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Extent of the implementation of the PPSSH: Basis for enhanced continuing professional development program

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Abstract

Aim: This study assessed the extent of implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) in selected public elementary schools in the National Capital Region (NCR) as a basis for developing an enhanced continuing professional development program for school leaders.

Methodology: The study employed a quantitative descriptive research design involving 596 respondents composed of school heads and teachers. Data were collected using a validated survey questionnaire based on the five PPSSH domains: Leading Strategically, Managing School Operations and Resources, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, Developing Self and Others, and Building Connections. Frequency, percentage, and weighted mean were used to describe the respondents' demographic profile and the level of PPSSH implementation. The Kruskal–Wallis test was applied to determine whether significant differences existed when respondents were grouped according to age, position, highest educational attainment, and length of service.

Results: Findings revealed that the PPSSH domains were generally mostly implemented, with an overall mean of 4.05, indicating an estimated implementation level of approximately 75 percent. Among the domains, Leading Strategically obtained the highest mean, followed by Building Connections, while Managing School Operations and Resources, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, and Developing Self and Others demonstrated consistent implementation levels. Statistical analysis further showed that there were no significant differences in the implementation of PPSSH domains when respondents were grouped according to demographic profile variables.

Conclusion: The results suggest that school heads generally demonstrate consistent leadership practices aligned with the PPSSH standards. However, specific areas such as data-driven decision-making, instructional support, and stakeholder engagement require further strengthening. The findings provide a basis for designing an enhanced continuing professional development program aimed at improving leadership competencies and sustaining effective school management and instructional leadership practices.

Keywords: *Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH); school leadership; instructional leadership; continuing professional development; elementary schools*

INTRODUCTION

Quality education plays a significant role in promoting societal and economic progress as well as sustainable development. Education plays a transformative role in shaping economic opportunities, social mobility, and overall well-being (Ali, 2024). Hence, education departments around the world are concerned about the demands of educational institutions to continue to respond to economic, social, and technological changes. Internationally, professional standards for educational leaders offer a structured framework that ensures school leaders have the important knowledge, skills, and ability to address educational challenges.

The whole development of every country depends on the caliber of its education system; its quality is largely influenced by the effectiveness of school leadership. It plays a decisive role in improving educational outcomes and managing schools, particularly in the context of increasing complexity and change (Fuentes & Moreno, 2025). In the Philippines, the DepEd adopted the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) to strengthen professional school governance and clearly define expectations.

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The PPSSH functions as a reference in evaluating the competency and performance of administrators. It aims to support school heads in enhancing their competencies, aligning professional practice according to global standards, and enabling them to lead strategically in dynamic educational environments (DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020). Furthermore, these standards aimed to set out expectations of school heads along well-defined career stages of professional development, engage school heads to actively embrace a continuing effort to attain a high level of proficiency, and provide support for professional learning development as well as facilitate uniform assessment of performance.

Despite the policy significance and widespread implementation, research evidence on the actual extent of PPSSH implementation remains fragmented and limited in the National Capital Region. According to Patiga (2025), there was a significant difference in the assessment of teachers and school heads on the level of manifestation of PPSSH strands. Another study identified common weaknesses of school administrators, such as a lack or absence of knowledge of standard practices, the absence of streamlining processes and performing diverse responsibilities, and the absence of tools for required assignments (Alvarez & Delavin, 2022).

This paper attempts to measure the PPSSH implementation in selected areas in the National Capital Region (NCR). Likewise, the research aims help professional development bodies such as the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP), the Philippine Normal University (PNU), the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), and similar institutions in monitoring PPSSH implementation, recognizing leadership gaps, and identifying training needs for principals. The findings of this paper will be used to develop a Continuing Professional Development program that is related to the identified leadership needs and gaps based on the PPSSH domains, thereby supporting and strengthening leadership practices as well as sustainable learning outcomes.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Profile of School Heads and Leadership Practices

The literature underscores that school heads' demographic and professional profiles—such as age, educational attainment, position, and years of service—play a role in shaping leadership effectiveness and administrative practices (Baba, 2022). Studies consistently show that higher educational qualifications and longer leadership experience contribute to stronger instructional leadership, informed decision-making, and alignment with professional standards (Dellomas & Deri, 2022; Parveen, 2022; Sebuyana, 2024). Moreover, school leaders who engage in graduate studies, leadership training, and professional development programs demonstrate higher confidence and competence in managing school operations and instructional supervision (Apillanes, 2025; Montanez & Aclao, 2025). These findings suggest that leadership quality is enhanced through both formal education and experiential learning.

