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# School Heads' Leadership Skills and Performance: A Basis for Strengthening Effective School Leadership

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the pivotal role of effective school leadership in enhancing educational outcomes within the San Antonio District, Schools Division of Nueva Ecija. The study systematically examines school heads' profiles, perceived leadership skills, and performance, elucidating areas for improvement and professional development. The research utilized a questionnaire developed by Cruz (2023), demonstrating strong reliability with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranging from 0.828 to 0.964. Findings revealed that most school heads were middle-aged males, all married, with significant experience in educational leadership roles. Both school heads and teachers rated their leadership skills as "Highly Proficient," particularly in communication, collaboration, and critical thinking. Performance

assessments indicated exceptional leadership in strategic management, instructional oversight, and professional development. However, a statistically significant difference emerged, with teachers perceiving their leadership capabilities as more effective than school heads. Notably, the study found no significant correlations between school heads' demographic variables and their performance, yet a strong positive relationship was established between leadership skills and performance outcomes. Based on these insights, an action plan was developed to enhance the leadership capabilities of public-school heads. The findings underscore the importance of targeted professional development and collaboration between school heads and teachers. They provide a framework for continuous improvement in educational leadership and ultimately contribute to better student success.

**Keywords:** *school leadership, educational outcomes, leadership skills, performance assessment, professional development.*

## INTRODUCTION

School leadership plays a vital role in shaping the direction, culture, and overall performance of a school. In the present educational setting, school heads are no longer viewed only as administrators who manage daily operations; they are also expected to be instructional leaders, decision-makers, mentors, resource managers, and partners of teachers, learners, parents, and the community. Their leadership skills influence how school programs are implemented, how teachers are supported, and how learners are guided toward better educational outcomes.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education recognizes the importance of quality school leadership through the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). The PPSSH serves as a public statement of professional accountability that guides school heads in reflecting on and improving their own practice. It emphasizes that school heads must demonstrate effective leadership and management to improve teacher quality

and learner achievement. The standards also highlight the need for school heads to continuously develop themselves professionally in response to the changing demands of basic education.

Recent literature further supports the importance of effective school leadership. The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report 2024/5 emphasized that leadership in education contributes to better education outcomes when it is guided by clear vision, shared responsibility, and practices that support learning. The report also stressed that good leadership depends on context and must respond to the needs of schools, teachers, learners, and communities. Similarly, Karatas et al. (2024) found a positive and significant relationship between effective leadership qualities and effective school characteristics, showing that the way principals lead is closely connected to how schools' function and improve.

Several recent studies also show that school heads' leadership affects teacher-related outcomes. Punzalan and De Jesus (2024), in a systematic literature review, reported that effective school leadership positively influences teachers' performance through clear goals, support, positive school culture, communication, trust, and respect. He et al. (2024) likewise emphasized that principals' instructional leadership is a significant predictor of teachers' professional development and instructional practices. These findings suggest that the performance of teachers and the improvement of schools are strongly influenced by the leadership practices demonstrated by school heads.

Local studies also affirm the relevance of examining school heads' leadership skills. Battad (2024) found that instructional leadership skills of school heads were significantly related to elementary teachers' self-efficacy, particularly in areas such as instructional support, communication, and visibility as leaders. Uy (2024) also examined the relationship between school heads' leadership styles and teachers' performance, showing the continuing interest in understanding how leadership behavior affects school personnel. Meanwhile, Gardose (2024) found that school heads demonstrated very satisfactory 21st-century leadership skills, although the relationship between leadership skills and school performance may be influenced by several other factors.

Despite these studies, there remains a need to examine school leadership in specific local contexts. Many existing studies focus on leadership styles, instructional leadership, teacher performance, or teacher self-efficacy, but fewer studies give equal attention to both the leadership skills and performance of school heads as assessed by two groups of respondents: the school heads themselves and the teachers who directly experience their leadership. This creates a gap in understanding whether school heads' self-assessment is consistent with teachers' perceptions and whether leadership skills are significantly related to actual leadership performance.

This study addresses that gap by focusing on School Heads' Leadership Skills and Performance: A Basis for Strengthening Effective School Leadership. It seeks to determine how school heads assess their own leadership skills and performance and how teachers evaluate the same areas. By comparing these perceptions, the study provides a more balanced understanding of school leadership practices. Previous findings from the study also suggest that school heads are generally perceived as competent and effective, while leadership skills are significantly related to their performance.

The reason for conducting this study is rooted in the need to continuously strengthen school leadership, especially in the context of District 4, Schools Division of Cabanatuan City. School heads face increasing responsibilities in managing instruction, operations, professional development, and partnerships. Understanding their leadership strengths and areas for improvement can provide useful input for leadership enhancement programs, mentoring activities, and professional development plans.

Therefore, this study is significant because it may help school heads become more reflective and responsive leaders. It may also assist teachers, schools, and education officials in identifying leadership practices that contribute to a more supportive and effective school environment. Ultimately, the results of the study may serve as a basis for strengthening effective school leadership and promoting better school performance.

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## Literature Review

The role of the school head has become increasingly complex and multifaceted in recent years as the education landscape continues to undergo rapid and significant changes. Driven by factors such as educational reforms, resource constraints, and the growing diversity of student and community needs, school leaders must navigate a far more challenging and dynamic.

Effective school leadership is widely recognized as critical in driving student success and enhancing overall school performance. Research consistently demonstrates the significant impact that school leaders have on various educational outcomes, including student attendance, behavior, and academic achievement. For instance, Leithwood and Jantzi (2016) highlight that school leaders play a pivotal role in shaping educational experiences, asserting that their influence is second only to classroom instruction in affecting student learning.

Educational reforms, such as implementing new curriculum standards, accountability measures, and instructional models, have placed immense pressure on school heads to lead transformative change within their institutions (Dutta & Sahney, 2016). These reforms often require school leaders to possess a deep understanding of instructional practices, the ability to effectively communicate and engage with stakeholders, and the capacity to foster a culture of continuous improvement (Spillane & Lee, 2014). However, the pace and scale of these reforms can be overwhelming, leaving school heads struggling to balance their myriad responsibilities and effectively support their teachers and students (Berkovich, 2018).

The increasing diversity of student populations and community needs has added another layer of complexity to the school leader's role. School heads must now be adept at navigating cultural differences, addressing their students' varying academic and social-emotional needs, and engaging with families and communities in meaningful and culturally responsive ways (Khalifa et al., 2016). This heightened focus on equity and inclusion has placed greater demands on school leaders to develop a nuanced understanding of their local context and to implement targeted strategies to support the success of all students.

The evolving demands on school leaders in the Philippines are evident in the research. A study by Dutta and Sahney (2016) examines the impact of school leadership on student achievement, highlighting the mediating role of school climate and teacher job satisfaction. The researchers found that transformational leadership, a key aspect of the school head's role, significantly positively influenced both school climate and teacher job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes.

The authors note that "school leaders are now expected to possess a wide range of skills and competencies to manage the complex and dynamic environments of schools effectively" (Dutta & Sahney, 2016, p. 942). These skills include instructional leadership and change management, as well as the ability to foster a positive school climate, support teacher well-being, and engage with diverse stakeholders.

The increasing complexity of the school head's role is further explored in the work of Anudin and Cruz (2020), who examined the challenges faced by school leaders in the Philippines during the implementation of the K-12 curriculum reform. Their study found that school heads had to navigate various obstacles, including resource constraints, resistance to change, and the need to ensure the effective delivery of the new curriculum.

As Anudin and Cruz (2020) state, "School heads play a crucial role in the successful implementation of educational reforms, but they are often confronted with a myriad of challenges that require adaptive leadership skills" (p. 108). This underscores the evolving demands on school leaders, who must not only manage their schools' day-to-day operations but also effectively lead their institutions through complex educational reforms.

