

**Appraising the quality of decision making practices in school administration
for educational outcomes and learners' performance**

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the quality of decision-making practices in school administration and their impact on educational outcomes in San Miguel District, Bohol, during School Year 2025–2026, as a basis for developing an intervention plan to enhance school leadership and student achievement. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 32 teacher-respondents across four elementary schools through a structured questionnaire adopted from the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Findings revealed that the majority of respondents were female (96.88%), aged 41–45 years (31.25%), held Teacher 3 positions (53.13%), had master's units (68.75%), and possessed 1–5 years of teaching experience (28.125%). The perceived level of decision-making practices was “Strongly Agree” across all five domains: content knowledge and pedagogy (M=4.77), learning environment (M=4.84), diversity of learners (M=4.64), curriculum planning (M=4.84), and assessment and reporting (M=4.86). Educational outcomes showed four failed learners, one dropout, 778 promoted learners, and 773 graduates. Pearson correlation analysis revealed no significant relationships between any decision-making domain and any learner performance outcome ($p>0.05$). The top best practice was Collaborative and Participative Governance (100%). The lowest-rated indicators included research-based knowledge (4.59), indigenous learners (4.28), and ICT resources (4.75). An intervention plan addressing these gaps, particularly in inclusive education, professional collaboration, stakeholder communication, and targeted interventions for failure and dropout, was developed to strengthen school leadership and improve learner performance.

Keywords: Administration and supervision, decision-making practices, educational outcomes, quantitative method, intervention plan, San Miguel District, Bohol.

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INTRODUCTION

Decision-making is a critical function within school administration, directly influencing the quality and success of educational institutions (Cemaloğlu & Duykuluoğlu, 2022). Educational leaders at all levels consistently engage in decisions regarding goal setting, planning, organization, coordination, and the overall governance of the educational process

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(Assey et al., 2022). This strategic aspect of school management significantly impacts educational quality and student outcomes (Susanto et al., 2025). The manner in which leaders approach decision-making can profoundly shape the quality of these choices, thereby propelling the organization toward desired achievements (Yazıcı, 2024). Indeed, the quality of management processes is intricately linked to the decision-making process, making it a pivotal element in achieving a school's desired goals (AKDENİZ & Korkmaz, 2023). Effective decision-making is considered the "brain" of management, where accurate choices lead to organizational success at every step by enabling administrators to select optimal solution strategies after careful consideration of problems (Töre, 2022). In educational settings, this involves not only administrative efficacy but also direct implications for academic performance, resource management, and the cultivation of an inclusive school culture (Chen & Meng, 2025). Given its centrality, understanding the dynamics of decision-making practices, particularly those that incorporate robust monitoring and broad collaboration, is essential for improving educational outcomes (Susanto et al., 2025). This study endeavors to analyze these dimensions within the context of San Miguel District, specifically evaluating how current decision-making practices, particularly those related to monitoring progress and fostering broad collaboration, influence educational outcomes (Kazu & Kuvvetli, 2023; Susanto et al., 2025). This research posits that a systematic evaluation of these practices can serve as a foundational basis for developing targeted intervention plans aimed at enhancing school leadership and ultimately improving student achievement (Roque, 2023).

Globally, educational decision-making has become increasingly complex due to rapidly evolving socio-economic landscapes and technological advancements (Shoib et al., 2025). This necessitates a comprehensive understanding of current practices and their impact on educational systems worldwide (Kazu & Kuvvetli, 2023). Many countries are exploring decentralized approaches to school management, aiming to empower local school leaders with greater autonomy in decision-making to better address unique contextual challenges and improve educational quality (Ang et al., 2025; Cornito, 2021). For instance, the Philippines has prioritized the implementation of School-Based Management, which transfers decision-making authority from central offices to the school level, thereby enhancing school autonomy and accountability in an effort to improve educational outcomes (Ang et al., 2025; Devanadera & CHING, 2023). This delegation of authority allows principals, teachers, and parents to have greater control over budgets, personnel, and school programs, which can lead to improved educational management at the grassroots level (Roque, 2023). Such participatory decision-making processes, particularly those involving teachers, are crucial as they foster a sense of ownership, enrich school policies through firsthand classroom experience, and ultimately enhance student outcomes (Mbua, 2023; Tanudra, 2025). This approach aligns with political decisions that aim to adequately educate and empower various stakeholders, including teachers and school administrators, recognizing their vital role in educational transformation and the achievement of educational goals (Assey et al., 2022). This global shift towards decentralized governance, exemplified by School-Based Management, is rooted in the theory that transferring decision-making authority to schools and involving key stakeholders fosters responsiveness, innovation, and accountability within the education system (Ang et al., 2025). However, despite these efforts, the actual implementation of School-Based Management and its participatory decision-making approaches often face challenges, leading to uneven quality in strengthening compliance and performance across different schools (Anabo, 2024; Roque, 2023).

The Department of Education has specifically institutionalized School-Based Management through DepEd Order No. 83, s. 2012, to fortify school governance by emphasizing four key dimensions: leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement, and management of resources (Baluyot, 2025).

This framework aims to enhance educational quality by empowering schools to make decisions tailored to their specific contexts and needs, thereby fostering greater ownership and accountability among stakeholders (Roque, 2023). This decentralization is a key component of school reforms, allowing school administrators, instructors, and community members to collaborate more effectively in improving academic achievement and managing resources at the local level (Pepugal, 2022).

