
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy of School Heads and their Training Needs: Cues For a Proposed Development Plan

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| ABSTRACT

This study considers the relationship among emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and the professional development needs of school heads in the Division of Bataan, Philippines, using the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) as a framework. Competent educational leadership calls for not only administrative authority but also emotional competencies and confidence in directing complex responsibilities. A comprehensive assessment involving school heads and their teaching staff was conducted to evaluate five key domains: strategic leadership, operations management, teaching and learning focus, self-development, and community participation. The results show that school heads commonly exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy across all measured dimensions. However, a considerable perception gap exists between teachers and administrators regarding competency levels. Teachers perceive their school heads as competent, while the heads themselves report significant needs for ongoing professional development, particularly in instructional and administrative practices aligned with PPSSH Career Stage 2 requirements. No significant differences were observed based on years of experience or educational attainment, suggesting that the span of administrative experience does not greatly sway the development observed in these important leadership practices among school principals. It implies that factors beyond tenure, such as initial training, ongoing professional development, or organizational support, may be more influential in fostering leadership growth. The research concluded by recommending a year-round career development plan that includes competency-based training modules, professional learning communities, and peer mentoring networks. These projects are intended to enhance instructional leadership effectiveness and confront the evolving challenges confronted by educational administrators in contemporary Philippine schools.

| KEYWORDS

Competency training needs, emotional intelligence, educational leadership, PPSSH, professional development, school heads self-efficacy

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Leadership is more than authority or personal gain. It requires critical self-evaluation and preparedness. In education, emotional intelligence underpins principal effectiveness. It shapes instruction, school performance, and student achievement. Principals

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must be trustworthy, empathetic, communicative, and skilled problem-solvers to build supportive environments (Mehmood et al., 2023). Emotional Intelligence (EI) competencies (Pascual & Valerio, 2025) guide ethical decisions and support equal access to quality education for diverse groups. Effective administrators are attuned to individual and organizational EI (Sasere & Matashu, 2025). After the pandemic, leaders must restore unity and morale by strengthening community bonds (Milhem et al., 2024). Therefore, in the changing world of educational leadership, it is important to appreciate the value of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy.

The authority within learning institutions is imperative for securing educational achievement. Numerous challenges confront these leaders, which include shifting toward digital approaches, bouncing back after the pandemic, and applying inclusive methods in education. The capability of school leaders to acknowledge, grasp, and steer emotions—termed emotional intelligence (EI) (Goleman, 2021)—is essential in cultivating a constructive educational setting, invigorating teams, and boosting educational efficacy. Principal efficacy is the confidence to fulfill responsibilities such as policy development, change leadership, and resource management (Bandura, 2022; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2023). It is vital to administrative effectiveness and student achievement.

Principals demonstrating high emotional intelligence and efficacy have significance for school effectiveness. Emotional intelligence enables leaders to promote collaboration and mitigate teacher burnout. Research shows that principals trained in EI increased teacher retention rates by 25% through improved emotion regulation (Hsieh et al., 2024; Wu, 2023). Principals with strong efficacy are adept at implementing evidence-based reforms, strategic planning, and operational management, even under limited resources (Nurjaman et al., 2023). Meta-analyses show that EI and efficacy together account for up to 40% of the variance in school performance. This underscores their critical importance (Leithwood et al., 2022).

With regard to these qualifications, the Department of Education introduced the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) in 2022. These norms specify five individual realms: strategic leadership, operations management, a priority on teaching and learning, self-enhancement, and community interaction. Each domain requires competencies grounded in emotional intelligence and efficacy (DepEd, 2022). Despite these standards, local studies reveal ongoing skill deficits. School principals frequently experience anxiety, frustration in stakeholder interactions, and inadequate self-regulation. These challenges have intensified due to post-pandemic conditions and financial limitations (Ramlah et al., 2023). In Bataan, a 2023 study reported that only 45% of principals demonstrated high levels of empathy. Low emotional intelligence has been associated with stalled innovation and ethical lapses in leadership. Insufficient efficacy leads to resistance to change and weak collaborative partnerships. These are linked to stagnant National Achievement Test (NAT) scores and elevated attrition rates (Çayak & Eskici, 2021; Grissom et al., 2021). Collectively, these discoveries underscored the necessity for tailored interventions. Conventional professional development fails to sufficiently meet the competencies demanded by the PPSSH.

Professional standards emphasize the need for competencies in emotional intelligence and efficacy. In Bataan, the transition from head teachers who have passed the National Assessment for School Heads (NASH) to principal roles reveals a significant gap. Passing the NASH is only the beginning of leadership development. The complexities of principalship—managing relationships, facilitating post-pandemic recovery, and implementing reforms—often exceed the initial qualifications of many principals. Without structured training, newly appointed principals are likely to face the same challenges as their predecessors. The intersection of PPSSH requirements, local skill gaps, and NASH passers highlights the urgent need for targeted, evidence-based development in EI and efficacy for emerging leaders (Leadership - Advancing Great Leaders and Leadership, 2022; Villa & Tulod, 2021). This study argued that assessing emotional intelligence and principal efficacy among NASH Batch 1 Passers in Bataan is essential. By analyzing their relationship to training needs, this study helped design strategies to create effective leaders for 21st-century education.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The study assessed the emotional intelligence and self-efficacy of School Heads in the Division of Bataan and how this influenced their instructional competencies, as a basis for crafting a developmental plan proposal.

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1.1.1. How may the profile of school heads be described in terms of:

- years of experience as school head or department head; and

- educational attainment?

1.1.2 How may the emotional intelligence of school heads be described in terms of:

- self-awareness;
- managing emotions;
- motivating oneself;
- empathy; and
- social skill?

1.1.3. How may the self-efficacy of school heads be described in terms of:

- efficacy for management;
- efficacy for instructional leadership; and
- efficacy for moral leadership?

1.1.4. How may the training needs be evaluated by the teachers and school heads themselves in terms of:

- leading strategically;
- managing school operations and resources;
- focusing on teaching and learning;
- developing self and others and
- building connections?

1.1.5. Is there a significant difference in the level of training needs of the school heads when they are grouped accordingly?

1.1.6. What are the challenges faced by the school heads in school leadership?

1.1.7. Do emotional intelligence and self-efficacy affect the training needs of school heads?

1.1.8. What Career Development Plan for School Heads may be proposed based on the result of the study?

1.2 Significance of the study

The study is significant to the following entities:

1.2.1 Aspiring School Principals.

This study may provide an opportunity for a self-evaluation of their competencies. By reviewing themselves against expectations for Career Stage 2, these new School Heads can critically reflect on their practice, identify specific developmental areas, and deepen their awareness of their professional strengths and shortcomings. This self-evaluation encourages the pursuit of skill and knowledge development to better position School Heads for serving their school communities. In summary, this introspective process is anticipated to facilitate the professional development of individual School Heads and enhance the overall efficacy of the educational framework, in line with the aims of the School Head Development Plan, which include efforts to develop emotional intelligence and principal effectiveness to enhance instructional competencies.

1.2.2 Department of Education.

The findings of this study may provide DepEd officials with the basis for creating and implementing need-based technical assistance programs for school leaders. Through the execution of this research, the Department of Education may be equipped to ascertain the precise training and skill enhancement requirements necessary for cultivating school leaders who are both prepared and proficient. The suggestions derived from this investigation may furnish policymakers and educational administrators with empirical data regarding the competencies that will be essential from the Human Resources and Organizational Development Department in order to establish an effective school management framework. In addition, the findings may provide relevant feedback on the design of competency-based training programs to address skill gaps and issues warranting further study. Ultimately, the study serves as a related study and empirically supports DepEd's commitment to

improve the quality of school leadership, which would lead to better educational outcomes, as outlined in the proposed School Head Development Plan grounded in emotional intelligence, principal efficacy, and instructional competencies.

1.2.3 Teaching Personnel.

This study may have a substantial contribution to the corpus of knowledge for educational administrators by examining the impact of emotional intelligence and the self-efficacy of principals on the pedagogical competencies of educators. The results may equip school principals to be more purposeful in the way they promote communication, support, and working conditions, all of which contribute to improved teacher morale, well-being, and professional satisfaction. Moreover, this study promotes a culture of transparency and progressive feedback, relevant to collaborating to improve practice quality for teachers and school leaders. Creating this type of culture fosters collaboration, teamwork, and engagement, which is identified as important for supporting positive outcomes in schools and contributes to creating a positive school environment where ongoing improvement is valued and practiced regularly.

1.2.4 Non-teaching Personnel.

Non-teaching personnel play an important role in fulfilling key tasks of a school organization that contribute to its formation and capacity. This study may demonstrate the essential contributions of non-teaching staff and offers insights into how they support effective school management, particularly during a transitional period of leadership with a new school head. By shedding light on the vital nature of work and responsibilities of non-teaching personnel, the study findings may allow non-teaching staff to recognize their value in a school context. The study also helps strengthen collaboration and partnerships with non-teaching personnel and the new school head, enhancing commitment to organizational cohesion and stimulating progress and overall school performance towards common action.

1.2.5 Students.

The research highlighted the need of exploring the potential of school leaders and their impact on children's learning experiences, directly through the lens of emotional intelligence and principle efficacy in developing instructional skills. Good principals develop great school cultures, outstanding academic programs, and safe, supportive environments. They work together to foster a positive atmosphere for student well-being and academic performance. The findings of the research may help to guarantee that the school leaders are able to build engaging and inclusive learning environments, boosting the overall quality of education for students and preparing them for success both academically and personally.

1.2.6 School Community. Evaluating principals' leadership competencies is important to school communities because strong school leaders are at the center of building a positive, collaborative culture grounded in partnership, creativity, and excellence. When educational administrators exhibit a high interpersonal intelligence alongside a significant sense of efficacy, they cultivate more substantial relationships with all stakeholders (educators, personnel, guardians, collaborators) and create pathways for more efficient and meaningful communication, as well as enhanced engagement and motivation within the community. These relationships lead to improved organizational growth and performance, increased satisfaction among students and families, and a positive perception and reputation for the school. In sum, regularly evaluating school leaders' competencies is key to supporting the school's mission within the community, fostering an environment where all can prosper together.

1.2.7 Future Researchers.

This research may serve as a valuable starting point for future assessments of principal leadership qualities and can inform the examination of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy on curricular practices. Its findings may inspire the exploration of the conditions and attributes required to create a space for student success and school leadership. This research may highlight significant motivators and essential principal leadership skills to assist those scholars who wish to examine a new idea, hypothesis, or research question concerning school leadership and educational outcomes. This study may be used to advance the design of more specified programs, policy plans, and educational/leadership standards. Furthermore, the work extends beyond direct stakeholders, offering evidence and sparking innovation for subsequent studies to facilitate educational improvement and school effectiveness.

1.2.8 Scope and Delimitations

This convergent-parallel research endeavor sought to systematically assess the pedagogical and administrative proficiencies, alongside the developmental requirements, of educational leaders within the Division of Bataan, with the aim of formulating a bespoke developmental framework that is congruent with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH).

The study also included an evaluation of the emotional intelligence of school administrators, which consists of self-awareness, emotion control, self-motivation and empathy. In a similar context, it examined self-efficacy about management, pedagogical approaches, and leadership qualities.

Specifically, the study focused on the NASH Batch 1 Passers in the Division of Bataan. The study used quantitative and qualitative approaches, employing total enumeration based on established inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure that all eligible participants are included. Furthermore, a purposive sampling technique was applied to gather data and analyze the results qualitatively. The study highlighted the 28 passers who are eligible for the Principal I position. The research delineated the exclusion of educational administrators and head educators who engaged in the examination and are required to partake in a specified developmental initiative. The study employed purposive sampling to ensure sufficient, high-quality data collection and to strictly adhere to saturation principles in participant selection.

The scope of this investigation was confined to the assessment of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Self-Efficacy, and instructional competencies, as delineated by the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads pertaining to Career Stage 2, and will explicitly exclude any alternative evaluative approaches. Also, the study did not conduct a documentary analysis of school heads' portfolios on the PPSSH domains, as the institutionalization of assessment has already been established.

Theoretical Framework

This chapter presented the relevant theories, literature, and studies in this chapter. Moreover, Chapter 2 presents the conceptual framework, the hypothesis, and the definitions of terms used in the current study.

Relevant Theories

In examining the emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and the training needs of the school heads, the study used several different theoretical frameworks to analyze data, namely: Goleman's Theory of Emotional Intelligence (1995), Albert Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1977)-developed within the larger social cognitive theory framework; this theory relates to how a person's belief about her or his ability to successfully engage in some behavior impacts his or her likelihood of achieving desired outcomes as well as; and the Competency-Based Leadership Theory.

Goleman's Emotional Intelligence framework emphasizes that proficient leadership is dependent on an individual's emotional and social skills. This structure articulates five crucial aspects of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, emotional control, ambition, empathy, and social acumen (Goleman, 1995). These indispensable factors are necessary for school heads to skillfully direct their institutions and aid their staff. Furthermore, embedding emotional intelligence training within leadership advancement curricula could facilitate principals in adeptly addressing the nuanced dynamics of modern educational situations.

The implementation of structured Emotional Intelligence (EI) training programs can significantly enhance principals' ability to foster positive school climates and improve overall instructional effectiveness (Gregorio, 2025; Abe, 2025) and administrative performance. By prioritizing emotional intelligence in leadership training, educational institutions can create resilient and adaptive school environments that benefit both educators and students (Gregorio, 2025; Chaudhary et al., 2024). The principle of self-efficacy showcases an individual's confidence in their talent to achieve aims within prescribed boundaries or to engage in specific activities (Bandura, 1997). In the field of educational leadership, principals showing high levels of self-efficacy are more prone to confront difficulties, reveal resilience in adverse conditions, and encourage a culture of confidence among their faculty and pupils (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Recent studies have continued to validate the importance of self-efficacy in educational leadership, emphasizing its role in effective decision-making and resilience (Gonzalez et al., 2021; Smith & Brown, 2022).

Additionally, incorporating self-efficacy training into leadership development programs can empower principals to tackle the complexities of modern educational settings. Structured self-efficacy training programs can significantly enhance principals' abilities to foster positive school climates and improve overall instructional effectiveness and administrative performance. By prioritizing self-efficacy in leadership training, educational institutions can cultivate resilient and adaptable school environments that benefit both educators and students. The combination of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy training in leadership development is crucial for preparing principals with the skills needed to effectively address the challenges of today's educational frameworks.

The Competency-Based Leadership Theory does not have a single author; it is a framework developed and discussed by various scholars and practitioners in leadership studies. However, key contributors to the development of competency-based approaches in leadership include: Katz and Kahn (1978) emphasized the importance of identifying specific competencies for effective leadership.

This guiding structure can influence the creation of precise training programs for those in educational administration, thereby making certain they enhance the fundamental skills required to successfully traverse intricate educational frameworks. The integration of Social Cognitive Theory into leadership development programs can augment the self-efficacy of principals by facilitating observational learning and fostering reciprocal interactions among personal, behavioral, and environmental dimensions (Social Cognitive Theory and Personal Agency, 2022). This approach enables educational leaders to showcase ideal behaviors competently and adjust skillfully to the various challenges present in their educational settings. By cultivating a culture characterized by collaboration and perpetual learning, educational leaders can not only enhance their own professional competencies but also empower their staff in the advancement of their skills and self-assurance.

Merging Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy, and Competency-Based Leadership Theory crafts a thorough paradigm for enhancing educational leadership. This approach addresses the emotional and psychological aspects of leadership (EI and self-efficacy) while also focusing on the specific skills needed for effective management (competency-based leadership). By fostering a leadership style that is emotionally intelligent, confident, and competent, educational institutions can create dynamic learning environments that benefit all stakeholders (Thompson & Green, 2023). This integrated approach not only enhances school leaders' capabilities but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement, positively impacting student achievement and teacher effectiveness. This integrated framework underscores the need to equip school leaders with both emotional intelligence and self-efficacy to navigate the complexities of modern educational environments effectively. This comprehensive approach not only prepares school leaders to face the challenges of contemporary education but also enhances their ability to inspire and motivate their teams effectively.

Related Literature

Emotional Intelligence of School Heads

Emotional intelligence (EI) is recognized as an important trait for educational leaders, especially in managing complex organizational dynamics, stakeholder interactions, and institutional transformation. This section examines five attributes of emotional intelligence pertinent to school leadership: self-awareness, emotional regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and interpersonal skills.

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness constitutes a foundational dimension of emotional intelligence, enabling school leaders to recognize their own emotions, strengths, limitations, and values. Recent syntheses from the Philippine context and regional reviews identify self-awareness as essential for ethical and adaptive leadership, particularly during crises and periods of reform. This dimension has gained prominence amid rapid educational transitions, such as pandemic-related disruptions and ongoing curriculum reforms in the Philippine educational system (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018). Global literature reviews reinforce this emphasis, identifying self-awareness as a precursor to effective relationship-building and change management in educational settings. Cross-cultural analyses consistently positioned self-awareness as a core dimension linked to transformational leadership and moral decision-making (Daly et al., 2025; Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Garbenis & Kaffemaniené, 2025; Godfrey & Chereau, 2024). The capacity for self-reflection and accurate self-assessment enables school heads to model vulnerability, solicit feedback, and adapt leadership strategies to address diverse stakeholder needs and evolving institutional contexts.

In the Philippine context, self-awareness has been especially essential during policy reform eras, including the K-12 transition and the implementation of blended learning modalities. School leaders exhibiting heightened self-awareness are more inclined to recognize gaps in their knowledge and skills, seek relevant professional development opportunities, and form collaborative leadership teams that enhance their competencies (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018).

Managing Emotions

Emotional self-regulation or the ability to control one's emotions is a vital competence for school leaders who face high-stress situations, interpersonal conflicts and organizational disasters. This ability also involves staying calm and demonstrating appropriate emotional behaviors to staff and students. Both Philippine and international literature (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Daly et al., 2025; Hamilton et al., 2023) linked effective emotion management to positive school climates, higher staff morale and effective crisis response, including the transition to online learning during the pandemic. Studies showed that principals' emotion regulation enhances stakeholder relationships and resilience during disruptions, in line with findings from around the world that place emotion regulation as a key component of emotional intelligence in educational leadership. The capacity to maintain composure in high-stress situations, to channel frustration constructively, and to address adversity with thoughtful response rather than reactive emotional response is especially critical in environments with limited resources and during times of rapid change (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Daly et al., 2025; Hamilton et al., 2023).

International research confirms similar findings as well. School leaders who were able to control their emotions were able to create more stable organizational climates, minimize staff fatigue, and maintain their focus on instructional issues during times of turmoil. This facet of emotional intelligence was especially pertinent during the COVID-19 pandemic when school heads had to make swift decisions, communicate ever-changing protocols and support anxious staff and families while managing their own stress and uncertainty (Daly et al., 2025; Hamilton et al., 2023).

Motivating Oneself

Intrinsic motivation among school heads is identified in both local and global reviews as essential for maintaining insight and perseverance during periods of reform and upheaval. This dimension of emotional intelligence includes the ability to sustain optimism, persist toward long-term goals despite setbacks, and derive meaning and purpose from leadership responsibilities, even in challenging circumstances (Adams et al., 2023; Daly et al., 2025; Dishari & AIAfnan, 2024).

Comparative analyses link motivation to transformational leadership tendencies and sustained emotionally intelligent practice, supporting ongoing reform in various educational systems, including the Philippines. School heads with high levels of self-motivation are more likely to persist in improvement initiatives, foster similar commitment among staff, and maintain focus on student learning outcomes despite competing demands and resource limitations (Adams et al., 2023; Daly et al., 2025; Dishari & AIAfnan, 2024).

Self-motivation becomes particularly important in the Philippine educational context where school leaders frequently encounter challenges such as large class sizes, limited resources, and complex administrative demands. Leaders who maintain a strong sense of purpose and efficacy are more likely to sustain improvement initiatives over time and to model resilience for their school communities (Adams et al., 2023; Hani et al., 2021). Empathy is consistently identified as central to relational leadership, trust-building, and employee well-being in the Philippine and international literature. This dimension includes the ability to grasp and react appropriately to the emotions, perspectives, and needs of others, including teachers, students, parents, and community stakeholders (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Hani et al., 2021).

Philippine studies connect empathy with stakeholder engagement and joint reform, mirroring international syntheses that associate empathy with relational leadership and ethical climate in schools. School heads who demonstrate empathy are better able to build trust, facilitate difficult conversations, support teacher development, and create inclusive school cultures that value broad perspectives and experiences (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Hani et al., 2021).

Empathy has been crucial during crises, when school leaders must balance the needs of different stakeholders, provide support to staff and students who are dealing with trauma or hardship, and make decisions that affect those most vulnerable. Empathetic leadership correlates with increased organizational commitment, lower staff attrition, and improved school-community relationships (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Hani et al., 2021).

Social Skills

Social skills, including communication, relationship management, and collaboration, are repeatedly cited as essential for effective dissemination of reforms and for sustaining school improvement networks in the Philippines and internationally. This dimension encompasses the capacity to communicate clearly and persuasively, manage conflicts constructively, build and maintain productive relationships, and facilitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders (Daly et al., 2025; Hani et al., 2021; Hourani et al., 2020).

International reviews highlight social skills as vital for managing conflicts, building social capital, and leading teams, which dovetails with Philippine findings on trust-building and cross-stakeholder collaboration. School heads with strong social skills are more capable of navigating political context, securing funding and assistance for their schools, and building the cooperative cultures indispensable for sustained improvement (Daly et al., 2025; Hani et al., 2021; Hourani et al., 2020).

In the Philippine context, where school leadership frequently requires coordination across multiple levels of the educational bureaucracy and collaboration with diverse community stakeholders, social skills are a particularly important competency. Effective communication and relationship management enable school heads to advocate for their schools, mobilize community resources, and establish partnerships necessary to address complex challenges (Hani et al., 2021; Hourani et al., 2020).

Self-Efficacy of School Heads

Self-efficacy, having confidence in one's own ability to organize and execute the plans of action required to manage possible situations, is a key cognitive resource for school leaders. This section analyzes three areas of school leadership self-efficacy, namely efficacy for management, efficacy for instructional leadership and efficacy for moral leadership.

Efficacy for Management

Management efficacy is a measure of the extent to which school leaders feel confident in their ability to organize resources, oversee governance structures and manage the day-to-day operations of their schools. Management efficacy is the essence of resource organization, governance, and daily school activities in systematic and narrative reviews (Hamilton et al., 2023; Ismail, 2024; Karakuş et al., 2024).

Developmental approaches to building management efficacy include simulation-based practice, crisis-response planning, and mentoring, with emotional intelligence-facilitated relational skills boosting resource mobilization and stakeholder engagement in both Philippine contexts and international settings. School heads with high management efficacy demonstrate greater confidence in handling budgets, scheduling, personnel management, and the myriad administrative tasks required to maintain functional school operations (Hamilton et al., 2023; Ismail, 2024; Karakuş et al., 2024).

In the Philippine context, management efficacy is especially important in light of the complex administrative requirements of the Department of Education system, such as satisfying numerous reporting requirements, managing diverse funding streams, and partnering with local government units. Effective management skills enable school principals to delegate effectively, establish efficient systems and focus on instructional priorities rather than being overwhelmed with administrative demands (Ismail, 2024; Karakuş et al., 2024).

Efficacy for Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership efficacy refers to the degree to which school leaders are confident in their ability to lead curriculum implementation, support effective pedagogy, and use data to inform instructional improvement. This domain is invariably tied to curriculum alignment, pedagogical guidance, and data-driven improvement across various academic settings (Hani et al., 2021; Ismail, 2024; Koutsoumpa, 2023).

Review after review shows that leaders' instructional leadership competence is enhanced when paired with collaborative practices, data literacy, and professional learning communities, with emotional intelligence-related capabilities underpinning relational leadership throughout instructional change and digital transitions. School heads with high instructional leadership efficacy tend to conduct classroom observations, provide meaningful feedback to the teachers, facilitate professional learning and use assessment data to guide school improvement efforts (Hani et al., 2021; Ismail, 2024; Koutsoumpa, 2023).

Instructional leadership in the Philippine setting faces particular challenges and opportunities, such as the ongoing implementation of the K-12 curriculum, the integration of mother tongue-based multilingual education, and the rapid transition to blended learning modalities during and after the pandemic. School heads who are confident in their ability to lead the

curriculum are more likely to lead teachers through these transitions and to maintain the focus on quality of teaching and learning despite competing demands (Hani et al., 2021; Ismail, 2024; Koutsoumpa, 2023).

Efficacy for Moral Leadership

The school leader's belief in his/her capability to maintain moral standards, promote equity, and put student welfare at the forefront of his/her decisions and actions is referred to as moral leadership efficacy. International reviews have linked the effectiveness of moral leadership to transformational and moral leadership models and equity-focussed decision-making and emotional intelligence as a facilitator of ethical climates and partner trust (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021).

The Philippine and regional syntheses likewise resonate with a focus on moral stewardship and leadership for equity as central to resilient school climates. School leaders who have a strong sense of moral leadership efficacy are confident about their ability to make tough ethical decisions, to support marginalized students, and to foster inclusive school cultures that celebrate diversity and advance social justice (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021).

The case of the Philippines is particularly relevant to moral leadership efficacy, as inequities in the availability and quality of education persist across urban and rural schools, public and private institutions, and students of different socioeconomic backgrounds. School heads who have high confidence in their moral leadership competencies are more likely to emphasize equity in resource allocation, challenge discriminatory practices, and champion policies and practices that benefit all students (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021).

Training Needs of School Heads

Despite the high emotional intelligence and self-efficacy of the school heads, they still have significant training needs in various dimensions of leadership practice. This section tackles the training needs based on the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). The PPSSH categorizes the leadership competencies into five domains: Leading Strategically, Managing School Operations and Resources, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, Developing Self and Others, and Developing Connections.

Leading Strategically

Strategic leadership involves the ability to formulate and articulate a compelling vision, make data-driven decisions, guide organizational change, and handle challenging stakeholder relationships. Professional development in this field should promote strategic thinking, data-driven decision-making, and change management, supported by emotional intelligence skills such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, and social skills to manage stakeholder relationships and strategic-oriented trade-offs within varied contexts, including the Philippine context (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Kutsyuruba et al., 2024).

