

Social Media Utilization and Leadership Practices of Secondary School Heads in the Province of Sorsogon

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Abstract

This study examined the social media utilization and leadership practices of secondary school heads in the Province of Sorsogon. Anchored on technology acceptance, Social Capital Theory, Educational Leadership Theory, and the Integrated Digital Social Leadership (IDSL) Framework, the study investigated how social media platforms are used in communication, information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and resource-related functions, and how these relate to educational leadership practices. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed. The respondents were secondary school heads from public small secondary schools in the Schools Division of Sorsogon, selected through total enumeration. Data were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire validated by experts and pilot-tested prior to administration. Statistical tools used included frequency count, percentage, rank, weighted mean, and Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient with t-test. Findings showed that Facebook and Messenger were the most commonly used platforms. Social media was often utilized for communication, information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and resource-related functions, with information dissemination showing the highest level of use. Leadership practices in policy implementation and compliance, accountability, responsiveness, adaptability, and achievement of organizational goals were all rated highly. However, the analysis revealed no significant relationship between social media utilization and leadership practices, indicating that frequent social media use did not directly correspond to stronger leadership performance. The study also found that opportunities for digital leadership were present, particularly in communication and stakeholder engagement, but challenges remained in ICT training, infrastructure, funding, and institutional support. It was concluded that social media serves as a useful support tool in school leadership, but its effectiveness depends on purposeful, ethical, and well-supported implementation. The study recommends continued strategic use of social media, stronger participatory digital practices, and improved institutional support for digital leadership. The study is aligned with SDG 4, SDG 9, and SDG 16 through its focus on quality education, digital infrastructure, and accountable school governance. Its sustainability impact lies in strengthening institutional, educational, technological, and community-based leadership practices in public secondary schools.

Keywords: Accountability, Adaptability, Digital Leadership, Educational Leadership Practices, Information Dissemination, Social Media Utilization, Stakeholder Engagement, Secondary School Heads, Sorsogon

1. Introduction

The rise of social media has transformed institutional communication, trust-building, and leadership in highly networked societies. In education, school heads are now expected to demonstrate digital fluency, strategic communication, and online stakeholder engagement, making social media part of the contemporary leadership environment rather than a mere communication tool (DataReportal, 2024; We Are Social, 2024; Beckman et al., 2024; Powers & Green, 2014). International and local literature consistently indicates that social media can strengthen school–community relationships, support transparency, improve information flow, and enhance responsiveness, although its use is also constrained by ethical, infrastructural, and professional challenges (Kartashova et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2023; Villaseñor, 2024; Del Rosario, 2023). In this context, the present study examines the social media utilization and leadership practices of secondary school heads in the Province of Sorsogon to determine how digital platforms are used and how such use relates to leadership effectiveness.

The widespread adoption of social media has reshaped educational leadership by expanding expectations for school heads beyond traditional administration to include timely online communication, stakeholder engagement, and reputational leadership (DataReportal, 2024; We Are Social, 2024; Beckman et al., 2024; Powers & Green, 2014). International studies show that school leaders use social media to mobilize stakeholder support, maintain visibility of school initiatives, and strengthen accountability through rapid communication (Beckman et al., 2024; Kartashova et al., 2022). At the same time, digital leadership is complicated by issues such as data privacy, professional boundaries, and misinformation, requiring

school heads to align communication practices with governance, ethics, and organizational goals (UNESCO, 2023). In educational systems, social media has become a practical leadership resource that enables school heads to disseminate information quickly, coordinate activities, maintain visibility, and respond to stakeholders in real time. Recent literature emphasizes that leadership in the digital age is not defined simply by frequent technology use, but by purposeful, ethical, and strategic use of digital platforms to support school improvement. Thus, social media use must be examined as part of a broader governance and leadership process rather than as a matter of platform preference alone (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2022).

