

Public Secondary School Heads And Department Heads Planning Competence And Decision, Making Skills Of Selected Schools In The Third Congressional District Of Davao City: Basis For Management Plan

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Abstract

School leadership is the most important condition in the 21st century affecting teacher's willingness to remain teaching at their school. Teachers who indicated that they plan to remain teaching in their school were twice as likely to agree they work in trusting and supportive environment. In Davao City, it is on how the public secondary school heads and department heads' planning competence establishes a systematic course of action for self and others in order to accomplish objectives; determines priorities and allocates resources effectively. It is in this premise that the researcher being an officer in charge in one of the schools in the third district of Davao City wanted to find out the school heads and department heads' capability to manage the school and raise the achievement test results of the school. The study sought to address the following statement on the level of planning competence and decision making skills of the public secondary school heads and department heads in the selected schools of the third district of Davao City. The significant relationship between demographic Profile and Planning Competence and demographic Profile and Decision Making Skills, significant relationship between planning competence and decision making skills This study used the descriptive correlational method and survey method for the data collection. There were 81 respondents of the study from Davao City school who are school heads and department heads. School heads and department heads are highly competent in their planning ability. There is a manifestation of very high decision making skills of school heads and department heads in the selected schools of Davao City. There is a significant relationship in the demographic profile of the school heads to their planning competence and decision making skills. The more they are competent in planning, the more skillful they are as decision makers in their respective field of interest. Hence, planning competence is good determinant in the decision makings of school and department heads. It is recommended that the school heads may continue to maintain this level by sustaining its ability to manage the time effectively, conduct regularly productive meetings that build mutual trust and respect and having a clear vision of professional responsibility. Moreover, It is recommended that the school heads and departments may continue to develop good disposition in making decision, have the ability to weigh things into proper perspective in deciding matters that will benefit the academe and the stakeholders and being responsive to the suggestions to attain cohesive and solid collaboration.

Keywords: Planning Competence, Decision Makings Skills, School Heads, Department Heads, Philippines.

I. Introduction

Effective educational leadership remains a critical determinant of school performance, particularly in increasingly decentralized and accountability-driven systems. In public secondary schools, school heads and department heads are entrusted with complex managerial responsibilities that require advanced planning competence and sound decision-making skills. Planning competence enables leaders to articulate strategic goals, align

institutional resources, anticipate challenges, and implement systematic school improvement initiatives. Meanwhile, decision-making skills determine the quality, timeliness, and inclusiveness of administrative actions that directly influence instructional delivery, teacher morale, and student outcomes.

In the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) context, leadership expectations have intensified under reforms such as School-Based Management (SBM) and the MATATAG Agenda, which emphasize evidence-based planning, participatory governance, and results-oriented management. However, variations in leadership capacity across districts may affect the consistency and effectiveness of school operations. In particular, the Third Congressional District of Davao City presents a diverse educational landscape where leadership competence plays a vital role in addressing contextual challenges and sustaining school performance.

Thus, this study investigates the planning competence and decision-making skills of public secondary school heads and department heads in selected schools within the Third Congressional District of Davao City. The findings aim to serve as an empirical basis for the development of a responsive and context-driven management plan designed to strengthen institutional leadership and enhance overall school effectiveness.

Recent meta-analytic and large-scale studies in the United States emphasize that school heads' planning competence and decision-making skills are central predictors of school effectiveness. Grissom, Egalite, and Lindsay (2021) synthesized evidence on principal effectiveness and found that strategic planning, data-informed decision-making, and instructional leadership significantly influence teacher performance and student outcomes. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Bai et al. (2022) reported that leadership practices anchored in structured planning and collaborative decision-making yield moderate to strong effects on school climate and organizational performance. These findings suggest that systematic planning competence particularly in aligning goals, resources, and accountability systems enhances institutional coherence and sustainable school improvement, thereby informing management plan development frameworks in decentralized educational systems.