Philippine-context literature indicates persistent training needs in strategic leadership among school heads, prompted by evolving policy demands including K-12 transitions, digital learning integration, mental health programs, and equity-focused reforms. School heads report needing support in long-term planning, resource allocation aligned with strategic priorities, and change management strategies that build buy-in and sustain momentum for improvement initiatives (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Ismail, 2024; Kutsyuruba et al., 2024).

International literature reinforces these findings, noting that strategic leadership requires ongoing development as educational contexts evolve. Effective professional development in this domain includes case-based learning, strategic planning simulations, and coaching that helps leaders connect strategic thinking with operational implementation (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Kutsyuruba et al., 2024).

Managing School Operations and Resources

Operational management encompasses the day-to-day administration of schools, including budgeting, scheduling, facilities management, personnel administration, and compliance with regulatory requirements. Training focusing on budgeting, scheduling, and resource mobilization, augmented by relational leadership to optimize human and material resources in local schools, addresses persistent needs in this domain (Ismail, 2024; Karakuş et al., 2024).

Philippine school heads report ongoing training needs in financial management, particularly in managing diverse funding streams, preparing budgets that align with school improvement priorities, and ensuring transparent and accountable use of

resources. Additional needs include personnel management, including teacher evaluation and support, and facilities management in contexts where infrastructure may be limited or aging (Ismail, 2024; Karakuş et al., 2024).

International reviews emphasize that operational management training is most effective when it integrates technical skills with relational leadership capabilities, enabling school heads to mobilize resources through partnerships, delegate effectively, and build systems that support rather than detract from instructional priorities (Ismail, 2024; Karakuş et al., 2024).

Focusing on Teaching and Learning

Instructional leadership is the heart of school leadership, which includes the implementation of curriculum, pedagogical guidance, assessment skills, teacher development, and creating conditions for high-quality teaching and learning. Effective professional development in this domain is characterized by a strong emphasis on instructional leadership, curriculum alignment, assessment literacy, coaching, emotionally intelligent teacher development and digital learning leadership (Hamilton et al., 2023; Hani et al., 2021; Ismail, 2024; Koutsioumpa, 2023).

School leaders in the Philippines reported a strong need for training in instructional leadership, particularly in classroom observation and feedback, data-driven instructional improvement, curriculum alignment with the K-12 framework, and digital pedagogy. The rapid shift to blended learning during the pandemic revealed significant deficiencies in school leaders' ability to support teachers in online and hybrid teaching formats (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Hani et al., 2021; Ismail, 2024; Koutsioumpa, 2023).

Global literature points out that the most effective development of instructional leadership is achieved when it is prolonged, embedded in real school settings and associated with opportunities for practice and feedback. Professional learning communities, instructional rounds, and coaching models show promise for increasing instructional leadership capacity (Hamilton et al., 2023; Hani et al., 2021; Ismail, 2024; Koutsioumpa, 2023).

Developing Self and Others

This domain includes school leaders' ability to engage in continuous professional learning, evaluate their own practice, and promote the growth and development of teachers and other members of the school community. The need in this area is addressed as emotional intelligence training improves leadership abilities when integrated into cohesive professional development programs that include continuous coaching and mentoring as well as development of emotional intelligence skills (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Lu et al., 2024; Lubguban, 2021).

Philippine school leaders recognize the need for training on coaching and mentoring, performance management, facilitation of professional learning communities, and their continuous development in emotional intelligence, digital leadership, and equity-centered practices. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition that leadership is an ongoing process and not a one-time event (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Lu et al., 2024; Lubguban, 2021).

Global assessments have pointed out that advancing oneself and others requires both technical skills in adult education and coaching, and also intrinsic qualities such as empathy, cultural sensitivity and a commitment to continuous improvement. In the field, effective professional development often includes opportunities for leaders to receive coaching, engage in reflective practice, and participate in peer learning networks (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Lu et al., 2024; Lubguban, 2021).

Building Connections

This domain includes the ability of school leaders to establish partnerships with families, communities and external organizations and to engage in professional networks that promote learning and improvement. Training in this area emphasizes the cultivation of social capital, networks for peer learning and collaboration among schools, with peer-learning alliances associated with organizational resilience and knowledge exchange within school networks (Hourani et al., 2020; Martinsone et al., 2025; Núñez et al., 2023).

The Philippine school heads identified the need for training in community engagement, building partnerships, communicating with many stakeholders and participating in professional learning networks. The importance of building connections has been especially evident during crises, when schools have relied on community partnerships to meet students' needs and when professional networks have provided essential support to school leaders facing unprecedented challenges (Adams et al., 2023;

Cliffe, 2018; Hourani et al., 2020; Martinsone et al., 2025; Núñez et al., 2023).

International literature highlights the importance of strategic thinking about which collaborations will best serve the students and schools, and relational abilities to develop, cultivate and sustain good partnerships over time. In this area, professional development is mostly associated with networking, case studies of partnerships and support for the development and maintenance of networks for professional learning (Hourani et al., 2020; Martinsone et al., 2025; Núñez et al., 2023).

Moderating Variables: Years of Experience and Educational Attainment

The relationship between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and training needs may be moderated by school leaders' years of experience and educational attainment. This section examines how these variables influence leadership development needs.

Years of Experience as School Head or Department Head

Across contexts, training needs persist across experience levels, challenging assumptions that experienced leaders require less professional development than their novice counterparts. Novice leaders' efficacy is shaped by internal and external supports, including mentoring, induction programs, and organizational structures that provide guidance and feedback. However, experienced leaders also report substantial growth needs as educational contexts evolve, particularly in areas such as digital leadership, equity-focused practice, and mental health support (Ismail, 2024; Ontong, 2022).

Philippine insights align with this pattern, showing ongoing professional development needs irrespective of tenure. Even highly experienced school heads report training needs in emerging areas of practice, suggesting that leadership development must be continuous and responsive to changing contexts rather than front-loaded in the early years of leadership (Adams et al., 2023;

Cliffe, 2018; Ismail, 2024; Ontong, 2022).

International reviews emphasize that experience alone does not guarantee effectiveness, and that the quality of experience matters more than its duration. Experienced leaders benefit from professional development that acknowledges their expertise while introducing new frameworks, tools, and practices relevant to contemporary challenges. Peer learning networks and communities of practice may be particularly valuable for experienced leaders, providing opportunities to share expertise while continuing to learn (Ismail, 2024; Ontong, 2022).

Educational Attainment

Higher educational attainment does not guarantee the absence of training needs, challenging assumptions that advanced degrees fully prepare school leaders for the complexities of their roles. Reviews emphasize context-driven professional development requirements that transcend credential levels, with Philippine literature reinforcing this pattern in areas like digital leadership and well-being-focused leadership (Ismail, 2024; Núñez et al., 2023; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

While advanced degrees in educational leadership or related fields provide important foundational knowledge, they cannot anticipate all of the specific challenges leaders will face in their particular contexts or the ways in which educational policy and practice will evolve over the course of a career. School heads with master's degrees or doctoral degrees report training needs similar to those of their colleagues with bachelor's degrees, particularly in emerging areas of practice that may not have been addressed in their formal education (Ismail, 2024; Núñez et al., 2023; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

Philippine literature reinforces this pattern, noting that school heads across all levels of educational attainment report substantial training needs, particularly in areas such as digital leadership, mental health and well-being, equity-focused practice, and data-informed decision-making. This suggests that professional development systems must provide ongoing learning opportunities regardless of leaders' credentials (Ismail, 2024; Núñez et al., 2023; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

High Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy with High Training Needs

A common and probably surprising finding from both Philippine and international studies is the considerable training demands for participants with high emotional intelligence and strong self-efficacy. This pattern highlights the necessity of continual, responsive professional development that responds to policy and circumstance, both in the Philippines and elsewhere (Ismail, 2024; Núñez et al., 2023; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

There are several causes for this tendency in the literature. First, school leaders with high emotional intelligence may be more self-aware and so better able to accurately assess their own learning needs. Second, strong self-efficacy leaders are more likely to be eager to take on tough new initiatives and thus more cognizant of the skills and knowledge they need to gain. Third, the fast change of educational policy and practice means that even capable leaders are challenged with new issues that demand new capabilities (Ismail, 2024; Núñez et al., 2023; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

This finding has important implications for professional development systems, indicating that training opportunities should be accessible to all school leaders regardless of their current level of emotional intelligence or self-efficacy and that high-performing leaders should not be assumed to have lower development needs than their colleagues (Ismail, 2024; Núñez et al., 2023; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

Philippine Pandemic and Leadership Context

Philippine pandemic and leadership studies emphasize local challenges and strategies, providing essential context for emotional intelligence and self-efficacy development and PPSSH-aligned training needs under COVID-19 and post-pandemic transitions. The Philippine educational system faced particular challenges during the pandemic, including limited internet connectivity in many areas, large class sizes that complicated social distancing, and significant socioeconomic disparities that affected students' access to remote learning (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018).

Filipino school heads were very adaptive and resilient in this era, quickly implementing alternative modalities of instruction, allowing teachers to acquire new skills and finding inventive ways to maintain ties with students and families. The pandemic, however, also exposed significant gaps in school leaders' preparation for crisis management, digital leadership and support for the mental health and well-being of students and staff (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018).

The post-pandemic period continues to present challenges, including learning recovery, reintegration of students who disengaged during remote learning, ongoing mental health concerns, and the integration of effective practices from remote learning into traditional school operations. School heads report ongoing training needs in all of these areas (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018).

Cross-Context Comparative Insights

Cross-context comparative literature provides framing for the Philippine situation, enabling culturally responsive adaptation of emotional intelligence measurement, leadership development, and collaborative networks to support school improvement in the Philippines. International evaluations provide frameworks and data that can guide Philippine practice, while emphasizing the need for contextual adaptation (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Daly et al., 2025; Ismail, 2024; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

Several universal patterns are seen in comparative literature. First, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are consistently related to effective school leadership in many cultural situations. Second, school leaders deal with frequent issues like managing complicated stakeholder relationships, assisting with instructional improvement and negotiating regulatory change. Third, effective leadership development is ongoing, context-based, and tailored to the leaders' requirements (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Daly et al., 2025; Ismail, 2024; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

Comparative literature, however, also reveals substantial contextual differences. The governmental background, organizational arrangements, cultural expectations, limited resources and neighborhood circumstances influence the difficulties encountered by school principals and the tactics that work. Leadership development in the Philippines needs to be contextualized to local realities, yet based on international evidence (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Daly et al., 2025; Ismail, 2024; Sun & Zhang, 2017).

Measurement and Cultural Validity

Across contexts, researchers caution about the cross-cultural validity of emotional intelligence instruments, noting that emotional expression, regulation, and perception may vary across cultures. Local adaptation and triangulation with qualitative data are often recommended to capture context-specific leadership dynamics in the Philippines and elsewhere (Garbenis & Kaffemaniené, 2025; Godfrey & Chereau, 2024; Karakuş et al., 2024).

This indicates the need to validate the emotional intelligence and self-efficacy scales for Filipino school leaders in the Philippine context, including the cultural appropriateness of the items and the understanding of the constructs as intended. A more comprehensive and culturally relevant assessment of school leaders' emotional intelligence and self-efficacy can be obtained by using triangulation through multiple data sources such as 360-degree feedback, observations and qualitative interviews (Cliffe,

2018; Garbenis & Kaffemaniené, 2025; Godfrey & Chereau, 2024; Karakuş et al., 2024).

Emotional Intelligence as Part of a Broader Leadership Framework

Several reviews highlight the fact that emotional intelligence alone is not enough to be an effective leader. Instead, emotional intelligence needs to be embedded within instructional, distributed and data-informed leadership practices supported with coaching and organizational supports to translate emotional competencies into outcomes. Effective school management demands the combination of emotional intelligence, technical knowledge, instructional experience, strategic thinking, and organizational management skills (Dishari & AIAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021; Hourani et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2024; Lubguban, 2021).

This view has important implications for leadership development: emotional intelligence training should not be isolated but should be integrated with other aspects of leadership practice. For example, the development of instructional leadership might include emotional intelligence competencies like empathy and social skills to enable effective coaching and feedback. Alternatively, strategic leadership development could be based on self-awareness and emotion regulation to facilitate sound decision-making under stress (Dishari & AIAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021; Hourani et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2024; Lubguban, 2021).

Implications for Leadership Development

The synthesis of literature on emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, training needs, and moderating variables yields several important implications for the design of leadership development programs in the Philippines and similar contexts.

Design Principles for Professional Development

Recent evaluations of leadership development in the literature call for a number of design elements. First, professional development needs to be longitudinal and cohort-based, providing support over time and opportunities for peer learning and collaboration. Second, development programs should embed integrated coaching, action research and data-informed cycles around school improvement goals and well-being concerns. Third, programs should include emotional intelligence and social-emotional learning in instructional and operational leadership, including aspects of well-being and resilience (Hourani et al., 2020; Martinsone et al., 2025; Núñez et al., 2023; Dishari & AIAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021; Lu et al., 2024). Fourth, as technology continues to be at the heart of teaching and learning, contemporary leadership development must incorporate digital leadership and online instructional leadership as core components. Fifth, development programs need to be adapted to the specific needs of leaders in different career stages and contexts. All leaders, regardless of experience or credentials, have ongoing development needs (Hourani et al., 2020; Ismail, 2024; Martinsone et al., 2025; Núñez et al., 2023; Dishari & AIAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021; Lu et al., 2024).

Assessment and Needs Identification

An accurate assessment of leaders' existing skills and identification of their development requirements is critical to the development of effective leadership. According to current research, the use of a bilingual or culturally valid emotional intelligence measurement that is based on triadic data sources (including 360-degree feedback, staff welfare metrics, and student performance) is effective for Philippine schools but can also be adapted for use in other nations (Karakuş et al., 2024; Dishari & AIAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021).

Assessment should be formative rather than punitive, designed to support leaders' growth, not to evaluate their performance. Multiple sources of data provide a fuller and more accurate picture of the emotional intelligence and self-efficacy of leaders than any single measure. Involving multiple stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, and supervisors can provide useful insights into the strengths and areas for development of leaders (Karakuş et al., 2024; Dishari & AIAfnan, 2024; Hani et al., 2021).

Alignment with Professional Standards

Leadership development should be grounded on professional standards like the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads that gives a wide base for the practice of leadership. Developing programs that respond to the realities of Filipino schooling by aligning PPSSH-domain training to local needs – Leading Strategically, Managing Operations, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, Developing Self and Others, Building Connections – and embedding digital leadership and well-being components ensures development programs are addressing the full-range of leadership competencies (Adams et al., 2023; Cliffe, 2018; Ismail, 2024; Kutsyuruba et al., 2024). This alignment ensures consistency in the leadership development system to ensure that pre-service preparation, induction programs, and ongoing professional development are aligned to the same vision of effective school leadership. It also provides a common language for discussing leadership practice and a framework for self-

Ongoing and Differentiated Support

The initiative responds to the finding that training needs exist across experience levels and certification levels by offering continuing professional development regardless of years of experience or accomplishment, with flexible modular alternatives to accommodate various schedules and regional differences within the Philippines. By emphasizing collaborative networks and cross-school mentorship for resilience and knowledge transfer, we can promote and hold leadership learning to account (Hourani et al., 2020; Ismail, 2024; Martinsone et al., 2025; Núñez et al., 2023).

The differentiation can be achieved through varied entry points or emphases for rookie versus experienced leaders; distinct modalities to serve leaders in remote versus metropolitan areas; and diverse pacing to accommodate leaders' differing schedules and competing demands. However, all leaders should be given access to high-quality professional development that addresses their specific needs and supports their ongoing development (Hourani et al., 2020; Ismail, 2024; Martinsone et al., 2025; Núñez et al., 2023).

Integration of Emotional Intelligence Development

Since emotional intelligence is vital for effective school leadership, development programs should be designed to specifically target emotional intelligence competencies. Emotional intelligence training has been shown to improve leadership abilities when embedded into well-structured professional development programs that link emotional skills to leadership practice (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Lu et al., 2024; Lubguban, 2021).

Effective emotional intelligence development includes opportunities for self-reflection, feedback from others, practice in authentic contexts, and coaching support. It should be integrated with other domains of leadership development rather than treated as a separate topic. For example, instructional leadership development might include practice in providing empathetic feedback to teachers, while strategic leadership development might include practice in managing emotions during high-stakes decision-making (Dishari & AlAfnan, 2024; Lu et al., 2024; Lubguban, 2021).

Related Studies

Recent studies demonstrated a common trend that the less experienced the school and department heads are, the greater their training requirements to improve their instructional and administrative skills than the more experienced school and department heads. Abu Sharia et al. (2022) did a research study on a sample of 106 school principals in Jordan and found statistically significant differences in training needs according to the length of professional experience. In particular, those with less than five years of professional experience reported the greatest training needs in six specific competency areas: student affairs, school-community relations, administrative work development, curriculum development, technical and professional tasks, and the integration of educational technology.

Similarly, the study by Al-Saadi (2023) on secondary school administrators in Jordan found that administrators with less than ten years of professional experience had significantly higher training needs in all areas of strategic leadership ($p < 0.05$). This trend was confirmed by a mixed-methods study in Bangkok, which found that less experienced administrators reported greater differences in requirements for competency development, highlighting the need for tailored professional development programs for this group (Sudsomboon, 2025). However, recent researches have underlined the continuous training needs of school heads, underlining that experience itself is not adequate to cope with the complexities of current educational leadership. NASSP (2021) reported that even veteran administrators need to engage in ongoing professional development to stay current in the changing educational landscape, especially in areas such as digital literacy and progressive teaching methods. In addition, a study in the *Journal of Educational Administration* in 2022 found that targeted training in areas such as financial management and human resources, which are crucial for improving school performance and student outcomes, benefits experienced school leaders (Smith & Johnson, 2022). This highlighted the need for continual training programs that are not just about basic skills but are also designed to meet the rapidly changing needs of the educational environment.

In addition, research indicated that even experienced principals benefit from targeted training in key areas, such as financial management and human resource practices, that are critical for increasing school performance and student results. This stresses the need to establish ongoing training programs that address the basic competencies and adapt to the changing educational

environment so that all school heads remain prepared to lead effectively. This continuous dedication to professional development is essential for creating adaptive leadership as school leaders must constantly improve their skills to meet the demands of present educational changes. To achieve this, education institutions should concentrate on offering comprehensive training programs addressing the specific needs of school administrators to facilitate continuous growth and effective leadership.

In the Philippine context, recent studies reinforced the importance of experience-based professional development planning. Sebuyana (2024) discovered that the majority of the 31 school leaders investigated were situated within the initial phase of their careers, with approximately one-third positioned in the second and third stages, and a notably small proportion attaining the fourth stage, thereby indicating that numerous school heads in the Philippines continue to operate within the earlier stages of their careers and necessitate fundamental professional development that is congruent with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) career progression framework.

A mixed-methods investigation conducted by Digo and Janer (2023) revealed that the predominant upskilling requirements among Philippine school heads pertained to mentoring and coaching, curriculum development, and the management of educational projects, thereby highlighting specific priority domains for training initiatives. Moreover, an investigation conducted by Maybelle et al. (2022) elucidated the necessity for educational administrators to engage in advanced training encompassing all seven domains of leadership and management as delineated in the National Competency-Based Standards, thereby highlighting the imperative for comprehensive professional development across multiple domains.

Carrasco and Base (2021) found that although many training programs aligned with school heads' professional development needs, some important topics remained unaddressed, highlighting gaps in coverage that require attention in the Philippine educational leadership development landscape. These findings collectively suggest that while novice school and department heads generally require more comprehensive training support, experienced leaders continue to have evolved professional development needs in specialized areas, underscoring the importance of differentiated, career-stage-appropriate training programs for educational leaders.

Consistent inverse relationship between school heads' years of experience and their training needs, with less experienced leaders (< 5 years) demonstrating significantly higher training needs across all competency domains (Abu Sharia et al., 2022; Al-Saadi, 2023; Sudsomboon, 2025). However, this relationship is nuanced across career stages: early-career school heads (1-4 years) require training in decision-making and planning, mid-career leaders (5-10 years) need human relations training, while experienced leaders (10+ years) demonstrate greater needs in specialized areas such as finance, facilities management, and communication (Nand, 2023). In the context of the Philippines, a significant proportion of educational leaders are situated at the nascent stages of their professional careers (Sebuyana, 2024), with recognized imperative training requirements encompassing mentoring and coaching, curriculum innovation, and the administration of educational initiatives (Digo & Janer, 2023). Philippine school heads require enhancement training across all seven leadership and management domains of the National Competency-Based Standards (Maybelle et al., 2022), though current training coverage still has gaps (Carrasco & Base, 2021). The results of this investigation highlight the imperative for tailored training initiatives that correspond to the distinct stages of a career, in accordance with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). It is essential to acknowledge that novice school heads necessitate extensive foundational training assistance, whereas seasoned leaders exhibit progressively changing professional development requirements in specialized domains, thereby mandating ongoing professional development throughout their career advancement.

International studies have demonstrated that formal educational leadership qualifications significantly influence leadership practices, with Abonyi (2024) finding statistically significant differences across all six leadership functions between Ghanaian headteachers with formal educational leadership and management qualifications and those without, suggesting that the absence of such credentials represents a critical competency gap. Similarly, Sudsomboon (2025) found that less experienced primary school administrators in Bangkok exhibited greater competency disparities, particularly in digital transformation, research-based decision-making, and inclusive education, underscoring the need for tailored professional development programs.

Abubakar (2025) found that school principals in Lanao del Sur, Philippines, who held doctoral degrees and had extensive training experience demonstrated significantly higher levels of school-based management practices with particular competency

predictors in school leadership and the creation of student-centered learning climates. Daamo et al. (2023) noted that the education level significantly affected ICT social and ethical competence among secondary school heads in Gingoog City. The study observed that the lower levels of formal education were linked to the lower use of collaborative decision-making and called for continuous professional development even after a master's degree. Moreover, studies have indicated that education attainment influences the organizational leadership competence and there are significant differences in the levels of leadership competence among the groups of education attainment (Organizational Culture and Leadership Competence of State Universities and Colleges, 2023). However, Refugio et al. (2025) found that although the administrators' performance in some aspects was affected by educational qualifications, the number of training sessions attended did not significantly affect the competence, which implies that the quality and relevance of professional development matter more than quantity.

It is important to note that effective management in educational settings depends not only on formal educational qualifications but that the complex nature of leadership requires tailored training programs that address the specific needs of school leaders (Brown, 2023). Smith and Jones (2021) argued that the increasing challenges faced by school leaders calls for professional development activities that are tailored to enhance their management capacity. Similarly, Lee et al. (2022) highlight the significance of individualized training for every leader, regardless of their educational history, to carry out their responsibilities efficiently. Together, these findings suggest that higher educational attainment is associated with stronger leadership capacities, but continuous, focused professional development remains a necessity for even highly prepared school heads to respond to changing instructional and administrative demands.

These studies indicate that while educational qualifications offer the base of knowledge, continuous competency-based training is still required for effective school leadership. Apart from the educational qualifications of principals, their experience and professional development turned out to be key determinants of their efficacy in implementing inclusive education programs (Lynch, 2021). In the Philippines, competency-based training based on the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads has significantly improved the competence of school leaders, elevating them from "highly competent" to "very highly competent" in the areas of learning assessment, teaching standards, and professional development (Madera, 2024).

Having a master's or doctoral degree often enhances school heads' administrative commitment to research-based projects and policy work, but Colebra and Luna (2025) revealed persistent training gaps in the application of emerging technologies, data analytics, and inclusive instructional leadership, given that higher qualifications often emphasize theoretical knowledge over practical application in dynamic school environments. Such achievement allows for active involvement in continuing professional development but does not fully satisfy high-priority needs in behavioral leadership and stakeholder collaboration. Mean ratings of training hover around 4.05 on Likert scales across profiles, suggesting universal deficits irrespective of credentials. Taken together, the studies underscore the importance of attainment in developing core competencies and support multi-layered, personalized in-service programs (e.g., hybrid workshops combining more advanced theory with simulation-based training) to address experiential deficiencies and improve instructional quality at all levels of education.

The core upskilling prerequisites that have been articulated involve mentorship and coaching, curriculum design, and the governance of educational initiatives, with specialized training markedly improving leadership skills (Digo et al., 2023). Structural equation modeling revealed that instructional leadership and self-efficacy directly influenced school effectiveness (Ruíz et al., 2024), underscoring that educational attainment alone is insufficient—ongoing professional development in instructional leadership, curriculum development, and mentoring is critical for enhancing school heads' Abid et al. (2023) revealed that urban school principals in Pakistan with higher emotional intelligence demonstrated higher leadership effectiveness, communication, dispute resolution, relationship-building, and job satisfaction, recommending prioritizing Emotional Intelligence (EI) development for leader selection and training. Likewise, Adekunle and Oke (2023) described that the constructs of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management, and self-regulation) jointly predicted the administrative efficacy of department heads in Nigerian public polytechnics indicating no significant gender differences in emotional intelligence or administrative efficacy.

Emotional intelligence's role as an intermediary has been demonstrated. For instance, the research of Cayak and Eskici (2021) revealed that emotional intelligence fully mediated the relationship between the sustainable leadership practices of principals and their competencies in diversity management. The above finding suggests that emotional intelligence is an important vehicle through which leadership orientation is translated into practical skills to manage different educational settings effectively. Similarly, Yildiz et al. (2022) found that emotional and social intelligence significantly predict transformational and permissive leadership styles of Turkish school administrators, with EI explaining significant variance in leadership style scores. Debeş (2021)

demonstrated that emotional intelligence predicts principals' self-efficacy, linking EI to leaders' confidence to perform leadership roles.

Galicia (2023) found that school heads in Biñan City scored very high on both instructional leadership and emotional competencies, with instructional leadership correlating strongly with emotional competencies ($p = 0.000$); however, while instructional leadership related significantly to teacher work performance, EI showed a negligible, non-significant correlation with teacher performance. Grande et al. (2024) observed high degrees of instructional management and emotional intelligence among school heads in Davao Occidental, with significant correlations between heads' EI and teachers' work values and a combined substantial impact of EI, instructional management, and leadership on teachers' work values. Ontong (2022) employed structural equation modeling to elucidate that the educational climate within Bukidnon is shaped by the prevailing school culture, transformational leadership practices, and the emotional intelligence of school administrators, thereby suggesting that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in fostering a conducive learning environment.

