Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 6 (2026)

School Head's Financial Management Practices And Performance

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Publication Date: June 7, 2026 DOI: **10.5281/zenodo.20579634**

Abstract

This study determined the levels of school heads' financial management practices and performance in one of the city school divisions in the Negros Island Region, Philippines, during the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it assessed financial management practices in the areas of budgeting and planning, risk management, and financial reporting and accountability. It also determined the level of school heads' performance, examined differences in financial management practices when grouped according to teachers' profile variables, and tested the relationship between financial management practices and performance. The study utilized a descriptive-comparative and correlational research design. The respondents were 271 teachers selected from public schools in the division. Data were gathered using a validated researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using frequency count, percentage, mean, Mann-Whitney U-test, and Spearman rho. Findings revealed that school heads demonstrated a high level of financial management practices in all areas, particularly in risk management. Their performance

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
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was rated Very Satisfactory. No significant differences were found in budgeting and planning when grouped according to age, income, and educational attainment. Similarly, no significant differences were observed in risk management, financial reporting and accountability when grouped according to age and income. However, significant differences existed when grouped according to educational attainment. Furthermore, the relationship between school heads' financial management practices and performance was found to be not significant. The study concluded that while school heads effectively practiced financial management, such practices alone did not significantly influence performance ratings, suggesting that leadership performance is multidimensional.

Keywords: *School Heads, Financial Management Practices, Performance,Budgeting and Planning, Risk Management, Financial Reporting and Accountability.*

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
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Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

School heads play a vital role in ensuring that schools run effectively and efficiently, beyond the teaching side. They are also tasked with managing school resources, especially financial resources, so that learning can proceed properly. In the Philippine education system, school heads are expected to apply sound fiscal management practices like budgeting, allocating resources, handling procurement, and doing accounting, and then monitoring, reporting, and finally seeing how school funds are used, in line with existing government rules and regulations. Republic Act No. 9155, also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, grants school heads the authority, accountability, and responsibility to manage the funds of their own schools. This shift towards decentralization places emphasis on the need for capable financial management among school leaders (Department of Education, 2001).

Financial management in schools has, over time, become more critical as educational institutions are expected to stretch limited resources while also responding to rising needs from learners, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. When money is handled well, schools can provide enough instructional materials, upgrade school facilities, support professional growth initiatives, and implement educational actions that improve overall school results. In contrast, weak financial management can cause funds to be used inefficiently, programs to start late, learning resources to fall short, and the organization to become less effective. That is why the financial management practices used by school heads are now a key subject of concern in educational leadership and administration (Abulon & Balagtas, 2023).

In the Philippine setting, the Department of Education keeps strengthening accountability, transparency, and efficiency in school governance, even when day-to-day implementation can get messy. School heads are expected to manage Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), Special Education Funds (SEF), school-generated resources, and other financial assets, while still following government auditing and procurement rules. Some recent studies in different regions of the Philippines show that school heads generally have strong capabilities in financial management. Still, there are issues that keep showing up in budgeting, planning, monitoring, procurement, and financial reporting. Because of that, the need remains to look closely at and improve financial management methods so that money really supports school effectiveness as well as learning outcomes (Aguirre, 2022; Ramos & Flores, 2024).

In several Philippine studies, there has been an emphasis on the connection between financial management and school performance. The results usually point out that when financial management is effective, it helps the school roll out programs, strengthens accountability, and improves the way the organization functions. Also, when fiscal management is strong, educational goals tend to be reached more easily because resources are directed properly to priority programs and to the learner's needs.

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School performance, which is often seen through institutional accomplishments, teacher performance, learner achievement, and the implementation of programs, can be affected by how well the school head handles the resources that are available. So, checking the financial management practices of school heads together with school performance still matters in order to understand how leadership helps bring educational success (Dela Cruz & Hernandez, 2023).

This study is also anchored on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UNSDG) 4 : Quality Education, which aims to ensure inclusive, equitable, and good-quality education is available while encouraging lifelong learning opportunities for everyone. To reach quality education, it is not only about strong teaching and learning processes but also about proper management of educational resources, in other words, the way those resources are handled, assigned, and monitored. Financial accountability, along with strategic resource utilization, are crucial in providing learners with adequate facilities, instructional materials, technology, and support services that can improve educational outcomes. When school heads practice effective financial management, they contribute in a big way to the realization of quality education and the ongoing, sustainable development of schools (United Nations, 2023).