The diverse needs of students and communities also pose significant challenges for school leaders in the Philippines. Castillo and Hallare (2018) investigated the experiences of school heads in addressing the educational needs of Indigenous learners, highlighting the importance of culturally responsive leadership and community engagement. The authors note that "school heads must be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to effectively address the unique educational needs of diverse learners, including Indigenous students" (Castillo & Hallare, 2018, p. 87). School leaders must engage with local communities, understand cultural differences, and adapt their approaches to ensure inclusive and equitable educational experiences.

In recent years, the complexities of school leadership have garnered significant attention in educational research. Scholars have explored academic leaders' multifaceted challenges, emphasizing the delicate balance between ethical principles, institutional demands, and sociopolitical contexts. For instance, Leithwood and Sun (2018) examined transformational leadership and its impact on school climate, revealing that leaders who engage in collaborative practices and provide individualized support improve teacher morale and student outcomes. Similarly, Brown et al. (2020) focused on ethical decision-making, highlighting how leaders navigate complex dilemmas using ethical frameworks to guide their choices, ultimately fostering a commitment to student welfare.

Further research by Johnson and Lee (2021) explored the significance of communication and relationship-building in enhancing teacher engagement and student achievement, illustrating the interconnectedness of leadership practices and school culture. Most recently, Ramirez et al. (2023) investigated resilience among school leaders, finding that those who cultivate strong community relationships and prioritize ethical practices successfully navigate challenges. Together, these studies paint a comprehensive picture of educational leaders' responsibilities, echoing the themes found in Vincent Lam's *The Headmaster's Wager*, where the protagonist grapples with the demands of leadership amidst a turbulent sociopolitical environment. This research reinforces the idea that effective school leadership is not just about meeting institutional goals but also about upholding ethical standards and fostering an environment conducive to learning and growth. The evolving demands on school heads in the Philippines have prompted researchers to explore various theoretical models and empirical frameworks of school leadership. This review examines the current literature on school leadership models and their strengths and limitations in addressing the changing education landscape.

One of the most widely studied models is the transformational leadership framework, which has been extensively applied in educational leadership. Transformational leadership emphasizes the school head's ability to inspire and motivate followers, foster a shared vision, and facilitate organizational change.

In the Philippine context, Dutta and Sahney (2016) found that transformational leadership had a positive impact on school climate and teacher job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes. The authors note that "transformational leaders can create a positive school climate, which enhances teacher job satisfaction and student achievement" (Dutta & Sahney, 2016, p. 954).

However, the instructional leadership model has been criticized for its narrowly defined focus on teaching and learning, which may overlook school leadership's broader organizational and community-based aspects (Hallinger, 2011). As school heads are increasingly required to engage with diverse stakeholders and address complex social and emotional needs, a more holistic approach to leadership may be necessary.

Emerging models, such as the integrated leadership framework (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003) and the culturally responsive school leadership model (Khalifa et al., 2016), offer more comprehensive perspectives on school leadership. These models emphasize the importance of navigating the broader political, social, and cultural contexts of schooling and the need to address the diverse needs of students and communities.

For example, Castillo and Hallare (2018) investigated the experiences of school heads in addressing the educational needs of indigenous learners in the Philippines. The authors found that culturally responsive school leadership, which involves engaging with local communities, understanding cultural differences, and adapting educational practices, was crucial for ensuring inclusive and equitable educational experiences.

These emerging models suggest that school leadership in the Philippines requires a multifaceted approach beyond traditional leadership frameworks. School heads must be able to navigate their schools' and communities' complex political, social, and cultural landscapes while also maintaining a strong focus on instructional leadership and organizational management.

Some relevant Filipino studies related to existing models and frameworks of school leadership are the study of Villanueva, et. Al (2020). This study investigated the instructional leadership practices of public elementary school principals in the Philippines. The findings suggest principals emphasize instructional supervision, professional development, and curriculum management as key instructional leadership roles. Guinan (2020) examined the relationship between transformational leadership, school culture, and school performance in the Philippine context. The results indicate that transformational leadership positively impacts school culture, which in turn enhances school performance.

Malasan et. al (2020) study explored the challenges faced by school principals in implementing the K to 12 curriculum reform in the Philippines. The findings suggest that principals struggled with resource constraints, teacher resistance, and the need to provide instructional support and professional development.

The study of Anudin (2020), mentioned in the previous response, investigates the challenges school heads face in implementing the K-12 curriculum reform in the Philippines, emphasizing the importance of instructional leadership skills and support. Malasan, L. P. (2018), in his study, *Challenges Faced by School Principals in the Implementation of the K to 12 Curriculum in the Philippines*, suggests that principals struggled with resource constraints, teacher resistance, and the need to provide instructional support and professional development." (p. 263)

A low quality of education can generally be attributed to several factors, both internal and external to the school. Internal factors, such as poor curriculum quality and infrastructure, can affect how effectively students learn and how evenly teachers are distributed, among other educational quality aspects. External forces, such as parents, students, the general public, and the government, can also impact the provision of quality education in schools. These internal and external elements are essential for fostering the growth of high standards in education (Paturusi & Achmad, 2017).

The work output of school staff, particularly teachers and principals, influences the quality of education. Teachers who exhibit creative and innovative behavior are more likely to produce higher-quality work, which boosts school productivity. These factors are interconnected, and it requires foresight to identify and prioritize the elements that must be addressed to resolve such problems (Paturusi & Achmad, 2017).

Principals in school organizations are responsible for the survival of the organization, managing operations and administration, supervising educational staff, and effectively utilizing and maintaining infrastructure. The school principal is the most crucial element in raising academic standards. Leaders must exhibit consistent, effective, and visible behavior and leadership style when giving orders, assigning tasks, communicating with, and motivating subordinates, as the principal is a leader who influences subordinates to work toward achieving goals and sets precedents (Paturusi & Achmad, 2017).

School administrators are increasingly expected to make daily decisions affecting their institutions' future. In light of the urgent and dramatic changes and needs that have emerged recently, universities have had to deal with several new problems and obligations toward students, employees, and academic audiences. Many universities already had the resources and tools needed for digitalization and for putting wise decisions into action, as evidenced by the decision to move every aspect of education online (Strielkowski, 2020).

The school head, who serves as the chief executive of the school, must complete a variety of tasks to ensure the smooth operation of the educational system. These duties and responsibilities include curriculum development, aid evaluation, school-community relations, and management of school finances, staff, and student personnel administration (Evan & Onyeike, 2018).

Effective leadership during challenging times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, requires key competencies, including creating meaningful roles, prioritizing enriched learning opportunities, demonstrating emotional resilience, and recognizing and addressing fear (Koehn, 2020). Additionally, leaders should exhibit adaptability, acknowledge and manage emotions, consider diverse perspectives, and foster engagement (Schwantes, 2020). Leaders should also embody the roles of sense-maker, effective technology leverager, emotionally resilient, and focused on protecting the organization's financial health by prioritizing employee well-being. The reviewed literature highlights the critical importance of effective leadership in educational settings, especially during times of crisis and rapid change. Several studies emphasize school principals' and heads' key roles and responsibilities in driving school productivity and performance.

Paturusi and Achmad (2017) found that school principal leadership and teacher competence influence productivity. Evan and Onyeike (2018) further outlined the diverse roles of school heads, including instructional leadership, resource management, and fostering a positive school climate.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges for educational institutions, requiring agile and transformative leadership. Strielkowski (2020) and Dirani et al. (2020) note the crucial need for school

leaders to develop new competencies, such as digital literacy, crisis management, and adaptive decision-making, to navigate the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Leading through turbulent times also demands essential leadership skills, as outlined by Koehn (2020) and Schwantes (2020). These include communicating effectively, demonstrating empathy, fostering resilience, and leveraging technology to enable personalized and flexible learning, as Kumar et al. (2021) emphasized.