The literature identifies several recurring themes in social media utilization among school leaders. First, platform selection is functional and strategic. School heads tend to use platforms already familiar to stakeholders because these increase reach, convenience, and the likelihood that messages will be received and acted upon (Kaban (2021); Saraih et al. (2022); Karakose et al. (2024); Uzorka and Kalabuki (2025); Hussein (2025)). Messaging applications are often used for internal coordination, while public-facing platforms are used for announcements, recognition, and outreach. Second, communication and information dissemination are central dimensions of social media utilization. Studies show that digital platforms enable school leaders to coordinate urgent matters, clarify expectations, issue reminders, and distribute official announcements more efficiently and transparently (Salamondra (2021); Saraih et al. (2022); Hussein (2025); Kaban (2021); McCarthy et al. (2023); Karakose et al. (2024); Uzorka and Kalabuki (2025)). Third, stakeholder engagement is more complex than simple online visibility. Literature distinguishes one-way communication from genuine engagement, stressing that effective stakeholder participation depends on sustained, reciprocal, and trust-based interaction (Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2022); The University of Chicago Consortium (2022); Frontiers in Education (2025); Powers & Green, 2014; SEAMEO, 2021). Studies from the Philippines and other countries further show that active and transparent school social media presence can improve parent participation, volunteerism, resource support, and stakeholder satisfaction, although it also raises concerns about privacy, etiquette, misinformation, and student protection (D'Souza (2023); Thompson and O'Hara (2022); Guzman & Rivera, 2021; Almario (2023); Espinosa and Templonuevo (2022); Villaseñor (2024); Beckman et al. (2024); Okafor (2023); Prasetyo and Halim (2021); Johnson (2023)). Fourth, sustained digital leadership depends on resource availability. The literature highlights infrastructure, connectivity, devices, technical support, professional digital competence, and institutional backing as necessary conditions for meaningful social media use in leadership practice (Reis-Andersson (2024); McCarthy et al. (2023); Yang et al. (2025); Tømte (2024); Okunlola and Naicker (2025)). Finally, the literature consistently links social media to leadership dimensions such as policy implementation and compliance, accountability, responsiveness, adaptability, and organizational effectiveness. Social media can improve transparency, strengthen communication quality, and support participatory governance, but it also introduces workload pressures, digital fatigue, ethical dilemmas, and uneven readiness across schools (McCarthy et al. (2023); Karakose et al. (2024); Reis-Andersson (2024); Tømte (2024); Yang et al. (2025); Beckman et al. (2024); Apps, et. al (2023); Taşdan (2024); Cruz and Garcia (2020); Santos (2022); Del Rosario, 2023; Lee (2023); Chen and Liu (2021); Alaimo (2022); Raza and Mumtaz (2024); Al-Harhi (2022); Krein (2024); Bowman (2022); Villaseñor, 2024; Aguilar, 2023; Berkovich (2022); European Commission (2022); Cruz (2024)).

Globally, social media has become central to educational leadership, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of digital communication for governance, instructional supervision, and stakeholder interaction (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2022). Educational leaders in the United States, Australia, Europe, and ASEAN have used social media to promote school image, improve transparency, support participatory governance, and expand professional collaboration (Beckman et al., 2024; Lim, 2022; Kartashova et al., 2022; Shaikh, Ali, and Al-Maamari (2022); Powers and Green (2014)). Nationally, the Philippines provides a highly relevant setting because it has one of the highest levels of social media use, with Filipinos spending an average of 3 hours and 34 minutes per day on social platforms (We Are Social, 2024; Philstar.com, 2024). This digital environment has extended into schools, where the Department of Education has promoted professionalism and responsible online engagement through DepEd Order No. 49, s. 2022 and related digital transformation initiatives (Department of Education, 2022). However, literature also shows that policy implementation, digital competence, training, and ethical regulation have not advanced uniformly, creating uneven practice across schools (Villaseñor (2024); Aguilar (2023); Del Rosario (2023)). Locally, the issue is more pronounced in the Province of Sorsogon, where connectivity expansion efforts indicate both progress and continuing limitations, particularly in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (Department of Information and Communications Technology [DICT], n.d.; Philippine News Agency, 2025). Even where internet access exists, variability in speed, stability, devices, and user readiness may reduce social media use to basic announcement posting rather than strategic digital leadership. This creates a practical tension for secondary school heads who operate in a context where stakeholders use social media extensively but where infrastructure and governance risks can hinder meaningful and ethical utilization.