Despite the increasing body of literature on school financial management in the Philippines, there still seems to be a need for further inquiry, more so when determining how the financial management approaches of school heads ties in with school performance, particularly in learning environments. Several studies have produced different results on how financial management impacts organizational outcomes, and this leads people to think that contextual factors can shape that connection. Also, with current education reforms, stronger requirements for transparency, and greater accountability when it comes to public funds, it becomes even more necessary to keep checking the financial management practices used by school leaders (Ramos & Flores, 2024).

So, this study is considered necessary to examine the financial management practices of school heads and their performance. The results might provide useful insights to school administrators, education supervisors, policymakers, and the Department of Education so they can improve financial management systems, strengthen leadership abilities, and design intervention programs that encourage better use of resources and a higher level of school performance. In the end, the study can help move educational management practices forward and support the goal of quality education in Philippine schools.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This present study on School Heads' Financial Management Practices and Performance is anchored on Henri Fayol's Administrative Management Theory, along with Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory. Fayol's thinking basically works as the foundation for understanding how school heads handle their financial management practices, especially when it comes to planning, organizing , coordinating, and supervising financial resources. Meanwhile, Vroom's Expectancy Theory provides the lens for understanding how school performance happens, because it clarifies how motivation, available resources, and expected outcomes contribute to organizational effectiveness and productivity (Fayol, 1949; Vroom, 1964).

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Henri Fayol's Administrative Management Theory says that management is like a universal process, made up of key managerial roles, such as planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. Fayol also points out that good administration and using organizational resources can really support organizational efficiency and help achieve goals (Fayol, 1949). In this view, the focus is on managerial competence, accountability, discipline, and especially how resources are distributed in order to reach institutional objectives. On another path, Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory frames it a bit differently, in that performance is shaped by a person's motivation as well as their expectations about what will happen next. Vroom (1964) notes that employees tend to try harder and perform well when they think their efforts will translate into strong results, and those results will bring useful, desirable rewards. The theory basically leans on expectancy, instrumentality, and valence, and taken together, these ideas explain how support, resources, and expected payoffs can affect performance and productivity, sometimes in very practical ways.

In relation to the present study, Fayol's Administrative Management Theory is about how school heads carry out administrative tasks tied to finance, such as budgeting, financial planning, monitoring, procurement, and reporting, so that school funds can be used in a more efficient way. When those financial management practices are done well, school heads can better maintain accountability, transparency, and general efficiency in day-to-day school operations. At the same time, Vroom's Expectancy Theory adds another angle; it suggests that if financial resources are handled carefully and allocated properly, teachers and other school personnel end up receiving enough instructional materials, facilities, and support mechanisms, which then boosts motivation and productivity. And that, in turn, helps lift school performance. These theories help support the idea that when school heads practice effective financial management, organizational performance improves quite a lot, and educational outcomes also get better.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to examine the link between school heads' financial management practices and performance in one city schools division in Negros Island Region during the school year 2025 - 2026. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions: What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, average family monthly income, and educational attainment? What is the level of school heads' financial management practices in terms of budgeting and planning, risk management, and financial reporting and accountability? What is the level of school heads' performance? Is there a significant difference in the levels of school heads' financial management practices when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables? Is there a significant relationship between the levels of school heads' financial management practices and performance?

Research Methodology:

This section presents the research design, study respondents, instrumentation, data-gathering procedure, data analysis, and statistical tools, and ethical considerations.

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Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive research design to determine the levels of the school heads' financial management practices and their performance in one city school division in the Negros Island Region, Philippines, during the School Year 2025–2026. In general, a descriptive research design is a way to look at and explain certain traits, behaviors, conditions, or even phenomena about a specific population or area that is being studied. As Creswell and Creswell (2018) mentioned, descriptive research mainly tries to portray trends, inclinations, or viewpoints of a population by examining a sample from that same population. So it is more about collecting numerical, or measurable, information that can help in spotting patterns, connections, and the existing setup, without changing or manipulating any variables. With this kind of design, researchers are able to come up with fairly accurate descriptions of what is happening right now and how those situations naturally occur, without much interference.

A descriptive research design is appropriate for this study because it looks into the prevailing levels of school heads' financial management practices and performance, including the existing conditions, relationships, opinions, practices, and patterns within the educational setting. The study does not involve any manipulation of variables , it just aims to describe and analyze the current state of the variables being examined. As Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018) stressed, descriptive research is about observing, recording, and interpreting phenomena as they naturally appear in a specific environment. In that sense, the descriptive research design fits this study, since it enables the researcher to systematically look at school heads' financial management practices and performance, without disturbing the participants or the surrounding setting.

