

Strengthening School Management: Administrative and Supervisory Practices in Southern Pinukpuk District Public Elementary Schools

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Abstract

This study analyzed the administrative and supervisory practices of public elementary school heads in Southern Pinukpuk District, Kalinga, for School Year 2025-2026. It determined the profile of the respondents, their level of proficiency in administrative and supervisory functions, the problems they encountered, and the significant differences in their perceptions when grouped according to position. The study used a descriptive-survey design with total enumeration of 20 school heads composed of 14 principals and 6 head teachers. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire, unstructured interviews, and documentary analysis, and were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and t-test. Findings showed that school heads were very proficient in most administrative functions, particularly planning, organizing, school operations, fiscal management, communication, and community relations. Available supervisory data also showed very proficient ratings in in-service training, pupil development, staff development, and classroom evaluation, while research was rated proficient. Problems were generally slightly serious to moderately serious, with significant differences in physical plant facilities, decision-making, communication, research, and curriculum enhancement. The study concludes that school heads in Southern Pinukpuk District demonstrate strong leadership capacity, yet continued support is needed in facilities improvement, research use, data management, communication, and curriculum work.

Keywords: Administrative Practices; Instructional Leadership; School Heads; School Management; Supervisory Practices.

1. Introduction

School leadership has become more demanding as public schools are asked to improve learning outcomes while responding to resource gaps, community expectations, and policy reforms. In the Philippine basic education system, school heads are not only administrative officers; they are also instructional leaders who guide teachers, organize learning support, manage school resources, and build partnerships that can help learners succeed. The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads define this role through domains that include leading strategically, managing operations and resources, focusing on teaching and learning, developing self and others, and building connections (Department of Education, 2020).

Recent education literature gives strong attention to the role of school leaders in improving teaching quality and school performance. School-based management research shows that when school heads involve teachers, parents, and local partners in planning and decision-making, schools become more responsive to learner needs and local realities (Ballarta et al., 2022; Bandur et al., 2022). Related studies also indicate that managerial skills, instructional leadership, and academic supervision are linked with better teacher performance, stronger organizational practices, and more purposeful school improvement processes (Ismail et al., 2020; Susanti et al., 2020; Aquino, 2023).

Administrative work remains a major part of school leadership. Planning, organizing, fiscal management, records management, communication, and facilities supervision shape the conditions under which teaching and learning take place. These functions are especially important in public elementary schools where school heads often work with limited resources and multiple reporting demands. Data management has also become more important because school decisions increasingly depend on timely and accurate information, yet schools often struggle with record quality, data use, and decision-making systems (Forrester, 2019; Department of Education, 2022).

Supervisory functions are equally important because they bring school leadership closer to classroom practice. Through in-service training, classroom observation, staff development, pupil development, research, guidance, and curriculum-related support, school heads help teachers refine instruction and respond to learner difficulties. Professional development works best when it is tied to actual needs, sustained through coaching, and supported by leaders who understand both policy expectations and classroom conditions (OECD, 2020; El-Hamamsy et al., 2023).

In the Philippines, continuing concerns about foundational learning, school resources, teacher support, and principalship gaps make school leadership a pressing area for inquiry (EDCOM II, 2024; UNESCO, 2025). In rural and geographically diverse areas such as Kalinga, the work of school heads may be shaped by unique needs in facilities, community relations, staffing, and resource mobilization. Examining the administrative and supervisory practices of school heads in Southern Pinukpuk District can therefore provide evidence that may guide district-level assistance, leadership development, and school improvement planning.

This study analyzed the administrative and supervisory practices of public elementary school heads in Southern Pinukpuk District, Kalinga. Specifically, it determined the profile of the respondents; assessed their proficiency in administrative and supervisory functions; identified the problems encountered in performing these functions; and tested whether significant differences existed in the perceptions of principals and head teachers.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-survey research design to examine the administrative and supervisory practices of public elementary school heads in Southern Pinukpuk District, Kalinga, for School Year 2025-2026. The design was appropriate because the study described existing leadership practices, respondent characteristics, perceived proficiency levels, problems encountered, and differences in perceptions between principals and head teachers.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the public elementary schools of Southern Pinukpuk District, Kalinga, during School Year 2025-2026. The locale was selected because the school heads in the district were directly involved in the administrative and supervisory practices, leadership concerns, and school management functions examined in the study.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were 20 public elementary school heads from Southern Pinukpuk District. They were composed of 14 principals and 6 head teachers who were directly involved in school administration and instructional supervision.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Total enumeration was used because the entire population of school heads in the district was included. This allowed the study to capture the views of both principals and head teachers and to compare their perceptions of administrative and supervisory practices and problems encountered.