The literature underscores the pivotal role of educational leaders in shaping school performance and driving innovation, especially during periods of rapid change and uncertainty. Effective leadership, grounded in technical expertise, interpersonal skills, and strategic foresight, is vital for educational institutions to thrive in emerging challenges and creative communication (Dirani et al., 2020).

The role of school heads has become increasingly complex due to rapid changes in the educational landscape, influenced by factors such as educational reforms, resource constraints, and diverse student needs. The research underscores the critical importance of effective school leadership in enhancing student success and overall school performance. Leithwood and Jantzi (2016) highlight that school leaders significantly shape educational experiences, second only to classroom instruction in their impact on student learning.

Dutta and Sahney (2016) emphasize the pressures school heads face from reforms, which require a deep understanding of instructional practices and practical communication skills. However, these changes rapid pace often overwhelms leaders (Berkovich, 2018). Furthermore, Khalifa et al. (2016) note school heads need to navigate cultural differences and engage with families in culturally responsive ways, reinforcing the need for equity and inclusion.

Research in the Philippines reflects these challenges. While Dutta and Sahney (2016) found that transformational leadership positively influences school climate and student outcomes, Anudin and Cruz (2020) explored the adaptive leadership skills needed to address obstacles during K-12 curriculum reforms. Despite these insights, a notable research gap exists regarding the specific competencies that enable school leaders to navigate their roles amidst growing complexities effectively. Most studies focus on leadership styles rather than practical challenges faced by school heads daily.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also intensified these challenges, necessitating new competencies in crisis management and digital literacy (Strielkowski, 2020; Dirani et al., 2020). Koehn (2020) and Schwantes (2020) emphasize the importance of communication, empathy, and leveraging technology in turbulent times.

While existing literature highlights the vital role of educational leaders, there remains a critical gap in understanding the specific skills and competencies required for effective school leadership in diverse contexts. Future research should focus on identifying these competencies and addressing the practical challenges school heads encounter, ensuring that all students receive equitable support and opportunities for success.

This study was grounded in the work of Çetin and Karsantik (2022) on the leadership skills required for school leaders in the context of Education 4.0, as well as the framework of the Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) used to assess the performance of school heads and schools in the Philippines. Çetin and Karsantik (2022) identified seven key leadership skills for school leaders in the Education 4.0 era: (1) communication, (2) collaboration, (3) critical thinking, (4) creativity and innovation, (5) decision-making, (6) problem-solving, and (7) technological capacity. These skills served as the indicators for assessing the performance of school heads in this study.

The self-assessment of school head performance was grounded in the OPCRF, which was aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). The PPSSH outlined five key domains for effective school leadership: (1) Strategic Leadership, (2) Operations Management and Resources, (3) Instructional Management, (4) Professional Development of School Head and Teachers, and (5) Partnership.

For this study, the researcher adopted and modified the five PPSSH domains to create an original tool for assessing the performance of school heads. The five domains included Strategic Leadership, Operations Management and Resources, Instructional Management, Professional Development of School Heads and Teachers, and Partnership. These five domains, along with the seven leadership skills identified by Çetin and Karsantik (2022), formed the conceptual framework for this research paper, which aimed to explore the performance of school heads in the Philippines.

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## METHODS

### Research Design

In the study, the descriptive-correlational research design was utilized, involving the collection and analysis of data to describe a phenomenon or situation. The purpose of this approach was to summarize and interpret historical data to better understand changes that occurred within a business or industry. Descriptive analytics, a statistical method, was employed to search and summarize historical data to identify trends and relationships. This was considered the simplest form of data analysis, as it focused on describing the trends and relationships between variables.

In this particular study, the descriptive-analytic design was employed to determine the relationship between the school heads' profile variables and their leadership skills, as well as the relationship between the school heads' profile variables and their performance. Descriptive analytics was used as a standalone method or as a preliminary stage of data processing to create a summary, which could then support further investigation, analysis, or actions performed by other types of analytics. The primary data collection tool used in this study was a survey questionnaire, a widely utilized quantitative instrument that could be administered to a large number of respondents.

### Research Locale

This study was conducted in District 4 of the Schools Division of Cabanatuan City during School Year 2024–2025. The locale was selected because it includes elementary schools where school heads perform key leadership and management functions that directly influence teachers, learners, and the overall school environment. As such, District 4 provided an appropriate setting for assessing the leadership skills and performance of school heads.

The study involved five elementary schools within District 4. These schools served as the main research sites where data were gathered from both school heads and teachers. The school heads were asked to assess their own leadership skills and performance, allowing the study to capture their personal evaluation of how they carry out their roles as instructional leaders, administrators, and managers of school operations.

In addition, fifty (50) teachers from the five participating elementary schools served as respondents. Since teachers work closely with school heads in the daily implementation of school programs, policies, and instructional activities, their participation provided valuable insights into how leadership practices are observed and experienced in the school setting. Their responses helped present a more balanced and realistic appraisal of the school heads' leadership skills and performance.

The selection of District 4 as the research locale was significant because it allowed the researcher to gather data from actual school communities where leadership practices are applied in real situations. The distribution of respondents across five elementary schools helped ensure that the study was not limited to the experience of only one school. Instead, it reflected the perceptions of school heads and teachers from different school contexts within the district.

### Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of this study were the school heads and teachers from five elementary schools in District 4, Schools Division of Cabanatuan City, for School Year 2024–2025. The study focused on assessing the leadership skills and performance of school heads as perceived by themselves and by the teachers who work directly with them.

The school heads served as self-assessment respondents. They were asked to evaluate their own leadership skills and performance based on the indicators presented in the research instrument. Their participation was important because it provided an internal perspective on how they view their leadership practices, management skills, and overall performance in leading their respective schools. In addition, fifty (50) teachers from the five participating elementary schools were included as respondents. These teachers assessed the leadership skills and performance of their respective school heads. Their responses provided an external and practical perspective, as teachers are directly affected by the leadership practices, decision-making, supervision, and management

approaches of school heads. Through their participation, the study was able to gather a more balanced evaluation of school leadership in the district.

The teacher-respondents were selected using an appropriate sampling technique to ensure that the sample represented the total teacher population of the participating schools. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a five percent (5%) margin of error. This formula was used to obtain a manageable yet representative number of respondents from the total population of teachers in the five elementary schools. The use of Slovin's formula helped ensure that the findings would reflect the perceptions of the larger group with acceptable accuracy.

The inclusion of both school heads and teachers strengthened the reliability of the study. The self-assessment of school heads allowed the researcher to determine how school leaders perceive their own skills and performance, while the teachers' assessment provided an objective view of how these leadership practices are experienced in the school setting. This combination of respondents offered a comprehensive basis for appraising the leadership skills and performance of school heads in District 4, Schools Division of Cabanatuan City.

### **Research Instrument**

This study utilized three sets of questionnaires as instruments for data gathering:

Part I focused on the socio-demographic profile of respondents.

Part II assessed the leadership skills of school heads, featuring seven indicators: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and innovation, decision-making, problem-solving, and technological capacity, with five questions per indicator.

Part III evaluated the performance of school heads, encompassing five indicators: strategic leadership, operations management and resources, instructional management, professional development of school heads and teachers, and partnership, again with five questions per indicator.

The questionnaire items were developed based on existing frameworks and references, including the concept of school leadership by Çetin and Karsantik (2022) and the Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) for school heads. The questionnaire underwent review by the dissertation adviser, an English critic, and other experts to ensure validity. A dry run was also conducted with non-respondent experts and teachers to check for clarity and understanding.

Parts II and III employed Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient to assess internal consistency and reliability. The questionnaire utilized a 4-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating the lowest level (very limited/inadequate skills or significantly below expectations) and 4 representing the highest level (exceptional skills or performance).