The study is anchored on multiple theoretical perspectives explaining adoption, acceptance, relational value, and leadership effectiveness in digital contexts. Technology acceptance is explained through the idea that school heads are more likely to use social media when they perceive it as useful, manageable, and beneficial for coordination, transparency, responsiveness, and professional engagement, but less likely to adopt it when they perceive complexity, limited skills, or

excessive workload. This theoretical view clarifies the motivational and cognitive factors influencing social media adoption among school leaders. Social Capital Theory (Putnam, 2000) explains how networks, trust, and relationships support collaboration and resource sharing. In educational settings, social media functions as a digital network through which school heads can strengthen connections with teachers, parents, and community stakeholders, thereby enhancing trust, reciprocity, participation, and collective support. Educational Leadership Theory further situates social media within the broader framework of leadership effectiveness. Effective school leadership involves setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organization, and improving instructional programs (Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2020)). From this perspective, social media is not merely a communication technology but a strategic leadership instrument that may support policy communication, instructional coordination, staff recognition, participatory governance, and community engagement when used intentionally and ethically. Building on these perspectives, the study advances the Integrated Digital Social Leadership (IDSL) Framework, which posits that social media becomes an effective leadership tool when innovation adoption, perceptual acceptance, relational strengthening, and strategic alignment with leadership practices occur simultaneously. The framework also recognizes moderating factors such as digital competence, ethical considerations, workload management, and institutional support in shaping meaningful leadership outcomes. The literature strongly supports the growing importance of social media in educational leadership, yet several gaps remain. First, although foreign and Philippine studies show that social media can improve communication, transparency, stakeholder satisfaction, and teacher collaboration, they also reveal continuing challenges related to digital literacy, policy awareness, ethics, workload, digital fatigue, and inequitable access (Villaseñor (2024); Almario (2023); Gutierrez (2023); Del Rosario (2023); Beckman et al. (2024); Krein (2024); Bowman (2022); Aguilar (2023)). Second, much of the literature is either foreign or regional in scope, while context-specific evaluation in areas such as Sorsogon remains limited. Recent theses and journal articles affirm the continued expansion of social-media leadership practices but stress uneven readiness and the lack of localized investigation, justifying the need for empirical inquiry in the target setting (Villaseñor 2024; Cruz 2024; Reyes 2024). Third, the study addresses the need to move beyond assumptions by examining the actual extent of social media utilization of secondary school heads in Sorsogon across communication, information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and resource availability, and by determining how these relate to policy implementation and compliance, accountability, responsiveness, adaptability, and achievement of organizational goals. The study is therefore justified because it provides baseline local evidence, tests the relationship between social media utilization and leadership practices, and develops a context-sensitive framework for digital leadership enhancement (United Nations, n.d.; UNESCO, 2023).

The study aligns most directly with Sustainable Development Goal 9 (SDG 9), which emphasizes quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure and stronger access to information and communications technology (United Nations, n.d.). In educational settings, this alignment is reflected in the need for digital infrastructure and leadership capacity that can transform connectivity into improved communication, transparency, stakeholder participation, and school services. Where access is limited or uneven, the potential of social media for school improvement is also constrained. The study also has relevance to SDG 4, as effective and ethical digital leadership supports school coordination, communication, stakeholder engagement, and professional practice that can contribute to improved educational governance and learning environments (UNESCO, 2023; Department of Education, 2022). In addition, the emphasis on transparency, accountability, and participatory engagement suggests relevance to SDG 16, particularly in relation to strong institutions and ethical governance in schools (UNESCO, 2023; Beckman et al., 2024).

