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Research Article

Guiding Lights of Literacy: The Role of Leadership and Policy in Educational Journey Among Elementary Schools of Benguet

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of leadership and policy in sustaining literacy excellence among elementary schools in Benguet Province, Philippines. Literacy is recognized as a cornerstone of lifelong learning, equity, and national development, yet challenges remain in translating national policies into effective school-level practices. Guided by Transformational Leadership Theory and Policy Enactment Theory, the research employed a descriptive-comparative design with 333 respondents composed of teachers and school heads from public elementary schools. Data were gathered through structured survey questionnaires describing demographic profiles, leadership strategies, educational policies, management practices, and collaboration across groups. Findings revealed that transformational, instructional, participative, situational, and cultural-relational leadership strategies contributed to Benguet's high literacy rates. Educational policies and management practices, particularly strategic planning and resource management, supported literacy development and sustainability. Comparative analysis showed significant differences in perceptions of policy support, management practices, and collaboration, highlighting the importance of leadership style and contextual realities in shaping literacy outcomes. Sustained literacy achievement requires synergy among leadership, policy, and collaboration, offering evidence-based strategies for fostering equitable and high-quality literacy instruction across diverse educational contexts.

Keywords: *Literacy, Management practices, Policy implementation, Strategies, Transformational leadership*

Introduction

Literacy is the cornerstone of lifelong learning, social equity, and national development (Beecher, 2023), empowering individuals to participate meaningfully in society while contributing to economic growth and cultural vitality. It provides access to relevant information for informed decision-making (Amnesty International, 2024). Despite systematic national literacy policies, a substantial implementation gap persists, particularly in high-performing educational regions where

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translating policy into effective, context-responsive school practices remains challenging. This study explored how school heads, teachers, and education officials translate national policies into actionable programs that drive high literacy outcomes.

Literacy underpins individual empowerment and societal advancement. Elevated literacy rates are positively associated with economic prosperity, social cohesion, and quality of life (World Bank, 2024). UNESCO positions literacy as central to global education policy agendas, serving as a catalyst for social transformation and equity, while the OECD underscores the need for coherent, aligned education policies to ensure effective implementation and sustainability of literacy initiatives (Pont & Nusche, 2020). Li (2022) further emphasized that literacy development is increasingly viewed as language socialization, shaped by disciplinary norms, identity formation, and institutional power positioning literacy as both a human right and a strategic policy concern.

Leadership is instrumental in translating literacy policy into practice. The International Literacy Association (ILA, 2023) emphasized that principals have a moral imperative to foster equitable literacy environments ensuring all students develop self efficacy and academic skills. Literacy leadership extends beyond administrators to include teachers, reading specialists, and community stakeholders forming collaborative Literacy Leadership Teams (Schutz & Teolis, 2021). Effective literacy leaders are instructional experts and visionaries capable of navigating complex educational landscapes and fostering inclusive, culturally responsive environments. UNESCO's Strategy for Youth and Adult Literacy (2020–2025) reinforces the need for systemic leadership aligned with SDG 4, promoting cross-sector engagement across schools, universities, and civic organizations.

Australian adult literacy data reveals marked stratification across proficiency tiers. According to PIAAC findings, approximately 44% of Australian adults possess literacy skills at Levels 1 and 2, enabling comprehension of simple sentences but limiting engagement with complex material (The Information Access Group, 2025). An estimated 38% function at Level 3, the minimum threshold for effective social and workplace participation (Australian Government Style Manual, 2024), while only 15% reach Levels 4 and 5, enabling critical evaluation and synthesis of dense texts essential for professional and civic engagement (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020).

Across Southeast Asia, literacy presents a varied landscape shaped by policy frameworks, economic capacity, and sociocultural contexts. Countries such as Brunei (99.7%), Vietnam (98.6%), and Singapore (97.6%) report the highest regional literacy rates, attributed to strong government investment and compulsory education, while Cambodia (84%), Laos (88%), and Timor-Leste (68.1%) continue facing access, gender, and resource challenges (World Population Review, 2025; Sumarno, 2025). Rusydiyah et al. (2023) highlighted how national literacy policies in Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia are shaped by distinct sociopolitical contexts, with leadership involving policy implementation alongside mobilization of literacy specialists and community-based initiatives.

In rural China, Zhu, Li, and Li (2024) found that principals perceived a direct leadership influence on literacy outcomes, while teachers emphasized indirect pathways mediated by commitment and collaborative culture emphasizing the importance of distributed leadership models. Kilag et al. (2023) noted that successful leadership in East Asian vertically aligned cultural systems often diverges from Western models, emphasizing relational authority, collective responsibility, and long-term vision. Their review revealed a growing shift toward collaborative, student-centered, and technologically adaptive leadership, balancing policy compliance with leadership autonomy.

In the Philippines, literacy has been a key policy focus, with initiatives targeting reading comprehension, functional literacy, and equitable access (UNESCO, 2024). The Philippine Statistics Authority recorded Benguet's basic literacy rate at 94.9% and functional literacy rate at 87.9%, reflecting strong educational foundations (PSA, 2024). However, sustaining high literacy outcomes requires continuous innovation in school leadership and policy implementation. Lipaopao et al. (2025) highlighted how school heads in Masbate strategically influenced literacy programs through collaborative

decision-making, teacher development, and resource navigation. Andrin et al. (2024) further emphasized that transformational instructional leaders who prioritized teacher training created environments conducive to student reading achievement. These findings align with Hallinger (2020), who noted that Philippine educational leadership is rooted in relational and community-based values extending to NGOs and grassroots organizations. Effective literacy leadership thus requires administrative competence, cultural responsiveness, strategic vision, and equity commitment.

Educational leaders shape literacy success by influencing instructional strategies, fostering teacher collaboration, and ensuring effective policy execution (Far Eastern University, 2023). Policy implementation remains a key factor in addressing educational challenges and improving literacy outcomes in the Philippines (DepEd, 2025). This study examined relationships between leadership strategies, policy implementation, and literacy outcomes in Benguet Province through a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, identifying key leadership practices contributing to literacy excellence while evaluating how school heads and teachers collaborate to maintain high literacy standards to enhance student achievement and instructional effectiveness (Edutopia, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Transformational Leadership Theory and Policy Enactment Theory, both of which offer complementary lenses for examining the relationship between leadership strategies, policy implementation, and literacy outcomes in Benguet Province.

Transformational Leadership Theory emphasizes the role of visionary, inspirational leadership in driving meaningful change within educational institutions. As Deng et al. (2023) assert, transformational leaders stimulate and inspire followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes while cultivating their own leadership capacity. Ugochukwu (2025) further affirms the theory's relevance in contemporary, team-centered environments, where emotional intelligence, innovation, and shared purpose are critical to success. In the context of literacy, transformational leadership provides a foundation for understanding how school heads motivate teachers, foster collaborative cultures, and adapt instructional practices to meet diverse learner needs. This theory will guide the study in identifying leadership behaviors that correlate with literacy excellence, particularly those that empower educators and build collective efficacy.