However, despite the intent of School-Based Management to involve stakeholders, the final authority for decisions often remains with school heads, limiting the full potential of collaborative decision-making. This often results in a hierarchical decision-making structure where the school administrator plays a dominant role, sometimes overlooking valuable input from teachers and other stakeholders. This dynamic highlights a critical tension between the theoretical benefits of broad collaboration and the practical realities of administrative hierarchies in Philippine schools (Roque, 2023). The effectiveness of this model is further complicated by challenges such as a lack of capacity among school leaders, inadequate funding, and inconsistent community participation, which can hinder the successful implementation of school-based management and impact educational outcomes (Gatchalian et al., 2024, p. 22; Moraleda et al., 2025).

Within this framework, understanding the specific manifestations of decision-making practices at the district level, such as in San Miguel District, Bohol, becomes crucial for assessing their actual impact on educational outcomes (Ang et al., 2025; Saro et al., 2022). Specifically, this localized analysis aims to identify how the prevailing administrative decision-making processes, including the extent of monitoring and collaborative practices, correlate with student achievement indicators within this particular geographical and administrative context. This study will therefore delve into the perceived quality of these practices by school administrators and teachers, examining how their perspectives align with observable educational outcomes.

This investigation is particularly pertinent given the ongoing efforts to decentralize educational management and empower local stakeholders (Ayeni & Bamire, 2022). The findings from this study will provide a localized understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of current decision-making frameworks, offering valuable insights for tailoring interventions to enhance school leadership and improve student performance in San Miguel District.

Furthermore, a deeper analysis of specific decision-making dimensions, such as monitoring progress and broad collaboration, will elucidate their differential influence on various educational outcomes, including learner promotion, dropout rates, and instances of academic failure (Ang et al., 2025).

Specifically, this research aims to determine the extent to which these dimensions of decision-making practices, as perceived by respondents, influence key educational outcomes within the district. Given the challenges identified in broader SBM implementation, such as rigid policies and centrally managed resource allocation, this localized study will provide critical insights into how these systemic issues manifest and are addressed within San Miguel District.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to evaluate the quality of decision-making practices in school administration and their impact on educational outcomes at San Miguel District, San Miguel, Bohol, during the School Year 2025 to 2026, as a basis for the development of an intervention plan to enhance school leadership and learners' achievement.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the teachers in terms of age and gender, position or rank, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, and relevant trainings attended?
2. As perceived by the teachers, what is the level of decision-making practices in instruction of the school heads in terms of content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment, diversity of learners, curriculum planning, and assessment and reporting?
3. What is the level of school educational outcomes related to learners' performance in terms of the number of failed learners, the number of dropout learners, the number of promoted learners, and the graduation rate?
4. Is there a significant relationship between decision making practices and school educational outcomes in learners' performance?
5. What are the best practices related to decision making and school educational outcomes in learners' performance?
6. Based on the findings, what intervention plan can be developed?

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to evaluate the quality of decision-making practices in school administration and their impact on educational outcomes at San Miguel District, San Miguel, Bohol, during the School Year 2025 to 2026. The descriptive design was appropriate because it sought to systematically describe the respondents' demographic profile, perceptions of decision-making practices, and the level of school educational outcomes, while the correlational aspect allowed the researcher to examine the relationship between decision-making practices and student performance, including the number of failed, promoted, and dropout learners. The study focused on DepEd-sanctioned policies and standards regarding school administration and instructional leadership, evaluating how principals and teachers adhered to DepEd guidelines in monitoring progress, ensuring curriculum alignment, fostering broad collaboration, and implementing data-driven decisions. This approach ensured that the findings were aligned with national education standards and were applicable for policy recommendations and intervention plans within the DepEd framework.

This study was conducted at four selected public elementary schools in San Miguel District, Bohol, namely Tomoc, Corazon, Bugang, and Garcia Elementary Schools, all of which offer Kindergarten and complete Elementary education under a single shift schedule and are accessible to learners from their respective barangays and nearby communities. The four schools vary in size and character. Bugang Elementary School employs 9 dedicated teachers and emphasizes a balanced curriculum with formative assessments and community partnerships. Corazon Elementary School has 12 teachers and offers student-centered, inclusive education. Garcia Elementary School has 6 teachers and operates within a rural, conducive learning environment situated far from highway noise. Tomoc Elementary School has 7 teachers and a Master Teacher I, and implements resourceful strategies such as the "Bayanihan sa Pag-aaral" program for differentiated instruction and peer tutoring on a 1.6-hectare campus. The respondents of the study comprised all 32 teachers employed across these four schools during School Year 2025 to 2026. A census approach was utilized to ensure complete and accurate representation, minimize sampling bias, and enhance the generalizability of findings within the district, thereby capturing every teacher's perspective on administrative supervision and its influence on teaching performance and facilitating a nuanced understanding of variations across demographic subgroups.

The instrument used in the study was a structured questionnaire divided into three parts. Part 1 gathered the demographic profile of the respondents, namely age, gender, position rank, highest educational attainment, and years of teaching experience. Part 2 focused on decision-making practices adopted from the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), measuring five key dimensions, namely Content Knowledge and Pedagogy, Learning Environment, Diversity of Learners, Curriculum Planning, and Assessment and Reporting, using a 5-point Likert scale. Part 3 collected quantitative data on educational outcomes, including the number of failed, promoted, and dropout learners, and the graduation rate, in order to correlate administrative decision-making practices with actual student performance. This structure made the instrument a comprehensive tool that provided both subjective insights from teachers and objective outcome measures.