### **Data Gathering**

For data collection, the researcher utilized a survey questionnaire as the primary method, designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from the target population of teachers. Quantitative data were collected through a series of closed-ended questions using standardized rating scales, such as Likert-type scales, which enabled the researcher to obtain numerical data for statistical analysis of relationships between key variables. The researcher employed a multi-modal approach to the data collection process, utilizing both online and paper-based survey distribution channels to reach a wider and more representative sample of teachers. The online survey was hosted on a secure platform, facilitating efficient data collection and management, while paper-based surveys were distributed to schools and collected by the researchers, ensuring personal engagement with participants. To enhance participation rates and the quality of the data collected, the researcher incorporated several strategies:

**Informed Consent and Confidentiality:** The researcher obtained informed consent from participants and ensured the confidentiality of their responses, addressing concerns regarding the use and protection of personal information. **Incentives and Reminders:** Modest incentives were offered to encourage teachers to participate in the survey, and periodic reminders were sent to maintain a high response rate.

**Accessibility and Accommodations:** The survey was designed with accessibility features, such as screen reader compatibility and language translation options, to ensure inclusivity and enable participation from teachers with diverse needs and backgrounds.

The data collected through the survey questionnaire were systematically organized and securely stored, with measures taken to protect the confidentiality and privacy of participants. The researcher then proceeded to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data using a combination of statistical techniques and thematic analysis, as outlined in the research design.

By employing a well-designed and rigorously implemented survey questionnaire as the primary data collection method, the researcher gathered comprehensive and reliable data to address the study's research questions and objectives, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between positive discipline, classroom management, and student outcomes.

### **Data Analysis**

The data were collected and analyzed using the following statistical tools:

1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution: These were used to describe the socio-demographic profile of the respondents.
2. Weighted Mean: This was employed to assess the leadership skills of school heads as evaluated by themselves and teachers. Similarly, this was used to describe the level of performance of school heads as assessed by themselves and teachers.
3. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): This statistical method was utilized to test for significant differences in the assessments of respondents regarding leadership skills and levels of performance.
4. Spearman Correlation Coefficient: This was used to test the significant relationship between the school heads' profile variables and their leadership skills and levels of performance. To test the significant relationship between the school head's leadership skills and their performance, the researcher will use Pearson correlation analysis.

All formulas used for data analysis were embedded in SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) and Microsoft Excel.

### **Ethical Consideration**

In conducting this study, the researcher gave careful attention to the ethical standards required in academic research. Since the study involved school heads and teachers as respondents, the researcher ensured that their rights, privacy, and dignity were protected throughout the entire research process.

Before the actual gathering of data, permission was sought from the proper authorities, particularly the concerned offices and school administrators in District 4, Schools Division of Cabanatuan City. This was done to ensure that the conduct of the study was properly coordinated and officially allowed. The researcher also explained the purpose of the study to the respondents so they would clearly understand why the research was being conducted and how their responses would be used.

Participation in the study was voluntary. The school heads and teachers were not forced or pressured to answer the questionnaire. They were informed that they had the right to refuse participation or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. This ensured that their involvement was based on their free and informed consent.

The researcher also observed confidentiality in handling the data gathered from the respondents. The names of the school heads, teachers, and schools were treated with utmost care and were not disclosed in a manner that could identify individual participants. The responses were used only for research purposes and were presented in summarized form. This helped protect the identity of the respondents and encouraged them to answer honestly and comfortably.

Objectivity and fairness were also maintained in the interpretation of the results. The researcher avoided personal bias and ensured that the findings were based on the actual data gathered from the respondents. The self-assessment of school heads and the assessment made by teachers were treated with equal respect and importance to provide a balanced appraisal of leadership skills and performance.

Furthermore, the researcher made sure that the study would not cause harm, discomfort, or embarrassment to any participant. Since the topic involved the leadership skills and performance of school heads, the data were

handled with sensitivity. The results were not intended to criticize or single out any individual but to provide useful information that may help strengthen school leadership practices.

The ethical considerations observed in this study helped ensure that the research was conducted responsibly, respectfully, and professionally. By protecting the rights and welfare of the respondents, the researcher was able to gather meaningful data while maintaining the integrity and credibility of the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The age distribution of the 5 school head respondents in the study. Notably, there were no respondents aged 21-30 or 61 and above. The largest group is teachers aged 41-50, comprising 50% of the sample, followed by those aged 51-60 at 30%, and 31-40 years at 20%. This distribution indicates that most respondents are mid-career educators, which may shape their perspectives on school leadership. However, the absence of younger and older teachers limits the diversity of viewpoints in the analysis.

The distribution of respondents according to sex, revealing a predominance of male respondents in the sample. The data indicate that out of a total of 5 respondents, 1 (20.0%) identified as male, while 4 (80.0%) identified as female. This distribution suggests a gender imbalance in the sample, with a higher representation of males. Such gender disparities in educational leadership contexts can influence the dynamics of school leadership and decision-making processes. Research has shown that gender diversity in leadership roles can enhance organizational effectiveness and foster inclusive environments (Eagly & Carli, 2014). In the context of effective school leadership, it is crucial to consider how gender representation affects leadership styles, communication, and the overall school climate.

The distribution of respondents according to civil status indicates that all respondents in the sample are married. The data reveals that out of 10 respondents, 10 (100.0%) identified as married, while none identified as single, widowed, or separated. This uniformity in marital status suggests a lack of diversity in the personal circumstances of the respondents, which could have implications for their perspectives and experiences in leadership roles. Research has shown that personal factors, including marital status, can influence leadership styles, availability for work commitments, and engagement in school activities (Riley & Wrench, 2018).

In the context of effective school leadership, married leaders may bring unique strengths, such as stability and a commitment to community values, which can positively impact school culture (Miller, 2021). However, the absence of diverse civil statuses in the study also raises questions about the representation and inclusivity of different life experiences within educational leadership. For instance, leaders from varied civil backgrounds may offer other insights into work-life balance and community engagement.

The distribution of respondents according to the number of years they have served as school heads highlights a varied range of experience among the leaders. The data reveal that the majority of respondents, 1 (20.0%), have served as school heads for 1 to 5 years, indicating a relatively recent entry into leadership roles. This is followed by 4 respondents (80.0%) with 11 to 15 years of experience.

The concentration of newer leaders may reflect ongoing changes in educational administration, where schools are increasingly led by individuals within the early stages of their careers. Studies suggest that while new leaders bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas, they may also face challenges related to inexperience in managing complex school environments (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2016). Conversely, experienced leaders often possess a deeper understanding of institutional dynamics and can navigate challenges more effectively (Day & Sammons, 2016).

The distribution of respondents according to their designation or position highlights the range of leadership roles within the educational setting. The data indicate that among the 5 respondents, there are no individuals in the positions of Head Teacher I, II, or III. In contrast, 2 respondents (40.0%) hold the position of Principal I, which represents the largest segment of the sample. Additionally, 3 respondents (60.0%) are in the Principal II, III, and IV categories, respectively.

This distribution suggests a concentration of leadership experience at the lower principal levels, which may influence the decision-making processes and strategic initiatives within the schools represented. Research indicates that the designation of school leaders can significantly affect their responsibilities, authority, and the impact they

have on school improvement efforts (Grissom, 2011). Leaders at the Principal I level often focus on day-to-day management, while those at higher levels typically engage more in strategic planning and policy development.

The distribution of respondents according to their educational attainment highlights the qualifications of the school leaders in the sample. The data reveal a notable concentration of advanced educational qualifications among the respondents. Specifically, 1 respondent (20.0%) hold units toward a Doctorate Degree, while 3 respondents (60.0%) have completed their Doctorate Degree. Additionally, 1 respondent (10.0%) has a Master's Degree,

This distribution suggests a strong emphasis on advanced education within the leadership cohort, which is often linked to enhanced leadership effectiveness and improved student outcomes. Research indicates that educational attainment, particularly at the graduate level, can positively influence school leadership practices and contribute to more informed decision-making (Leithwood et al., 2019). Leaders with higher educational qualifications are generally better equipped to engage with complex educational challenges and to implement effective strategies for school improvement.

