

Leadership, Core Behavioral Skills, and Administration in Public Secondary Schools

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Abstract:

Effective school leadership is vital to school management, teacher performance, and quality education. This study examined the leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices of public secondary school heads in the Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City during the school year 2025–2026. It described respondents' profiles, assessed key leadership and behavioral competencies, determined their relationships with administrative practices, and tested differences when grouped by profile characteristics. A descriptive-correlational design was used, with universal sampling of 105 school heads. Data were gathered through a standardized questionnaire anchored on the Results-Based Performance Management System and the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads. Frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation, t-test, and analysis of variance were used. Findings showed high levels of leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices. People development was the strongest leadership dimension, while teamwork and innovation were the most evident core behavioral competencies. Managing school operations and resources, and focusing on teaching and learning, were among the strongest administrative practices. The study found significant positive relationships between leadership skills and administrative practices, and between core behavioral skills and administrative practices. The study also found significant differences across age, sex, educational attainment, and relevant training attended. The study concludes that effective school leadership requires a combination of people leadership, professional behavior, instructional leadership, strategic management, and administrative competence. It recommends needs-based leadership development, mentoring and coaching, stronger results-focused practices, ongoing instructional leadership training, stakeholder engagement, reflective practice, and individualized professional development plans to support the continued growth of school heads.

Keywords: leadership skills; core behavioral skills; administrative practices; school heads

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

School heads in the Department of Education are assessed annually through the Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) to promote accountability, organizational efficiency, and improved learning outcomes. This assessment follows DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015, establishing the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), and DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020, adopting the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH).

School heads' leadership skills, behavioral attributes, and administrative practices may vary due to their backgrounds, experiences, training, and working environments. These differences can influence decision-

making, teacher performance, school operations, program implementation, and learning outcomes. Understanding them helps identify professional development needs and policy support.

Leithwood et al. (2021) emphasized leadership's significant influence on school outcomes. Lepardo and Caingcoy (2021) linked leadership competencies with effective administration, while Bacalso (2024) found that effective leadership and positive behavioral skills strengthened instructional supervision and teacher morale during the pandemic.

This study examines the leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices of public secondary school heads in the Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City. It assesses leadership skills in leading people, people performance management, and people development; behavioral skills in self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation; and administrative practices across the five PPSSH domains. It also determines the relationships among these variables.

Literature and Related Studies

This review examines school heads' leadership and core behavioral skills and their relationship with administrative practices under the RPMS and PPSSH.

Respondents' Profile

School heads' age, sex, educational attainment, and training may influence their leadership, workplace responses, and administrative practices. These profile variables serve as moderating factors in analyzing leadership performance and school management.

Age

Age may influence school heads' experience, confidence, leadership, and administrative practices. Intud and Fernal identified age as a leadership-related profile variable. Quinal and Dupa (2024) found effective leadership among older-career administrators, while Nazareth (2021) noted that younger administrators can lead effectively with proper training and opportunities. Sebuyana (2024) associated older school heads with stable leadership, whereas Bacalso (2024) highlighted younger leaders' innovation and technology-based practices. Gerola and Meimban (2023) also identified age as a significant factor in administrative performance.

Sex

Leadership effectiveness depends on communication, interpersonal relations, ethics, collaboration, and work behavior, not sex alone. Toledo (2023) found stronger professionalism, ethics, and service orientation among female school heads, while male school heads excelled in planning and management. Abella and Saluria (2025) identified differences in collaboration and learning outcome practices. Lapuz and Pecajas (2022) found that both sexes could perform administrative and instructional duties effectively with proper preparation. Adams et al. (2023) and Bingat and Herrera (2025) reported female predominance among school leaders, with Bingat and Herrera noting consistently high performance regardless of sex.

Highest Educational Attainment

Higher educational attainment broadens school heads' knowledge and strengthens leadership and management competencies. Pana (2024) linked graduate degrees with strategic leadership, while Alegre,

Quirap, and Bacalso-Baroman (2024) associated higher education with innovation and people development. Leithwood et al. (2021) emphasized its value in managing complex educational responsibilities. Antigo and de Guzman (2024), Rios and Corpuz (2023), and Peregrino et al. (2021) reported that many school heads had completed or were pursuing master's degrees. Gerola and Meimban (2023) and Aquino et al. (2021) linked educational attainment with leadership and management differences. Arrieta et al. (2023) noted that graduate studies support both promotion and professional growth.

Number of Related Trainings Attended

Leadership training strengthens school heads' leadership, behavioral, and administrative competencies. Robinson (2020) linked training with instructional leadership and improved learning outcomes. Macalanda (2025) and Lapuz and Pecajas (2022) identified local, regional, and division-level activities as accessible professional development opportunities. Farin (2026) highlighted division-office mentoring, coaching, and supervision, while Agravante et al. (2023) emphasized local and regional development programs. Madera (2024) found that training involving 104 school heads from 21 Region VI divisions significantly improved leadership competencies.

Leadership Skills

Leadership skills enable school heads to guide people through collaboration, communication, empathy, and accountability. Leithwood et al. (2021) linked effective leadership with improved teacher performance, collaboration, and school outcomes.

Leading People

Leading people involves guiding and motivating staff toward shared goals, improving morale, teamwork, and school performance. Lepardo and Caingcoy (2021), Bacalso (2024), and Cagape (2024) emphasized leadership's contribution to school effectiveness. Abunaser et al. (2025) linked structured performance management with instructional effectiveness, while Intud and Ferenal (2025) highlighted transformational leadership's benefits for teacher performance.

People Performance Management

People performance management involves setting expectations, monitoring performance, providing feedback, and supporting improvement. Galang (2025) emphasized performance planning and review, while Gading (2024) and the Department of Education (2025) highlighted coaching, mentoring, evaluation, and professional development. Ibarra and Guhao (2024) and Comighud et al. (2021) linked effective performance management with improved school performance. Tuico and Callo (2024) and Godes and Dioso (2024) emphasized supervision, communication, and support in improving teachers' work.

People Development

People development strengthens staff knowledge, skills, and confidence through mentoring, coaching, training, and professional growth. Alegre et al. (2024) linked people development with effective school-based management, while Galdames-Calderón (2023) associated growth opportunities and participation in decision-making with better teacher engagement. Simbre, Aquino, and Palad (2023) emphasized personnel development, performance management, team building, welfare, and recognition. Ramos and

Bauyot (2024) highlighted supportive leadership, collaboration, resources, and recognition in promoting professional growth.

Core Behavioral Skills

Core behavioral skills include self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation. Semblante and Sambo (2025) linked these competencies with leadership performance and responsible school management.

Self-Management

Self-management involves regulating emotions, time, and responsibilities. Toledo (2023) rated school heads exemplary in this area, while Abella and Saluria (2025) linked self-regulation with teacher performance and decision-making. Abunaser et al. (2025) and Semblante and Sambo (2025) emphasized its role in policy implementation and job performance. Negulo and Canoy (2024) highlighted time management, decision-making, and commitment; Naparan and Tulod (2021) stressed planning and delegation; and Goleman (2020) emphasized self-awareness and emotional control.

Professionalism and Ethics

Professionalism and ethics involve integrity, rule compliance, and ethical leadership. Toledo (2023) linked professionalism with teacher trust, while Ambasa and Labitad (2024) associated it with positive work attitudes. Abunaser et al. (2025) connected ethical leadership with organizational culture, commitment, and reduced conflict. Sabello and Oted (2024) identified integrity, fairness, and ethical guidance as essential practices. Manluyang and Apostol (2024), Masunag and Guhao (2024), and Özdoğru and Sarier (2024) linked ethical leadership with school culture, teacher commitment, trust, organizational justice, motivation, and job satisfaction.