However, more recent perspectives emphasize that leadership effectiveness is increasingly competency-based rather than demographic-based, highlighting the role of continuous professional development and structured standards such as the PPSSH (Avergonzado, 2025; Hallinger & Wang, 2020). While experienced leaders tend to exhibit stronger leadership practices (Baig et al., 2021; Saleem, 2020), emerging studies argue that sustained professional learning, mentoring, and exposure to leadership training are more critical in developing instructional leadership competence across all career stages (Diva & Bautista, 2025; Estrada & Gumban, 2024; Prestoza, 2025).

The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) and Educational Leadership

The PPSSH provides a comprehensive framework that defines the expectations for school heads across five domains, grounded in principles such as learner-centeredness, inclusivity, accountability, and professional collaboration (DepEd Order No. 024, s. 2020). Literature highlights that school leadership is a critical determinant of school effectiveness, influencing teaching quality, school culture, and learner outcomes (Day, Sammons, & Gorgen, 2020; Lunenberg & Ornstein, 2021; Shebli & Alhosani, 2022). The domains of PPSSH align closely with transformational and instructional leadership theories, emphasizing strategic direction-setting, efficient resource management, and the promotion of high-quality teaching and learning.

Empirical studies further affirm that effective school leadership fosters professional learning communities, enhances teacher performance, and supports instructional improvement (Hallinger & Wang, 2020). School heads play a pivotal role in implementing data-driven decision-making and research-based innovations to improve learner outcomes (Almonte, 2025). However, while leadership practices are generally strong in internal management and instructional supervision, challenges remain in areas such as technology integration, research utilization, and stakeholder engagement (Mendoza & Catiis, 2022; Theodorio, 2024; Valenzuela & Buenvinida, 2021), indicating uneven implementation across domains.

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Differences in PPSSH Implementation Across Profiles

Existing studies present mixed findings regarding differences in PPSSH implementation across demographic profiles. Some research indicates significant differences based on experience, career stage, and professional exposure, with more experienced school heads demonstrating higher competency levels (Dellomas & Deri, 2022; Sebuyana, 2024). Additionally, discrepancies between school heads' self-assessment and teachers' evaluation suggest variations in perceived leadership effectiveness, particularly in instructional leadership and stakeholder engagement (Bucal & Lipit, 2025; Cruz & Ortega, 2023; Patiga, 2025).

On the other hand, other studies argue that leadership practices are becoming more standardized due to the influence of professional frameworks like the PPSSH, reducing variability across demographic groups (Siripipatthanakul et al., 2023). Variations across domains also persist, with stronger implementation observed in operational and instructional areas, while weaker implementation is noted in research utilization and external partnerships due to constraints such as workload, limited resources, and insufficient training (Apillanes, 2025; Day & Sammons, 2022; Montanez & Aclao, 2025).

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Leadership Enhancement

The literature emphasizes that continuing professional development is essential in strengthening leadership competence and ensuring quality education. The CPD Act of 2016 (RA 10912) mandates ongoing learning among professionals, reinforcing the importance of sustained capacity-building for school leaders (Prudente et al., 2024). Effective professional development programs focus on enhancing leadership skills in management, communication, team-building, and instructional supervision (Awodiji & Naicker, 2025).

Moreover, professional development is viewed as a key mechanism for addressing leadership gaps, particularly in areas such as innovation, stakeholder engagement, and instructional leadership. Continuous learning opportunities enable school heads to respond to emerging educational challenges and improve school performance. This highlights the need for targeted, needs-based development programs aligned with the PPSSH framework to ensure holistic leadership growth.