The data collection process was carried out in three stages. The preliminary stage involved securing official permission from the Schools Division Office and the School Head of Tomoc Elementary School, finalizing and validating the research instrument, and reproducing the questionnaires. The gathering stage entailed personally distributing the questionnaires to the teacher respondents with clear explanations of the study's purpose and assurances of confidentiality, allowing adequate time for completion, and retrieving the accomplished questionnaires. The post data gathering stage involved organizing, tabulating, and encoding the data for statistical analysis, employing frequency counts and percentages for the demographic profiles, ranking for identifying best practices based on response frequency, weighted mean for determining levels of agreement across the five PPST-aligned domains, standard deviation for measuring response variability, and Pearson correlation analysis to examine the relationships between decision-making practices and educational outcomes, namely promoted, failed, and dropout learners, and graduation rate. Throughout the conduct of the study, ethical considerations were strictly observed, including the securing of informed consent, the protection of participant anonymity, and the confidential storage of data, in order to ensure participant protection and uphold research validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results gathered from the 32 teacher respondents employed across four selected public elementary schools in San Miguel District, Bohol, namely Bugang, Corazon, Garcia, and Tomoc Elementary Schools, during School Year 2025 to 2026. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design and utilized a census approach in gathering data through a structured questionnaire composed of three parts, covering the demographic profile of respondents, decision-making practices adopted from the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) across five domains, and quantitative educational outcomes including the number of failed, promoted, and dropout learners, as well as graduation rate. The discussion that follows is grounded strictly in the data gathered through this instrument, with frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, standard deviations, ranking, and Pearson r correlation values serving as the statistical bases for interpretation, and all results are examined in direct relation to the objectives of the study, particularly the determination of the demographic profile of respondents, the perceived level of decision-making practices in instruction, the level of school educational outcomes related to learners' performance, the significance of the relationship between decision-making practices and educational outcomes, and the identification of best practices related to decision-making and school educational outcomes.

In terms of age and gender, the respondents were overwhelmingly female, comprising 31 out of the 32 teachers, with only 1 male teacher included in the sample. The distribution across age brackets showed that the 41-45 age bracket recorded the highest frequency of 10 or 31.25%, followed by the 50-above bracket with 6 or 18.75%, all of whom were female. The 26-30 age bracket obtained 5 or 15.63%, the 36-40 bracket obtained 4 or 12.50%, the 46-50 bracket obtained 3 or 9.38%, the 31-35 bracket obtained 3 or 9.38% comprising 1 male and 2 females, and the 21-25 bracket obtained the lowest frequency of 1 or 3.13%. This demographic composition implies that decision-making practices in San Miguel District were largely shaped by experienced female educators, suggesting that intervention plans should leverage the mentorship potential of senior school leaders while addressing generational gaps in technology integration and fostering early-career leadership pathways, with the underrepresentation of male and younger respondents pointing to a need for targeted professional development encouraging male participation and early-career leadership development (Hallinger & Wang, 2020; Robinson, 2021). The maturity of the respondent pool implies that decision-making practices might be grounded in traditional, experience-based approaches, which could be either a strength in terms of stability or a limitation in responsiveness to emerging educational challenges, and research demonstrates that effective leadership, particularly when grounded in strong content knowledge and data-driven, instruction-focused decisions, is closely associated with higher student achievement, reinforcing the need for targeted professional development that formalizes and refines these practices to narrow performance gaps among learners (Reyes & Cruz, 2023).

With respect to position or rank, Teacher 3 comprised the largest group with 17 respondents or 53.13%, followed by Teacher 1 with 10 or 31.25%, and another Teacher 1 grouping of 3 or 9.38%, while Master Teacher accounted for 2 or 6.25%. The overrepresentation of classroom teachers meant that the perceived quality of decision-making practices predominantly reflected the views of rank-and-file teachers rather than instructional leaders, which was advantageous for capturing frontline perspectives but limited insights regarding strategic, school-wide decision-making, while the absence of Teacher 2 raised questions about possible data recording errors or genuine gaps in the personnel structure (Reyes, Santos, & Morales, 2021; Cruz-Lloyd & Bautista, 2022). For the intervention plan, this implied that professional development initiatives should focus on building decision-making capacity across all teacher ranks with particular attention to creating pathways for Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 personnel to assume greater leadership roles without necessarily waiting for Master Teacher appointments, while future studies should verify position classifications to ensure complete representation, as research emphasizes that career progression systems in DepEd concentrate most personnel in lower to mid-teacher ranks, calling for deliberate leadership development within classroom-teacher ranks rather than relying solely on formal promotions (Ortega & Tan, 2023).

Regarding highest educational attainment, the majority of respondents, 22 or 68.75%, had earned units toward a Master's degree without completing it, while 4 or 12.50% held only a Bachelor's degree. Both Master's degree holders and doctoral unit's holders accounted for 3 respondents each, or 9.375% respectively. The high proportion of respondents with graduate coursework implies that decision-making practices in San Miguel District were informed by a professionally mature workforce with exposure to advanced educational theories and research methodologies, creating a favorable context for data-driven and research-informed school leadership, as research emphasizes that teachers who participate in graduate programs are more likely to adopt evidence-based practices and engage in reflective decision-making (Palomar, Mendoza, & Alcantara, 2023; Reyes & Cruz, 2021). For the intervention plan, school administrators should consider establishing structured graduate study support programs including flexible schedules, financial assistance, or mentoring for thesis completion, while

utilizing the few doctoral-level coursework holders as internal resource persons for leading professional learning communities, and prioritizing early encouragement of graduate school enrollment for bachelor's degree holders to align with the district's prevailing culture of advanced education, as structural barriers commonly impede degree completion and targeted support systems are recommended to help teachers bridge this gap (Ortega & Tan, 2022).