Policy Enactment Theory, as articulated by contemporary scholars, recognizes that policy enactment is never linear; it is mediated by professional judgment, cultural norms, and institutional dynamics (Ghamrawi, 2023). Rather than viewing policy implementation as a linear process, this theory recognizes the influence of contextual factors, individual agency, and institutional dynamics. In regions like Benguet, where local culture, geography, and resource availability shape educational realities, Policy Enactment Theory provides a critical framework for analyzing how national literacy policies are localized and sustained. It will guide the study in assessing the extent to which policy intentions align with on-the-ground practices, and how leadership mediates this translation.These theories provide a strong conceptual basis for examining how leadership practices and policy implementation interact to influence literacy outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the systems-oriented framework that positions sustained literacy outcomes as the central focus. These outcomes include proficiency reading, critical thinking, and academic achievement. They are influenced by five interconnected domains: educational leadership, policy implementation, management practices, teacher collaboration, and contextual factors.



Figure 1. Systems Interaction for Literacy Policy Implementation

The directional arrows suggest both direct and indirect relationships among these variables. Educational leadership serves as the central driving force, guiding policy interpretation and shaping conditions for effective management and teacher collaboration, while policy and practice maintain a reciprocal relationship where national directives and classroom realities continuously inform each other. Management practices operationalize both leadership strategies and policy goals by aligning resources, time, and administrative structures with literacy objectives. Teacher collaboration, though shaped by leadership and management, feeds back into the system by enhancing instructional quality and informing policy enactment at the classroom level. Contextual factors including culture, geography, and community involvement act as moderators that either strengthen or constrain how leadership and policy are received and adapted, with all directional arrows in the framework collectively reflecting the dynamic interdependencies that contribute to literacy success in Benguet Province.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the role of leadership and policy in educational journey among elementary schools of Benguet. Specifically;

1. What are the respondents' demographic profiles in terms of:
   1.1 Teacher
      1.1.1 Age
      1.1.2 Gender
      1.1.3 Subject Taught
      1.1.4 Years of Experience in Education
      1.1.5 Highest Educational Attainment
   1.2 School Head
      1.2.1 Age
      1.2.2 Gender
      1.2.3 Years of Experience in Education
      1.2.4 Highest Educational Attainment
2. What leadership strategies contribute to Benguet's high literacy rates as perceived by the respondents in terms of:
   2.1 Transformational Leadership
   2.2 Instructional Leadership
   2.3 Participative Leadership
   2.4 Situational Leadership
   2.5 Cultural and Relational Leadership
3. To what extent do educational policies support literacy development in high performing schools?
4. To what extent do management practices ensure the sustainability of literacy success as perceived by the respondents in terms of:
   4.1 Strategic Planning
   4.2 Resource Management
5. What is the degree of the collaboration of teachers and school heads in maintaining literacy excellence?

6. Is there a significant difference in the educational policies supporting literacy development in high-performing schools?
7. Is there a significant difference in the management practices ensuring the sustainability of literacy success?
8. Is there a significant difference in the degree of collaboration between teachers and school heads in literacy excellence?
9. Is there a significant difference among leadership practices, educational policies, management practices, and the degree of collaboration in sustaining high literacy outcomes?
10. Based on the results of the study, what output can be proposed?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study investigates leadership practices and policy implementation of literacy programs in public elementary schools in Benguet Province, Philippines, examining how school heads, teachers, and education officers influence the success and sustainability of literacy initiatives within a culturally diverse and linguistically rich indigenous context. Using a descriptive-comparative approach with interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, and thematic analysis, the study covers the past three academic years to capture current and recent practices. The study is delimited to public elementary schools and literacy programs only, with participants restricted to school heads, teachers, and education officers, thereby excluding private and secondary schools, non-formal education settings, other academic domains, and stakeholders such as parents, support staff, and learners.

Significance of the Study

This study offers multi-dimensional contributions to literacy development by providing school leaders with insights into transformational and collaborative leadership strategies that foster teacher motivation, innovation, and data-informed decision-making. Policymakers benefit from findings that support the crafting of responsive, sustainable literacy policies aligned with both national priorities and grassroots realities, while teachers gain affirmation of the value of professional collaboration, shared goal setting, and peer-empowered co-creation of literacy solutions. Students, as the central beneficiaries, stand to gain more equitable learning outcomes, increased reading proficiency, and greater communicative confidence particularly in linguistically and culturally diverse communities where leadership and policy decisions directly shape access to meaningful literacy experiences. Educational researchers will find value in the study's contribution to evolving discourse on leadership and policy in developing contexts, specifically within the Philippine public school system. For communities, the study reinforces education as a cornerstone of local development, demonstrating how sustained literacy outcomes translate into broader social and economic benefits that elevate the collective value of literacy across sectors.

Related Literature and Studies

Conceptualizing Literacy. Literacy extends beyond basic reading and writing to encompass comprehension, critical thinking, and meaningful knowledge application. Basic literacy covers foundational reading, writing, and arithmetic, while functional literacy involves interpreting and applying written information in real-life contexts (DepEd, 2025; PSA, 2025). The Philippines' 2024 FLEMMS data illustrates this distinction sharply: while 93.1% of Filipinos aged 10–64 were basically literate, only 70.8% were functionally literate, meaning nearly 18.9 million Filipinos could read and write but struggled with comprehension and application (PSA, 2025; DepEd CALABARZON, 2025). The decline from 91.6% functional literacy in 2019 to 70.8% in 2024 reflects both a refined definition and systemic instructional gaps, with even college graduates found lacking in functional literacy, pointing to deep curriculum and delivery problems (Yee, 2025).

Educational Practices. Effective literacy instruction is grounded in the science of reading, requiring explicit teaching across phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Seidenberg et al., 2020). One-dimensional approaches have proven insufficient; what matters is a multidimensional, evidence-based framework. Instructional supervision and coaching rank among the most powerful practices. Principals who observe

classrooms regularly and provide developmental feedback generate stronger gains in teaching quality and student achievement (Grissom et al., 2021). Instructional coaching, when sustained and job-embedded, produces significant improvements in literacy outcomes (Kraft et al., 2020), while classroom walkthroughs with focused protocols and immediate feedback increase principal-teacher engagement and improve implementation of targeted practices (Hallinger & Walker, 2020).

Integrating reading and writing across subject areas deepens comprehension and vocabulary, with students exposed to cross-content literacy instruction showing stronger transfer of reading skills (Sanchez et al., 2021). When teachers regularly assess, collaboratively analyze student performance, and adjust instruction accordingly, reading growth increases substantially (William & Afeez, 2025). Differentiated instruction further strengthens outcomes, particularly for struggling readers and English learners (Tomlinson & Eidson, 2020).

Policy Alignment and Implementation. In the Philippines, key literacy initiatives include the National Reading Program, Bawat Bata Makababasa, ARAL, and the MATATAG curriculum agenda (DepEd, 2025). However, research consistently shows substantial variation in how schools interpret and enact these policies (Santos, Reyes, & Tan, 2024). Contemporary theory frames implementation not as straightforward compliance but as active interpretation, negotiation, and contextualization shaped by local capacity, culture, and leadership (Ghamrawi, 2023). A critical gap persists between policy intention and classroom practice described as loose coupling where teachers may comply procedurally while substantively maintaining traditional methods (Spillane & Lee, 2021).