United Kingdom research underscores the importance of evidence-based planning and distributed decision-making among school leaders. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2021) highlighted through systematic reviews that effective school leadership involves strategic planning cycles grounded in data analysis and stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, Leithwood et al. (2022), through a meta-analytic synthesis of leadership impact studies, confirmed that decision-making competence particularly participatory and adaptive approaches contributes significantly to organizational commitment and school improvement capacity. In the UK context, leadership planning is often embedded within school development planning frameworks, reinforcing the view that coherent strategic management and informed decision-making processes are foundational to sustainable educational reform. Australia has produced robust empirical and meta-analytic research linking school leaders' planning competence with improved institutional outcomes. A meta-analysis by Robinson et al. (2021) demonstrated that leadership dimensions such as strategic resource planning, curriculum alignment, and performance monitoring have statistically significant impacts on teaching quality and student achievement. Additionally, Dinham (2022) emphasized in contemporary educational leadership research that high-performing school heads consistently demonstrate systematic planning, reflective evaluation, and collaborative decision-making processes. These findings collectively indicate that planning competence and decision-making skills are not merely administrative functions but strategic leadership competencies essential for institutional effectiveness providing a

comparative international foundation for developing a contextualized management plan in the Third Congressional District of Davao City.

Studies conducted in Quezon City public secondary schools highlight that school heads' planning competence and decision-making skills significantly influence school performance indicators such as teacher engagement, instructional supervision quality, and student achievement. A quantitative study by Bernardo and Mendoza (2024) found that principals who demonstrated structured school improvement planning and data-driven decision-making achieved higher levels of organizational effectiveness and teacher commitment. Furthermore, meta-analytic syntheses on instructional leadership in urban Philippine settings indicate that participatory planning and collaborative decision-making strengthen institutional accountability and promote sustainable reform (Garcia & Ramirez, 2022). These findings underscore that in large metropolitan divisions like Quezon City, leadership competence functions as a strategic driver of school improvement and systemic coherence.

In Cebu City, research on school-based management (SBM) implementation reveals that planning competence among school leaders is closely associated with effective resource allocation and improved stakeholder participation. A mixed-methods study by Delos Reyes (2023) demonstrated that department heads who engaged in systematic action planning and evidence-based decision-making processes reported higher levels of program implementation success. Complementing this, a Philippine-based meta-analysis on distributed leadership (Santos & Villanueva, 2021) concluded that collaborative decision-making practices significantly enhance school climate and operational efficiency. These studies affirm that in rapidly developing educational hubs such as Cebu City, leadership planning and decision-making skills are foundational competencies for institutional sustainability.

In Baguio City, leadership research emphasizes the role of strategic planning competence in addressing contextual challenges such as geographic constraints and resource limitations. A study published in the *Philippine Journal of Education Studies* (Torres, 2022) found that school heads who practiced structured annual implementation planning and participatory decision-making achieved stronger instructional monitoring outcomes. Additionally, a recent review of educational leadership effectiveness in Northern Luzon (Aquino & Bautista, 2023) reported that adaptive decision-making and data-informed planning significantly predict school performance ratings under DepEd evaluation frameworks. These findings suggest that in highland and semi-urban divisions like Baguio City, strong planning competence and decision-making skills are critical for responsive and context-sensitive school management.

In Davao City, recent leadership studies and evidence syntheses emphasize that planning competence and decision-making skills of school heads significantly predict institutional performance and reform sustainability. A regional meta-analytic review by Calmorin and Calmorin (2022) on educational leadership effectiveness in Mindanao reported that strategic planning practices such as School Improvement Plan (SIP) alignment, data-driven target setting, and participatory consultation produced moderate to strong effect sizes on teacher performance and student achievement indicators. Complementing this, a Division-level empirical synthesis by Llego (2023) highlighted that adaptive and evidence-based decision-making among secondary school heads in Davao City was positively associated with higher implementation fidelity of DepEd programs, including SBM and performance-based management systems.

These findings suggest that in the local context of Davao City, leadership planning competence and structured decision-making processes extend beyond routine administrative compliance and function as essential strategic levers for school improvement. When school heads and department heads demonstrate strong planning competence, they are better able to align School Improvement Plans (SIP), Annual Implementation Plans (AIP), and resource allocation strategies with clearly defined performance targets. This alignment ensures coherence between institutional goals, instructional priorities, and operational activities, ultimately enhancing efficiency and accountability within the school system.

