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The Effectiveness of the Strategic Resource and Time Management Practices of the School Heads in the Public Elementary Schools in the Division of Camarines Norte

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated strategic resource and time management among public elementary school heads in the Division of Camarines Norte during School Year 2025–2026. A descriptive-evaluative-inferential survey used total enumeration of 113 school heads from the First Congressional District (n=59) and Second Congressional District (n=54). A validated researcher-made questionnaire measured six resource-management domains, seven time-management practices, four operational-effectiveness domains, and eleven challenges. Weighted means, ranks, and Wilcoxon–Mann–Whitney tests were analyzed at α=.05. Strategic resource management was Very Much Employed overall (M=4.64), led by financial allocation (M=4.70); human-resource improvement was lowest (M=4.49). Time-management practices clustered at M=4.66–4.68 and were Very Much Employed. Operational effectiveness was Very Much Effective (M=4.66), led by prioritized instructional time (M=4.68). All resource, time, and operational-effectiveness domains differed significantly between districts. Challenges were Very Much Evident, headed by excessive administrative workload (M=4.60), multiple overlapping roles (M=4.50), and burnout (M=4.49); however, their overall rank distributions did not differ significantly (z=1.02, p=.1539). Findings support administrative streamlining, workload protection, district-responsive resource leadership, transparent lifecycle management, delegation, self-care, and outcome-linked evaluation.

1. Introduction

School leadership is a central organizational condition for translating educational policy into coherent classroom practice. Although school heads influence learning indirectly, they shape the goals, routines, professional relationships, resource decisions, and accountability structures through which teachers work. Leadership is therefore most consequential when administrative competence is joined with instructional purpose and when improvement priorities are understood by staff and stakeholders (Leithwood et al., 2020).

The Governance of Basic Education Act locates substantial responsibility for school-level management within a decentralized system. This responsibility requires school heads to interpret national directives, organize human and material resources, maintain transparent processes, and respond to local needs. The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads further organizes effective practice around strategic leadership, operations, teaching and learning, people development, and stakeholder relationships (Department of Education, 2020; Republic Act No. 9155, 2001).

Competence in school management is not reducible to procedural compliance. Effective leaders diagnose conditions, set priorities, use evidence, mobilize collective expertise, and communicate a credible direction. They also create the relational conditions under which teachers can take professional risks, share problems, and sustain improvement. Relational trust is thus an operational resource: it lowers coordination costs, supports candid dialogue, and increases the likelihood that organizational decisions will be implemented (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

Distributed leadership provides a complementary lens because the work of school improvement is stretched across people, routines, and situations. Principals remain accountable, but effective governance depends on purposeful participation by teachers, coordinators, parents, local officials, and community partners. Collaboration becomes productive when roles are clear, decision processes are transparent, and participation is linked to defined learning goals rather than treated as consultation for its own sake (Spillane, 2006).

Leadership learning is especially important when responsibilities change, local conditions differ, or administrative demands compete with instructional work. Formal training can build conceptual knowledge, yet transfer to practice depends on coaching, deliberate rehearsal, feedback, peer learning, and opportunities to solve authentic school problems. Professional capital develops through the interaction of individual expertise, social relationships, and sound professional judgment (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

Time, attention, and organizational capacity are finite. School heads who spend disproportionate effort on routine reporting, interruptions, and fragmented transactions may have less opportunity to observe instruction, coach teachers, engage families, and monitor improvement. Evidence on principal time use suggests that management skill is associated not only with productivity but also with perceived effectiveness and occupational stress (Grissom et al., 2015).

Stakeholder engagement adds another layer of complexity. Community participation can extend resources and legitimacy, but it requires leaders to manage expectations, protect fairness, and maintain alignment with educational purposes. Communication must

therefore be reciprocal and evidence-informed. It should clarify why a decision is necessary, whose needs are affected, how implementation will be monitored, and what evidence will indicate improvement.

Within this policy and organizational context, particular attention is required for strategic resource allocation, time use, operational effectiveness, and workload challenges among public elementary school heads.

Survey ratings can establish a useful implementation baseline by identifying domains perceived as strong, comparatively weak, or uneven across groups. However, high self-reported or respondent-reported ratings do not by themselves demonstrate improved teaching or learner achievement. Ratings describe perceived practice; they should be triangulated with observations, administrative records, professional-learning outputs, and outcome indicators before causal claims are made.