2.5 Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire supplemented by unstructured interviews and documentary analysis. The questionnaire covered respondent profile, administrative functions, supervisory functions, and problems encountered. Administrative functions included planning, organizing, directing and controlling, school operations, records and reporting, community relations, fiscal management, physical plant facilities, decision-making, and communication. Supervisory functions included in-service training, pupil development, staff development, classroom instruction and performance evaluation, research, guidance and counseling, and curriculum enhancement. The instrument was tried out among selected school heads from another municipality who were not included as respondents. Comments from the try-out, adviser, and graduate studies reviewer were used to improve the final form of the questionnaire. Documentary analysis was used to verify selected profile data, including latest performance ratings.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

After permission was secured from the proper school authorities, the structured questionnaire was administered to the school head-respondents. Unstructured interviews were conducted to clarify responses and gather additional details, while documentary analysis was used to verify selected profile information, including latest performance ratings.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe respondent profile. Weighted mean was used to determine the level of proficiency and the seriousness of problems encountered. A five-point Likert scale was used for interpretation. The t-test was applied to determine whether the perceptions of principals and head teachers differed significantly at the 0.05 level of significance.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, and their participation was treated with respect. Individual responses were kept confidential and were reported only in grouped form. School names and personal identifiers were not included in the manuscript to maintain anonymity and protect respondents from possible identification.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Profile of the Respondents

Table 1. *Profile of the respondents*

Profile variable	Principal-respondents (n = 14)	Head teacher-respondents (n = 6)
Age	51-55: 4 (28.57%); 46-50: 3 (21.43%); 56-60: 3 (21.43%); 36-40: 2 (14.29%); 41-45: 1 (7.14%); 61-65: 1 (7.14%)	31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50, 51-55, and 56-60: 1 each (16.70%)
Gender	Male: 4 (28.60%); Female: 10 (71.40%)	Male: 5 (83.30%); Female: 1 (16.70%)
Civil status	Married: 13 (92.90%); Widow: 1 (7.10%)	Married: 6 (100.00%)
Highest educational attainment	Bachelor's degree: 3 (21.43%); MAEd graduate: 6 (42.86%); Ed.D./Ph.D.: 5 (35.71%)	Bachelor's degree: 2 (33.30%); MAEd graduate: 4 (66.70%)
Present position	Principal I: 7 (50.00%); Principal II: 5 (35.70%); Principal III: 1 (7.10%); Principal IV: 1 (7.10%)	Teacher III: 3 (50.00%); Head Teacher I: 1 (16.70%); Head Teacher III: 2 (33.30%)
Latest performance rating	Outstanding: 9 (64.29%); Very Satisfactory: 5 (35.71%)	Outstanding: 6 (100.00%)
Years in present position	1-5: 3 (21.43%); 6-10: 3 (21.43%); 11-15: 4 (28.57%); 16-20: 1 (7.14%); 21-25: 2 (14.29%); 26-30: 1 (7.14%)	1 respondent (16.70%) in each bracket from 1-5 to 26-30 years
In-service trainings attended	School, district, division, and regional: 14; National: 9; International: 10	School, district, division, and regional: 6; National: 2; International: 3

Note: Percentages were based on the number of respondents in each group.

Table 1 shows that most principal-respondents were experienced school leaders, with the largest group aged 51-55 and many holding graduate degrees. Head teachers were more evenly distributed across age brackets, and all reported outstanding performance ratings. The profile points to a leadership group with formal preparation and accumulated experience, yet the range in position and years of service indicates a need for differentiated professional development. This agrees with Alvarez and Delavin (2022), who emphasized that school heads vary in career-stage needs and require support aligned with their professional growth levels.

3.2 Proficiency in Administrative Functions

Table 2. *Extent of proficiency along administrative functions*

Administrative function	Principal WM	QD	Head teacher WM	QD
Planning	4.36	Very Proficient	4.33	Very Proficient
Organizing	4.35	Very Proficient	4.32	Very Proficient
Directing and Controlling	4.25	Very Proficient	4.19	Proficient
Operations of the School	4.33	Very Proficient	4.30	Very Proficient
Records and Reporting	4.20	Proficient	4.18	Proficient
Community Relations	4.27	Very Proficient	4.25	Very Proficient
Fiscal Management	4.31	Very Proficient	4.29	Very Proficient
Physical Plant Facilities	4.14	Proficient	4.04	Proficient
Decision-Making	4.28	Very Proficient	4.15	Proficient
Communication	4.33	Very Proficient	4.28	Very Proficient
Grand Mean	4.28	Very Proficient	4.23	Very Proficient

Note: WM = weighted mean; QD = qualitative description.