Result Focus

Result focus involves prioritizing long-term outcomes. Toledo (2023) and Abella and Saluria (2025) linked results-oriented leadership with teacher performance and learner outcomes. Galdames-Calderón (2023) emphasized progress monitoring and strategy adjustment, while Hawlitschek et al. (2024) highlighted achievement data in decision-making. Bada et al. (2024) linked clear school direction and instructional management with teacher effectiveness. Dadores and Perez (2022) reported high perceived RPMS implementation.

Teamwork

Teamwork promotes staff collaboration and cooperation. Ambasa and Labitad (2024) linked collaborative leadership with teacher engagement. Calderón (2023) emphasized shared responsibility, supportive environments, and organizational cohesion. Fuentes and Rodriguez (2024) found that shared governance, collaborative decision-making, and stakeholder participation were highly practiced and significantly related to teacher performance. Intud and Fernal (2025) and Malolos (2024) also highlighted school heads' roles in promoting collaboration and school effectiveness.

Service Orientation

Service orientation involves responding respectfully and promptly to learners', teachers', and community members' needs. Abella and Saluria (2025) linked it with stakeholder involvement, while Toledo (2023) associated it with teacher satisfaction, program compliance, and teacher performance. Abunaser et al. (2025) emphasized its contribution to trust and learner outcomes. Cuison (2024) found high service orientation among public elementary school heads and a significant relationship with length of service. Khaldi et al. (2024) linked servant leadership with teacher commitment, while He et al. (2024) highlighted principals' support for professional development. Pilpil, Romera, and Lopez (2023) stressed timely responses to concerns, and Legal (2023) found that technology-supported processes improved stakeholder experiences.

Innovation

Innovation involves developing creative approaches to improve school programs, teaching, and problem-solving. Toledo (2023) and Tuang and Quintos (2023) linked innovative strategies with teaching quality, while Abunaser et al. (2025) identified innovation as a driver of educational improvement. Hernandez et al. (2023) highlighted strategic thinking, creativity, and interpersonal skills in innovative leadership. Ortega and Palarisan (2021) emphasized strategy development, stakeholder empowerment, and responsiveness to educational needs. Gabutan et al. (2024) associated strong leadership and supportive environments with greater teacher innovation.

Administrative Practices**Leading Strategically**

Leading strategically involves setting goals, planning, decision-making, and guiding schools toward their vision. Barola and Digo (2022) highlighted its multidimensional nature, while Paladio and Padasas (2024) reported strong performance in planning, policy implementation, innovation, and learner programs. Patiga (2025) found that PPSSH adherence was strongly related to school performance.

Managing School Operations and Resources

This domain involves efficiently and transparently managing personnel, finances, facilities, and materials. DepEd (2020), Valenzuela and Buenvinida (2021), and Cardona (2023) emphasized its importance. Silva and Andal (2023) linked operational governance with school access, quality, and efficiency. Tarusan and Nabos (2024) highlighted its contribution to school performance, while McBurnie et al. (2021) emphasized reliable data for effective management.

Focusing on Teaching and Learning

This domain involves improving instruction through teacher supervision, curriculum implementation, and instructional support. Rodulfa (2023) linked instructional leadership with learner outcomes and teacher efficacy. Claud and Dalisay (2024) found a significant relationship between supervision and teacher performance, while Ulit (2025) and Pana (2024) emphasized academic direction and teacher development.

Developing Self and Others

This domain promotes lifelong learning and professional growth. Rosario (2024) and He et al. (2024) emphasized supportive leadership in teacher development. Madera (2024) highlighted needs-based

training, Faculo and Yango (2022) found a significant relationship between professional development and leadership skills, and Agravante, Digo, and Janer (2023) emphasized mentoring and coaching.

Building Connections

Building connections involves partnerships with parents, communities, and external stakeholders. Tuang and Quintos (2023) linked partnerships with stakeholder support and learner outcomes, while Ramirez (2022) reported improved student motivation and participation. Epstein (2020), DepEd (2020), Codilla (2022), and Mandolado and Ancho (2023) emphasized collaboration and shared responsibility. Tomajin (2022) highlighted participation, transparency, and communication, while De Jesus (2025) stressed interpersonal and problem-solving skills.

Objectives

This study examined the leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices of public secondary school heads in the Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City during SY 2025–2026. It described respondents by age, sex, educational attainment, and training attended; assessed practices across the five PPSSH domains; determined relationships among the study variables; and examined differences according to respondents' demographic and professional characteristics.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Transformational Leadership Theory, developed by Burns (1978) and expanded by Bass (1985). Burns described it as a process that elevates leaders' and followers' motivation and morality, while Bass emphasized shared goals, capability development, and modeling organizational values. Bass and Riggio (2006) identified four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

The theory explains how school heads' leadership skills and core behavioral competencies relate to administrative practices under the five PPSSH domains. Leadership skills include leading people, performance management, and people development. Core behavioral skills include self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation.

- **Idealized influence** involves leading by example through integrity, fairness, and responsibility, building trust and accountability.
- **Inspirational motivation** involves communicating a clear vision and encouraging shared goals through leadership, teamwork, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Intellectual stimulation** promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation in performance, resource management, and instruction.
- **Individualized consideration** addresses individual needs through coaching, mentoring, training, and professional development.

Performance management also supports transformational leadership when monitoring, feedback, and accountability promote employee growth.

The five PPSSH domains translate leadership into practice through strategic direction, resource management, instructional improvement, professional development, and stakeholder collaboration. Effective leadership therefore requires both capable personnel and effective systems.

This study considers leadership skills and core behavioral competencies as explanatory variables and administrative practices as the outcome variable. Stronger competencies are expected to support effective school management, teaching and learning, resource utilization, and stakeholder relationships.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020, adopting the PPSSH, and DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015, establishing the RPMS. These policies guide the assessment of leadership skills, core behavioral competencies, and administrative practices.

The RPMS emphasizes performance target setting, monitoring, evaluation, and development planning. It covers leadership skills in leading people, performance management, and people development, alongside core behavioral skills in self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation.

These competencies support decision-making, problem-solving, personnel management, resource utilization, and stakeholder relationships. The PPSSH identifies five administrative domains: leading strategically, managing school operations and resources, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections.

Respondents' age, sex, highest educational attainment, and number of related trainings attended serve as moderating variables that may influence the relationships among leadership skills, core behavioral competencies, and administrative practices. The framework assumes that leadership and behavioral competencies significantly influence school heads' administrative practices.

Figure 1 presents the relationships among the study variables.