Study Respondents

The study's respondents were the public elementary and secondary school teachers. These teachers were chosen because they directly work with school heads and can provide meaningful insights into how their school heads perform instructional leadership tasks, manage finances, and perform overall. Their daily interaction with their school heads makes them reliable sources of information for evaluating management effectiveness at the school level.

A sample of 271 was taken from a total population of 907. Since the number of respondents is significant, a stratified random sampling technique was used, using Cochran's formula (Cochran, 1977), a widely used method for estimating sample size in survey research when targeting proportions, to determine the sample size. Stratified random sampling is a probability sampling technique that divides a population into distinct subgroups, known as strata, based on shared characteristics such as age, gender, income, or education level. Stratified random sampling was used by dividing the population into homogeneous strata to ensure proportional representation and increased precision (Thomas, 2020).

Instrument

This study utilized a standardized survey questionnaire to determine the levels of school heads' financial management practices while using secondary data on their performance. The

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instrument consisted of two parts: Part I gathered respondents' profile information, including age, average family monthly income, and educational attainment, while Part II consisted of the instrument on school heads' financial management practices, which had undergone validity and reliability tests to ensure its appropriateness for measuring school heads' financial management practices. There were 7 items for each area, and work performance was based on their Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) results for SY 2024 - 2025.

Data Gathering and Procedure

Upon the approval of the schools division superintendent, the questionnaire was administered to the target respondents. The questionnaires were gathered, recorded, and analyzed. The data gathered from the respondents was tallied and tabulated using the appropriate statistical tools. The encoded data were processed using SPSS.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objectives 1 to 3 employed a descriptive analytical scheme, using frequency counts and percentages as statistical tools to assess the profile of respondents, mean to assess the level of school heads' financial management practices and performance. Objective 4 used a comparative analytical scheme, applying the Mann-Whitney U test to determine significant differences in the levels of school heads' financial management practices when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables. Lastly, Objective 5 used Spearman rho to examine the significant relationship between the school heads' financial management practices levels and their performance.

Ethical Consideration

The study strictly adhered to ethical research standards by ensuring the protection of respondents' rights and welfare throughout the research process. The researchers obtained written informed consent from the respondents prior to data collection. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were clearly informed of the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. To minimize potential harm, the confidentiality of all responses was guaranteed, and the anonymity of the respondents was maintained during data gathering, analysis, and reporting. Moreover, the study complied with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, mandates the lawful, fair, and secure processing of personal and sensitive information (Republic of the Philippines, 2012).

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Results and Discussion:

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered to accomplish the predetermined objectives of this study.

Profile of Respondents

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	Younger (Below 41 years old)	134	49.4
	Older (41 years old and above)	137	50.6
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower (Below Php32,000)	124	45.8
	Higher (Php32,000 and above)	147	54.2
Educational Attainment	Lower (Bachelor's degree)	171	63.1
	Higher (Master's and Doctoral degrees)	100	36.9
	Total	**271**	**100**

As presented in Table 1, in terms of age, 134 respondents, or 49.4%, were below 41 years old, while 137 respondents, or 50.6%, were 41 years old and above. Regarding average family monthly income, 124 or 45.8% earned below ₱32,000, while 147 or 54.2% earned ₱32,000 and above. Regarding educational attainment, 171 teachers, or 63.1%, held a bachelor's degree, while 100, or 36.9%, had completed a master's or doctoral degree.

The data show that the teachers in the study represent a balanced mix of younger and older educators. This suggests that the teaching workforce comprises individuals with different experience levels and energy. The combination of both groups helps create a dynamic and well-rounded school environment.

In addition, in terms of income, more than half of the teachers belong to the higher-income group. This may reflect the salary adjustments given to teachers with longer years of service or higher positions. A stable financial condition may help teachers focus more on their work and be more motivated to perform their duties effectively.

Furthermore, regarding educational attainment, most teachers hold a bachelor's degree, while many have also completed advanced studies. This suggests that many teachers are committed to ongoing professional development and lifelong learning. Those pursuing graduate studies often develop stronger instructional and leadership skills, making them more capable of supporting their school heads' instructional and financial management practices.