Table 2 presents the school heads' proficiency in administrative functions. Principals obtained a grand mean of 4.28, while head teachers obtained 4.23, both described as Very Proficient. Among principals, planning received the highest weighted mean of 4.36, followed by organizing at 4.35. Among head teachers, planning also ranked highest at 4.33. These ratings show that school heads are confident in preparing school plans, arranging structures, and aligning activities with school needs. Such results are consistent with studies showing that planning, organizing, and participatory management are central to effective school-based management (Ballarta et al., 2022; Bandur et al., 2022).

Records and reporting received one of the lower ratings, with weighted means of 4.20 for principals and 4.18 for head teachers, while physical plant facilities were rated 4.14 and 4.04. Although these scores remain favorable, they point to tasks that require more technical support, time, and resources. Forrester (2019) noted that data quality and school information systems affect decision-making, while EDCOM II (2024) reported that resource and governance gaps continue to affect basic education delivery. These citations support the need to strengthen records systems and facilities management even when leaders rate themselves as proficient.

3.3 Proficiency in Supervisory Functions

Table 3. *Extent of proficiency along supervisory functions*

Supervisory function	Principal WM	QD	Head teacher WM	QD
In-service Training	4.32	Very Proficient	4.30	Very Proficient
Pupil Development	4.37	Very Proficient	4.33	Very Proficient
Staff Development	4.34	Very Proficient	4.29	Very Proficient
Evaluating Classroom Instruction and Performance	4.32	Very Proficient	4.17	Proficient
Research	4.19	Proficient	4.15	Proficient
Grand Mean	4.31	Very Proficient	4.25	Very Proficient

Note: WM = weighted mean; QD = qualitative description. The table presents the supervisory proficiency data available in the manuscript.

Table 3 shows that principals and head teachers were Very Proficient in their supervisory functions, with grand means of 4.31 and 4.25, respectively. Pupil development received the highest rating for both groups, with weighted means of 4.37 for principals and 4.33 for head teachers. This means that school heads placed strong attention on learner support, remedial teaching, enrichment activities, home visitation, and opportunities for pupil participation. Ismail et al. (2020) and Susanti et al. (2020) similarly reported that instructional leadership and academic supervision can strengthen teacher practice and learner support.

Research received the lowest weighted mean among the supervisory functions, with 4.19 for principals and 4.15 for head teachers, both interpreted as Proficient. The rating is still positive, but it shows that research use may not be as strongly practiced as pupil and staff development. This finding matters because research-informed leadership helps school heads design interventions based on evidence rather than routine compliance. Recent work on professional development also stresses that training becomes more useful when school leaders connect it with teacher needs, classroom data, and guided implementation (OECD, 2020; El-Hamamsy et al., 2023).

3.4 Problems Encountered in Administrative Functions

Table 4. *T-test analysis on problems encountered along administrative functions*

Administrative area	Principal M / SD	Head teacher M / SD	t-value	Decision	Remarks
Planning	2.57 / 0.021	2.59 / 0.012	0.961	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Organizing	2.44 / 0.029	2.48 / 0.021	1.769	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Directing and Controlling	2.53 / 0.061	2.60 / 0.021	2.054	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Operations of the School	2.55 / 0.069	2.63 / 0.065	1.398	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Records and Reporting	2.65 / 0.041	2.70 / 0.051	1.326	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Community Relations	2.51 / 0.042	2.57 / 0.004	2.022	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Fiscal Management	2.54 / 0.114	2.60 / 0.106	0.629	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Physical Plant Facilities	2.70 / 0.021	2.73 / 0.012	2.642	Reject Ho	Significant
Decision-Making	2.50 / 0.021	2.56 / 0.033	2.673	Reject Ho	Significant
Communication	2.51 / 0.029	2.56 / 0.022	3.320	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: t-tabular value = 2.132; df = 4; level of significance = 0.05; Ho = null hypothesis.

