



MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN A PHILIPPINE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Dr. Jeremias T. Gavenia
Southern Mindanao Colleges

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the managerial competencies and management practices of school administrators in a Philippine higher education institution, focusing on how essential administrative qualities are associated with the performance of core management functions toward the attainment of institutional goals. Specifically, managerial competencies were examined in terms of being system-oriented, planning-oriented, problem-oriented, resource-oriented, and function-oriented, while management practices were assessed in the areas of planning, organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and leadership. These dimensions reflect the original framework of the study, which conceptualized effective educational administration through the interaction between administrators' desirable qualities and their management functions. The study employed a descriptive-correlational approach involving 28 school administrators and 175 teachers from Southern Mindanao Colleges in Pagadian City. It assessed the extent to which the identified managerial competencies and management practices were demonstrated, compared the perceptions of administrators and teachers, and examined the relationship between the two major constructs. The findings provide empirical insights into how administrators' professional attributes and managerial practices operate together within an educational organization. The study underscores the importance of strengthening systems thinking, strategic planning, problem-solving, resource utilization, functional accountability, coordination, evaluation, and leadership in promoting effective school administration and advancing institutional aims and objectives.

KEYWORDS: Educational Management, Managerial Competencies, Management Practices, School Administrators, Leadership, Higher Education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Effective educational administration increasingly requires school leaders to possess managerial competencies that extend beyond routine supervision and encompass systems thinking, strategic planning, problem-solving, resource management, and the effective execution of organizational responsibilities. In the present study, managerial competencies are conceptualized through five dimensions: being system-oriented, planning-oriented, problem-oriented, resource-oriented, and function-oriented, reflecting the capacity of administrators to understand institutional operations comprehensively and align administrative actions with organizational goals. Contemporary scholarship supports the importance of these competencies in educational leadership. Gumus et al. (2021) emphasized that effective school leadership increasingly involves multiple leadership approaches and organizational competencies responsive to changing educational environments. Likewise, Leithwood et al. (2020) identified setting directions, developing people, redesigning organizational structures, and improving instructional programs as fundamental leadership practices associated with successful schools. In higher education, Al-Mansoori and Koç (2021) demonstrated that effective leadership is closely connected with strategic management practices and institutional performance, while Alipoyo (2022) showed in the Philippine organizational context that administrators must respond to complex institutional conditions through appropriate management of personnel, resources, and

operational challenges. Together, these studies suggest that managerial competence is multidimensional and requires administrators to integrate analytical thinking, planning, resource stewardship, problem resolution, and organizational responsiveness to achieve institutional objectives.

Managerial competencies become organizationally meaningful when translated into effective management practices, particularly in planning, organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and leadership—the five management dimensions examined in the present study. These functions enable educational administrators to transform institutional goals into coordinated programs, allocate responsibilities and resources, monitor performance, evaluate outcomes, and guide personnel toward shared objectives. Recent research has increasingly emphasized that effective educational leadership depends on collaborative and organizational processes rather than on the actions of a single administrator. Liu et al. (2021) found that distributed leadership can positively influence teachers' job satisfaction through professional autonomy and collaboration, while Galdames-Calderón (2023) demonstrated that school leaders can promote professional development and school improvement by creating structures that distribute leadership responsibilities. De Jong et al. (2023) similarly found that distributed leadership develops through interactions among individuals, teams, and broader school contexts, underscoring the importance of coordination and collective organizational functioning. In the Philippine setting, Aranjuez et al. (2022) emphasized the significance of institutional awareness,



stakeholder participation, and organizational responsiveness, while Aranjuez (2025) further demonstrated how institutional structures and support systems shape individual experiences and adjustment. Despite the growing literature on educational leadership, there remains a need for context-specific evidence examining how administrators' underlying managerial competencies correspond with the management practices they perform within Philippine higher education institutions. Accordingly, the present study examines the managerial competencies and management practices of school administrators at Southern Mindanao Colleges, providing evidence that may inform leadership development and institutional management.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 2.1. To assess the extent of managerial competencies demonstrated by school administrators in terms of being system-oriented, planning-oriented, problem-oriented, resource-oriented, and function-oriented.
- 2.2. To determine the extent to which school administrators perform management practices in terms of planning, organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and leadership.
- 2.3. To compare the assessments of school administrators and teachers regarding the extent of managerial competencies and management practices.
- 2.4. To determine whether significant differences exist between the assessments of school administrators and teachers regarding their perceptions of managerial competencies and management practices.
- 2.5. To examine the relationship between the managerial competencies and management practices of school administrators.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Managerial Competencies of School Administrators

