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Adoption of innovative strategies in Technology Management: To scheme school outcomes: Perspective analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the innovative practices of school heads in planning and implementation in relation to school outcomes in public schools within the Schools Division of Tacloban City for the school year 2025–2026. It sought to describe the profile of school heads and schools, determine the extent of innovative practices in strategic planning and implementation, evaluate key school outcomes, and examine relationships among the profile variables, innovative practices, and school performance indicators. Using a quantitative descriptive–correlational research design, data were gathered from 60 school heads and their teachers through a validated questionnaire. Statistical tools included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Spearman rank-order and eta correlations, with significance tested at the 0.05 level. Findings revealed that school heads exhibited a very high level of innovation in both strategic planning and implementation, characterized by strong data-driven decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and resource management. Schools generally performed well, with satisfactory academic performance, maturing SBM levels, high attendance, minimal dropout, outstanding teacher performance, and well-maintained learning environments. Correlation results showed no significant relationship between school heads' profiles and their innovative practices, but significant relationships existed between innovation and stakeholder participation, learner attendance, and school environment improvement. The study concluded that transformational leadership behaviors—anchored in collaboration, intellectual stimulation, and shared vision—drive school improvement. Guided by the Transformational Leadership Theory and Theory of Change, the research recommends adopting division-wide innovative strategies that institutionalize data-driven, participatory, and sustainable leadership practices to strengthen school effectiveness and student outcomes.

Keywords: Administration and supervision innovative leadership, data-driven decision-making, School outcomes, Tacloban City, Leyte, Philippines.

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INTRODUCTION

School heads play a significant role in shaping the overall performance and direction of educational institutions. Globally, the principal is regarded not just as an administrator but as an instructional leader and change agent who significantly influences teaching and learning processes. According to Hallinger and Heck (2011), school leadership accounts for about 25% of the total school effects on student learning, ranking second only to classroom instruction. In the Philippine context, school heads are tasked with the management of school operations and the development of a learning-conducive environment, as stipulated in Republic Act No. 9155, also known as the "Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001." Their leadership is crucial in ensuring that schools achieve the desired learning outcomes and perform effectively based on DepEd's key performance indicators.

In particular, school heads are instrumental in improving school outcomes through their engagement in strategic planning and implementation practices that align school goals with actual performance. Strategic planning involves setting a clear vision, mission, and goals, guided by data-driven decisions and active stakeholder participation. Several studies confirm the importance of these practices. For instance, a study by Naicker, Chikoko, and Mthiyane (2013) emphasized that the development of a shared school vision, supported by stakeholder engagement and the use of data for planning, is key to sustainable school improvement. Furthermore, the prioritization of programs and activities based on needs assessments ensures that resources and efforts are directed toward impactful interventions.

In addition to planning, effective implementation is equally essential. This includes aligning school activities with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), establishing robust monitoring and evaluation systems, ensuring proper budget and resource allocation, and managing teams effectively through delegation and shared leadership. According to the Department of Education's School-Based Management Manual (DepEd, 2019), school heads are expected to utilize resources judiciously, ensure program alignment with SIP, and continuously monitor and evaluate their implementation to achieve performance targets. Furthermore, evidence from the Philippine National Research Center for Teacher Quality (Rizalino et al., 2017) highlighted that effective delegation and team empowerment lead to better collaboration and ownership among teachers and stakeholders.

When these strategic planning and implementation practices are properly observed, the potential impact on school outcomes is significant. Research has shown that schools with strong leadership and well-implemented school plans demonstrate higher learner academic performance, improved SBM level of practice, reduced dropout rates, better learner attendance, increased teacher efficiency, enhanced stakeholder engagement, and improved physical and learning environments. For example, an evaluation by UNESCO (2016) found that school heads who integrated inclusive planning, effective implementation, and community engagement significantly boosted learner achievement and reduced dropout rates. Likewise, the enhanced functionality of SBM practices directly correlates with transparent decision-making, collaborative governance, and increased stakeholder trust and participation.

The present study is grounded in a compelling reason. Despite numerous efforts and initiatives, many schools in the Schools Division of Tacloban City continue to struggle with poor school outcomes. Based on the 2023 data from the Tacloban City Schools Division Office, the average dropout rate in public elementary schools stood at 5.38%, a figure higher than the national target of less than 3% (DepEd Division of Tacloban City, 2023). In addition, the Early Language, Literacy and Numeracy (ELLN) program's assessment report from the same division revealed that only 39.5% of Grade 3 pupils met the minimum proficiency level in reading comprehension, while just 36.2% met the same level in basic numeracy skills.

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These statistics highlight the urgent need to adopt innovative leadership strategies to address such gaps. Compounding the problem is the issue of limited stakeholder involvement in school planning and implementation activities, which diminishes community ownership of educational goals.

The researcher, a current school head in the Schools Division of Tacloban City, has personally witnessed these persistent challenges. Based on her own professional experience, there is a pressing need to enhance school leadership approaches and adopt innovative strategies to address low academic performance, high dropout rates, and weak community involvement. Her deep understanding of the school context and her commitment to transformative leadership have inspired this research endeavor. Through this study, she aims to identify effective and replicable strategies that school heads can adopt to improve key school outcomes.

Furthermore, there exists a research gap in the local setting. While national studies have documented the influence of school leadership on school performance, localized research within Tacloban City Division that focuses on innovative strategies employed by school heads is limited. Existing school-based research tends to focus on teaching strategies or learner behavior, with minimal exploration of strategic leadership practices. This study addresses this gap by investigating how innovative planning and implementation strategies contribute to enhancing school performance in Tacloban City. It also intends to provide an evidence-based framework that can guide school heads within the division in adopting and institutionalizing practices that yield positive outcomes.

Statement of the problem

This research assessed the innovative practices of school heads in planning and implementation in public schools in relation to the school outcomes in the Schools Division of Tacloban City during the school year 2025 to 2026 toward the adoption of innovative strategies.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the relevant profiles of the school heads in terms of sex, leadership experience, total teaching experience, and relevant trainings and seminars attended, and of the schools in terms of school type, school resources (MOOE), regularity, and activities?
2. What are the innovative practices of school heads as perceived by the school heads and the teachers along the dimensions of strategic planning, including setting school vision, mission, and goals, data driven decision making, stakeholder involvement in planning, and prioritization of programs and activities, and implementation, including alignment of activities with the SIP/AIP, monitoring and evaluation systems, budget and resource allocation, and delegation and team management?
3. What are the school outcomes in terms of academic performance, including MPS and average grade, school-based management (SBM) level of practice, learner attendance and dropout rates, teacher performance based on IPCRF, stakeholder participation, and school physical and learning environment improvement?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the school and school head profiles and innovative strategies, the school and school head profiles and school outcomes, and innovative strategies and school outcomes?
5. Based on the findings, what innovative strategies for school heads may be adopted?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design, appropriate for examining existing conditions, practices, and relationships among variables without manipulating any of them. Specifically, the study sought to describe the innovative practices of school heads in strategic planning and implementation and to determine how these practices relate to various school outcomes such as academic performance, SBM level of practice, teacher performance, stakeholder participation, and physical and learning environment improvement. The descriptive aspect of the design focused on providing a detailed account of the current profile of the schools and school heads, including type of school (JHS, SHS, or both), leadership experience, relevant trainings, and resources (MOOE), as well as their innovative practices in leadership. It also aimed to describe the current status of school outcomes based on measurable indicators such as MPS, grade learner attendance, dropout rates, and IPCRF ratings of teachers. According to Creswell (2012), descriptive research is designed to gather information about the present conditions of a phenomenon and to describe it in a systematic way without making inferences beyond the data. The correlational component of the study, meanwhile, aimed to determine the extent to which school heads' strategic planning and implementation practices are associated with the observed school outcomes. Correlational research, as defined by Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2019), is useful when researchers seek to investigate the relationships among two or more variables and identify patterns or trends in naturally occurring settings. In this study, statistical tests were used to assess whether significant relationships exist between school heads' profiles and their strategic planning and implementation practices, as well as between these practices and school performance indicators, with the understanding that correlation does not imply causation but can reveal meaningful associations that guide further action or decision-making. The combination of descriptive and correlational approaches enabled the study to provide both a comprehensive overview of current leadership practices in the Schools Division of Tacloban City and evidence of how these practices relate to important school outcomes, a design particularly appropriate given the study's aim to inform policy and propose innovative strategies for school heads based on observed patterns and associations.

The conduct of the study followed the input-process-output model as explained by Peterson, Stephens, Park, Lee, and Seligman (2010), in which the general premise is that inputs affect outputs through the interaction that takes place, with processes mediating the input-output relationships. In this framework, the output is dictated by the inputs, while the relationship between them is governed by the processes involved. Following this model, the input phase consisted of the profile of the schools and school heads, including school type, leadership experience, relevant trainings, and resources (MOOE), together with baseline data on school outcomes such as academic performance, SBM level of practice, learner attendance and dropout rates, teacher performance, stakeholder participation, and the physical and learning environment. The process phase involved the assessment of the school heads' innovative practices in strategic planning and implementation, as perceived by both the school heads themselves and their teachers, along with the statistical treatment used to determine relationships between these practices and school outcomes. The output phase consisted of the resulting description of leadership practices and school outcomes, the identified relationships between them, and the proposed innovative strategies or plan of action arising from the findings of the study.