Synthesis and Research Gap

The reviewed literature establishes that while the PPSSH provides a strong framework for educational leadership and is generally implemented across its domains, gaps persist in the consistent application of data-driven practices, research utilization, and external stakeholder engagement (Almonte, 2025; Apillanes, 2025; Day & Sammons, 2022; Patiga, 2025). Moreover, conflicting findings on whether demographic variables significantly influence leadership practices indicate a need for further empirical validation. Existing studies also highlight discrepancies between perceived and actual leadership practices, particularly in instructional leadership and school governance (Bucal & Lipit, 2025; Cruz & Ortega, 2023). Hence, this study addresses these gaps by assessing the extent of PPSSH implementation and determining differences across profiles, serving as a basis for developing a contextualized and needs-driven Continuing Professional Development Program that strengthens instructional leadership, teacher development, and school governance toward improved educational outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

Transformational Leadership Theory and Instructional Leadership Theory are the foundations of this research. Transformational leadership theory was originally proposed by James MacGregor Burns (1978) and was refined by Bass (1985). This theory is viewed as a leadership approach aligned with the PPSSH since it gives emphasis on strategic leadership, inspiration and motivation, professional growth, and connection-building.

Transformational leadership is about guiding an organization toward growth by introducing fresh ideas and new ways of thinking and has always been associated with variety of positive outcomes. These leaders inspire commitment, passion, and loyalty among their team, encouraging them to embrace meaningful changes and build the skills needed to move forward and achieve higher levels of performance (Ayandibu, 2024). Instructional leadership promotes effective teaching and learning; it is known as a crucial element in achieving schools' success (Fullan, 2020; Hallinger, 2020). The Education Research Center (2022) stated that the core aspect of effective leadership is intentional and impactful, ensuring continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Implementation of transformational leadership across various educational programs helps enhance Philippine education, making it equitable, resilient, and globally flexible (Sarong, 2023). It is also linked to the effectiveness of leaders, work performance, and organizational behavior (Koo & Lee, 2021; Majeed & Jamshed, 2021).

Transformational leadership focuses on strategic leadership and continuous improvement, just like how the PPSSH domains are designed. Leaders' behavior is believed to shape members' behaviors; transformational leaders

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can change behavior and encourage individuals to exceed expectations. Based on studies, transformational leadership enhances members' performance as well as their behavior (Lai, Tang, and Lin, 2020). Principals with transformational leadership qualities are more likely to gain the trust of their teachers, resulting in improved performance, greater innovation, and stronger commitment from the teaching staff (Mansor et al., 2021).

In addition, transformational leadership also supports the PPSSH domain of Managing School Operations and Resources by promoting constructive organizational behavior and efficient use of resources. It has a strong influence on various organizational outcomes, which enhance work performance and organizational effectiveness (Koo & Lee, 2021; Majeed & Jamshed, 2021). Domain 3 is grounded in instructional leadership theory and highlights the core activities of teaching and learning to enhance the psychological well-being of elementary teachers. Instructional leadership is important. It is also important that teachers are provided with clear guidance, support, and resources because, through this, they feel empowered and confident in their roles (Nombrado & Guhao, 2025).

Both transformational and instructional leadership theories support the dimensions of Developing Self and Others. Transformational leaders foster the potential of educators in their continuous growth and professional improvement. Similarly, instructional leaders support this by emphasizing professional learning and development. According to Rosyada et al., (2023), instructional leadership focuses on improving the quality of teaching and learning. It guides school policies and practices to enhance students' learning outcomes, making it an effective approach to raising overall educational quality.

Lastly, the collaborative and relational aspects of both transformational and instructional theories match PPSSH domain 5, which is Building Connection. Instructional leadership emphasizes partnerships between school heads, teachers, and stakeholders, while transformational leadership underlines community connections and collective vision building.

Conceptual Framework

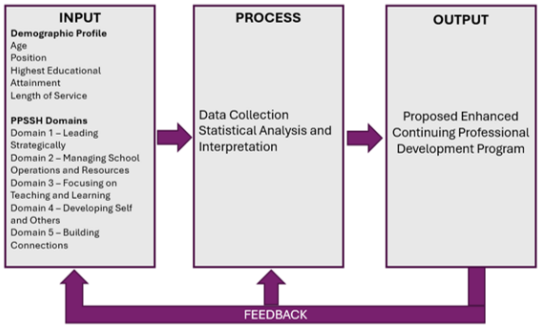

Figure 1. Research Paradigm

The Input-Process-Output structure illustrates the study's flow and demonstrates how the identified inputs are systematically converted to come up with a meaningful and research-based output.

The input component includes the Demographic profile of the respondents (age, position, highest educational attainment, and length of service) and the PPSSH domains (Leading Strategically, Managing School Operations and Resources, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, Developing Self and Others, and Building Connections).