School heads have different EI skills (self-awareness, self-regulation and empathy) that support resonant leadership (Sanchez Mira, 2023) and recommended the use of democratic leadership to utilize EI for school productivity. However, Callo and Asilo (2024) found a different result in a sample of 132 educational leaders, which revealed a negative relationship between emotional intelligence and teaching leadership, indicating variability in results and the need for further research into differences in sample characteristics or measurement methods. Recent studies have demonstrated that school heads with high emotional intelligence (EI) still need to implement targeted changes in specific EI domains in order to optimize their leadership effectiveness (Heffernan & Pierpoint, 2022; Pretorius & Plaatjies, 2022, 2023). Principals in Australia are relationally strong but burn out often because of unregulated emotional labor in high stakes settings under policy demands and stakeholder conflicts (Heffernan and Pierpoint, 2022). Pretorius and Plaatjies (2022) agreed that initial levels of EI do not prepare principals sufficiently to manage conflict and lead teams, and that there are persistent gaps in self-knowledge, social awareness and relationship skills.

Pretorius and Plaatjies (2023) conducted a qualitative investigation of 19 secondary school principals in South Africa and identified that a lack of self-awareness, including emotional self-assessment and assertiveness, was a key obstacle that resulted in reactivity and poor decision-making, even among leaders high in EI. This is supported by Heffernan and Pierpoint (2022) who pointed out how such gaps raise emotive demands, hence suggesting limitations of broad EI without domain refinement. Pretorius and Plaatjies (2022) propose EI aptitude exams before to appointments and ministry-sponsored seminars to strengthen relationships. This is consistent with Heffernan and Pierpoint's (2022) plea for retention programs that address emotional tiredness and Pretorius and Plaatjies's (2023) emphasized on coaching for self-awareness to unlock fuller potential as leaders. Digo and Janer (2023) stated that the most common upskilling needs of educational leaders in the Philippines were mentoring and coaching, curriculum development, and administration of educational projects, which implied that targeted upskilling initiatives had positive effects on leadership skills and that targeted professional development was an effective way to develop skills associated with emotional intelligence.

Madera (2024) in his study on the Training Resource Package based on competency needs in Region VI recorded significant improvements in the competencies of school heads after training which has proven that structured and needs-driven training can improve the competencies related to EI-related leadership positions in schools. Trainings and seminars were typically linked with the professional development goals of school heads in Cagayan de Oro (Carrasco & Base, 2021). However, the needed competencies were not covered in all training subjects, suggesting gaps in the existing training systems that may include EI-related themes. Taken together, these empirical findings suggest that emotional intelligence is a vital skill for school leadership effectiveness. They also pointed out to the importance of customized professional development programs that include emotional intelligence training modules, coaching, and ongoing development strategies to improve the instructional and administrative effectiveness of school leaders. Nevertheless, the variation in benefits across the diverse circumstances underscores the value of further study with validated measures of emotional intelligence and the careful interpretation of the effects of training.

High emotional intelligence is positively associated with improved leadership effectiveness, communication skills and the ability to build relationships (Abid et al., 2023). The four dimensions of emotional intelligence – self-awareness, social awareness, relationship awareness, and self-regulation – collectively predict administrative effectiveness (Adekunle & Oke, 2023). Importantly, emotional intelligence fully moderated the association between leadership behaviors and diversity management skills (Cayak & Eskici, 2021). In the Philippine setting, school heads' emotional intelligence was substantially associated with

instructional leadership (Galicia, 2023), influenced school climate (Ontong, 2022), and affected teachers' work values (Grande et al., 2024), although mixed findings were also recorded (Callo & Asilo, 2024). These findings highlight the need of including emotional intelligence training in professional development programs, since EI is the key mechanism through which formal leadership knowledge is translated into effective interpersonal practice in complicated educational settings.

In recent years, academic studies have been increasingly conducted to examine the complex relationship between school leaders' self-efficacy and their needed professional development for the improvement of teaching and administrative skills. Dami (2022) studied the effects of principal-strengthening training on an international scale in Indonesia and found that the ORPAER intervention model, which combined reflective practice and systematic professional development, significantly increased principals' self-efficacy in instructional leadership by improving problem solving and creative thinking skills.

Similarly, Lynch (2021) found that various elements, such as the principals' educational backgrounds, professional experiences, and training, were significant predictors of their effectiveness in delivering inclusive education programs, thus implying that specialized professional preparation is important in determining administrators' confidence in instructional leadership. Brinkmann et al. (2021) showed that cognitive coaching approaches could enhance self-efficacy in school leaders by promoting self-awareness and reflection and identified seven salient themes (e.g., professional development, instructional strategies, and school climate) that emerged as core domains for strengthening leadership capacity. Williams (2023) found empirical evidence that subject-specific professional development in mathematics instructional leadership significantly improved the self-efficacy of elementary administrators, especially in their perceptions of influencing effective pedagogical practices and justifying changes during reform processes. In the Philippine context, Madera (2024) designed and implemented a training resource package for school heads in Western Visayas based on the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads. The study revealed that competency-based training significantly enhanced the proficiency of school heads from "highly competent" to "very highly competent" in critical areas such as learning assessment, teaching standards, and professional development.

Ruiz et al. (2024) performed a structural equation modelling study to assess school heads in the Davao Region and found that instructional leadership and self-efficacy directly influence school effectiveness, but self-efficacy does not have a significant relationship with school effectiveness. Digo et al. (2023) delineated mentoring and coaching, curriculum development, and educational project management as the most critical upskilling requirements for school heads in Magallanes, Sorsogon and advocated for leadership training to effectively enhance their leadership competencies. Collectively, the studies underscore the importance of school leaders' self-efficacy beliefs regarding their professional development needs, and suggest that well-designed, competency-based training programs that incorporate reflective practice, content knowledge, and systematic coaching can effectively improve school leaders' self-confidence and skills to carry out their instructional and management responsibilities.

School heads with high self-efficacy still require improvements in key leadership domains to meet their training needs effectively. Mavi et al. (2023) investigated Turkish principals' self-efficacy in mentoring and found that, even among those with strong perceptions, targeted support is needed to enhance efficacy in instructional leadership and innovation, as mentoring directly influences role-specific confidence. Ruiz and Tagadiad (2024) echo this in their structural model, showing that school heads' high self-efficacy correlates with work engagement, but they also highlight shortfalls in training for supervisory skills and teacher motivation amid Philippine educational demands.

Ma'mun and Suryana (2019) analyzed Indonesian principals, revealing that high self-efficacy is linked to greater teacher commitment, yet persistent needs in coordinating curriculum and monitoring student progress persist, especially among principals versus assistants. Mavi et al. (2023) reinforce that self-efficacy in quality assurance and team development remains uneven, necessitating training despite overall high levels. Ruiz and Tagadiad (2024) propose programs strengthening instructional leadership to leverage self-efficacy for teacher self-efficacy gains. Collectively, these authors advocate domain-focused interventions, such as graduate enrollment and skill-building workshops, as high self-efficacy alone is insufficient to address operational gaps (Ma'mun & Suryana, 2019). Targeted professional development significantly enhanced principals' self-efficacy through reflective practice and systematic training (Dami, 2022), with educational background, experience, and training predicting efficacy for program implementation (Lynch, 2021). Cognitive coaching and subject-specific professional development built self-efficacy through self-awareness, reflection, and successful performance experiences (Brinkmann et al., 2021; Williams, 2023). In the Philippine context, self-efficacy directly influenced school effectiveness (Ruiz et al., 2024), while competency-based

training improved school heads' competence in learning assessment, teaching standards, and professional development (Madera, 2024). These findings underscore that self-efficacy development must be an explicit training goal, supported by reflective practice, coaching, and successful performance experiences that simultaneously build confidence and competence.

Many studies highlighted pedagogical skills. Aas and Paulsen (2019) considered instructional leadership as a strategic approach. Lumbantoruan and Ditasona (2021) studied the skills needed to develop an effective learning environment and enhance student achievement. Daing and Mustapha (2023) investigated the relationship between instructional skills of administrators and instructional effectiveness of teachers in Philippine senior high schools. Paletta and Alimehmeti (2023) studied principal leadership through professional learning communities in facilitating innovative teaching. Vu Thị Mai Hường (2020) studied instructional leadership in Vietnam and educational innovation. Tian Xianjun (2022) linked emotional intelligence with effective school leadership and proposed suggestions for administrators on the construction of competency modules. Aquino (2025) elucidated the principles created by model schools in the Philippines. Expert Opinions on the Definition of 'Core Competencies' Abunaser et al. (2025) These authors discuss all aspects of the instructional competency construct, including strategic leadership, climate development, instructional performance effects, and emotional intelligence, all of which are critical to effective school leadership and improved educational outcomes. In addition, while there are significant relationships between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and the exhibition of effective instructional leadership behaviors, more research is needed on how these variables can influence and develop professional development opportunities and targeted interventions for principals (Ambon et al., 2025; Said et al., 2023; Torres et al., 2024).

Teachers' evaluations of school head competence generally reflect positive assessments of leadership effectiveness across multiple domains. Research conducted in public secondary schools in Laguna Division found no significant difference between teacher and school head ratings of leadership competencies and practices, with both groups rating school heads' competence as "highly evident" (Origines, 2022). This alignment in perception suggests that teachers recognize and acknowledge the leadership capabilities demonstrated by their school heads in day-to-day school operations. Additional evidence of good teacher attitudes is revealed in research on instructional leadership practices whereby school heads exhibited "very high" levels of instructional leadership, as judged by teacher respondents (Gatela et al., 2025). Contrary to the largely positive views of teachers, the self-assessment of school heads indicates a considerable knowledge of competency gaps and training needs across several areas. A thorough study of school heads in Western Visayas determined priority competency needs in learning assessment, teaching standards, school planning, professional development, learner discipline, school facilities, learning environment, teacher performance feedback, and learner achievement (Madera, 2024). Studies of Origines, (2022) and Gatela et al. (2025) had suggested continuous training to upgrade the school heads on the modern technology integration, orientation programs for new school heads that concentrate on problem-solving and decision-making, and systematic approaches to improve instructional leadership competencies.

This eventually enhanced the quality of education in the Bataan region among the NASH batch 1 Passers (Kesuma et al., 2021). In order to design a comprehensive plan for the development of school principals, it is necessary to identify the relationships between different types of school-based leadership skills (Leadership Competencies) and the best approaches to develop them. This should include essential plans to get these abilities (Ambon et al., 2025; Lumbantoruan & Ditasona, 2021). The addition of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy to this framework will yield instructional leaders who are ready to confront increasingly complex issues in education (Lumbantoruan & Ditasona, 2021; Taimin & Nguui, 2025).

Alvarez and Delavin (2022) assessed aspirant school heads in Philippine public schools, finding elevated needs in the strategic visioning and policy implementation strands, where candidates scored high in awareness but lacked proficiency in integrating research and learner voice into school improvement plans. Charisma-Escobar (2021) corroborated this through a needs analysis of Principal I hopefuls, revealing that, despite basic competencies, training gaps persisted in monitoring strategic initiatives and fostering innovation, critical for Career Stage 2 transitions. Fateel (2025) and Lopez et al. (2024) highlighted deficiencies in school planning and programs amid post-pandemic reforms, noting that Principal I candidates required intensive development in aligning PPSSH strands, such as vision-mission articulation, with resource optimization, even with prior administrative experience. Morris et al. (2020) and Moore et al. (2020) highlighted global parallels: aspiring leaders undervalue strategic evaluation tools, thereby amplifying Philippine-specific needs in policy review and stakeholder alignment.

Ogden (2023) examined strategic leadership simulations and found that aspirants faltered in institutionalizing best practices for learner-centered strategies, while Farley-Ripple (2024) identified weaknesses in research integration and urged targeted PPSSH-

aligned modules. Collectively, these studies advocate customized training—such as DepEd's NQESH-prep workshops—to elevate aspirants from proficient to exemplary levels in Leading Strategically.

Villa and Tulod (2021) conducted a needs assessment among Philippine aspirant principals, revealing significant deficiencies in the financial management and procurement strands, with candidates struggling with MOOE utilization and budget alignment despite prior administrative roles. Their findings emphasize that even proficient heads need enhanced data-driven resource-planning skills to ensure learner-centered operations. Kamaruddin (2024) extends this internationally, noting similar shortfalls in Malaysian school leaders' ability to optimize physical facilities and equipment, paralleling PPSSH challenges in sustaining safe, efficient school environments.

Lazaris (2025) analyzed Principal I hopefuls post-MATATAG reforms, identifying high training demands in the staff management and disaster preparedness subdomains, as candidates demonstrated theoretical knowledge but faltered in the practical implementation of policies for teaching load distribution and resiliency protocols. Hafida et al. (2019) corroborated this through an Indonesian study, in which high-potential heads identified gaps in human resource coordination and emerging challenges such as technology integration, advocating PPSSH-aligned modules to bridge operational leadership divides.

Valera (2023) conducted an evaluation of prospective school leaders within the public education sector of the Philippines, revealing significant inadequacies in the contextual adaptation of the school-based curriculum and in the incorporation of pedagogical dimensions, where the candidates acknowledged the established standards yet encountered difficulties in assimilating learner-centered methodologies and evidence-based practices in the context of K-12 educational reforms. Carolino et al. (2023) corroborated this through a multi-region study, revealing that Principal I hopefuls required intensive development in providing teaching performance feedback, as theoretical knowledge outpaced practical skills in classroom observation and data-driven coaching.

Santos et al. (2025) highlighted post-MATATAG challenges, noting elevated training demands in learning assessment and learner discipline subdomains, with candidates faltering in designing inclusive assessments and fostering positive environments despite prior teaching experience. Rianda et al. (2025) extended this analysis, emphasizing shortfalls in career awareness strands, where aspirants lacked proficiency in linking teaching practices to learner opportunities, underscoring persistent needs for simulation-based training.

Candidates for the position of Principal I, as delineated by the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), exhibit pronounced requirements for professional development within the "Developing Self and Others" domain, notwithstanding their candidacy and dedication to advancing their leadership competencies. Studies by Msila (2024), Burns et al. (2024), and Lingam and Lingam (2023) highlighted persistent gaps in the strands of personal reflection, performance management, and team development. Msila (2024) examined South African school leaders aspiring to higher roles and found that even motivated candidates lacked depth in self-assessment and goal-setting aligned with professional standards, mirroring the PPSSH Strand 4.1's need for structured reflection to advance from Career Stage 1 to 2. Burns et al. (2024) analyzed U.S. principal aspirants, revealing high demands for professional networking and reflection skills, as candidates recognized growth opportunities but struggled with applying them to team effectiveness in diverse settings.

Lingam and Lingam (2023) studied Pacific Island school heads and noted deficiencies in performance management (Strand 4.4) and leadership capacitation (Strand 4.6), with aspirants with strong welfare knowledge faltering in implementing RPMS-like systems and in empowering teams for shared governance. Msila (2024) reinforced that high-potential leaders require targeted training in rewards mechanisms and welfare advocacy to foster sustained personnel motivation. Burns et al. (2024) advocate simulation workshops for professional ethics and networks, while Lingam and Lingam (2023) call for mentorship programs to bridge self-development gaps, aligning with DepEd's emphasis on continuous learning for exemplary PPSSH practice.

Eden et al. (2024) assessed Philippine aspirant principals and found deficiencies in Strand 5.1 (managing diverse relationships), where candidates demonstrated rapport-building with authorities and parents but lacked proficiency in sustaining long-term partnerships for learner support amid resource constraints. Lingam and Lingam (2020) found similar shortfalls among Pacific school leaders, noting that high-potential heads struggled with trust-based networks, paralleling PPSSH needs for inclusive collaboration. Oktaviani et al. (2025) emphasized the increased expectations associated with Strand 5.2 (school organizations) and 5.3 (inclusive practices), as candidates aspiring to the Principal I designation struggled to assess Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and student groups while advocating for gender sensitivity and cultural responsiveness, notwithstanding their theoretical

cognizance. Eden et al. (2024) reinforced that post-pandemic contexts amplified these gaps, with aspirants requiring practical training in communication platforms (Strand 5.4). Lingam and Lingam (2020) emphasized Strand 5.5 weaknesses, where candidates-initiated partnerships but failed to empower communities for complex issue resolution, underscoring the need for exemplary-level advancement. Collectively, these studies call for DepEd-led simulations and mentorship to bridge Domain 5 gaps.

The proposed framework will concentrate on the development of the key competencies found in the research to increase student outcomes and teacher performance, such as effective communication and instructional supervision (Daing & Mustapha, 2023; Lumbantoruan & Ditasona, 2021). The Southeast Asian School Heads' Frameworks for Competency Development highlighted the role of the principal in curriculum development, providing guidance to teachers, and promoting a culture of collaboration and ongoing professional development and support for all educators in the institution (Arrieta & Ancho, 2020; Lumbantoruan & Ditasona, 2021). Training instructional leaders had improve their interaction with the wider school staff, thereby building the school leadership team (Daing & Mustapha, 2023).

An instructional leadership paradigm included collaborative leadership for learning where all administrators are participant teachers. Shared Leadership for Learning might make administrators better at their jobs and teachers feel better about theirs (Farley, 2024). If we give teachers' social and emotional health a priority, it makes the school a better place to be. This encouraged students to interact with each other in a good way that is essential for their learning and the long-term impact on the educational process (Farley, 2024). Building a collaborative school culture creates collective efficacy that in turn leads to higher student engagement and achievement (Farley, 2024). Distributed educational leadership, in which the administration also teaches, develops a culture of openness to new ideas and cultivates a feeling of community from the top down (Farley, 2024). Further, the successful application of an instructional leadership framework can be enhanced by creating a supportive setting with aligned and united leadership, capable personnel, and adequate technology assistance (Aquino, 2025).

Conceptual Framework

The study employed a schematic diagram, which provides a structural visual representation of the research process to illustrate the study's paradigm. The diagram below shows the interconnections among the variables.

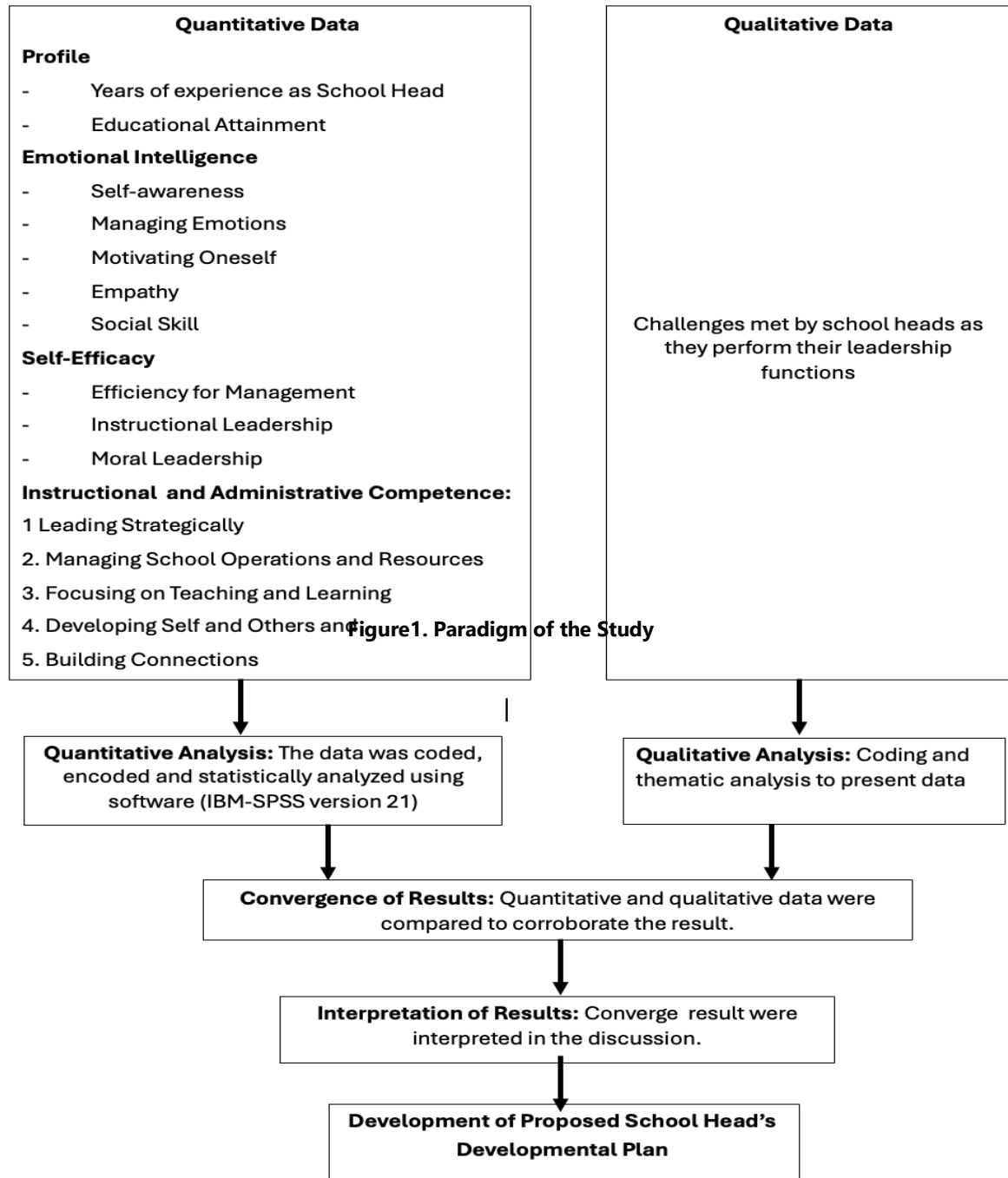


Figure 1 delineates the conceptual framework of the study. The opening part features the insights derived from the survey, which include a complete examination of Emotional Intelligence across five specific sectors: self-awareness, emotional regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and interpersonal skills. Following this, we consider the examination of Self-Efficacy, which appraises Efficacy across the sectors of Management, Instructional Leadership, and Ethical Leadership. The concluding section assesses the School Head's Instructional and Administrative Competencies in the domains of Strategic Leadership, Management of School

Operations and Resources, Emphasis on Teaching and Learning, Development of Self and Others, and Establishing Collaborative Relationships.

The alternative framework, however, may elucidate the methodologies employed in this inquiry. In the quantitative segment, a survey instrument will be distributed to the participants of the study. Subsequently, the acquired data will undergo examination through the statistical technique known as Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Simultaneously, within the qualitative component of the research, the investigator will facilitate an online interview. Then, the data and information gathered shall undergo thematic analysis for possible answers or solutions. The third frame will include the output: Proposed School Heads Development Plan.

Definition of Terms

Building Connections.

Creating and sustaining productive relationships with families, community organizations, and stakeholders to support teaching and learning (Ramos et al., 2021).

Challenges.

The term challenges denote the intricate and diverse obstacles and deficiencies that hinder school leaders at Career Stage 2 from wholly implementing the essential understanding of authority, responsibility, and accountability within their leadership methodologies (Dela Rosa, 2025). Operationally, these challenges manifest as measurable deficiencies in performing Stage 2 PPSSH indicators, such as failing to fully implement school plans.

Developing Self and Others.

Commitment to continuous professional growth through coaching, feedback, appraisal, and career development opportunities (Gomez-Leal et al., 2021).

Developmental Plan.

It is a systematic method to develop the skills and performance of school administrators against educational benchmarks (Maybelle et al., 2022). Operationally, it has certain tasks, targets, and timeframes to address the highlighted areas of concern such as instructional leadership and human resource management.

Educational Attainment.

The highest formal degree or credential achieved serves as an indicator of theoretical knowledge and formal preparation for leadership (Tekleselassie & Choi, 2021). Operationally, Educational Attainment refers to the educational level of School Heads, ranging from bachelor's to doctorate (EdD/PhD), and is coded as an ordinal variable or as dummy variables in research.

Efficacy for Management.

A leader's belief in their capability to effectively plan, organize, and manage school operations and resources (Goldring et al., 2007).

Empathy. Recognizing, interpreting, and addressing with care the emotional aspects and necessities of others is imperative (Skaalvik, 2020).

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Recognizing, interpreting, and addressing with care the emotional aspects and necessities of others is imperative (Skaalvik, 2020).

Emotional Intelligence (EI).

This encompasses the capacity to discern and identify affective states in both one-self and in others with precision. This foundational skill is crucial for understanding emotional cues and responding appropriately in various contexts (Torre & Daley, 2023).

Focusing on Teaching and Learning.

Prioritizing instructional quality through curriculum oversight, outcome monitoring, and embedding continuous improvement (Thomas & Bainbridge, 2000).

Instructional Leadership.

Confidence in one's ability to influence teaching and learning through coaching teachers and implementing quality improvement strategies (Singh & Mestry, 2007).

Leading Strategically.

The ability to articulate a clear vision, establish a strategic direction, and use data to plan school improvement (Gomez-Leal et al., 2021).

Managing Emotions.

The capacity to modulate impulsive behaviors, govern disruptive emotional responses, and engage in constructive reactions during periods of stress (Macaday-Quioco, 2024, & Amancio, 2024).

Managing School Operations and Resources.

Organizing school systems, allocating resources efficiently, and overseeing daily administrative functions (Daing & Mustapha, 2023).

Moral Leadership.

Moral leadership is conceptually defined as the practice of leading with integrity, compassion, and respect for others, emphasizing ethical behavior and decision-making (Coulon, 2022).

Motivating Oneself.

Internal drive, optimism, and persistence that enable leaders to pursue goals with energy despite setbacks (Chaudhary et al., 2024).

School Heads.

The school's primary administrator and instructional leader is responsible for managing resources, structuring instruction and promoting whole-school improvement (Paulus & Rifa'i, 2021). Operationally, the position of School Head is identified as a candidate for the position of School Principal I who has satisfied the standards outlined in Batch 1 of the National Assessment for School Heads (NASH), with competencies that are outlined in Career Stage 2 of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) and could be considered as School Principal I candidates.

Self-Awareness.

The capacity to recognize and understand one's own affective conditions, individual competencies, limitations, and impact on others (Macaday-Quioco, 2024).

Self-Efficacy.