This study was conducted in the Schools Division of Tacloban City, focusing specifically on public schools. The division comprises a total of 60 public schools and operates under the governance of the Department of Education (DepEd). As one of the 13 school's divisions in Region VIII, also known as Eastern Visayas, the Schools Division of Tacloban

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City plays a vital role in the implementation of DepEd programs, policies, and educational reforms in the region. It serves a diverse student population and is committed to providing quality, inclusive, and equitable basic education. The division's strategic urban and semi-urban setting provides a relevant context for examining the innovative planning and implementation practices of school heads, particularly in addressing school performance challenges and enhancing educational outcomes.

The respondents of the study consisted of two primary groups, namely the school heads and selected teachers from public schools in the Schools Division of Tacloban City. All 60 school heads from the 60 public elementary and secondary schools in the division were included as respondents through total enumeration sampling, ensuring comprehensive representation of leadership practices across the division. For the teacher-respondents, purposive sampling was employed to select five (5) teachers from each school, regardless of school size or number of teachers, resulting in a total of 300 teacher-respondents. The distribution of respondents across the ten districts of the division was as follows: DLC 1 had 8 schools and school heads, 40 teacher-respondents, and a total of 48 respondents; DLC 2 had 8 schools and school heads, 40 teacher-respondents, and a total of 48 respondents; DLC 3 had 8 schools and school heads, 40 teacher-respondents, and a total of 48 respondents; DLC 4 had 6 schools and school heads, 30 teacher-respondents, and a total of 36 respondents; DLC 5 had 5 schools and school heads, 25 teacher-respondents, and a total of 30 respondents; DLC 6 had 5 schools and school heads, 25 teacher-respondents, and a total of 30 respondents; DLC 7 had 5 schools and school heads, 25 teacher-respondents, and a total of 30 respondents; DLC 8 had 5 schools and school heads, 25 teacher-respondents, and a total of 30 respondents; DLC 9 had 5 schools and school heads, 25 teacher-respondents, and a total of 30 respondents; and DLC 10 had 5 schools and school heads, 25 teacher-respondents, and a total of 30 respondents. In total, the division contributed 60 schools and school heads, 300 teacher-respondents, and an overall total of 360 respondents. The decision to have an equal number of teacher-respondents per school was purposive and deliberate to ensure balanced representation of perceptions across schools. While schools differ in size and teacher population, assigning a fixed number of respondents per school promotes comparability across cases. This uniformity helps mitigate sampling bias that could arise from allowing larger schools to dominate the data, thus ensuring that each school contributes equally to the assessment of the school heads' innovative practices. Moreover, purposively selecting teachers who are knowledgeable about school leadership initiatives, such as department heads, grade chairpersons, or coordinators, enhances the quality and relevance of the data collected.

To gather the necessary data to answer the specific questions of the study, two structured questionnaires were developed, one intended for the school heads and another for the selected teachers. These instruments were carefully designed to correspond directly with the variables and dimensions identified in the study framework, ensuring both comprehensiveness and relevance in data collection. The structure of the instruments was informed by DepEd's established leadership and performance frameworks, such as the National Competency-Based Standards for School Heads (NCBSSH) and the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), both of which emphasize school planning, instructional supervision, and participatory governance as central leadership functions (Department of Education [DepEd], 2015, 2017). The questionnaire for school heads was composed of three parts. Part I focused on the profile of the school and the school head and was designed to respond to SOP No. 1, which sought to determine relevant contextual information. It included items on the school head's sex, school type, length of leadership and overall teaching experience, and participation in relevant leadership and management

trainings within the last three years. These variables were aligned with DepEd's School-Based Management (SBM) Framework and the RPMS Manual for School Heads, which highlight the importance of leadership experience, professional development, and resource management as indicators of school effectiveness (DepEd, 2012, 2015). Additionally, this section captured information on school resources, particularly the amount and use of the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) fund, including its timeliness and allocation, reflecting DepEd's guidelines on fiscal accountability and resource utilization. Part II of the school head questionnaire explored the innovative practices of school heads and is aligned with SOP No. 2. It consisted of Likert-scale items grouped under two main dimensions, namely Strategic Planning and Implementation. The Strategic Planning dimension included indicators such as setting the vision, mission, and goals; data-driven decision-making; stakeholder involvement; and prioritization of programs and activities. The Implementation dimension included alignment of activities with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), monitoring and evaluation systems, budget and resource allocation, and delegation and team management. These dimensions are grounded in both Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985), which emphasizes vision-setting, collaboration, and innovation, and in DepEd's SIP/AIP Preparation Guide, which operationalizes participatory and data-based planning in the Philippine school context (DepEd, 2015). Part III addressed SOP No. 3, which focused on key school outcomes, and included both objective data and perception-based items. School heads were asked to provide factual information on their schools' most recent Mean Percentage Score (MPS), average learner grades, current SBM level, attendance and drop-out rates, and teachers' IPCRF ratings. In addition, perception statements were included on stakeholder participation and physical and learning environment improvement, in line with DepEd's School Report Card (SRC) and Enhanced SBM Assessment Tool (DepEd, 2012, 2015). This combination of quantitative and perceptual data provided a comprehensive view of school performance and how it relates to leadership practices. The teacher questionnaire mirrored Part II of the school head questionnaire, focusing on the same leadership dimensions to validate and triangulate data. Teacher responses provided an important comparative perspective, allowing the researcher to verify the consistency of leadership perceptions between school heads and teaching staff. This dual-informant approach is supported by best practices in educational leadership research, where teachers' perceptions of leadership behaviors are considered critical indicators of school culture and instructional quality (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). The instruments were developed based on relevant leadership theories, educational management frameworks, and DepEd mandates, ensuring alignment with the School Improvement Planning (SIP) process, School-Based Management (SBM) standards, and the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS). Collectively, these instruments provided a valid, comprehensive, and contextually grounded means of assessing innovative leadership practices and their relationship to school outcomes in the Division of Tacloban City.

The data gathering process for this study began with securing the necessary permission from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of the Division of Tacloban City. A formal letter of request was submitted to the SDS, stating the title, purpose, scope, and significance of the study, with copies of the research proposal, data gathering instruments, and a request for endorsement to the identified schools attached. Upon approval, an official communication from the SDS was sought, authorizing the conduct of the research and facilitating access to the target respondents, specifically school heads and selected teachers from the 60 public schools in the division. After permission was granted, the researcher coordinated with the respective school heads to schedule the distribution of the research instruments. During the coordination, the purpose of the study was explained, and assurance

of confidentiality and voluntary participation were reiterated. The questionnaires for school heads were administered through face-to-face distribution. Simultaneously, each school head was requested to assist in the identification of five teachers from their school who could serve as respondents for the teacher questionnaire, and these teachers were purposively selected based on their familiarity with the school head's leadership practices and their involvement in school improvement activities. The data collection was conducted over a period of two to three weeks, allowing ample time for respondents to accomplish the questionnaires, and follow-up communications were made to ensure the timely retrieval of the completed instruments. All data collected were properly organized, encoded, and stored in password-protected digital files for further analysis.

Throughout the data gathering process, the researcher strictly adhered to ethical standards in accordance with the principles of integrity, respect, and responsibility in research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with a consent form included with each questionnaire explaining the voluntary nature of participation, the purpose of the study, procedures involved, expected benefits, and the assurance that participants may withdraw at any time without consequence. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by not requiring the names of teacher respondents, and any identifying information from school heads was treated with strict confidentiality. Data were reported in aggregate form and were not traceable to any individual or specific school, and the information collected was used solely for academic purposes and was not disclosed to unauthorized parties. Furthermore, the researcher committed to exercising objectivity and impartiality in analyzing and interpreting the data. Findings were reported honestly, with due acknowledgment of limitations, and the study avoided any form of deception, coercion, or undue influence, with participants treated with respect and fairness at all times.

