

# Relationship Between Leadership Skills of School Heads and Their School Performance: Basis in School Management

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Date Submitted:  
**April 28, 2026**

Date Accepted:  
**May 13, 2026**

Date Published:  
**June 09, 2026**

DOI:  
**10.5281/zenodo.20602818**

## ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between the leadership skills of school heads and their school performance as a basis for strengthening school management. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was used with supporting interviews and observations to validate the survey findings. The participants were 60 elementary and secondary school heads from participating districts in Congressional District III, Division of Nueva Ecija, selected through total population sampling. An adapted and modified leadership-skills inventory measured coaching, collaboration, communication, conflict management, decision-making, and delegation of tasks. School-head performance was operationalized using the reported Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) ratings.

Weighted mean, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, and analysis of variance were used. Fifty-three respondents (88.33%) received Outstanding OPCRf ratings, while seven (11.67%) received Very Satisfactory ratings. All six leadership-skill domains were rated Very Good, with delegation of tasks obtaining the highest weighted mean ( $M = 3.94$ ). The source table reported positive relationships between the skill domains and OPCRf-based performance, with coefficients ranging from  $r = .49$  to  $r = .81$ . Significant differences in leadership skills were reported according to age, relevant trainings attended, and level of school, while no significant differences were reported according to gender, educational attainment, experience as a school head, and position. The findings support continuous leadership development, structured coaching, participatory decision-making, and district-level technical assistance. Several inconsistencies in the source tables should be verified against the original statistical records before journal submission.

**Keywords:** *educational leadership, leadership skills, OPCRf, school heads, school management, school performance*

## INTRODUCTION

School heads influence the direction, climate, and performance of educational institutions. Their responsibilities extend beyond administrative supervision to include instructional leadership, staff development, communication, decision-making, resource management, and the creation of conditions that support effective teaching and learning. In periods of educational disruption and recovery, these responsibilities become more complex because leaders must address learning gaps while maintaining organizational stability and accountability.

Instructional leadership involves defining and communicating the school mission, managing instructional programs, coordinating the curriculum, supervising teaching, monitoring learner progress, and developing a positive learning climate (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). School improvement is strengthened when leaders work

collaboratively with personnel, promote shared responsibility, and align organizational resources with instructional goals (Fullan, 2009; Marks & Printy, 2003).

The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads provides a relevant context for strengthening leadership capacity. School heads are expected to respond strategically to school needs, support teachers, manage change, and improve educational outcomes. Leadership development is therefore not limited to formal authority. It includes observable competencies such as coaching, collaboration, communication, conflict management, decision-making, and delegation of tasks.

This study examined the leadership skills of school heads in Congressional District III, Division of Nueva Ecija. It described the OPCRf-based performance ratings of the respondents, assessed six leadership-skill domains, examined their reported relationships with performance, tested differences according to selected profile variables, and developed practical school-management priorities based on the findings.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Leadership and School Performance***

Leadership is central to school effectiveness because leaders influence organizational culture, teacher engagement, and the implementation of instructional programs. Marks and Printy (2003) emphasized the value of integrating transformational and instructional leadership, while Hallinger and Wang (2015) highlighted the role of school leaders in supervising instruction and fostering conditions for learner success. Martin (2021) likewise reported a positive relationship between effective principal leadership practices and perceived school effectiveness.

School performance is also strengthened by inclusive and participatory leadership. Boonla and Treputtharat (2013) identified leadership styles that predicted school effectiveness, while Tilahun (2014) emphasized the value of democratic practices and stakeholder participation. These findings support the view that effective school management depends on leadership behaviors that mobilize teachers, personnel, and community partners.

### ***Coaching and Collaboration***

Coaching helps personnel identify strengths, address performance gaps, and develop confidence in carrying out their responsibilities. School heads who provide guidance and constructive feedback can reinforce continuous professional growth. Collaboration complements coaching by creating opportunities for shared learning and collective responsibility. Teacher collaboration has been associated with organizational improvement and student achievement when schools cultivate supportive professional cultures (García-Martínez et al., 2021; Nguyen & Ng, 2020; Ronfeldt et al., 2015).

### ***Communication and Conflict Management***

Communication supports the exchange of information, ideas, expectations, and feedback within the school. Brinia et al. (2022) emphasized that communication contributes to the effectiveness of educational organizations by strengthening teamwork and shared understanding. School leaders must also manage conflict constructively. Msila (2012) explained that effective conflict management requires leaders to recognize the nature of disputes and apply appropriate strategies that protect relationships and organizational functioning.