Bridging this gap requires instructional infrastructure: professional development, quality materials, assessment tools, collaborative planning time, and capable leadership (Honig & Hatch, 2020). Without these, policy change remains superficial (Fullan, 2020). The Philippine context is further complicated by policy congestion, where multiple concurrent initiatives create conflicting demands that dilute focus (Ronda, 2023). Strategic coherence through a limited set of aligned priorities is essential (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2020), as is institutionalization embedding policy-aligned practices into school structures and routines so they persist beyond initial momentum (Ball et al., 2012).

Teacher Collaboration and Engagement. Teacher collaboration is a mediating factor with substantial influence on literacy improvement. Collective teacher efficacy shared beliefs in the group's capacity to improve student outcomes has effect sizes exceeding 1.5, making it one of the strongest influences on achievement (Goddard et al., 2024). The quality of collaboration matters significantly; structured collaboration organized around shared goals, data analysis, and mutual accountability produces stronger outcomes than loose, informal exchanges (Javornik & Klemenčič Mirazchiyski, 2023). Professional Learning Communities exemplify this structure, with schools establishing Literacy Leadership Teams achieving more sustained reading improvements than those relying on administrative leadership alone (Schutz & Teolis, 2021; Dufour & Eaker, 2020).

In the Philippines, Subject Learning Action Cells (SLACs) are the primary structured collaboration mechanism. When SLACs function with clear purpose, administrative support, and genuine instructional focus, they generate meaningful professional learning (DepEd, 2025). Effective SLACs require professional capital: teacher expertise, trusting relationships, and leadership capacity (Katz & Earl, 2020). Sustaining collaboration over the long term also requires attention to collective efficacy, which leaders build by celebrating progress and ensuring equitable participation (Donohoo et al., 2024).

Global and Regional Literacy Perspectives. Globally, over 750 million adults remain without basic literacy skills, with Asia facing particular challenges from linguistic diversity, unequal access, and policy fragmentation (UNESCO, 2024). In Southeast Asia, nations like Brunei (99.7%), Vietnam (98.6%), and Singapore (97.6%) lead in literacy performance, underpinned by sustained educational investment (Sumarno, 2025). The Philippines (96.3%), Indonesia (96%), and Malaysia (95%)

show steady progress, though urban-rural disparities persist (World Population Review, 2025). Despite high basic literacy rates, functional literacy gaps persist across the region, particularly among older women, indigenous communities, and out-of-school youth (UNESCO, 2020). The SEA-PLM 2019 study reveals that significant proportions of Grade 5 students across Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Vietnam cannot make inferences or comprehend everyday texts (SEA PLM, 2020).

Educational Leadership Models. Transformational leaders who articulate a compelling literacy vision and inspire teacher commitment produce substantial gains in reading outcomes (Leithwood & Sun, 2022). In the Philippines, leaders who combine literacy-specific expertise with transformational qualities achieve the most significant comprehension gains while empowering teachers to innovate (Andrin et al., 2024). Instructional leadership monitoring classroom instruction, providing targeted feedback, and aligning curriculum with literacy benchmarks consistently achieves stronger outcomes (Hallinger, 2020). In Masbate, school heads who set clear learning targets and facilitated teacher learning communities functioned as instructional coaches rather than mere administrators (Lipaopao et al., 2025). Distributed leadership models have gained recognition for sustaining literacy initiatives, with schools comprising Literacy Leadership Teams of teachers, specialists, and administrators outperforming those relying on top-down approaches (Gronn & Lacey, 2023; Sari et al., 2025).

Professional Development, Resources, and Community Engagement. Effective professional development is sustained, job-embedded, content-focused, and collaborative not one-shot workshops (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020). Schools investing in ongoing literacy-specific professional development and coaching cycles achieve more stable gains (Andrin et al., 2024). Organizational culture shapes literacy development significantly; leaders who communicate high expectations and embed literacy in daily routines cultivate schools where reading is a core mission rather than an external compliance requirement (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2023; Hallinger & Kulophas, 2023). Strategic resource allocation toward classroom libraries and evidence-based materials is critical in constrained contexts (Andrin et al., 2024; Santos, Reyes, & Tan, 2024), with creative approaches such as community partnerships and indigenous knowledge sustaining momentum despite limited budgets (Kumar & Sharma, 2022). Schools that collect diagnostic reading data and use findings to adjust instruction outperform those relying on global proficiency measures alone (Timperley & Alkin, 2023). Community engagement creates a literacy-supportive ecosystem beyond the school, particularly vital in rural and resource-limited settings (Pushor & Riojas-Cortez, 2023; Lipaopao et al., 2025). Culturally responsive instruction incorporating local languages and community narratives produces higher engagement among diverse student populations (Gay, 2023; Andrin et al., 2024), while technology integration requires careful planning and attention to equitable access to avoid deepening existing divides (Leu et al., 2023; Yee, 2025).

Materials and Method

This chapter presents the nature of the study, and the methodology employed. The research design, research local, population and sampling, respondents of the study, research instrument, data gathering procedure, and the statistical treatment are discussed in this chapter.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-comparative design. The descriptive aspect was used to present the demographic profiles of teachers and school heads, as well as to identify leadership strategies, educational policies, management practices, and the degree of collaboration in maintaining literacy excellence. The comparative aspect was applied to determine whether there were significant differences in leadership practices, policy support, management practices, and collaboration across respondents and school contexts.

Population and Sampling

A sample was drawn from the population of public elementary school teachers using a

stratified random sampling procedure to ensure proportional representation from each district in Benguet.

This research was conducted in public elementary schools across Benguet Province, located in the southern region of the Cordillera Administrative Region on Luzon Island. As a landlocked province, Benguet is composed of thirteen (13) municipalities, each operating several public elementary schools. The school distribution per district includes: Atok with 22 schools, Bakun with 30, Bokod with 38, Buguias with 43, Itogon with 20, Kabayan with 22, Kapangan with 27, Kibungan with 24, Mankayan with 35, Sablan with 14, Tuba with 32, Tublay with 19, and La Trinidad with 23.

Respondents of the Study

A total of three hundred thirty-three (360) respondents. They are the people who have direct managerial and administrative functions in the school. They are the Teachers In-Charge, Master Teacher I, Head Teachers (Head Teachers I, II, or III) and Principals (Principal I, II, III or IV). There are a total of 333 teachers and 27 school heads, a total of 360 respondents.

Research Instrument

To gather the needed data, the researcher employed a research assistant to administer a structured survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was formulated based on the ideas and insights taken from the different authorities as reflected in the related literature and studies. The questionnaire is composed of four parts. Part one dealt with the profile of respondents that included the respondents' age, sex, position, ethnic tribe, municipality and school's latest basic/functional literacy rating. Part two is subdivided into four categories where the first attempts to gather information on leadership strategies of public elementary school teachers and school heads, the second intends to know the extent of educational policy support, third will deal with the management practices and fourth will gather information on the strategies of school's heads and teachers in maintaining or increasing the literacy excellence.