Managerial Competencies	School Administrators	Teachers	Combined Mean	Interpretation
Planning-oriented	4.90*	4.63*	4.77	Almost Always Practiced
System-oriented	4.90	4.56	4.73	Almost Always Practiced
Problem-oriented	4.95	4.52	4.73	Almost Always Practiced
Resource-oriented	4.86	4.48	4.67	Almost Always Practiced
Function-oriented	4.67	4.50	4.59	Almost Always Practiced
Overall Mean	4.86	4.54	4.70	Almost Always Practiced

Table 1 shows that the managerial competencies of school administrators were generally rated Almost Always Practiced, with an overall mean of 4.70. Planning-oriented competency obtained the highest combined mean ($M = 4.77$), followed by system-oriented and problem-oriented competencies ($M = 4.73$), resource-oriented competency ($M = 4.67$), and function-oriented competency ($M = 4.59$). These findings suggest that administrators demonstrate a strong inclination toward anticipating institutional needs, establishing directions, addressing operational challenges, mobilizing available resources, and defining organizational responsibilities. This pattern is consistent with Salvanera and Tumalon (2024), who found that effective educational management and leadership are positively associated with teachers' self-efficacy, emphasizing the value of purposeful management of institutional missions, teaching quality, resources, and community engagement. Similarly, Alipoyo

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to examine the managerial competencies and management practices of school administrators at Southern Mindanao Colleges in Pagadian City, Philippines. The respondents consisted of 28 school administrators and 175 teachers, representing the two groups whose assessments were compared in relation to the study variables. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed questionnaire-checklist designed around two major constructs: managerial competencies, comprising system-oriented, planning-oriented, problem-oriented, resource-oriented, and function-oriented qualities; and management practices, covering planning, organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and leadership. The instrument was subjected to a dry run and refinement before its administration to the principal respondents, after which the accomplished questionnaires were retrieved, checked, tabulated, and analyzed. The study used weighted mean and ranking to determine the extent to which the identified competencies and management practices were demonstrated, while appropriate tests of difference were employed to compare the assessments of school administrators and teachers. The original study also conducted a correlational analysis to examine the relationship between managerial competencies and management practices. Overall, the methodological approach enabled the study to describe prevailing administrative competencies and practices, compare stakeholder perceptions, and determine whether the two major dimensions of educational management were related.

(2022) highlighted how administrators operating within complex institutional environments must balance human resources, organizational demands, and operational constraints, underscoring the importance of adaptive managerial competence. Hungo et al. (2023) likewise demonstrated that Philippine school leaders encounter multiple administrative and instructional challenges that require flexibility and practical problem-solving. Furthermore, principals in the Philippines have been found to employ distributed leadership and collaborative problem-solving when confronting institutional disruptions, demonstrating that contemporary managerial competence extends beyond formal administrative authority to include empowerment, delegation, and collective decision-making (Francisco et al., 2023). Taken together, the high ratings indicate that managerial competence is manifested through interconnected planning, systems thinking, problem resolution,



resource utilization, and functional coordination rather than through isolated administrative activities.

Table 2. Management Practices of School Administrators

Management Practices	School Administrators	Teachers	Combined Mean	Interpretation
Leadership	5.04	4.49	4.76	Almost Always Practiced
Organizing	4.75	4.57	4.66	Almost Always Practiced
Coordinating	4.86	4.42	4.64	Almost Always Practiced
Evaluating	4.94	4.29	4.62	Almost Always Practiced
Planning	4.77	4.38	4.58	Almost Always Practiced
Overall Mean	4.87	4.43	4.65	Almost Always Practiced