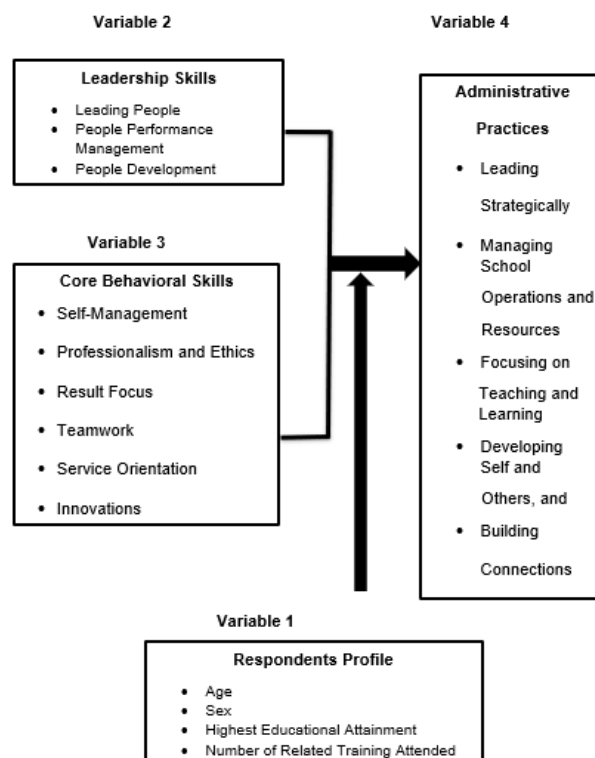


Figure 1. Schematic Presentation Showing the Interplay of Variables of the Study

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the level of leadership, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices among public secondary school heads in the Division of Cagayan de Oro City for the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, and trainings attended?
2. How do the respondents assess their leadership skills in terms of leading people, people performance management, and people development?
3. How do the respondents assess their core behavioral skills, considering self-management, professionalism and ethics, results focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation?
4. What is the respondents' level of administrative practices based on leading strategically, managing school operations and resources, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' level of leadership skills and their administrative practices among public secondary school heads?
6. Is there a significant relationship between respondents' core behavioral skills and their administrative practices?
7. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices when they are grouped according to their profile?

Hypothesis

Problems 1, 2, 3, and 4 are hypothesis-free. However, for Problems 5, 6, and 7, the null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between the level of leadership skills and the administrative practices among public secondary school heads.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between the level of core behavioral skills and the level of administrative practices among public secondary school heads.

HO₃: There is no significant difference between leadership competency skills, core behavioral competency skills, and administrative practices when grouped according to their profile variables.

Significance of the Study

This study provides an understanding of how the leadership skills and core behavioral competencies of public secondary school heads relate to their administrative practices. It examines leadership skills in leading people, performance management, and people development, as well as core behavioral competencies in self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation. It also assesses administrative practices across the five PPSSH domains.

The findings may help school heads identify their strengths and areas for improvement. They may use the results to develop personal and professional improvement plans and strengthen their leadership and administrative practices.

The study may help promote a supportive school environment through effective performance management, professional development, teamwork, mentoring, and staff support.

Learners may benefit from improved school leadership and administration that support a safe, inclusive, and motivating learning environment and better educational outcomes.

The findings may provide baseline data for planning leadership development programs, mentoring, technical assistance, and capacity-building activities based on school heads' actual needs.

The results may guide the development of focused and relevant training programs that address the leadership skills, behavioral competencies, and administrative practices needed by school heads.

The study may help aspiring school heads identify the competencies and practices they need to develop in preparation for future leadership roles.

The findings may provide useful information for developing policies and initiatives that strengthen school leadership and administrative practices.

The study may serve as a reference for future research on educational leadership, leadership competencies, and school management. It may also encourage studies in other educational settings and investigations of related variables, such as teacher effectiveness, school performance, organizational climate, learner outcomes, and leadership succession, using qualitative or mixed-method approaches.

Overall, the study may contribute to stronger school leadership by providing evidence to guide professional development, leadership preparation, administrative practices, policy development, and future research.

Scope and Limitations

This study assessed how leadership and behavioral skills influence the administrative practices of public secondary school heads. Anchored on the RPMS and the PPSSH, the study seeks to generate empirical evidence on leadership effectiveness within the public education system.

The study is limited to public secondary school heads in the Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City during School Year 2025–2026. The study includes 105 school heads using universal sampling. The study investigated leadership skills (leading people, people performance management, and people development), core behavioral skills (self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation), and administrative practices based on the five PPSSH domains. The study also considers respondents' profile variables for comparative and correlational analysis.

Despite its scope, the study has several limitations. It is confined to a single school division, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other divisions or regions. The study also relies solely on quantitative data and does not include qualitative methods that could provide deeper contextual insights. Additionally, the study does not control external factors such as school size, resource availability, and community context. The data collected is not authenticated but is raw.

METHODOLOGY

This section deals with the methods and procedures used in the study, such as research design, study setting, research respondents, sampling procedure, research instrument, validity and reliability, categorization of variables and system of scoring, data gathering procedure, statistical treatment of data, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design that utilized a quantitative approach. This design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to systematically describe leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices while examining the relationships among these variables.

The study aims to determine how leadership competencies, leading people, people performance management, and people development influence core behavioral competencies and how both affect administrative practices, as outlined in the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads domains. The descriptive-correlational design is suitable because it enables the researcher to capture the status of the independent and dependent variables without manipulating them. It provides a basis for identifying patterns, trends, and relationships in naturally occurring data, offering insights into the degree and direction of association between leadership competencies, behavioral traits, and administrative practices. Moreover, the quantitative approach used a structured survey questionnaire anchored on the RPMS and PPSSH. Numerical data gathered from the respondents are subjected to inferential statistical tests, including Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine the strength and direction of relationships among variables, as well as independent-samples t-test and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to identify significant differences when respondents are grouped according to profile variables. By adopting this design, the study provides a rigorous examination of how leadership and core behavioral skills relate to and influence the administrative practices of public-school heads, thereby offering empirically grounded implications for leadership development, policy formulation, and administrative improvement within the public school system.

Study Setting

The study was undertaken within the Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City, under the supervision of the Department of Education (DepEd), Philippines. Cagayan de Oro City is a highly urbanized city in Northern Mindanao and serves as an important educational, commercial, and administrative center in the region.

The Schools Division provides leadership, supervision, technical assistance, and administrative support to public elementary, secondary, and integrated schools within the city. As an operating unit of DepEd, the division translates national education policies, programs, standards, and guidelines into practices appropriate to the needs and contexts of schools and their communities. The Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City is an ideal setting for this study because it includes a diverse group of school heads managing schools of varying sizes, resources, and instructional contexts.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the one hundred five (105) secondary public school heads from secondary schools in the Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City for the School Year 2025-2026.

The respondents were considered ideal for this study because they were the primary implementers of leadership and administrative practices as defined by the PPSSH. Their experiences and perceptions provided the necessary data to examine the prevailing leadership skills, core behavioral competencies, and administrative practices, as well as the relationships among these variables.

Table A
Distribution of Respondents

Legislative District Code	Number of Respondents
A	45

B	60
Total	105

Sampling Techniques

This study used a universal sampling technique. A total of one hundred five (105) public secondary school heads participated in the study, ensuring full representation of the target population.

The use of universal sampling allowed the inclusion of the complete perspectives and self-assessments of all secondary school heads in the division. This approach ensured the collection of comprehensive, reliable, and representative data, enabling an accurate analysis of leadership and behavioral competencies and their influence on administrative practices within the Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City.

Research Instrument

The study utilized a standardized survey questionnaire as its primary research instrument. The questionnaire was designed to gather quantitative data on leadership skills and core behavioral skills, based on RPMS and the administrative practices aligned with PPSSH.

All items in the questionnaire were rated using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always) for Part I and Part II; in Part III, ratings ranged from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Outstanding). The responses were analyzed quantitatively to determine descriptive statistics and correlations among leadership competencies, core behavioral competencies, and administrative practices. A standardized questionnaire ensures data consistency, reliability, and validity, while providing a clear framework for interpreting the relationship between RPMS indicators and the PPSSH domains.

