

Original Article

School Leaders' Strategic Leadership Behaviors and Learners' Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas in Public Elementary Schools

Lovely T. Aportadera, Fernando Jr. M. Lagrimas , Iric F. Casa, Lerma M. Gacuscus

Author Information:

Graduate School, Davao del Sur State
College, Digos City, Philippines

Corresponding Author:

lovelyaportadera3@gmail.com

Article History:

Date received: April 20, 2026
Date revised: May 22, 2026
Date accepted: June 9, 2026

Recommended citation:

Aportadera, L., Lagrimas, F., Jr., Casa, I., & Gacuscus, L. (2026). School leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement in MATATAG priority areas in public elementary schools. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 4(7), 94-101. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2026.194>

Abstract. This study investigated the correlation between school leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement in MATATAG priority areas in public elementary schools within the Municipality of Esperanza, Division of Sultan Kudarat, during the School Year 2025-2026. The research aimed to assess the extent of strategic leadership behaviors across four domains, the level of learner achievement in foundational literacy, numeracy, and values formation, and the significant relationship between these variables. Employing a descriptive correlational survey design, data were collected from 120 purposively selected teachers across 15 elementary schools in Districts I, II, and III using a highly reliable researcher-made questionnaire. Results revealed that the strategic leadership behaviors of school heads were consistently evident, with strong practices noted in strategic direction and visioning (4.20), instructional management (4.17), resource management (4.17), and stakeholder engagement (4.15). Similarly, learner achievement was evident, reflecting strong performance in values formation (4.23), foundational literacy (4.12), and foundational numeracy (4.11). Correlation analysis demonstrated a highly significant positive relationship between overall strategic leadership behaviors and learner achievement ($r = 0.617$, $p < 0.01$). The findings conclude that effective school leadership, particularly in providing instructional support and managing resources, plays a critical role in enhancing academic performance and holistic development within the MATATAG curriculum framework. Recommendations include regular leadership training on instructional supervision, the targeted allocation of learning resources, the development of stronger school-wide support systems, and the establishment of regular monitoring to sustain and elevate learner outcomes.

Keywords: *Correlation; Learner achievement; MATATAG curriculum; School leaders; Strategic leadership*

The conceptualization of educational leadership has transitioned from traditional human resource management to a dynamic focus on human capital and an actionable strategic vision (Almairan, 2023; Westover, 2024). Navigating complex educational reforms now demands that school heads actively integrate daily operational duties with long-term strategic foresight (Salvalda, 2026). Studies collectively establish that this strategic implementation functions as a critical precursor to a positive school climate and the success of

new initiatives (Costa, 2025). Specifically, a synthesis of current literature indicates that targeted leadership practices, such as instructional management and stakeholder engagement, significantly elevate both academic outcomes and holistic learner performance across various domains (Irby, 2023; Muhia, 2021).

However, the efficacy of these global strategic leadership paradigms must be critically examined when applied to specific, localized educational reforms. In the Philippines, the Department of Education launched the MATATAG K to 10 Curriculum in 2023 to address systemic educational deficits through the decongestion of competencies and the prioritization of foundational literacy, numeracy, and values formation (Kilag, 2024; Merano, 2025). Translating this ambitious national vision into success at the school level requires profound strategic leadership. While global models dictate that strategic foresight is necessary to navigate complex reforms, MATATAG introduces highly specific, localized hurdles. These challenges include acute resource constraints, increased teacher workloads, and the need for specialized professional development (Fuentes, 2025).

This intersection of global leadership ideals and local implementation realities presents a significant research gap. While studies indicate a generally positive relationship between school head performance and teaching effectiveness in the Philippines (Albino, 2023), there is a lack of comparative research that analyzes how distinct strategic leadership behaviors mitigate the unique challenges of the MATATAG curriculum. It remains unclear how behaviors such as making decisions informed through data and utilizing strategic resource management directly correlate with learner achievement within these newly designated priority areas.

For public elementary schools, particularly in Esperanza District III, managing the transition to MATATAG cannot rely solely on traditional operational leadership. By synthesizing global strategic leadership imperatives with the immediate challenges of local curriculum reform, this study aims to determine the correlation between school leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement. Exploring these dynamics will fill the existing contextual gap and provide a critical foundation for strengthening targeted leadership practices to optimize educational outcomes under the MATATAG framework.