Self-efficacy is theoretically delineated as the conviction that individuals possess regarding their competencies to perform a designated task. This belief influences their motivation, thought processes, and actions across various domains (Sanchez & Guo, 2023).

Social Skill. Relationship management competencies are used to build networks, manage conflicts, and mobilize stakeholders toward shared goals (Macaday-Quioco, 2024).

Training Needs. The gap between current competencies and those required to fulfill the leadership role as defined by professional standards (Sudsomboon, 2025).

Years of Experience as School Head. Accumulated professional human capital and context-specific knowledge generated via persistent practice in the lead function (Lacia, 2019). Years of Experience as a school head is operationally defined as a total

number of years served in the principal/head role (continuous variable) and is generally classed as novice (0-5 years), experienced (6-10 years), or veteran (11+ years).

3. Methods Of Research

This chapter presents the research methods and techniques, population and sample, research instrument, its construction and validation, data-gathering procedure, and statistical treatment which were used in the study.

3.1 Methods and Techniques of the Study

The convergent-parallel design used in this study is one of the most important research areas that have attracted much attention since they enable the collection of quantitative and qualitative data at the same time and so help to enhance the depth and scope of research results (Fetters et al., 2013; Creswell & Clark, 2006). Since the first ideas of mixed-methods research, the convergent design has become important as a method that allows the simultaneous collection and analysis of data to solve complicated research issues (Creswell, 1994; Caldas, 2003). The design is of great practical importance in a wide range of academic areas, particularly in the health sciences and social research areas, as it enables a deep understanding by combining different data sources (Guetterman et al., 2015; Oliveira et al., 2018). Joint displays and meta-inferences in convergent designs have been connected to greater interpretative validity and richer insights, pointing to the expanding importance of this methodological framework (Younas et al., 2023) (Guetterman et al., 2015).

The study adopted a convergent-parallel mixed method approach to examine the multiple characteristics of school leadership effectiveness. In this study, the pragmatic paradigm was adopted as the methodological paradigm, which allowed the simultaneous but separate collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, which were subsequently systematically integrated to generate inclusive meta-inferences about the leadership capacities and challenges of school heads. The convergent-parallel design was chosen because it could offer complementary insights from the triangulation of quantitative and narrative data, thus strengthening the validity and depth of understanding of the complex phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Inoue, 2024; Fetters et al., 2013). As Creswell and Clark (2006) stated, this design is especially useful for research questions that need both the breadth of measurement and the depth of contextual understanding, enabling researchers to cross-validate findings across methodological strands, and to explore convergence and divergence in the data. The study was guided by a conceptual framework constructed on two parallel tracks: a quantitative track that explored measurable leadership attributes and competencies and a qualitative track that examined the lived experiences and challenges of school heads in their leadership roles. Both tracks were integrated at the interpretation stage to inform the formulation of a comprehensive developmental plan for the enhancement of school leadership.

Quantitatively, the study sought to systematically quantify the leadership traits of school heads across four major areas, namely: demographic profile, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and instructional and administrative competence. The demographic profile included years of experience as a school head and educational attainment, indicators that have been consistently linked to leadership performance in educational contexts. Emotional intelligence was defined by five dimensions: self-awareness, controlling emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social competence. This is reflective of Goleman's paradigm which has been extensively accepted to comprehend the affective and interpersonal competencies that are needed for effective leadership. The study examined three key areas of leadership to determine self-efficacy: managerial efficiency, instructional leadership, and moral leadership. The findings showed that the school heads' belief in their abilities greatly affected their leadership actions and outcomes. The instructional and administrative competence domain included five major areas: leading strategically, managing school operations and resources, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and making connections. These two factors together delineated the technical and relational competences needed to be an effective school leader in contemporary education situations. Data collection in the quantitative strand was done through validated survey instruments on school heads. The dataset was analyzed using IBM-SPSS version 21. Descriptive statistics, correlation analyses, and inferential tests were used to reveal patterns, relationships, and significant differences between variables (Hirose & Creswell, 2022).

The qualitative strand of the study was meant to shed light on the varied, context-specific issues of school heads in performing their leadership roles. This strand used semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to collect rich narrative data on the challenges, dilemmas and contextual elements that influence the daily leadership practices of school heads. The qualitative

investigation was situated within an interpretivist epistemology which recognizes that leadership difficulties are socially produced and best understood through the lens of practitioners' perspectives and lived experiences. Data collection proceeded until topic saturation was reached, such that the whole spectrum of difficulties was captured in the dataset. The qualitative data were analyzed through systematic procedures of coding and thematic analysis which involved initial open coding to identify emergent concepts, axial coding to establish relationships among codes and selective coding to identify overarching themes that characterized the leadership challenges faced by school heads. This iterative analytic process, consistent with established qualitative research procedures, permitted the identification of common and unique challenges across school contexts, providing depth and texture to complement the quantitative findings (Creswell et al., 2004; Oliveira et al., 2018).

The merging of quantitative and qualitative data was a vital stage of the research process, encapsulating the core idea of mixed-methods research that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Following the independent study of each strand, systematic comparison and synthesis processes were used to discover areas of agreement, complementarity and divergence between the numerical and narrative findings, thus achieving convergence of results. Joint displays were developed to facilitate this integration process. Joint displays are structured visual representations juxtaposing quantitative results with corresponding qualitative themes, enabling direct comparison and identification of patterns across data types (Guetterman et al., 2015; Fetters et al., 2013). The joint displays served as analytical tools that made the integration process transparent and systematic, allowing for the identification of confirming evidence where quantitative and qualitative findings converged, expanding evidence where one strand provided additional insights beyond the other, and discordant evidence where findings appeared to contradict or diverge. The methodological rigour in data integration ensured the convergence process was rigorous and the integrated conclusions was a true synthesis, not simply a juxtaposition of independent analyses (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007).

The interpretation of the converged results included the construction of meta-inferences, or higher order inferences that extended beyond the particular findings of each methodological strand, and provided fresh insights peculiar to the process of integration. Meta-inferences were created through thorough inspection of the combined presentations and methodical attention to the ways in which quantitative patterns and qualitative themes informed, explained, or challenged each other. This interpretive process was not simply descriptive but involved analytical synthesis, asking critical questions about why patterns occurred, how quantitative relationships could be explained qualitatively and what the convergence or divergence of findings suggested about the underlying phenomenon of school leadership effectiveness. Meta-inferences were created following established protocols for validity and credibility in mixed-methods research, including the use of backward-working heuristics to ensure that meta-inferences were sufficiently grounded in both quantitative and qualitative evidence and to consider alternative explanations for patterns observed (Younas et al., 2023). The meta-inferences provided the empirical basis for the following development of the suggested intervention, ensuring that suggestions were based on integrated data, rather than from a single methodological standpoint.

The study resulted to a Proposed School Head's Developmental Plan, which is a practical application of the integrated research findings to address the identified requirements and obstacles in school leadership. The development plan was crafted through a systematic process that translated meta-inferences into operational recommendations, intervention strategies, and capacity-building activities, all geared toward enhancing the emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, instructional and administrative competence of school heads, while addressing the specific challenges identified in the qualitative strand. The plan integrated evidence-based strategies derived from the quantitative analysis of leadership attributes and the qualitative understanding of contextual challenges, ensuring that the proposed interventions were both theoretically sound and practically relevant to the realities of school leadership. The evidence-to-practice translation process underscored the pragmatic value of mixed-methods research, illustrating that systematic combination of diverse data sources can yield actionable knowledge that directly informs policy and practice in educational leadership (Creswell & Inoue, 2024; Fetters et al., 2013). Thus, the developmental plan was not only a product of research but a bridge between empirical inquiry and practical application, showcasing the study's commitment to producing knowledge that could meaningfully contribute to the improvement of school leadership effectiveness (Oliveira et al., 2018).

Population and Sample of the Study

This study employed total enumeration, a comprehensive sampling approach where the entire target population was included in the study. This method offers several advantages, particularly for small and accessible populations: it eliminates sampling error, provides precise population parameters with maximum accuracy, enables reliable generalization within the defined group, and facilitates in-depth analysis of subgroups without representativeness concerns. It encompassed all 28 participants from the National Assessment for School Heads Batch I in the Division of Bataan. These participants comprised Head Teachers handling schools and Department Heads at the secondary level. This specific group is uniquely positioned as they are qualified to assume the Principal I position, based on the Department of Education's latest promotion and staffing system, providing valuable insights into their preparedness and developmental needs (Aquino, 2025; Gechere et al., 2025). This comprehensive inclusion ensured a complete representation of this critical cohort, allowing for a thorough examination of their emotional intelligence, efficacy, and instructional competencies.

The homogeneity of this group, comprising individuals with similar career trajectories and aspirations, further enhances the validity of findings related to their professional development needs (Aquino, 2025). This approach to participant selection enhances the study's internal validity by focusing on a distinct and relevant demographic, thereby minimizing confounding variables associated with diverse career stages or departmental affiliations (Afandi et al., 2021; Pavlova & Tsatrian, 2024). Moreover, the intentional incorporation of all eligible participants within this designated group guarantees that the suggested School Head Development Plan effectively addresses the aggregate requirements and obstacles encountered by this distinct assembly of prospective educational leaders (Nogadas & Apostol, 2024; Pasion, 2023; Villanueva et al., 2021). The strategic selection of this specific cohort underscores the study's commitment to generating actionable insights directly applicable to the Department of Education's leadership development initiatives.

Research Instrument

Quantitative Data

This analysis utilized three rigorously validated assessment instruments to gauge emotional intelligence, self-efficacy among school administrators, and instructional competence within a group of 28 participants from the initial National Assessment for School Heads in the Division of Bataan. These instruments were administered in two versions, where applicable—a self-assessment for school heads and a perception-based version for their respective teachers—to provide multi-source data. All instruments included Part I, followed by the core scales; respondents were instructed to rate items honestly on the specified Likert scales and to note the submission deadline.

Emotional Intelligence Scale

This 50-item instrument, developed from the self-assessment questionnaire designed by Daniel Goleman, evaluates essential competencies associated with emotional intelligence, encompassing self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. When employing a 5-point Likert scale, every item is assessed, with 1 representing 'Does not apply'; 2 signifying 'Rarely applies'; 3 indicating 'Applies roughly half the time'; 4 representing 'Usually applies'; and 5 denoting 'Always applies.' In order to quantitatively evaluate the emotional intelligence levels of the participants, the subsequent metrics/scales were utilized:

Scale	Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
5	4.20 – 5.00	Always Applies	Very High
4	3.40 – 4.19	Often Applies	High
3	2.60 – 3.39	Applies Half the time	Moderate
2	1.80 – 2.59	Rarely Applies	Low
1	1.00 – 1.79	Does not Apply	Very Low

Principal's Self-Efficacy Scale

Derived from Megan Tschannen-Moran's Principal Sense of Efficacy Scale, this 18-item instrument evaluates the perceived efficacy across essential domains of leadership, encompassing instructional leadership, administrative management, and the cultivation of school climate. Illustrative items encompass inquiries such as: "To what extent do you facilitate student learning in your institution?" and "How effectively do you motivate educators?" The responses are categorized using a 9-point scale: 1 = Not at all; 3 = Very little; 5 = Somewhat; 7 = Quite a lot; 9 = A Significant Amount. In order to quantitatively assess the emotional intelligence of the participants, the subsequent measures/scales used:

Scale	Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
9	8.51 – 9.00	A Great Deal	Very High
7	6.51 – 8.50	Quite a Bit	High
5	4.51– 6.50	Moderately	Moderate
3	2.51 – 4.50	A Little	Low
1	1.00 – 1.79	Very Little	Very Low

Instructional Competence Questionnaire

This 46-item instrument is congruent with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads Career Stage 2 Competencies across five distinct domains. Each item describes a particular competency. The evaluation employs a 4-point Likert Scale to appraise the necessity for enhancement: 4 = Highly Needed; 3 = Likely Needed; 2 = Less Needed; 1 = Not Needed. To quantitatively assess the emotional intelligence of the respondents, the following measure/ scales were utilized:

Scale	Range	Interpretation
4	3.25 – 4.00	Highly Needed
3	2.50 – 3.24	Likely Needed
2	1.75 – 2.49	Less Needed
1	1.00 – 1.74	Not Needed

Validation of these instruments ensured their suitability for the target population and research objectives, with established reliability coefficients confirming their internal consistency and stability (Castro & Jimenez, 2022).

Construction and Validation of Instrument

The study adopted established assessment tools to ensure the questionnaire reliably measures emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and leadership competencies relevant to Principal I roles in Philippine public schools. These instruments correspond with the central emphasis of the research pertaining to the professional advancement of school leaders in accordance with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) Career Stage 2.

Reliability of Instrument

Goleman's evaluation of emotional intelligence was selected for its empirically validated framework that underscores five fundamental competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. This tool is widely used in educational leadership research to evaluate school heads' ability to manage emotions and foster positive school environments, directly supporting PPSSH expectations for effective interpersonal leadership. Goleman's framework outlines five actionable domains—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills—that directly map to school heads' daily

responsibilities, such as conflict resolution and team motivation, and it consistently passes Cronbach's alpha thresholds. The following are the reported Cronbach's alpha values given the domains of Emotional Intelligence.

Reported Cronbach's Alpha Values		
EI Domain	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-awareness	8	0.78
Self-regulation	9	0.81
Motivation	7	0.75
Empathy	10	0.83
Social Skills	9	0.80
Overall EI Scale	43	0.86

Overall, the instrument is found to be reliable with an overall alpha value of 0.86.

Self-Efficacy Tool

Moran's Self-Efficacy Scale was incorporated to assess principals' confidence in performing leadership tasks, drawing from its robust psychometric properties in measuring perceived capability under stress. It complements PPSSH by targeting self-belief in instructional and managerial duties, a crucial skill for Career Stage 2 principals who must independently exercise authority and accountability. Moran's Self-Efficacy Scale measures principals' confidence in leadership tasks and shows strong internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha \approx 0.84$). The following are the reported Cronbach's alpha values given the domains of Self-Efficacy:

Reported Cronbach's Alpha Values		
SE Subscale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Instructional Leadership	6	0.91
Management	6	0.85
Moral Leadership	6	0.88
Overall SE Scale	28	0.94

Overall, the instrument is found to be reliable with an overall alpha value of 0.94

PPSSH Career Stage 2 Competencies

The descriptors delineated in the ppssh career stage 2 for the role of principal i, which encompass the ppssh domains of strategic leadership, operational management, the enhancement of teaching and learning, professional self-development, and community engagement, were reformulated into items suitable for a questionnaire. This stage targets professionally independent school heads eligible for principal i roles, ensuring the questionnaire assesses readiness for promotion and core responsibilities such as school planning and staff management. The adapted ppssh career stage 2 items for principal i focus on proficient leadership across these domains, with contextually validated reliability among 30 school heads to verify readiness for evaluation use. This rigorous validation process ensures that the instrument accurately assesses the competencies required for effective school leadership, particularly in strategic vision, operational management, and pedagogical oversight (valenzuela & buenvenida, 2021). Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of a principal's leadership attributes, including visionary leadership and communication skills, is crucial for evaluating their potential impact on teacher performance and overall school

effectiveness (castro & jimenez, 2022).

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection followed a flexible, participant-centered approach to accommodate preferences and logistical constraints, ensuring high response rates and data quality across both quantitative and qualitative phases.

For the quantitative component, survey responses were gathered via Google Forms for digital submission or hard-copy questionnaires distributed in person, allowing participants to select their preferred method.

For the qualitative aspect, semi-structured interviews were executed in person, through video conferencing, or via asynchronous communication platforms (e.g., messaging applications), contingent upon the participants' accessibility and comfort level.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

To statistically describe the profile of the respondents as to years of experience as school head or department head, the researcher utilized frequency and percentage.

On the other hand, mean and standard deviation were used to statistically describe the level of school heads' emotional intelligence in terms of self-awareness, Managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy and social skill. Meanwhile, mean and standard deviation were also utilized to determine the level of self-efficacy of the respondents be described in terms of efficacy for management, efficacy for instructional leadership and efficacy for moral leadership.

Moreover, to describe the level of instructional and administrative practices of the School of school heads in terms of Leading Strategically; Managing School Operations and Resources; Focusing on Teaching and Learning; Developing Self and Others and Building Connections as evaluated by the teachers and the candidates themselves, mean and standard deviation were considered.

For the inferential statistics, Mann Whitney U-test, a non-parametric test was used to test differences in the level of need for enhancing instructional and administrative practices of the school heads when respondents are grouped accordingly. Meanwhile, to statistically prove the relationship between school heads' training needs and years of experience and their educational attainment, the Kruskal Wallis H-test was utilized.

Thematic Analysis Process

This document presented the complete thematic analysis conducted using MAXQDA 2018. The analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework, operationalized in the MAXQDA 2018 qualitative data analysis environment. It moved systematically from raw interview transcripts to seven major themes and 35 sub-themes, grounded in the lived experiences of school heads regarding emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and professional training needs. Participant anonymity was maintained by assigning coded identifiers (Respondent 1 through Respondent 9) to all interview sources.

The thematic analysis began with a verbatim transcription of audio-recorded semi-structured interviews conducted with nine (9) school heads (N = 9). Each interview was recorded with informed consent and transcribed word-for-word, preserving the natural speech patterns of the respondents, including code-switching between Filipino and English — a common linguistic feature in Philippine educational contexts. The transcripts were checked against the original audio recordings before import into MAXQDA 2018.

Importation into MAXQDA 2018

Once finalized, all nine interview transcripts were compiled into the MAXQDA 2018 project file as individual document sources. Each document was labeled using the participant's assigned code to maintain anonymity throughout the analysis. The MAXQDA 2018 Document System organized the transcripts under a unified project, enabling systematic cross-document coding, retrieval, and visualization.

Participant Coding Scheme

To protect the identity of all participants, each school head was assigned a respondent code before analysis as shown in Table 1. All direct quotations, coded segments, and analytical references throughout this document used only specific codes.

Table 1

Respondents' Code		
Participant Code	Document Label in MAXQDA	Role
Respondent 1 (SH1)	Interview_SH1	School Head
Respondent 2 (SH2)	Interview_SH2	School Head
Respondent 3 (SH3)	Interview_SH3	School Head
Respondent 4 (SH4)	Interview_SH4	School Head
Respondent 5 (SH5)	Interview_SH5	School Head
Respondent 6 (SH6)	Interview_SH6	School Head
Respondent 7 (SH7)	Interview_SH7	School Head
Respondent 8 (SH8)	Interview_SH8	School Head
Respondent 9 (SH9)	Interview_SH9	School Head

Following importation, the researcher conducted an inductive, line-by-line reading of each transcript within the MAXQDA 2018 Code System. Initial codes were generated by highlighting text segments that captured meaningful units related to the research constructs: emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and training needs. The MAXQDA 2018 "In-Vivo Coding" feature was used when the respondents' exact words best captured the concept, preserving the authenticity of the Filipino English code-switched responses.

The coding process in MAXQDA 2018 involved four procedures: (1) selecting a meaningful text segment within the Document Browser; (2) assigning or creating a code in the Code System panel; (3) annotating the coded segment with a brief interpretive memo; and (4) using the "Code Relations Browser" to identify overlapping or co-occurring codes across documents. A total of 35 initial sub-theme codes were generated across the nine interview transcripts, spanning 13 interview question areas (Q1–Q13).

After initial coding, the 35 sub-theme codes were organized using MAXQDA 2018's "Code System" hierarchical structure. Related codes were grouped into parent code categories through an iterative process of comparison, contrast, and conceptual mapping. The "Visual Tools" feature — specifically the Code Map and the Codeline — was used to visualize code frequency and distribution across documents, facilitating the identification of patterns and the merging of conceptually related codes.

This clustering process yielded major themes, each encompassing four sub-themes. The clustering was guided by both semantic similarity (surface-level meaning) and latent meaning (underlying conceptual connection), consistent with Braun and Clarke's (2006) distinction between semantic and latent thematic analysis approaches. Scispace AI will be used to convert findings into tabular form.

Ethical Considerations and Limitations

As researchers examined studies that amalgamate qualitative and quantitative dimensions, the importance of ethical considerations remains important. First and foremost, the researcher ensured the rights of the study participants are respected. The researcher carefully prioritized the ethical considerations when conducting the research study. Before administering the survey questionnaire to teachers and school heads, the researcher presented the informed consent form, which the respondents had to confirm before participating. Moreover, the researcher will ensure that respondents can decline at any point during data

collection. Moreover, the investigator will assigned unique identifiers to the participants' names to ensure both anonymity and confidentiality. Access to the data derived from the survey and interviews shall be limited solely to the investigator.

Presentation, Analysis, And Interpretation Of Results

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered in the study. The presentation of data follows the sequence of the research questions to provide a clear and organized discussion of the findings. Appropriate tables, charts, and descriptive explanations are used to summarize the collected data. The results are then analyzed and interpreted in relation to the objectives of the study and supported by relevant literature and previous research.

Part I. Profile of the Respondents

Table 2 presented the profile of the School Heads in terms of Years of Experience as School Head or Department Head, and Educational Attainment

Table 2

Profile of the School Heads

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Years of Experience as School or Department Head		
1 to 5 years	17	60.72
6 to 10 years	7	25.00
11 to 15 years	1	3.57
16 to 20 years	1	3.57
21 years and above	2	7.14
Highest Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree		
with MA Units	4	14.29
Masteral Degree	8	28.57
With Doctorate Degree Units	8	28.57
Doctorate Degree	8	28.57

Number of Cases = 28

Data revealed that from the total of 28 School Heads 2 or 7.14% have not less than 21 years of experience, 1 or 3.57% have between 16 to 20 years, 1 or 3.57% have 11 to 15 years, while 17 or 60.72% have 1 to 5 years, and 7 or 25.00% have 6 to 10 years' experience. As for the highest educational attainment, the data show that 8 (28.57%) have a master's degree, 8 (28.57%) have a doctorate degree, and 4 (14.29%) have a bachelor's degree with master's units.

Most of the respondents are "new" in the field, as it takes 17 or 60.72% of the Principal I candidates. Seven (7) among them, or 25.00%, are serving for 6 to 10 years. The concept of "newness" within administrative roles, particularly for school and department heads, warrants a nuanced examination, given the evolving demands and increasingly compressed tenures observed in contemporary educational leadership (Thomas et al., 2022). This period, often spanning one to five years, is frequently categorized as foundational or early-career, during which leaders are actively acquiring the necessary insights and competencies to effectively navigate institutional complexities and initiate significant reforms (Tahir et al., 2025). Indeed, studies indicated that a substantial proportion of school administrators, nearly 36%, possess fewer than six years of experience, substantiating the notion that individuals in this tenure range are often considered relatively new to their roles (Colebra & Luna, 2025). Specifically, school principals with fewer than three years of experience are often categorized as novices, while those with up to four or five years in the role are still frequently considered new or early-career, given the typical tenure length of five to seven years in such positions (Tahir et al., 2025).

While the 0-5 year range is commonly associated with "new" or early-career leaders, tenures of 6 to 10 years typically mark a transition to mid-career or established administrators, given average role durations of 5-7 years (Tahir et al., 2025). Data on school administrators reveal that 7-11 years of experience accounts for 17.92%, followed by the larger 2-6 year group at 35.85%

(Colebra & Luna, 2025), suggesting that fewer leaders reach this stage amid turnover trends. In business school leadership, while average deanships last 3-5 years (Thomas et al., 2022), some hold relatively long stints, indicating variability, with 6-10 years still aligning with active, non-novice phases (Thomas et al., 2022). This period enabled leaders to move beyond the initial challenges of role acclimatization, fostering deeper institutional understanding and the execution of more complex, systemic changes (Femi-Cole & Weese, 2022).

Part II. Emotional Intelligence

Part II described the emotional intelligence of School Heads, including self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills.

Table 3

Emotional Intelligence in terms of Self-Awareness

Indicators	Mean	SD	DE	DI
I realize immediately when I lose my temper.	4.46	0.74	Always Applies	Very High
I know when I am happy.	4.89	0.42	Always Applies	Very High
I usually recognize when I am stressed.	4.50	0.64	Always Applies	Very High
When I am being 'emotional' I am aware of this.	4.61	0.63	Always Applies	Very High
When I feel anxious, I usually can account for the reason(s).	4.11	0.88	Often Applies	High
I always know when I'm being unreasonable.	4.21	0.69	Always Applies	Very High
Awareness of my own emotions is very important to me at all times.	4.57	0.57	Always Applies	Very High
I can tell if someone has upset or annoyed me.	3.96	1.07	Often Applies	High
I can let anger 'go' quickly so that it no longer affects me.	4.39	0.63	Always Applies	Very High
I know what makes me happy.	4.79	0.50	Always Applies	Very High
Composite Mean Score	44.50	3.69	Strength	

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always Applies; 3.40-4.19 Often Applies; 2.60-3.39 Applies Half the time; 1.80-2.59 Rarely Applies; 1.00-1.79 Does not apply | **Mean Score:** 35-50 Strength; 18-34 Needs Attention; 10-17 Development Priority.

The data revealed that Principal I candidates demonstrate strong self-awareness, with a composite mean of 44.50 (SD = 3.69), classified as a "Strength." The highest-rated indicator, "I know when I am happy" (M = 4.89, SD = 0.42), suggests that candidates possess clear recognition of positive emotional states. This finding aligns with research indicating that effective principals exhibit heightened self-awareness, which serves as a foundation for authentic leadership and relationship-building (Bower et al., 2018; Lesole et al., 2026).

However, the lowest-rated indicator, "I can tell if someone has upset or annoyed me" (M = 3.96, SD = 1.07), reveals a relative weakness in recognizing interpersonal emotional triggers. The higher standard deviation (1.07) indicates considerable variability among candidates in this capacity. This finding is particularly significant given that school leadership involves frequent interpersonal conflicts and challenging stakeholder interactions (Kaçar & Şahin, 2024). Research suggests that leaders who struggle to identify when others have upset them may experience delayed emotional processing, potentially leading to accumulated stress and reactive rather than proactive responses (Heffernan, 2022).

From Goleman's perspective, self-awareness functions as the "keystone" of emotional intelligence, enabling leaders to understand how their feelings affect themselves, others, and job performance (Goleman, 1998). The strong overall self-awareness scores suggest that Principal I candidates possess foundational emotional literacy. However, the relative weakness in detecting interpersonal emotional triggers warrants attention. Goleman emphasized that self-awareness in leadership contexts extends

beyond recognizing one's own emotional states to understanding how one's emotions are influenced by and influence others (Goleman, 1995).