### ***Decision-Making and Delegation of Tasks***

Decision-making requires the careful evaluation of alternatives, priorities, evidence, and expected outcomes. Because school heads make decisions that affect teachers, learners, and school operations, the quality of their judgment has direct implications for performance. Delegation is equally important because leaders cannot complete all responsibilities independently. Stonehouse (2015) described delegation as the transfer of responsibility and appropriate authority to others, grounded in trust, competence, and accountability.

## METHODS

### Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational design. The descriptive component was used to summarize OPCRF-based performance ratings and the perceived leadership skills of school heads. The correlational component examined the reported relationships between the six leadership-skill domains and performance. Interviews and observations were used as supporting techniques to validate the survey findings.

### Research Locale and Participants

The study was conducted among school heads in participating districts within Congressional District III, Division of Nueva Ecija. The participants were 60 elementary and secondary school heads. Total population sampling was used because the study intended to include all eligible school heads within the defined study coverage.

### Research Instrument

The primary instrument was an adapted and modified leadership-skills inventory. It included respondent-profile information, OPCRF-based performance ratings, and statements measuring coaching, collaboration, communication, conflict management, decision-making, and delegation of tasks. Responses used a four-point scale: 3.26-4.00, Very Good; 2.51-3.25, Good; 1.76-2.50, Fair; and 1.00-1.75, Poor. The source manuscript describes pretesting and Cronbach-alpha reliability procedures but does not provide the final reliability coefficient. No unsupported coefficient is reported in this article.

### Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured permission from the appropriate district and school authorities, explained the purpose of the study to the respondents, and administered the questionnaire through Google Forms. Respondent anonymity and the confidentiality of self-assessment results were emphasized. The accomplished questionnaires were organized, checked, and subjected to statistical analysis.

### Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage were used to summarize OPCRF-based performance ratings. Weighted mean was used to describe the leadership-skill domains. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationships between leadership skills and performance. Analysis of variance was used to test differences in leadership skills according to selected profile variables at the .05 level of significance.

### Ethical Consideration

The study observed voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and the responsible handling of data. Results were reported in aggregate form. The researcher should retain the permission letters, consent records, and supporting statistical files required by the journal.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### OPCRF-Based Performance Ratings of the Respondents

Table 1. *OPCRF-Based Performance Ratings of the School Heads (N = 60)*

Performance Range	Verbal Description	Frequency	Percentage
Below 1.49	Poor	0	0.00%
1.50-2.49	Unsatisfactory	0	0.00%
2.50-3.49	Satisfactory	0	0.00%
3.50-4.49	Very Satisfactory	7	11.67%
4.50-5.00	Outstanding	53	88.33%
Total		60	100.00%

The reported OPCRF-based performance profile was favorable. Fifty-three school heads (88.33%) were rated Outstanding, while seven (11.67%) were rated Very Satisfactory. No respondent was classified within the

Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, or Poor categories. These ratings indicate a high-performing group and should be considered when interpreting the generally strong self-assessed leadership-skill ratings.

### Leadership Skills of the School Heads

Table 2. *Summary of the Leadership-Skill Domains*

Leadership-Skill Domain	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Delegation of tasks	3.94	Very Good	1
Collaboration	3.92	Very Good	2
Decision-making	3.91	Very Good	3
Coaching	3.90	Very Good	4.5
Communication	3.90	Very Good	4.5
Conflict management	3.90	Very Good	4.5
Recalculated overall weighted mean	3.91	Very Good	

All six leadership-skill domains were rated Very Good. Delegation of tasks obtained the highest mean ( $M = 3.94$ ), followed by collaboration ( $M = 3.92$ ) and decision-making ( $M = 3.91$ ). Coaching, communication, and conflict management each obtained an overall mean of 3.90. The recalculated average of the six reported domain means was 3.91. The consistently high ratings suggest that the school heads perceived themselves as capable of guiding personnel, coordinating work, resolving issues, making decisions, and assigning responsibilities appropriately.

Table 3. *Selected Indicators for Continuous Improvement*

Domain	Selected Lower-Rated Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
Coaching	Allows members to identify their mistakes and propose corrective measures.	3.73	Very Good
Collaboration	Provides teams with a role in decision-making.	3.80	Very Good
Communication	Makes an effort to know team members at a personal level.	3.80	Very Good
Conflict management	Recognizes that conflicts are unavoidable in the workplace.	3.78	Very Good
Decision-making	Anticipates the possible outcomes of actions.	3.83	Very Good
Delegation of tasks	Trains the team member assigned to complete a delegated task.	3.87	Very Good

Although the domain ratings were consistently strong, the item-level results identify areas that can be reinforced through leadership development. School heads may strengthen reflective coaching, participatory decision-making, relationship-building, proactive conflict awareness, anticipation of outcomes, and preparation of personnel before tasks are delegated.