Data Gathering Procedure

The investigation began with the researcher obtaining an approval letter from the Dean of the Graduate School. To conduct the study, formal permission was secured from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent. This step ensured that the research was conducted in accordance with the policies and guidelines of the Department of Education. Upon approval, the researcher coordinated with the school heads to explain the purpose, significance, and procedures of the study. Clear instructions were provided on how to answer the survey items to ensure accurate and meaningful responses. The questionnaire was administered both in printed form and via Google Forms for accessibility and convenience. Completed instruments were retrieved by the researcher either in person or through electronic submission.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The study used statistical tools appropriate for its descriptive-correlational, quantitative design. The researcher analyzed data from the one hundred five (105) public secondary school heads using weighted mean to determine the extent of leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices, while standard deviation assessed the consistency of responses across RPMS-anchored indicators and PPSSH domains. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was used to examine the strength and direction of relationships among the variables, with all hypothesis tests conducted at a 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis 1 would be rejected when the p -value is ≤ 0.05 , indicating a statistically significant relationship.

To determine whether significant differences existed in both leadership and core behavioral skills with administrative practices across profile variables, independent-samples t -tests were applied to variables

with two categories (e.g., sex), and one-way ANOVA was used for variables with more than two categories (e.g., age, educational attainment, trainings attended), with post hoc tests performed when significant differences were found. These procedures allowed the study to objectively describe competency levels, assess relational patterns, and examine group differences, providing empirical evidence to inform leadership development, policy formulation, and performance improvement initiatives within the Schools Division of Cagayan de Oro City.

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly observed ethical standards in conducting research involving human participants to protect the dignity and well-being of all respondents.

The study rigorously upheld confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process. No personal identifiers such as names, positions, school assignments, or any information that could reveal respondents' identities appeared anywhere in the study. Each participant was assigned a numerical or coded identifier to protect their privacy. Data was treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic and research purposes pertinent to this study; they will not be disclosed to any unauthorized individual or institution.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides the findings and analysis of the data collected during the study. The results are arranged in order, corresponding to the sequence of the problem statements. Tables were also provided to better understand the study's findings.

Results

Problem 1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, and training attended?

Table 1- Distribution of Respondents' Profiles in terms of Age

Category	Frequency	Percentage
59 years old and above	7	6.70 %
48 – 58 years	49	46.70%
37 – 47 years	29	27.60%
26 – 36 years	19	18.10%
25 years old and below	1	0.90%
Overall	105	100.00%

Table 1 shows the respondents' age distribution. Of the 105 respondents, 49 (46.70%) were aged 48–58 years, the largest group. This suggests that many school heads have considerable experience in teaching, school management, and decision-making. Their experience may have strengthened their patience, self-control, judgment, and ability to handle diverse school situations. However, they still need continuous learning to keep up with new policies, technologies, and changing school needs.

Daud (2021) found that educators with greater professional and supervisory experience are often promoted to leadership positions. Gerola and Meimban (2023) identified age as a significant profile variable in

administrators' work, while Intud and Fernal considered age in relation to school heads' leadership skills. Quinal and Dupa (2024) likewise reported that many public-school administrators were in the later stages of their careers and demonstrated leadership effectiveness in instructional programs, financial management, and community relations.

The lowest frequency was one respondent aged 25 (0.90%), indicating that school heads at this age were uncommon. Younger educators may still be developing their instructional knowledge, credibility, and management skills. This suggests that early entry into school leadership requires adequate preparation, experience, and opportunities to handle greater responsibilities.

The respondent serves as a School-in-Charge (SIC) or Teacher-in-Charge in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) and mobile schools in remote communities, managing both teaching and leadership responsibilities. This illustrates how community needs may require younger teachers to assume leadership roles in underserved areas while addressing learners' and communities' needs.

Nazareth (2021) explained that younger professionals aged 25–35 may assume school leadership roles when provided with appropriate training and opportunities. Agravante et al. (2023) emphasized mentoring and coaching as important in developing school heads' leadership skills. Similarly, the OECD (2019) reported that principals are generally older than teachers because leadership positions commonly require teaching experience, higher qualifications, and years of service.

Table 2- Distribution of Respondents' Profile in terms of Sex

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	48	45.7%
Female	57	54.3%
Overall	105	100.0%

Table 2 presents the respondents' sex distribution. Of the 105 school heads, 57 (54.3%) were female, indicating a slight majority. This may reflect women's strong participation in teaching and their advancement into leadership roles through experience as advisers, coordinators, department heads, and program managers. The findings highlight the importance of providing equal leadership opportunities to all qualified educators.

UNESCO (2021) reported that women comprise a large share of the basic education teaching workforce. Dela Rosa and Vargas (2021) found that most public school principals in Central Luzon were women, while Adams et al. (2023) also reported a slight majority of female principals. Bingat and Herrera (2025) similarly found that female school heads predominated, although leadership performance remained high regardless of sex.

Meanwhile, 48 (45.7%) respondents were male, showing that men were also well represented in school leadership. The small difference between male and female respondents suggests that both groups have substantial participation in managing teachers, addressing school concerns, and implementing school programs. This indicates that sex alone does not determine leadership effectiveness, as competence, experience, and preparation are also important.

Bingat and Herrera (2025) found no significant difference in school head performance when grouped by sex. Similarly, Gerola and Meimban (2023) emphasized the importance of competence, experience, and management practices, while Lapuz and Pecajas (2022) found that both male and female school leaders could perform administrative and instructional duties effectively when adequately prepared. These findings support the view that effective school leadership depends on professional capabilities rather than sex.

Table 3- Distribution of Respondents' Profiles in terms of Highest Educational Attainment

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Doctoral Degree	15	14.30%
Master's Degree with Doctoral Units	21	20.00%
Master's Degree	27	25.70%
Bachelor's Degree with Master's Unit	40	38.10%
Bachelor's Degree	2	1.90%
Overall	105	100.00%

Table 3 presents the respondents' highest educational attainment. The findings suggest that school heads pursue graduate studies to strengthen their knowledge and prepare for administrative and instructional responsibilities. However, balancing graduate studies with school management can be challenging due to work demands, financial constraints, distance, and personal responsibilities. Study permits and flexible learning options may help them continue their education.

Gerola and Meimban (2023) found that educational attainment was strongly associated with school administrators' management practices. Aquino et al. (2021) reported higher leadership practice levels among school heads with doctoral degrees, while Rios and Corpuz (2023) found that higher educational attainment was positively related to e-leadership skills.

The highest frequency was 40 (38.10%) respondents with a bachelor's degree and master's units. This indicates that many school heads have started pursuing graduate studies while managing their schools. Providing adequate support and flexible learning opportunities may help them complete their degrees and strengthen their leadership capabilities.

Antigo and de Guzman (2024) reported that public secondary school heads in Zambales generally held master's degrees. De Asis et al. (2024) also noted that many school leaders pursue education beyond the bachelor's level. Gerola and Meimban (2023), Leal (2023), and Aquino et al. (2021) likewise emphasized the value of graduate education and leadership training in strengthening school management and leadership practices.

Meanwhile, only 2 (1.90%) respondents had a bachelor's degree as their highest educational attainment, making this the least represented group. This suggests that most school heads have pursued or continued

graduate education to meet leadership demands. Graduate studies can strengthen their knowledge of management, supervision, research, and decision-making.

DepEd's qualification standards for School Principal I emphasize master's-level education in education, educational management, educational leadership, or a related field with management units. Flexible and online graduate programs may help school heads meet these qualifications despite demanding schedules and assignments in remote areas.

Rios and Corpuz (2023) found that many school heads in Cabanatuan had reached the master's level and were pursuing doctoral units. Peregrino et al. (2021) similarly reported that school heads commonly held bachelor's degrees with master's units. Villanueva et al. (2021) found that none of the school heads in their study remained at the bachelor's level. Arrieta, Ancho, and Barrameda (2023) further explained that graduate studies help school leaders and teachers improve their knowledge and skills and apply them to actual leadership and management responsibilities.