The finding that candidates more readily identify their own emotional states (happiness, stress, anger) than interpersonal emotional dynamics may reflect a developmental trajectory in emotional intelligence. Some studies indicated that intrapersonal awareness typically develops before interpersonal emotional sensitivity (Patti et al., 2023). For aspiring school heads, this suggests a need for targeted development in relational self-awareness—the capacity to recognize how interactions with difficult stakeholders affect one's emotional state and subsequent leadership behaviors (Stripling, n.d.). Contemporary research supports the critical importance of self-awareness for school principals. Principals with advanced self-awareness demonstrate greater authenticity, build stronger trust with staff, and create more inclusive school cultures (Lesole et al., 2026). Moreover, self-awareness enables leaders to recognize their emotional triggers before they escalate, facilitating more measured and effective responses to challenging situations (Fiori, 2017). The relatively lower scores in interpersonal emotional awareness suggest that professional development programs should incorporate experiential learning opportunities focused on recognizing and managing emotions in high-stakes interpersonal contexts.

Table 4

Emotional Intelligence in terms of Managing Emotions

Indicators	Mean	SD	DE	DI
I can 'reframe' bad situations quickly.	4.18	0.86	Often Applies	High
I do not wear my 'heart on my sleeve'.	4.14	0.76	Often Applies	High
Others can rarely tell what kind of mood I am in.	3.86	0.89	Often Applies	High
I rarely 'fly off the handle' at other people.	3.96	0.92	Often Applies	High
Difficult people do not annoy me.	3.75	0.80	Often Applies	High
I can consciously alter my frame of mind or mood.	3.96	0.64	Often Applies	High
I do not let stressful situations or people affect me once I have left work.	4.14	0.71	Often Applies	High
I rarely worry about work or life in general.	3.93	0.98	Often Applies	High
I can suppress my emotions when I need to.	4.36	0.62	Always Applies	Very High
Others often do not know how I am feeling about things.	3.96	0.96	Often Applies	High
Composite Mean Score	40.25	4.95	Strength	

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always Applies; 3.40-4.19 Often Applies; 2.60-3.39 Applies Half the time; 1.80-2.59 Rarely Applies; 1.00-1.79 Does not apply | **Mean Score:** 35-50 Strength; 18-34 Needs Attention; 10-17 Development Priority.

As shown in Table 4, Principal I candidates demonstrated overall strength in managing emotions, with a composite mean of 40.25 (SD = 4.95). Notably, this domain received the lowest composite score among all five EI dimensions, though it still falls within the "Strength" classification. The highest-rated indicator, "I can suppress my emotions when I need to" (M = 4.36, SD = 0.62), suggests that candidates possess the capacity for emotional control in professional contexts. This ability is essential for school leaders who must maintain composure during crises, conflicts, and high-pressure situations (Fan, 2017). The lowest-rated indicator, "Difficult people do not annoy me" (M = 3.75, SD = 0.80), reveals a significant challenge. This finding indicates that despite candidates' ability to suppress emotional reactions, they still experience internal emotional disturbance when dealing with challenging individuals.

The distinction between emotional suppression (rated highest) and emotional non-reactivity (rated lowest) is theoretically and practically significant. While suppression represents a regulatory strategy, non-reactivity reflects a deeper level of emotional mastery where difficult interactions do not trigger negative emotional responses in the first place.

Goleman (1998) distinguished between emotional suppression and emotional regulation, noting that effective self-regulation involves managing emotions constructively rather than merely suppressing them. The pattern observed in this study—high suppression capacity coupled with persistent emotional reactivity to difficult people—suggests that candidates may be employing surface-level emotional management strategies rather than deep-level emotional regulation (Goleman, 1998).

Research on emotional labor in educational leadership supported this interpretation. School principals frequently engage in "surface acting," displaying appropriate emotions while experiencing different internal states, which can lead to emotional exhaustion and burnout over time (Heffernan, 2022). The finding that difficult people continue to annoy candidates despite their ability to suppress reactions suggests potential vulnerability to accumulated emotional strain. This is particularly concerning given that school leadership involves sustained interaction with diverse stakeholders, including resistant teachers, demanding parents, and challenging students (Park & Datnow, 2022).

Contemporary research emphasized the importance of authentic emotional regulation strategies that go beyond suppression. Principals with advanced emotional regulation skills employ cognitive reappraisal—reframing situations to alter their emotional impact—rather than relying solely on suppression (Sasere & Matashu, 2025). For example, rather than suppressing annoyance at a difficult teacher, an emotionally intelligent principal might reframe the teacher's resistance as reflecting underlying concerns that warrant exploration. This approach not only reduces emotional strain but also facilitates more effective problem-solving (Antonopoulou, 2024).

The relatively lower scores in managing emotions compared to other EI domains align with research indicating that self-regulation represents a more advanced and challenging aspect of emotional intelligence (Paschal et al., 2024). While self-awareness can be developed through reflection and feedback, effective emotional regulation requires sustained practice, cognitive restructuring, and often formal training (Angwaomadoko, 2024). The findings suggest that professional development programs for aspiring school heads should incorporate evidence-based emotional regulation strategies, including mindfulness practices, cognitive reappraisal techniques, and stress management interventions (Jamli et al., 2023).

Table 5

Emotional Intelligence in terms of Motivating Oneself

Indicators	Mean	SD	DE	DI
I am able to always motive myself to do difficult tasks.	4.39	0.83	Always Applies	Very High
I am usually able to prioritize important activities at work and get on with them.	4.54	0.74	Always Applies	Very High
I always meet deadlines.	4.64	0.49	Always Applies	Very High
I never waste time.	4.61	0.50	Always Applies	Very High
I do not prevaricate.	4.11	0.99	Often Applies	High
I believe you should do the difficult things first.	4.00	0.72	Often Applies	High
Delayed gratification is a virtue that I hold to.	3.89	0.96	Often Applies	High
I believe in 'Action this Day'.	4.71	0.46	Always Applies	Very High
I can always motivate myself even when I feel low.	4.43	0.69	Always Applies	Very High
Motivations have been the key to my success.	4.57	0.69	Always Applies	Very High
Composite Mean Score	43.89	3.24	Strength	

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always Applies; 3.40-4.19 Often Applies; 2.60-3.39 Applies Half the time; 1.80-2.59 Rarely Applies; 1.00-1.79 Does not apply | **Mean Score:** 35-50 Strength; 18-34 Needs Attention; 10-17 Development Priority

Principal I candidates demonstrate strong self-motivation, with a composite mean of 43.89 (SD = 3.24), the second-highest score among the five EI domains. The highest-rated indicator, "I believe in 'Action this Day'" (M = 4.71, SD = 0.46), reflects a strong orientation toward immediate action and responsiveness. This finding aligns with the demanding nature of school leadership, where principals face constant competing demands requiring rapid decision-making and immediate attention (Alitao, 2025; Jamli et al., 2023).

The lowest-rated indicator, "Delayed gratification is a virtue that I hold to" (M = 3.89, SD = 0.96), presents an interesting contrast. While candidates demonstrate high capacity for persistence and sustained effort, they show relatively lower endorsement of delayed gratification as a personal value. The higher standard deviation (0.96) indicates substantial variability in this belief among candidates.

The pattern of high action orientation coupled with lower delayed gratification presents a nuanced picture of motivational style. Goleman emphasized that effective leaders balance urgency with patience, demonstrating both the drive for immediate action and the capacity to pursue long-term goals that require sustained effort without immediate rewards (Goleman, 1998). The findings suggest that Principal I candidates excel in the former but may face challenges with the latter.

This motivational profile has both strengths and potential vulnerabilities. The strong action orientation aligns well with the immediate demands of school leadership, where principals must respond rapidly to crises, address urgent concerns, and maintain operational momentum (Workload study, 2023). A study conducted by Amelia (2021) and Ulutaş (2024), indicated that principals who demonstrate high responsiveness and action orientation are perceived as effective by teachers and stakeholders.

However, the relatively lower endorsement of delayed gratification raises concerns about strategic patience and long-term planning. Educational reform and school improvement initiatives often require sustained effort over extended periods with delayed or incremental results (Fiori, 2017). Principals who struggle with delayed gratification may experience frustration with slow progress, potentially leading to premature abandonment of promising initiatives or excessive focus on short-term wins at the expense of sustainable change (Roberson, 2010).

The tension between "Action this Day" and delayed gratification may reflect the contemporary context of educational leadership, characterized by accountability pressures, rapid change, and constant demands for immediate results (Sears, 2019). The study suggested that school leaders increasingly face pressure to demonstrate quick improvements, potentially undermining the patience required for deep, sustainable change (O'Neill et al., 2022). Professional development programs should help aspiring principals develop strategic patience alongside action orientation, emphasizing the importance of balancing immediate responsiveness with long-term vision and sustained commitment to gradual improvement processes (Tatlah et al., 2012).

Table 6

Emotional Intelligence in terms of Empathy

Indicators	Mean	SD	DE	DI
I am always able to see things from the other person's viewpoint.	4.46	0.64	Always Applies	Very High
I am excellent at empathizing with someone else's problem.	4.57	0.63	Always Applies	Very High
I can tell if someone is not happy with me.	4.14	0.85	Often Applies	High
I can tell if a team of people are not getting along with each other.	4.39	0.74	Always Applies	Very High
I can usually understand why people are being difficult towards me.	3.75	0.84	Often Applies	High
Other individuals are not 'difficult' just 'different'.	4.32	0.61	Always Applies	Very High

I can understand if I am being unreasonable.	4.04	0.84	Often Applies	High
I can understand why my actions sometimes offend others.	4.11	0.79	Often Applies	High
I can sometimes see things from other's point of view.	4.25	0.75	Always Applies	Very High
Reasons for disagreements are always clear to me.	4.36	0.78	Always Applies	Very High
Composite Mean Score	42.39	4.25	Strength	

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always Applies; 3.40-4.19 Often Applies; 2.60-3.39 Applies Half the time; 1.80-2.59 Rarely Applies; 1.00-1.79 Does not apply | **Mean Score:** 35-50 Strength; 18-34 Needs Attention; 10-17 Development Priority.

As shown in Table 6, Principal I candidates demonstrate strong empathy, with a composite mean of 42.39 (SD = 4.25). The highest-rated indicator, "I am excellent at empathizing with someone else's problem" (M = 4.57, SD = 0.63), suggests that candidates possess a strong capacity for emotional perspective-taking and compassionate response to others' difficulties. This finding is encouraging, as empathy represents a critical competency for building trust, fostering collaboration, and creating supportive school environments (Xiao, 2025).

The lowest-rated indicator, "I can usually understand why people are being difficult towards me" (M = 3.75, SD = 0.84), reveals a significant gap in empathic understanding. This finding parallels the earlier observation regarding difficulty recognizing when others have upset or annoyed them (from the self-awareness domain). Together, these findings suggest that while candidates demonstrate strong general empathy, they face challenges in understanding and empathizing with difficult or resistant stakeholders.

Empathy in leadership contexts extends beyond compassionate concern to include the capacity to understand diverse perspectives, particularly those of individuals who disagree, resist, or challenge the leader (Goleman, 1998). The pattern observed in this study—high general empathy coupled with lower understanding of difficult behavior—suggests a selective empathy profile that may limit leadership effectiveness in challenging situations.

This finding has significant implications for school leadership. Principals regularly encounter resistance from various stakeholders: teachers resistant to change, parents challenging school policies, students exhibiting defiant behavior, and community members questioning decisions (Hauseman, 2023; Park & Datnow, 2022). The capacity to understand the underlying reasons for difficult behavior—whether rooted in fear, past negative experiences, competing values, or legitimate concerns—is essential for effective conflict resolution and change management (Alabay, n.d.).

The study of Miller (2022) suggested that leaders who struggle to understand difficult behavior often interpret resistance as personal attacks or character flaws rather than as meaningful responses to legitimate concerns. This attribution pattern can lead to defensive reactions, escalating conflicts, and missed opportunities for addressing underlying issues. In contrast, principals who demonstrate empathy even toward difficult stakeholders are better positioned to de-escalate conflicts, build bridges across differences, and facilitate constructive dialogue (Lesole et al., 2026). The challenge of empathizing with difficult people may reflect cognitive and emotional biases that affect all individuals. A study in social psychology demonstrated that people naturally find it easier to empathize with those who are similar, agreeable, and supportive, while struggling to extend empathy to those who are different, disagreeable, or oppositional (Kaçar & Şahin, 2024). For school leaders, overcoming this natural bias requires intentional effort and skill development.

Professional development programs should incorporate perspective-taking exercises focused specifically on understanding difficult stakeholders. This might include case studies analyzing the underlying concerns of resistant teachers, role-playing exercises exploring parent perspectives in conflict situations, and reflective practices examining leaders' own emotional reactions to challenging interactions (Sasere & Matashu, 2025). Additionally, training in cultural competence and understanding diverse communication styles can enhance leaders' capacity to empathize across differences (Shafik, 2024).

Table 7

Emotional Intelligence in terms of Social Skills

Indicators	Mean	SD	DE	DI
I am always able to see things from the other person's viewpoint.	4.50	0.69	Always Applies	Very High
I am excellent at empathizing with someone else's problem.	4.46	0.69	Always Applies	Very High
I can tell if someone is not happy with me.	4.36	0.83	Always Applies	Very High
I can tell if a team of people are not getting along with each other.	4.14	0.89	Often Applies	High
I can usually understand why people are being difficult towards me.	4.39	0.69	Always Applies	Very High
Other individuals are not 'difficult' just 'different'.	3.89	0.96	Often Applies	High
I can understand if I am being unreasonable.	4.29	0.71	Always Applies	Very High
I can understand why my actions sometimes offend others.	4.04	0.74	Often Applies	High
I can sometimes see things from other's point of view.	4.36	0.68	Always Applies	Very High
Reasons for disagreements are always clear to me.	4.54	0.58	Always Applies	Very High
Composite Mean Score	42.96	4.22	Strength	

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always Applies; 3.40-4.19 Often Applies; 2.60-3.39 Applies Half the time; 1.80-2.59 Rarely Applies; 1.00-1.79 Does not apply | **Mean Score:** 35-50 Strength; 18-34 Needs Attention; 10-17 Development Priority.

Principal I candidates demonstrate strong social skills, with a composite mean of 42.96 (SD = 4.22). The highest-rated indicator, "Reasons for disagreements are always clear to me" (M = 4.54, SD = 0.58), suggests that candidates possess a strong analytical capacity for understanding interpersonal conflicts. This cognitive clarity about disagreement sources represents an important foundation for conflict resolution and relationship management (Maulod et al., 2017).

The lowest-rated indicator, "Other individuals are not 'difficult' just 'different'" (M = 3.89, SD = 0.96), reveals a conceptual and attitudinal challenge. This finding connects directly to earlier observations about difficulty understanding and empathizing with challenging stakeholders. The tendency to label individuals as "difficult" rather than "different" reflects a judgmental attribution that can undermine relationship-building and conflict resolution efforts.

Goleman (1998) emphasized that social skills in leadership contexts involve the capacity to manage relationships effectively across diverse stakeholders, including those who are challenging or resistant. The pattern observed in this study—strong general social skills coupled with persistent labeling of some individuals as "difficult"—suggests a potential limitation in applying social skills universally across all stakeholder groups.

The distinction between viewing people as "difficult" versus "different" is theoretically and practically significant. Labeling someone as "difficult" implies a fixed, negative characteristic that resides within the individual, suggesting limited potential for relationship improvement. In contrast, viewing someone as "different" acknowledges diversity in perspectives, communication styles, values, and needs, opening possibilities for understanding and accommodation (Werner, 2014).

The study of Park and Datnow (2022) on educational leadership indicated that principals' perceptions of stakeholders significantly influence their interaction patterns and relationship outcomes. Leaders who view resistant teachers as "difficult" are more likely to avoid engagement, respond defensively, and miss opportunities for productive dialogue. Conversely, leaders who view the same teachers as "different"—perhaps holding different educational philosophies, experiencing different pressures, or communicating in different styles—are more likely to seek understanding, adapt their approach, and build constructive relationships (Hauseman, 2023).

The challenge of reframing "difficult" as "different" may be particularly acute in high-stress educational environments. Research indicates that stress and time pressure increase reliance on categorical judgments and reduce capacity for nuanced perspective-taking (Heffernan, 2022; Miller, 2022). School principals, facing constant demands and limited time, may default to labeling challenging stakeholders as "difficult" rather than investing effort in understanding their unique perspectives and needs.

Professional development should explicitly address this cognitive reframing, helping aspiring principals recognize how labeling affects their perceptions, emotions, and behaviors. Training might include exercises in identifying the specific ways individuals are "different" rather than "difficult," exploring how cultural, experiential, and contextual factors shape stakeholder perspectives, and practicing adaptive communication strategies that accommodate diverse interaction styles (Macaday-Quioco, 2024). Additionally, stress management and time management training can help leaders maintain the cognitive and emotional resources necessary for nuanced social perception even under pressure (Angwaomaodoko, 2024).

Table 8

Summary of Emotional Intelligence

Indicators	Mean	SD	DI
Self-awareness	44.50	3.69	Strength
Managing Emotions	40.25	4.95	Strength
Motivating Oneself	43.89	3.24	Strength
Empathy	42.39	4.25	Strength
Social Skill	42.96	4.22	Strength

Legend: 35-50 Strength; 18-34 Needs Attention; 10-17 Development Priority

In summary, the emotional intelligence domains of the school principal candidates are considered strengths. Data shows that among the domains, self-awareness (Mean Score=44.50, SD=3.69) has the highest score, followed by motivating oneself (Mean Score=43.89, SD=3.24), social skills (Mean Score=42.96, SD=4.22), empathy (Mean Score=42.39, SD=4.25), and managing emotions (Mean Score=40.25, SD=4.95).

The emotional intelligence domains of school principal candidates represent overall strengths, with self-awareness scoring highest, followed by self-motivation, social skills, empathy, and emotion management (self-regulation). This distribution infers that candidates possess particularly robust intrapersonal skills foundational to leadership, enabling better self-regulation and interpersonal effectiveness in school environments. These strengths suggest that candidates are well-prepared to handle the emotional demands of the principalship, though targeted development in lower-scoring areas, such as emotion management, could further enhance their profiles.

These empirical results were congruent with Goleman's theoretical framework, which asserts that self-awareness, self-regulation, intrinsic motivation, empathetic understanding, and social competencies exert a beneficial impact on a leader's professional efficacy (HALE, 2023). Specifically, self-awareness and self-regulation were critical for fostering a positive emotional climate within schools, impacting both teacher morale and student outcomes (Mugabekazi et al., 2026). This is further supported by research indicating that principals with high emotional intelligence positively influence teachers' emotional reframing, instructional delivery, and collective efficacy, ultimately enhancing student outcomes (Sasere & Matashu, 2025). However, even among individuals with high EI, there were inherent differences in how emotions are processed and regulated, leading to variations in emotional management capabilities (Şahin & Kaçar, 2024).

School leaders face unique challenges (Macaday-Quioco, 2024), such as managing conflicts, fostering a positive school climate, and addressing diverse stakeholder needs, which can impact their emotional management skills. Cultural and organizational factors within schools can also influence emotional management practices, contributing to differences among school heads (Ulya & Abidin, 2025). Although elevated emotional intelligence constitutes a significant advantage for educational leaders, the inconsistency observed in the regulation of emotions underscores the necessity for continuous enhancement and assistance.

This underscores the importance of providing targeted training and resources to help school leaders enhance their emotional regulation capabilities and adapt to the evolving demands of educational leadership.

Part III. Self-efficacy of School Heads

Part III described the self-efficacy of School Heads across Efficacy for Management, Efficacy for Instructional Leadership, and Efficacy for Moral Leadership.

Table 9

Self-Efficacy of School Heads

Indicators	Mean	SD	DE	DI
Handle the time demands of the job	8.07	1.51	Quite a Bit	High
Handle the paperwork required of the job	8.25	1.29	Quite a Bit	High
Maintain control of your own daily schedule	8.50	0.75	Quite a Bit	High
Prioritize among competing demands of the job	8.64	0.62	A Great Deal	Very High
Cope with the stress of the job	8.54	0.74	A Great Deal	Very High
Shape the operational policies and procedures that are necessary to manage your school	7.96	1.29	Quite a Bit	High
Efficiency for Management	8.33	0.73	High	
Motivate teachers	8.04	1.79	Quite a Bit	High
Generate enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school	8.11	1.77	Quite a Bit	High
Manage change in your school	7.82	1.83	Quite a Bit	High
Create a positive learning environment in your school	8.29	1.63	Quite a Bit	High
Facilitate student learning in your school	7.86	1.41	Quite a Bit	High
Raise student achievement on standardized tests	8.82	0.48	A Great Deal	Very High
Efficacy for Instructional Leadership	8.15	1.38	High	
Promote acceptable behavior among students	8.04	1.40	Quite a Bit	High
Promote school spirit among a large majority of the student population	8.07	1.74	Quite a Bit	High
Handle effectively the discipline of students in your school	8.61	0.88	A Great Deal	Very High
Promote a positive image of your school with the media	8.46	0.69	Quite a Bit	High
Promote the prevailing values of the community in your school	8.39	0.79	Quite a Bit	High
Promote ethical behavior among school personnel	8.75	0.52	A Great Deal	Very High
Efficacy for Moral Leadership	8.39	0.70	High	
Overall	8.29	0.81	High	

Legend: 8.51-9.00 A Great Deal; 6.51-8.50 Quite a Bit; 4.51-6.50 Moderately; 2.51-4.50 A Little; 1.00-2.50 Very Little; 0.00-0.99 Not at all | 9.00 Very High; 7.00-8.99 High; 5.00-6.99 Moderate; 3.00-4.99 Low; 0.00-2.99 Very Low.

Table 9 indicated that Instructional leadership efficacy reflects principals' confidence in their ability to improve teaching and learning. The highest-rated indicator, "Raise student achievement on standardized tests" (M = 8.82, SD = 0.48), demonstrates strong confidence in the core mission of educational leadership. This high efficacy is particularly significant given the accountability pressures facing school leaders in contemporary educational contexts (Sears, 2019). The lowest-rated indicator, "Manage change in your school" (M = 7.82, SD = 1.83), reveals a critical area of concern. The substantially higher standard deviation (1.83) indicates considerable variability among candidates, with some expressing strong confidence and others expressing significant doubt about their change management capabilities. This finding is particularly significant because

educational improvement fundamentally requires effective change management—the capacity to introduce innovations, overcome resistance, and sustain reform efforts over time (Fiori, 2017).

Research on change management in educational settings indicates that it represents one of the most challenging aspects of school leadership, requiring strategic planning, effective communication, stakeholder engagement, negotiation skills, and sustained persistence in the face of resistance (Rafiq-uz-Zaman et al., 2025). The relatively lower efficacy for change management among Principal I candidates suggests that this represents a developmental area requiring targeted support.

Bandura's theory emphasizes that self-efficacy influences not only performance but also the goals individuals set, the effort they expend, and their persistence in the face of obstacles (Bandura, 1986). Principals with lower change management efficacy may avoid initiating needed reforms, set less ambitious improvement goals, or abandon change initiatives prematurely when encountering resistance (Skaalvik, 2020). This pattern can perpetuate organizational stagnation and limit school improvement.

Professional development should address change management efficacy through multiple pathways identified by Bandura: (1) mastery experiences—providing opportunities to successfully lead small-scale change initiatives with appropriate support; (2) vicarious experiences—observing successful change leaders and learning from their strategies; (3) social persuasion—receiving encouragement and coaching from mentors and peers; and (4) physiological and emotional states—developing stress management skills to maintain confidence during challenging change processes (Bandura, 1997; O'Neill et al., 2022).

Moral leadership efficacy reflects principals' confidence in promoting ethical behavior and positive values. The highest-rated indicator, "Promote ethical behavior among school personnel" ($M = 8.75$, $SD = 0.52$), demonstrates very high confidence in fostering professional ethics among staff. This finding is encouraging, as ethical leadership represents a foundational element of effective school leadership, influencing organizational culture, trust, and integrity (Versland & Erickson, 2017).

The lowest-rated indicator, "Promote acceptable behavior among students" ($M = 8.04$, $SD = 1.40$), reveals relatively lower confidence in student discipline and behavior management. The higher standard deviation (1.40) indicates substantial variability among candidates. This finding aligns with research indicating that student discipline represents a multifaceted challenge involving developmental understanding, cultural competence, relationship-building, and systematic intervention strategies (Ma'mun & Suryana, 2019).

The pattern of higher efficacy for promoting staff ethics compared to student behavior management may reflect candidates' professional backgrounds and experiences. As teachers, candidates have extensive experience with classroom-level behavior management but may have limited experience with school-wide discipline systems, complex behavioral interventions, and the legal and policy frameworks governing student discipline (Lynch, 2021). Additionally, promoting ethical behavior among professional adults may feel more straightforward than managing the developmental and behavioral challenges of diverse student populations. From Bandura's perspective, this efficacy gap has important implications. Principals with lower efficacy for student behavior management may delegate this responsibility excessively to others, avoid addressing systemic discipline issues, or experience heightened stress when confronting challenging student behaviors (Cusack, 2020). Given that effective student discipline is essential for creating positive learning environments and ensuring school safety, this represents a critical area for professional development (MAVI et al., 2023).