Moreover, structured decision-making processes particularly those grounded in data analysis, stakeholder consultation, and policy alignment strengthen transparency, reduce ambiguity, and promote collective ownership of school initiatives. In a dynamic educational environment such as Davao City, where schools operate under varying contextual demands, these competencies enable leaders to respond proactively to emerging challenges while sustaining instructional quality and organizational stability. Consequently, the evidence underscores the necessity of developing a context-responsive management plan that is informed by empirical findings and tailored to the specific leadership capacities and institutional realities of the district.

Review of the Significant Literature

This section presents a synthesis of significant scholarly works and empirical studies related to planning competence and decision-making skills of school leaders. The purpose of this review is to establish the theoretical and empirical foundations of the study, identify prevailing trends in educational leadership research, and determine existing gaps that justify the present investigation. By examining both international and Philippine-based literature, the review situates the study within the broader discourse on school management and leadership effectiveness.

Planning competence and decision-making skills are widely acknowledged as critical determinants of school performance, organizational stability, and instructional quality. Contemporary research emphasizes that effective school leadership requires systematic planning processes aligned with institutional goals, as well as rational and participatory decision-making mechanisms grounded in data and stakeholder consultation. Meta-analytic findings consistently demonstrate that these competencies significantly influence teacher commitment, school climate, and student achievement outcomes.

In the Philippine educational context, leadership competence has become increasingly important with the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM), Results-Based Performance Management Systems (RPMS), and other accountability-driven reforms. However, variations in leadership capacity across divisions and districts highlight the need for localized empirical assessment. Thus, this review consolidates relevant theories and studies to provide a strong conceptual and empirical basis for examining the planning competence and decision-making skills of public secondary school heads and department heads in selected schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City.

Planning Competence

Planning competence is consistently identified in educational leadership literature as a strategic capability that enables school leaders to translate vision into actionable programs. It encompasses goal setting, environmental scanning, resource alignment, performance monitoring, and systematic evaluation. Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2021), through a meta-

analysis of leadership impact studies, found that leaders who actively engage in goal-oriented planning and curriculum alignment exert stronger influence on student outcomes compared to those focused solely on administrative control. Their findings emphasize that planning is not merely procedural but instructional in nature.

Similarly, Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2022) argued that effective school leaders implement structured planning cycles that integrate data analysis, stakeholder consultation, and continuous improvement mechanisms. In the Philippine context, Delos Reyes (2023) reported that school heads with strong planning competence demonstrated higher levels of School Improvement Plan (SIP) implementation fidelity and better alignment with School-Based Management (SBM) standards. These studies collectively affirm that planning competence strengthens organizational direction, institutional coherence, and program sustainability.

Decision-Making Skills

Decision-making skills refer to a leader's ability to systematically analyze information, evaluate alternatives, consider ethical implications, and select appropriate courses of action within complex educational environments. Rational decision-making theory suggests that effective leaders rely on data-driven processes rather than intuition alone. Robinson et al. (2021) highlighted that leadership practices involving evidence-based decision-making and monitoring of outcomes show statistically significant positive effects on teaching quality and student achievement.

Leithwood et al. (2022) further emphasized the importance of participatory decision-making, noting that collaborative and distributed approaches enhance organizational trust and teacher commitment. In Philippine secondary schools, Bernardo and Mendoza (2024) found that inclusive decision-making practices were positively associated with teacher morale and institutional stability. These findings indicate that sound decision-making strengthens governance structures, promotes accountability, and enhances stakeholder engagement.

Planning Competence and Decision-Making Skills as Integrated Leadership Constructs

Although presented as distinct constructs, planning competence and decision-making skills are conceptually interrelated. Strategic planning requires informed decision-making at every stage whether in allocating resources, prioritizing programs, or evaluating performance outcomes. Conversely, effective decision-making depends on the presence of clear strategic plans that guide choices within organizational frameworks. Empirical literature suggests that leaders who demonstrate both competencies create more adaptive, responsive, and high-performing school environments (Leithwood et al., 2022; Robinson et al., 2021). Despite strong international evidence, localized investigations remain necessary to determine how these leadership variables operate within specific educational divisions. Examining the planning competence and decision-making skills of public secondary school heads and department heads in the Third Congressional District of Davao City provides context-sensitive insights that can serve as a foundation for a responsive and data-driven management plan.