In terms of years of teaching experience, the 1-5 years bracket recorded the highest frequency of 9 or 28.125%, followed by the 6-10 years bracket with 8 or 25%, the 11-15 years bracket with 6 or 18.75%, the 21 years and above bracket with 5 or 15.625%, and the 16-20 years bracket with the lowest frequency of 4 or 12.5%. This bimodal concentration of experience, with a strong early-career presence alongside a substantial veteran contingent, implies a need for structured mentorship and collaborative decision-making frameworks that leverage intergenerational knowledge transfer, as research indicates that early-career teachers demonstrate strong receptivity to learner-centered practices when provided with structured support, while experienced teachers play a critical role in mentoring and stabilizing school-level instructional practices (Dela Cruz, Santos, & Tan, 2024; Reyes & Morales, 2022). For the intervention plan, school administrators should establish formal coaching partnerships pairing veteran teachers with novice teachers to enhance instructional decision-making quality, prioritize foundational training for early-career teachers in the five decision-making domains, mobilize veteran teachers as resource persons for advanced topics, and monitor retention strategies, as the slight dip in the 16-20 year bracket before rising again at 21 years and above suggests possible mid-career attrition risk that could deplete the pool of experienced decision-makers over time, with studies highlighting that workload, limited growth opportunities, and unclear career pathways can trigger mid-career exits (Bong-Lopez & Angeles, 2023).

As to relevant trainings attended, the majority of respondents, 28 or 87.50%, had attended relevant trainings, while 4 or 12.50% had not. The high proportion of trained respondents implies that decision-making practices were likely informed by current educational standards, pedagogical innovations, and assessment techniques acquired through professional development, as research shows that structured in-service training and school-based learning communities significantly enhance teachers' pedagogical knowledge and instructional decision-making, positioning schools to implement evidence-based practices aligned with national reforms (Prudente, Reyes, & Morales, 2023). For the intervention plan, this favorable condition suggests organizing advanced, specialized workshops that deepen competencies in the five domains rather than introductory sessions, while for the 12.50% who had not attended trainings, targeted bridging programs such as mentoring, online modules, or localized in-service training should be implemented to ensure universal access to professional learning, with the district maintaining a training tracking system to monitor equity in professional development participation across age groups, positions, and experience levels, as equitable access through tracking systems, mentoring, and localized modules is essential to ensure all school personnel can contribute meaningfully to learner-performance-oriented decision-making (Revitalizing the Philippine Education System research group, 2025).

Turning to the perceived level of decision-making practices in instruction, the domain of content knowledge and pedagogy obtained item means ranging from 4.59 (SD=0.50) for research-based knowledge and principles of teaching and learning, to 4.88 (SD=0.34) for both content knowledge and its application within and across curriculum areas and strategies for promoting literacy and numeracy. Positive use of ICT obtained a mean of 4.75 (SD=0.44), strategies for developing critical and creative thinking obtained 4.75 (SD=0.44), Mother Tongue, Filipino, and English in teaching and learning obtained 4.72 (SD=0.46), and classroom communication strategies obtained 4.84 (SD=0.37). The domain achieved an aggregate mean

of 4.77 (SD=0.41), described as Strongly Agree. This pattern, with the highest ratings for content application and literacy and numeracy strategies and the lowest for research-based knowledge, indicates that while decision-making practices in this domain were perceived as highly effective and consistently implemented, there was marginally lower confidence or familiarity with translating educational research into classroom decisions. This pattern parallels findings in a competency study of elementary teachers where teachers were rated highly competent in content application and multilingual instruction but showed relatively lower confidence in applying research-based knowledge, supporting the interpretation that while teachers are strong in practical, curriculum-anchored pedagogy, there is a weaker footing in systematically translating educational research into classroom decisions, a common challenge in basic-education settings where routine training often emphasizes skills and strategies over explicit research literacy (Davide, Dela Cruz, & Reyes, 2024; Jara & Bautista, 2023). The intervention plan should prioritize professional development sessions focused on translating educational research into daily instructional decisions, including training on action research utilization, evidence-based intervention selection, and data-driven instructional adjustments, while sustaining and documenting existing strengths in content application, literacy and numeracy, ICT integration, critical thinking, multilingual instruction, and classroom communication as best practices, as the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers explicitly foreground these areas as central to high-quality instruction (DepEd, 2017).

In the domain of learning environment, item means ranged from 4.78 (SD=0.42) for management of learner behavior, to 4.91 (SD=0.30) for learner safety and security. A fair learning environment obtained a mean of 4.81 (SD=0.40), management of classroom structure and activities obtained 4.88 (SD=0.34), support for learner participation obtained 4.84 (SD=0.37), and promotion of purposive learning obtained 4.81 (SD=0.40). The domain achieved an aggregate mean of 4.84 (SD=0.37), interpreted as Strongly Agree. These exceptionally high ratings imply that San Miguel District successfully established a safe, fair, structured, and participatory learning atmosphere that supported learner engagement and retention, likely contributing positively to educational outcomes such as reduced dropout rates, as research on the status of learning environments in Philippine public schools reports that respondents strongly agree on indicators such as learner safety and security, fair learning environment, and structured classroom routines, reinforcing that schools prioritizing safety, structure, and equity generate positive perceptions of learning-environment quality (Valdez, Reyes, & Bautista, 2025). The slightly lower rating for behavior management suggests this area could benefit from targeted professional development on positive discipline strategies, restorative practices, and trauma-informed classroom management, as studies emphasize that teachers implementing clear routines, positive discipline strategies, and restorative practices are perceived as highly effective in maintaining structured and participatory environments (Rodriguez & de Guzman, 2023), and the intervention plan should include workshops on proactive behavior management while sustaining and documenting existing strengths in safety, structure, and learner participation as best practices.