Table 4- Distribution of Respondents' Profiles in terms of Relevant Training Attended

Profile Variable	No. of Relevant Trainings Attended									
	Not attended		once		2-3 times		4-5 times		More than 5 times	
Level	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
International	79	75.24	13	12.38	9	8.57	1	0.95	3	2.86
National	20	19.05	18	17.14	54	51.43	9	8.57	4	3.81
Regional	6	5.71	15	14.29	45	42.86	24	22.86	15	22.86
Division	0	0	0	0	4	0.67	28	26.67	70	66.67

Table 4 presents the respondents' relevant training attendance. The highest frequency was 70 (66.67%), representing school heads who attended division-level training more than five times. This suggests that division-level programs are accessible, practical, and relevant to their daily responsibilities. These trainings also provide opportunities to share best practices, understand DepEd policies, and strengthen leadership and management skills with minimal travel costs and work disruption.

Division offices commonly organize and communicate training through official memoranda. In contrast, national training often has limited slots, while international programs may require additional expenses and travel arrangements. Participants in national training may also share their learning with other school heads through cascading activities.

Lapuz and Pecajas (2022) found that school leaders commonly receive professional development through division-level training. Farin (2026) highlighted the use of division-based mentoring, coaching, and

supervision to improve school performance and instructional quality. DepEd (2024) records also indicate the availability of division- and regional-level programs for education leaders. Madera (2024) found that locally organized training improved school heads' competencies in planning, supervision, teacher development, and learner achievement. These findings support the preference for accessible division-level training.

Meanwhile, only three school heads attended international training more than five times, indicating limited international exposure. This may be due to high travel and registration costs, limited slots, strict selection procedures, travel authorization requirements, and the difficulty of leaving school responsibilities unattended. These challenges make local and regional programs more practical for many school heads, although international training can provide broader perspectives on leadership and school management.

Macalanda (2025) noted that school heads attend international training less frequently because local, division, and regional programs are more accessible. DepEd (2011) explained that professional development commonly occurs at the school, division, regional, and national levels, while international training is often offered through special projects or invitations. Agravante et al. (2023) likewise reported that school-head development programs commonly use regional and local training activities. Madera (2024) found that a training program involving 104 school heads from 21 school divisions in Region VI significantly improved leadership competencies. These findings highlight the value and accessibility of local professional development opportunities.

Problem 2. How do the respondents assess their leadership skills in terms of leading people, people performance, and people development?

Table 5- Summary Table on the Respondents' Leadership Skills

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Leading People	3.97	0.77	Consistently Demonstrates
People Performance Management	4.47	0.77	Consistently Demonstrates
People Development	4.50	0.78	Role Model
Overall	4.31	0.77	Consistently Demonstrates

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Outstanding/ Role Model
 3.50 – 4.49 Very Satisfactory/ Consistently Demonstrates
 2.50 – 3.49 Satisfactory/Most of the Time Demonstrates
 1.50 – 2.49 Unsatisfactory/Sometimes Demonstrates
 1.49 and below Poor/Rarely Demonstrates

Table 5 summarizes respondents' leadership skills, with an overall mean of 4.31 (SD = 0.77), interpreted as Consistently Demonstrates. This indicates that school heads regularly guide teachers, monitor performance, provide feedback, and support staff development. Effective leadership helps improve

decision-making, problem-solving, teamwork, and teacher motivation. These skills are especially important when addressing staff concerns, handling stakeholder complaints, encouraging participation in school activities, and promoting professional growth.

Intud and Fernal (2025) reported that leadership skills improve school and teacher performance. Mercader-Roa and Balanga (2024) emphasized leading people, performance management, and staff development, while Lepardo and Caingcoy (2021) linked leadership skills to better school performance. Faculo and Yango (2022) also highlighted the importance of continuous professional growth.

People development obtained the highest mean of 4.50 ($SD = 0.78$), interpreted as Role Model. This suggests that school heads demonstrate strong commitment to developing personnel through training, mentoring, coaching, technical assistance, professional dialogue, and school-based learning. By modeling continuous improvement, they can encourage teachers to strengthen their skills and assume greater responsibilities.

Galdames-Calderón (2023) found that principals support teachers' professional growth by providing learning opportunities and leadership responsibilities. He et al. (2024) likewise emphasized the role of instructional leadership in continuous professional development. Panganiban and Tamayo highlighted the importance of mentoring and school-head support, while Zheng (2023) emphasized shared leadership and professional learning communities in building teachers' confidence and capabilities.

In contrast, leading people received the lowest mean of 3.97 ($SD = 0.77$), interpreted as Consistently Demonstrates. Although this remains a positive rating, it indicates an area for further improvement, particularly in communication, trust-building, conflict management, and collaboration. School heads must address differences in teachers' personalities, workloads, and perspectives while encouraging participation in school decisions. Strengthening these practices may improve staff relationships and cooperation.

Voelkel et al. (2024) identified trust, collaboration, relationship-building, and empowerment as important leadership practices. Lepardo and Caingcoy (2021) linked leading people with school performance and improvement, while Mercader-Roa and Balanga (2024) associated leadership skills with effective School-Based Management. Ma and Marion (2024) also found that shared leadership can strengthen teacher collaboration. These findings highlight the importance of listening to teachers, involving them in decisions, and building positive working relationships.

Problem 3. How do the respondents assess their core behavioral skills, considering self-management, professionalism and ethics, results focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation

Table 6- Summary Table of Respondents' Core Behavioral Skills

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Self-Management	4.44	0.76	Consistently Demonstrates
Professionalism and Ethics	4.50	0.79	Role Model
Result Focus	4.26	0.78	Consistently Demonstrates
Teamwork	4.51	0.77	Role Model
Service Orientation	4.48	0.79	Consistently Demonstrates
Innovations	4.51	0.79	Role Model
Overall	4.45	0.78	Consistently Demonstrates

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 *Outstanding/ Role Model*

3.50 – 4.49 *Very Satisfactory/ Consistently Demonstrates*

2.50 – 3.49 *Satisfactory/Most of the Time Demonstrates*

1.50 – 2.49 *Unsatisfactory/Sometimes Demonstrates*

1.49 and below *Poor/Rarely Demonstrates*

Table 6 summarizes respondents' core behavioral skills, with an overall mean of 4.45 (SD = 0.78), interpreted as Consistently Demonstrates. This indicates that school heads demonstrate discipline, professionalism, teamwork, service orientation, result focus, and innovation in performing their duties. These competencies help them manage challenges, build trust, work effectively with others, and achieve school goals.

Bartolome (2024) found that core behavioral competencies were significantly related to leadership competencies. Mercader-Roa and Balanga (2024) emphasized their importance in school operations and instructional supervision, while Semblante and Sambo (2025) examined their relationship with school heads' work performance. These findings highlight the role of behavioral competencies in effective school leadership.

Innovation and teamwork obtained the highest mean scores of 4.51, with SDs of 0.79 and 0.77, respectively, both interpreted as Role Model. The innovation result suggests that school heads are open to improving existing practices, developing practical solutions, and adapting to changing school needs. Innovation involves identifying problems, testing better approaches, and improving practices based on results.

Gonzales et al. (2024) found that principals develop innovative ideas by examining school problems and identifying practical solutions. Schmitz et al. (2023) and Ninković et al. (2023) likewise emphasized the role of supportive leadership and an innovative school climate in encouraging teachers to adopt new technologies and practices.