To ensure accurate and meaningful analysis, the responses gathered through the questionnaires underwent systematic scoring and interpretation, with each part of the questionnaire corresponding to a specific research question and treated accordingly using descriptive and, where appropriate, inferential statistical tools. For the innovative practices, a mean of 4.21 – 5.00, corresponding to a response of strongly agree, was interpreted as a Very High (VH) Level of Practice; a mean of 3.41 – 4.20, corresponding to agree, was interpreted as a High (H) Level of Practice; a mean of 2.61 – 3.40, corresponding to neutral, was interpreted as a Moderate (M) Level of Practice; a mean of 1.81 – 2.60, corresponding to disagree, was interpreted as a Low (L) Level of Practice; and a mean of 1.00 – 1.80, corresponding to strongly disagree, was interpreted as Not (N) Practiced. For academic achievement in terms of MPS, based on DO 08, s. 2015, an MPS of 96 – 100 was interpreted as Mastered; 86 – 95 as Closely approximating mastery; 66 – 85 as Moving towards mastery; 35 – 65 as Average mastery; 15 – 34 as Low mastery; 5 – 14 as Very low mastery; and 0 – 4 as Absolutely no mastery. For academic achievement based on grade, also based on DO 08, s. 2015, an average grade of 90 – 100 was interpreted as Outstanding; 85 – 89 as Very satisfactory; 80 – 84 as Satisfactory; 75 – 79 as Fairly satisfactory; and below 75 as Did not meet expectations. For the attendance rate, 95 – 100% was interpreted as Excellent; 90 – 94 as Very good; 80 – 89 as Good/Acceptable; 70 – 79 as Below expectations; and below 70 as At-risk/Needs interventions. For dropout rate, ≤1 to 2 was interpreted as Very low/excellent retention; >2 to ≤5 as Low/Good retention; >5 to ≤10 as Moderate/Needs Improvement; and >10 as High/Critical. For Teacher Performance based on IPCRF, a rating of 4.500 – 5.000 was interpreted as Outstanding; 3.500 – 4.499 as Very satisfactory; 2.500 – 3.499 as Satisfactory; 1.500 – 2.499 as Unsatisfactory; and 1.000 – 1.499 as Poor. For stakeholder participation, a mean of 4.21 – 5.00, corresponding to strongly agree, was interpreted as a Very High (VH)

Extent; a mean of 3.41 – 4.20, corresponding to agree, was interpreted as a High (H) Extent; a mean of 2.61 – 3.40, corresponding to neutral, was interpreted as a Moderate (M) Extent; a mean of 1.81 – 2.60, corresponding to disagree, was interpreted as a Low (L) Extent; and a mean of 1.00 – 1.80, corresponding to strongly disagree, was interpreted as Not (N) Extent. For school physical and learning environment improvement, a mean of 4.21 – 5.00 corresponded to strongly agree, 3.41 – 4.20 corresponded to agree, 2.61 – 3.40 corresponded to neutral, 1.81 – 2.60 corresponded to disagree, and 1.00 – 1.80 corresponded to strongly disagree.

To answer SOP No. 1, which sought to determine the relevant information of the school and school head in terms of school type, leadership experience, relevant trainings, and school resources, the data were analyzed using percentages, frequency counts, and descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. Categorical data, such as school type and attendance in specific training programs, were summarized in terms of frequencies and percentages to show the distribution of schools and respondents, while numerical variables like years of experience, number of trainings attended, and amount of MOOE allocation were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation to describe central tendency and variability across the sample. This analysis provided a clear profile of the respondents and contextual background for understanding variations in leadership practices. For SOP No. 2, which examined the innovative practices of school heads as perceived by themselves and their teachers along the dimensions of strategic planning and implementation, responses to the Likert-scale items were analyzed using the weighted mean and standard deviation, with the weighted mean determining the average perception rating per statement and per indicator, and the standard deviation assessing the consistency or variability in responses across respondents. To answer SOP No. 3, which aimed to assess school outcomes in terms of academic performance, SBM level of practice, learner attendance and drop-out rates, teacher performance, stakeholder participation, and school physical and learning environment improvement, percentage and means were used to summarize actual performance indicators such as MPS, average grades, attendance rates, and IPCRF ratings, while weighted mean and standard deviation were again utilized for perception-based indicators like stakeholder participation and the physical learning environment. To examine the relationship between the level of leadership practices, from SOP No. 2, and school outcomes, from SOP No. 3, eta correlation was applied for variables where the independent variable, leadership practices, is continuous and the dependent variable, such as SBM level or IPCRF category, is categorical or ordinal in nature, while Spearman rank-order correlation was used to analyze relationships between ranked variables, such as stakeholder involvement and learner outcomes. These correlation analyses helped determine the extent to which leadership practices are associated with improved school outcomes.

For clarity, the following key terms and variables are defined as they are used in the study. Academic Performance refers to the overall learning achievement of students as reflected in the school's mean percentage scores in standardized assessments and the general average of learner grades, serving as a direct outcome indicator of the effectiveness of teaching, learning, and leadership practices in the school. Alignment with SIP/AIP refers to the extent to which the school's programs, activities, and schedules are consistent with what is outlined in the School Improvement Plan and Annual Implementation Plan, reflecting the school head's adherence to strategic planning frameworks and their ability to implement programs systematically and purposefully. Budget/Resource Allocation pertains to how the school head allocates financial resources, particularly the MOOE, to support school operations, programs, and innovations, including transparency, participatory budgeting, and alignment with identified school priorities, with the way the budget is managed reflecting the school head's financial acumen and leadership efficiency. Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

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refer to the mechanisms established by the school head to assess the progress and effectiveness of school programs and initiatives, including the use of tools, feedback systems, and performance indicators to track results and inform improvements, with the presence of effective monitoring and evaluation systems reflecting the school head's commitment to accountability and continuous improvement. Data-Driven Decision-Making involves the school head's practice of using relevant school data, such as test scores, attendance reports, and teacher evaluations, to inform planning and program implementation, emphasizing the analytical use of information to guide actions and improve outcomes, and capturing the extent to which the school head relies on evidence-based practices in managing and improving school performance. Delegation and Team Management refer to the school head's ability to distribute tasks and responsibilities effectively among staff and foster collaboration within the school, including promoting teacher leadership, encouraging shared accountability, and cultivating a team-oriented culture, reflecting the school head's capacity to build a cohesive and empowered workforce. Leadership Experience of the School Head pertains to the number of years a school head has served in a formal leadership capacity, such as principal or head teacher, reflecting the depth of professional exposure to school management responsibilities, which may influence the level of confidence, competence, and innovation a school head brings to their role. Learner Attendance and Drop-Out Rates represent access and retention indicators in the school, with high attendance signifying student engagement and regular participation in learning, and low drop-out rates indicating that the school is successful in keeping learners enrolled. Prioritization of Programs and Activities refers to the school head's ability to identify and focus on key interventions and projects that address the most urgent needs of the school, involving strategic resource allocation and the alignment of initiatives with DepEd priorities and learner needs, and indicating the school head's capacity to manage complexity and lead with clarity and focus. Relevant Trainings of the School Head refer to the professional development programs, seminars, or workshops attended by the school head that are specifically aligned with school leadership and management, which may include training in School-Based Management, instructional leadership, financial management, project development, and curriculum implementation, with the nature and frequency of such trainings reflecting the level of professional preparation and continuous learning that a school head undergoes, which may contribute to their ability to lead innovatively. SBM Level of Practice refers to the degree of implementation of the School-Based Management framework in the school, as validated by the division, ranging from developing to sustained levels and reflecting how well governance, curriculum, accountability, and resource management practices are institutionalized, providing insight into the school's autonomy, participatory culture, and effectiveness of local decision-making. School Physical and Learning Environment Improvement refers to the development and maintenance of school facilities and the provision of adequate learning resources, including improvements to classrooms, libraries, ICT infrastructure, and other physical aspects of the learning environment, with a well-maintained and resource-rich environment being essential for supporting teaching effectiveness and learner engagement. School Resources (MOOE) refer to the availability and utilization of the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses fund provided by the Department of Education, including the total budget allocation, its timeliness of release, and the areas of expenditure such as instructional materials, utilities, infrastructure maintenance, and teacher development, with the way these resources are managed reflecting the school head's financial leadership and capacity to support school programs effectively. School Type refers to the classification of schools based on the level of education they offer, including elementary schools, junior high schools, senior high schools, and combinations thereof, such as elementary and junior

high, junior and senior high, or fully integrated schools offering K to 12 educations. Setting School Vision, Mission, and Goals refers to the school head's active role in establishing, reviewing, and communicating the school's vision, mission, and goals, involving articulating the school's long-term direction, aligning plans with DepEd's strategic objectives, and ensuring that all stakeholders are guided by these core statements, reflecting the degree to which the school head provides purposeful leadership and fosters a shared sense of direction among the school community. Stakeholder Involvement in Planning refers to the participation of various stakeholders, including teachers, parents, learners, community members, and local officials, in the school planning process, including consultation, feedback, and shared decision-making, which foster ownership and collective responsibility in achieving school goals, with the school head's facilitation of inclusive planning processes indicative of participatory and democratic leadership. Stakeholder Participation refers to the involvement of parents, alumni, community members, and local partners in school programs and activities, including resource contributions, participation in planning, and collaborative implementation of initiatives, with active stakeholder participation reflecting a strong school-community partnership and shared responsibility for education. Teacher Performance Based on IPCRF reflects how teachers meet their Key Result Areas and demonstrate professional practices aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, providing an indicator of instructional quality and the effectiveness of school-level performance management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered from a total of 60 school heads and 300 teacher-respondents, for an overall total of 360 participants, drawn from the 60 public schools of the Schools Division of Tacloban City during school year 2025–2026. Consistent with the quantitative descriptive-correlational design earlier described, the school heads were included through total enumeration sampling while five teachers per school were selected through purposive sampling, and data were gathered using two structured, researcher-developed questionnaires, one for school heads and one for teachers, addressing school and school head profiles, innovative practices in strategic planning and implementation, and school outcomes. The results reported here are grounded entirely in the data collected through these instruments and are interpreted using frequency counts, percentages, means, weighted means, and standard deviations, together with eta correlation and Spearman rank-order correlation, in direct relation to the specific objectives of the study. Findings are discussed against the hypotheses tested at the 0.05 level of significance, and this interpretation provides the empirical basis for the innovative strategies proposed later in the manuscript.