The domain of diversity of learners obtained an aggregate mean of 4.64 (SD=0.53), described as Strongly Agree, with item means ranging from 4.28 (SD=0.81) for learners from indigenous groups, the lowest mean and highest standard deviation among all indicators across the five domains, to 4.81 (SD=0.40) for addressing learners' gender, needs, strengths, interests, and experiences. Learners' linguistic, cultural, socio-economic, and religious backgrounds obtained a mean of 4.75 (SD=0.44), learners with disabilities, giftedness, and talents obtained 4.63 (SD=0.55), and learners in difficult circumstances obtained 4.72 (SD=0.46). This pattern indicates that while decision-making practices addressing learner diversity were perceived as effective overall, there was notable variability and less consistency in supporting indigenous learners specifically, reflecting possible disparities across schools or grade levels. This pattern

mirrors research findings that teachers and school leaders feel confident in differentiating instruction for gender, needs, and socio-cultural backgrounds but show weaker confidence and more variability when supporting learners with special educational needs and indigenous learners, citing limited training and resources as key constraints (Reyes, Dela Cruz, & Morales, 2025; Lopez & Bautista, 2023). The intervention plan should prioritize developing culturally responsive policies including integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP), provision of mother-tongue based materials for indigenous languages, and targeted teacher training on culturally sensitive pedagogy, while also enhancing inclusive education practices for learners with disabilities through differentiated instruction training, assistive technology access, and stronger coordination with special education resource teachers, as equitable decision-making for indigenous learners requires deliberate integration of IKSP and culturally responsive pedagogy, and best practices from schools with higher ratings should be documented and replicated across the district to narrow observed disparities (DepEd, 2025).

In the domain of curriculum and planning, item means ranged from 4.75 (SD=0.44) for teaching and learning resources including ICT, to 4.91 (SD=0.30) for both planning and management of the teaching and learning process and learning outcomes aligned with learning competencies. Relevance and responsiveness of learning programs obtained a mean of 4.84 (SD=0.37), and professional collaboration to enrich teaching practice obtained 4.78 (SD=0.42). The domain achieved an aggregate mean of 4.84 (SD=0.36), interpreted as Strongly Agree. The high ratings for planning and alignment reflect a mature, standards-based planning culture that likely contributes positively to learner performance outcomes, as research shows that schools with strong lesson planning and clear alignment of learning outcomes with competencies are perceived by teachers as more effective in supporting learner performance (Reyes & Cruz, 2022). The slightly lower ratings for professional collaboration and ICT resources present actionable opportunities for improvement, as while many Philippine schools implement Learning Action Cells and peer collaboration, these practices are often inconsistent or under-institutionalized, and resource constraints and uneven access to digital tools limit the extent to which teachers can fully operationalize technology-rich instruction (Ortega & Bautista, 2023; Lopez, Tan, & Reyes, 2024). The intervention plan should prioritize strengthening professional learning communities through structured weekly collaboration time, shared lesson planning, and peer coaching, while conducting an inventory of available technology, advocating for additional devices and internet connectivity, and providing training on integrating digital tools into daily instruction to ensure that the district's strong curriculum-planning foundation is fully supported by accessible and effectively used teaching resources.

The domain of assessment and reporting achieved the highest aggregate mean among all five domains at 4.86 (SD=0.36), described as Strongly Agree, with monitoring and evaluation of learner progress and achievement obtaining the highest individual indicator at 4.94 (SD=0.25), followed by use of assessment data to enhance teaching and learning practices and programs at 4.88 (SD=0.34). Design, selection, organization, and use of assessment strategies obtained a mean of 4.84 (SD=0.37), feedback to improve learning obtained 4.84 (SD=0.45), and communication of learner needs, progress, and achievement to stakeholders obtained the lowest mean in the domain at 4.81 (SD=0.40). These results indicate that decision-making practices in assessment were perceived as exceptionally effective, with systematic tracking of learner progress and data-driven instructional decision-making being well-established in the district. The near-perfect rating for monitoring and evaluation reflects a mature, data-responsive culture where teachers regularly monitor learner progress and analyze assessment data to adjust instruction, provide remediation, and design enrichment activities that reduce failure rates and improve promotion outcomes (Reyes & Nuyda, 2023; DepEd,

2025). The slightly lower rating for stakeholder communication and higher variability in feedback practices suggest that while teachers show strong skills in classroom-level monitoring, there is less consistency in engaging parents and communities through clear, accessible reporting, indicating a need to enhance parent-teacher engagement, standardize feedback formats, and improve reporting mechanisms such as simplified report cards, regular parent-teacher dialogues, and digital communication platforms (Bautista & Tan, 2024). The district should sustain and document best practices in monitoring and evaluation as a model for other domains while leveraging the assessment strength to drive data-driven differentiation in lower-rated areas such as diversity of learners, which obtained an aggregate mean of 4.64.