Data Gathering Procedure

In this study, the researcher ensured the active participation of teachers and school heads, particularly during the data collection process. Upon receiving formal approval to conduct the research, the researcher consulted with designated school authorities to facilitate access to relevant information. Assistance was sought from trained research aides or coordinators to help distribute questionnaires, manage responses, and coordinate with district-level contacts.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The researcher employed a research assistant to personally administer the questionnaire after proper coordination has been done with the different school heads.

The data was tallied, categorized, and subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. The statistical processing was conducted using RealStat. Percentage, weighted mean, t-test, and one-way ANOVA were used to treat the data.

The study employed four rating scales to measure its key variables. Leadership strategies were assessed using a 4-point scale ranging from Not Effective (1.00–1.75) to Very Effective (3.26–4.00). Educational policies were evaluated based on their extent of impact, with descriptive equivalents spanning from No Impact (1.00–1.75) to Great Impact (3.26–4.00). Management practices were rated according to applicability, ranging from Not Applicable (1.00–1.75) to Moderately Applicable (3.26–4.00). Lastly, school head and teacher collaboration were measured through an agreement scale, with responses ranging from Strongly Disagree (1.00–1.79) to Strongly Agree (3.40–4.19).

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the results of the study and provides a comprehensive discussion of the findings. The data gathered from the respondents are organized, analyzed, and interpreted in relation to the research objectives.

Demographic Profile of Teachers

Table 1. Demographic profile of teachers in terms of age

Age	Frequency
21 – 30	62
31 – 40	146
41 – 50	93
51 – 60	32
Total	**333**

The 31–40 age group dominates at 43.8% (n=146) as shown in table 1, reflecting teachers who balance technological competence with established pedagogical expertise particularly valuable in post-pandemic hybrid learning environments (Kim & Asbury, 2020). The 41–50 group comprises 27.9% (n=93), representing a stabilizing force possessing critical emotional intelligence and mentoring capacity (Harmsen et al., 2023). Entry-level teachers aged 21–30 constitute 18.6% (n=62), bringing digital nativity but facing heightened burnout risk requiring robust induction programs (Pressley, 2021). The 51–60 bracket at 9.6% (n=32) is smallest yet critical for institutional knowledge preservation (Worth & Faulkner-Ellis, 2022). This distribution calls for career-stage specific professional development, with the large 31–40 cohort representing an ideal pipeline for future instructional leaders (Pressley & Ha, 2021).

*Table 2. Demographic profile of teachers in terms of gende**r***

Gender	Frequency
Female	310
Male	23
Total	**333**

The workforce in table 2 is markedly female-dominated at 93.1% (n=310), reflecting the broader feminization of the teaching profession.

Table 3. Demographic profile of teachers in terms of subject taught

Subjects	Frequency
Araling Panlipunan, GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION, EPP	15
Araling Panlipunan, GMRC/VALUES EDUCATIONMAPEH	10
English	7
English; Filipino	9
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION	23
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Araling Panlipunan; MAPEH	7
English; Filipino; Mathematics; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION	8
English; Filipino; Mathematics; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; Other	9
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Science; Araling Panlipunan; EPP	8
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Science; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/Values Education	38
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Science; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/Values Education MAPEH	9
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Science; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/Values Education; MAPEH; EPP	44
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Science; GMRC/Values Education; EPP	8
English; GMRC/Values Education; MAPEH	16
English; Mathematics; Science; MAPEH	8
Filipino	8

Subjects	Frequency
Filipino; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION	6
Filipino; Mathematics; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/Values Education	10
Filipino; Mathematics; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/Values Education; EPP	10
Filipino; Mathematics; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/Values Education; MAPEH	9
Filipino; Mathematics; Science; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/Values Education	9
Filipino; Other	8
MAPEH	8
Mathematics	16
Mathematics; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION	11
Mathematics; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; Other	11
Science	7
Science; Mathematics	1
Total	**333**

The most common configuration is full eight-subject assignment (n=44, 13.2%) as displayed in table 3, consistent with the K-12 generalist model (Tindowen et al., 2021). Multi-subject loads impose significant cognitive demands on teachers (Sorensen & McKim, 2020), compounded by the unique challenges of multilingual instruction in the Philippine context (Tupas, 2020). GMRC/Values Education appears in 85.2% of configurations, reflecting the Filipino educational emphasis on character formation rooted in kapwa and pakikipagkapwatao (Bernardo et al., 2022). Emerging specialization in Mathematics and English signals growing recognition of content-specific pedagogical demands (Blömeke & Kaiser, 2023).

Table 4. Demographic profile of teachers in terms of years of experience

Years of Experience	Frequency
Less than 2 years	38
2–5 years	14
6–10 years	15
11–15 years	9
16–20 years	17
21+ years	14
Total	**333**

Table 4 presents the entry-level teachers dominate at 11.4% (n=38), reflecting DepEd's aggressive post-pandemic recruitment (Ronda, 2023). The sharp drop to 4.2% (n=14) in the 2–5-year cohort signals significant early-career attrition driven by compensation inadequacy and professional disillusionment (Gulosino & Harmsen, 2022). Mid-level professionals (6–10 years, n=15) represent stabilized practitioners capable of mentoring and instructional innovation (Bilbao et al., 2021). Senior professionals (11–15 years, n=9) are the smallest cohort, raising succession planning concerns. Seasoned experts (16–20 years, n=17) serve as organizational anchors through change (Tindowen et al., 2021), while veteran professionals (21+ years, n=14) carry the deepest institutional memory across multiple curriculum transitions (Corpuz & Salabutin, 2020), though their impending retirement risks significant knowledge loss (Ulla & Winitkun, 2023).

Table 5. Demographic profile of teachers in terms of educational attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency
Bachelor's Degree	185
Master's Degree	140
Doctorate	8
Total	**333**

The workforce in table 5 is highly qualified, with 55.6% holding bachelor's degrees and a notably high 42.0% possessing master's degrees was remarkable given Benguet's geographic isolation (Mariano, 2021). Indigenous cultural values among Ibaloi and Kankanaey communities, which prize education and view teaching as prestigious, drive this high advanced-degree attainment (Ngao-i & Macandog, 2023).

Demographic Profile of School Heads

Table 6. Demographic profile of school heads in terms of age

Age	**Frequency**
41–50	16
51–60	8
61 and above	3
Total	**27**

Table 6 shows the majority (59.3%, n=16) fall in the 41–50 range, consistent with DepEd's career progression requirements of 10–15 years teaching experience plus master's degree before principal eligibility (Mariano, 2021). The 51–60 group (29.6%, n=8) brings 25–35 years of experience, enabling skilled navigation of stakeholder relationships and policy transitions (Bakilan & Banguanan, 2022).

Table 7. Demographic profile of school heads in terms of gender

Gender	**Frequency**
Female	18
Male	9
Total	**27**

Female school heads constitute 67% (n=18) in table 7, reflecting the growing feminization of educational leadership, particularly at the elementary level (Bitterman et al., 2021), driven by expanded pools of qualified female candidates and dismantled gender barriers (Bozeman & Bozeman, 2023).