The high teamwork rating indicates that school heads value collaboration and shared responsibility. Teamwork supports school planning, problem-solving, program implementation, and the effective use of limited resources. It also encourages teachers and staff to contribute ideas and participate in achieving school goals.

Malolos (2024) highlighted the connection between school heads' roles and teacher collaboration. Galdames-Calderón (2023) emphasized shared leadership and teacher participation, while De Jong et al. (2023) found that distributed leadership encourages teachers to seek advice and work collaboratively. Reyes and Apostol (2024) also reported a significant relationship between teamwork skills and transformational leadership.

These findings support the importance of collaboration in school improvement.

In contrast, result focus obtained the lowest mean of 4.26 (SD = 0.78), interpreted as Consistently Demonstrates. Although still positive, this indicates an area for further improvement. School heads need to strengthen goal setting, progress monitoring, delegation, follow-up, and timely adjustments to ensure that school plans lead to meaningful outcomes. Result focus involves more than completing tasks; it requires ensuring that programs and activities contribute to improved teaching, learning, and school performance.

Semblante and Sambo (2025) identified result focus as one of the weaker core behavioral areas among school heads. Fabre and Osias (2024), Dimasimpun and Abarquez (2024), and Piquero (2024) also emphasized its importance in improving performance. Kilag et al. (2023) reported that effective instructional leadership supports better results through clear direction, collaboration, and communication. These findings highlight the need for school heads to regularly monitor targets, evaluate progress, and take timely action to achieve school goals.

Problem 4. What is the respondents' level of administrative practices based on leading strategically, managing school operations and resources, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections?

Table 7- Summary of Respondents' Administrative Practices

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Leading Strategically	4.49	0.77	Often Practiced
Managing School Operations and Resources	4.51	0.78	Always Practiced
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	4.51	0.77	Always Practiced
Developing Self and Others	4.50	0.77	Always Practiced
Building Connections	4.48	0.76	Often Practiced
Overall	4.50	0.77	Always Practiced

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Outstanding/Always Practiced

3.50 – 4.49 *Very Satisfactory/Often Practiced/Very*

2.50 – 3.49 *Satisfactory/Sometimes Practiced*

1.50 – 2.49 *Unsatisfactory/Rarely Practiced*

0.49 and below *Poor/Rarely Practiced*

Table 7 summarizes respondents' administrative practices, with an overall mean of 4.50 (SD = 0.77), interpreted as Always Practiced. This indicates that school heads regularly perform key responsibilities in strategic leadership, resource management, teaching and learning, staff development, and stakeholder engagement. Effective administration requires sound decision-making, efficient resource use, staff support, and the consistent implementation of school plans.

Tagra and Mongas (2026) found that stronger administrative qualities were associated with greater teacher participation in school governance. Nacionales (2024) and Ramirez and Bautista (2025) examined similar administrative domains and reported high levels of practice. Delmonte and Rapada (2024) also linked school heads' managerial skills with school performance. These findings highlight that effective administration extends beyond daily operations to include instructional improvement, personnel development, and stakeholder collaboration.

Managing School Operations and Resources obtained one of the highest mean scores of 4.51 (SD = 0.78), interpreted as Always Practiced. This suggests that school heads effectively manage personnel, finances, facilities, schedules, reports, and other resources. They prioritize urgent needs, promote accountability, and ensure that resources support teaching, learning, and learner welfare. In the Division of Cagayan de Oro, practices such as SMART Days (Submission of Monthly Accomplishment Reports for Transparency Days) support timely financial reporting and accountability.

DepEd (2020) emphasized the efficient, transparent, and accountable management of school resources. Valenzuela and Buenvenida (2021) linked effective resource management with better school performance, while Cardona (2023) identified it as an important competency of public school heads. These findings highlight the importance of careful planning and responsible resource allocation.

Focusing on Teaching and Learning also obtained a mean of 4.51 (SD = 0.77), interpreted as Always Practiced. This indicates that school heads prioritize classroom instruction and learner progress through classroom observations, assessment monitoring, teacher feedback, and learning interventions. These practices help ensure that school programs and resources contribute to improved teaching and learning outcomes.

Pana (2024) emphasized that instructional leadership strengthens teachers' capacity and classroom practices. Godes and Dioso (2024) and Claud and Dalisay (2024) likewise found significant relationships between instructional supervision and teacher performance. These findings support the importance of monitoring instruction, providing feedback, and addressing learners' needs.

In contrast, Building Connections obtained the lowest mean of 4.48 (SD = 0.76), interpreted as Often Practiced. Although stakeholder engagement remains evident, the findings suggest a need for more consistent communication, follow-up, and long-term partnerships with parents, alumni, local officials, and

community organizations. Stronger collaboration can help schools secure support for learner programs, school projects, safety, and other community needs.

Pascual (2023) linked school heads' leadership functions with external stakeholder support for school programs and activities. De Jesus (2024) emphasized communication, interpersonal, decision-making, and problem-solving skills in building school-community partnerships. Arguelles and Sarsale (2025) highlighted regular communication, shared decision-making, collaboration, and partnership monitoring. Akmad et al. (2025) likewise emphasized stakeholder involvement, feedback, and participation in decision-making. These studies show that effective connections require sustained communication, trust, shared responsibility, and long-term cooperation.

Problem 5. Is there a significant relationship between leadership skills and administrative practice among public secondary school heads?

Table 8
Distribution of Significant Relationship between Leadership Skills and Administrative Practices

Leadership Skills	Administrative Practices						Overall
		Leading Strategically	Managing School Operations and Resources	Focusing on Teaching and Learning	Developing self and Others	Building Connections	
Leading People	r	0.6005	0.7008	0.6006	0.9006	0.6007	0.6806
	p	0.0213	0.0242	0.0231	0.0122	0.0311	0.0224
People Performance Management	r	0.8008	0.7005	0.9007	0.9004	0.7008	0.8006
	p	0.0221	0.0332	0.0311	0.0231	0.0324	0.0284
People Development	r	0.5006	0.9008	0.6008	0.8009	0.9009	0.7408
	p	0.0421	0.0441	0.0101	0.0202	0.0402	0.0313

Legend: *significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level S – significant NS – not significant

Table 8 presents the significant relationship between leadership skills and administrative practices among public secondary school heads. The results show statistically significant relationships, with all p-values below 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that leadership skills in leading people, managing performance, and developing personnel are associated with administrative practices in strategic leadership, resource management, teaching and learning, staff development, and stakeholder engagement.

These findings suggest that school heads who communicate effectively, guide teachers, monitor performance, and support professional growth also tend to demonstrate better administrative practices. Ferrer et al. (2023) found a significant relationship between leadership practices and administrative disposition. Mercader-Roa and Balanga (2024) emphasized leadership competence in school operations

and instructional supervision, while Nacionales (2024) linked leadership practices with stakeholder engagement and school performance.

Leading people showed a significant positive relationship with administrative practices ($r = 0.6806$, $p = 0.0224$). This suggests that school heads who effectively guide, motivate, communicate with, and support personnel tend to demonstrate better administrative practices. Building trust and encouraging teachers to work toward common goals may strengthen school management and collaboration.

Ma and Marion (2024) found that distributed leadership strengthens teacher collaboration through shared responsibility and professional learning. Galdames-Calderón (2023) emphasized teacher development and participation in leadership, while De Jong et al. (2023) found that shared leadership encourages cooperation and collective responsibility. These findings support the importance of people-centered leadership in effective school administration.

People performance management also showed a significant positive relationship with administrative practices ($r = 0.8006$, $p = 0.0284$). This indicates that setting clear expectations, monitoring performance, providing feedback, and supporting teachers are associated with more effective school management. Regular coaching, classroom observations, and follow-up meetings may help align individual performance with school goals.