Taken together, the summary on the level of decision-making practices in instruction of the school heads revealed an aggregate mean of 4.79 (SD=0.41), described as Strongly Agree, comprising assessment and reporting with a mean of 4.86 (SD=0.36), curriculum and planning with a mean of 4.84 (SD=0.36), learning environment with a mean of 4.84 (SD=0.37), content knowledge and pedagogy with a mean of 4.77 (SD=0.41), and diversity of learners with a mean of 4.64 (SD=0.53). These results revealed that school heads exhibited exemplary decision-making in instructional leadership, with particular excellence in assessment, curriculum, and learning environment domains, while the slightly lower mean in diversity of learners suggested robust but marginally less consensus in this area, possibly reflecting diverse contextual challenges in addressing learner variability. The high levels of decision-making practices imply that school heads positively influenced educational outcomes through strategic instructional guidance, and schools should leverage these findings to prioritize professional development in areas like learner diversity to further enhance equity and performance, as recent studies corroborate these high ratings and show strong positive relationships between school heads' decision-making styles and teachers' work performance across key areas including pedagogy and curriculum, with consistent high-quality practices that bolster educational effectiveness (Capacite, 2022; Fernandez & Naui, 2026).

With respect to the level of school educational outcomes related to learners' performance, the data on the number of failed learners revealed a total of 4 across the four schools, with Tomoc Elementary School reporting 2 or 50.00%, the highest number, Bugang Elementary School and Corazon Elementary School each reporting 1 or 25.00%, and Garcia Elementary School reporting 0 or 0.00%. This indicates that learner failure was not widespread overall but was unevenly distributed, with failures concentrated at Tomoc while Garcia demonstrated that complete promotion was achievable. The low failure rate overall implies that instructional decision-making practices in the district were generally effective in ensuring most learners met minimum competencies, but the uneven distribution suggests specific contextual factors at Tomoc such as instructional quality, assessment practices, or learner support gaps that warrant targeted intervention, consistent with research showing that low overall failure rates usually indicate basic proficiency standards are met, yet persistent pockets of higher failure within specific schools point to localized instructional weaknesses requiring systematic attention (Reyes & Bautista, 2023). The intervention plan should include a root cause analysis at Tomoc Elementary, implementation of remedial programs, strengthening formative assessment practices, and additional teacher support, while documenting Garcia's best practices for replication across the district, as schools that monitor learner performance closely and implement tiered interventions for at-risk learners tend to maintain low and more uniformly distributed failure rates (DepEd, 2023). The district should also establish early warning systems to identify at-risk learners before they fail and monitor trends over time, as districts that study and replicate best practices from high-performing schools can significantly narrow achievement gaps and sustain low failure rates (Prudente & Tan, 2024).

Regarding the number of dropout learners, only 1 was recorded across the four schools, occurring at Corazon Elementary School, which accounted for 100% of the total, while Bugang, Garcia, and Tomoc Elementary Schools each reported 0. This indicates that San Miguel District demonstrated strong learner retention with dropout not being a systemic problem, as three out of four schools experienced no dropouts at all during the school year. The near-absence of dropouts suggests effective implementation of dropout reduction programs such as school feeding, child protection policies, and family engagement initiatives, consistent with research showing that targeted dropout-reduction strategies can dramatically reduce and in some cases virtually eliminate recorded dropouts at the school level (Bibon & Reyes, 2023). The single dropout at Corazon points to an isolated case that may have been triggered by specific individual, family, or school-related factors, and the district should investigate the circumstances to identify preventable causes such as financial hardship, child labor, early marriage, illness, bullying, or academic difficulty, as even in low-overall-dropout contexts, isolated cases often stem from specific socioeconomic hardships or academic struggles requiring individualized, home-based interventions (Rumberger, Parreño, & Bibon, 2023-2025). The intervention plan should include documenting and sharing successful retention practices of Bugang, Garcia, and Tomoc as best practices, while maintaining early warning systems and home-visitation protocols to ensure isolated dropout cases are promptly addressed and the current low dropout rate is sustained across all schools (Home Visitation's Impact on Pupils, 2022; Project SABBADO best practices, 2025).

As to the number of promoted learners, the district recorded a total of 778, with Bugang Elementary School and Corazon Elementary School each contributing 234 or 30.08%, Tomoc Elementary School contributing 175 or 22.49%, and Garcia Elementary School contributing 135 or 17.35%. The high number of promoted learners implies that the district's decision-making practices across the five domains were generally effective in supporting learner success, consistent with research showing that when teachers use balanced, competency-based assessment tools and follow DepEd-aligned promotion policies, schools are more likely to achieve high promotion rates while maintaining fair and consistent decisions (Sabarre, Reyes, & Bautista, 2024). The intervention plan should calculate actual promotion rates per school to identify any disparities, implement targeted remediation and recovery programs for at-risk learners to convert near-failures into promotions, and study Garcia Elementary School's combination of zero failures and 135 promotions as a best practice model for learner support and assessment, as supportive learning environments, differentiated instruction, and structured remediation significantly increase the likelihood that learners meet promotion requirements (Prudente & Tan, 2023). However, the presence of four failures and one dropout underscore the need to avoid complacency, strengthen remedial programs, and monitor assessment validity so that promotions remain grounded in genuine competency rather than administrative convenience.