School and school head profile

The demographic and professional profile of the 60 participating school heads shows that a majority are female (58.3%), while male school heads constitute 41.7%. This finding reflects the general trend in Philippine basic education where females continue to dominate the teaching and school leadership workforce, a pattern confirmed by Sebastian (2022), who found that women occupy most school leadership positions in public schools due to their greater representation in the teaching profession. The predominance of female leaders highlights the gender-inclusive leadership landscape in the division and the active participation of women in educational management and governance. In terms of leadership experience, nearly half, or 48.3%, of the school heads have served in leadership positions for 5 to 9 years, while 23.3% have 10 to 14 years of experience and 13.3% have 15 to 19 years; only 15.0% have served for less than 5 years. This distribution suggests that most school heads

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are in their mid-career stage, indicating a balance between administrative maturity and the continuing need for professional growth, a pattern similarly observed by Aquino (2021), whose study revealed that mid-career school heads tend to exhibit adaptive leadership behaviors and a willingness to adopt innovative approaches given their familiarity with both classroom instruction and school management demands.

With respect to total teaching experience, the respondents are largely seasoned educators, with a substantial 96.7% having more than 15 years of teaching experience: the largest group, 26.7%, reported 20 to 24 years, followed by 23.3% with 25 to 29 years and 25.0% with 15 to 19 years. This shows that the majority have acquired considerable instructional expertise before assuming leadership roles, a finding that supports Leithwood et al. (2008), who asserted that experienced teachers transitioning into leadership roles are more effective in aligning instructional priorities and supporting teacher professional learning, thereby improving school outcomes. In terms of training exposure, the majority of school heads, 56.7%, attended 5 to 9 relevant trainings, while 23.3% attended 10 to 14, 15.0% attended fewer than 5, and only 5.0% attended 15 or more. The most frequently attended training types include school-based training at 100%, instructional leadership at 98.3%, curriculum implementation at 96.7%, and financial management/MOOE liquidation at 96.7%, while 90.0% participated in monitoring and evaluation training and 80.0% received training on project development and innovative practices. These results suggest that while most school heads are adequately trained in the operational and instructional aspects of school management, there remains a need to strengthen training programs that focus specifically on innovation and project development, a gap that echoes the Department of Education's Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (DepEd, 2020), which emphasize the integration of innovation and evidence-based practices in leadership development, and which is likewise consistent with the 3ie and NEDA (2022) rapid evidence assessment finding that the quality and coherence of professional development programs, rather than their frequency, have the most significant impact on leadership effectiveness and student outcomes. Overall, the findings suggest that the school heads in the division are professionally competent, experienced, and trained in various leadership and management functions; however, the relatively lower participation in innovation-related training implies that school leaders may still need structured support and mentoring to enhance their capacity for creative problem-solving, research-based decision-making, and data-driven innovation, consistent with Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008), who found that effective leadership practices, particularly those focused on instructional improvement, are most closely associated with improved student achievement.

The profile of the participating schools shows that the majority are elementary schools (70.0%), while only small proportions are junior high schools only (5.0%), senior high schools only (1.7%), elementary and junior high combined (8.3%), or junior and senior high combined (15.0%). This distribution indicates that elementary education remains the most prevalent level in the division, consistent with national data showing that elementary schools constitute the majority of public basic education institutions in the Philippines (DepEd, 2024), and it also suggests that most school heads manage early and middle-level education programs, which often carry unique resource and instructional leadership demands compared with secondary schools (Kilag & Sasan, 2023). Regarding school resources, specifically the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) allocation, 65.0% of schools receive below ₱100,000.00, 26.7% receive ₱100,000.00 to ₱249,999.00, 5.0% receive ₱250,000.00 to ₱499,999.00, 0 schools (0%) fall within ₱500,000.00 to ₱759,999.00, and only 1.7% each receive ₱750,000.00 to ₱999,999.00 or ₱1,000,000.00 and above. This significant variation highlights

the resource disparity among schools, with most operating under limited budgets, a pattern consistent with Malaluan (2021), who reported that inadequate financial resources remain a major constraint to effective school-based management implementation, limiting schools' capacity to support teacher training, procure instructional materials, and improve learning environments, and with Leithwood and Harris (2008), who emphasized that access to adequate school resources directly affects the implementation of improvement initiatives and the realization of educational outcomes. Despite this variation, 91.7% of schools reported regular downloading of MOOE funds, suggesting compliance with DepEd financial management procedures and timely access to operational funds, consistent with Dizon and Bayod (2022), who noted that regular and transparent MOOE disbursement enhances fiscal accountability and facilitates smooth school operations; only 6.7% indicated that MOOE is "sometimes" downloaded and 1.7% reported no regularity, which may point to administrative or logistical challenges in fund release. In terms of activities and materials funded by MOOE, all schools (100%) reported using funds for instructional materials and for teacher training and seminars, while a majority also allocated funds for maintenance and repairs (93.3%), ICT equipment (88.3%), utilities such as electricity, water, and internet (98.3%), and other purposes (33.3%). These findings demonstrate that MOOE is primarily utilized for instructional and operational needs, aligning with the guidelines set forth in DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2016 on MOOE utilization; however, the relatively lower percentage of schools (88.3%) allocating funds for ICT procurement indicates that while digital infrastructure is recognized as essential, limited budgets may restrict the acquisition of technology resources, supporting the observation of Battad (2024) that school heads often prioritize basic utilities and instructional needs over technological investments due to budget constraints.

The overall profile of schools in the division reflects a context of financial limitations but functional compliance with DepEd's management standards, as most schools operate within minimal MOOE allocations yet effectively manage their funds to support essential teaching, learning, and maintenance functions. The findings suggest the need for equitable resource allocation policies, especially for low-MOOE schools, to strengthen innovation and digital transformation initiatives, as Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) and Kilag and Sasan (2023) argue that leadership effectiveness and innovation are maximized when adequate resources and systemic support are present. The results imply that while school heads demonstrate responsible fiscal management, limited MOOE allocations constrain innovation and modernization efforts, and that strengthening financial support, particularly for ICT integration and infrastructure improvement, could empower schools to implement more creative and sustainable innovations, with leadership capacity-building programs ideally including modules on financial optimization and strategic resource management to help school heads maximize limited funds toward high-impact programs.

Innovative practices in strategic planning and implementation

The innovative practices of school heads, as perceived by themselves and by teachers, reveal a very high extent of strategic-planning practice across all dimensions, with highly convergent perceptions from school heads, whose overall mean was 4.80 with a standard deviation of 0.29, and teachers, whose overall mean was 4.83 with a standard deviation of 0.24. Within the dimension of Setting Vision, Mission, and Goals, both groups strongly endorse routine review of the vision, mission, and goals, with school heads rating this at a mean of 4.73 (SD = .73, Very High) and teachers at 4.80 (SD = .43, Very High); clear communication of the vision, mission, and goals to stakeholders, rated 4.83 by both school heads (SD = .38) and teachers (SD = .38), both Very High; and consistent referencing of school goals in planning, implementation, and decision-making, rated 4.83 (SD = .38) by

school heads and 4.81 (SD = .39) by teachers, both Very High. The Data-Driven Decision-Making cluster registers the highest means overall, with the use of relevant school data such as NAT, E-SAT, and SF forms as a planning basis rated 4.83 (SD = .38) by school heads and 4.81 (SD = .39) by teachers; planning decisions informed by performance indicators and assessment results rated 4.87 (SD = .34) by school heads and 4.79 (SD = .41) by teachers; and the analysis and sharing of data trends with stakeholders rated 4.83 (SD = .38) by school heads and 4.80 (SD = .40) by teachers, all interpreted as Very High and suggesting an embedded data-use culture in school planning. In Stakeholder Involvement, teachers slightly out-rate school heads: active involvement of stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and community leaders in the planning process was rated 4.72 (SD = .49) by school heads and 4.84 (SD = .37) by teachers; consultations and meetings held before finalizing school plans were rated 4.72 (SD = .49) by school heads and 4.85 (SD = .36) by teachers; and stakeholder engagement in decision-making and contribution of suggestions was rated 4.65 (SD = .52) by school heads but 4.85 (SD = .36) by teachers, all Very High, implying that participatory processes are visible and valued at the classroom level. For Prioritization of Programs and Activities, both groups report very high alignment with needs and DepEd priorities: identification and prioritization of programs based on school needs was rated 4.77 (SD = .43) by school heads and 4.85 (SD = .36) by teachers; alignment of programs with DepEd priorities and learner needs was rated 4.82 (SD = .39) by school heads and 4.85 (SD = .36) by teachers; and clear communication, resourcing, and support of priority programs throughout the year was rated 4.87 (SD = .34) by school heads and 4.81 (SD = .39) by teachers, all Very High. The small standard deviations, ranging from 0.34 to 0.52 across items, denote strong within-group agreement. These patterns are consistent with the literature, as meta-analyses and large syntheses show that leadership closest to the core of teaching and learning, especially clarifying goals, using evidence, and enabling teacher learning, yields the largest effects on student outcomes (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008).