Table 8. Demographic profile of school heads in terms of years of experience

Years of Experience	**Frequency**
11–15 years	1
16–20 years	8
21+ years	18
Total	**27**

All school heads have at least 11 years of experience, with 66.7% or 18 being veteran professionals as presented in table 8. No entry-level or early-career leaders are present, reflecting research that principal effectiveness strengthens significantly through accumulated experience (Grissom et al., 2021). Veteran leaders demonstrate greater capacity for transformational practices and change management (Bellibas & Liu, 2020).

Table 9. Demographic profile of school heads in terms of educational attainment

Educational Attainment	**Frequency**
Decorate	27
Total	**27**

Table 9 shows that all 27 school heads (100%) hold doctorate degrees, equipping them with research skills, theoretical frameworks, and evidence-based practices essential for 21st-century educational leadership (Khalifa et al., 2021).

Table 10. Demographic profile of school heads in terms of subject taught

Subjects	Frequency
Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; EPP	3
Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; MAPEH	2
English; Filipino; Mathematics; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION	1
English; Filipino; Mathematics; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; Other	2
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Science; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; MAPEH	1
English; Filipino; Mathematics; Science; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; MAPEH; EPP	1
Filipino; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION	2
Filipino; Mathematics; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; EPP	2
Filipino; Mathematics; Science; Araling Panlipunan; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION	1
MAPEH	8
Mathematics; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION	3
Mathematics; GMRC/VALUES EDUCATION; Other	1
Total	**27**

MAPEH displayed in table 10 is the most common single-subject specialization (29.6%, n=8), while GMRC/Values Education appears in 66.7% of profiles. MAPEH trained leaders often demonstrate strengths in holistic child development and social emotional learning (Klar et al., 2022). The prevalence of Values Education reflects its centrality to moral and character-focused leadership (Berkowitz et al., 2021).

Table 11. Level of effectiveness of transformational leadership strategies

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Inspire teachers and students by presenting a clear vision for literacy improvement.	3.60	VE	4
2. Motivate the school community to achieve higher literacy targets.	3.56	VE	7.5
3. Encourage innovation in teaching strategies to support literacy.	3.55	VE	9
4. Recognize and reward teachers' efforts in literacy programs.	3.40	VE	10
5. Model commitment to reading and lifelong learning.	3.58	VE	5.5
6. Challenge staff to think critically about literacy improvement.	3.56	VE	7.5
7. Promote continuous professional growth aligned with literacy goals.	3.74	VE	1
8. Build teachers' confidence in implementing new literacy practices.	3.62	VE	3
9. Communicate high expectations for students' literacy successes.	3.58	VE	5.5
10. Foster collaboration to sustain Benguet's literacy successes.	3.73	VE	2
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.59**	**VE**	

Legend:

3.26–4.00	Very Effective (VE)
2.51–3.25	Effective (E)
1.76–2.50	Less Effective (LE)
1.00–1.75	Not Effective (NE)

Table 11 displays that school heads demonstrate very effective transformational leadership with a weighted mean of 3.59. Top-ranked indicators like professional growth alignment with 3.74 and fostering collaboration of 3.73 reflects investment in teacher capacity and collective efficacy as literacy drivers (Leithwood & Sun, 2020; Goddard et al., 2020). The lowest-ranked indicator, recognition and reward (WM=3.40), reveals underutilization of motivational strategies that are particularly critical in resource constrained settings where symbolic acknowledgment compensates for limited material incentives (Bellibas & Liu, 2020). The overall pattern favors systemic capacity-building over inspirational motivation, reflecting a leadership approach Bass and Riggio (2020) identify as requiring more balanced attention.

Table 12. Level of effectiveness of instructional leadership strategies

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Observe classes regularly to monitor literacy instruction.	3.37	VE	10
2. Provide teachers with constructive feedback to improve literacy teaching.	3.56	VE	8
3. Integrate reading and writing activities across subjects.	3.77	VE	1
4. Allocate resources (books, digital tools, materials) to strengthen literacy.	3.50	VE	9
5. Set clear literacy goals and standards for the school.	3.68	VE	5
6. Conduct professional development focused on literacy instruction.	3.64	VE	6
7. Use assessment data to guide literacy decisions.	3.60	VE	7
8. Align curriculum with literacy benchmarks and competencies.	3.75	VE	2
9. Encourage adoption of evidence-based reading strategies.	3.69	VE	3
10. Support remedial and enrichment programs for diverse learners.	3.68	VE	4
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.62**	**VE**	

Legend:

3.26–4.00	Very Effective (VE)
2.51–3.25	Effective (E)
1.76–2.50	Less Effective (LE)
1.00–1.75	Not Effective (NE)

Instructional leadership in table 12 is very effective having a weighted mean of 3.62. Cross-curricular literacy integration with a weighted mean of 3.77 and curriculum alignment with 3.75 rank highest, reflecting systemic program design over isolated initiatives (Sanchez et al., 2021; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). However, regular classroom observation ranks lowest (WM=3.37), representing the only indicator below 3.50 and a critical gap since direct classroom presence is foundational for understanding teaching quality and providing meaningful feedback (Grissom et al., 2021). This disconnect, where school heads establish strong curriculum frameworks but lack sufficient instructional presence, limits their capacity to identify implementation barriers (Spillane & Lee, 2021).

Table 13. Level of effectiveness of participative leadership strategies

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Involve teachers in planning literacy initiatives.	3.78	VE	1.5
2. Encourage parents to participate in literacy activities.	3.78	VE	1.5
3. Provide students with opportunities to contribute ideas for literacy promotion.	3.68	VE	6
4. Build community partnerships to enhance literacy programs.	3.66	VE	7
5. Make literacy-related decisions collaboratively with stakeholders.	3.62	VE	9.5
6. Seek feedback from teachers before implementing literacy reforms.	3.71	VE	5
7. Promote open communication among teachers, students, and parents.	3.76	VE	3

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
8. Empower teachers to suggest innovations for literacy teaching.	3.73	VE	4
9. Form committees or task forces that focus on literacy goals.	3.64	VE	8
10. Trust stakeholders with responsibilities for literacy improvement.	3.62	VE	9.5
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.70**	**VE**	

Legend:

3.26–4.00	Very Effective (VE)
2.51–3.25	Effective (E)
1.76–2.50	Less Effective (LE)
1.00–1.75	Not Effective (NE)

Table 13 reveals that participative leadership scores highest among all leadership dimensions (WM=3.70). Co-top indicators; teacher involvement in planning and parent participation (both WM=3.78) reflect equitable collaboration that builds teacher ownership and home-school literacy connections (Bellibas & Liu, 2020; Ishimaru, 2020). However, the lowest-ranked indicators around genuine power-sharing and shared decision-making authority (both WM=3.62) reveal what Gronn (2020) identifies as consultative rather than truly collaborative leadership. Day et al. (2020) caution that authentic participative leadership requires incorporating stakeholder contributions into consequential decisions, not merely soliciting input.