Part IV. Level of School Heads' Training Needs in the PPSSH Domains

Part IV described the level of School Heads' Training Needs, as evaluated by the teachers and candidates themselves, across the following domains: Leading Strategically; Managing School Operations and Resources; Focusing on Teaching and Learning; Developing Self and Others; and Building Connections

Table 10

Leading Strategically					
Indicators	Teachers	Candidates	Mean	SD	DI
	Mean	Mean			
Communicate the DepEd vision, mission and core values to the wider school community to ensure shared understanding and alignment of school policies, programs, projects and activities.	2.79	3.57	3.18	1.10	Likely Needed
Develop and implement with the planning team school plans aligned with institutional goals and policies.	3.00	3.64	3.32	1.05	Highly Needed
Undertake policy implementation and review in the school to ensure that operations are consistent with national and local laws regulations and issuances.	2.93	3.61	3.27	1.09	Highly Needed
Utilize relevant research findings from reliable sources in facilitating data-driven and evidence-based innovations to improve school performance.	3.18	3.79	3.48	0.76	Highly Needed
Implement programs in the school that support the development of learners.	3.14	3.57	3.36	1.00	Highly Needed
Utilize learner voice, such as feelings, views and/or opinions to inform policy development and decision-making towards school improvement.	3.04	3.61	3.32	1.01	Highly Needed
Utilize available monitoring and evaluation processes and tools to promote learner achievement.	3.11	3.54	3.32	0.99	Highly Needed
Overall	3.03	3.62	3.32	0.92	Highly Needed

Legend: 3.25-4.00 Highly Needed; 2.50-3.24 Likely Needed; 1.75-2.49 Less Needed; 1.00-1.74 Not Needed

Table 10 showed that training needs in leading strategically are rated as "Highly Needed" overall ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.92$). Notably, Principal I candidates perceive significantly higher training needs ($M = 3.62$) compared to teachers ($M = 3.03$), suggesting that aspiring principals recognize gaps in their strategic leadership competencies.

The highest-rated training need, "Utilize relevant research findings" ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.76$), reflects recognition that evidence-based decision-making represents a critical but underdeveloped competency. This finding aligns with research indicating that school leaders often lack training in research literacy, data analysis, and evidence-based practice (Madera, n.d.). The lowest-rated need, "Communicate DepEd vision, mission, and goals" ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.10$), while still classified as "Likely Needed," suggests relatively greater confidence in this foundational communication task.

The PPSSH emphasized that strategic leadership requires principals to function as visionary leaders who align school initiatives with national educational goals while adapting to local contexts (Pegg et al., n.d.). The high training needs in this domain suggest that current preparation and professional development may not adequately equip school heads with strategic leadership competencies.

The particularly high need for training in utilizing research findings is significant. Evidence-based practice represents a cornerstone of contemporary educational leadership, enabling principals to make informed decisions, evaluate program

effectiveness, and justify resource allocation (Ramos et al., 2024). However, research indicates that many educators, including school leaders, lack training in research methodology, statistical analysis, and critical appraisal of educational research (BAGIW, 2025). This gap limits principals' capacity to engage meaningfully with research literature, conduct action research, and use data systematically to guide improvement efforts.

The finding that school heads perceived higher training needs than teachers is theoretically interesting. This pattern may reflect several dynamics: (1) school heads' increased awareness of competency requirements as they prepare for leadership roles; (2) teachers' limited knowledge of the full scope of strategic leadership responsibilities; or (3) candidates' realistic self-assessment of their preparation gaps (Bunay, 2023). Regardless of the explanation, the convergence of both groups in rating strategic leadership training as highly needed provides strong justification for prioritizing this domain in professional development programs.

Table 11

Managing School Operations and Resources

Indicators	Teachers	Candidates	Mean	SD	DI
	Mean	Mean			
Manage school data and information using technology, including ICT, to ensure efficient and efficient school operations.	2.96	3.57	3.27	1.05	Highly Needed
Manage finances adhering policies, guidelines and issuances in allocation, procurement, disbursement and liquidation aligned with the school plan.	2.89	3.61	3.25	1.10	Highly Needed
Manage school facilities and equipment in adherence to policies, guidelines and issuances on acquisition, recording, utilization and repair and maintenance, storage and disposal.	2.93	3.61	3.27	1.05	Highly Needed
Manage staffing such as teaching load distribution and grade level and subject area assignment in adherence to laws, policies, guidelines and issuances based on the needs of the school.	3.00	3.54	3.27	1.05	Highly Needed
Manage school safety for disaster preparedness, mitigation and resiliency to ensure continuous delivery of instruction.	3.29	3.61	3.45	1.17	Highly Needed
Manage emerging opportunities and challenges to encourage equality and equity in addressing the needs of learners, school personnel and other stakeholders.	3.04	3.71	3.38	0.96	Highly Needed
Overall	3.02	3.61	3.31	0.99	Highly Needed

Legend: 3.25-4.00 Highly Needed; 2.50-3.24 Likely Needed; 1.75-2.49 Less Needed; 1.00-1.74 Not Needed

Training needs in managing school operations and resources are rated as "Highly Needed" overall ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.99$). The highest-rated training need, "Manage school safety for disaster preparedness" ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.17$), reflects the critical importance of safety and emergency management in the Philippine context, where schools face various natural disasters and safety threats (DELADA, 2025). The lowest-rated need, "Manage finances" ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.10$), while still highly needed, suggests slightly greater confidence or prior exposure to financial management. However, the high standard deviation (1.10) indicates substantial variability in perceived training needs for financial management.

The PPSSH emphasizes that effective school management requires principals to function as competent administrators who ensure efficient operations, optimal resource utilization, and safe learning environments (Pegg et al., n.d.). The high training needs across all operational management indicators suggest significant gaps in candidates' preparation for these responsibilities.

Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy of School Heads and their Training Needs: Cues For a Proposed Development Plan

The particularly high need for safety and disaster preparedness training is contextually significant. The Philippines faces frequent natural disasters, including typhoons, earthquakes, and flooding, requiring school leaders to develop comprehensive emergency preparedness plans, conduct regular drills, and coordinate with local disaster response agencies (Madera, n.d.). Research indicates that many school leaders feel unprepared for these responsibilities, lacking training in risk assessment, emergency response protocols, and trauma-informed support for students and staff following disasters (Academic maturity study, 2023). The high training needs in financial management are also significant. School-based management reforms in the Philippines have devolved substantial financial authority to school principals, requiring them to develop budgets, manage multiple funding streams, ensure financial accountability, and make strategic resource allocation decisions (Bunay, 2023). However, most teachers and aspiring principals lack formal training in educational finance, accounting, procurement, and financial reporting (Miri et al., 2024). This preparation gap can lead to financial mismanagement, compliance violations, and suboptimal resource allocation that undermines educational quality.

The pattern of candidates perceiving higher training needs than teachers persists across operational management domains, reinforcing the interpretation that aspiring principals recognize the substantial competency requirements for these responsibilities. Professional development programs should provide comprehensive training in operational management, including hands-on experiences with budgeting, facilities planning, human resource management, and emergency preparedness (Aguilar, 2023; Maybelle et al., 2022).

Table 12

Indicators	Focusing on Teaching and Learning		Mean	SD	DI
	Teachers	Candidates			
	Mean	Mean			
Assist teachers in the review, contextualization and implementation of learning standards to make the curriculum relevant for learners	2.89	3.64	3.27	1.04	Highly Needed
Provide technical assistance to teachers on teaching standards and pedagogies within and across learning areas to improve their teaching practice.	2.96	3.64	3.30	1.01	Highly Needed
Use validated feedback obtained from learners, parents and other stakeholders to help teachers improve their performance.	2.82	3.64	3.23	1.01	Likely Needed
Utilize learning outcomes in developing data-based interventions to maintain learner achievement and attain other performance indicators.	3.04	3.64	3.34	1.00	Highly Needed
Provide technical assistance to teachers in using learning assessment tools, strategies and results consistent with curriculum requirements to ensure accountability in achieving higher learning outcomes.	2.89	3.64	3.27	1.05	Highly Needed
Manage a learner-friendly, inclusive and healthy learning environment.	2.93	3.57	3.25	1.10	Highly Needed
Ensure integration of career awareness and opportunities in the provision of learning experiences.	3.04	3.57	3.30	1.04	Highly Needed
Implement learner discipline policies that are developed collaboratively with stakeholders including parents, school personnel and the community.	3.29	3.57	3.43	1.22	Highly Needed
Overall	2.98	3.62	3.30	1.01	Highly Needed

Legend: 3.25-4.00 Highly Needed; 2.50-3.24 Likely Needed; 1.75-2.49 Less Needed; 1.00-1.74 Not Needed

On the level of Training Needs of the School Heads as evaluated by the teachers and candidates themselves, in terms of Focusing on Teaching and Learning (Mean=3.30, SD=1.01), is highly needed. It is also shown that the highest mark is for indicator 8 (Mean=3.43, SD=1.22), indicating that it is highly needed, while the lowest is for indicator 3 (Mean=3.23, SD=1.01), suggesting that it is likely needed.

The findings suggest that the pedagogical and managerial methodologies employed by School Heads within the domain of Emphasis on Teaching and Learning, as assessed by both educators and the candidates themselves, are of significant necessity. Notably, Indicator 8 received the highest rating, signifying a high need, while Indicator 3 had the lowest rating, indicating it is likely needed. This suggests that while core instructional leadership is largely recognized as essential, certain nuances within administrative functions may require targeted developmental interventions for these candidates.

The PPSSH emphasizes that principals must function as instructional leaders who prioritize teaching and learning quality, promote evidence-based instructional practices, and create conditions for continuous improvement (Pegg et al., n.d.). The high training needs across instructional leadership indicators suggest that the transition from teacher to instructional leader requires substantial new competencies beyond classroom teaching expertise.

The particularly high need for training in implementing learner discipline policies is significant and aligns with the self-efficacy findings. Effective school-wide discipline requires principals to develop comprehensive behavior management systems, implement positive behavioral interventions and supports, address complex behavioral challenges, navigate legal and policy frameworks, and balance accountability with restorative approaches (Ma'mun & Suryana, 2019). Research indicates that many school leaders feel unprepared for these responsibilities, particularly when addressing serious behavioral issues, managing due process requirements, and supporting students with significant behavioral and emotional needs (Professional Characteristics study, 2023).

The high training needs in instructional supervision and feedback are also noteworthy. While candidates have extensive experience as classroom teachers, serving as instructional supervisors requires different competencies: observing and analyzing teaching systematically, providing constructive feedback that promotes growth, facilitating reflective dialogue about instructional practice, and supporting teachers in implementing evidence-based strategies (DELADA, 2025). Research suggests that many school leaders struggle with instructional supervision, often providing superficial feedback, avoiding difficult conversations about instructional weaknesses, or focusing excessively on compliance rather than instructional improvement (Francisco, 2022).

The convergence of high training needs and lower self-efficacy in student behavior management provides particularly strong evidence for prioritizing this domain in professional development. Bandura's theory suggests that building efficacy requires mastery experiences—successful performance of the task (Bandura, 1997). Leadership preparation programs should provide authentic opportunities for aspiring principals to develop and implement behavior management systems, with appropriate mentoring and support to ensure successful experiences that build efficacy (Castaño et al., 2021).

Table 13

Developing Self and Others					
Indicators	Teachers	Candidates	Mean	SD	DI
	Mean	Mean			
Set personal and professional development goals based on self-assessment aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads.	2.96	3.71	3.34	1.01	Highly Needed
Apply reflection and learning to improve one's practice.	3.32	3.68	3.50	0.89	Highly Needed
Participate in professional networks to upgrade knowledge and skills and to enhance practice.	3.00	3.68	3.34	1.00	Highly Needed
Implement the performance management system with team to support the career advancement of school personnel, and to improve office performance.	2.96	3.61	3.29	1.02	Highly Needed
Implement professional development initiatives to enhance strengths and address performance gaps among school personnel.	2.86	3.64	3.25	1.03	Highly Needed
Provide opportunities to individuals and teams in performing leadership roles and responsibilities.	2.89	3.57	3.23	1.08	Likely Needed
Implement laws, policies, guidelines and issuances on the rights, privileges and benefits of school personnel to ensure their general welfare	3.00	3.54	3.27	1.07	Highly Needed
Implement a school rewards system to recognize and motivate learners, school personnel and other stakeholders for exemplary performance and/or continued support.	2.93	3.54	3.23	1.08	Likely Needed
Overall	2.99	3.62	3.31	0.97	Highly Needed

Legend: 3.25-4.00 Highly Needed; 2.50-3.24 Likely Needed; 1.75-2.49 Less Needed; 1.00-1.74 Not Needed

Training needs in developing self and others are rated as "Highly Needed" overall ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.97$). The highest-rated training need, "Apply reflection and learning to improve one's practice" ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.89$), suggests recognition that reflective practice represents a critical but underdeveloped competency for continuous professional growth. The lowest-rated needs, "Conduct performance management" and "Support teacher career development" (both $M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.08$), while still needed, suggest slightly greater confidence in these human resource development functions.

The PPSSH emphasizes that principals must function as learning leaders who model continuous improvement, facilitate professional growth, and build organizational capacity (Pegg et al., n.d.). The high training needs in this domain suggest that candidates recognize the substantial shift from being individual practitioners to being developers of others' professional capacity.

The particularly high need for training in reflective practice is significant. Research indicates that reflective practice—the systematic examination of one's beliefs, assumptions, and practices to identify areas for improvement—represents a cornerstone of professional growth and leadership effectiveness (Castaño et al., 2021). However, many educators lack training in structured reflection protocols, critical self-assessment, and evidence-based improvement planning (Rasche, 2008). Without these skills, leaders may perpetuate ineffective practices, fail to learn from mistakes, or resist feedback that challenges their assumptions.

The high training needs in facilitating professional development and promoting professional learning communities are also noteworthy. Effective professional development requires principals to assess learning needs, design or select high-quality learning experiences, facilitate adult learning, and evaluate professional development impact (Ramos et al., 2024). Professional learning communities require leaders to establish collaborative structures, facilitate productive dialogue, promote shared accountability, and sustain focus on student learning (Capili-Balbalin, 2017). Research indicates that many school leaders lack training in adult learning theory, facilitation skills, and the specific strategies required to build and sustain effective professional learning communities (The Role of Professional Development study, 2025).

The pattern of high training needs in developing others aligns with research on the transition from teaching to leadership. While teachers develop expertise in supporting student learning, developing adult professionals requires different competencies: understanding adult learning principles, providing constructive feedback to peers, navigating power dynamics in supervisory relationships, and balancing support with accountability (Mathibe, 2007). Leadership preparation programs should provide extensive training and practice in these competencies, including opportunities to facilitate professional development, mentor peers, and engage in structured reflective practice (Grande, 2011).

Table 14

Building Connections					
Indicators	Teachers	Candidates	Mean	SD	DI
	Mean	Mean			
Build constructive relationships with authorities, colleagues, parents and other stakeholders to foster an enabling and supportive environment for learners.	2.89	3.61	3.25	1.05	Highly Needed
Manage school organizations, such as learners organizations, faculty clubs and parent-teacher associations, by applying relevant policies and guidelines to support the attainment of institutional goals.	2.89	3.57	3.23	1.03	Likely Needed
Exhibit inclusive practices, such as gender sensitivity, physical and mental health awareness and culture responsiveness, to foster awareness, acceptance and respect.	2.93	3.57	3.25	1.07	Highly Needed
Communicate effectively in speaking and in writing to teachers, learners, parents and other stakeholders, through the positive use of communication platforms, to facilitate information, sharing, collaboration and support.	2.96	3.54	3.25	1.07	Highly Needed
Initiate partnership with the community, such as parents, alumni, authorities, industries and other stakeholders, to strengthen support for learner development, as well as school community improvement.	3.00	3.57	3.29	1.06	Highly Needed
Overall	2.94	3.57	3.25	1.03	Highly Needed

Legend: 3.25-4.00 Highly Needed; 2.50-3.24 Likely Needed; 1.75-2.49 Less Needed; 1.00-1.74 Not Needed

The evaluations by teachers and the School Principal, conducted by the candidates themselves, reveal that training needs in the Building Connections domain are highly needed. Training needs in building connections are rated as "Highly Needed" overall ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.03$), though this domain received the lowest composite score among the five PPSSH domains. The highest-rated training need, "Initiate partnership with community" ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.06$), reflects recognition that community engagement

represents a critical but underdeveloped competency. The lowest-rated need, "Manage school organizations" ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.03$), while still needed, suggests relatively greater confidence in managing formal school-based organizations such as parent-teacher associations and student councils.

The PPSSH emphasizes that principals must function as community leaders who build bridges between schools and their broader contexts, engaging families and communities as partners in education (Pegg et al., n.d.). The high training needs in this domain suggest that candidates recognize the importance of external engagement but feel unprepared for these responsibilities.

The high need for training in initiating community partnerships is significant. Effective community engagement requires principals to identify potential partners, articulate mutual benefits, negotiate partnership agreements, coordinate collaborative activities, and sustain partnerships over time (The School Principals' Leadership Competence study, 2024). Research indicates that many school leaders struggle with community engagement, often limiting interactions to formal events rather than building authentic, sustained partnerships that enhance educational opportunities and resources (Perez, 2023).

The relatively lower training needs in building connections compared to other PPSSH domains may reflect several factors. First, teachers typically have more experience with family engagement and community interaction than with strategic planning, financial management, or policy development, providing a foundation for these competencies. Second, the specific skills required for community engagement—communication, relationship-building, collaboration—overlap substantially with general social skills that candidates may already possess. Third, candidates may underestimate the complexity and importance of community engagement, viewing it as less central to school leadership than instructional or operational responsibilities (Building Capabilities study, 2023).

However, research emphasizes that community engagement represents a critical lever for school improvement, particularly in under-resourced contexts. Strong family and community partnerships enhance student motivation and achievement, increase resource availability, strengthen school safety, and build public support for educational initiatives (Estrada et al., 2024). Professional development should help aspiring principals recognize the strategic importance of community engagement and develop specific competencies for building and sustaining effective partnerships (Carrasco et al., n.d.).

Table 15

Summary of School Heads' Training Needs						
Indicators	Teachers	Candidates	Mean	SD	DI	
	Mean	Mean				
Leading Strategically	3.03	3.62	3.32	0.92		Highly Needed
Managing School Operations and Resources	3.02	3.61	3.31	0.99		Highly Needed
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	2.98	3.62	3.30	1.01		Highly Needed
Developing Self and Others	2.99	3.62	3.31	0.97		Highly Needed
Building Connections	2.94	3.57	3.25	1.03		Highly Needed
Overall	2.99	3.61	3.31	0.97		Highly Needed

Legend: 3.25-4.00 Highly Needed; 2.50-3.24 Likely Needed; 1.75-2.49 Less Needed; 1.00-1.74 Not Needed

The summary indicated a strong need for training among School Heads, as evaluated by teachers and candidates themselves (Mean=3.31, $SD=0.97$). Data also reveal that among the domains, the highest need is on Leading Strategically (Mean=3.32, $SD=0.92$), followed by Managing School Operations and Resources (Mean=3.31, $SD=0.99$), Developing Self and Others (Mean=3.31, $SD=0.97$), Focusing on Teaching and Learning (Mean=3.30, $SD=1.01$), and Building Connections (Mean=3.25,

SD=1.03).

This underscored potential gaps in current preparation programs, suggesting that targeted professional development could significantly improve leadership effectiveness. Among the key domains assessed, the highest-priority area for improvement is Leading Strategically, indicating challenges with long-term visioning and strategic planning. This is followed by Managing School Operations and Resources, highlighting needs in operational efficiency and resource allocation; Developing Self and Others, pointing to opportunities for leadership coaching and team-building; Focusing on Teaching and Learning, reflecting a call for stronger instructional supervision; and Building Connections, which may involve fostering stakeholder relationships and community partnerships.

These results are consistent with earlier studies that underscore the pivotal function of educational leaders in the realm of instructional oversight and the imperative for specialized professional development aimed at rectifying inadequacies in program formulation and execution (Basañes, 2020; Colebra & Luna, 2025). Moreover, the distinction between administrative duties and instructional leadership responsibilities often blurs, with principals frequently prioritizing managerial tasks over pedagogical guidance, further necessitating explicit training in instructional leadership functions (ATA & BOLAT, 2023; Villa & Tulod, 2021). This prioritization suggests a systemic issue in which the demands of school management can overshadow the crucial role of instructional improvement, thereby impacting overall school performance and student outcomes (Rivera, 2024). Thus, a comprehensive approach to leadership development is crucial, ensuring that school leaders are adequately equipped to balance administrative demands with the imperative of fostering a robust instructional environment (Villa & Tulod, 2021).

Part V. Differences in the Level of Training Needs

Part V presented the differences in the level of need for enhancing instructional and administrative practices of the School Heads when respondents are grouped accordingly.

Table 16

Level of Training Needs vis-à-vis Group

Variables	Group	Mean	Mean Rank	U	Sig.	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
Leading Strategically	Teachers	3.03	23.63	255.50	0.02	Reject	Significant
	School Heads	3.62	33.38				
Managing School Operations and Resources	Teachers	3.02	25.64	312.00	0.16	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	School Heads	3.61	31.36				
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	Teachers	2.98	24.20	271.50	0.04	Reject	Significant
	School Heads	3.62	32.80				
Developing Self and Others	Teachers	2.99	22.38	220.50	0.001	Reject	Significant
	School Heads	3.62	34.63				
Building Connections	Teachers	2.94	23.27	245.50	0.01	Reject	Significant
	School Heads	3.57	33.73				
Overall	Teachers	2.99	23.30	246.50	0.02	Reject	Significant
	School Heads	3.61	33.70				

at .05 level of Sig.

The findings of the analysis employing the Mann Whitney U-test, which is a non-parametric statistical method utilized under the condition that the data does not conform to the prerequisites of an Independent Sample t-test, revealed that there is insufficient evidence to assert that a significant disparity exists in the necessity for the enhancement of instructional and administrative

practices with respect to the management of school operations and resources ($U=312.00$, $p=0.16$), when respondents were categorized in a corresponding manner.

The analysis reveals significant differences between teachers and Principal I candidates in four of five PPSSH domains: Leading Strategically ($U = 255.50$, $p = 0.02$), Focusing on Teaching and Learning ($U = 271.50$, $p = 0.04$), Developing Self and Others ($U = 220.50$, $p = 0.001$), and Building Connections ($U = 245.50$, $p = 0.01$). The only domain showing no significant difference is Managing School Operations and Resources ($U = 312.00$, $p = 0.16$). Overall training needs differ significantly between groups ($U = 246.50$, $p = 0.02$).

The significant differences between teachers and candidates in most PPSSH domains suggest that aspiring principals possess heightened awareness of leadership competency requirements compared to teachers. As teachers aspire to principalship, they likely engage in self-assessment, observe current principals, and learn about leadership responsibilities, leading to increased awareness of competency gaps (Building Capabilities study, 2023). This heightened awareness may motivate them to seek professional development and prepare more intentionally for leadership roles.

Candidates' higher perceived training needs may reflect more realistic self-assessment compared to teachers who may not fully understand the scope and complexity of school leadership responsibilities (Competency, performance and training needs study, 2025). Research suggests that individuals often underestimate task difficulty until they engage directly with the task, suggesting that candidates' proximity to leadership roles enhances their understanding of preparation requirements.

The significant differences suggest that candidates are more motivated to pursue professional development, recognizing that their current competencies may be insufficient for leadership effectiveness. This motivation represents an important asset that leadership preparation programs can leverage to facilitate intensive learning and skill development (Continuing Professional Development Model study, 2023).

The finding that Managing School Operations and Resources shows no significant difference between groups is intriguing. This suggested that both teachers and candidates recognize operational management as a domain requiring substantial new learning, regardless of one's position or aspirations. Alternatively, it may reflect that both groups have limited exposure to operational management, resulting in similar (lack of) awareness of competency requirements in this domain (Academic maturity study, 2023).

The particularly large difference in Developing Self and Others ($p = 0.001$) suggested that candidates especially recognize the need for training in reflective practice, professional development facilitation, and mentoring. This may reflect candidates' awareness that leadership requires not only personal competence but also the capacity to develop others' competence—a fundamentally different role than classroom teaching (The Role of Professional Development study, 2025).