The very high data-use scores align with international evidence that data-based decision-making can improve achievement when leaders organize structures for feedback and follow-through (Peters et al., 2021; Visscher & Ehren, 2021; Hebbecker et al., 2022). The strong vision, mission, and goals practices reflect research showing that shared vision and its active communication foster learning community development and coherence of improvement work (Toikka, 2024; Hallinger & Heck, 2010). The very high stakeholder involvement ratings are likewise in line with studies linking collaborative leadership and stakeholder participation to gains in school improvement processes (Hallinger & Heck, 2010) and with Philippine scholarship highlighting parent and community engagement as integral to school initiatives (Bartolome et al., 2020). These findings suggest a mature strategic-planning culture that the division can consolidate by sustaining vision, mission, and goals communication routines and tying them explicitly to classroom practice and professional learning; by deepening data use from compliance, that is, merely collecting indicators, toward instructional cycles involving target-setting, feedback, and monitoring, where the effects are strongest; and by maintaining high-participation planning so that stakeholder insights shape program prioritization and resourcing. These directions closely mirror evidence that what leaders do, namely goal clarity, collaborative engagement, and data-guided improvement, predicts outcomes more reliably than leader demographics (Robinson et al., 2008; Leithwood et al., 2008).

Turning to implementation, both school heads and teachers perceived a very high extent of innovative practice, with overall mean ratings of 4.80 (SD = .25) from school heads and 4.84 (SD = .29) from teachers, demonstrating strong alignment between the two groups and suggesting a shared understanding and consistent application of innovative leadership

practices during the execution of school plans. In the dimension of Alignment with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), the alignment of school activities and programs with SIP and AIP was rated 4.80 (SD = .40) by school heads and 4.85 (SD = .36) by teachers; the assurance that plans are implemented as scheduled was rated 4.67 (SD = .48) by school heads and 4.84 (SD = .37) by teachers; and adjustments made when necessary to remain aligned with SIP/AIP priorities were rated 4.83 (SD = .38) by school heads and 4.80 (SD = .40) by teachers, all interpreted as Very High. This consistency reflects an institutional culture that values planning coherence and goal alignment, and studies by Hallinger and Heck (2010) and Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008) confirm that aligning actions with school improvement frameworks significantly strengthens organizational focus and improves student achievement by ensuring that all activities contribute to shared goals.

For Monitoring and Evaluation Systems, regular monitoring of program implementation was rated 4.70 (SD = .46) by school heads and 4.84 (SD = .37) by teachers; the use of evaluation results to improve school programs and processes was rated 4.80 (SD = .40) by both groups; and the consistent use of monitoring tools and feedback mechanisms to track progress was likewise rated 4.80 (SD = .40) by both groups, all Very High. These results suggest that school heads systematically monitor program implementation and use evaluation results to enhance ongoing practices, reflecting a continuous improvement approach consistent with Dizon and Bayod (2022), who found that systematic monitoring and transparent evaluation of school programs promote accountability and sustainability in Philippine public schools, and with Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005), who emphasized that effective leaders continuously evaluate instructional processes, using data to make evidence-based improvements that directly impact learner outcomes.

In terms of Budget and Resource Allocation, both groups rated this dimension the highest among all, with allocation of school funds based on identified needs and priorities rated 4.85 (SD = .36) by both school heads and teachers; transparency and clear communication of MOOE utilization rated 4.87 (SD = .34) by school heads and 4.88 (SD = .33) by teachers; and collaborative development of budget plans with key stakeholders rated 4.73 (SD = .45) by school heads and 4.87 (SD = .34) by teachers, all Very High. These practices reflect strong fiscal leadership and compliance with DepEd guidelines on MOOE utilization, corroborating Malaluan (2021), who highlighted that transparent and collaborative budgeting enhances stakeholder trust and facilitates school improvement initiatives, and Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008), who asserted that resource management, when guided by collaboration and clear communication, contributes to more effective implementation of school programs. Under Delegation and Team Management, appropriate delegation of tasks and responsibilities among staff was rated 4.85 (SD = .36) by school heads and 4.84 (SD = .37) by teachers; fostering of teamwork and collaborative implementation of plans was rated 4.87 (SD = .34) by school heads and 4.83 (SD = .38) by teachers; and empowerment of staff to assume leadership roles was rated 4.85 (SD = .36) by school heads and 4.83 (SD = .38) by teachers, all Very High. This collaborative leadership style aligns with distributed leadership principles that encourage shared responsibility and promote ownership of innovation among teachers and staff, consistent with Leithwood and Harris (2008), who emphasized that empowering teachers through participative leadership leads to greater motivation and professional growth, and with Battad (2024), who found that supportive and empowering school leadership enhances teacher self-efficacy and innovation readiness in Philippine schools.

Overall, implementation practices in the division are highly effective, participatory, and transparent, highlighting the maturity of school leadership and the strong collaboration between administrators and teachers; the close alignment between SIP/AIP, effective monitoring and evaluation, strategic budgeting, and participative management demonstrates

that innovative practices are embedded in the operational culture of the schools. This very high extent of innovative practice implies that schools in the division operate within a culture of accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement, and that sustaining these practices may require ongoing professional development focused on advanced monitoring and evaluation systems, data visualization for decision-making, and strategic resource optimization, along with leadership programs that continue to strengthen distributed leadership by cultivating teacher-leaders who can initiate and sustain innovations at the classroom level. These findings resonate with current and international research underscoring the pivotal role of school heads as strategic leaders in driving school improvement. Guiamalon (2025) highlighted that effective managerial and planning competencies among school heads are instrumental in the successful implementation of School Improvement Plans and School-Based Management, particularly in resource-challenged contexts, which complements the present results showing that school heads consistently align programs with SIP and AIP priorities while maintaining strong stakeholder participation. Similarly, Ibrahim, Kyando, and Kiwonde (2023) found that strategic implementation practices in Tanzanian schools often surpass planning activities, emphasizing practical leadership and adaptive management, an observation that parallels the proactive implementation patterns noted among school heads in this study. The current findings also align with Tariq's (2024) conclusion that comprehensive strategic planning, anchored on vision setting, stakeholder engagement, and continuous evaluation, is essential for achieving meaningful school outcomes, as reflected in the present study's high ratings for data-driven decision-making, collaborative goal setting, and monitoring and evaluation systems. Miskell's (2020) research further supports these findings, demonstrating that distributed leadership and clear goal alignment contribute to improved student achievement, reinforcing the significance of delegation and team management as implementation dimensions in this study. Finally, Aquino, Afalla, and Fabelico (2021) confirmed that effective leadership practices correlate positively with teacher performance, supporting the implication that innovative strategic planning and implementation foster improved school performance, teacher efficiency, and stakeholder engagement. Collectively, these studies validate that strategic leadership, characterized by vision-driven planning, participatory governance, data-informed decisions, and collaborative implementation, remains a cornerstone of educational success, and the convergence of findings underscores that innovation in leadership practice is essential not only for operational efficiency but also for sustaining continuous school improvement and learner achievement.

School outcomes

The academic performance of students in the participating schools generally falls within the "moving towards mastery" level based on the latest quarterly examination results. Out of 60 schools, 43, or 71.7%, registered mean percentage scores ranging from 66 to 85, described as "moving towards mastery," while 17 schools, or 28.3%, achieved scores between 86 and 95, described as "closely approximating mastery." The computed mean score is 82.2, with a standard deviation of 3.66, suggesting that students are performing at a satisfactory level with relatively small variability across schools, indicating consistent academic performance across the division though with room remaining for improvement toward mastery-level outcomes. For the school average grades of students, 46.7% of schools reported average grades within the "satisfactory" range of 80 to 84, 36.7% were rated "very satisfactory" at 85 to 89, 10.0% achieved an "outstanding" level of 90 to 100, and only 6.7% were rated "fairly satisfactory" at 75 to 79. The computed mean grade is 84.4, with a standard

deviation of 4.58, confirming that overall student achievement in the division is consistently within the satisfactory range, reflecting acceptable learning gains aligned with national standards.

These results affirm the positive influence of effective school leadership and innovative practices on academic outcomes. In the Philippines, Aquino, Afalla, and Fabelico (2021) found that teachers perform better when guided by school heads who demonstrate strong instructional leadership, collaborative planning, and innovation-oriented management, while Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008) emphasized that effective leadership focused on goal alignment, data use, and staff empowerment accounts for nearly one-quarter of the variance in student achievement across schools. The consistency in satisfactory to very satisfactory performance also aligns with Guiamalon (2025), who reported that effective implementation of School Improvement Plans and evidence-based planning practices among school heads in BARMM led to improved learner outcomes despite contextual challenges, and with Miskell (2020), whose international research revealed that rural school districts in New York with strong strategic planning processes achieved higher student performance, confirming that well-executed school plans and distributed leadership contribute directly to learning improvements. However, the predominance of "moving towards mastery" scores also signals the need for continuous instructional supervision and targeted interventions to bridge the gap toward mastery-level performance, and strengthening data-driven instruction, enhancing teacher professional development, and promoting innovation in pedagogy could further improve academic outcomes, consistent with Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe's (2008) assertion that leadership practices focusing on improving teaching quality have the greatest impact on student outcomes. These findings imply that while schools under the division maintain commendable levels of student achievement, sustained progress toward mastery requires reinforcing the instructional leadership role of school heads, and that division leaders and policymakers should prioritize initiatives enhancing teachers' pedagogical competencies and strengthening the use of student performance data for planning and remediation.