Comighud (2021) emphasized goal setting, monitoring, and feedback in aligning individual performance with school objectives. Godes and Dioso (2024) found a significant relationship between supervisory practices and teacher performance. Similarly, Landawe et al. (2024) reported significant relationships between supervisory competence, managerial behavior, and teacher performance. These findings highlight the importance of performance management in supporting personnel and school effectiveness.

People development likewise showed a significant positive relationship with administrative practices ($r = 0.7408$, $p = 0.0313$). This suggests that school heads who provide coaching, mentoring, training, and leadership opportunities also tend to demonstrate more effective administrative practices. Developing capable and confident personnel enables teachers to share responsibilities, support school programs, and contribute to solving school concerns.

Panganiban and Tamayo found that school-head support and mentoring are related to teachers' professional development. Landawe et al. (2024) also emphasized the relationship between supervisory competence, managerial behavior, and teacher performance, while Lim (2024) highlighted the role of instructional leadership and planned professional development in strengthening teacher growth. These findings support the importance of investing in personnel development to improve both individual performance and overall school administration.

Problem 6. Is there a significant relationship between core behavioral skills and administrative practices among public secondary school heads?

Table 9
Distribution of Significant Relationship Between Core Behavioral Skills and Administrative Practices

Core Behavioral Skills	Administrative Practices					
	Leading Strategically	Managing School Operations and Resources	Focusing on Teaching and Learning	Developing self and Others	Building Connections	Overall
Self-Management	r 0.5003 p 0.0403 S	0.8007 0.0303 S	0.8006 0.0302 S	0.6089 0.0231 S	0.7801 0.0143 S	0.6981 0.0276 S
Professional and Ethics	r 0.9003 p 0.0100 S	0.8008 0.0103 S	0.8006 0.0105 S	0.6006 0.0142 S	0.7054 0.0324 S	0.7615 0.0155 S
Results and Focus	r 0.9009 p 0.0102 S	0.8005 0.0301 S	0.7005 0.0201 S	0.5006 0.0142 S	0.7860 0.0432 S	0.7377 0.0236 S
Teamwork	r 0.5007 p 0.0402 S	0.8006 0.0301 S	0.8007 0.0303 S	0.6007 0.0104 S	0.8005 0.0202 S	0.7006 0.0262 S
Service Orientation	r 0.9006 p 0.0101 S	0.6005 0.0103 S	0.8003 0.0102 S	0.6005 0.0220 S	0.7006 0.0202 S	0.7205 0.0146 S
Innovations	r 0.8005 p 0.0241 S	0.8004 0.0301 S	0.7006 0.0203 S	0.5009 0.0304 S	0.9009 0.0110 S	0.7407 0.0232 S

Legend: *significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level S – significant NS – not significant

Table 9 presents the significant relationships between core behavioral skills and administrative practices among secondary school heads. All relationships were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$); therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that self-management, professionalism and ethics, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation are associated with more effective school administration. The findings suggest that administrative effectiveness depends not only on knowledge of policies and procedures but also on how school heads manage themselves, work with others, and respond to school needs.

Mercader-Roa and Balanga (2024) emphasized the importance of behavioral and leadership competencies in school operations and instructional supervision. Semblante and Sambo (2025) found a significant relationship between school heads' core behavioral competencies and performance ratings, while Gerola and Meimban (2023) identified these competencies as part of educational management practices. These studies support the importance of behavioral skills in effective school administration.

Self-management showed a significant positive relationship with administrative practices ($r = 0.6981$, $p = 0.0276$). This suggests that school heads who manage their time, emotions, priorities, and responsibilities effectively also tend to manage school operations, teaching and learning, staff development, and stakeholder relations more effectively. Semblante and Sambo (2025) found a similar relationship between

self-management and school heads' performance. Mercader-Roa and Balanga (2024) and Bartolome (2024) also highlighted the relevance of behavioral competencies to school operations and leadership. Professionalism and ethics had a significant positive relationship with administrative practices ($r = 0.7655$, $p = 0.0155$). This indicates that school heads who demonstrate fairness, integrity, responsibility, and professionalism tend to perform better in managing personnel, resources, policies, and school concerns. Archuleta (2025) linked ethical leadership with administrative competence across PPSSH domains. Abing (2024) highlighted the influence of personal values and school governance on leadership practices, while Sabello and Oted (2024) emphasized integrity, fairness, and ethical guidance in public school leadership. Teamwork also showed a significant positive relationship with administrative practices ($r = 0.7006$, $p = 0.0262$). This suggests that involving teachers and staff in planning, problem-solving, and implementing school programs supports effective administration. Ma and Marion (2024) found that distributed leadership strengthens collaboration and shared responsibility. Galdames-Calderón (2023) emphasized teacher participation in leadership and school improvement, while De Jong et al. (2023) found that shared leadership encourages cooperation and collective responsibility.

Service orientation had a significant positive relationship with administrative practices ($r = 0.7205$, $p = 0.0146$). This indicates that school heads who respond to the needs of learners, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders tend to demonstrate stronger administrative practices. Listening to concerns, addressing requests, and ensuring proper service delivery can strengthen trust and cooperation within the school community. Mercader-Roa and Balanga (2024) highlighted behavioral competencies in school operations, while Verano et al. (2024) emphasized communication and stakeholder relationships. SEAMEO INNOTECH (2014) also identified stakeholder engagement and managerial leadership as essential competencies. Hermanto and Srimulyani (2022), Swart et al. (2022), and Zulfikar and Akhairuddin (2022) further supported the value of service-oriented and servant leadership.

Innovation showed a significant positive relationship with administrative practices ($r = 0.7407$, $p = 0.0232$). This suggests that school heads who are open to new ideas and improved ways of working tend to demonstrate stronger administrative practices. Using technology, improving school processes, and developing practical solutions can help schools respond to changing needs and limited resources. These findings emphasize the importance of flexibility and continuous improvement in school leadership.

Problem 7. Is there a significant difference in leadership competency skills, core behavioral competency skills, and administrative practices when respondents are grouped according to their profile variable?

Table 10
Test of Difference in Leadership Skills, Core Behavioral Skills and Administrative Practices when grouped according to their Profile Variables

Respon- dents Profile	Leadership Skills				Core Behavioral Skills				Administrative Practices					
	Leading People	People Performance Management	People Development	Self Management	Professionalism and Ethics	Result Focus	Team Work	Service Orientation	Innovations	Leading Strategically	Managing School Operations and	Focusing on Teaching and Learning	Developing Self and Others	Building Connections
Age	F 0.7006 P 0.0211 S	0.6008 0.0421 S	0.5006 0.0212 S	0.7005 0.0321 S	0.9007 0.0112 S	0.6890 0.0321 S	0.5425 0.0421 S	0.6262 0.0424 S	0.7541 0.0102 S	0.8932 0.0302 S	0.7652 0.0103 S	0.6742 0.0321 S	0.6579 0.0424 S	0.5627 0.0342 S
Sex	t 0.6005 p 0.0321 S	0.9007 0.0212 S	0.8006 0.0324 S	0.6005 0.0421 S	0.7008 0.0214 S	0.5673 0.0234 S	0.8211 0.0452 S	0.5064 0.0436 S	0.6672 0.0132 S	0.8001 0.0124 S	0.6008 0.0143 S	0.6533 0.0142 S	0.5006 0.0431 S	0.9426 0.0142 S
Highest Educational Attainment	F 0.8007 P 0.0241 S	0.6006 0.0431 S	0.7008 0.0121 S	0.8006 0.0112 S	0.7005 0.0323 S	0.7421 0.0123 S	0.7425 0.0123 S	0.7273 0.0321 S	0.6262 0.0424 S	0.5627 0.0342 S	0.6005 0.0321 S	0.7643 0.0102 S	0.7005 0.0321 S	0.6532 0.0214 S
Relevant Training Attended	F 0.5064 P 0.0432 S	0.9426 0.0442 S	0.5007 0.0234 S	0.8005 0.0452 S	0.8008 0.0423 S	0.9556 0.0434 S	0.9423 0.0452 S	0.8770 0.0424 S	0.6175 0.0345 S	0.8772 0.0242 S	0.6855 0.0332 S	0.8009 0.0203 S	0.8005 0.0224 S	0.8756 0.0431 S
Overall	0.6521 0.0301 S	0.7612 0.0402 S	0.6258 0.0222 S	0.7255 0.0326 S	0.7757 0.0266 S	0.7385 0.0278 S	0.7621 0.0362 S	0.6842 0.0426 S	0.6663 0.0251 S	0.7833 0.0253 S	0.648 0.0225 S	0.7231 0.0192 S	0.6649 0.035 S	0.7585 0.0602 S