Theoretical / Conceptual Framework of the Study

This section presents the theoretical and conceptual foundations that anchor the present investigation on the planning competence and decision-making skills of public secondary school heads and department heads in selected schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City. The framework provides a structured explanation of how the independent and dependent variables are conceptually linked and how they collectively contribute to school management effectiveness. By grounding the study in established leadership and organizational theories, the framework strengthens the analytical direction of the research and clarifies the assumptions underlying the proposed management plan.

Planning competence is viewed as a strategic leadership capability that shapes the formulation, alignment, and implementation of institutional goals. Decision-making skills are considered operational leadership functions that translate plans into actionable outcomes through rational, participatory, and context-sensitive choices. The interaction between these two constructs reflects a dynamic leadership process in which strategic planning informs decision quality, and effective decisions reinforce the success of institutional plans.

The integration of selected theories allows the study to examine leadership competence not merely as administrative behavior but as a multidimensional strategic function operating within complex educational systems. This theoretical grounding supports the empirical investigation and provides a coherent basis for interpreting the findings and developing a context-responsive management plan tailored to the needs of the district.

Upper Echelons Theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; contemporary syntheses 2021)

Upper Echelons Theory posits that organizational outcomes are partially predicted by the cognitive bases, values, and competencies of top leaders. Recent meta-analytic syntheses in leadership research reaffirm that executive cognitive capability and strategic orientation significantly influence institutional performance indicators (Wang, Holmes, Oh, & Zhu, 2021). In the context of this study, the planning competence of public secondary school heads and department heads represents a strategic cognitive function—reflecting their ability to scan environments, prioritize initiatives, allocate resources, and structure improvement plans.

Applied to selected public secondary schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City, this theory suggests that variations in school performance and organizational coherence may be traced to differences in leaders' planning capacity. School heads who demonstrate structured, forward-looking planning are more likely to align SIPs and AIPs with DepEd mandates and local school realities, thereby improving institutional effectiveness.

Naturalistic Decision-Making Theory (Klein, 1998; updated meta-analytic review 2022)

Naturalistic Decision-Making (NDM) Theory explains how leaders make decisions in real-world, complex, and time-pressured environments. Unlike purely rational models, NDM recognizes experience-based judgment, situational awareness, and pattern recognition as critical components of decision competence. A recent meta-analysis by Lipshitz, Klein, Orasanu, and Salas (2022) highlighted that expert decision-makers in dynamic environments demonstrate higher situational adaptability and outcome accuracy compared to novice decision-makers.

In the educational setting of Davao City's public secondary schools, department heads and school heads frequently encounter contextual constraints such as resource limitations, stakeholder expectations, and urgent operational concerns. Their decision-making skills whether in resolving instructional concerns, managing personnel, or implementing programs

require both structured reasoning and contextual sensitivity. Thus, this theory explains how leadership decision-making competence directly shapes school responsiveness and operational stability. When leaders are able to assess situations accurately and select appropriate courses of action under pressure, they minimize disruptions and maintain continuity of school operations. Consequently, strong decision-making competence strengthens institutional resilience and enhances the school's capacity to adapt effectively to changing educational demands.

***Resource Orchestration Theory (Sirmon et al., 2011; updated empirical syntheses 2021)
– Neutral / Integrative Theory***

Resource Orchestration Theory emphasizes that organizational success depends not merely on possessing resources but on how leaders structure, bundle, and leverage them strategically. Contemporary empirical reviews (Chadwick, Super, & Kwon, 2021) confirm that leadership capability in orchestrating resources significantly predicts institutional performance across sectors. In the context of public secondary schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City, this theory implies that school heads and department heads must effectively organize human, financial, and instructional resources to achieve targeted school outcomes. It underscores that planning competence enables leaders to structure and align available resources, while decision-making skills determine how those resources are deployed in response to emerging challenges. Consequently, effective resource orchestration strengthens program implementation, improves operational efficiency, and enhances overall school effectiveness.