Table 2 reveals that the management practices of school administrators were also assessed as Almost Always Practiced, with an overall combined mean of 4.65. Leadership emerged as the highest-rated practice ($M = 4.76$), followed by organizing ($M = 4.66$), coordinating ($M = 4.64$), evaluating ($M = 4.62$), and planning ($M = 4.58$). The prominence of leadership indicates that administrators' ability to influence, motivate, communicate, and establish direction may serve as the integrating mechanism through which other management functions are accomplished. Yongco (2026) supports this interpretation, reporting that transformational leadership significantly predicts teacher performance and student achievement in Philippine secondary schools, particularly when leaders provide direction, support, and motivation. Sahlin (2022) similarly emphasized that principals facilitate school

improvement by establishing collaborative structures through which teachers collectively participate in professional and organizational development. Aranjuez et al. (2022) further emphasized the importance of awareness, participation, responsiveness, and institutional mechanisms in translating policies into meaningful organizational practices, principles that can likewise inform participatory school management. In addition, Aroz et al. (2026) demonstrated the importance of supportive environments and adaptive responses in strengthening individuals' capacity to deal with challenging circumstances. Applied to educational management, these findings reinforce the idea that effective leadership should integrate organizational structures with supportive relationships, clear communication, coordination, and systematic evaluation.

Table 3. Difference Between School Administrators' and Teachers' Assessments of Managerial Competencies

Respondent Group	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	Computed t	Critical t	df	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
School Administrators	4.86	0.1099						
Teachers	4.54	0.0594	0.32	5.729	2.306	8	Reject H_0	Significant Difference

Table 3 indicates a significant difference between the administrators' and teachers' assessments of managerial competencies, as demonstrated by the computed t -value of 5.729, which exceeded the critical value of 2.306. Administrators reported a higher mean ($M = 4.86$) than teachers ($M = 4.54$), suggesting that administrators perceived the implementation of their managerial competencies more favorably than did the teachers who experienced those practices. Such perceptual differences are important because leadership effectiveness depends not only on administrators' intentions but also on how leadership behaviors are interpreted by organizational members. Malolos (2024), for example, found differences between school heads' and teachers' assessments in some aspects of collaborative school functioning, illustrating how organizational position can shape perceptions of leadership and collaboration. Lareza and Espiritu (2024) similarly assessed leadership competence from both principals' and teachers' perspectives, demonstrating the

importance of incorporating multiple stakeholder evaluations when determining leadership effectiveness. Aranjuez (2025) further showed that institutional experiences are shaped by individuals' interactions with structures, relationships, and support systems, emphasizing that perceptions may differ according to one's position and lived experience within an organization. Moreover, Zabala (2024) reported that teachers' leadership participation can be constrained by role ambiguity and inadequate administrative support, indicating that administrators' perceptions of managerial effectiveness may not always fully correspond with teachers' everyday organizational experiences. The significant difference in Table 3 therefore highlights the need for regular feedback mechanisms, participatory evaluation, and open dialogue between administrators and teachers to minimize perception gaps and strengthen shared understanding of managerial practices.

Table 4. Difference Between School Administrators' and Teachers' Assessments of Management Practices

Respondent Group	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	Computed z	Critical z	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
School Administrators	4.87	0.1207					
Teachers	4.43	0.1065	0.44	1.936	1.96	Fail to Reject H_0	No Significant Difference



Table 4 demonstrates that administrators and teachers did not significantly differ in their assessments of management practices, as the computed z-value of 1.936 was lower than the critical value of 1.96. Although administrators reported a higher mean ($M = 4.87$) than teachers ($M = 4.43$), the statistical result suggests sufficient convergence between the two groups regarding the general implementation of planning, organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and leadership practices. This convergence is significant because shared recognition of leadership and management behaviors can facilitate organizational coherence and collaborative action. Damasco and Villocino (2024) found that school administrators demonstrate identifiable instructional leadership practices involving supervision, time management, and technological competence, although these did not necessarily translate directly into differences in teacher performance, suggesting that leadership outcomes may depend on contextual and mediating

factors. Tejero and Aoanan (2024) likewise examined leadership styles, organizational climate, and teacher work engagement in Philippine schools, reinforcing the interconnected nature of leadership and teachers' workplace experiences. Stosich (2020) emphasized that collaborative leadership structures can bring principals and teachers together around instructional improvement and shared organizational responsibilities. In addition, Zolina and Eulatic (2026) examined shared leadership and governance among Philippine school heads in relation to teacher performance, further demonstrating the growing importance of distributed responsibility in educational organizations. Thus, the absence of a statistically significant difference in Table 4 suggests that administrators and teachers possess relatively compatible views of the institution's overall management processes, which can provide a favorable foundation for collaborative school governance and improvement.