The process measures the PPSSH domain based on the perception of the respondents. An appropriate statistical tool was used to analyze the data gathered to assess and describe the implementation levels and show significant differences across the profile of the respondents.

To address the identified gaps in this study, the output is aimed at developing a continuing professional development program. This is intended to strengthen school leadership and administration as well as provide support and interventions to foster professional development.

The feedback allows the outcomes to be integrated with the input variables to ensure that the feedback generated by the proposed enhanced continuing professional development program will continuously sustain professional growth and leadership development of school heads.

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Statement of the Problem

School leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring effective school governance, improving instructional practices, and achieving positive student learning outcomes. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) institutionalized the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) to guide the professional practice and competency development of school leaders. The PPSSH provides a comprehensive framework that defines the roles, responsibilities, and expected competencies of school heads across key domains such as strategic leadership, instructional leadership, resource management, professional development, and stakeholder engagement.

Despite the implementation of the PPSSH as a national policy framework, there remains limited empirical evidence regarding the extent to which these standards are implemented in schools, particularly in elementary schools within the National Capital Region (NCR). Understanding the level of implementation of the PPSSH is essential for identifying leadership strengths and gaps among school heads. Such information is necessary to inform leadership development initiatives, enhance professional training programs, and strengthen school leadership practices.

Furthermore, variations in leadership implementation may exist depending on demographic characteristics such as age, position, educational attainment, and length of service. Examining these differences may provide insights into leadership development needs and inform the design of responsive continuing professional development programs for school leaders. Therefore, this study seeks to evaluate the extent of implementation of the PPSSH domains in selected elementary schools in NCR and to propose an enhanced continuing professional development program based on the findings of the study.

Research Objectives

General Objective

To evaluate the extent of implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) in selected elementary schools in the National Capital Region.

Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Determine the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
   1.1 age
   1.2 position
   1.3 highest educational attainment
   1.4 length of service
2. Determine the extent of implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) in selected NCR elementary schools across the following domains:
   2.1 Leading Strategically
   2.2 Managing School Operations and Resources
   2.3 Focusing on Teaching and Learning
   2.4 Developing Self and Others
   2.5 Building Connections
3. Examine whether there is a significant difference in the extent of implementation of the PPSSH domains when respondents are grouped according to their demographic profile.
4. Propose an enhanced continuing professional development program based on the findings of the study.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
   1.1 age
   1.2 position
   1.3 highest educational attainment
   1.4 length of service?

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2. What is the extent of implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) in selected elementary schools in the National Capital Region across the following domains:
   2.1 Leading Strategically
   2.2 Managing School Operations and Resources
   2.3 Focusing on Teaching and Learning
   2.4 Developing Self and Others
   2.5 Building Connections?
3. Is there a significant difference in the extent of implementation of the PPSSH domains when respondents are grouped according to their demographic profile?
4. What enhanced continuing professional development program may be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis were tested in the study:

Ho: There is no significant difference in the extent of implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) domains when respondents are grouped according to their demographic profile in terms of age, position, highest educational attainment, and length of service.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research design in exploring the extent of PPSSH implementation in Selected Public Elementary Schools in the National Capital Region (NCR). A comprehensive presentation of a collection of numerical data is through a quantitative research design (Babbie, 2021). Based on studies, research in education oftentimes uses a quantitative approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). This method uses numerical data that can support or refute a theory and encompasses a variety of statistical tests and instruments. Quantitative research methods in education emphasize basic group designs for research and evaluation, analytic methods for exploring relationships between categorical and continuous measures, and statistical analysis procedures for group design data (Siripipatthanakul et al., 2023).

Descriptive research was employed in this research to understand the extent of implementation of the PPSSH in selected public elementary schools in the National Capital Region (NCR). The use of quantitative and descriptive approaches fosters a comprehensive examination of the extent of implementation of PPSSH and enables the formulation and design of a continuing professional development program that is based on the assessment of the respondents and aligned to the performance standards. The results will then help policymakers, education authorities, and school leaders in developing a continuing professional development program that can effectively enhance not just school heads and teachers' performance but also strengthen and improve the quality of education in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Population and Sampling

The study samples were represented by the school leaders, specifically the School Principal, and the teachers from the selected public elementary schools in the National Capital Region (NCR). DepEd – NCR is made up of 16 school divisions and is composed of 516 public elementary schools. The National Capital Region Elementary schools are composed of 485 Principals and 39, 764 teachers (which includes Head Teachers, Master Teachers, Teachers I-III, and Special Education Teachers).