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Additionally, the teachers in this study bring diverse experiences, qualifications, and socio-economic backgrounds to their profession. The mix of younger and older teachers fosters collaboration and the exchange of ideas to enhance teaching and learning in schools. Their financial stability may lead to greater job satisfaction and increased productivity, while their pursuit of higher education reflects a desire for professional growth and improvement. Altogether, these characteristics contribute positively to how teachers understand and support their school heads' instructional leadership and financial management practices, ultimately improving overall school performance.

Level of School Heads' Financial Management Practices

Table 2

Level of Financial Management Practices in the Area of Budgeting and Planning

Budgeting and Planning **Items**	**Mean**	**Interpretation**
My school head…		
1. Conducts participatory financial planning with faculty, PTA, and SGC.	4.31	High level
2. Aligns financial plans with the SIP, AIP, and instructional targets.	4.45	High level
3. Sets priorities in the budget based on actual school needs.	4.41	High level
4. Consults teachers during budget preparation for instructional materials.	4.23	High level
5. Demonstrates transparency and openness in financial decision-making.	4.27	High level
6. Uses school data and performance reports to inform budget proposals.	4.32	High level
7. Revises or updates financial plans based on emerging needs (e.g., calamities, enrollment surges).	4.44	High level
Overall Mean	**4.35**	**High level**

As shown in Table 2, the area of budgeting and financial planning recorded an overall mean of 4.35, indicating a high level of performance, which suggests that school heads are effectively managing financial resources. The highest mean was obtained in the indicator "Aligns financial plans with the SIP, AIP, and instructional targets" with a mean score of 4.45, indicating a high level. This reflects school heads' strong commitment to ensuring that financial decisions support instructional and developmental goals. In contrast, the lowest mean was recorded in the indicator "Consults teachers during budget preparation for instructional materials" with a mean score of 4.23, also interpreted as a high level, highlighting a potential area for improvement.

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The findings suggest that while school heads demonstrate strong responsibility and strategic planning in managing school finances, the lower rating in consulting with teachers indicates a need to involve educators further in the budgeting process. Teachers, being directly engaged in classroom instruction, provide valuable insights into the resources and materials most needed to enhance learning outcomes. Strengthening teacher participation in budget preparation may ensure that financial plans are responsive to actual classroom needs, promote inclusivity and transparency, and foster shared ownership of school initiatives. By encouraging collaboration and open discussion during budgeting, school leaders can enhance resource allocation, promote accountability, and foster a more supportive and participatory school environment that ultimately benefits both teaching and learning.

Finally, the results of this study are supported by Abulencia (2020), who emphasizes that participatory budgeting enables schools to better respond to their actual needs and ensures that funds are used effectively.

Table 3

Level of Financial Management Practices in the Area of Risk Management

Risk Management **Items**	**Mean**	**Interpretation**
My school head…		
1. Establishes internal control systems to monitor fund usage and prevent misuse.	4.31	High level
2. Provides orientation or updates to teachers on financial policies and guidelines.	4.33	High level
3. Ensures compliance with DepEd, COA, and DBM rules in all transactions.	4.50	Very High level
4. Coordinates with the finance committee or SDO accountants for technical support.	4.46	High level
5. Implements standard operating procedures for procurement and disbursement.	4.46	High level
6. Reviews and updates financial documents to avoid audit findings.	4.45	High level
7. Anticipates financial risks and prepares action plans for resolution.	4.38	High level
Overall Mean	**4.41**	**High level**

As shown in Table 3, the area of risk management obtained an overall mean of 4.41, interpreted as a high level. The highest mean was recorded in the indicator "Ensures compliance with DepEd, COA, and DBM rules in all transactions," with a mean score of 4.50, indicating a very high level that is reflective of school heads. In contrast, the lowest mean was obtained in the indicator "Establishes internal control systems to monitor fund usage and prevent misuse," with a mean score of 4.31, also interpreted as a high level.

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The findings imply that while school heads demonstrate strong accountability and compliance in handling school funds, the slightly lower rating in establishing internal control systems may indicate the need to improve monitoring and preventive measures. Enhancing these systems through regular audits, systematic record-keeping, and potentially utilizing digital platforms, as well as upskilling and mentoring Administrative Assistants in bookkeeping and clerical work, and orienting teachers on financial protocols, might ensure that fund usage is accurately tracked, errors are minimized, and the risks of misuse are further reduced. Strengthening internal controls not only safeguards school resources but also reinforces transparency, fosters trust among stakeholders, and promotes a shared sense of responsibility in financial management. By prioritizing this area, school heads can further secure financial stability and support the effective implementation of school programs and instructional goals.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Cruz and Nolasco (2020). They found that school heads who follow financial regulations and use good risk management practices show greater accountability, transparency, and efficiency. Their research also highlighted that following DepEd, COA, and DBM guidelines, along with strong monitoring and internal controls, helps prevent financial problems and builds trust among stakeholders. These points support the current study's findings, especially the high compliance among school heads and the need to further improve internal controls to better monitor, protect resources, and use funds responsibly.