Rank-based inferential procedures are appropriate when the analysis concerns ordered assessments or non-normal data. Their interpretation nevertheless requires care. A difference between groups indicates variation in rank distributions, while concordance indicates similarity in ordering; neither statistic estimates the causal effect of a leadership practice. This distinction is essential when translating findings into policy and training priorities.

Against this background, the study provides locally grounded evidence on strategic resource allocation, time use, operational effectiveness, and workload challenges among public elementary school heads. Its value lies in connecting descriptive profiles with implementable leadership-development priorities while preserving the limits of cross-sectional perception data.

1.1 Research Purpose and Analytical Focus

The study assessed six strategic resource-management domains, seven time-management practices, four operational-effectiveness domains, and the challenges school heads encountered. It also compared the two congressional districts using rank-based tests.

The analysis treats resource and time management as interdependent leadership functions. Resources without protected time may remain underused, while time-management routines without adequate staffing, facilities, and materials cannot sustain instructional priorities.

1.2 Conceptual and Empirical Synthesis

Strategic resource management aligns human, financial, physical, and partnership resources with school goals. It includes needs assessment, transparent allocation, utilization monitoring, mobilization, and acquisition across the resource lifecycle.

Time management is conceptualized as priority governance rather than personal scheduling alone. Goal clarity, delegation, distraction control, reflection, and self-care affect whether leaders preserve instructional attention and maintain sustainable performance.

Operational effectiveness emerges when resource and time decisions reduce friction, align stakeholders, support continuous improvement, and protect instructional work. Challenges such as role overload and burnout can disrupt each link in this system.

2. Methodology

A descriptive-evaluative-inferential survey design was used to profile practice and compare two district groups.

The participant table identified 113 school heads through total enumeration: 59 from the First Congressional District and 54 from the Second. This respondent count was used throughout the journal analysis.

A researcher-made questionnaire measured six resource domains, seven time-management domains, four effectiveness outcomes, and eleven challenges. Expert validation and revisions preceded administration.

Weighted means and ranks summarized implementation. Wilcoxon–Mann–Whitney tests compared independent district groups at $\alpha=.05$. Five-point verbal scales described employment, effectiveness, and challenge evidence.

Significant district differences identify non-equivalent rank distributions but do not establish that district membership caused the observed pattern. Practical interpretation requires attention to staffing, geography, support systems, and resource conditions.

Table 1. Research Design, Participants, Measures, and Analysis

Component	Specification
Design	Descriptive-evaluative-inferential survey
Participants	113 public elementary school heads
District distribution	First District=59; Second District=54
Instrument	Validated researcher-made questionnaire
Resource domains	Human, finance, facilities, availability, mobilization, acquisition
Time domains	Priorities, goals, delegation, self-care, focus, reflection
Effectiveness	Instructional time; alignment; improvement cycles; reduced friction
Analysis	Weighted means, ranks, Wilcoxon–Mann–Whitney; $\alpha=.05$

2.1 Analytical Rigor and Boundaries

Total enumeration provides strong coverage of the identified school-head population. It does not eliminate perception bias or differences in how respondents interpreted highly favorable scale anchors.

The participant distribution in the methodology provides the reproducible sample frame used here. District comparisons would be strengthened by reporting group medians, rank sums, effect sizes, and confidence intervals.

Operational-effectiveness ratings are perceptual. Administrative records on budget execution, procurement time, facility utilization, report volume, meeting load, instructional observation, and staff well-being are needed for triangulation.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Participant Distribution

The two districts contributed nearly equal numbers of school heads.

Table 2. Distribution of School-Head Respondents

Congressional District	Frequency	Percent
First District	59	52%
Second District	54	48%
Total	113	100%

The balanced distribution supports comparative analysis and reduces the risk that one district dominates pooled interpretation. Differences should be examined as contextual management patterns, not as fixed district characteristics. Resource bases, staffing, remoteness, and administrative support may shape the observed results.

3.2 Strategic Resource Management

Table 3. Strategic Resource-Management Practices

Resource Domain	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Allocating financial resources	4.70	Very Much Employed	1
Mobilizing resources	4.67	Very Much Employed	2
Acquiring resources	4.67	Very Much Employed	2
Using facilities and equipment	4.66	Very Much Employed	4
Assessing resource availability	4.66	Very Much Employed	4
Improving human resources	4.49	Much Employed	6
Grand mean	4.64	Very Much Employed	—

Financial allocation led the profile, followed by mobilization and acquisition. These ratings suggest strong attention to fiscal alignment, partnership development, procurement, and accountability.