Table 14. Level of effectiveness of situational leadership strategies

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Adjust leadership style depending on teachers' needs.	3.71	VE	2
2. Provide more guidance to teachers who are new to literacy programs.	3.62	VE	7
3. Delegate responsibility when teachers show competence in literacy instruction.	3.67	VE	5
4. Adapt strategies to address specific literacy challenges.	3.58	VE	10
5. Offer individualized support to teachers struggling with literacy instruction.	3.62	VE	7
6. Encourage autonomy among experienced teachers in literacy activities.	3.62	VE	7
7. Balance directive and supportive behaviors to achieve literacy goals.	3.60	VE	9
8. Consider teachers' readiness before assigning literacy tasks.	3.71	VE	2
9. Modify literacy approaches based on resources and context.	3.71	VE	2
10. Change leadership strategies when literacy outcomes are not achieved.	3.69	VE	4
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.65**	**VE**	

Legend:

3.26–4.00	Very Effective (VE)
2.51–3.25	Effective (E)
1.76–2.50	Less Effective (LE)
1.00–1.75	Not Effective (NE)

Table 14 illustrated Situational leadership is very effective (WM=3.65), with three co-top indicators reflecting multi-level situational awareness: adjusting style to teachers' needs, considering readiness, and modifying approaches based on context (all WM=3.71) (Thompson & Glasø, 2020; Grissom et al., 2021). Outcome-based strategy adjustment (WM=3.69) further demonstrates evidence-informed adaptive expertise (Hallinger & Walker, 2020). Notably, adapting strategies to specific literacy challenges ranks lowest (WM=3.58), suggesting that while school heads show general flexibility, they may lack sufficient literacy-specific pedagogical knowledge for precise challenge matched interventions (Day et al., 2020). The uniform ranking of

developmental differentiation indicators is 3.62, at rank 7 suggests macro-level flexibility without sufficient micro-level differentiation across teacher career stages (Avolio & Hannah, 2021).

Table 15. Level of effectiveness of cultural and relational leadership strategies

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Respect and integrate Benguet's cultural identity into literacy programs.	3.73	VE	8
2. Incorporate local stories, traditions, and languages in literacy activities.	3.69	VE	10
3. Promote inclusive literacy programs that value diversity.	3.78	VE	6
4. Strengthen relationships with parents to support literacy at home.	3.84	VE	3
5. Partner with barangay and local organizations for literacy campaigns.	3.71	VE	9
6. Foster a culture of respect and cooperation in the school.	3.80	VE	5
7. Connect literacy lessons to students' lived experiences.	3.89	VE	1
8. Emphasize values of unity and bayanihan in literacy efforts.	3.84	VE	3
9. Show care and concern for both teachers and students.	3.84	VE	3
10. Celebrate literacy achievements in culturally meaningful ways.	3.76	VE	7
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.79**	**VE**	

Legend:

3.26–4.00	Very Effective (VE)
2.51–3.25	Effective (E)
1.76–2.50	Less Effective (LE)
1.00–1.75	Not Effective (NE)

Cultural and relational leadership scores highest among all leadership dimensions (WM=3.79) evidently in table 15. Connecting literacy to students' lived experiences (WM=3.89) reflects culturally sustaining pedagogy that positions students' cultural knowledge as a resource (Paris & Alim, 2021; Ladson-Billings, 2021). The three co second ranked indicators namely; parent relationship building, bayanihan values, and caring for teachers and students (all WM=3.84) demonstrate authentic relational trust as a foundation for collective action (Khalifa et al., 2021; Ishimaru, 2020). However, incorporating local stories, traditions, and languages ranks lowest (WM=3.69), reflecting what McCarty and Lee (2020) term rhetorical multiculturalism a general cultural affirmation without substantive curricular transformation. This gap indicates that while relational foundations are strong, operationalizing cultural responsiveness into concrete curricular materials and indigenous-language integration remains a challenge (Gay, 2020).

Educational Policies Supporting Literacy Development

Table 16. Impact of educational policies supporting literacy development

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Align school literacy programs with national education policies.	3.67	GI	10
2. Implement DepEd guidelines that strengthen reading and writing instruction.	3.71	GI	6
3. Provide sufficient resources and funding as mandated by education policies.	3.71	GI	6
4. Support teacher training in literacy instruction through policy-driven initiatives.	3.78	GI	1
5. Encourage schools to create literacy interventions that follow national standards.	3.73	GI	2.5
6. Promote equal access to literacy materials through government directives.	3.71	GI	6

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
7. Integrate 21st-century skills, including literacy, as required by policy frameworks.	3.71	GI	6
8. Monitor school compliance with literacy-related policies and programs.	3.71	GI	6
9. Evaluate literacy outcomes regularly as part of policy accountability measures.	3.73	GI	2.5
10. Strengthen community and stakeholder involvement in literacy programs through education policy.	3.69	GI	9
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.72**	**GI**	

Legend:

3.26–4.00	Great Impact (GI)
2.51–3.25	Moderate Impact (MI)
1.76–2.50	Little Impact (LI)
1.00–1.75	No Impact (NI)

Table 16 presents educational policies yield great impact (WM=3.72). Policy supported teacher training ranks first (WM=3.78), consistent with research identifying professional learning as the highest-leverage policy mechanism for instructional improvement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Fullan, 2020). Balanced accountability through intervention encouragement and outcome evaluation (both WM=3.73) reflects the productive pressure-and-support dynamic effective policy systems employ (Levin & Datnow, 2020). The lowest-ranked indicator, policy alignment with national programs (WM=3.67), may reflect loose coupling between formal policy requirements and actual classroom practice, where schools adopt policy language while maintaining substantial local instructional autonomy (Coburn & Woulfin, 2020). The clustering of six indicators at identical means (WM=3.71) suggests that Benguet's educators perceive policy operating as an integrated system rather than discrete interventions (Burk, 2024).

Management Practices for Literacy Sustainability

Table 17. Level of applicability of strategic planning practices

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Develop long-term plans that prioritize literacy improvement and sustainability.	3.62	VMA	6
2. Set clear and measurable literacy goals aligned with the school vision.	3.76	VMA	1
3. Integrate literacy targets into the school's overall strategic plan.	3.62	VMA	6
4. Identify potential risks and challenges that may affect literacy success.	3.62	VMA	6
5. Formulate strategies that address both short-term and long-term literacy needs.	3.62	VMA	6
6. Engage stakeholders in planning to ensure shared responsibility for literacy.	3.60	VMA	9.5
7. Review and update literacy action plans regularly to remain relevant.	3.60	VMA	9.5
8. Align literacy initiatives with national and local education priorities.	3.62	VMA	6
9. Establish monitoring systems to track progress of literacy goals.	3.64	VMA	3
10. Evaluate literacy outcomes to guide future strategic decisions.	3.69	VMA	2
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.64**	**VMA**	

Legend:

3.26–4.00	Very Much Applicable (VMA)
2.51–3.25	Slightly Applicable (SA)
1.76–2.50	Least Applicable (LA)
1.00–1.75	Not Applicable (NA)

Strategic planning is very much applicable (WM=3.64) as underscored in table 17. Clear and measurable goal setting ranks first (WM=3.76), consistent with goal-setting theory linking specific goals to enhanced performance (Locke & Latham, 2020; Hitt & Tucker, 2021). Outcome evaluation (WM=3.69) and monitoring systems (WM=3.64) rank second and third, reflecting data-informed improvement cycles essential for sustainability (Datnow & Park, 2020; Bryk et al., 2020). The lowest-ranked indicators; stakeholder engagement in planning and regular plan review (both WM=3.60) suggest a learning action disconnection: schools collect data but lack mechanisms translating insights into revised strategies (Argyris & Schön, 2020; Ishimaru & Galloway, 2022). The clustering of six indicators at WM=3.62 reflects realistic recognition that planning provides directional guidance but ultimate sustainability depends on adaptive capacity (Fullan, 2020).