Table 4

Level of Financial Management Practices in the Area of Financial Reporting and Accountability

Financial Reporting and Accountability **Items**	**Mean**	**Interpretation**
My school head…		
1. Prepares and submits timely and accurate liquidation reports.	4.42	High level
2. Posts MOOE and financial reports on school transparency boards.	4.27	High level
3. Holds regular financial updates or meetings with teachers and stakeholders.	4.40	High level
4. Ensures financial transactions comply with ethical and legal standards	4.33	High level
5. Encourages feedback and questions about school finances.	4.32	High level
6. Takes corrective action when audit observations are issued.	4.35	High level
7. Promotes a culture of transparency, trust, and accountability in financial management.	4.35	High level
Overall Mean	**4.35**	**High level**

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Table 4 presents the area of Financial Reporting and Accountability, achieved an overall mean of 4.35, interpreted as a high level. The highest mean was recorded in the statement "Prepares and submits timely and accurate liquidation reports," with a mean score of 4.42, interpreted as a high level. In contrast, the lowest mean was obtained in the indicator "Posts MOOE and financial reports on school transparency boards," with a mean score of 4.27, which can also be interpreted as a high level.

The findings suggest that while school heads excel in financial documentation and reporting, the slightly lower rating in posting transparency reports may highlight a need to improve public information sharing. Regularly updating MOOE and financial reports on transparency boards and providing a more visible location for the transparency board, where stakeholders can easily access it, might increase stakeholders' awareness of fund utilization, foster confidence, and promote a culture of openness among teachers, parents, and community partners. Strengthening this practice ensures that financial operations are not only accurate and compliant but also visible and understandable to all stakeholders. By improving the accessibility and clarity of financial information, school heads can reinforce accountability, encourage active participation in school governance, and further strengthen trust within the school community.

Finally, the findings are supported by Bautista and Ramos (2020), who emphasized that timely financial reporting is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability in schools. Likewise, Delos Reyes and Villanueva (2021) also noted that promoting stakeholder participation in financial discussions strengthens shared accountability and decision-making.

Level of School Heads' Performance

Table 5

Level of School Heads' Performance When Grouped as a Whole

Performance	Mean	Interpretation
School Heads	4.482	Very Satisfactory

Table 5 shows the overall performance level of school heads in the division. The data revealed a mean score of 4.482, which is interpreted as Very Satisfactory under the DepEd Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS). According to the RPMS performance descriptors, a Very Satisfactory (VS) rating corresponds to performance that exceeds targets by 15% to 29%. In comparison, an Outstanding (O) rating corresponds to performance that exceeds targets by 30% or more (Department of Education).

This result indicates that school heads are performing very well in fulfilling their duties in instructional leadership, financial management, and school governance. Their performance suggests that they can lead teachers effectively, manage resources responsibly, and maintain supportive learning environments conducive to student success.

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The mean rating of 4.482—close to the threshold for Outstanding—shows that most school heads are not only meeting expectations but often exceeding them. This reflects strong dedication and the ability to balance administrative responsibilities with high-quality instructional practices. It also underscores their commitment to aligning school goals with DepEd's mission and vision, ensuring that leadership practices directly benefit both teachers and learners. A very satisfactory level of performance among school heads means they consistently meet and often exceed the expected standards of leadership and management. It indicates that they are effectively fulfilling their roles in supervising instruction, managing school operations, supporting teachers, and ensuring that school goals and policies are carried out efficiently and responsibly.

Furthermore, the Very Satisfactory performance level implies that leadership within the division is strong and effective. This suggests that DepEd's ongoing training, mentoring, and professional development programs have significantly contributed to strengthening the competencies of school heads. However, despite the commendable results, there remains room for continuous improvement. To move from Very Satisfactory to Outstanding, school heads may deepen stakeholder involvement, strengthen data-driven decision-making, and promote more collaborative and innovative school cultures. These efforts can help elevate the overall quality of education and inspire greater excellence across schools in the division.