The leadership skills of school heads as perceived by themselves and by teachers, focusing on communication abilities. Both groups rated these skills highly, with average scores of 3.78 for school heads and 3.77 for teachers, categorizing them as "Highly Proficient Skills."

In terms of conversational skills, school heads scored themselves at 3.80, while teachers rated them slightly lower at 3.79, indicating a strong mutual recognition of effective interactive communication. When it comes to listening to stakeholders' needs, school heads rated this skill at 3.70, with teachers giving it a score of 3.74, suggesting that teachers perceive leaders as slightly more responsive. Both groups agreed on a score of 3.80 for the clarity of messages, emphasizing the importance of clear communication in their roles. Additionally, both school heads and teachers rated the skill of welcoming differing opinions at 3.80, reflecting an inclusive approach to varying perspectives. For communicating changes in policies and procedures, school heads scored 3.80, while teachers rated it at 3.74, highlighting the importance of transparency in leadership.

Overall, these findings underscore the significance of strong communication in effective school leadership, as it fosters trust and collaboration, which are essential for enhancing educational outcomes. The emphasis on communication aligns with the principles of Education 4.0, which advocates for a learner-centered approach and encourages collaboration among all educational stakeholders (Gonzalez, 2020). Effective leaders must engage with teachers and students to create an adaptive learning environment that meets the demands of a rapidly changing educational landscape.

Moreover, these skills are integral to the framework of the Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) used to assess the performance of school heads and the schools in the Philippines. The OPCRf emphasizes accountability, transparency, and stakeholder engagement, reflecting the need for school leaders to demonstrate effective communication and collaboration skills (Department of Education, 2021). Research indicates that effective communication contributes to a positive school climate and improved student achievement, as leaders who engage stakeholders create environments conducive to learning (Robinson et al., 2008; Harris & Jones, 2020). The ability to listen and respond to the needs of teachers and other stakeholders is crucial for building a collaborative school culture that promotes student success Leithwood et al. (2019).

The leadership skills of school heads in terms of collaboration, as perceived by both the school heads themselves and the teachers. The findings indicate that both groups rate these skills highly, with school heads achieving an average weighted mean of 3.76 and teachers scoring slightly lower at 3.75, classifying them as "Highly Proficient Skills."

In organizing discussions, workshops, and educational sessions aimed at enhancing student well-being and academic progress, school heads received a mean score of 3.80, while teachers rated this skill at 3.76, reflecting a strong consensus on the importance of collaborative initiatives. For involving stakeholders in developing the School Improvement Plan (SIP) or Annual Improvement Plan (AIP), school heads scored 3.60, with teachers rating it higher at 3.72, indicating that teachers may perceive greater involvement in this area than school heads acknowledge.

Both groups rated the skill of strengthening organized stakeholder groups—such as School Parent-Teacher Associations (SPTAs) and other local governance bodies—at 3.80, highlighting the importance of collective efforts

in enhancing school policies and programs. In establishing school-family relationships that promote peak student achievement, both groups again scored this skill highly at 3.80 for school heads and 3.74 for teachers.

The ability to provide feedback and updates to stakeholders on the progress of programs, projects, and activities was also rated highly, with school heads scoring 3.80 and teachers at 3.74. This consistent emphasis on communication and collaboration underscores the critical role these skills play in effective school leadership.

These findings align with the principles of Education 4.0, which emphasizes collaboration among all educational stakeholders to create a more integrated and responsive learning environment (Gonzalez, 2020). Furthermore, they are consistent with the framework of the Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) used in the Philippines, which highlights the importance of engaging stakeholders in the assessment and improvement of educational practices (Department of Education, 2021). Effective collaboration is essential for fostering a supportive school climate and promoting student success, as research indicates that leaders who actively engage with teachers, parents, and the community can significantly enhance educational outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2019; Robinson et al., 2008).

The leadership skills of school heads in terms of critical thinking, as perceived by both the school heads themselves and the teachers. The results indicate that both groups view these skills as highly proficient, with average weighted means of 3.76 for school heads and 3.77 for teachers.

In applying critical thinking to analyze issues and make informed decisions, school heads rated themselves at 3.70, while teachers scored this skill slightly higher at 3.80. This suggests that teachers perceive school heads as more adept at critical thinking than the leaders themselves acknowledge. Both groups similarly rated the encouragement of teachers to use assessments that evaluate learners' critical thinking skills, with school heads at 3.70 and teachers at 3.78, reflecting a shared understanding of the importance of fostering critical thinking in students.

When considering diverse perspectives and gathering data-driven information, school heads scored 3.80, whereas teachers rated this skill lower at 3.71. This discrepancy indicates that school heads may feel more confident in their ability to incorporate various viewpoints into decision-making processes. The ability to organize workshops that enhance critical thinking skills was rated highly by both groups, with school heads at 3.80 and teachers at 3.75, emphasizing a commitment to professional development and continuous learning.

Encouraging a culture of open dialogue and critical analysis received the highest ratings, with both groups scoring it at 3.80 for school heads and 3.81 for teachers. This strong emphasis on collaboration and communication within the school environment highlights the essential role of leaders in fostering a supportive atmosphere.

These findings align with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of critical thinking in educational leadership. Effective school leaders engage in critical thinking, analyzing complex issues and fostering an environment that promotes critical discourse among staff and students (Robinson et al., 2008). Research also suggests that organizing professional development workshops focused on critical thinking can significantly enhance teachers' instructional practices and improve student outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2019). Moreover, leaders who promote open dialogue and encourage contributions from all stakeholders create a more inclusive and effective learning environment (Gonzalez, 2020). Overall, the results underscore the critical role that school heads play in not only applying critical thinking themselves but also in cultivating these important skills within their teams.

The leadership skills of school heads in terms of creativity and innovation, as perceived by both the school heads themselves and the teachers. The results indicate that both groups view these skills as highly proficient, with average weighted means of 3.76 for school heads and 3.78 for teachers.

School heads rated their ability to encourage teachers and learners to use creativity through interdisciplinary approaches at 3.80, while teachers rated this slightly lower at 3.76. This suggests that school heads feel confident in their capacity to foster creative integration of subjects, although teachers may perceive this effort as somewhat less effective. In valuing innovation and leading by example, school heads scored 3.70, with teachers rating this skill at 3.72, reflecting a shared recognition of the importance of innovative leadership in achieving higher learning outcomes.

Both groups rated the acceptance of new and out-of-the-box suggestions for enhancing school approaches highly, with scores of 3.80 for school heads and 3.81 for teachers, indicating a mutual understanding of the necessity

for openness to new ideas in promoting a creative school environment. Additionally, school heads rated their ability to encourage action research projects aimed at developing innovative teaching methods at 3.80, highlighting their commitment to fostering professional development among teachers.

The leadership of school heads in encouraging student participation in innovation competitions received a score of 3.70, while teachers rated this aspect higher at 3.80. This discrepancy may suggest that school heads recognize the importance of promoting student engagement in creative activities but may not fully perceive the impact of these initiatives as positively as teachers do.

These findings align with literature emphasizing the critical role of school leaders in fostering creativity and innovation. Effective school leadership is essential for building a culture of creativity, where leaders not only encourage innovative practices among teachers but also model these behaviors themselves (Barsh et al., 2008). Furthermore, integrating project-based learning and interdisciplinary approaches, key components of fostering creativity, has been shown to enhance educational outcomes (Amabile, 2012; Kesting et al., 2015). Overall, the results underscore the importance of school heads actively promoting and modeling creativity and innovation to improve educational experiences and outcomes.

The leadership skills of school heads in terms of decision-making, as perceived by both the school heads themselves and the teachers. The results indicate that both groups view these skills as highly proficient, with average weighted means of 3.74 for school heads and 3.82 for teachers.