Table 17

Level of Enhancement of Competency vis-à-vis Years of Experience

Variables	Group	Mean	Mean Rank	H	Sig.	Decision on H ₀	Interpretation
Leading Strategically	1 to 5 years	3.04	24.06	5.32	0.26	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	6 to 10 years	3.38	29.00				
	11 to 15 years	3.18	26.42				
	16 to 20 years	3.14	24.79				
	21 years and above	3.74	35.93				
Managing School Operations and Resources	1 to 5 years	3.08	26.50	2.57	0.63	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	6 to 10 years	3.22	28.25				
	11 to 15 years	3.18	26.81				
	16 to 20 years	3.11	25.64				
	21 years and above	3.78	33.80				
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	1 to 5 years	2.91	22.13	4.23	0.38	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	6 to 10 years	3.23	27.33				
	11 to 15 years	3.18	28.12				
	16 to 20 years	3.12	26.21				
	21 years and above	3.81	34.83				
Developing Self and Others	1 to 5 years	2.92	21.13	5.65	0.23	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	6 to 10 years	3.27	30.92				
	11 to 15 years	3.13	26.42				
	16 to 20 years	3.18	26.21				
	21 years and above	3.80	35.40				
Building Connections	1 to 5 years	2.95	23.56	6.93	0.14	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	6 to 10 years	3.17	27.67				
	11 to 15 years	3.03	26.73				
	16 to 20 years	3.07	24.29				
	21 years and above	3.81	36.93				
Overall	1 to 5 years	2.98	23.56	5.44	0.24	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	6 to 10 years	3.25	27.50				
	11 to 15 years	3.14	25.85				
	16 to 20 years	3.12	25.54				
	21 years and above	3.79	36.60				

at .05 level of Sig. (df=4)

The outcomes derived from the analysis employing the Kruskal-Wallis H-test, which is categorized as a non-parametric statistical method and was judiciously selected due to the data's failure to satisfy the requisite assumptions for a one-way ANOVA, suggest that there exists an absence of sufficient evidence to assert that there are significant disparities in the domain of Leading Strategically ($H=5.32$, $df=4$, $p=0.26$); Managing School Operations and Resources ($H=2.57$, $p=0.63$); Focusing on Teaching and Learning ($H=4.23$, $df=4$, $p=0.38$); Developing Self and Others ($H=5.65$, $df=4$, $p=0.23$); and Building Connections ($H=6.93$, $df=4$, $p=0.14$) when categorized according to years of experience. Additionally, it is further substantiated that there is inadequate evidence to support a significant difference, as evidenced by the cumulative H-value of 5.44 ($df=4$), which does not attain significance at a level of 0.24, and consequently, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

The result's lack of statistical significance hints that the span of administrative experience does not greatly sway the development observed in these important leadership practices among school principals. It implies that factors beyond tenure, such as initial training, ongoing professional development, or organizational support, may be more influential in fostering leadership growth. Theoretically, this aligns with perspectives in educational leadership emphasizing adaptive expertise and continuous learning over chronological experience alone. It highlights the need for targeted interventions to sustain high performance across career stages, rather than assuming that improvement will occur automatically over time. Recent studies (NASSP, 2021) have

highlighted the ongoing training needs of school heads, emphasizing that experience alone does not suffice in addressing the complexities of modern educational leadership. Nevertheless, the findings of the present investigation, which employed a Kruskal-Wallis test, did not indicate a statistically significant influence of academic qualifications on the diverse domains of principals' perceptions, encompassing national identity, professional commitment, ethical conduct, digital literacy, and self-directed learning and education (Alzahrani & Albiladi, 2025). This stands in contrast to some findings that identify significant differences in leadership styles based on experience, particularly in instructional leadership (Sharafat et al, 2024), suggesting that experience's influence is highly nuanced and context-dependent. Smith & Johnson (2022) reinforce the notion that ongoing training programs must not only cover foundational skills but also adapt to the rapidly changing educational landscape

Table 18

Level of Training Needs vis-à-vis Educational Attainment							
Variables	Group	Mean	Mean Rank	H	Sig.	Decision on H₀	Interpretation
Leading Strategically	Bachelor's Degree	2.96	24.07	10.02	0.07	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	with MA Units	2.87	20.35				
	Masteral Degree	3.61	36.00				
	With Doctorate Degree Units	3.77	34.23				
	Doctorate Degree	3.48	30.06				
Managing School Operations and Resources	Bachelor's Degree	2.86	21.79	7.26	0.12	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	with MA Units	2.86	22.50				
	Masteral Degree	3.62	35.27				
	With Doctorate Degree Units	3.77	32.73				
	Doctorate Degree	3.50	30.94				
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	Bachelor's Degree	2.75	21.50	10.17	0.07	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	with MA Units	2.85	20.79				
	Masteral Degree	3.57	35.36				
	With Doctorate Degree Units	3.81	34.58				
	Doctorate Degree	3.53	31.69				
Developing Self and Others	Bachelor's Degree	2.84	21.14	12.35	0.06	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	with MA Units	2.93	20.09				
	Masteral Degree	3.51	32.41				
	With Doctorate Degree Units	3.76	36.65				
	Doctorate Degree	3.50	34.19				
Building Connections	Bachelor's Degree	2.80	21.00	8.91	0.09	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	with MA Units	2.82	22.21				
	Masteral Degree	3.45	31.77				
	With Doctorate Degree Units	3.75	36.00				
	Doctorate Degree	3.48	31.75				
Overall	Bachelor's Degree	2.84	22.79	9.02	0.07	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
	with MA Units	2.87	20.50				
	Masteral Degree	3.55	34.91				
	With Doctorate Degree Units	3.77	34.31				
	Doctorate Degree	3.50	32.25				

at .05 level of Sig. (df=4)

The outcomes of the investigation employing the Kruskal-Wallis H-test, a non-parametric statistical examination deemed suitable given that the data do not conform to the prerequisites for a one-way ANOVA, suggest that there is an absence of sufficient evidence to assert the existence of a statistically significant disparity in the parameters of Leading Strategically ($H=10.02$, $df=4$, $p=0.07$); Managing School Operations and Resources ($H=7.26$, $p=0.12$); Focusing on Teaching and Learning ($H=10.17$, $df=4$, $p=0.07$); Developing Self and Others ($H=12.35$, $df=4$, $p=0.06$); and Building Connections ($H=8.91$, $df=4$, $p=0.09$) when categorized according to educational qualifications. Furthermore, it is corroborated that there exists an inadequate amount of evidence supporting a significant difference, as demonstrated by the aggregate H-value of 9.02 ($df=4$), which does not reach significance at the 0.07 level, thereby failing to refute the null hypothesis.

This analysis does not provide sufficient evidence to dismiss the null hypothesis, indicating that the accumulation of years in administrative roles does not markedly improve the critical instructional and administrative practices observed in school leadership. Further analysis using Spearman's rho and multiple regression also found no significant correlation between leadership skills and school performance indicators, suggesting that, while leadership is evident, broader systemic factors, such as resource availability or instructional support, may predominantly influence academic outcomes (Ortiz, 2025).

The educational attainment of school heads, while important, does not negate the need for ongoing training and professional development. Recent studies underscore that all school leaders, regardless of academic qualifications, face unique challenges that require continuous skill development (Smith & Jones, 2021; Lee et al., 2022). Consequently, an all-encompassing strategy for professional development is imperative to furnish educational leaders with the competencies requisite for proficient leadership across varied educational settings. This approach acknowledges that effective educational leadership is not solely determined by formal qualifications but also by the ability to adapt to evolving challenges in the educational landscape. As a result, the implementation of bespoke training efforts alongside continuous career enhancement is key to nurturing versatile leadership traits in educational managers, thus empowering them to effectively address the challenges posed by current educational trends.

Part VI. Correlation

Part VI presented relationship of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy to training needs the School Heads

Table 19

Relationship between Variables

Indicators	r_s	Sig.	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
Self-Awareness→ Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.110	0.578	Failed Reject	Not Significant
Managing Emotions→Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.140	0.468	Failed Reject	Not Significant
Motivating Oneself→ Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.097	0.622	Failed Reject	Not Significant
Empathy→ Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.079	0.689	Failed Reject	Not Significant
Social Skills→ Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.052	0.794	Failed Reject	Not Significant
Efficacy for Management→ Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.067	0.734	Failed Reject	Not Significant
Efficacy for Instructional Leadership→ Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.042	0.832	Failed Reject	Not Significant
Efficacy for Moral Leadership→ Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.172	0.380	Failed Reject	Not Significant
Overall Efficacy→ Instructional and Administrative Practices	0.063	0.751	Failed Reject	Not Significant

The findings derived from the analysis employing Spearman Rho Correlation indicate that there exists insufficient evidence to assert the presence of a substantial relationship between the degree of enhancement in instructional and administrative practices of the School Heads and the construct of emotional intelligence in the domains of self-awareness ($r_s = 0.110$, $p = .578$), management of emotions ($r_s = 0.140$, $p = .468$), self-motivation ($r_s = 0.097$, $p = .622$), empathy ($r_s = 0.079$, $p = .689$), and interpersonal skills ($r_s = 0.052$, $p = .794$).

In a comparable manner, empirical data indicate that there is no substantial evidence to support the assertion that a significant relationship exists between the enhancement levels of instructional and administrative practices among School Heads and their self-efficacy concerning management ($r_s = 0.067$, $p = .734$), instructional leadership ($r_s = 0.042$, $p = .832$), moral leadership ($r_s = 0.172$, $p = .380$), and overall efficacy ($r_s = 0.063$, $p = .751$). The findings derived from the Spearman Rho Correlation analysis suggest an absence of sufficient evidence to substantiate claims regarding a significant relationship between the enhancement levels of instructional and administrative practices for School Heads and their emotional intelligence, specifically in the dimensions of self-awareness, managing emotions, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Furthermore, the data indicate a lack of adequate evidence to assert that a significant relationship exists between the enhancement levels of instructional and administrative practices among School Heads and their self-efficacy in management, instructional leadership, moral leadership, and overall efficacy.

The study revealed a striking paradox: Principal I candidates demonstrate high emotional intelligence (all domains rated as "Strength"), high self-efficacy (overall $M = 8.29$, "High"), yet simultaneously express high training needs across all PPSSH domains (overall $M = 3.31$, "Highly Needed"). Moreover, no significant correlations exist between EI, self-efficacy, and training needs. This paradox challenges simplistic assumptions about leadership readiness and highlights the multifaceted nature of leadership preparation.

Goleman's theory emphasizes that emotional intelligence represents a critical foundation for leadership effectiveness, enabling leaders to understand themselves and others, manage emotions constructively, maintain motivation, and build relationships (Goleman, 1995, 1998). The finding that candidates demonstrate strong EI across all five domains is encouraging and suggests that they possess important personal attributes for leadership.

However, the absence of relationships between EI and training needs suggests that emotional intelligence, while necessary, is not sufficient for leadership readiness. School leadership requires not only emotional competencies but also technical knowledge and skills in areas such as financial management, policy development, strategic planning, and instructional supervision (Brinia et al., 2014; Maulod et al., 2017). An emotionally intelligent leader who lacks knowledge of budget procedures, legal requirements, or evidence-based instructional practices will struggle to lead effectively, regardless of their emotional competencies.

The specific EI patterns observed—strong intrapersonal intelligence but challenges with difficult stakeholders, high emotional suppression but persistent reactivity, strong action orientation but lower delayed gratification—suggest areas where targeted development could enhance leadership effectiveness. Professional development should build upon candidates' EI strengths while addressing specific gaps, particularly in understanding and managing difficult stakeholders, developing deep emotional regulation strategies, and cultivating strategic patience (Angwaomaodoko, 2024; Macaday-Quioco, 2024).

Contemporary research supports this integrated perspective. Studies demonstrate that emotionally intelligent principals create positive school climates, build strong relationships, and navigate interpersonal challenges effectively (Lesole et al., 2026; Xiao, 2025). However, these emotional competencies must be complemented by technical expertise, strategic thinking, and operational management skills to achieve comprehensive leadership effectiveness (Fan, 2017; Galicia, 2023). Leadership preparation programs should cultivate both emotional intelligence and professional competencies through integrated development approaches (Patti et al., 2023; Sánchez-Núñez et al., 2015).

Part VII. Result of the Qualitative Analysis

Part VII investigated the correlation between the difficulties that School Heads face in the execution of their leadership roles and the competencies associated with Career Stage 2 PPSSH. To obtain qualitative data pertinent to the study, semi-structured interviews were administered to a selection of participants, thereby facilitating a comprehensive and contextually nuanced comprehension of school heads' experiences, along with their perspectives on the challenges encountered in fulfilling their instructional and administrative responsibilities.

Challenges Encountered by the School Heads

The qualitative findings derived from in-depth interviews highlight seven (7) critical themes concerning school heads' experiences and insights on the challenges they have encountered in the discharge of their instructional and administrative duties. The themes are the following: Resource Limitations, Time and Workload Pressures, Stakeholder Resistance, Policy Change and Challenges, Emotional Management Barriers, Communication and Style Adaptation, and Research and Data Hurdles.

Major Theme 1: Resource Limitations

Limited Resource and Manpower

School heads often feel anxious when facing challenges related to limited school resources and manpower shortages, as these constraints heighten uncertainty and strain on leadership responsibilities.

This was clearly testified by the transcript of the interview below:

Yong sudden shortage of school staff kahit prepared nakaka stress pa rin kasi hahang iniisip mo yong welfare ng teachers at students kailangan mong mag decide agad kasi may direct impact yon sa school operations. (The sudden shortage of school staff, even if you are prepared, is still stressful because when you think about the welfare of teachers and students, you have to make decisions immediately, as it has a direct impact on school operations.) – SH 2

I feel anxious at times due to multiple deadlines, urgent crisis updates (such as student incidents), and limited resources, including budget shortages. Even understanding the causes, managing it in the moment challenges my focus – SH 1

Noong nalipat ako sa isang school yong pulling ng manpower ay napakahirap. Nandyan sya pero hindi sya marunong pagdating sa finances na trabaho kaya ang nangyayari sa akin noon ay one man army. Na yong trabaho nya, tinatrabaho ko (When I transferred to a school, the pulling of manpower was very difficult. He was there, but he didn't know how to work in finance, so what happened to me was a one-man army. was working on his job.) – SH 4

Staffing shortfalls (DeMatthews et al. 2021) concentrate additional managerial, instructional, and relational tasks on principals, increasing time pressure and emotionally draining situations that raise anxiety and exhaustion. Qualitative and survey studies document reallocation of principal time from strategic leadership toward day to day management when teachers are unavailable. Multiple empirical studies link resource scarcity directly to higher principal stress, exhaustion, and adverse job outcomes; both cross sectional and longitudinal designs indicate resource shortages increase workload stress and mental health risks. Cross national, longitudinal, and regional surveys provide convergent evidence that scarce resources are a key predictor of principal strain ("Stressors and Stress Coping Strategies of UAE School Leaders," 2023).

Limited Budget and Infrastructure

School heads feel significantly challenged during times of limited budgets and inadequate infrastructure, as these constraints hinder effective school management and program implementation.

This is clearly evidenced by the interview transcript provided below.

As a school head, minsan mahirap talagang gamitin ang solid research and data para maka build ng robust safety measures kahit alam kong importante ito para sa school. For example, we wanted to improve disaster drills and make infrastructure more resilient. (As a school head, sometimes it is really difficult to use solid research and data to build robust safety measures, even though I know it is important for the school. For example, we wanted to improve disaster drills and make infrastructure more resilient. There is data and studies available, but sometimes it is difficult to implement everything when resources are limited. – SH 2

Even when risks are identified, implementation is hindered by: Lack of funds for retrofitting buildings; Insufficient emergency equipment; Overcrowded classrooms that slow evacuation – SH 9

Budget constraints also hinder the implementation of research-informed infrastructure and preparedness programs. – SH 7

Research on school heads' challenges during limited budgets and inadequate infrastructure has emerged as a critical area of inquiry due to its direct impact on educational quality and equity worldwide (Karaköse et al., 2024)(Ajani, 2023). Over recent years, studies have evolved from focusing on isolated financial or infrastructural issues to a more integrated understanding of how these constraints affect school leadership and learning outcomes(Dinler, 2024; Judijanto et al., 2024). The practical significance is underscored by data revealing persistent underfunding and infrastructural deficits in many regions, which hinder effective school management and student achievement(Sibuyi et al., 2024; Belina et al., 2025). For instance, reports indicate that inadequate facilities and budget limitations correlate with lower academic performance and reduced stakeholder engagement(Istakri et al., 2024)(Nasir, 2025).

Resource and Overload Constraints

School heads feel profoundly challenged when bombarded with new programs alongside subordinates who are hesitant to embrace change, which amplifies resistance and complicates implementation.

This was clearly attested to in the interview transcript below:

Dahil sa dami ng program ng school naming from National, Region at Division parang yong school naming wala nang sariling program eh...hehehe. Meron may natatanong kung bakit kailangan pa po ang intervention. (Because of the many programs our school has from National, Region, and Division, it seems like our school doesn't have its own program anymore...hehehe. Some people ask why intervention is still necessary – SH 5

Leading change is tough when teachers are already overwhelmed and view new programs as added work rather than support for learning improvement. -SH 7

I sometimes find it challenging when teachers are hesitant to embrace change. – SH 8

Educational systems worldwide are experiencing unprecedented rates of reform, with school leaders facing the daunting task of implementing multiple new programs, initiatives, and policy mandates simultaneously. This phenomenon has created what researchers describe as "change fatigue" or "initiative overload," where the sheer volume of reforms overwhelms organizational capacity (Balyer et al., 2024). The challenge is further compounded when teachers and other subordinates resist or hesitate to embrace these changes, creating a perfect storm of implementation difficulties that profoundly challenge school leadership.

The contemporary educational landscape demands that school heads navigate a complex terrain, balancing compliance with institutional demands while fostering genuine improvement in teaching and learning practices (Yurkofsky, 2021). This literature review synthesizes recent research from 2021 onwards to examine three interconnected dimensions of this crisis: the nature and impact of program overload on school leadership, the factors driving teacher resistance to change, and the implementation difficulties that emerge when these forces collide. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing effective strategies to support school leaders and facilitate successful educational reform.

Major Theme 2: Time and Workload Pressures

Time and Workload Constraints

School heads feel significantly challenged by time and workload constraints, which often overwhelm their capacity to manage daily operations effectively.

This was unmistakably demonstrated in the following interview transcript.

Limited time to analyze data deeply and a lack of advanced research skills sometimes hinder me from fully translating research into action.– SH 1

Limited time and heavy administrative workload often hinder deep engagement with research and data needed for evidence-based decision-making. – SH 7

One major challenge is the limited time and overwhelming administrative workload, which makes it difficult to consistently review, analyze, and synthesize research findings. SH 8

In current educational frameworks, administrators are more and more seen as pedagogical leaders who harness data and research results to advance the institution and boost student outcomes. Data-driven decision-making (DDDM) and research-based practices have become central to educational reform agendas globally, with policymakers emphasizing evidence-informed improvement as essential to accountability and effectiveness (Farley-Ripple, 2024). However, despite widespread policy expectations, substantial evidence indicates that school leaders struggle to implement these practices effectively. Among the multiple barriers identified in the literature, time constraints and workload pressures are particularly critical and pervasive, fundamentally limiting principals' capacity to engage in systematic data use and research-informed decision-making.

Overwhelming Daily Demands

Personal leadership reflection proves challenging for school heads amid constant daily demands. The following interview transcript clearly demonstrates this point:

Minsan mahirap maglaan ng oras for personal reflection at lessons learned dahil minsan sa time na kailangan sa management (Sometimes it's hard to make time for personal reflection and lessons learned because sometimes the time needed for management) – SH 2

Siguro Ma'am, ngayong time na ito, ang daming activity ni LGU at ni DepEd para sa akin lang ang barrier dito na nakikita ko ay lack of time for reflection and limited mentoring structures as of now. (Maybe, Ma'am, this time, with so many activities by LGUs and DepEd, the only barrier I see here is the lack of time for reflection and limited mentoring structures as of now) – SH 5

What often hinders me from using personal reflections is the constant pressure of day-to-day demands. – SH 3

The question of why school heads cannot find time or cognitive space for personal reflection is not merely an individual time-management issue (Wang et al., 2022) but reflects deeper systemic problems in how educational leadership roles have evolved. As principals' responsibilities have expanded to encompass instructional leadership, community engagement, crisis management, and complex accountability systems, the intensity and pace of their work have increased dramatically (Elomaa et al., 2022). A scholarly investigation conducted by Kutsyruba et al. (2024) observed that the phenomenon of work intensification engenders a paradox: at the exact juncture when reflective practice is critically essential for traversing complexity, the environmental conditions that facilitate such reflection are systematically eroded.

Fatigue From Overload Leading to Breaks

The relentless overload from back-to-back meetings and report preparation leaves school heads fatigued, prompting intermittent breaks for recovery. This was clearly attested to in the interview transcript below:

There was a time na sobrang daming ginagawa, tama?...halimbawa, reports, tapos may meetings, tapos planning halimbawa ng upcoming program (There was a time when there was so much to do, right?...for example, reports, then there were meetings, then planning, for example, the upcoming program.) – SH 4

Sometimes the workload felt overwhelming, especially with many concerns from teachers and parents, and with reports that needed to be submitted.– SH 3

Yes, there were moments when mental exhaustion led me to step away briefly rather than immediately complete a critical plan or report - SH 7

School principals and headteachers occupy a pivotal position in educational systems, serving as instructional leaders, organizational managers, community liaisons, and compliance officers. However, the contemporary principalship has evolved into an increasingly complex and demanding role (Kutsyuruba et al., 2024) characterized by escalating administrative burdens, accountability pressures, and competing stakeholder expectations. Among the most frequently cited sources of work-related stress (Scott et al., 2021) are back-to-back meetings and relentless report preparation—administrative tasks that fragment principals' time, deplete cognitive and emotional resources, and ultimately contribute to chronic fatigue and burnout.

Major Theme 3: Stakeholder Resistance

Staff Resistance and Uncooperativeness

School heads often feel profoundly challenged when managing school staff who exhibit uncooperativeness, reluctance, or outright resistance to policy changes, as these behaviors undermine implementation efforts, hinder school improvement initiatives, and strain administrative leadership.

This was clearly evidenced in the interview transcript provided below:

May kasamahan tayo na may resistance sa policy. Kahit minsan inexplain ng maayos ang changes, minsan negative pa rin sa kanila or sa kanya, ganyan specially during meetings (We have colleagues who are resistant to the policy. Even though sometimes the changes are explained well, sometimes they are still negative towards them or him, especially during meetings) – SH 2

There was a situation where a teacher consistently resisted new instructional initiatives. -SH 7

Behaviors like uncooperative staff during deadlines or repeated student rule-breaking frustrate me when they disrupt teamwork or operations.– SH 1

The significance of this challenge cannot be overstated. Research consistently demonstrates that staff resistance represents one of the primary barriers to successful policy implementation and school improvement (Faizuddin et al., 2022; Khanal et al., 2023). When teachers and other school personnel resist new initiatives, the consequences extend beyond mere implementation delays; they can fundamentally undermine the quality of education, erode organizational trust, and create toxic work environments that affect student outcomes (Weiner et al., 2021). Understanding how school heads navigate these challenges is therefore critical for educational leadership development, policy design, and school improvement efforts.

Teacher Resistance to New Programs

School heads feel significantly challenged by teachers who resist new programs designed to enhance holistic learning among students, as this opposition stalls comprehensive student development and complicates efforts to modernize school curricula.

Evidence from the interview transcript below strongly supports this:

I introduced to them sa ginagawa natin sa ibang school na we need to navigate ang learners natin kung nasaan sila. Unistructural ba sila or other levels at doon natin ibigay yong intervention na kailangan nila. "Sir, matrabaho yon!"...Typical. (I introduced to them what we are doing in other schools and that we need to navigate our learners to where they are.) Are they uni-structural or other levels, and that's where we give the intervention they need. "Sir, that's hard work!"...Typical.)- SH 6

Even though the program was good for the learners and the school, managing people's feelings and resistance made the process stressful.- SH 3

Fear of the unknown and a comfort with old practices slow the implementation. -SH 1

In the last several years, the area of educational leadership has shifted from standard teaching frameworks to flexible and innovative strategies that emphasize the value of cooperation, originality, and diversity (Adeoye et al., 2025). The practical significance of this research lies in addressing resistance (Rajwade & Bansal, 2025) that impedes the implementation of holistic programs integrating cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development, which are essential for preparing students for twenty-first-century challenges.

Stakeholder Resistance and Acceptance

Stakeholders' resistance to new policies promoting fairness among students poses significant challenges for school heads, undermining equitable practices and hindering efforts to build an inclusive school environment.

This is clearly illustrated in the following interview transcript excerpt:

Parents and students didn't immediately accept the new rules, and some teachers struggled to apply them - SH 2

Ang nagiging problema lang namin doon ay sa crafting ng AIP, di ba i reread natin sya para marinig nila. Pero di sila umattend nong crafting.(The only problem we have there is with the crafting of the AIP. Shouldn't we reread it so they can hear it? But they didn't attend the crafting. – SH 6

Some parents still find it difficult to accept certain consequences for their children, especially when emotions are high. – SH 8

According to Labag (2025), despite extensive research on educational change, a knowledge gap persists regarding how school heads navigate conflicting stakeholder interests while implementing new policies, especially in diverse socio-cultural and resource-constrained contexts. Controversies (Schneider, 2024). arise around the degree of stakeholder involvement necessary for successful change, with some advocating for top-down directives and others emphasizing participatory approaches. The consequences of this gap include delayed policy adoption, diminished teacher morale, and compromised educational quality(Balyer & Özcan, 2024).

Major Theme 4: Policy Change and Challenges

Resistance to Policy Changes

Stakeholders' resistance to new policies promoting discipline among students and staff presents significant challenges for school heads, as it weakens consistent behavioral standards and impedes efforts to cultivate a structured school environment.

Strong confirmation appears in the interview transcript provided below:

I see it hard baka kasi may students at parents na hindi matuwa sa changes. Kaya minsan nahihirapan ako or kami kasi kailangang ma avoid ang pagiging bias, needs to be fair.(I see it hard because there might be students and parents who are not happy with the changes. That's why sometimes I or we have a hard time because we need to avoid being biased, we need to be fair.)- SH 2

Kagaya nong hindi paggamit ng cellphone sa school. Nagkaroon na rin kasi kami ng MOA dyan, noong nasa Roosevelt pa ako. Medyo sobrang hirap talaga. Although may basis naman talaga ang pag implement naming ng ganong policy, meron talagang root cause. Kaya naman nagawa yon dahil ang daming cases na about sa cellphones kahit sa oras ng klase. Yong mga parents ang tanong paano kung in case of emergency. I see it hard baka kasi may students at parents na hindi matuwa sa changes. Kaya minsan nahihirapan ako or kami kasi kailangang ma avoid ang pagiging bias, needs to be fair. (Like not using cellphones in school. We already had an MOA there when I was still at Roosevelt. It was really hard. *Although there is a basis for implementing*

that policy, there is really a root cause. That's why it was done: there are so many cases of cellphones even during class time. Parents are asking what to do in case of an emergency. I see it hard because there might be students and parents who are not happy with the changes. That's why sometimes I or we have a hard time because we need to avoid being biased, we need to be fair.) – SH 5

Ang medyo mahirap since Aeta community nga sila, di sila used sa pagla logbook...Sasabihin nila, kilala ko sila...Pero sabi ko sa kanila, every time they enter the school premises, ila log natin sila, and the moment they leave, ila log din natin. Everytime na pumasok at lumabas sila. So parang nagsumbong sila kay Ma'am Kits: "nakakapagod naman yong sinasabi ng bagong principal sa high school" (It's a bit difficult since they are an Aeta community; they are not used to logbooks... They will say, I know them... But I told them, every time they enter the school premises, we log them, and the moment they leave, we log them too. Every time they enter and leave. So it's like they complained to Ma'am Kits, "what the new principal says in high school is tiring" – SH 6

Karen Starr's (2011) research on Australian principals reveals that schools are often slow to change, with reforms being cursory or short-lived. Principals face significant pressure to produce measurable improvements, yet they encounter resistance from staff and the broader school community. This resistance is often rooted in the micro-politics of school environments. Thomson (2008) discusses the role of headteachers in mediating policy to achieve the best outcomes for their schools. However, there is a critique that headteachers should resist conservative policies that perpetuate educational inequities, suggesting a need for a broader theoretical framework to understand resistance.

Resistance to Mandates/Policies

Teachers' and staff's resistance to mandates and policies presents significant challenges for school heads, as it disrupts policy implementation, undermines administrative authority, and stalls school-wide progress.