Finally, these findings reinforce the work of Day and Sammons (2018), who emphasized that strong leadership is closely linked to improved teaching and learning outcomes. Similarly, Hallinger and Wang (2020) found that high-performing school heads demonstrate robust instructional and transformational leadership that motivates teachers and elevates overall school performance.

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Comparative Analysis of the Level of School Heads' Financial Management Practices

Table 6

Differences in the Level of Financial Management Practices in the Area of Budgeting and Planning, and when grouped and Compared According to Variables

Budgeting and Planning							
Variables	**Categories**	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Mann Whitney U-test**	**Sig. Level**	***p*-value**	**Interpretation**
Age	Younger	134	129.36	8289.00		0.155	Not Significant
	Older	137	142.50				
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower	124	142.03	8366.00	0.05	0.231	Not Significant
	Higher	147	130.91				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	171	132.51	7953.00		0.323	Not Significant
	Higher	100	141.97				

Table 6 shows the differences in the level of school heads' financial management practices in budgeting and planning, grouped by age, average family monthly income, and highest educational attainment. The Mann-Whitney U-test was used to determine whether differences between these groups were statistically significant.

For age, younger teachers had a mean rank of 129.36, while older teachers had a mean rank of 142.50. The computed p-value of 0.155, being greater than the 0.05 significance level, indicated that the difference was not statistically significant. This suggested that younger and older teachers shared similar views of their school heads' budgeting and planning practices. In other words, age did not influence how teachers perceived their school heads' ability to manage and allocate financial resources. The hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the level of school heads' financial management practices in budgeting and planning when grouped according to age was accepted.

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When grouped by average family monthly income, teachers in the lower-income group had a mean rank of 142.03, while those in the higher-income group had a mean rank of 130.91. The resulting p-value of 0.231, also above 0.05, indicated that the difference was not significant. This implied that teachers, regardless of income level, held comparable perceptions of their school heads' budgeting and planning practices. The hypothesis that there was no significant difference when grouped by average family monthly income was accepted.

Regarding the highest educational attainment, teachers with lower educational attainment had a mean rank of 132.51, while those with higher educational attainment had a mean rank of 141.97. The p-value of 0.323, greater than 0.05, revealed that the difference was insignificant. This indicated that teachers' educational background did not significantly affect how they viewed their school heads' budgeting and planning practices. The hypothesis that there was no significant difference when grouped by educational attainment was accepted.

In general, the findings revealed that teachers shared a common perception of their school heads' financial management practices in budgeting and planning, regardless of age, income, or educational attainment. All computed p-values were greater than 0.05, indicating that these demographic factors did not result in meaningful differences in their evaluations. Slightly higher mean ranks were observed among older and lower-income teachers, but these variations were not statistically significant. This suggested that school heads applied budgeting and planning practices that were consistent, transparent, and uniformly understood by teachers across different demographic groups.

The absence of significant differences implied that the financial management system in schools operated under standardized policies and procedures that promoted fairness and inclusivity. It also reflected that school heads effectively communicated and implemented budgeting and planning processes in a manner that was clear and consistent for all teaching staff. Maintaining this level of consistency strengthened trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility in managing school funds efficiently.

These findings align with Castillo and Hernandez (2019) explained that school budgeting and planning practices are often shaped more by institutional guidelines and leadership accountability than by individual teacher characteristics.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
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Table 7

Differences in the Level of Financial Management Practices in the Area of Risk Management, When Grouped and Compared According to Variables

Risk Management							
Variables	**Categories**	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Mann Whitney U-test**	**Sig. Level**	***p*-value**	**Interpretation**
Age	Younger	134	130.16	8396.00		0.208	Not Significant
	Older	137	141.72				
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower	124	141.58	8422.50	0.05	0.265	Not Significant
	Higher	147	131.30				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	171	127.60	7113.00		0.017	Significant
	Higher	100	150.37				

Table 7 shows the differences in the level of school heads' financial management practices in risk management when grouped according to age, average family monthly income, and highest educational attainment. The Mann-Whitney U-test was used to determine whether the differences among these groups were statistically significant.

For the variable of age, younger teachers had a mean rank of 130.16, while older teachers had a mean rank of 141.72. The computed p-value of 0.208, which is higher than the 0.05 significance level, indicated that the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant. Thus, when grouped and compared according to age, the hypothesis stating that there was no significant difference in the level of school heads' financial management practices in risk management was accepted.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
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When grouped according to average family monthly income, teachers from the lower-income category had a mean rank of 141.58, while those from the higher-income group had a mean rank of 131.30. The p-value of 0.265, being greater than 0.05, showed that the difference between the two groups was also insignificant. Therefore, the hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the level of school heads' financial management practices in risk management when grouped and compared according to average family monthly income was accepted.