### Relationship Between Leadership Skills and Performance

Table 4. *Reported Relationships Between Leadership Skills and OPCRFB-Based Performance*

Leadership-Skill Domain	Pearson r	Reported Interpretation	Null Hypothesis
Coaching	.72	High correlation	Rejected
Collaboration	.80	High correlation	Rejected
Communication	.76	High correlation	Rejected
Conflict management	.75	High correlation	Rejected
Decision-making	.81	High correlation	Rejected
Delegation of tasks	.49	Positive correlation	Rejected

The source table reported positive relationships between each leadership-skill domain and OPCRFB-based performance. Decision-making obtained the highest coefficient ( $r = .81$ ), followed by collaboration ( $r = .80$ ), communication ( $r = .76$ ), conflict management ( $r = .75$ ), and coaching ( $r = .72$ ). The table reported  $r = .49$  for delegation of tasks. The null hypothesis was rejected for all domains. These results indicate that stronger leadership

skills were associated with higher reported performance ratings. The cross-sectional design does not establish causation.

### Differences in Leadership Skills According to Profile

*Table 5. Reported Differences in Leadership Skills According to Profile Variables*

Profile Variable	F-Computed	p-value	F-Critical	Interpretation	Decision
Age	7.76	.002	4.01	Significant	Reject H0
Gender	3.02	.157	4.01	Not significant	Fail to reject H0
Educational attainment	.85	.781	2.54	Not significant	Fail to reject H0
Experience as school head	1.29	.494	3.16	Not significant	Fail to reject H0
Position	3.56	.762	4.01	Not significant	Fail to reject H0
Relevant trainings attended	9.38	.0001	3.16	Significant	Reject H0
Level of school	10.40	.0005	4.01	Significant	Reject H0

Significant differences in leadership skills were reported according to age, relevant trainings attended, and level of school. No significant differences were reported according to gender, educational attainment, experience as a school head, and position. These findings underscore the importance of continuing leadership development and the need to consider the differing contexts in which school heads perform their roles.

### Proposed School-Management Priorities

*Table 6. Proposed Leadership-Development Priorities for School Management*

Priority Area	Recommended Action	Responsible Units	Expected Outcome
Reflective coaching	Use coaching conversations that help personnel identify errors, solutions, and improvement goals.	School heads and district supervisors	Greater ownership of professional growth
Participatory leadership	Strengthen consultation, shared planning, and team involvement in school-level decisions.	School heads and school personnel	Improved collaboration and commitment
Communication and relationships	Maintain regular meetings, feedback channels, and respectful professional relationships.	School heads and department leaders	Clearer coordination and stronger trust
Conflict-management readiness	Use confidential, fair, and preventive approaches when addressing disputes.	School heads and school committees	Healthier school climate and reduced recurring conflict
Evidence-informed decisions	Review relevant data, priorities, resources, and possible outcomes before implementing actions.	School heads and planning teams	More strategic school-management decisions
Responsible delegation	Match tasks with personnel strengths, clarify authority, and provide training before delegation.	School heads and designated focal persons	Improved accountability and task completion
Leadership capacity building	Conduct quarterly needs assessments, coaching, mentoring, and District Learning Action Cells.	District offices and school heads	Sustained leadership improvement

### CONCLUSION

The school heads demonstrated favorable OPCRf-based performance ratings and Very Good leadership skills across coaching, collaboration, communication, conflict management, decision-making, and delegation of tasks. The source manuscript reported positive relationships between the six skill domains and performance. Differences in leadership skills were reported according to age, relevant trainings attended, and level of school,

while no significant differences were found according to gender, educational attainment, experience as a school head, and position. The findings support continuous leadership development and the use of school-management strategies that promote coaching, teamwork, open communication, constructive conflict resolution, evidence-informed decisions, and responsible delegation. Interpretation should remain cautious until the original statistical records and source-table inconsistencies are fully verified.

### Recommendations

1. School heads may continue to uphold ethical leadership and align school-management practices with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads.
2. District offices may conduct quarterly needs assessments and use the results as a basis for coaching, mentoring, focus-group discussions, and District Learning Action Cells.
3. Leadership-development programs may prioritize participatory decision-making, reflective coaching, communication, conflict management, evidence-informed planning, and responsible delegation.
4. School heads may provide delegated personnel with clear instructions, appropriate authority, and task-specific training before implementation.
5. Schools may maintain supportive communication systems and confidential conflict-management procedures that strengthen trust and collaboration.
6. Future researchers may validate the findings using larger samples, objective school-performance indicators, multivariate methods, and complete reliability and statistical documentation.

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