Table 5. Relationship Between Managerial Competencies and Management Practices

Variables	Overall Mean	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Strength of Relationship	Direction
Managerial Competencies	4.698			
Management Practices	4.651	0.68	Moderate/Substantial Relationship	Positive

Table 5 reveals a positive and substantial relationship between managerial competencies and management practices, with a correlation coefficient of $r = .68$. This finding indicates that stronger competencies in planning, systems orientation, problem solving, resource management, and functional organization tend to be associated with stronger practices in planning, organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and leadership. The relationship is theoretically meaningful because competencies provide administrators with the knowledge, dispositions, and capabilities required to translate managerial intentions into observable organizational practices. Research involving 1,654 Philippine public-school teachers similarly demonstrated that leadership contributes to teacher professional learning through important mechanisms such as teacher trust and agency, showing that leadership competencies operate through organizational and relational processes rather than in isolation (Bellibaş et al., 2020). More recently, Remandaban et al. (2026) found that collaboration plays a particularly important role in strengthening teacher leadership agility in Philippine schools, demonstrating how organizational capabilities become more effective when supported by collaborative processes. Belgium (2026) likewise examined leadership behaviors alongside management practices involving strategic leadership, operations and resources, teaching and learning, professional development, and relationship-building, reinforcing the conceptual interconnectedness between leadership capability and managerial execution. Finally, the present finding parallels broader institutional research emphasizing that effective functioning depends on the interaction between individual capacities and supportive organizational environments rather than on either element alone (Aroz et al., 2026). Therefore, the correlation of .68 supports the proposition that strengthening administrators' managerial competencies may contribute to more coherent and effective management practices across the institution.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings imply that higher education institutions should adopt a competency-based approach to leadership and management development by systematically strengthening administrators' capacities in systems thinking, strategic planning, problem-solving, resource management, and functional accountability. Since planning-oriented competency emerged as the most highly demonstrated managerial competency, institutions should sustain this strength while providing targeted professional development in the relatively lower-rated areas, particularly function-oriented and resource-oriented competencies. Leadership development programs may include strategic management workshops, scenario-based problem-solving, resource optimization, data-informed decision-making, mentoring, and periodic competency assessments. The significant difference between administrators' and teachers' assessments of managerial competencies further indicates the importance of incorporating multi-source feedback into leadership evaluation rather than relying exclusively on administrators' self-assessments. Regular faculty consultations, 360-degree feedback mechanisms, performance dialogues, and participatory institutional assessments may help administrators identify gaps between intended managerial behaviors and how these behaviors are actually experienced by faculty members.

The findings also suggest that effective institutional management requires administrators to translate their competencies into consistent practices involving planning, organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and leadership. Leadership obtained the highest rating among management practices, indicating a strong foundation for motivating personnel and directing organizational activities; however, planning received the lowest rating and therefore deserves greater institutional attention. Higher education administrators should strengthen evidence-based strategic planning, establish measurable targets, clarify responsibilities, improve coordination across academic and administrative units, and use



systematic evaluation results to guide subsequent decisions. Although administrators reported a higher overall assessment of management practices than teachers, the difference was not statistically significant, suggesting a generally shared perception of how these practices are implemented. Moreover, the reported positive relationship between managerial competencies and management practices reinforces the practical value of integrating leadership competency development with institutional management systems. Rather than treating managerial competencies and management functions as separate concerns, institutions should develop administrators who can effectively convert professional knowledge, leadership attributes, and problem-solving abilities into observable and sustainable management practices.

6. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that managerial competencies and management practices are important and interconnected dimensions of effective educational administration in the institution studied. School administrators generally demonstrated the identified managerial competencies at a high level, with planning-oriented competency receiving the highest assessment, while leadership emerged as the most prominent management practice. Administrators and teachers differed significantly in their assessments of managerial competencies, indicating that leadership capabilities may be perceived differently according to organizational role; in contrast, their assessments of management practices did not significantly differ, suggesting relatively consistent perceptions of the administrators' actual performance of core management functions. Most importantly, the reported correlation of $r = .68$ indicates a positive and substantial relationship between managerial competencies and management practices, suggesting that stronger managerial capabilities tend to coexist with more effective implementation of administrative functions. Overall, the findings underscore the need for higher education institutions to continuously develop administrators who combine strategic thinking, resourcefulness, problem-solving, and functional competence with effective planning, organization, coordination, evaluation, and leadership in pursuing institutional goals and sustained organizational effectiveness.

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