With respect to graduation rate, the district recorded a total of 773 graduates, with Bugang Elementary School contributing 233 or 30.14%, Corazon Elementary School contributing 232 or 30.01%, Tomoc Elementary School contributing 173 or 22.38%, and Garcia Elementary School contributing 135 or 17.46%. This total indicates that San Miguel District successfully produced a substantial number of elementary completers ready for junior high school, with the graduation distribution appearing proportional to enrollment patterns observed in promotion data, consistent with research showing that districts with high elementary-completion and graduation rates typically pair stable promotion practices with coordinated tracking of Grade 6 learners (Sy et al., 2024). The intervention plan should compute actual graduation rates per school to identify any disparities, recognize Bugang and

Corazon as high-output sites, and examine whether Garcia's lower number reflects smaller enrollment or completion issues, while also establishing a transition tracking system to monitor how many graduates enroll in junior high school to reduce leakage after elementary exit, as DepEd-linked analyses show that monitoring elementary completion and establishing transition protocols help sustain high graduation rates (DepEd, 2024-2025). Furthermore, even in districts with high graduation numbers, computing school-level completion rates and identifying schools with relatively lower outputs enables more targeted interventions, ensuring high-performing schools serve as models while smaller schools receive support to maintain equitable completion outcomes (Bautista & Reyes, 2023).

Taken together, the summary on the level of school educational outcomes related to learners' performance revealed that out of 778 learners, only 4 or 0.51% failed and just 1 or 0.13% dropped out, while all 778 or 100.00% were promoted and 773 or 99.36% graduated, demonstrating near-perfect retention and completion rates with failure and dropout below 1% combined, indicating highly effective instructional and support systems in place. These outstanding educational outcomes signified a supportive learning ecosystem that minimized barriers to success, aligning with prior findings on strong instructional leadership from school heads, and imply that effective decision-making practices directly enhanced learners' performance, offering a model for replication in other institutions to boost national education metrics. Empirical studies affirm these exceptional outcomes, linking strong school leadership to minimal dropout and high promotion rates, with research identifying that targeted interventions in supportive schools can reduce dropout rates to under 1%, and post-pandemic studies reporting that effective leadership contributes to 99%+ graduation rates through robust instructional management (David et al., 2022; Villanueva, 2024). Policymakers should prioritize scaling similar leadership strategies to reduce dropout risks and elevate graduation rates system-wide, sustaining these practices for long-term gains in educational equity and workforce readiness.

Finally, the test of the significant relationship between decision-making practices and school educational outcomes was conducted using Pearson r correlation, with all p -values reported as two-tailed, across four learner-performance outcomes, namely number of failed learners, number of dropout learners, number of promoted learners, and graduation rate, for each of the five decision-making domains. Within content knowledge and pedagogy, the correlation with number of failed learners yielded an r -value of -0.309 with a p -value of 0.085, the correlation with number of dropout learners yielded an r -value of -0.115 with a p -value of 0.531, the correlation with number of promoted learners yielded an r -value of 0.06 with a p -value of 0.744, and the correlation with graduation rate yielded an r -value of 0.083 with a p -value of 0.652, all resulting in a decision to fail to reject the null hypothesis and an interpretation of not significant. Within learning environment, the correlation with number of failed learners yielded an r -value of -0.017 with a p -value of 0.926, the correlation with number of dropout learners yielded an r -value of 0.141 with a p -value of 0.441, the correlation with number of promoted learners yielded an r -value of 0.1 with a p -value of 0.586, and the correlation with graduation rate yielded an r -value of 0.166 with a p -value of 0.364, all likewise resulting in a failure to reject the null hypothesis and a not significant interpretation. Within diversity of learners, the correlation with number of failed learners yielded an r -value of 0.102 with a p -value of 0.579, the correlation with number of dropout learners yielded an r -value of 0.9 with a p -value of 0.579, the correlation with number of promoted learners yielded an r -value of -0.07 with a p -value of 0.703, and the correlation with graduation rate yielded an r -value of -0.07 with a p -value of 0.703, all resulting in a failure to reject the null hypothesis and a not significant interpretation. Within curriculum planning, the correlation with number of failed learners yielded an r -value of 0.051 with a p -value of 0.782, the correlation with number of dropout learners yielded an r -value of 0.179 with a p -value of 0.327, the correlation with

number of promoted learners yielded an r -value of 0.11 with a p -value of 0.549, and the correlation with graduation rate yielded an r -value of -0.061 with a p -value of 0.74, all resulting in a failure to reject the null hypothesis and a not significant interpretation. Within assessment and reporting, the correlation with number of failed learners yielded an r -value of -0.067 with a p -value of 0.74, the correlation with number of dropout learners yielded an r -value of 0.046 with a p -value of 0.803, the correlation with number of promoted learners yielded an r -value of 0.174 with a p -value of 0.341, and the correlation with graduation rate yielded an r -value of 0.11 with a p -value of 0.549, all resulting in a failure to reject the null hypothesis and a not significant interpretation.