From the total population, the sample size was generated through Raosoft's sample calculator with 5% margin of error, 95% confidence level, and 50% response distribution. Based on the Raosoft conditions, the suggested study sample for school head respondents was 215, and 381 for teacher respondents. Random sampling was used in choosing the teacher-respondents.

Random sampling is a sampling method wherein each member of a population has an equal probability of being chosen as a response (Noor et al., 2022). Purposive or intentional sampling was used in choosing the school head-respondent. It intentionally selects specific units (such as individuals, cases, or events) based on their relevance to the research question, enabling the researchers to gain deep insights into complex phenomena (Tajik, Golzar, & Noor, 2024).

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Research Instruments

The main data-gathering tool that was used in the survey was a questionnaire that was derived from the PPSSH benchmark statements. The checklist in the questionnaire was adopted and served as the basis for the indicators of the five domains of the PPSSH under career stage 2. In this career stage, school heads are expected to be professionally independent and already function as administrative managers and instructional leaders (DepEd Order no. 24, s. 2020).

The questionnaires were composed of two (2) parts. The first part of the question was the demographic profile of the respondents, which included their age, position, highest educational attainment, and length of service. This information was utilized in identifying respondents' backgrounds for profiling purposes only.

The part two questions were in statement forms, indicating the extent of the implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) based on the five domains: 1) Leading Strategically, 2) Managing School Operations and Resources, 3) Focusing on Teaching and Learning, 4) Developing Self and Others, and 5) Building Connections.

A five-point Likert scale was used to assess the extent of the implementations of PPSSH based on the abovementioned domains. A scale of 5 means that the respondents agreed that the PPSH was fully implemented. The lowest scale, which is 1, means that there is zero implementation of PPSSH. The scales of 4, 3, and 2 mean that the PPSSH was mostly implemented, partially implemented, and slightly implemented, respectively.

Content Validation

The instrument underwent content validation by three subject-matter experts, consisting of:

- an Education Program Supervisor (Curriculum and Learning Management Division - Regional Office),
- an Associate Professor and Project Development officer V (DepEd, National Capital Region)
- an Education Program Supervisor (Policy, Planning, and Research Division - Regional Office).

Each validator possessed at least a doctoral degree and extensive experience in instruction and curriculum evaluation. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used for validation, where 5 indicated *very highly valid* and 1 indicated *poorly valid*. The instrument obtained a mean validity rating of 4.73, interpreted as Very Highly Valid, indicating excellent content adequacy and relevance.

Reliability Testing

Reliability testing was conducted through a pilot administration involving 31 teacher and school head respondents who were not part of the actual study sample. Using Cronbach's alpha, the instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.92, which indicated high internal consistency and suitability for research use.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to the actual questionnaires' distribution and data gathering, the researcher secured and obtained the Ethics Clearance Certification from the University Research Ethics Center (UREC) of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. Upon getting the ethical clearance, the researcher then obtained permission to conduct the study from the Policy, Planning, and Research Division of the Department of Education – National Capital Region (DepEd–NCR). Following the approval from the Regional Office, formal request letters were subsequently forwarded to each School Division Office within the NCR to facilitate the implementation of the study.

After securing all the necessary permits, the validated questionnaire was distributed electronically through a Google Survey form. Through this, it was more accessible, efficient, and achieved wider participation among the respondents.

The data collection continued until sufficient answers were collected to validate the quantitative data recorded in the questionnaires. After the retrieval of responses, the collected data underwent a rigorous quantitative analysis by using appropriate statistical tools.

Treatment of Data

The statistical methods applied in this study were selected based on the specific statements of the problem.

For Statement of Problem 1, to describe and analyze the respondents' demographic profile, frequency distribution, and percentages were utilized. This tool is appropriate for summarizing and presenting categorical data, which makes it easier to understand the distribution of respondents.

To evaluate the extent of PPSSH implementation across its five domains under Statement of Problem 2, the weighted mean was computed and interpreted, since it effectively measures the central tendency of respondents'

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perceptions based on the Likert-scale responses, thereby providing a concise summary of how strongly or weakly the respondents perceive the level of implementation.