The study contributes to multidisciplinary sustainability by addressing technological, institutional, educational, and community dimensions of school leadership. From a technological sustainability perspective, it examines whether school heads can meaningfully leverage social media within the realities of infrastructure, connectivity, and digital competence. From an institutional and governance perspective, it explores how digital platforms can support accountability, responsiveness, policy implementation, and ethical communication. From an educational sustainability perspective, it highlights how strategic digital leadership may strengthen school operations, teacher coordination, and stakeholder support. From a community sustainability perspective, it considers how social media can improve participation, trust, and collaborative engagement among schools, parents, and local stakeholders. Overall, the study is important because it situates digital leadership within the actual conditions of public secondary schools in Sorsogon and offers evidence that may guide more targeted interventions, localized digital leadership training, and a social media-based digital leadership enhancement framework responsive to ethical, infrastructural, and organizational realities.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component provided a detailed account of how secondary school heads in the Province of Sorsogon utilized social media in carrying out leadership functions, particularly in communication, information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and management of resources such as manpower, budget, and facilities. The correlational component examined the relationship between social media utilization

and educational leadership practices, specifically policy implementation and compliance, accountability, responsiveness, adaptability, and achievement of organizational goals. The descriptive aspect supported the systematic collection of data on the types and extent of social media use, perceived benefits, and encountered challenges, while the correlational aspect determined whether and how these digital tools influenced leadership effectiveness in the context of secondary schools in Sorsogon.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the Schools Division of Sorsogon, focusing on public secondary schools classified under the small schools category. These schools were situated in both urban and rural areas, offering a diverse context marked by differences in population size, infrastructure, and access to technological resources. Urban small secondary schools generally had better internet connectivity, digital tools, and more established practices in using social media for administrative and instructional purposes, whereas rural small secondary schools often faced unstable internet access, limited digital devices, and varying levels of digital competence among school heads and staff. By concentrating on small secondary schools, the study sought to capture the leadership experiences, practices, and constraints of school heads operating in resource-limited environments. The inclusion of both urban and rural schools also enabled the study to reveal contextual differences in access, capacity, and adaptive strategies in social media utilization, making the findings locally grounded and relevant to small-school settings in Sorsogon.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents consisted of secondary school heads from public secondary schools in the Schools Division of Sorsogon Province. They were selected because they carry primary responsibility for school leadership, including supervision of instructional programs, management of teaching and non-teaching personnel, implementation of policies, coordination with stakeholders, and overall school governance.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

A total enumeration approach was employed in the study. All eligible school heads and administrators in the Schools Division of Sorsogon City were included, ensuring comprehensive data collection and strengthening the accuracy and representativeness of the findings.

2.5 Research Instrument

The primary instrument used in the study was a researcher-made questionnaire designed to determine the extent of social media utilization and the level of educational leadership practices of secondary school heads in the Province of Sorsogon. It was developed based on the objectives of the study and related literature on digital leadership, social media utilization, and educational management. The questionnaire used structured items with a four-point Likert scale to measure frequency or level of agreement. It consisted of four parts. The first part identified the types of social media platforms used by school heads, including Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Telegram, Snapchat, Threads, Skype, and others, rated from Never to Always. The second part measured the extent of social media utilization in terms of communication, information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and resource availability using a four-point scale ranging from Never to Always. Another part assessed educational leadership practices, while the final part determined the availability of opportunities for maximizing social media use, including training, technical support, partnerships, and ICT resources, rated from Not Available to Highly Available. Prior to administration, the instrument underwent content validation by experts in educational leadership, research, and school administration to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness. Their suggestions were incorporated to improve wording, organization, and alignment with the study objectives. After validation, the instrument was pilot-tested on selected respondents not included in the actual study to check reliability and comprehensibility, and necessary revisions were made before final distribution. The questionnaire also used a four-point Likert scale interpreted through adjectival ranges such as Always, Often, Rarely, and Never.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering followed proper ethical standards, research protocol, and approved procedures to ensure the reliability and validity of the results. Before the conduct of the study, the questionnaire underwent content validation by experts in educational leadership and digital technology integration, and revisions were made based on their comments and suggestions. After validation, a formal request to conduct the study was submitted to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent of Sorsogon, and approval was secured prior to actual data collection. Permission was likewise obtained from the secondary school heads who served as respondents. Before distributing the questionnaire, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and provided an informed consent form. Respondents were informed that participation was voluntary, that responses would be treated confidentially, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to ensure proper orientation and to clarify any questions regarding the instrument. Respondents were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire, and retrieval was conducted after approximately one to two weeks. Follow-up visits and communication were made to ensure complete