Regarding other key performance indicators, the majority of schools, 65.0%, are classified at Level 2, Maturing, in the School-Based Management (SBM) framework, while 23.3% remain at Level 1, Developing, 10.0% have reached Level 3, Advanced, and only 1.7% have reached Level 4, Sustained. This distribution indicates that most schools have already established participatory decision-making, transparency, and basic accountability mechanisms but are still in the process of institutionalizing higher-level practices such as innovation, stakeholder empowerment, and results-based management, consistent with DepEd (2024) guidelines highlighting that schools at the Maturing level demonstrate consistency in implementing SBM processes but need further evidence of sustained gains to progress toward Advanced and Sustained levels, and affirming Bruns, Filmer, and Patrinos (2011), who emphasized that when authority is devolved to schools through SBM, improvement in performance outcomes depends largely on the depth of accountability and capacity at the local level. Learner attendance across schools is likewise commendable, with an average rate of 91.9% and a standard deviation of 4.88: 35.0% of schools achieved attendance levels between 95 and 100%, described as Excellent, 26.7% were Very Good at 90 to 94%, and 38.3% were Good/Acceptable at 80 to 89%. According to Gottfried (2010), consistent student attendance is one of the strongest predictors of academic success, as each additional day of attendance contributes directly to improved learning outcomes, and Sekiwu, Alupo, and Luyinda (2020) found in Ugandan schools that learner attendance significantly correlates with achievement levels, highlighting that proactive monitoring and supportive school environments help maintain consistent participation; in the Philippine context, the Philippine Statistics Authority (2022) reported that four out of five children aged 5 to 24 were attending school, suggesting that the division's attendance rates are relatively high and above national averages. Regarding

retention, the average dropout rate is 1.94%, with a standard deviation of 1.66, demonstrating excellent learner persistence: more than half of the schools, 56.7%, recorded very low dropout rates of ≤1 to 2%, 40.0% registered low dropout rates of >2 to ≤5%, and only 3.3% showed moderate dropout levels of >5 to ≤10%. These figures indicate strong retention efforts, likely supported by effective SBM practices and active parent-community engagement, as Bruns et al. (2011) argued that SBM fosters accountability and responsiveness, which reduce student attrition, and in the Philippine context, school-level interventions such as feeding programs, attendance monitoring, and community linkages have been instrumental in keeping dropout rates low (DepEd, 2012). Teacher performance based on the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) reveals a highly positive result, with an overwhelming 98.3% of schools rating teachers as Outstanding at 4.500 to 5.000, and the remaining 1.7% rating Very Satisfactory at 3.500 to 4.499. These high ratings suggest that most teachers are performing well above expectations, reflecting both teacher competence and the effectiveness of instructional supervision by school heads, supporting Cruz (2024), who emphasized that the IPCRF, when properly implemented, serves as a reliable tool for identifying teachers' strengths and areas for professional growth; however, the nearly uniform "Outstanding" ratings highlight the need to strengthen calibration and monitoring to ensure fairness and differentiation in performance appraisal. Overall, these findings suggest that schools in the division are functioning effectively under SBM, with high attendance, minimal dropout, and exceptional teacher performance; however, to sustain these outcomes there is a need to move more schools toward Advanced and Sustained SBM levels, ensuring that participatory leadership and accountability mechanisms are fully institutionalized, while continuous improvement efforts should focus on deepening SBM maturity, maintaining high learner participation, reinforcing data-driven attendance interventions, and emphasizing performance calibration and instructional coaching to maintain the integrity of teacher evaluations.

Stakeholder participation in schools within the division is very high across all indicators, with an overall mean of 4.62 and a standard deviation of 0.48. The highest-rated indicators include the organization of regular meetings and consultations with stakeholders, at a mean of 4.75 (SD = .57), and the representation of parents, LGUs, NGOs, and alumni in governance structures such as the School Governing Council (SGC) and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), also at a mean of 4.75 (SD = .54), both Very High. Stakeholders' active participation in SIP/AIP formulation carries a mean of 4.53 (SD = .65), while resource contributions, whether financial, material, or technical, carry a mean of 4.58 (SD = .62), demonstrating that partnership efforts extend beyond attendance to include tangible support for school improvement. High attendance during school-initiated events such as Brigada Eskwela, feeding programs, and literacy campaigns carries a mean of 4.43 (SD = .79), highlighting the community's responsiveness to school-initiated activities. Community volunteer assistance in co-curricular and extracurricular activities carries a mean of 4.52 (SD = .57), while the consideration of stakeholder feedback and suggestions in decision-making carries a mean of 4.67 (SD = .57). Regular communication of school accomplishments, plans, and needs to stakeholders carries a mean of 4.73 (SD = .66), sustained partnerships with local government and private institutions carry a mean of 4.68 (SD = .68), and stakeholders expressed satisfaction with their level of involvement carries a mean of 4.57 (SD = .70), all interpreted as Very High. These results reinforce the findings of Epstein and Sheldon (2018), who emphasized that structured and continuous school-family-community partnerships contribute significantly to student achievement, particularly when participation is linked to instructional goals, and of Bartolome, Mamat, and Masnan (2020), who found that active

parental engagement in the Philippines enhances collaboration between schools and families, fostering shared accountability and mutual trust. The present findings also echo Erdem's (2020) meta-analysis, which revealed that parental and community involvement positively influences student outcomes when engagement is purposeful, consistent, and aligned with school objectives, and Jeynes (2012), who concluded that effective parental involvement programs, especially those encouraging home-based academic support and school participation, improve both academic performance and socio-emotional development among learners. The high ratings in stakeholder participation also reflect a culture of shared governance and participatory leadership aligned with the goals of the School-Based Management system, as highlighted by Josol (2025), who noted that collaboration and partnership among various stakeholders lead to improved school effectiveness by maximizing community resources and promoting shared ownership of school initiatives. The findings imply that schools in the division have successfully built strong community partnerships essential for achieving educational goals and sustaining innovation, though schools can deepen these partnerships by focusing on instruction-linked involvement, for instance engaging parents and community members in literacy interventions, numeracy support, and attendance improvement programs, consistent with the research of Epstein and Sheldon (2018) and Jeynes (2012) suggesting that stakeholder engagement should evolve from general participation toward meaningful collaboration that directly contributes to improving learning outcomes.

The improvement of the school physical and learning environment likewise shows a consistently strong level across schools. Clean, well-maintained classrooms and school grounds received a mean of 4.75 (SD = .65), while regular repair and maintenance of key facilities such as roofing, lighting, water supply, and toilets registered a mean of 4.73 (SD = .63). Adequate and safe learning spaces, explicitly inclusive of SPED learners, were rated at a mean of 4.77 (SD = .53), and the promotion of a safe environment through disaster preparedness and child-protection measures was the highest-scoring indicator at a mean of 4.78 (SD = .61). Sufficiency and accessibility of learning materials such as textbooks, modules, and digital tools scored a mean of 4.61 (SD = .72), beautification and greening initiatives such as gardens, murals, and tree planting scored a mean of 4.68 (SD = .65), and the availability and regular use of ICT facilities such as computers, projectors, and internet for teaching and learning scored a mean of 4.75 (SD = .54). Classrooms reported as adequately ventilated, well lighted, and arranged to foster learner engagement earned a mean of 4.70 (SD = .56), while projects that upgrade the learning environment, such as new classrooms, laboratories, and libraries, posted a mean of 4.68 (SD = .65), and the maintenance of a child-friendly, inclusive, and gender-sensitive learning environment earned the second highest mean at 4.80 (SD = .61). All indicators were interpreted as Strongly Agree, and the overall mean of 4.73, with a standard deviation of 0.51, reflects system-wide, institutionalized attention to safety, inclusiveness, and functionality rather than merely one-off improvements. These results are strongly consonant with international evidence: large multi-school studies show that classroom design and environmental quality account for meaningful variation in learning gains, with research across 3,766 pupils linking well-designed classrooms to substantial improvements in year-to-year progress and emphasizing light, temperature, air quality, ownership, and flexibility as key drivers (Barrett, Davies, Zhang, & Barrett, 2015; Barrett, 2016). Likewise, studies on school facilities and climate report that higher-quality buildings are associated with better achievement in English and mathematics and with more positive climate indicators, suggesting an indirect pathway through teacher efficacy and collegiality (Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008). The division's high ratings on ventilation, lighting, upkeep, and learning-space adequacy align with these mechanisms and help explain the stable academic performance patterns observed elsewhere in this chapter. The safety and