To summarize the responses to SOP 1 and SOP 2, the percentage and WAM were used.

% =f/n where: f = frequency of responses; n = number of respondents

$W = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i X_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i}$ where: w = weighted average; n = number of terms to be averaged; W_i =weights applied to x values; X_i =data values to be averaged

To determine whether the extent of implementation of PPSSH domains differs significantly when respondents are grouped based on their profile, the Kruskal-Wallis test was employed. This inferential, non-parametric statistical technique was used to show the significance of differences in the variables. This test is appropriate to use in comparing more than two independent variables and does not require the assumption of normality.

Lastly, the ranking of results that were based on statistical analysis was used in formulating the continuing professional development. This ranking guides the development of the program that is aligned with the findings of the research.

Ethical Considerations

To ensure the protection, dignity, and welfare of participants throughout the research process, ethical standards were strictly observed and established. The respondents were informed that their participation is voluntary, that they will not be obliged or pressured to take part in the study, and that they can withdraw their participation at any time.

Orientation and instruction on the proper way of answering the questions were integrated into the questionnaire. This is to ensure a clear understanding and reduce misinterpretation that may lead to inaccuracy of responses. The survey was administered electronically through a Google Survey form, and the respondents did not incur any cost and were not remunerated for accessing or completing the questionnaire.

In compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), all responses were treated with strict confidentiality; hence, no personal identifiers were included in the research instrument. The data gathered will be privately and securely stored by the researcher for a period of one year.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This section shows the data derived from the study, which is systematically organized and presented in tabular form to provide clear answers to the research questions. The presentation of data is followed by a comprehensive discussion and interpretation of the findings, supported by relevant literature and related studies.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Profile		Frequency	Percent
Age	35 and below	131	21.94
	36-45	143	23.95
	45 and above	323	54.10
Position	Teacher-in-charge	26	4.36
	Head Teacher	4	0.67
	Principal	215	36.01
	Master Teacher	54	9.05
	Teacher	298	49.92
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	203	34.00
	Master's Degree	180	30.15
	Doctorate	175	29.31
	Others: with Masters Units	25	4.19
	Others: with Doctorate Units	14	2.35

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Length of Service	0 – 5 years	98	16.42
	6 – 10 years	103	17.25
	11 and above	396	66.33

Table 1 illustrates the respondents' demographic characteristics. Based on age, the majority of the participants were older, mature workers, since more than half (54.10%) belonged to the age group of 45 and above, then the age group of 36 to 45 with a share of 23.95%, and the youngest group, that of 35 and under, only made up 21.94%. This demographic picture shows that most of the teaching and educational leadership staff in the NCR elementary schools are experienced experts. Research validates that the senior and the experienced staff often reveal an increase in stability and flexibility at the advent of leadership situations, which are in consonance with the transformational leadership that embraces and facilitates improvement of organizational effectiveness (Lai et al., 2020).

In terms of positions, the largest group of respondents consisted of Teachers (49.92%), with Principals (36.01%), Master Teachers (9.05%), Teacher-in-charge (4.36%), and Head Teachers (0.67%) following in order. The strong presence of teachers and principals guarantees that the leadership standards from different perspectives are evaluated, since every group has different views of leadership. According to Batanga and Miasco (2025), a strong relationship was revealed between department heads' leadership styles and teachers' job performance; it is therefore noted that leadership has a strong influence on educational outcomes.

The educational attainment of the respondents shows a professional group that is well qualified. A substantial number of respondents have a bachelor's degree (34.00%), a master's degree (30.15%), and a doctorate (29.31%), while the rest have some units in graduate studies (6.54% in total). The huge number of master's graduates indicates that the participants show high value in professional development and academic progression combined. Parveen (2022) concurs, as shown in his study, that those school administrators and teachers with higher educational qualifications are found to be connected with better instructional leadership, decision-making, and performance outcomes, as up-to-date studies promote critical thinking and evidence-based practices.

Lastly, in terms of service duration, the most common category (66.33%) consists of professionals with 11 years or more experience, then comes 6-10 years (17.25%), and those with 0-5 years of experience (16.42%) last. This demographic shows that most of the respondents have long tenures. Saleem (2020) highlights that long tenure mostly leads to higher leadership quality because the experience a teacher has accumulated makes him or her able to tackle problems in a manner that prevents or minimizes the conflict with the school community. In addition, old-time teachers and principals generally have a better understanding of the goals of the organization and even have more trust in using such leadership concepts as the PPSSH (Baig et al., 2021).