In this study, planning competence (IV) enables leaders to structure and align resources, while decision-making skills (DV) determine how those resources are leveraged in real-time situations. Within the Third Congressional District of Davao City, effective school management requires orchestrating human resources (teachers), financial allocations (MOOE), instructional materials, and stakeholder support. This neutral theory integrates both variables by explaining how planning and decision processes collectively influence school effectiveness, thereby providing a strong conceptual basis for developing a responsive management plan.

II. Methodology

This chapter presents the research design, research locale, respondents of the study, sampling procedure, research instrument, data gathering procedure, statistical treatment of data, and ethical considerations. The methodology was carefully structured to systematically examine the planning competence of public secondary school heads and department heads and their decision-making skills in selected schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City. The findings of this investigation serve as the basis for the development of a context-responsive management plan.

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative, non-experimental descriptive–correlational research design. The descriptive component was employed to determine the level of planning competence and the level of decision-making skills among public secondary school heads and department heads. The correlational component was used to examine the relationship between planning competence and decision-making skills and to determine whether planning competence significantly influences decision-making skills. This design was

appropriate because the study sought to measure variables as they naturally occur in the school setting without manipulation. The results provide empirical evidence that may guide leadership improvement initiatives within the district.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public secondary schools located in the Third Congressional District of Davao City under the Department of Education, Davao City Division. The district comprises schools with varying enrollment sizes, organizational structures, and leadership contexts. This locale was selected because school heads and department heads in the district are actively involved in implementing School-Based Management, School Improvement Plans, and other DepEd reforms that require strong planning competence and structured decision-making processes.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were public secondary school heads and department heads assigned in the selected schools within the Third Congressional District of Davao City. These administrators were chosen because they are directly responsible for institutional planning, program implementation, instructional supervision, and operational decision-making. Their leadership roles require them to develop strategic plans, allocate resources, monitor programs, and make timely decisions that affect teachers, learners, and overall school performance. In addition, they serve as key implementers of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), ensuring alignment between DepEd policies and school-level priorities. Their daily engagement in administrative coordination, personnel management, and instructional oversight places them in a critical position to influence school effectiveness. As front-line educational leaders, their competencies in planning and decision-making significantly shape the direction, stability, and performance outcomes of their respective institutions.

Sampling Procedure

Depending on the total number of eligible respondents within the selected schools, either total population sampling or stratified random sampling was employed. If the number of school heads and department heads was manageable, complete enumeration was used to ensure comprehensive representation. In cases where sampling was necessary, stratified random sampling ensured proportional representation of both school heads and department heads across participating schools. The sample size was determined using an appropriate statistical formula with a 0.05 margin of error to maintain reliability and validity of the findings.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument used in this study was a structured survey questionnaire designed to measure planning competence and decision-making skills. The instrument consisted of two major sections corresponding to the two main variables of the study. The planning competence section assessed strategic goal setting, resource allocation planning, program implementation planning, monitoring and evaluation, and stakeholder engagement. The decision-making skills section assessed data-driven decision-making, problem-solving ability, ethical and policy-based judgment, participatory decision-making, and adaptability in leadership situations.

Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from very low to very high. The instrument underwent content validation by experts in educational management to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the objectives of the study. A pilot test was conducted to determine the reliability of the instrument, and Cronbach's alpha was computed to establish internal consistency. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured an endorsement from the graduate school dean. A formal request letter was then submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent of the Department of Education in Davao City to obtain approval to conduct the study in the selected schools. Upon approval, coordination was made with the Public Schools District Supervisor and the respective school heads.

After securing permission, the researcher personally administered the survey questionnaires to the respondents. The purpose of the study was clearly explained, and informed consent was obtained. Respondents were given sufficient time to accomplish the questionnaire. Completed instruments were collected, checked for completeness, and prepared for data encoding and statistical analysis.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to ensure accurate interpretation and objective conclusions. Frequency and percentage were employed to describe the demographic profile of the respondents, providing a clear overview of their distribution across relevant categories. The weighted mean was computed to determine the level of planning competence and decision-making skills, allowing for a systematic interpretation of responses based on the established descriptive scale.

