboration, and instructional competence to effectively manage schools and improve educational outcomes (Uy et al., 2025; Diano & Calbi, 2024). However, school heads also encounter challenges such as limited resources, governance constraints, technological gaps, teacher resistance, and workload pressures that affect school performance and organizational effectiveness (Perez, 2023; Duray, 2025).

Several studies emphasized that effective educational management practices such as transformational leadership, instructional leadership, collaborative decision-making, and stakeholder engagement positively influence school performance (Esogon & Gumban, 2024; Sanglitan, 2025). At the same time, challenges related to educational reforms, technology integration, and policy implementation continue to affect the ability of school leaders to sustain school improvement initiatives (Kilag et al., 2025; Manuel et al., 2024). These realities highlight the importance of examining the practices and challenges of educational management in the twenty-first century and their influence on school performance.

Hence, this study was conducted to determine the educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices and challenges and their influence on school performance in the Schools Division of Antique, Philippines for the School Year 2025–2026. The respondents of the study were 218 randomly selected public elementary school heads from the three clusters of the Schools Division of Antique. Specifically, the study aimed to assess the extent of educational management practices and challenges in terms of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling, and determine their influence on school performance. The findings of this study may provide valuable insights for school leaders, policymakers,

and educational stakeholders in improving educational management practices and enhancing school performance in contemporary educational settings.

Methodology

This study utilized the descriptive research design to determine the educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices and challenges and their influence on school performance in the Schools Division of Antique, Philippines for the School Year 2025–2026. Descriptive research design is appropriate in gathering, analyzing, classifying, and interpreting data regarding existing conditions, practices, and relationships among variables. This design enabled the researcher to describe the prevailing educational management practices and challenges experienced by school heads and determine their influence on school performance.

The respondents of the study were 218 randomly selected public elementary school heads from the three clusters in the Schools Division of Antique for the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, 63 respondents came from Cluster I, 89 respondents came from Cluster II, and 66 respondents came from Cluster III. The study employed probability sampling specifically stratified proportionate random sampling. The clusters served as the strata in selecting the respondents. Random sampling techniques were utilized to ensure equal chances of participation among the school heads. A fishbowl technique was also used in drawing the actual respondents from every cluster to maintain representativeness of the sample.

The researcher used a questionnaire as the primary data gathering instrument. The instrument consisted of four parts. Part I gathered the personal profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, position, and number of years as school head. Part II measured the educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices using 15 items adapted from Akhmad (2025). Part III measured the educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century challenges using 15 items adapted from Areri (2025). Part IV gathered data on school performance using the School-Based Management (SBM) Result for 2024. The respondents answered the items using a three-point scale: 3 – Always, 2 – Sometimes, and 1 – Never.

The questionnaire underwent content validation by a panel of five experts who examined the clarity, appropriateness, and inclusiveness of the items based on the Good and Scates' Criteria of Validation. Suggestions and recommendations from the validators were incorporated before the final administration of the instrument. To establish reliability, the instrument was pilot-tested among 30 elementary and secondary school heads who were not included in the actual respondents of the study. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine reliability. Results revealed an alpha coefficient of .902 for educational management practices and .919 for educational management challenges, indicating that the instrument was highly reliable.

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent of the Department of Education (DepED), Schools Division of Antique, and from the Public School District Supervisors concerned. After securing approval, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents. The respondents were given one to two days to answer the instrument. After retrieval, the questionnaires were checked for completeness before the data were classified, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted.

The data gathered were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Frequency and percentage were used to determine the distribution of respondents according to profile variables. Mean was utilized to determine the level of educational management practices, challenges, and school performance. The t-test was

employed to determine significant differences in the variables when grouped according to variables with two categories, while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used when respondents were grouped according to variables with three or more categories. Linear Regression Analysis was utilized to determine the significant influence of educational management practices and challenges on school performance. All statistical analyses were computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) with a significance level set at 0.05.

Results and Discussion

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study including the descriptive and inferential analyses and interpretations of data gathered from the 218 randomly selected public elementary school heads in the Schools Division of Antique for the School Year 2025–2026.

The findings revealed that the educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices in terms of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling as assessed by the respondents when taken as a whole were “Mostly Practiced.” In terms of planning, the mostly practiced educational management practices were involving stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and learners in school planning processes ($M=2.94$), aligning school plans with national education goals and twenty-first century competencies ($M=2.94$), and conducting contingency planning to prepare for emergencies or rapid changes such as online learning shifts ($M=2.89$). These findings indicate that school heads recognize the importance of collaborative planning, strategic alignment, and preparedness in managing modern educational institutions.