Table 2. Extent of the Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads across all domains

PPSSH Domain	Overall Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Leading Strategically	4.10	Mostly Implemented
Managing School Operations and Resources	4.03	Mostly Implemented
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	4.03	Mostly Implemented
Developing Self and Others	4.03	Mostly Implemented
Building Connections	4.06	Mostly Implemented

The findings reveal that school heads demonstrate a consistently high level of implementation across all PPSSH domains, reflecting a strong foundation in educational leadership and school governance. The high ratings in leading strategically and building connections indicate that school leaders effectively establish shared vision, inclusive practices, and collaborative school cultures, which are critical elements of transformational and distributed leadership (Aquino et al., 2021; Lai et al., 2020; Younas et al., 2022). These practices strengthen stakeholder trust, organizational coherence, and ultimately support improved school performance and learner outcomes.

However, the results also surface critical gaps that directly affect instructional leadership and teacher professional development. Notably, the limited emphasis on data-driven decision-making and learner voice integration constrains the capacity of school heads to lead evidence-based instructional improvements (Almonte, 2025; Fernandes, 2023).

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Similarly, weaknesses in technical assistance on assessment practices and imbalanced teacher workload distribution suggest that instructional support systems are not yet fully optimized, which may hinder teaching quality and student achievement (Pamunag & Mosquera, 2025; Theodorio, 2024; Villanueva & Embodo, 2024). Furthermore, insufficient reward systems and external partnerships reflect gaps in both teacher motivation mechanisms and school-community governance, potentially limiting innovation and resource expansion (Baig et al., 2021; Kiure et al., 2025).

Overall, while school heads exhibit strong competencies in strategic and relational leadership, the findings highlight the need to strengthen instructional leadership practices, data-informed culture, and professional development systems to achieve more responsive, equitable, and high-performing schools.

Table 3. Significant Difference on the Extent of the Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) Domains When Grouped According to Profile

Profile Variable	Statistical Test	p-value Range	Decision	Interpretation
Age	Kruskal-Wallis Test	0.1512 – 0.7556	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Position	Kruskal-Wallis Test	0.3033 – 0.8737	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	Kruskal-Wallis Test	0.0685 – 0.9700	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Length of Service	Kruskal-Wallis Test	0.1992 – 0.8492	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Significant

The findings consistently show no significant differences across all profile variables, indicating that the implementation of the PPSSH domains is uniform across age, position, educational attainment, and length of service. This suggests that educational leadership practices are largely driven by standardized frameworks and institutional expectations rather than individual demographic characteristics, reinforcing the role of the PPSSH as a unifying structure for school leadership (Lunenberg & Ornstein, 2021; Siripipatthanakul et al., 2023).

From an educational leadership and school governance perspective, this uniformity highlights the strength of shared leadership and distributed governance, where leadership behaviors are collectively practiced across roles and levels, rather than confined to formal authority (Lunenberg & Ornstein, 2021). The absence of variation by position further implies that leadership is embedded in organizational culture and collaborative practices, supporting cohesive school functioning.

However, in terms of instructional leadership and teacher professional development, the results reveal a critical insight: neither experience nor academic qualifications alone guarantee stronger implementation of leadership standards. This underscores the importance of continuous, targeted professional development, mentoring, and capacity-building programs to enhance leadership competencies across all groups (Hallinger & Wang, 2020; Sebuyana, 2024). Moreover, while older and more experienced school heads tend to show slightly higher mean scores, these differences are not statistically significant, suggesting that leadership effectiveness is competence-based rather than tenure-based (Dellomas & Deri, 2022).

Overall, the findings emphasize that improving school leadership—and consequently teaching and learning outcomes—depends less on demographic factors and more on strengthening data-driven practices, instructional support systems, and sustained professional learning, ensuring that all school leaders can effectively implement PPSSH standards toward equitable and high-quality education.