Legend: *significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level

S – significant

NS – not significant

Table 10 presents the significant differences in school heads' leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices when grouped by age, sex, highest educational attainment, and relevant training attended. All p-values were below 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that school heads' leadership and administrative practices vary according to their personal and professional backgrounds. These differences may reflect variations in experience, academic preparation, and professional development. The findings suggest that leadership development programs should consider school heads' different needs and provide appropriate training, mentoring, and opportunities for further growth.

Gerola and Meimban (2023) examined age, sex, educational attainment, and training in relation to secondary school administrators' management practices. Dayuha (2024) found a significant relationship between age and school heads' management competence, while Mercader-Roa and Balanga (2024) highlighted the importance of educational preparation, experience, and administrative training in developing school heads' competencies. These studies support considering personal and professional backgrounds when planning leadership development programs.

Age. Significant differences were found in leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices across age groups (all $p < 0.05$). This suggests that school heads may differ in their leadership

approaches and administrative performance depending on their career stage and professional experiences. Younger school heads may bring fresh ideas, while more experienced leaders may draw on years of handling school concerns. However, these differences do not mean that one age group is more capable than another. Ignacio, Relloto, and Torreces (2026) found significant age differences in visionary leadership, while Tangan (2023) reported that age significantly affected transformational leadership scores. Boniao, Alpuerto, and Sales (2020) also found a significant relationship between age and school heads' self-assessed leadership styles. Semblante and Sambo (2025) further emphasized the importance of considering school heads' personal and professional characteristics. These findings support providing leadership development suited to different career stages.

Sex. Significant differences were also found across all three domains when school heads were grouped by sex (all $p < 0.05$). This indicates differences in leadership approaches, behavioral competencies, and administrative practices between male and female school heads. However, the results do not establish that one group is more effective than the other, as leadership may also be shaped by experience, opportunities, and work situations. Ignacio, Relloto, and Torreces (2026) found significant sex differences in visionary leadership, consistent with May and Makura (2021). Tahlil and Purcia (2023) highlighted women school heads' teamwork and collaborative leadership, while Aquino et al. (2021) emphasized communication, supportive relationships, and stakeholder engagement in effective school leadership. These findings support providing equal leadership development opportunities while recognizing school heads' varied experiences.

Highest educational attainment. Significant differences were found in leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices according to educational attainment (all $p < 0.05$). This suggests that academic preparation may contribute to differences in school heads' knowledge, decision-making, and management approaches. Graduate studies may provide broader perspectives and additional skills for addressing school concerns, although educational attainment alone does not guarantee effective leadership. Alagos (2024) found differences in school heads' leadership competence according to educational attainment, while Giron (2024) reported significant differences in some leadership competencies among school administrators. Gerola and Meimban (2023) also examined educational background in relation to leadership competencies and management practices. These findings highlight the value of further studies in strengthening leadership preparation and professional growth.

Relevant training attended. Significant differences were found across all three domains based on relevant training attended (all $p < 0.05$). This suggests that differences in training exposure are associated with variations in school heads' leadership skills, core behavioral competencies, and administrative practices. Relevant training may provide updated knowledge and practical strategies for managing personnel, implementing policies, and responding to school needs. However, training is only one factor influencing performance, alongside experience, education, and workplace application. Ultra (2021) found significant relationships between administrative and supervisory training and school heads' leadership and management competencies. Faculo and Yango (2022) reported a strong positive relationship between professional development and leadership competence, while Agravante et al. (2023) found that upskilling activities contributed to leadership development in mentoring, curriculum development, and project

management. These findings support continuous, relevant professional development to strengthen school heads' leadership and administrative capabilities.

Discussion

This study provides a comprehensive picture of the leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices of the public secondary school heads in the Division of Cagayan de Oro City. Nearly half of the respondents were 48 to 58 years old, and there were more women than men. Many were also taking graduate studies while working as school heads. Most of the trainings they attended were division-level seminars, with very few having the chance to join international training.

Respondents are better at developing people than managing performance and leading people. Their exemplary behavioral skills are worth emulating. They worked with teachers, learners, parents, and other stakeholders to carry out school programs and new ideas. The results also showed that school heads paid close attention to managing school operations and resources, as well as teaching and learning. However, a gap remains in building sustainable connections and continuous support from different community members.

Leadership skills are closely associated with strong administrative practices. Similarly, core behavioral skills are highly correlated with administrative practices, particularly self-management and managing school operations and resources. School heads who value self-discipline, time, emotions, resources, and responsibility also manage school operations and resources effectively. However, the results do not show a causal effect on the other. Leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices also differed significantly across profiles. This means that school heads may differ in how they lead people, manage performance, and develop personnel. They vary in self-management, professionalism and ethics, results focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation. School leaders' administrative practices differ according to their diverse demographic background.

Conclusion

The study concludes that school heads consistently demonstrate strong leadership and core behavioral skills in performing their administrative duties.

The significant relationship between leadership skills and administrative practices reflects a good balance between leading people and managing the school. Moreover, the significant relationship between core behavioral skills and administrative practices indicates that school leaders' strong sense of self-discipline, teamwork, service, flexibility, and responsibility is associated with how they manage the whole school community.

Significant differences in leadership skills, core behavioral skills, and administrative practices by age, sex, education, and training experience mean that school heads' abilities to lead and manage a school also vary. School heads develop through continuous learning, professional behavior, practical experience in different situations, and consistency in practice.

Recommendation

The following are recommended based on the findings of the study:

1. Schools should strengthen the use of realistic, workable, and well-reflected self-assessment and profiling to tailor professional growth to school heads' needs. This will support individualized, appropriate coaching and mentoring rather than generic intervention training. This will also serve as a basis for future scholarships and recommendations for higher positions based on the relevance of their competencies.
2. A district-level Focus Group Discussion (FGD) will be conducted quarterly to share best practices in leadership skills from senior school heads on how they handle issues and concerns in the school.
3. A result-driven Gantt chart should be used to target achievable goals for every school head. The division office will monitor this every term through the Performance Implementation Review (PIR) presentation.
4. The division office will initiate a wider campaign to build connections for all schools depending on their priority needs. The division office should establish and regularly monitor an active, sensible, and functional School Governance Council.
5. Each school head will be required to conduct a timely, relevant, and applicable Learning and Development activity with complete attached documents ready for future promotions.

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