Human-resource improvement ranked last and fell just below the Very Much Employed band. This relative weakness is consequential because material and financial resources create value only when staff possess the capacity and time to use them well. All six domains differed significantly between districts ($z=2.24–2.72$; $p=.0034–.0125$). Contextual resource-leadership support should therefore be differentiated while maintaining common transparency and equity standards.

3.3 District Differences in Resource Management

Table 4. Wilcoxon–Mann–Whitney Results for Resource Domains

Resource Domain	z	p	Decision
Improving human resources	2.30	.0062	Significant
Allocating finances	2.24	.0125	Significant
Facilities and equipment	2.47	.0068	Significant
Assessing availability	2.36	.0091	Significant
Mobilizing resources	2.72	.0034	Significant
Acquiring resources	2.65	.0040	Significant

The largest standardized differences concerned mobilization and acquisition. These activities depend on stakeholder networks, proposal skills, local fiscal conditions, procurement support, and access to external partners.

Equity requires more than equal distribution. Districts with fewer partnership opportunities may need technical assistance, shared procurement mechanisms, grant-writing support, and division-level resource brokerage.

3.4 Time-Management Practices

Table 5. Highest-Level Time-Management Practices

Practice Domain	Mean	Interpretation	Relative Position
Prioritizing task-evaluation frameworks	4.68	Very Much Employed	Highest tier
Setting clear goals	4.68	Very Much Employed	Highest tier
Delegating effectively	4.68	Very Much Employed	Highest tier
Focusing on set goals	4.68	Very Much Employed	Highest tier
Reflecting and adjusting	4.67	Very Much Employed	Middle
Minimizing distraction	4.66	Very Much Employed	Lower tier
Practicing self-care	4.66	Very Much Employed	Lower tier

Goal setting, prioritization, delegation, and focus formed the highest tier. Their similarity indicates that school heads perceived a coherent set of planning and execution practices.

Self-care and distraction control were slightly lower. The small numerical difference should not obscure their strategic value: sustained leadership requires recovery, boundaries, and protection from unnecessary interruption.

District comparisons were reported as significant across time-management domains. Capacity-building should combine personal routines with organizational redesign, because individual efficiency cannot fully compensate for excessive reporting or understaffing.

3.5 Operational Effectiveness

Table 6. Effectiveness of Strategic Resource and Time Management

Effectiveness Domain	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Prioritized instructional time	4.68	Very Much Effective	1
Data-informed improvement cycles	4.66	Very Much Effective	2
Reduced administrative friction	4.66	Very Much Effective	2
Stakeholder-driven resource alignment	4.65	Very Much Effective	4
Grand mean	4.66	Very Much Effective	—

Prioritized instructional time ranked first, appropriately connecting management with the core work of teaching and learning. Continuous improvement and reduced friction followed closely.

All four domains differed significantly between districts: instructional time $z=2.16$, $p=.0154$; stakeholder alignment $z=2.73$, $p=.0032$; improvement cycles $z=2.72$, $p=.0033$; and reduced friction $z=2.23$, $p=.0132$.

The practical objective is not efficiency for its own sake. Streamlined routines should release time for classroom observation, teacher coaching, learner support, and evidence-informed improvement.

3.6 Challenges in Resource and Time Management

Table 7. Highest-Rated Challenges Encountered by School Heads

Challenge	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Administrative workload limiting instructional leadership	4.60	Very Much Evident	1
Multiple and overlapping responsibilities	4.50	Very Much Evident	2
Burnout from extended hours and high demands	4.49	Much Evident	3
Delayed priority tasks and decisions	4.49	Much Evident	3
Difficulty balancing work and personal life	4.47	Much Evident	5
Frequent interruptions and distraction	4.44	Much Evident	6

Administrative workload was the dominant challenge, directly threatening the instructional-time strength identified elsewhere. Multiple roles and burnout show that favorable management ratings coexist with substantial sustainability risks.

The overall challenge comparison was not significant ($z=1.02$, $p=.1539$). Both districts therefore appear to share a common burden even though they differ in specific resource and effectiveness domains.