preparedness dimension scoring 4.78 echoes a growing evidence base that structured disaster risk reduction education and preparedness practices in schools build knowledge, shape protective behaviors, and strengthen community resilience when embedded in routines and drills (Shiwaku & Shaw, 2008; Johnson, Ronan, Johnston, & Peace, 2014; Shaw, 2021). High marks for child-friendly, inclusive, and gender-sensitive environments at 4.80 also track with seminal inclusion frameworks linking welcoming cultures, equitable participation, and barrier-removal to improved engagement and learning opportunities (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). Finally, the ICT availability and regular use indicator at 4.75 is consistent with meta-analytic evidence that purposeful, curriculum-aligned technology use, especially when combined with teacher professional learning, has positive though variable effects on achievement, with stronger gains when implementation is tightly coupled to pedagogy and assessment (Cheung & Slavin, 2013; Lei, Cui, Zhou, & Chen, 2021); the slightly lower mean for learning-materials sufficiency at 4.61 suggests a remaining constraint that may moderate the full benefits of otherwise strong environmental improvements. These findings imply that the division should consolidate these gains by locking in environmental quality as an instructional lever through systematic maintenance, ventilation, lighting, and classroom layout adjustments linked explicitly to teacher planning (Barrett et al., 2015; Barrett, 2016); by deepening preparedness and inclusion from compliance to practice through annual disaster risk reduction cycles with age-appropriate drills and reflective debriefs and the use of inclusion tools to review participation barriers for SPED and other marginalized learners (Shiwaku & Shaw, 2008; Booth & Ainscow, 2011; Johnson et al., 2014); and by converting ICT access into measurable learning through pairing device and connectivity use with targeted teacher professional development, clear task designs, and assessment routines (Cheung & Slavin, 2013; Lei et al., 2021), with materials sufficiency addressed further to amplify these improvements by ensuring that textbooks, modules, and digital content are available at the point of instruction.

Relationships among variables

The analysis of the relationship between school and school head profile variables and the extent of innovative practices in strategic planning and implementation reveals that none of the profile variables, whether demographic (sex), professional (leadership experience, teaching experience, number of trainings), or school-related (school type, school resources), showed a statistically significant relationship with school heads' innovative practices in either dimension. For strategic planning, sex yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.194 with a p-value of 0.137, leadership experience yielded 0.174 with a p-value of 0.183, teaching experience yielded 0.112 with a p-value of 0.396, number of trainings yielded 0.061 with a p-value of 0.642, school type yielded 0.181 with a p-value of 0.759, and school resources (MOOE) yielded 0.048 with a p-value of 0.715, all interpreted as not significant. For implementation, sex yielded 0.158 with a p-value of 0.228, leadership experience yielded 0.140 with a p-value of 0.285, teaching experience yielded 0.181 with a p-value of 0.166, number of trainings yielded 0.025 with a p-value of 0.852, school type yielded 0.181 with a p-value of 0.761, and school resources (MOOE) yielded 0.083 with a p-value of 0.530, all likewise not significant, as all p-values exceed the 0.05 significance threshold and the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is therefore retained for every profile variable tested against both dimensions. These results suggest that the extent of innovation among school heads is not influenced by their background characteristics or by the basic attributes of the schools they manage, consistent with Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008), who asserted that effective school

leadership is not determined by demographic or positional factors but by specific behaviors and practices, such as setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organization, that foster teaching and learning improvement, and with Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008), whose meta-analysis found that the strongest effects on student achievement arise when leaders focus directly on instructional and strategic processes rather than relying on managerial experience or tenure. The absence of a significant relationship between the number of trainings attended and innovative practices further underscores the idea that the quality, not the quantity, of professional development determines effectiveness, as Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) emphasized that professional learning yields impact only when it is sustained, content-focused, and embedded in practice, a point reinforced by the meta-analysis of Kraft, Blazar, and Hogan (2018), which reported that coaching and job-embedded professional development have a stronger effect on leadership and instructional improvement than episodic workshops. The non-significant correlation between school resources and innovative practices likewise aligns with evidence that resources alone do not guarantee innovation unless coupled with strong leadership capacity and accountability systems (Leithwood et al., 2008), suggesting that school heads in the division are able to demonstrate innovation regardless of differences in funding or material conditions, an encouraging sign of leadership adaptability and creativity. These findings imply that innovative leadership transcends demographic and structural boundaries, and that efforts to strengthen innovation among school heads should focus on enhancing leadership behaviors, reflective practice, and coaching-based professional development, rather than relying solely on seniority or training attendance, reinforcing the global consensus that what leaders do, and not who they are, makes the most difference in improving school outcomes (Robinson et al., 2008; Leithwood et al., 2008).

Turning to the relationship between school and school head profile variables and school outcomes, no significant associations emerged between profile variables and academic performance, whether measured by mean percentage score or by average grade. For mean percentage score, sex yielded 0.052 with a p-value of 0.693, leadership experience yielded 0.125 with a p-value of 0.340, teaching experience yielded 0.154 with a p-value of 0.241, number of trainings yielded 0.058 with a p-value of 0.658, school type yielded 0.136 with a p-value of 0.904, and school resources yielded 0.024 with a p-value of 0.854. For average grade, sex yielded 0.050 with a p-value of 0.703, leadership experience yielded 0.114 with a p-value of 0.385, teaching experience yielded 0.132 with a p-value of 0.316, number of trainings yielded 0.051 with a p-value of 0.701, school type yielded 0.266 with a p-value of 0.393, and school resources yielded 0.032 with a p-value of 0.810; all of these correlations are small, ranging from 0.024 to 0.266, and all p-values exceed .05, so the null hypothesis is retained in every case. This pattern reinforces a long-standing point in the literature that background attributes of leaders and basic school descriptors rarely predict achievement unless they translate into concrete, instruction-proximal leadership and classroom practice (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008); in short, what schools and leaders do matters more than who they are or the simple category of school they lead.

For SBM level of practice, two associations are flagged as significant: number of trainings correlates positively with SBM level at 0.286, with a p-value of .027, and school resources (MOOE) correlates positively at 0.296, with a reported p-value of .22 marked significant in the analysis, while sex (0.135, $p = 0.303$), leadership experience (0.172, $p = 0.188$), teaching experience (0.050, $p = 0.704$), and school type (0.178, $p = 0.773$) were not significant. The significant findings for number of trainings and MOOE suggest that professional learning and greater operating resources are each associated with more mature SBM practice, consistent with evidence that capacity plus resources strengthen the depth of

school-level decision-making and accountability, which in turn improves implementation quality (Bruns, Filmer, & Patrinos, 2011), though impact still depends on the design of professional development, that is, sustained, content-focused, job-embedded learning rather than training counts alone (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). For attendance rate, school resources (MOOE) is positively associated at 0.266, with a p-value of .040, marked significant, while sex (0.019, p = 0.884), leadership experience (-0.008, p = 0.952), teaching experience (0.176, p = 0.179), number of trainings (0.046, p = 0.726), and school type (0.151, p = 0.864) were not significant. The significant MOOE-attendance link indicates that better-resourced schools sustain higher attendance, according with causal and quasi-experimental work linking improved conditions, services, and supports to better student participation, which subsequently relates to higher achievement (Gottfried, 2010; Bruns et al., 2011). For dropout rate, school type shows a significant positive association at 0.416, with a p-value of .031, while sex (0.118, p = 0.371), leadership experience (-0.084, p = 0.524), teaching experience (-0.160, p = 0.223), number of trainings (-0.079, p = 0.549), and school resources (0.011, p = 0.931) were not significant. Because secondary configurations typically face steeper progression and retention challenges than elementary schools, this pattern is plausible and resonates with comparative evidence showing dropout pressures rising with grade level in many systems, including the Philippines (Bruns et al., 2011). For stakeholder participation, school type again emerges as significant, at 0.427 with a p-value of .024, while sex (0.133, p = 0.312), leadership experience (0.097, p = 0.461), teaching experience (0.125, p = 0.341), number of trainings (0.175, p = 0.181), and school resources (0.050, p = 0.703) were not significant, suggesting that organizational configuration is related to the breadth of community engagement, since elementary settings often enjoy denser parent-school ties while some secondary schools require more deliberate strategies to mobilize stakeholders, aligning with research on school-family-community partnerships that thrive when purposefully structured and linked to learning goals (Epstein & Sheldon, 2018). Teacher performance (IPCRF) showed no significant association with any profile variable, with sex at 0.110 (p = 0.403), leadership experience at 0.019 (p = 0.886), teaching experience at 0.128 (p = 0.329), number of trainings at 0.182 (p = 0.165), school type at 0.012 (p = 0.902), and school resources at 0.086 (p = 0.511), a result echoing the broader finding that performance frameworks yield developmental value when embedded in coaching, feedback, and observation cycles, not by virtue of school type, leader tenure, or raw training counts (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2008). School physical and learning environment improvement also showed no significant relationship with any profile variable, with sex at 0.022 (p = 0.866), leadership experience at 0.144 (p = 0.271), teaching experience at 0.127 (p = 0.335), number of trainings at 0.049 (p = 0.709), school type at 0.061 (p = 0.664), and school resources at 0.333 (p = 0.160). Three implications follow from these results. First, improvement strategies should be anchored in enacted practice, since academic results do not track with demographics or basic profiles, so divisions should prioritize instruction-focused leadership routines, such as goal clarity, data-use cycles, and observation-feedback, over reliance on background traits (Robinson et al., 2008; Leithwood et al., 2008). Second, resources and professional development should be treated as enablers rather than ends in themselves, since the positive links of MOOE with SBM level and attendance and of training with SBM level indicate potential leverage, though returns will depend on the quality of professional development and on using funds to strengthen accountability, participation, and supports (Bruns et al., 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Third, systems should differentiate by school type, since the significant associations of school type with dropout and stakeholder participation suggest that secondary schools should be targeted with tailored retention programs and partnership

designs, while elementary ties should be consolidated so that engagement remains instruction-linked (Epstein & Sheldon, 2018; Bruns et al., 2011).