In contrast, a different result was observed when the data were grouped according to the highest educational attainment. Teachers with lower educational attainment had a mean rank of 127.60, while those with higher educational attainment had a mean rank of 150.37. The computed p-value of 0.017, being less than 0.05, indicated a significant difference between the two groups. Hence, when grouped and compared according to educational attainment, the hypothesis stating that there was no significant difference in the level of school heads' financial management practices in risk management was rejected.

In summary, the results showed that teachers' perceptions of their school heads' financial risk management practices did not differ significantly based on age or income. However, they varied according to educational attainment. This finding suggested that teachers with higher levels of education may have greater awareness of how financial risks are identified, minimized, and managed in schools. They might also be more familiar with DepEd's financial regulations and protocols, enabling them to recognize effective risk management practices more clearly.

These results suggest that teachers' educational backgrounds influence their perceptions of their school heads' financial management practices in risk management. Teachers with higher educational attainment tended to rate their school heads more favorably, likely because they possessed a deeper understanding of financial accountability, transparency, and risk-prevention measures. The significant result based on educational attainment underscores the importance of enhancing teachers' financial literacy and awareness. When teachers understood the principles of financial risk management, they could better appreciate their school heads' efforts to ensure transparency and accountability in handling school funds. It also fostered a sense of shared responsibility in safeguarding school resources and promoting sustainable financial practices.

These findings are consistent with Castillo and Hernandez (2019), who found that teachers with higher educational backgrounds have a more comprehensive understanding of financial systems, making them more perceptive of school heads' management strategies.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
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Table 8

Differences in the Level of Financial Management Practices in the Area of Financial Reporting and Accountability When Grouped and Compared According to Variables

Financial Reporting and Accountability							
Variables	**Categories**	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Mann Whitney U-test**	**Sig. Level**	***p*-value**	**Interpretation**
Age	Younger	134	131.41	8564.00		0.324	Not Significant
	Older	137	140.49				
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower	124	140.05	8612.00	0.05	0.419	Not Significant
	Higher	147	132.59				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	171	127.55	7105.50		0.016	Significant
	Higher	100	150.44				

Table 8 shows the differences in the level of school heads' financial management practices in financial reporting and accountability when grouped according to age, average family monthly income, and highest educational attainment. The Mann-Whitney U-test was used to determine whether differences among these groups were statistically significant.

For the variable age, younger teachers had a mean rank of 131.41, while older teachers had a mean rank of 140.49. The computed p-value of 0.324, which is greater than the 0.05 significance level, indicates that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant. Consequently, when grouped and compared according to age, the hypothesis stating that there was no significant difference in the level of school heads' financial management practices in financial reporting and accountability was accepted.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
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When grouped according to average family monthly income, teachers in the lower-income group had a mean rank of 140.05, while those in the higher-income group had a mean rank of 132.59. The resulting p-value of 0.419, which is greater than 0.05, indicated that the difference was not significant. Thus, the hypothesis stating that there was no significant difference in the level of school heads' financial management practices in financial reporting and accountability when grouped and compared according to average family monthly income was accepted.

In contrast, when grouped according to highest educational attainment, teachers with lower educational attainment had a mean rank of 127.55, while those with higher educational attainment had a mean rank of 150.44. The computed p-value of 0.016, being lower than the 0.05 significance level, indicated a significant difference. Therefore, when grouped and compared according to highest educational attainment, the hypothesis stating that there was no significant difference in the level of school heads' financial management practices in financial reporting and accountability was rejected.

In general, the findings revealed that age and income did not create differences in teachers' evaluations of financial reporting and accountability, but educational attainment did. Teachers with higher educational backgrounds may have a better understanding of the importance of maintaining transparent and accurate financial records, making them more appreciative of sound financial management practices. Professional learning and exposure to financial procedures can enhance teachers' capacity to recognize effective fiscal accountability within schools. The results suggest that enhancing financial literacy among teachers, regardless of their educational level, can foster a culture of transparency and shared accountability. When teachers understand financial systems more deeply, they are more likely to trust and support their school heads in managing school funds responsibly and ethically.