System-level streamlining, clerical support, reporting integration, delegation, calendar protection, and wellness safeguards are necessary. Training in personal productivity alone would place responsibility on school heads without changing the workload environment.

3.7 Integrated Interpretation of the Findings

School heads reported very strong resource and time-management practices and very high operational effectiveness. Financial allocation, instructional time, and improvement cycles were notable strengths.

District differences across resource, time, and effectiveness domains indicate that high pooled means coexist with contextual inequity. Support should be targeted according to verified needs and opportunities.

The universal pattern of heavy workload is the central policy tension. Leaders cannot indefinitely preserve instructional time through personal effort when reporting, role overlap, interruptions, and insufficient manpower remain structurally embedded.

A sustainable framework should align resource lifecycle management, workload protection, delegation, administrative simplification, staff development, and outcome monitoring.

4. Conclusions and Implications

4.1 Conclusions

Strategic resource management was Very Much Employed overall, with financial allocation highest and human-resource improvement lowest. All resource domains differed significantly between districts.

Time-management practices and operational effectiveness were very highly rated, with prioritized instructional time leading. District differences were significant across the reported domains.

Challenges were substantial, especially workload, overlapping roles, burnout, and delays. Their overall rank distributions did not differ significantly, indicating a shared system-level concern.

4.2 Study Limitations

The cross-sectional design captures perceptions at one point in time and cannot establish temporal order or causal influence. High ratings should therefore be interpreted as evidence of perceived implementation or effectiveness, not as proof that the practices caused improved organizational or learner outcomes.

The measures rely on structured questionnaire responses and may be affected by social desirability, recall, common-method variance, and differences in how respondents interpreted scale anchors. Observation, document review, interviews, and performance records were not integrated into the principal statistical estimates.

Rank-based comparisons summarize ordering among indicators or groups but do not quantify the practical size of an intervention effect. Generalization is bounded by the specified locale, participant selection, school year, and organizational conditions represented in the study.

Future applications should retain item-level data, document missing-data procedures, report reliability coefficients for every multi-item scale, and publish reproducible test statistics with degrees of freedom and exact probability values.

The sample count follows the detailed respondent distribution of 113 school heads. Future reporting should reconcile every summary count and retain one verified analytic dataset throughout all sections.

4.3 Implications for Practice and Policy

The Division Office should simplify duplicative reports, coordinate deadlines, expand clerical support, and protect recurring instructional-leadership blocks in school-head calendars.

Resource management should use lifecycle controls covering needs assessment, transparent prioritization, procurement, utilization, maintenance, inventory, and replacement.

District-specific assistance should strengthen partnership development, grant preparation, equitable resource brokerage, and human-resource development where gaps are greatest.

Leadership support should include delegation, boundary setting, stress management, recovery, and referral mechanisms, accompanied by organizational—not merely individual—workload reform.

5. Policy and Implementation Priorities

Table 8. Strategic Resource and Time Management Matrix

Priority Area	Recommended Direction	Expected Evidence
Administrative streamlining	Integrate reports, coordinate deadlines, and remove low-value requirements.	Time audit; reduced reporting hours; fewer duplicate submissions
Instructional-time protection	Block recurring time for observation, coaching, and learner review.	Calendar evidence; completed coaching cycles
Resource lifecycle	Standardize needs, allocation, procurement, use, maintenance, and replacement.	Lifecycle records; utilization and condition audits
District equity	Target brokerage, grant, and partnership support using needs profiles.	Gap profiles; support actions; resource gains

Priority Area	Recommended Direction	Expected Evidence
Human-resource development	Link staffing, delegation, coaching, and professional learning.	Development plans; delegation map; competency evidence
Leader well-being	Monitor workload, burnout risk, recovery, and access to support.	Workload dashboard; well-being checks; referrals

6. Directions for Future Research

- Future studies should verify resource and time practices using administrative logs, budget records, procurement timelines, calendar data, and school-performance indicators.
- Longitudinal research should examine how workload, burnout, and instructional-time allocation change after administrative streamlining or added clerical support.
- District comparisons should report effect sizes and investigate contextual mechanisms through interviews and case studies.
- The proposed training and workload reforms should be evaluated through implementation fidelity, pre/post outcomes, and cost-benefit analysis.

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