retrieval of the instruments. All collected data were kept confidential, properly recorded, and securely stored to protect respondent identity and maintain research integrity.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools aligned with the objectives of the study. Frequency count, percentage, and rank were used to determine the types of social media platforms used by secondary school heads and to identify the most commonly utilized platforms. Weighted mean was used to determine the extent of social media utilization in terms of communication, information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and resource availability, as well as the level of educational leadership practices in the areas of policy implementation and compliance, accountability, responsiveness, adaptability, and achievement of organizational goals. To determine the relationship between social media utilization and educational leadership practices, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used, together with the t-test for significance of correlation at the 0.05 level of significance. These statistical tools were applied to ensure objective interpretation of the data and to support the conclusions of the study.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical safeguards throughout the research process. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, their participation was voluntary, confidentiality was assured, and they were given the right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Permissions were obtained from the proper authorities and participants before the administration of the questionnaire, and all gathered data were securely handled to protect the identities of the respondents and preserve the integrity of the research.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Social Media Utilization of Secondary School Heads

3.1.1 Types of Social Media Platforms Used

The findings show that Facebook and Messenger were the dominant platforms used by secondary school heads, although their ranking varied by district. Facebook ranked highly in both districts and placed first in the Second Congressional District, while Messenger ranked first in the First Congressional District. Other platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter) were used only minimally. The pattern indicates that school heads relied most heavily on familiar and accessible platforms suited for either broad stakeholder communication or rapid internal coordination. This pattern suggests that platform selection was closely tied to leadership function. Facebook was used more for public communication, visibility, accountability, and stakeholder engagement, while Messenger supported internal coordination, clarification of policies, scheduling, and urgent operational communication. The limited use of Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X indicates that visual branding, multimedia dissemination, youth-centered engagement, and wider professional networking were not yet primary digital leadership strategies among school heads in the province.

3.1.2 Communication

The results indicate that social media was used often for communication-related leadership functions, with an overall average weighted mean of 3.26. Sending important announcements to teachers obtained the highest total weighted mean of 3.80 and communicating reminders and daily updates followed with 3.72, both interpreted as “Always.” Addressing staff concerns or queries, conducting quick polls or feedback, and communicating with parent groups were all interpreted as “Often,” with total weighted means of 3.04, 3.02, and 2.74, respectively. The First Congressional District showed slightly stronger integration than the Second Congressional District. These findings indicate that social media has become a routine administrative communication tool, especially for announcements and reminders. The lower but still frequent ratings for staff concerns, feedback, and parent-group communication suggest that digital platforms are used more strongly for directive and operational communication than for deeper consultative interaction. This supports the view that digital tools have strengthened coordination efficiency in schools while some sensitive or complex concerns may still be handled through formal meetings or direct conversations (Bowman et al. (2022); Santiago and Reyes (2021)).