Finally, the analysis of the relationship between school outcomes and innovative practices reveals few direct, statistically significant links, with notable effects concentrated in stakeholder participation, attendance, and the physical and learning environment. For strategic planning, the correlation with academic performance by mean percentage score is 0.106, with a p-value of 0.419, and with academic performance by average grade is 0.176, with a p-value of 0.179, both not significant; SBM level of practice yielded 0.007 with a p-value of 0.959, attendance rate yielded 0.196 with a p-value of 0.134, dropout rate yielded -0.029 with a p-value of 0.826, and teacher performance (IPCRF) yielded 0.056 with a p-value of 0.669, all not significant. A single relationship stands out under strategic planning: stakeholder participation rises with stronger strategic planning at 0.299, with a p-value of 0.020, significant, while school physical and learning environment improvement yielded 0.131 with a p-value of 0.320, not significant. This suggests that planning routines that clarify goals, use evidence, and set priorities are associated with more active, organized community engagement, according with work showing that goal-linked school-family-community partnerships strengthen improvement efforts when deliberately structured and tied to learning aims (Epstein & Sheldon, 2018; Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010). For implementation, several relationships are statistically meaningful: academic performance by mean percentage score yielded 0.143 with a p-value of 0.277, and by average grade yielded 0.140 with a p-value of 0.288, both not significant, while SBM level of practice yielded 0.072 with a p-value of 0.584, also not significant. Attendance rate improves with stronger implementation at 0.261, with a p-value of 0.044, significant at the 0.05 level, consistent with evidence that operational follow-through, including monitoring, feedback cycles, and timely supports, helps keep students in school and is linked to achievement gains (Gottfried, 2010; Bryk et al., 2010). Dropout rate yielded -0.197 with a p-value of 0.130, not significant, and teacher performance (IPCRF) yielded 0.164 with a p-value of 0.209, not significant. Stakeholder participation shows a moderate positive association with implementation at 0.370, with a p-value of 0.004, significant at the 0.01 level, and school physical and learning environment improvement is also moderately related at 0.373, with a p-value of 0.003, significant at the 0.01 level. These patterns fit the literature, since schools that execute plans with fidelity, through delegation, team management, budget transparency, and monitoring and evaluation, tend to sustain richer partnerships and healthier climates (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008), and the environment finding echoes studies linking facility quality and classroom conditions to better school climate and student progress when implementation translates into concrete upgrades and daily practices (Barrett, Davies, Zhang, & Barrett, 2015; Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008). The non-significant relationships with academic performance and teacher performance in this analysis are unsurprising, as meta-analyses show that leadership and organizational practices often influence learning indirectly through teaching quality, climate, and engagement rather than through immediate, direct correlations with test scores or ratings (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2008); in short, the significant links, namely participation, attendance, and environment, map onto the intermediate conditions that research identifies as the chief pathways by which leadership practice affects outcomes. Two implications follow from these results. First, implementation discipline should be doubled down on, since the positive links to attendance and the learning environment suggest that strengthening observation-feedback routines, progress monitoring, and team-based execution can yield tangible participation and climate gains that are known mediators of achievement (Gottfried, 2010; Bryk et al., 2010; Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008). Second, strategic planning should be converted into instruction-linked partnerships, since stakeholder participation rises with stronger planning,

so schools should embed clear partnership goals, roles, and metrics in the SIP/AIP so that engagement directly supports literacy, numeracy, and attendance initiatives, an approach that produces larger effects than generic involvement (Epstein & Sheldon, 2018; Robinson et al., 2008).

Taken together, these findings show that the 60 school heads and 300 teachers of the Schools Division of Tacloban City report a very high extent of innovative practice in both strategic planning (school heads M = 4.80, SD = .29; teachers M = 4.83, SD = .24) and implementation (school heads M = 4.80, SD = .25; teachers M = 4.84, SD = .29), set against a profile of mostly female, mid-career, highly experienced school heads working predominantly in elementary schools with modest MOOE allocations, and against school outcomes that are generally satisfactory to very satisfactory, including a mean MPS of 82.2 (SD = 3.66), a mean grade of 84.4 (SD = 4.58), a predominantly Maturing SBM profile (65.0% at Level 2), a mean attendance rate of 91.9% (SD = 4.88), a mean dropout rate of 1.94% (SD = 1.66), an overwhelmingly Outstanding teacher performance rating (98.3%), a very high overall stakeholder participation mean of 4.62 (SD = .48), and a very high overall physical and learning environment improvement mean of 4.73 (SD = .51). The correlational analyses demonstrate that these innovative practices and outcomes are largely independent of school and school head demographic or structural profiles, with the notable exceptions of number of trainings and MOOE in relation to SBM level ($r = 0.286$, $p = .027$; $r = 0.296$, significant), MOOE in relation to attendance ($r = 0.266$, $p = .040$), and school type in relation to dropout rate ($r = 0.416$, $p = .031$) and stakeholder participation ($r = 0.427$, $p = .024$); and that innovative practices themselves relate significantly to school outcomes chiefly through stakeholder participation and, for implementation specifically, through attendance rate ($r = 0.261$, $p = .044$) and physical and learning environment improvement ($r = 0.373$, $p = .003$), while direct associations with academic performance and teacher performance remain non-significant. These results directly address the study's objectives by describing the profile of schools and school heads, documenting a very high extent of innovative planning and implementation practice, characterizing generally strong school outcomes, and empirically identifying where innovative practices connect most meaningfully to those outcomes, namely through participation, attendance, and environmental improvement rather than through direct effects on test scores or teacher ratings. In doing so, the findings contribute to the broader body of educational leadership research by reinforcing, within the specific context of the Schools Division of Tacloban City, that what leaders and schools actually do in strategic planning and implementation matters more for outcomes than who leaders are or what basic resources they command, while also identifying resource and training levers, together with school-type differentiation, that warrant targeted policy attention. These findings collectively provide the empirical foundation for the innovative strategies and plan of action to be presented in the succeeding chapter, which builds on the demonstrated strengths in stakeholder engagement, implementation fidelity, and environmental quality while addressing the identified gaps in innovation-focused training, resource equity, and the strengthening of direct pathways between leadership practice and academic and teacher performance outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that school heads in the Schools Division of Tacloban City demonstrate a very high extent of innovative practices in both strategic planning and implementation. These practices—such as data-driven decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and effective resource management—have significantly

contributed to enhanced school performance indicators, particularly in stakeholder participation, learner attendance, and the improvement of the physical and learning environment. Although the study found no direct significant relationships between demographic or professional characteristics of school heads and most school outcomes, it confirmed that the quality of leadership practices rather than personal attributes drives meaningful school improvement.

The results affirm the relevance of Transformational Leadership Theory, as proposed by Burns (1978) and expanded by Bass (1985), in understanding the leadership behaviors of school heads. The study's findings reflect the core dimensions of transformational leadership: school heads serve as role models through idealized influence, inspire collective action and vision-setting through inspirational motivation, challenge traditional methods through intellectual stimulation, and support teacher and community growth through individualized consideration. These behaviors enable school heads to foster innovation, shared responsibility, and commitment to excellence—key elements that underpin sustainable school improvement. The very high ratings in stakeholder participation and collaborative planning exemplify how transformational leaders can cultivate a sense of ownership and unity among teachers, parents, and community members, translating leadership vision into tangible outcomes.

Moreover, the study's results align with the Theory of Change (ToC) framework introduced by Carol Weiss (1995), which provides a logical explanation of how specific actions lead to measurable outcomes. In the context of this study, the profiles of school heads and schools serve as the inputs; innovative practices in planning and implementation represent the processes or interventions; and school outcomes—such as higher attendance rates, active stakeholder engagement, and improved learning environments—constitute the outputs. The ToC lens clarifies that meaningful improvement in educational performance does not occur by chance but through an intentional and well-structured sequence of planning, implementation, and reflection.

Taken together, the findings underscore that innovative and transformational leadership practices are critical drivers of school effectiveness. When school heads act as visionary, collaborative, and reflective leaders, they not only enhance operational efficiency but also create inclusive, resilient, and learning-centered environments. These leadership practices, guided by both Transformational Leadership Theory and the Theory of Change, provide a clear roadmap for sustaining educational improvement—where innovation in leadership translates into stronger governance, engaged communities, and improved learning outcomes for all.

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