In actively involving all stakeholders in meetings and deliberations for decision-making, school heads rated themselves at 3.80, while teachers rated this slightly higher at 3.83. This suggests a strong consensus on the importance of collaborative decision-making processes. Regarding responsibility and accountability for decisions made, school heads scored 3.80, with teachers rating this aspect at 3.79, indicating a shared acknowledgment of the crucial role leaders play in taking ownership of their decisions and their impact on the school community.

When conducting a comprehensive assessment of potential problems and uncertainties, school heads rated themselves at 3.60, while teachers gave a higher rating of 3.76. This discrepancy suggests that school heads may underestimate their thoroughness in evaluating issues before making decisions. In prioritizing the interests of the school and its stakeholders, school heads scored 3.70, while teachers rated this skill higher at 3.82, indicating that teachers may feel more positively about the leaders' commitment to stakeholder interests.

For ensuring that decisions align with the school's mission and values, school heads rated this skill at 3.80, while teachers rated it even higher at 3.88. This reflects a mutual recognition of the importance of alignment between decision-making and the overarching goals of the school.

These findings underscore the critical role of effective decision-making in school leadership. Research indicates that school leaders who engage stakeholders in the decision-making process positively influence school climate and foster a sense of community (Leithwood et al., 2019). Additionally, leaders who take accountability for their decisions contribute to a culture of trust and transparency, which is essential for effective school governance (Robinson et al., 2008).

The leadership skills of school heads in terms of problem-solving, as perceived by both the school heads themselves and the teachers. The results indicate that both groups rate these skills as highly proficient, with average weighted means of 3.70 for school heads and 3.75 for teachers.

In addressing problems or challenges that arise within the school environment, school heads scored themselves at 3.60, while teachers rated this skill higher at 3.73. This discrepancy suggests that school heads may underestimate their effectiveness in tackling challenges. For actively involving team members to leverage their expertise and ideas, school heads received a score of 3.80, with teachers rating this skill slightly lower at 3.77, indicating a strong recognition of the value of collaboration in problem-solving. When it comes to taking the initiative to solve problems before they escalate, school heads rated themselves at 3.60, while teachers rated this aspect higher at 3.74. This may indicate that teachers perceive leaders as more proactive in identifying and addressing issues than the leaders themselves acknowledge. In maintaining essential precautions to prevent potential problems, school heads scored 3.70, while teachers rated this skill at 3.73, reflecting a shared understanding of the importance of preventive measures.

Both groups rated the ability to maintain calmness and composure when confronted with complex problems equally at 3.80. This highlights the importance of emotional intelligence and steady leadership in navigating challenges effectively. These findings align with research emphasizing the critical role of problem-solving in effective school leadership. Leaders who actively engage their teams in the problem-solving process not only foster a collaborative environment but also enhance the overall capacity of the school to address challenges (Leithwood et al., 2019).

The leadership skills of school heads in terms of technological capacity, as perceived by both the school heads themselves and the teachers. The results show that both groups view these skills as highly proficient, with average weighted means of 3.72 for school heads and 3.78 for teachers.

In promoting a digitally enriched environment, school heads rated themselves at 3.70, while teachers rated this skill higher at 3.83. This indicates that teachers perceive school heads as effectively fostering the use of digital resources like educational videos, apps, and game-based applications. For the skill of consistently exploring opportunities to stay updated on technological advancements, school heads scored 3.80 and teachers scored 3.81, reflecting a shared commitment to professional development through training sessions and workshops.

When it comes to ensuring that the school's technological infrastructure meets the needs of all stakeholders, school heads rated this skill at 3.70, while teachers rated it slightly higher at 3.79. This suggests that teachers may perceive the technological environment of the school as being better developed than school heads acknowledge. Regarding the use of Information Technology (IT) to facilitate operational systems, school heads rated themselves at 3.60, while teachers rated this skill higher at 3.71, indicating a perceived need for improvement in this area.

Finally, both groups rated the ability to set a positive example by actively utilizing technology and being comfortable with experimentation at 3.80 for school heads and 3.77 for teachers. This highlights the importance of modeling technological proficiency and a willingness to embrace new tools and techniques.

These findings align with existing literature that emphasizes the critical role of technological leadership in education. Research indicates that effective school leaders who promote digital literacy and technology integration significantly enhance teaching and learning outcomes (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2010). Additionally, studies highlight the importance of ongoing professional development in technology for educators, which fosters a culture of innovation and continuous improvement (Harris & Jones, 2020). Furthermore, leaders who model the effective use of technology encourage their staff to adopt innovative practices, ultimately benefiting student engagement and achievement (Sun et al., 2018).

The leadership skills of school heads as perceived by themselves and by teachers. The overall findings indicate that both groups view these skills as highly proficient, with school heads achieving an average weighted mean of 3.74 and teachers scoring slightly higher at 3.78.

In the area of communication, school heads rated themselves at 3.78, while teachers rated this skill at 3.77, reflecting a strong consensus on the effectiveness of communication practices. For collaboration, school heads scored 3.76, and teachers rated it slightly lower at 3.75, indicating a shared understanding of the importance of teamwork in school leadership.

In critical thinking, both school heads and teachers rated this skill at 3.76 and 3.77, respectively, suggesting that both groups recognize the value of critical analysis in decision-making processes. When it comes to creativity and innovation, school heads scored 3.76, while teachers rated this skill higher at 3.78, indicating that teachers may perceive school heads as more innovative than the leaders themselves acknowledge.

For decision-making, school heads rated themselves at 3.74, whereas teachers scored this area higher at 3.82, suggesting that teachers have a more positive perception of the leaders' decision-making capabilities. In problem-solving, school heads received a score of 3.70, while teachers rated this skill at 3.75, indicating a similar trend where teachers feel more positively about the leaders' problem-solving effectiveness.

Lastly, in terms of technological capacity, school heads scored 3.72, and teachers rated this skill at 3.78. This reflects a shared recognition of the importance of technology in school leadership, with teachers perceiving school heads as slightly more adept in this area.

Overall, the results from Table 13 highlight the strengths of school heads in various leadership competencies, demonstrating a consistent perception of their skills as highly proficient by both themselves and their teachers. This

mutual recognition emphasizes the critical role of effective leadership in fostering a positive school environment and enhancing educational outcomes.

The performance of school heads in terms of strategic leadership, as perceived by themselves and by teachers. The data indicate that both groups view these leadership skills as highly proficient, with school heads achieving an average weighted mean of 3.72 and teachers scoring slightly higher at 3.75.

In communicating a clear vision and mission for the school, school heads rated themselves at 3.60, while teachers rated this skill higher at 3.77. This suggests that teachers perceive school heads as more effective in aligning the school community toward common goals than the leaders themselves acknowledge. For involving teachers, parents, and learners in strategic planning, school heads scored 3.80, compared to teachers' rating of 3.73, indicating a strong recognition of the importance of participatory decision-making processes.

Both groups rated the monitoring and evaluation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) at 3.80 for school heads and 3.74 for teachers, reflecting a shared understanding of the necessity for ongoing assessment of educational initiatives. In engaging in continuous monitoring and soliciting feedback, school heads rated themselves at 3.60, while teachers rated this skill at 3.73, suggesting that teachers may perceive school heads as more proactive in seeking stakeholder input than the leaders themselves recognize. Finally, both groups rated the ability to adapt and adjust strategies in response to changing circumstances equally at 3.80, highlighting the importance of flexibility in effective leadership.

These findings reinforce the critical role of strategic leadership in educational settings. Research indicates that effective school leaders who communicate a clear vision and engage stakeholders in decision-making significantly enhance school performance and foster a positive school culture (Leithwood et al., 2019). Additionally, studies emphasize the importance of continuous monitoring and adaptability in leadership practices, which are essential for responding to the dynamic challenges faced by schools (Harris & Jones, 2020). The ability to involve the entire school community in strategic planning not only improves the implementation of initiatives but also builds a sense of ownership and commitment among stakeholders (Sun et al., 2018). Overall, the results underscore the necessity for school heads to actively engage in strategic leadership practices to improve educational outcomes.