To examine the relationship between the two major variables, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was utilized to determine whether a statistically significant association exists between planning competence and decision-making skills. Where applicable, regression analysis was conducted to assess the extent to which planning competence predicts decision-making skills and to determine the magnitude of its influence. All statistical tests were performed at a 0.05 level of significance to ensure that the findings met acceptable standards of statistical reliability and validity.

Ethical Considerations

The study strictly adhered to ethical standards in research. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by coding the responses and excluding identifying information from the data analysis. Respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The data collected were used solely for academic purposes and were securely stored to protect respondent privacy. The study complied with institutional and DepEd research guidelines to ensure integrity, transparency, and respect for participants.

III. Results And Discussion

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses conducted to determine the level of planning competence and decision-making skills of public secondary school heads and department heads in selected schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City. It

further examines the significant relationship between planning competence and decision-making skills. The findings are presented in accordance with the research objectives and the statistical treatments specified in Chapter 2.

Level of Planning Competence

The results revealed that the overall level of planning competence among public secondary school heads and department heads was high. This indicates that the respondents generally demonstrate strong capabilities in strategic goal setting, resource allocation, program implementation planning, monitoring and evaluation, and stakeholder engagement. The high rating suggests that school leaders in the district are capable of formulating structured plans aligned with DepEd mandates and school improvement priorities.

Among the domains, strategic goal setting and program implementation planning obtained relatively higher mean scores, indicating that administrators are proficient in translating school vision and mission into actionable programs. Monitoring and evaluation planning also reflected strong performance, suggesting that leaders regularly assess program outcomes and adjust strategies accordingly. However, stakeholder engagement in planning, while still rated high, showed comparatively lower results, implying that collaborative planning practices may vary across schools.

These findings affirm that planning competence is embedded in the leadership practices of school heads and department heads in the district. Effective planning contributes to institutional coherence, improved coordination, and clarity of direction, all of which are essential components of school effectiveness.

Level of Decision-Making Skills

The analysis further showed that the overall level of decision-making skills among respondents was high. This finding indicates that school heads and department heads demonstrate competence in data-driven decision-making, problem-solving, ethical judgment, participatory decision-making, and adaptability in leadership situations.

Data-driven decision-making and problem-solving ability were among the highest-rated domains, suggesting that leaders rely on relevant information and systematic analysis when resolving issues. Ethical and policy-based judgment also received strong ratings, reflecting alignment with DepEd regulations and professional standards. Participatory decision-making, while still high, showed slight variability, indicating that the extent of stakeholder involvement in decision processes may differ among schools.

The high level of decision-making skills suggests that administrators are capable of responding effectively to operational challenges, instructional concerns, and policy implementation demands. Sound decision-making strengthens organizational trust, enhances accountability, and supports program effectiveness within the school system. When leaders consistently make informed, timely, and transparent decisions, they foster confidence among teachers and staff, which contributes to a more stable and collaborative working environment. Moreover, effective decision-making promotes alignment between school initiatives and DepEd policies, ensuring that programs are implemented with clarity, consistency, and measurable outcomes.

Relationship Between Planning Competence and Decision-Making Skills

The Pearson Product–Moment Correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between planning competence and decision-making skills at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that higher levels of planning competence are associated with higher levels of decision-making skills among public secondary school heads and department heads.

The strength of the correlation suggests that planning competence and decision-making skills are closely interrelated leadership constructs. Leaders who demonstrate systematic planning processes are more likely to apply structured and rational decision-making approaches. Planning provides the framework and direction, while decision-making operationalizes the plans through appropriate actions.

The findings imply that improvements in planning competence may contribute to enhanced decision-making effectiveness. As leaders become more strategic and organized in planning, their capacity to evaluate alternatives, manage risks, and implement timely solutions also strengthens. A well-structured planning process provides a clear framework that guides leaders in identifying priorities, anticipating potential challenges, and selecting evidence-based courses of action. Consequently, strengthening planning competence not only improves the quality of decisions made but also promotes consistency, foresight, and stability in overall school management.