Table 18. Level of applicability of resource management practices

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Allocate sufficient budget to support literacy programs.	3.62	VMA	4.5
2. Provide appropriate teaching and learning materials for literacy development.	3.58	VMA	8
3. Ensure access to libraries, digital tools, and other literacy resources.	3.62	VMA	4.5
4. Distribute resources equitably among teachers and students.	3.53	VMA	9.5
5. Invest in teacher training and professional development for literacy instruction.	3.60	VMA	6.5
6. Maintain school facilities that create a conducive environment for literacy.	3.64	VMA	2.5
7. Maximize available resources by partnering with community stakeholders.	3.64	VMA	2.5
8. Monitor the use of resources to ensure accountability in literacy programs.	3.69	VMA	1
9. Secure external funding or donations to sustain literacy initiatives.	3.53	VMA	9.5
10. Sustain literacy programs by efficiently managing financial and material resources.	3.60	VMA	6.5
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.61**	**VMA**	

Legend:

3.26–4.00	Very Much Applicable (VMA)
2.51–3.25	Slightly Applicable (SA)
1.76–2.50	Least Applicable (LA)
1.00–1.75	Not Applicable (NA)

Resource management is very much applicable (WM=3.61) manifesting in table 18. Resource monitoring ranks first (WM=3.69), reflecting stewardship leadership that ensures allocated resources serve intended literacy purposes (Odden & Picus, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020). Facilities maintenance and community partnerships (both WM=3.64) rank second, demonstrating recognition that literacy programs require both adequate physical infrastructure and extended resource networks (Earthman, 2020; Khalifa et al., 2021). Equitable resource distribution and external funding acquisition rank lowest (both WM=3.53), revealing challenges in ensuring proportional resource access and diversifying funding beyond school budgets limitations reflecting constrained development capacity in most Philippine schools (Baker et al., 2020; Brimley et al., 2020).

Collaboration Between School Heads and Teachers

Table 19. Level of agreement among school head and teacher collaboration

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
1. Plan literacy programs jointly with school heads and teachers.	3.87	SA	1.5

Indicator	WM	DE	Rank
2. Share ideas and best practices to improve literacy instruction.	3.84	SA	3.5
3. Coordinate roles and responsibilities in implementing literacy initiatives.	3.80	SA	6.5
4. Engage in regular meetings to discuss literacy progress and challenges.	3.78	SA	8.5
5. Support one another in achieving literacy targets.	3.87	SA	1.5
6. Evaluate literacy outcomes together to guide improvements.	3.82	SA	5
7. Promote teamwork between school leaders and teachers in sustaining literacy efforts.	3.84	SA	3.5
8. Encourage open communication about literacy needs and strategies.	3.80	SA	6.5
9. Collaborate in mobilizing resources for literacy activities.	3.78	SA	8.5
10. Celebrate literacy achievements as a unified school community.	3.76	SA	10
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.82**	**SA**	

Legend:

3.40–4.19	Strongly Agree (SA)
2.60–3.39	Agree (A)
1.80–2.59	Disagree (D)
1.00–1.79	Strongly Disagree (SD)

Level of agreement among school head and teacher collaboration is portrayed in table 19. Collaboration scores highest across all examined dimensions (WM=3.82, Strongly Agree). Co-top indicators; joint program planning and mutual support (both WM=3.87) reflect distributed ownership and relational trust essential for sustainable improvement (Goddard et al., 2024; Yang & Chang, 2024). Knowledge sharing and teamwork (both WM=3.84) signal professional capital wherein distributed expertise becomes organizationally accessible rather than individually hoarded (Park et al., 2020). Collaborative evaluation having a weighted mean of 3.82 indicates psychological safety enabling honest professional conversations about outcomes (Asad & Hussain, 2023). The lowest-ranked indicator, collective celebration (WM=3.76), suggests underutilization of recognition practices that strengthen collective efficacy and resilience (Donohoo et al., 2024). The narrow 0.11-point range across all indicators reflects a pervasive collaborative culture embedded across multiple literacy work dimensions (Olmo-Extremera et al., 2024).

Significant Differences

Table 20. Significant differences in educational policies supporting literacy development

Educational Policies	Mean	F	p-value
All indicators (1–10)	3.67–3.78	1.27	0.25

Table 20 highlights the significant differences in educational policies supporting literacy development. It demonstrates that there is no significant differences exist across policy impact indicators (F=1.27, p=0.25), suggesting uniform perceptions of policy influence across diverse mechanisms. This reflects comprehensive policy coherence wherein multiple interconnected elements work synergistically (Burk, 2024). The non significant finding may also indicate implementation blur and overlapping policies making differential impact difficult to distinguish (Gillon et al., 2024). While professional development policy leads (M=3.78), the narrow mean range (3.67–3.78) confirms integrated rather than hierarchical policy impact perceptions.

Table 21. Significant differences in management practices ensuring literacy sustainability

Indicator	Mean	p-value
Strategic planning	3.64	.002*
Resource management	3.61	

Table 21 yields a high significant differences on strategic planning across groups since the p-value of .002 is less than .05. This indicates variability in implementation depending on institutional capacity, leadership commitment, or contextual factors. This aligns with evidence that schools with robust planning frameworks, embedding professional development, vertical alignment, and multi-tiered support systems demonstrate better sustained outcomes (Ohio Department of Education, 2024; Nevada Department of Education, 2024; What Works Clearinghouse, 2023).

Table 22. Significant differences in collaboration between teachers and school heads

Group	Mean	p-value
School Heads	3.92	.000**
Teachers	3.81	

A highly significant perception gap evidently in table 22 exists between school heads with a mean of 3.92 and teachers with 3.81, and having a p-value of .000. School heads rate collaboration more favorably, consistent with the leader self-awareness gap wherein administrators' self-perceptions exceed subordinate perceptions (RAND Corporation, 2020; Ralebese et al., 2025). International research confirms this pattern, with perception misalignment correlating negatively with teacher satisfaction, trust, and collaborative engagement (Brezicha et al., 2020; Chen, 2025). Closing this gap requires perception audits and shifting from administrator-directed meetings toward authentic co planning, co-assessing, and co-reflecting frameworks (Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest, 2023).

Table 23. Significant differences among leadership practices, educational policies, management practices, and collaboration in sustaining literacy outcomes

Group	Mean	F	p-value
Leadership practices	3.67	13.58	.000**
Educational policies	3.72		
Management practices	3.63		
Collaboration between school heads and teachers	3.82		

Table 23 portrays a highly significant differences exist among the four organizational factors (F=13.58, p=.000). Collaboration ranks highest (M=3.82), followed by educational policies (M=3.72), leadership practices (M=3.67), and management practices (M=3.63). The primacy of collaboration aligns with research identifying collective teacher efficacy (effect size=1.57) as among the most powerful influences on student achievement (Donohoo et al., 2020). The finding of Hargreaves and O'Connor (2018), provides a relational-collaborative dimensions outrank structural-administrative ones suggests that sustainable literacy improvement is fundamentally a collective endeavor and one through which leadership is exercised, policies are enacted, and management practices achieve their intended effects.