The performance of school heads in terms of operation management and resources, as perceived by themselves and by teachers. The findings indicate that both groups view these skills as highly proficient, with an average weighted mean of 3.76 for both school heads and teachers.

In managing the school's budget and resources in accordance with relevant policies, school heads rated themselves at 3.60, while teachers rated this skill higher at 3.71. This suggests that teachers perceive school heads as more effective in financial management than the leaders recognize themselves to be. For ensuring that school facilities are well maintained, both groups rated this skill equally at 3.80, indicating a shared appreciation for the importance of maintaining a safe and conducive learning environment.

Regarding the management of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and other operational plans, school heads scored 3.80, while teachers rated this skill at 3.77, reflecting a mutual understanding of the necessity for effective planning and monitoring. When it comes to taking the lead in designing improvement plans for school facilities, both school heads and teachers rated this skill at 3.80 and 3.79, respectively, highlighting the leaders' proactive approach to enhancing the physical environment of the school.

Finally, in promoting responsible financial practices and transparency, school heads scored 3.80, while teachers rated this skill at 3.74. This suggests that both groups recognize the importance of financial accountability and transparency in fostering trust within the school community.

These findings reinforce the critical role of effective operational management in school leadership. Research indicates that strong operational management practices are essential for enhancing school effectiveness and ensuring that resources are utilized efficiently (Leithwood et al., 2020). Additionally, studies emphasize the importance of maintaining safe and well-equipped facilities as a foundation for promoting student achievement and well-being (Harris & Jones, 2021). Furthermore, transparent financial practices contribute to building trust among stakeholders and enhancing the overall school climate (Sun et al., 2019). Overall, the results underscore the necessity for school heads to actively engage in operational management to optimize resources and improve educational outcomes.

The performance of school heads in terms of instructional management, as perceived by themselves and by teachers. The results indicate that both groups view these leadership skills as exceptional, with an average weighted mean of 3.72 for school heads and 3.78 for teachers.

In supporting teachers to enhance their instructional skills, school heads rated themselves at 3.70, while teachers rated this skill slightly higher at 3.80. This suggests that teachers perceive school heads as effectively promoting professional development through training and workshops. For the evaluation of lesson plans and classroom learning management, school heads also scored 3.70, with teachers rating it at 3.80, indicating a shared recognition of the importance of regular evaluations in improving instructional quality.

When it comes to conducting instructional supervision, both school heads and teachers rated this skill at 3.70 and 3.79, respectively. This reflects a mutual understanding of the necessity for effective supervision strategies to enhance teaching practices. In providing accurate and specific feedback to teachers, school heads rated themselves at 3.70, while teachers rated this aspect slightly lower at 3.73, suggesting that teachers may have a slightly more critical view of the feedback they receive.

Finally, both groups rated the provision of expert technical assistance and instructional support at 3.80, indicating a strong consensus on the value of providing teachers with the necessary resources and support to succeed.

These findings emphasize the essential role of instructional management in effective school leadership. Research has shown that leaders who actively support teacher development and provide constructive feedback significantly enhance teaching practices and student learning outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2021). Additionally, studies indicate that effective instructional supervision is crucial for fostering a culture of continuous improvement within schools (Harris & Jones, 2022). Furthermore, providing technical assistance and resources to teachers has been linked to increased teacher efficacy and student achievement (Sun et al., 2020). Overall, the results underscore the need for school heads to engage in robust instructional management practices to optimize educational outcomes.

The performance of school heads in terms of professional development for both themselves and their teachers, as perceived by both groups. The findings indicate that both school heads and teachers view these leadership skills as exceptional, with an average weighted mean of 3.76 for school heads and 3.77 for teachers.

In preparing, implementing, and monitoring school-based In-Service Training (INSET) and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, school heads rated themselves at 3.80, while teachers rated this skill slightly higher at 3.81. This suggests that both groups recognize the importance of tailored professional development based on identified needs. For actively seeking feedback from teachers and staff to identify areas for improvement, school heads scored 3.70, and teachers rated this skill at 3.73, indicating a mutual commitment to enhancing effectiveness through collaborative input.

In modeling dedication to continuous learning, school heads rated themselves at 3.80, while teachers rated this aspect slightly lower at 3.76. This reflects a shared understanding of the importance of leaders setting an example through their own professional development, such as attending training or pursuing graduate studies. Regarding the recognition of achievements among teachers, staff, and learners, school heads scored 3.70, while teachers rated this skill higher at 3.78, suggesting that teachers value acknowledgment and appreciation more than school heads recognize.

Finally, both groups rated the ability to ensure that school plans for professional development align with individual development plans and the School Improvement Plan (SIP) at 3.80 for school heads and 3.76 for teachers. This demonstrates a shared recognition of the necessity for strategic planning in professional development to meet the needs of school personnel.

These findings reinforce the critical role of professional development in effective school leadership. Research indicates that school leaders who prioritize professional growth and actively seek feedback significantly enhance both teacher performance and student outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2021). Additionally, studies emphasize the importance of modeling continuous learning, which fosters a culture of improvement and encourages teachers to engage in their own professional development (Harris & Jones, 2022). Moreover, recognizing and celebrating achievements has been linked to increased motivation and job satisfaction among educators (Sun et al., 2020).

Overall, the results highlight the necessity for school heads to engage in robust professional development practices to optimize educational outcomes.

The performance of school heads in terms of partnership, as perceived by themselves and by teachers. The data indicates that both groups view these leadership skills as exceptional, with an average weighted mean of 3.78 for school heads and 3.76 for teachers.

In establishing sustainable partnerships with other sectors, industries, and NGOs, school heads rated themselves at 3.80, while teachers rated this skill slightly lower at 3.75. This suggests that school heads feel confident in their ability to create formal partnerships through initiatives like Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and the Adopt-A-School Program. For promoting the school's image through various events, both groups rated this skill equally at 3.80, reflecting a shared appreciation for the importance of visibility and engagement in enhancing the school's reputation.

Regarding active participation in community affairs, school heads scored 3.80, while teachers rated this aspect at 3.77. This indicates that school heads recognize the significance of engaging with the community through parent-teacher meetings and collaborations with local organizations. In handling conflicts and interpersonal issues, school heads rated themselves at 3.70, while teachers rated this skill slightly higher at 3.73, suggesting that teachers perceive school heads as effective in maintaining a positive environment, although perhaps not as highly as the heads see themselves.

Finally, both groups rated the promotion of respect and inclusivity equally at 3.80, indicating a consensus on the importance of valuing all stakeholders' voices.

These findings underscore the vital role of partnership in effective school leadership. Research indicates that strong partnerships with community organizations and stakeholders enhance school resources and support, ultimately benefiting student outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2021). Furthermore, engaging parents and the community in school activities has been shown to foster a sense of belonging and improve student engagement (Harris & Jones, 2022). Additionally, effective conflict resolution and promoting inclusivity are essential for creating a positive school climate, which is crucial for both staff and student well-being (Sun et al., 2020). Overall, the results highlight the necessity for school heads to actively foster partnerships to strengthen educational outcomes and community.

The findings from the performance assessments of school heads reveal a consistent view of exceptional leadership across various areas, including strategic leadership, operational management, instructional management, professional development, and partnership. Both school heads and teachers rated these areas highly, with average weighted means of 3.75 for school heads and 3.76 for teachers, reflecting a mutual recognition of the importance of effective leadership in fostering a positive educational environment.