The results of this study are similar to Castillo (2019), who found that teachers with higher levels of education had a better understanding and appreciation of financial reporting, accountability, and transparency in schools. Castillo's study showed that educational background had a strong effect on how teachers viewed financial management, while factors like age and income had little impact. This matches the current findings, which found no major differences in teachers' views on financial reporting and accountability based on age or family income, but did find a significant difference based on educational attainment. This suggests that higher education helps teachers become more aware of fiscal accountability and transparency in managing schools.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
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Relational Analysis Between the Levels of School Heads' Financial Management Practices and Performance

Table 9

Relationship Between the Level of School Heads' Financial Management Practices and the Level of School Heads' Performance

Correlation	rho	Sig. level	*p*-value	Interpretation
Level of School Heads' Financial Management Practices Level of School Heads' Performance	0.047	0.05	0.814	Not Significant

The results in Table 9 show that the level of school heads' financial management practices had a very weak positive correlation with their level of performance, with a computed rho of 0.047. However, this relationship was not statistically significant, as indicated by a p-value of 0.814, which is well above the 0.05 significance threshold. This suggests that the financial management practices demonstrated by school heads did not significantly relate to or predict their performance ratings. Even when school heads implemented budgeting procedures, ensured the proper utilization of school funds, or adhered to financial accountability standards, these efforts did not translate into observable differences in overall performance, as measured by the indicators employed in this study. This implies that other leadership domains, such as instructional supervision, administrative management, stakeholder engagement, or school governance, may have had a more significant influence on performance evaluations.

The implications of these findings highlight the need for a balanced leadership approach to achieve strong performance as a school head. While financial management remains essential for accountability, sustaining programs, and complying with government standards, it may not serve as a central criterion in performance evaluation. Consequently, professional development programs should integrate financial management with other critical leadership competencies to ensure well-rounded leadership effectiveness. Similarly, school systems may need to revisit performance evaluation tools to assess whether financial leadership should be given greater emphasis or better aligned with broader performance expectations. Overall, these results reinforce the notion that leadership performance is multi-dimensional and cannot be predicted by financial management alone.

These findings are consistent with both local and international studies. Mendoza (2019) observed that Philippine school heads often face constraints on fiscal autonomy, which limits the impact of their financial management practices on overall school performance. Harris and Jones (2019) argued that strong financial management supports school operations, but does not necessarily predict school leaders' performance unless it is linked to broader organizational goals.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
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Additionally, Bush and Glover (2021) emphasized that financial management is frequently treated as a technical administrative function rather than a determinant of leadership success.

Conclusion:

The respondents included both younger and older teachers, with most coming from higher-income backgrounds and holding bachelor's degrees. This mix of demographic and professional backgrounds may lead to different perspectives and experiences in supporting school leadership and financial management.

The findings showed that school heads exhibited a fairly consistent, high level of financial management practice in terms of budgeting and planning, risk management, and also financial reporting and accountability. In practice school heads were able to tie their financial plans to school goals, make sure that they follow the financial regulations, and keep the financial records accurate as well. So the results seems to suggest that school heads have good competencies in handling school resources responsibly, in a transparent way, and with efficiency. Still, the findings also point out some spots that could use more attention, especially when it comes to getting more teacher involvement during budget preparation, reinforcing internal control systems, and making financial transparency reports easier to see and more accessible to people. Overall, the results indicate that school heads are committed to solid financial governance, accountability, and collaboration with stakeholders, which in turn support smooth school operations and help organizational efficiency move in a positive direction.

School heads attained a Very Satisfactory level of performance, indicating that they effectively fulfilled their responsibilities in instructional leadership, school governance, and financial management. The findings further suggest that school heads consistently exceeded expected standards and demonstrated strong leadership competencies that positively contributed to school effectiveness and educational outcomes.

The results showed that teachers mostly had similar views about how school heads manage finances in budgeting, planning, risk management, and financial reporting, no matter their age or family income. There were, however, notable differences when teachers were grouped by their highest level of education, especially in risk management and financial reporting. This means that teachers with more education may better understand financial systems, accountability, and transparency in schools. In general, the findings suggest that school heads apply financial management practices consistently, but teachers' educational backgrounds affect how deeply they understand and assess these processes.

The findings showed that school heads' financial management practices had a very weak, and not significant relationship with their performance. That is sort of means financial management alone did not really move the needle in terms of their performance ratings, so it suggests other leadership aspects like instructional leadership, governance, and stakeholder engagement may be more of a driving factor instead. In other words, maybe it's not the money handling by itself but those related dimensions that matter, in determining the overall performance.

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