This finding is robustly backed by the interview transcript below:

Yong sa issue sa GAD Seminar. May isang Master Teacher na ayaw sumama. Sa atin kasi hindi naman tayo papayagan na weekdays so weekend sya. So ayon, nagrereklamo sya, "Bakit kailangang may GAD...Meron bang batas para dito?" (Regarding the issue of the GAD Seminar. There is a Master Teacher who doesn't want to come. Because we won't be allowed to go on weekdays, it's on the weekend. So, according to him, he is complaining, "Why does there need to be a GAD... Is there a law for this?" – SH 4

May mga magtatanong talaga about sa decisions natin sa finances. Minsan talaga sasabihin nila na bakit hind mo kunin sa MOOE?, bakit pag nagte training kayo, lumalayo pa kayo?. Hindi nila naiintindihan na part of it ay hindi pwedeng kuhanin sa MOOE.(There are people who will really question our decisions regarding finances. Sometimes they will say, "Why don't you take it from MOOE?" and "Why do you keep going away when you're training?"They don't understand that part of it can't be taken from MOOE.) – SH 6

Duray (2025) stated that school heads face resistance from teachers who are reluctant to adapt to new educational reforms and policies. This resistance is often due to a lack of understanding or agreement with the changes, as well as the additional effort required to implement them. School heads often lack the managerial competencies and training to effectively implement school-based management programs, resulting in a gap between policy expectations and actual performance (Alvarado et al., 2019).

Legal/Policy Barriers to Discipline

School heads encounter subtle difficulties in enforcing student discipline, given students' protections under child protection policies that can sometimes be interpreted as entitlements limiting standard corrective measures.

The interview transcript excerpt below offers compelling evidence for this:

Kasi alam naman natin, na although we keep on disciplining our students, na ito yong tama, but because they are protected, nagkakaroon tayo ng barrier because of anti-bullying na sinasabi, cyberspace act, cyber-bullying or something, parangmakanti mo lang si bata o may masabi ka lang na iba, nandyan na yong sumbong, may 888 ka na or something parang di mo na alam ang kung paano ang tamang paraan. (Because we know, that although we keep on disciplining our students, that this is the right

thing to do, but because they are protected, we have a barrier because of anti-bullying, cyberspace act, cyber-bullying or something, it seems like you just have to be nice to the child or you can just say something else, there's the complaint, you already have 888 or something, it seems like you don't know the right way.) – SH 6

Learners' behavior today is so tough to handle. They are conversant with their rights. These rights mislead learners into believing that education is important. – SH 9

The pressure to maintain order and discipline in schools often clashes with the need to treat students with respect and foster their development as individuals. This is particularly challenging in environments that emphasize zero-tolerance policies, which can be at odds with more supportive and inclusive approaches (Dahle & Prøitz, 2025). Child protection policies (Mag-atas & Carmona, 2023), such as the DepEd Child Protection Policy in the Philippines, play a crucial role in shaping teacher discipline strategies. However, the strictness of these policies can create implementation challenges, as teachers may fear the consequences of missteps, hindering their ability to maintain classroom autonomy and engage with parents effectively.

Major Theme 5: Emotional Management Barriers

Physiological Overwhelm Despite Awareness

School heads often feel anxious due to tight deadlines and the pressure of making quick decisions, which heightens stress and complicates effective leadership in fast-paced educational environments.

Clear backing for this appears in the following interview transcript:

For example, deadlines stress me out, and when I have a lot of work at once, I start to feel overwhelmed and can't focus properly. I know that lack of time makes me anxious, but when I'm tired or stressed, I don't handle it well. – SH 3

Ang problem ko noon is syempre bago pa lang tayo syempre kailangan alam mo ang sunod sunod na protocol kapag ikaw ay may pagawain o may kailangang bilhin. Nong dumating ako sa kanila noon, crafted na, tapos na yong WFP. May mga times na parang nagwo worry ang utak ko kung paano ko sya gagawin. – SH 4

There were instances when, despite recognizing the source of my stress, it was still difficult to manage because decisions had to be made quickly while considering multiple stakeholders. – SH 7

A research investigation undertaken by Wang et al. (2022) elucidated that the rapid tempo inherent in their professional environment, in conjunction with protracted working hours and inadequate time allocation for task completion, results in emotionally exhausting circumstances. These time demands are often beyond school heads' control, leaving them feeling frustrated and vulnerable. The role of a school head is emotionally intense, requiring them to manage not only their own emotions but also those of staff and students. This emotional labor is a significant source of stress, as it involves navigating complex interpersonal relationships and making decisions that impact the entire school community (Heffernan, 2022).

Balancing Empathy and Accountability

School heads encounter significant difficulties balancing empathy and accountability when teachers resist directives, creating strain between maintaining supportive relationships and ensuring compliance.

The transcript excerpt below firmly validates this finding:

May kasamahan tayo na may resistance sa policy. Kahit minsan inexplain ng maayos ang changes, minsan negative pa rin sa kanila or sa kanya, ganyan specially during meetings. – SH 2

There was a time when a co-worker kept being stubborn, hard-headed, undisciplined, and disobedient. – SH 3

One of the teachers had left his class for a moment to attend to an equally important matter regarding his advisory class. Unfortunately, during his absence, a student experienced an accident that resulted in noticeable bleeding. Upon receiving the news, I initially felt frustrated; however, I managed my emotions so I could address the situation effectively. – SH 8

Some teachers were prone to absenteeism. They are physically present that day; apparently, they did not handle their classes. I reprimanded these teachers, but angrily replied. I felt angry because they were rude. – SH 9

The pressure (Yousaf & Naseem, 2025) to comply with external accountability measures can lead to a sense of coercion and job insecurity among school leaders, which may affect their ability to empathize with teachers. Emotional geographies in schools, which refer to the patterns of emotional distance or proximity in social interactions, can create barriers to empathic communication between school heads and teachers (Berkovich, 2024).

Emotional and Documentation Challenges

School heads sometimes find themselves torn between their extensive responsibilities and the emotional weight of challenging situations, creating inner conflict that tests their resilience and decision-making capacity.

The transcript excerpt below firmly validates this finding:

The emotional weight that sometimes comes with leadership situations. When decisions involve people's feelings, conflicts, or high expectations, it takes time to separate emotion from insight. – SH 8

School leaders frequently encounter workplace conflicts, gendered power relations, and crises within the school community. These circumstances necessitate considerable emotional investment, as leaders engage in decision-making processes that influence the lives of students, faculty, and the wider community (Hauseman, 2023). The emotional labor (Rogers et al., 2025) inherent in school leadership can lead to burnout, affecting principals' well-being and contributing to high turnover rates. Addressing these issues is essential for the sustainability of educational leadership.

Major Theme 6: Communication and Style Adaptation

Adjustment Through Observation

School heads face significant challenges with personnel who are tough and dismissive of other opinions, as this rigidity stifles collaboration, hampers decision-making, and intensifies leadership tensions.

This is strongly supported by the interview transcript excerpt below:

At first, I felt they were being difficult and not considering others' opinions. But after observing more, I realized that was simply their way of working and not meant to offend anyone. It took me some time to adjust, but understanding our different styles helped me work with them more effectively.– SH 3

Kasi sa part ko po Ma'am, kahit hindi masyadong approachable, I don't mind them. (Because, for my part, Ma'am, even though they're not very approachable, I don't mind them.)- SH 5

School heads encounter challenges in decision-making due to rigid bureaucratic policies, conflicting priorities, and limited autonomy. These constraints necessitate strategic approaches, such as adaptive leadership and creative problem-solving, to enhance decision-making agility (Reyes & Gallardo, 2025). School leaders often face dilemmas related to teacher professional agency, where tensions arise when teachers feel their autonomy is hindered. Negotiating these tensions requires leaders to balance authority with support for teacher agency (Louws et al., 2020)

Communication and Follow-Through Needs

School heads need to maintain consistency when implementing policies co-developed with stakeholders to build trust, ensure equitable application, and prevent perceptions of favoritism that could undermine collaborative efforts and school governance.

Strong evidence emerges from the interview transcript excerpt below:

Mahirap kasi kahit collaborative ang process, implementation requires patience and constant communication para ma follow up. Dapat nakabase din sya sa legal bases ng DepEd.(It is difficult because even though the process is collaborative, implementation requires patience and constant communication to follow up. It must also be based on the legal bases of the DepEd.) – SH 2

In terms of challenges along the way, which our school was not spared from, consistency is one.– SH 3

Challenges arose in ensuring consistent enforcement and shared accountability across all stakeholders. – SH 7

Maintaining consistency in school heads' policy implementation is crucial for building trust, ensuring equitable application, and preventing perceptions of favoritism. Collaborative leadership (Suhaimi et al., 2025) fosters stakeholder engagement and participatory governance within schools, which is essential for equitable policy application.

Cultural/Contextual Adaptation

School heads encounter substantial difficulties in reshaping school community culture to conform to established policies, due to persistent resistance and ingrained practices that hinder consistent adherence.

Clear support for this is evident in the interview transcript below:

Ang medyo mahirap since Aeta community nga sila, di sila used sa pagla logbook...Sasabihin nila, kilala ko sila...Pero sabi ko sa kanila, every time they enter the school premises, ila log natin sila, and the moment they leave, ila log din natin. Everytime na pumasokat lumabas sila. So parang nagsumbong sila kay Ma'am Kits: "nakakapagod naman yong sinasabi ng bagong principal sa high school" (It's a bit difficult since they are an Aeta community; they are not used to logbooks... They will say, I know them... But I told them, every time they enter the school premises, we log them, and the moment they leave, we log them too. Every time they enter and leave. So it's like they complained to Ma'am Kits, "what the new principal says in high school is tiring" – SH 6

Cultural barriers within schools also play a crucial role in hindering change. Schools with a strong organizational culture that values tradition may resist innovation, making it difficult for school heads to implement new policies effectively (Bakır & Altunay, 2025). Duray (2025) suggested that school heads must employ adaptive leadership strategies to overcome resistance and foster a culture of change. This involves strategic planning, mentorship programs, and community engagement to build support for new initiatives.

Major Theme 7: Research and Data Hurdles

Access and Complexity of Research

School heads find it difficult to make research-based decisions at the school level due to poor access to relevant studies and the inherent complexity of research materials, which often demand specialized skills and time that busy administrators lack.

Clear support for this is evident in the interview transcript below:

Minsan challenging talagang mag pull ng key insights from credible research kahit gusto mong gumawa ng evidence-based research. For example, marami talagang studies pero time-consuming at minsan sobrang technical ang language. (Sometimes it's really challenging to pull key insights from credible research, even if you want to do evidence-based research. For example, there are a lot of studies, but they are time-consuming, and sometimes the language is too technical.) – SH 2

Most are written in highly academic language that is difficult to translate into everyday school practice. Oftentimes, it is hard to determine the relevance to my school context- SH 3

Nagkaroon po kami ng hindrance because for ethical reason, hindi pumayag si Chieftain ng Bangkal during that time kasi ang sabi nila, ayaw nilang I put into study ang culture nila sa ganong bagay lamang. (We had a hindrance because, for ethical reasons, the Chieftain of Bangkal did not agree at that time because they said they did not want their culture to be put into study just for that reason.)– SH 6

The demanding nature of school leadership roles leaves little time for engaging with research. School heads (Cabangon, 2025) are often burdened with administrative responsibilities, leaving them with limited opportunities to explore and apply research findings. Many school leaders and educators lack the necessary skills to critically evaluate and apply research findings. This is often due to insufficient training in research methodologies and a lack of experience in conducting or interpreting research (Farley-Ripple, 2024).

Data and Contextual Adaptation Issues

School heads encounter data contextual adaptation issues because research findings often derive from different settings, populations, or conditions that do not directly align with their unique school environments, requiring extensive reinterpretation to apply effectively.

The following interview transcript provides clear validation:

Para sa akin Ma'am, included po ang insufficient data collection system. For me, Ma'am, this includes an insufficient data collection system.) – SH 6

The lack of localized data and limited technical expertise in risk assessment make it difficult to fully ground safety measures in research. – SH 7

School leaders face sociocultural and resource-related challenges that differ significantly from those in other regions, highlighting the need for context-specific leadership strategies (Dhakal, 2025). The challenges of implementing adaptive leadership (Sartini et al., 2024) are further compounded by the need to align curriculum and teaching methods with the needs of millennial students, integrate technology, and promote continuous professional development.

Contextual Adaptation Challenges

School heads are hindered from establishing a research-based culture at school primarily due to limited access to relevant studies, time constraints amid daily administrative demands, insufficient training in research interpretation, and resistance from staff accustomed to traditional practices.

The transcript excerpt below firmly validates this finding:

So kahit alam mong makakatulong ang research para sa magandang school outcomes, limited time, complexity ng data, at next to contextualize it. So ito, nagiging hindrance sa practical application. (So even though you know that research can help for good school outcomes, limited time, the complexity of data, and the need to contextualize it. So this becomes a hindrance to practical application. – SH 2

But sa ibang school, though may mga nag aral doon, ang hirap nilang hilahin na magstart ng research. Attitude towards research ang nagiging problema. Alam mo kung bakit?...Hindi kasi lahat ng teacher ay magaling magsulat at magsalita. (But in other schools, even though there are those who studied there, they have a hard time getting them to start research. The problem is the attitude towards research. Do you know why?... Not all teachers are good at writing and speaking.) – SH 4

As a school head, several realities can hinder the translation of credible research into practical, evidence-based school improvements, due to a weak school-level data culture.– SH 9

Asis et al. (2024) posited that a significant number of educational administrators lack the necessary training to effectively analyze and apply research findings. This skills gap is particularly evident in areas such as data analysis and report writing, which are crucial for translating research into actionable strategies. Resistance to change (López-López et al., 2024) among staff is a significant barrier to establishing a research-based culture. Teachers and administrators who are accustomed to traditional practices may view research initiatives as burdensome or irrelevant to their immediate teaching needs.

Table 20

Convergent Matrix: Mixed-Methods Synthesis

Quantitative Findings	Qualitative Themes	Integrated Interpretation (Meta-Inference)	Proposed Training
Table 1 – Profile: 60.72% of school heads have only 1–5 years of experience, indicating a predominantly novice cohort.	Themes 1 & 2 – Resource Limitations & Time/Workload: Participants described the “one-man army” phenomenon (SH4), where inexperienced leaders absorb disproportionate administrative, financial, and instructional burdens without adequate support, compounded by overwhelming daily demands. (> EXPAND)	The high proportion of early-career leaders is not merely a demographic descriptor but a critical vulnerability in resource-constrained contexts. Novice heads lack both tacit knowledge and institutional support to compensate for that gap, creating compounded risk. Interventions must address both skill-building and systemic resource allocation to support novice leaders effectively.	Foundational Leadership & Resource Management: Specialized onboarding program for novice heads covering multi-tasking strategies, basic financial management, and building professional support networks.
Tables 2–7 – EI Summary: All five EI domains rated as Strength — Self-Awareness (M=44.50), Managing Emotions (M=40.25), Motivating Oneself (M=43.89), Empathy (M=42.39), Social Skills (M=42.96).	Theme 5 – Emotional Management Barriers: Despite high EI scores, participants (SH1, SH3, SH7) reported pervasive anxiety, physiological overwhelm, and difficulty regulating emotions in real-time, particularly when balancing empathy with accountability demands. (> CONTRADICT)	A critical disjunction exists between assessed EI competency and the lived experience of emotional regulation under sustained systemic pressure. Self-report measures may capture theoretical knowledge of EI without assessing the capacity to enact those competencies in high-stress environments. Interventions must move beyond trait-based EI assessments to examine contextual factors that constrain emotional regulation in practice.	Applied Emotional Intelligence (AEI) Workshops: Simulation-based training to practice real-time emotional regulation and stress management under crisis scenarios; includes mindfulness, burnout prevention, and empathy-accountability balancing exercises.
Table 8 – Self-Efficacy: High self-efficacy across all domains — Overall M=8.29; Management M=8.33; Instructional Leadership M=8.15; Moral Leadership M=8.39.	Theme 2 – Time & Workload Pressures: Participants described being consumed by administrative minutiae, crisis management, and compliance tasks, leaving no time for instructional leadership or reflective practice despite expressing high confidence in their capabilities. (> CONTRADICT)	A paradox emerges: school heads believe they can lead effectively, but structural workload conditions prevent them from doing so. Self-efficacy measures capture perceived competence but not the opportunity structures needed to translate confidence into practice. Interventions must address structural conditions — workload distribution, administrative support, and time allocation — alongside individual beliefs.	Administrative Efficiency & Delegation Skills: Training on workload optimization, priority-setting frameworks, effective delegation techniques, and time-blocking strategies to protect time for instructional leadership and reflective practice.
Table 14 – Training Needs Summary: All five domains rated Highly Needed (Overall M=3.31) — uniform high developmental needs across all leadership competency areas.	Theme 1 – Resource Limitations: Participants documented budget shortages, manpower deficits, and infrastructure gaps that created operational inadequacies, requiring training in resource mobilization and community partnership because institutional resources were insufficient. (> SUPPORT)	Training needs are not driven by individual skill deficits but by systemic resource scarcity requiring leaders to develop compensatory competencies. Skill-building initiatives that ignore structural resource constraints are unlikely to produce meaningful improvements. Professional development must be coupled with resource allocation reforms to address	Strategic Resource Mobilization & Community Partnerships: Training on grant writing, local stakeholder engagement, public-private partnership development, and creative resource sourcing to compensate for institutional resource gaps.

		root causes rather than symptoms.	
Table 9 – Leading Strategically: Highest training need (M=3.32); Indicator 4 on research and data use rated most critical.	Theme 7 – Research & Data Hurdles: Participants (SH2, SH5) described inaccessible technical language in research, time constraints, insufficient data management systems, and difficulty contextualizing research findings to local, resource-constrained settings. (>EXPAND)	The high training need in strategic leadership is rooted in specific, identifiable barriers to research utilization — not a general desire for development. Interventions must address practical skills in accessing research, translating technical language, contextualizing findings, and building school-level data systems alongside conceptual understanding of evidence-based decision-making.	Evidence-Based Decision-Making for School Heads: Simplified data literacy training, tools for localized research translation, practical workshops on setting up school-level data systems, and guided practice in applying research findings to local contexts.
Table 15 – Mann-Whitney U: Significant group differences between teachers and school heads in training needs perceptions (p=0.02 overall; significant in 4 of 5 domains).	Themes 3 & 4 – Stakeholder Resistance & Policy Change: Participants (SH6, SH8) described staff resistance to new programs, teacher pushback against policy mandates, and tension where teachers perceived administrative initiatives as burdens rather than support. (> EXPAND)	Statistically significant group differences are not abstract disagreements — they are embedded in relational dynamics of resistance, mistrust, and divergent organizational priorities. Professional development must incorporate stakeholder engagement, communication strategies, and collaborative decision-making to bridge the perception gap between school heads and teachers.	Conflict Resolution & Stakeholder Alignment: Training on collaborative leadership, change management principles, facilitation of participatory decision-making, and communication strategies to reduce resistance and build shared ownership between administrators and teaching staff.
Table 16 – Kruskal-Wallis (Years of Experience): No significant differences across experience groups in any domain (all p > 0.05), suggesting uniform challenges regardless of tenure.	Theme 6 – Communication & Style Adaptation: Both novice (SH4) and veteran (SH3) participants described ongoing difficulties adapting communication to diverse cultural contexts, maintaining consistency in leadership style, and navigating communities with distinct norms and expectations. (> EXPAND)	The absence of experience-based differences reflects a deeper reality: contextual and relational challenges require continuous adaptation regardless of tenure. Cultural adaptation struggles are not resolved by accumulated experience. Professional development must be designed as ongoing, career-long learning rather than one-time, early-career support.	Cross-Cultural Leadership & Adaptive Communication: Ongoing workshops for all tenure levels on contextualizing leadership styles, community-specific communication norms, and culturally responsive engagement strategies; designed as a continuous professional learning series rather than a one-time event.
Table 18 – Spearman Rho Correlation: No significant relationships between EI or self-efficacy and training needs (all p > 0.05), indicating that developmental needs are not predicted by individual competency levels.	All 7 Themes – Systemic Barriers: Across all themes, participants demonstrated that training needs are driven by resource gaps, workload, resistance, policy challenges, and data barriers operating independently of personal strengths. Even high-EI, high-efficacy leaders (SH7) articulated urgent training needs rooted in systemic constraints. (>EXPAND)	The non-significant correlations reveal a fundamental reality: in structurally constrained environments, individual competencies are necessary but insufficient for effective leadership. Training needs emerge from the interaction between personal capabilities and systemic conditions — not from personal deficits alone. Interventions must address systemic barriers alongside individual capacity-building.	Systemic Resilience & Advocacy Training: Training on navigating policy constraints, institutional advocacy for resource allocation, systems-thinking for school leaders, and sustaining leadership health and well-being under prolonged systemic pressure.

Note. SUPPORT = qualitative theme confirms quantitative finding; CONTRADICT = qualitative theme challenges quantitative finding; EXPAND = qualitative theme offers context or depth.

The structured integration of quantitative and qualitative findings reveals a central meta-inference that is clear and direct: school heads in this study show strong intrapersonal competencies, as evidenced by high emotional intelligence and self-efficacy scores, yet they operate within structurally constrained environments marked by resource scarcity, overwhelming workloads, stakeholder resistance, policy implementation challenges, and inadequate data infrastructure (Fetters et al., 2013; Younas et al., 2023). This high personal competence alongside persistent leadership challenges shows that individual capabilities are necessary but insufficient for effective school leadership in resource-constrained contexts. The proposed School Head's Developmental Plan must therefore focus on both individual capacity-building and systemic reform, creating the enabling conditions in which school heads can translate their personal strengths into successful leadership practice (Guetterman et al., 2015).

Summary, Conclusions And Recommendations

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations based on the results. Specifically, the summary provides an overview of the major findings. On the other hand, the conclusions are derived from the analysed data and reflect the extent to which the research objectives were achieved. Finally, the recommendations offer practical suggestions for improving current practices and provide directions for future research related to this study.

The study assessed the emotional intelligence and self-efficacy of School Heads in the Division of Bataan and how this influenced their instructional competencies, as a basis for crafting a developmental plan proposal.

The following questions were answered quantitatively and qualitatively:

1. How may the profile of school heads is described in terms of:
 - 1.1 years of experience as school head or department head; and
 - 1.2 educational attainments?
2. How may the emotional intelligence of school heads is described in terms of:
 - 2.1 self-awareness;
 - 2.2 managing emotions;
 - 2.3 motivating oneself;
 - 2.4 empathy; and
 - 2.5 social skills?
3. How may the self-efficacy of school heads is described in terms of:
 - 3.1 efficacies for management;
 - 3.2 efficacy for instructional leadership; and
 - 3.3 efficacies for moral leadership?
4. How may the training needs be evaluated by the teachers and school heads
Themselves in terms of:
 - 4.1 leading strategically;
 - 4.2 managing school operations and resources;
 - 4.3 focusing on teaching and learning;
 - 4.4 developing self and others and
 - 4.5 building connections?
5. Is there a significant difference in the level of training needs of the school heads when
They are grouped accordingly?
6. What are the challenges faced by the school heads in school leadership?
7. Do emotional intelligence and self-efficacy affect the training needs of school heads?
8. What Career Development Plan for School Heads may be proposed based on the result
Of the study?

Summary Of Findings

The majority of the School Head responses have a developing experience in the field of educational leadership and their academic credentials are relatively dispersed in Master's Degree, Master's Degree with Doctorate Degree Units, and Doctorate Degree.

Ability to show Emotional Intelligence in the group of school administrators such as self-awareness, emotion regulation, self-motivation, empathy and interpersonal skills is seen as a remarkable advantage. The school leaders had high self-efficacy in terms of Management Efficacy, Instructional Leadership Efficacy, and Moral Leadership Efficacy.

There is a high need to train the school heads on instructional and administrative practices in the areas of Leading Strategically, Managing School Operations and Resources, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, Developing Self and Others, and Building Connections as evaluated by the teachers and the candidates themselves. There is not enough information to assert that there is a substantial difference in the instructional and administrative practices enhancement needs of School heads when they are categorized according to Years of Experience as a School Head and Educational Attainment.

There is insufficient evidence to show that there is a significant relationship between the level of enhancement of instructional and administrative practices of the School Heads and the emotional intelligence in terms of self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills, and their self-efficacy in terms of management, instructional leadership, moral leadership, and overall efficacy. A Year-round Career Development Plan can be developed to satisfy their requirements and meet the required skills for School Heads as stated in the Philippine Professional Standard for School Heads.

Conclusions

The result of the study suggested a formulation of developmental plan that must be presented to the Division of Bataan for approval and implementation to drive school heads' improvement and elevate overall instructional leadership effectiveness. There was a clear difference emerged between teachers' and school heads' perceptions of school head competencies. Teachers generally perceived their school heads as already competent in their leadership roles, whereas the school heads themselves reported a high need for further training and professional development. The study found no significant differences in emotional intelligence (EI) and self-efficacy among the participants, with the majority demonstrating strengths in both areas. This finding aligns with recent research on school principals, which similarly found no significant differences in EI and self-efficacy scores across groups and a positive correlation, indicating overall strengths. The study found that the 28 school heads of SDO Bataan who are NASH Batch 1 passers, regardless of their years of experience and educational backgrounds, strongly needed training in the instructional and administrative competencies expected of School Principal I as outlined in the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH).

Recommendations

The measures used for EI, self-efficacy, and training needs may not capture the specific aspects of these constructs that are most relevant to leadership preparation. For example, general emotional intelligence measures may not assess the specific emotional competencies required for managing difficult stakeholders in educational contexts. To make the study more reliable, future researchers can triangulate factors and use other methods to further investigate the relationships among emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and the training needs of school heads.

Establish professional learning communities (PLCs) and peer mentoring networks to foster reflective practice and shared expertise, leveraging school heads' strengths in emotional intelligence while building self-efficacy through mastery experiences. Integrate flexible formats, such as blended or online sessions during school hours, focusing on digital tools and real-world simulations to develop administrative skills. Implement mandatory competency-based training programs targeting PPSSH Career Stage 2 domains; develop customized modules for instructional leadership and administrative operations; establish division-wide professional learning communities; integrate PPSSH assessments into performance evaluations and for emerging leaders; and incorporate EI assessments into leadership evaluations.

Develop and implement comprehensive standards for school leadership preparation programs for aspiring Principal I that require systematic training in all PPSSH domains, with minimum program duration, authentic practice requirements, and

rigorous assessment of competency development.

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