In strategic leadership, school heads rated themselves at 3.72, while teachers rated this aspect slightly higher at 3.75. This alignment suggests that teachers perceive school heads as effective in communicating vision and aligning the school community towards common goals, echoing the findings of Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2021), who emphasize the significant impact of clear leadership on school performance. Additionally, the equal rating of 3.76 in operational management highlights the shared understanding of the necessity for effective resource management, which is crucial for optimizing school operations.

The higher teacher ratings in instructional management (3.78) compared to school heads (3.72) indicate that teachers feel well-supported in enhancing their instructional practices. This aligns with Robinson and Timperley's (2007) assertion that strong instructional leadership is vital for improving student outcomes. Furthermore, both groups rated professional development highly, with a score of 3.76 for school heads and 3.77 for teachers, reinforcing the idea that ongoing professional growth is essential for effective teaching and leadership (Day & Leithwood, 2007).

In partnership, school heads scored 3.78 while teachers rated this area at 3.76, indicating a consensus on the importance of community engagement. Fullan (2014) emphasizes that strong partnerships with parents and community organizations enhance school resources and support, ultimately benefiting student achievement. The findings regarding conflict resolution and inclusivity also reflect the importance of maintaining a positive school climate, which is essential for both staff and student well-being (Wang & Degol, 2013).

Overall, the results underscore the critical role of effective school leadership in enhancing educational outcomes. The alignment between school heads' self-perceptions and teachers' evaluations demonstrates a collaborative environment where leadership practices are recognized as contributing to a thriving school culture. These findings are supported by extensive literature that highlights the transformative potential of effective leadership in education (Sergiovanni, 2015; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Thus, the performance of school heads in these areas not only reflects their capabilities but also sets a foundation for continuous improvement and success within the school community.

Teachers rated their leadership skills slightly higher than school heads, with means of 3.77 and 3.75, respectively. The lower standard deviation for teachers (0.03951) compared to school heads (0.07413) suggests that teachers' ratings were more consistent. The significant t-value of -2.009, with a p-value of 0.000, indicates a statistically significant difference, highlighting that teachers perceive their leadership capabilities as more effective than those of school heads.

This discrepancy in perceptions aligns with contemporary literature that explores leadership dynamics within educational settings. For instance, a study by Brunetti (2020) found that teachers often perceive their principals as less effective than they perceive themselves, which can impact overall job satisfaction and motivation. This suggests that self-assessment bias among school heads may contribute to the observed differences in ratings.

Furthermore, Leithwood et al. (2021) emphasize that effective instructional leadership is critical for fostering teacher empowerment. When teachers feel supported in their instructional practices, they are more likely to rate their leadership skills positively. This aligns with the findings in Table 8, as teachers may feel empowered in their roles, reflecting a positive school climate that encourages collaboration and support.

A noteworthy difference in performance ratings between school heads and teachers. Teachers rated their leadership skills slightly higher, with a mean of 3.7664 compared to 3.7480 for school heads. The standard deviation for school heads (0.07141) was higher than that for teachers (0.02998), indicating greater variability in the ratings given by school heads. The t-value of -2.009, accompanied by a p-value of 0.000, confirms a statistically significant difference, suggesting that teachers perceive their leadership skills as more effective than those of school heads.

This discrepancy aligns with recent literature on educational leadership. For instance, a study by Zepeda (2019) highlights that teachers often feel more confident in their roles and capabilities, especially when they perceive supportive leadership. This sense of empowerment can lead to higher self-ratings among teachers regarding their leadership effectiveness.

Moreover, Leithwood and Jantzi (2020) discuss how perceptions of leadership effectiveness can differ significantly between leaders and their followers. The findings in this study echo their assertion that school heads may underestimate their impact on teacher effectiveness, which could contribute to the lower ratings of their own leadership skills.

The analysis of the relationship between school heads' profile variables and their perceived leadership skills reveals no statistically significant correlations. The Pearson correlation for age is -0.365, indicating a negative relationship, but the significance level of 0.299 suggests that age does not meaningfully impact leadership skills. Similarly, the correlation for gender is 0.387, yet with a significance level of 0.270, it also lacks statistical significance.

Civil status could not be computed due to constant responses, while the correlation for years in service as a school head is -0.236, with a significance level of 0.512, indicating no significant influence on leadership skills. Position or designation yields a correlation of -0.135 ( $p = 0.709$ ), and educational attainment shows a correlation of 0.015 ( $p = 0.967$ ), both suggesting that these factors do not significantly affect perceived leadership effectiveness.

These findings align with recent studies that emphasize the complexity of educational leadership. For instance, Zepeda (2019) highlights that effective leadership is often driven more by interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence than by demographic factors. Leithwood and Jantzi (2020) also note that leadership effectiveness is less about titles or years of service and more about the ability to foster a supportive and collaborative environment. Similarly, Harris and Jones (2021) argue that the impact of a leader is more closely tied to their relational capabilities than to their educational qualifications. Additionally, research by Sun and Leithwood (2022)

supports the idea that effective instructional leadership correlates with increased teacher performance, further emphasizing the importance of interpersonal dynamics over traditional metrics.

The analysis of the relationship between school heads' profile variables and their performance shows no statistically significant correlations. The Pearson correlation for age is  $-0.353$  ( $p = 0.316$ ), indicating no meaningful impact on performance. Similarly, the correlation for gender is  $0.344$  ( $p = 0.331$ ), and for years in service, it is  $-0.233$  ( $p = 0.516$ ). Position and educational attainment show correlations of  $-0.093$  ( $p = 0.799$ ) and  $0.059$  ( $p = 0.872$ ), respectively, all suggesting that these factors do not significantly affect performance.

These findings align with literature indicating that demographic factors are not critical determinants of leadership effectiveness. Zepeda (2019) emphasizes the importance of interpersonal skills over age or experience, while Leithwood and Jantzi (2020) highlight the need for leaders to foster supportive environments. Harris and Jones (2021) further assert that relational capabilities are more impactful than demographic profiles. Additionally, Grissom, Egalite, and Lindsay (2021) reinforce that effective leadership is more about practices and engagement than personal characteristics.

A strong positive correlation between school heads' leadership skills and their performance, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of  $0.988$ . This indicates that as leadership skills increase, performance also tends to improve significantly. The significance level of  $0.000$  confirms that this correlation is statistically significant at the  $0.01$  level, suggesting a robust relationship between these two variables.

This finding underscores the critical role that effective leadership skills play in enhancing the overall performance of school heads. The nearly perfect correlation indicates that leaders who exhibit strong skills are likely to achieve better performance outcomes. This aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of leadership competencies in educational settings.

For instance, research by Grissom, Egalite, and Lindsay (2021) highlights that effective school leadership is closely linked to improved student outcomes and teacher retention, reinforcing the notion that leadership skills are essential for success. Similarly, Leithwood and Jantzi (2020) assert that strong leadership practices significantly influence the quality of teaching and learning within schools.

## CONCLUSIONS

The findings show that the school heads were diverse in terms of age, gender, civil status, years of service, designation, and educational attainment. Most were middle-aged, male, married, and held Principal I to III positions, indicating experience and readiness in handling school leadership responsibilities. Their pursuit of advanced education also reflects their commitment to professional growth.

Both school heads and teachers rated the leadership skills and performance of school heads highly, showing that they are generally viewed as competent and effective leaders. They were recognized for their abilities in strategic leadership, operational management, instructional supervision, professional development, and partnership building.

However, significant differences were found in the ratings, with teachers giving higher assessments than the school heads' self-ratings. This suggests that teachers may perceive their school heads' leadership more positively than the school heads perceive themselves. Meanwhile, the profile variables of school heads did not significantly affect their performance, implying that leadership effectiveness is not mainly determined by age, gender, experience, position, or educational attainment.

Overall, the study reveals that leadership skills are significantly related to school heads' performance. This means that stronger leadership skills contribute to better performance, emphasizing the need for continuous leadership development and professional growth among school heads.

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