Conclusion

The study's findings reveal that teachers' and school heads' diverse demographic profiles contribute to varied instructional approaches and leadership styles that collectively shape literacy program outcomes. The cultural and relational leadership emerges as the most effective strategy, though transformational and instructional dimensions require improvement in recognition systems and classroom supervision. Educational policies provide essential structural support for literacy development, but its effectiveness depends on consistent and equitable enactment at the school level. There are differences in policy perceptions and variations in management practices which indicates uneven implementation across schools with some better equipped than others to sustain literacy initiatives. Management practices are

perceived as less influential than collaboration and leadership, underscoring the need for stronger integration with literacy goals. Collaboration between teachers and school heads stands as the most critical factor in sustaining literacy excellence. With this significant differences among sustainability factors it confirms that collective effort when supported by coherent policies and strategic leadership, drives the strongest outcomes. These converging findings ground the proposed "BINHI ng PAGBASA" framework, which serves as a practical guide for schools to sustain literacy excellence by systematically aligning leadership, policy, management, and collaboration toward shared literacy goals.

Recommendation

1. School leaders require professional learning in instructional supervision, recognition systems design, and literacy assessment literacy delivered through sustained coaching and collaborative learning communities.
2. School heads should conduct regular perception audits using anonymous teacher surveys and implement structured reflection processes.
3. Schools should establish formal collaborative structures including literacy leadership teams, regular data-inquiry cycles (monthly, quarterly, annually), and distributed leadership pathways.
4. Schools must implement quarterly strategic plan review cycles, develop risk mitigation strategies addressing principal turnover and budget constraints, and strengthen external funding capacity through grants management training and donor relationship development.
5. Policymakers should provide detailed implementation guidance through exemplars and assessment tools, expand professional development investments building teacher expertise and coaching skills, establish learning-oriented accountability systems, and conduct resource adequacy analyses.
6. Schools should integrate local stories, languages, and indigenous knowledge into literacy curricula, strengthen community partnerships with barangay organizations and cultural centers, develop culturally sustaining pedagogies positioning home languages as educational resources, and implement family literacy initiatives promoting intergenerational knowledge transmission.
7. School leaders should establish classroom observation protocols with developmental feedback cycles, create recognition systems emphasizing achievement and growth celebration, and develop literacy-specific intervention strategies.
8. Schools should establish professional learning communities focused on continuous literacy inquiry cycles, create documentation systems capturing improvement journeys and success stories, and implement collective celebration practices at multiple scales.
9. Policymakers should advocate for capacity-building policy frameworks with implementation support, establish regional literacy coaching systems and teacher learning community infrastructure.
10. Used the proposed program.

Proposed Program Title: BINHI ng PAGBASA (Seeds of Reading)

Rationale. BINHI ng PAGBASA emerges directly from research findings revealing that while Benguet demonstrates strong collaborative culture and effective leadership, critical gaps exist in recognition systems, cultural content integration practices, early-career teacher retention, and perception gaps between school heads and teachers. This comprehensive framework addresses these specific deficiencies while building upon existing strengths in instructional quality, participative culture, and collaborative professionalism.

The program name "BINHI" (seeds) reflects the understanding that sustainable literacy improvement requires planting seeds through leadership development, cultural integration, professional learning, and community engagement that will grow into robust, self-sustaining literacy ecosystems. "PAGBASA" emphasizes that reading is not merely a technical skill but a culturally embedded practice requiring approaches honoring indigenous knowledge while developing 21st-century competencies.

Executive Summary. BINHI ng PAGBASA is a comprehensive, culturally-responsive literacy sustainability framework designed to address critical gaps identified in research while building upon existing strengths in Benguet's educational system. The program responds directly to research findings showing strong collaborative cultures and effective leadership practices, while addressing deficiencies in recognition systems (lowest indicator: WM=3.40), classroom observation practices (lowest indicator: WM=3.37), cultural content integration (lowest indicator: WM=3.69), plan review mechanisms, external funding acquisition, and perception gaps between school heads (M=3.92) and teachers (M=3.81).

Program Components

Component	Focus	Purpose	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Timeframe	Persons Involved
UGAT	Leadership development and succession planning	Strengthening distributed leadership and addressing succession planning	% of schools with an active succession/ leadership development plan; number of teacher leaders formally identified and mentored	Months 1 12 (Phases 1–2)	School Head, PSDS, Master Teachers, Division HR Office
KULTURA	Indigenous integration and cultural content	Integrating local languages, stories, and indigenous knowledge systems	Number of literacy materials incorporating local languages/indigenous content developed and used per grade level	Months 1 24 (Phases 1–3)	School Head, Master Teachers, Barangay/LGU Cultural Officers, Community Elders
DUNONG	Professional learning and science of reading	Implementing evidence-based professional development grounded in science of reading	% of teachers completing science of-reading training; pre/post gains in teacher literacy instruction assessment scores	Months 4 18 (Phases 2–3)	PSDS, Master Teachers, School Head, DepEd Division Learning Resource Coordinators
PARANGAL	Systematic teacher recognition and motivation	Addressing transformational leadership practice	Number of formal recognition activities held per year; teacher satisfaction rating with the recognition system	Months 4 12, recurring annually (Phase 2 onward)	School Head/Principal, Master Teachers, PTA
BAYANIHAN	Community partnership and resource mobilization	Mobilizing external resources and authentic stakeholder engagement	Value/volume of resources mobilized through partnerships; number of active community or barangay partnerships sustained	Months 1 24 (Phases 1–3), sustained ongoing	School Head, PTA, Barangay Officials, Community Partners
GABAY	Teacher retention and career support	Addressing early-career attrition	Early-career teacher retention rate; number of mentees formally paired with mentor teachers	Months 4 24+ (Phases 2–4)	School Head, Master Teachers (as mentors), PSDS, Guidance/HR Personnel

Program Implementation Framework

How The Program Works

Phase 1: Foundation Building (Months 1-3)

- Stakeholder engagement and consensus building
- Establishment of steering committees and working groups
- Baseline data collection on current practices
- School readiness assessment and planning
- Selection of pilot schools
- Development of detailed implementation plans

Phase 2: Intensive Implementation (Months 4-12)

- Component rollout across pilot schools
- Teacher professional development execution
- Cultural content curriculum development
- Community partnership establishment
- Recognition system implementation
- Mentoring program launch

Phase 3: Scaling and Sustainability (Months 13-24)

- Expansion to additional schools based on pilot results
- Refinement based on formative feedback
- Integration into routine operations
- Capacity building for teacher leaders
- Community partnership deepening
- Policy alignment and formalization

Phase 4: Institutionalization (Month 25+)

- Integration into regular school operations
- Embedded in teacher evaluation and professional development
- Formalized in school policies and procedures
- Community partnership maturation
- Succession planning ensuring continuation beyond individual leaders
- Continuous improvement systems ensuring ongoing refinement

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