3.1.3 Information Dissemination

The findings show that information dissemination registered the highest level of utilization among the social media dimensions examined. Social media became a central instrument for regulatory communication, public reporting, recognition, and community engagement, and the overall pattern reflected a mature stage of digital integration in governance-related communication. The data also indicate that digital platforms were consistently used for posting schedules, policy directives, student recognition, and official announcements across both districts. This result suggests that school heads have already institutionalized social media as a formal information channel for transparency and compliance-related communication. The findings are consistent with the view that systematic and visible dissemination of information reinforces trust networks, accountability, direction-setting, and stakeholder engagement, as explained through Social Capital Theory (Putnam, 2000) and Educational Leadership Theory (Leithwood et al., 2020). Overall, information dissemination reflects a digital-first orientation in governance and public communication.

3.1.4 Stakeholder Engagement

The results show that stakeholder engagement was practiced often, with an overall average weighted mean of 2.86. Interacting with parents regarding school concerns obtained 2.60, encouraging community participation 3.30, addressing stakeholder inquiries 2.64, and recognizing stakeholder contributions and partnerships 3.20, all interpreted as “Often.” However, gathering suggestions and feedback from stakeholders recorded 2.48 and was interpreted as “Rarely,” indicating a weaker area in participatory engagement. These findings suggest that social media-supported stakeholder engagement was present but less intensive than internal communication and formal information dissemination. School heads appeared to use digital platforms more for interaction, recognition, and outreach than for collaborative consultation or structured feedback collection. This supports literature emphasizing that stakeholder engagement requires trust, openness, and reciprocal communication, not merely visibility or posting activity (Greco et al. (2020); Espinosa and Templonuevo (2022); Aguilar (2023); Villaseñor (2024)).

3.1.5 Resource Availability

The findings indicate that schools in Sorsogon have a working foundation for digital resource management, but resource support has not yet been fully institutionalized. Social media utilization for resource-related functions was sustained by available personnel, equipment, and connectivity, but budget allocation, technical support, and formal systems remained only moderate. Overall, the study showed that foundational digital infrastructure exists, although it is not yet fully optimized for long-term digital governance. This result implies that digital leadership in the province is operationally supported but still constrained by the absence of stronger institutional frameworks. The findings suggest that improving financial support, technical training, and infrastructure stability would strengthen the sustainability of social media use in school leadership. Thus, while social media is already embedded in practice, its long-term effectiveness depends on stronger organizational investment and systematization.

3.2 Educational Leadership Practices

3.2.1 Policy Implementation and Compliance

The results reveal that policy implementation and compliance were rated very highly, with all indicators falling under “Strongly Agree” and an overall average weighted mean of 3.68. The highest indicator was providing guidance to teachers on implementing policies with a total weighted mean of 3.82, followed by ensuring all school policies are clearly communicated at 3.77 and strictly monitoring compliance with DepEd mandates at 3.76. Enforcing rules consistently and promptly addressing policy violations also remained within the “Strongly Agree” range. These results indicate that school heads were perceived as effective in policy-related leadership, demonstrating strong administrative competence and governance integrity. The consistently high ratings suggest a robust policy implementation framework across both districts, showing that school leaders remained clear communicators, supportive guides, and firm implementers of institutional rules.

3.2.2 Accountability

The findings show that accountability was also rated “Strongly Agree,” with an overall average weighted mean of 3.63. Ensuring proper documentation of school activities obtained the highest total weighted mean of 3.76, followed by maintaining transparency in school operations and decisions at 3.67, providing clear expectations to teachers and personnel at 3.64, monitoring teachers’ performance regularly at 3.59, and taking responsibility for school outcomes at 3.47. The First Congressional District posted a higher mean than the Second, although both remained within the same interpretation. These results suggest that accountability practices were strongly embedded in school leadership. The high rating for transparency indicates that openness in decision-making and operations was actively practiced, while strong documentation and supervision practices reinforced institutional credibility. This aligns with the idea that visible and documented governance strengthens trust and fairness in school management (Johnson (2023)).