Table 4 indicates that most administrative problems did not differ significantly between principals and head teachers. Planning, organizing, directing and controlling, school operations, records and reporting, community relations, and fiscal management had t-values lower than 2.132; hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. This means that both groups experienced these problems in generally similar ways. The weighted means, mostly near the slightly serious to moderately serious range, reveal that difficulties were present but not disabling.

Significant differences appeared in physical plant facilities, decision-making, and communication, with t-values of 2.642, 2.673, and 3.320, respectively. These results mean that principals and head teachers did not experience these concerns in the same degree. Facility-related challenges may be shaped by school size, availability of funds, and access to local support, while decision-making and communication may be affected by differences in authority and role expectations. The finding aligns with Aquino (2023), who

linked managerial skills with organizational performance, and with Dellomas and Deri (2022), who noted that school leadership practices are strengthened when communication and shared responsibility are clear.

3.5 Problems Encountered in Supervisory Functions

Table 5. *T-test analysis on problems encountered along supervisory functions*

Supervisory area	Principal M / SD	Head teacher M / SD	t-value	Decision	Remarks
In-service Education	2.52 / 0.074	2.60 / 0.024	1.850	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Pupil Development	2.63 / 0.021	2.67 / 0.055	1.096	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Staff Development	2.45 / 0.051	2.51 / 0.063	1.348	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Evaluating Classroom Instruction and Performance	2.60 / 0.092	2.62 / 0.021	1.264	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Research	2.63 / 0.012	2.70 / 0.024	4.201	Reject Ho	Significant
Guidance and Counseling	2.58 / 0.044	2.57 / 0.050	0.424	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Curriculum Enhancement	2.55 / 0.016	2.65 / 0.021	6.379	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: *t*-tabular value = 2.132; *df* = 4; level of significance = 0.05; *H*₀ = null hypothesis.

Table 5 shows that principals and head teachers had no significant difference in their perceptions of problems related to in-service education, pupil development, staff development, classroom evaluation, and guidance and counseling. The accepted null hypotheses indicate that both groups shared similar concerns in these areas. The weighted means also show that the problems were felt but remained manageable, which may reflect the respondents' strong experience and continuing participation in professional development activities.

Research and curriculum enhancement, however, showed significant differences, with *t*-values of 4.201 and 6.379. This means that principals and head teachers differed in how strongly they experienced problems in these supervisory areas. Research often requires time, technical confidence, funding, and access to recent studies, while curriculum enhancement demands close work with teachers, learning standards, assessment results, and local learning needs. This result is consistent with the view that school heads need continuous capability building to link supervision, research use, and curriculum improvement (Department of Education, 2020; Crispin et al., 2022; Nalla and Camaya, 2023).

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study found that school heads in Southern Pinukpuk District were generally capable in performing administrative and supervisory functions. Principals and head teachers both showed very proficient ratings in planning, organizing, school operations, community relations, fiscal management, communication, in-service training, pupil development, and staff development. These results indicate that school heads have the knowledge, discipline, and leadership readiness needed to manage daily school operations and support instructional work. The data also point to areas that need greater assistance. Records and reporting, physical plant facilities, research, decision-making, communication, and curriculum enhancement require attention because they either received lower proficiency ratings or showed significant differences in how principals and head teachers experienced related problems. These areas are practical concerns for school leaders because they demand resources, data skills, collaboration, and clear systems of support.

Based on the findings, Southern Pinukpuk District may strengthen school management by providing technical assistance on research, curriculum work, data management, facilities planning, decision-making, and communication. Leadership development activities may also be tailored according to position and career stage so that principals and head teachers receive support suited to their actual responsibilities. Future studies may include teachers, parents, and learners as additional respondents to obtain a fuller picture of how administrative and supervisory practices affect instruction and school improvement.

The study was limited to 20 public elementary school heads in Southern Pinukpuk District, Kalinga, during School Year 2025-2026. Since it used a descriptive-survey design with questionnaire responses, unstructured interviews, and documentary analysis, the findings describe the perceptions and available records of the respondents and may not fully represent school management practices in other districts or school divisions.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study complied with institutional academic and ethical standards by informing the respondents of the purpose of the research, observing voluntary participation, securing informed consent, protecting confidentiality, and reporting individual responses only in grouped form. School names and personal identifiers were not included to maintain anonymity and protect participants from possible identification. The authors take responsibility for the integrity and originality of the manuscript, acknowledge all cited works and contributions, declare no conflict of interest, and retain copyright responsibility in accordance with journal and institutional policies.

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