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Proposed Continuing Professions Development (CPD) Program

AREA PPSSH Domain	Program Title	Objectives	Key Success Indicator	Performance Indicators	Specific Activities	Responsible Person	Budget	Expected Outputs
Domain 1: Leading Strategically	**LEAD** (Leadership through Evidence, Analytics, and Data)	Enhance school leaders' capacity to make data-driven decisions for strategic planning	Improved data-driven decision-making	% of school heads using evidence-based strategies; number of strategic plans aligned with data analytics	Training on school data analysis and interpretation	Schools Division Superintendent /School Heads	DepEd MOOE/ School Funds/ Sponsorships/ partnerships	Data-driven School Improvement Plan (SIP)
Domain 2: Managing School Operations and Resources	**SMART-SOP** (Systems Management and Resources Transformation for School Operations)	Strengthening school management and operations by making it future-ready	Efficient utilization and allocation of school resources	% of schools complying with operational guidelines; % reduction in resource wastage	Digitization of School Records through Google Workspace	School Heads, Administrative Officers	DepEd MOOE/ School Funds/	Digitized operational system
Domain 3: Focusing on Teaching and Learning	**INSPIRE** (Instructional Support and Pedagogical Innovation through Responsive Empowerment)	Improve teaching and student learning outcomes through instructional innovations	Boost teaching quality and student learning outcomes	% of teachers implementing innovative strategies; student learning performance improvement (pre-post assessment)	Training and Implementation on Digital lesson planning and coaching feedback platforms	Curriculum coordinator / School Heads / Master Teachers	DepEd MOOE/ School Funds/ Sponsorships/ partnerships	Advanced teaching practices
Domain 4: Developing Self and Others	**PATH-LEAD** (Professional Advancement and Training for Holistic Leadership)	Build professional competence of teachers through specific continuing professional development program	Improving professional capacity of school heads and teachers	Number of CPD training courses conducted; % of participants achieving competency benchmarks	Development and Adaptation of Wellness Monitoring Tools	Human Resources/ Admin officers/ School Heads	DepEd MOOE/ School Funds/ Sponsorships/ partnerships	Wellness Action Plans
Domain 5: Building Connections	**ENGAGeD** (Empowering Networks and Governance through Active Group Engagement for Education)	Promote collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders and community for school improvement	Enhance collaboration with stakeholders and community	Number of collaborative projects with stakeholders; % increase in community engagement initiatives	Engagement workshops, stakeholder's forum, and consultation meetings	Community relations coordinator / School Heads / Key Stakeholders	DepEd MOOE/ School Funds/ Sponsorships/ partnerships	Stakeholder engagement and partnership plans

Conclusions

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The findings revealed that most respondents were experienced educators holding teaching and leadership positions with advanced educational qualifications. This indicates that the respondents possess the professional background necessary to provide informed assessments regarding the implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH).
2. The results showed that the PPSSH domains—Leading Strategically, Managing School Operations and Resources, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, Developing Self and Others, and Building Connections—were generally mostly implemented in the selected public elementary schools in the National Capital Region. This suggests that school heads demonstrate strong alignment with national leadership standards and actively practice leadership behaviors that support effective school governance and instructional improvement.
3. The statistical analysis indicated that there were no significant differences in the implementation of PPSSH domains when respondents were grouped according to age, position, educational attainment, and length of service. This finding implies that the implementation of leadership standards is relatively consistent across demographic groups, reflecting the influence of institutional policies and professional expectations in shaping school leadership practices.
4. The results underscore the importance of sustaining and strengthening leadership competencies among school heads through continuing professional development initiatives. Enhancing leadership capabilities may further support instructional improvement, effective school management, and collaborative engagement with stakeholders in the education system.

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Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered.

1. Continuing professional development programs may be designed to incorporate differentiated leadership training that addresses the varying experiences, positions, and professional backgrounds of school leaders and teachers.
2. Educational authorities may strengthen leadership capacity-building initiatives focusing on areas identified for improvement, including data-driven decision-making, instructional coaching, resource management, leadership mentoring, and stakeholder engagement.
3. Since the implementation of PPSSH domains appeared consistently across demographic groups, leadership development programs may be implemented as system-wide initiatives to promote equitable professional growth opportunities for school leaders and teacher-leaders.
4. The Department of Education–National Capital Region and relevant school leadership offices may utilize the findings of this study as a basis for designing context-responsive continuing professional development programs that address the leadership needs of school heads and enhance educational leadership practices within schools.

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