3.2.3 Responsiveness

The study identified responsiveness as one of the leadership practices demonstrated positively by school heads. The overall findings indicate that school heads maintained effective responsiveness despite changing educational demands and increasing responsibilities, contributing to sustained school improvement and organizational functioning. This suggests that school heads were able to respond to operational needs and stakeholder concerns even as digital leadership demands expanded. The discussion implies that responsiveness remains linked not only to digital tools but also to institutional support and leaders’ ability to manage multiple responsibilities effectively.

3.2.4 Adaptability

The findings reveal that adaptability was interpreted as “Strongly Agree,” with an overall total weighted mean of 3.55. The First Congressional District obtained an average weighted mean of 3.72 and the Second Congressional District 3.38. Among the indicators, embracing changes that support school improvement recorded the highest total weighted mean of 3.70, followed by modifying decisions when circumstances change at 3.58 and encouraging staff to try innovative approaches at 3.56. The lowest mean was being open to adopting new digital tools for school operations at 3.42, although it still fell within the “Strongly Agree” category. These results suggest that school heads were generally flexible and open

to organizational change, particularly when such change supported school improvement. However, openness to new digital tools was comparatively lower, indicating that technology adoption may still be affected by limited training, resources, and technological readiness. This interpretation is consistent with literature emphasizing adaptability as a core element of digital leadership and noting that digital transformation may be slowed by weak ICT infrastructure and limited capacity-building opportunities (Lim (2022); Shaikh, Ali, and Al-Maamari (2022); Reyes and Tan (2024); Del Rosario (2023); Aquino et al. (2021); Malco (2024)).

3.2.5 Achievement of Organizational Goals

The findings show that achievement of organizational goals was also rated “Strongly Agree,” with an overall average weighted mean of 3.74. Monitoring progress toward school targets and motivating teachers to achieve performance goals both obtained 3.85, the highest in this dimension. Making decisions that lead to improved school outcomes followed with 3.80, aligning school programs with DepEd priorities recorded 3.74, and ensuring that school goals are clearly communicated obtained 3.47. Both districts demonstrated strong performance in this area. These results indicate that school heads were generally effective in directing schools toward planned targets through alignment, monitoring, motivation, and decision-making. The consistently strong ratings suggest that organizational effectiveness remained high even when the level of social media integration differed across leadership functions.

3.3 Relationship Between Social Media Utilization and Leadership Practices

The correlational analysis showed that there was no statistically significant relationship between social media utilization and leadership practices. All computed rho values were low, ranging from $\pm .10$ to $\pm .70$, and all computed t-values (.17, .17, 1.70, .21) were lower than the tabulated t-value of 1.96 at the 5% level of significance. As a result, the null hypothesis was accepted across all four utilization areas: communication, information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and resource availability. These findings imply that more frequent use of social media does not automatically translate to stronger leadership practices. Social media appears to function as a supporting administrative tool rather than a direct determinant of leadership effectiveness. This interpretation is consistent with literature stating that leadership effectiveness depends more on professional competence, digital competence, ethical awareness, management skills, organizational conditions, and institutional support than on the mere presence or frequency of digital platform use (Lim (2022); Beckman et al. (2024); Almario (2023); SEAMEO (2021); Del Rosario (2023); Reyes and Tan (2024)).

3.4 Opportunities for Maximizing Social Media Use for Digital Leadership and School Improvement

The results indicate that opportunities for maximizing social media use were generally available and, in many areas, highly available. Webinars on social media use for education obtained a total weighted mean of 3.34 and were interpreted as highly available, while training on digital leadership was rated 3.25, ICT-related learning opportunities 2.99, technical support training 3.22, and digital leadership learning communities 3.15. The broader discussion further showed that the strongest opportunities were in communication, collaboration, parent involvement, community support, and stakeholder partnerships, whereas training, ICT support, funding, and institutional assistance were comparatively weaker. These results suggest that school heads already have meaningful openings for digital leadership, especially in outreach and stakeholder engagement, but these opportunities are unevenly distributed and not yet fully optimized. The lower ratings in ICT training, funding, and access to technology indicate that digital leadership development may still rely heavily on personal initiative rather than institutionalized support. This interpretation is consistent with studies emphasizing schools as open systems requiring continuous stakeholder interaction and with literature noting that digital leadership also depends on training, innovation, infrastructure, and professional support (Greco et al. (2020); Espinosa and Templonuevo (2022); Aguilar (2023); Del Rosario (2023); Villaseñor (2024); Guzman and Rivera (2021)).