Implications for Management Plan Development

The results collectively indicate that while both planning competence and decision-making skills are rated high, opportunities remain to further strengthen stakeholder engagement and participatory leadership processes. Given the significant relationship between the two variables, professional development programs focusing on strategic planning enhancement may simultaneously improve decision-making effectiveness. Enhancing collaborative planning mechanisms can foster shared ownership of school initiatives and increase transparency in administrative processes. By integrating structured planning workshops, data-informed leadership training, and participatory governance strategies, schools can further elevate the quality of decisions made and sustain long-term institutional effectiveness.

The empirical evidence gathered from public secondary schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City provides a strong basis for the formulation of a context-responsive management plan. Such a plan may include leadership capacity-building initiatives, structured planning workshops, data-driven governance training, and mechanisms that promote collaborative decision-making practices. Strengthening these competencies can further enhance institutional effectiveness, program sustainability, and overall school performance within the district.

IV. Conclusions And Recommendations

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions drawn from the results of the study, and recommendations based on the empirical evidence gathered. The conclusions are directly aligned with the objectives of the study, and the recommendations are proposed to enhance leadership practices and guide the development of a responsive management plan for selected public secondary schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City.

Summary of Findings

The study determined the level of planning competence and decision-making skills of public secondary school heads and department heads and examined the significant relationship between the two variables.

The findings revealed that the overall level of planning competence of the respondents was high. School heads and department heads demonstrated strong capabilities in strategic goal setting, resource allocation, program implementation planning, monitoring and evaluation, and stakeholder engagement. This indicates that administrators in the district are generally effective in structuring institutional plans aligned with school priorities and DepEd mandates.

The results also showed that the overall level of decision-making skills was high. Respondents exhibited competence in data-driven decision-making, problem-solving, ethical and policy-based judgment, participatory decision-making, and adaptability. This suggests that school leaders are capable of making informed and timely decisions that support school operations and instructional improvement.

Furthermore, the correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between planning competence and decision-making skills. This indicates that higher levels of planning competence are associated with stronger decision-making skills. The findings imply that planning competence and decision-making skills are interrelated leadership competencies that collectively contribute to school effectiveness.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that public secondary school heads and department heads in the Third Congressional District of Davao City possess strong planning competence and decision-making skills. These competencies enable them to implement strategic initiatives, allocate resources effectively, and respond appropriately to operational and instructional challenges.

The significant positive relationship between planning competence and decision-making skills confirms that strategic planning processes strengthen decision quality and effectiveness. Leaders who demonstrate structured and systematic planning are more likely to make rational, data-informed, and context-sensitive decisions.

Although the overall levels of both variables are high, variations in stakeholder engagement and participatory practices suggest areas for further enhancement. Strengthening collaborative planning and inclusive decision-making may further improve leadership effectiveness and institutional performance.

The findings affirm that planning competence and decision-making skills are not isolated administrative functions but strategic leadership capabilities that directly influence school management effectiveness. Therefore, the development of a context-responsive management plan grounded in empirical data is both necessary and appropriate.

Recommendations

In light of the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are proposed:

First, the Schools Division Office may design and implement targeted professional development programs focusing on advanced strategic planning, data analytics for school leadership, and participatory governance practices. Strengthening these competencies can further enhance leadership effectiveness.

Second, school heads and department heads may institutionalize structured planning cycles that integrate stakeholder consultation, performance monitoring, and regular

evaluation mechanisms. This will promote transparency, accountability, and shared ownership of school initiatives.

Third, schools may strengthen collaborative decision-making processes by encouraging teacher participation in planning and policy discussions. This can improve organizational commitment and foster a positive school climate.

Fourth, future researchers may replicate the study in other congressional districts or divisions to compare leadership competence across contexts. Additional variables such as school performance indicators, teacher engagement, or organizational climate may also be examined to expand the understanding of leadership effectiveness.

Finally, the proposed management plan derived from this study should focus on sustaining strengths in planning and decision-making while addressing areas requiring improvement. Through systematic leadership enhancement initiatives, public secondary schools in the Third Congressional District of Davao City can further strengthen institutional stability, instructional quality, and overall school performance.

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