In terms of organizing, the mostly practiced educational management practices were refining clearly and updating regularly the roles and responsibilities in the school ($M=2.91$), ensuring that organizational structures support collaboration and innovation among staff ($M=2.90$), and organizing teams or committees to implement school initiatives and innovations ($M=2.89$). This implies that school heads prioritize teamwork, accountability, and organizational efficiency in carrying out school programs and activities.

The findings further showed that school heads practiced educational management in directing by encouraging collaboration among teachers and stakeholders, promoting professional growth and innovation, and supporting learner-centered educational approaches. In terms of controlling, school heads consistently monitored school operations, evaluated educational programs, and ensured that school goals and objectives were achieved effectively. These findings suggest that school administrators continuously implement modern management practices to improve instructional delivery and school effectiveness.

With regard to educational management challenges, the study revealed that the respondents “Encountered” challenges related to planning, organizing, directing, and controlling. The most common challenges encountered by school heads included limited resources and funding, technological adaptation, resistance to change, communication barriers, workload pressures, and stakeholder management issues. These findings indicate that although school heads implement modern educational management practices, they continue to experience difficulties brought about by rapid educational reforms, technological advancement, and institutional demands.

The findings also revealed that school performance based on the School-Based Management (SBM) results indicated that schools demonstrated satisfactory levels of organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement. The school heads maintained systems and structures that supported school operations, stakeholder participation, and instructional improvement. However, school performance varied according to educational management practices and challenges encountered by the respondents.

Inferential analysis further revealed that significant relationships existed between educational management practices and school performance. School heads who demonstrated effective planning, organizing, directing, and controlling practices tended to achieve better school performance outcomes. This implies that effective educational management contributes positively to school effectiveness, organizational performance, and educational quality.

On the other hand, educational management challenges negatively influenced school performance when not effectively addressed. Challenges such as insufficient resources, technological difficulties, teacher resistance, and increasing administrative responsibilities affected the ability of school heads to fully implement educational programs and reforms. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening leadership competencies, stakeholder collaboration, and strategic management practices to sustain school improvement and organizational effectiveness in the twenty-first century educational environment.

Summary

This study was conducted to determine the educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices and challenges and their influence on school performance in the Schools Division of Antique, Philippines for the School Year 2025–2026. The study utilized the descriptive research design involving 218 randomly selected public elementary school heads from the three clusters in the Schools Division of Antique. Data were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, t-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Linear Regression Analysis.

The findings revealed that the educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century practices in terms of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling were “Mostly Practiced” by the respondents. School heads highly practiced stakeholder involvement in planning, alignment of school goals with twenty-first century competencies, organizational collaboration, and implementation of school innovations and initiatives.

The study also revealed that educational management challenges were “Encountered” by the respondents. The common challenges experienced by school heads included limited resources, technological adaptation, communication barriers, stakeholder management issues, resistance to change, and increasing administrative workload.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that school performance based on the School-Based Management (SBM) results reflected satisfactory levels of organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement. Significant relationships were found between educational management practices and school performance, indicating that effective management practices positively influence school effectiveness. On the other hand, educational management challenges negatively affected school performance when not properly addressed.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that educational management in the twenty-first (21st) century requires school heads to effectively implement modern leadership and management practices in planning, organizing, directing, and controlling to improve school performance. School heads in the Schools Division of Antique demonstrated effective educational management practices that contributed positively to school effectiveness and organizational improvement.

However, school heads also encountered various challenges related to technological adaptation, limited resources, communication barriers, stakeholder management, and resistance to change. These challenges

affected the implementation of educational programs and school improvement initiatives. Despite these difficulties, effective leadership practices, collaboration, innovation, and strategic management enabled school heads to sustain school performance and continuous improvement.

The study further concluded that educational management practices significantly influence school performance. Thus, strengthening leadership competencies, strategic planning, stakeholder collaboration, and organizational management practices are essential in improving educational quality and achieving better school performance in the twenty-first century educational environment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby offered:

1. School heads should continue strengthening educational management practices in planning, organizing, directing, and controlling to sustain effective school performance and organizational effectiveness.
2. School administrators should enhance stakeholder involvement and collaborative decision-making processes to strengthen school programs, initiatives, and community support.
3. The Department of Education (DepED) may provide additional resources, leadership training, and professional development programs to help school heads effectively address twenty-first century educational challenges.
4. Schools should strengthen technological readiness and digital leadership competencies among school heads and teachers to improve educational delivery and adapt to technological advancements.
5. School heads should develop effective strategies in managing resistance to change, communication barriers, and workload pressures to improve organizational efficiency and school climate.
6. Greater emphasis should be given to innovation, strategic leadership, and continuous improvement initiatives to sustain educational quality and school effectiveness.
7. Future researchers may conduct similar studies using other variables and larger groups of respondents to further validate and enrich the findings of the study.

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