3.5 Proposed Social Media-Based Digital Leadership Enhancement Framework

Based on the study findings, a Social Media-Based Digital Leadership Enhancement Framework was proposed. The framework was designed as a structured and strategic approach for integrating social media into school leadership and management from June 2026 to June 2027 and was anchored on six key focus areas: Communication, Instructional Leadership, Stakeholder Engagement, Governance, Ethical Practice, and Digital Infrastructure. The framework was developed in direct response to the finding that social media utilization did not show a statistically significant relationship with leadership effectiveness. This means that the proposed framework was not intended to promote social media use for its own sake, but to ensure that such use becomes intentional, ethical, strategic, and aligned with leadership functions. The discussion emphasizes that social media should serve as a supportive mechanism in governance, communication, stakeholder participation, instructional leadership, and digital citizenship, with implementation supported by clear systems, protocols, and infrastructure.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that secondary school heads in the Province of Sorsogon commonly used Facebook and Messenger as their primary social media platforms and generally utilized social media often for communication, information

dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and resource-related functions. Their educational leadership practices in policy implementation and compliance, accountability, responsiveness, adaptability, and achievement of organizational goals were consistently rated at a high level, indicating that leadership in the province is generally stable and effective. However, the statistical analysis showed that there was no significant relationship between social media utilization and leadership practices, which means that frequent use of social media did not directly correspond to stronger leadership performance. The findings further indicate that while digital leadership opportunities exist, especially in communication, collaboration, and stakeholder engagement, challenges remain in terms of ICT training, infrastructure, funding, and institutional support, thereby justifying the development of a social media-based digital leadership enhancement framework for secondary school heads.

It is recommended that secondary school heads continue maximizing social media as a tool for communication, information dissemination, and stakeholder engagement while strengthening more structured and participatory digital practices. Greater support should be provided through professional development on digital leadership, improved access to technological resources, and clearer systems for communication, monitoring, and planning to sustain leadership effectiveness amid changing educational demands. Institutional support mechanisms, including training, ICT assistance, and stronger organizational support, should also be enhanced so that school heads can better manage increasing responsibilities without compromising responsiveness, adaptability, accountability, and goal achievement. These actions may help improve readiness for digital and organizational change and support continuous school improvement in the secondary schools of Sorsogon.

This study was limited to public secondary schools under the Schools Division of Sorsogon, particularly those classified under the small schools category, and therefore did not include large secondary schools, private schools, or schools outside the division. It focused only on the perceptions of secondary school heads regarding social media utilization and educational leadership practices, which means the perspectives of teachers, parents, students, and other stakeholders were not covered. The study also examined only selected dimensions of social media utilization, namely communication, information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and resource availability, as well as selected leadership practices such as policy implementation and compliance, accountability, responsiveness, adaptability, and achievement of organizational goals. Since the study used a descriptive-correlational design and relied on a researcher-made questionnaire, the findings were limited to self-reported data and could not establish causal relationships between variables.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study was conducted in accordance with institutional ethical standards and approved procedures. Permission to conduct the research was secured from the proper authorities before data collection, and all respondents participated voluntarily after being informed of the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained prior to the administration of the questionnaire, and all responses were treated with strict confidentiality, recorded properly, and stored securely to protect the identity and privacy of the participants. The researcher likewise observed honesty, transparency, and responsibility in the conduct of the study, acknowledged all sources and contributions appropriately, and ensured that the manuscript is an original academic work with no conflict of interest in its preparation and presentation.

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