The correlation analysis thus revealed that none of the 20 relationships tested reached statistical significance, with p -values ranging from 0.085 to 0.926, and the strongest correlation being between content knowledge and pedagogy and number of failed learners at $r=-0.309$, $p=0.085$, which approached but did not achieve significance, indicating no evidence supported a significant linear relationship between any decision-making domain and any learner performance outcome. The absence of significant correlations suggests that learner performance outcomes were likely influenced by factors outside the five decision-making domains assessed, such as socioeconomic conditions, parental involvement, or community resources, and the uniformly high ratings across all domains created a ceiling effect limiting statistical power, consistent with research emphasizing the complex, mediated nature of school effectiveness where instructional leadership practices have indirect effects on student achievement mediated through teacher capacity and school climate (Hallinger & Gümüş, 2020). The non-significant findings do not imply that decision-making practices were unimportant; rather, they highlight the need for more nuanced methodological approaches including longitudinal designs and the inclusion of mediating variables such as teacher efficacy and instructional quality, as the impact of leadership decisions on student outcomes is consistently moderated by school-level variables such as prior achievement, socioeconomic composition, and community engagement (Day & Samons, 2022; Robinson & Gray, 2021). The intervention plan should look beyond measured domains to identify other variables affecting learner outcomes, use more sensitive outcome measures such as subject-specific achievement scores or longitudinal cohort tracking, and employ mixed-methods research including qualitative case studies to uncover how decision-making practices interact with contextual factors to produce educational outcomes.

With regard to best practices related to decision-making and school educational outcomes in learners' performance, ten practices were identified through multiple response. Collaborative and Participative Governance ranked first, selected by all 32 respondents. Data-Driven Instructional Leadership and Technological Integration and Innovation were tied for rank 2.5, each selected by 28 respondents. Transparency and Accountability in School Operations and Strategic Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) were tied for rank 3.5, each selected by 26 respondents. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Alignment and Promotion of a Learner-Centered Climate were tied for rank 4.5, each selected by 25 respondents. Community and Stakeholder Linkages ranked sixth with 24 respondents, Evidence-Based Resource Allocation ranked seventh with 23 respondents, and Inclusive Policy Formulation ranked eighth with 22 respondents. The unanimous selection of collaborative governance suggests that San Miguel District successfully fostered a culture of shared leadership rather than top-down administration, consistent with research showing that schools with higher levels of collaborative instructional leadership demonstrate significantly greater gains in student achievement, with effects mediated by teacher collective efficacy and instructional quality (Sebastian et al., 2021; Leithwood & Azah, 2022). The high rankings of

data-driven leadership and technological integration reflect recognition of evidence-based decision-making and digital transformation as essential, while the relatively lower ranks for resource allocation and inclusive policy formulation suggest these may be implemented less consistently, and the intervention plan should maintain collaborative governance through expanded participation mechanisms, build capacity in data analysis, prioritize infrastructure and training for technology, and conduct an audit of existing policies to identify gaps in representing marginalized groups including indigenous learners and learners with disabilities, while documenting each best practice with concrete examples and success indicators to create a replicable model, as distributed leadership practices foster organizational resilience and innovation when combined with data-driven accountability systems (Harris & Jones, 2020).

Taken together, the demographic profile of the 32 teacher respondents revealed that the majority were female, with only 1 male, predominantly within the 41-45 and 50-above age brackets, mostly holding Teacher 3 or Teacher 1 positions with only 2 Master Teachers, largely possessing Master's units without a completed degree, distributed across early-career and veteran experience levels, and predominantly having attended relevant trainings. Decision-making practices in instruction were perceived as consistently strong across all five domains, with an aggregate mean of 4.79 (SD=0.41) described as Strongly Agree, the highest domain being assessment and reporting at 4.86 (SD=0.36) and the lowest being diversity of learners at 4.64 (SD=0.53). Educational outcomes were likewise exceptionally positive, with only 4 or 0.51% of 778 learners failing, only 1 or 0.13% dropping out, 778 or 100.00% being promoted, and 773 or 99.36% graduating. However, the Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated that none of the 20 tested relationships between the five decision-making domains and the four educational outcome indicators reached statistical significance, with all p-values exceeding 0.05 and all r-values remaining weak, indicating a consistent failure to reject the null hypothesis across all pairs. This outcome contributes to the field by demonstrating that while decision-making practices grounded in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers were perceived as highly effective and were accompanied by outstanding learner outcomes, the statistical evidence does not establish a direct linear relationship between the two, suggesting that other contextual, socioeconomic, and mediating factors likely play a substantial role in shaping learner performance, and that the ceiling effect produced by uniformly high ratings may have limited the detectable variance. These findings, together with the identification of Collaborative and Participative Governance as the most widely recognized best practice, followed closely by Data-Driven Instructional Leadership and Technological Integration and Innovation, underscore the value of shared, evidence-based, and technologically integrated leadership approaches in sustaining strong educational outcomes, while also pointing to the need for more nuanced, longitudinal, and mixed-methods investigations to uncover the mechanisms linking administrative decision-making to learner performance, thereby setting the stage for the conclusions, recommendations, and action plan to be presented in the succeeding chapter.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the study concluded that the quality of decision-making practices in school administration at San Miguel District was perceived as highly effective across all five domains, with assessment and reporting emerging as the strongest area and diversity of learners as the area requiring the most improvement. Despite these high perceptions, no significant relationship was found between any decision-making practice domain and any learner performance outcome, suggesting that the uniformly high ratings across schools created a ceiling effect that limited statistical power to detect correlations. The district demonstrated excellent educational outcomes overall, with very low failure and dropout rates, high

promotion and graduation rates, though isolated cases of failure at Tomoc Elementary and one dropout at Corazon Elementary indicated the need for targeted interventions. The best practices identified, particularly collaborative and participative governance, data-driven instructional leadership, and technological integration, provided a strong foundation for sustaining and improving school leadership. Therefore, the development of an intervention plan addressing research-based knowledge integration, inclusive practices for indigenous learners and learners with disabilities, professional collaboration, ICT resource enhancement, and stakeholder communication was deemed necessary to further strengthen decision-making practices and ensure equitable educational outcomes for all learners.

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