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher used a descriptive survey utilizing a correlational research method. The descriptive survey is a fact-finding study with adequate and accurate interpretation. It is used to collect demographic data about people's behavior, practices, intentions, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, judgments, interests, perceptions and the like and then such data are analyzed, organized and interpreted (Brondolo, 2021). The data gathered focuses on the correlation between school leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement in MATATAG priority areas in public elementary schools within the Municipality of Esperanza, Division of Sultan Kudarat, for the School Year 2025–2026.

Research Locale

The study on the correlation between school leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement in MATATAG priority areas in public elementary schools in the municipality of Esperanza, Division of Sultan Kudarat for the School Year 2025–2026, will be conducted to the following districts; Esperanza I comprising of Esperanza Central School, Sagasa Elementary School, Paitan Elementary School, Villamor Elementary School and Doroteo Pastor Memorial Elementary School; Esperanza District II comprising of Ala Central School, New Panay Elementary School, Salabaca Elementary School, Romulo L. Latog Sr. Elementary School and Laguinding Elementary School; and Esperanza District III comprising of Manirub Integrated School, Numo Elementary School, Pamantingan Elementary School, Sultan Sinanggayan Integrated School and Kabanalian Elementary School.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the teachers of the public Elementary School in the Municipality of Esperanza, Division of Sultan Kudarat, for the School Year 2025–2026. The study employed the Purposive sampling method, wherein teachers from the identified schools were included as participants. This approach ensured comprehensive data representation of the target population within the district.

Research Instrument

To identify the correlation between school leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement in

MATATAG priority areas in public elementary schools within the Municipality of Esperanza, Division of Sultan Kudarat, for the School Year 2025–2026, the researcher used a survey questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire was about the correlation between school leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement in MATATAG priority areas. The items were formulated after a review of the literature and studies. The survey questionnaire was composed to gather information on the correlation between school leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement in MATATAG priority areas in public elementary schools.

It was composed of 5 items per area where the respondents indicated their answers using a five-point Likert scale, where 5 – Highly Evident, 4-Evident, 3 - Moderately Evident, 2 – Less Evident, and 1 – Least Evident. In summary, A Likert scale using 4.46 - 5.00 - Highly Evident, 3.46 – 4.00 Evident; 2.46 – 3.45 Moderately Evident; 1.46 – 2.45 Less Evident; 1.00 – 1.45 Least Evident was used to identify the correlation between school leaders' strategic leadership behaviors and learners' achievement in MATATAG priority areas in public elementary schools.

The research instrument was a researcher-made questionnaire. After the questionnaire was formulated, it was checked by a panel of experts, including the adviser, master teachers, and the principal. The researcher distributed it to 10 teachers, not the respondents of the study. To test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, the answered questionnaire was tested using the Guttman Split-Half Coefficient Method of Reliability and SPSS software. Reliability testing was conducted by a statistician, yielding .859, which was interpreted as highly reliable. Hence, the questionnaire was valid and reliable.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher asked permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of Sultan Kudarat to conduct this study. After his approval, the researcher likewise sought permission from the District Supervisors, the school heads, and the respective respondents to gather the necessary data. Afterward, the researchers personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. After its distribution, the researcher retrieved and checked all the items to ensure they were properly answered. Then, tabulation and analysis were performed in Microsoft Excel to achieve quick, accurate results. It was run by a computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were presented in a table after being analyzed and interpreted using the specified processing techniques.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the relevant institutional review boards. The study was conducted in strict adherence to core ethical principles, prioritizing participant welfare, informed consent, and data privacy. Participation was entirely voluntary and free from external coercion. The researcher secured informed consent from all participating parents and pupils after thoroughly explaining the study purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Participants retained the unconditional right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Furthermore, the research maintained cultural sensitivity and respected local customs while incorporating diverse perspectives to capture a comprehensive view of strategic leadership and learner achievement.

To protect participant identities, strict anonymity and confidentiality were upheld through the use of pseudonyms and secure coding systems. The researcher complied with data protection regulations, ensuring that all information was stored securely and that access was restricted solely to the research team. During interactions, the researcher maintained a respectful, professional relationship with all respondents, treating them with dignity and employing strategies to prevent emotional distress when discussing sensitive professional challenges.

Finally, scientific integrity was maintained throughout the entire research process. The researcher actively mitigated potential bias, ensured transparency, and reported findings accurately, without manipulating data. These synthesized ethical protocols ensured that the research contributed positively to educational practices while safeguarding the rights and dignity of all human subjects involved.

Results and Discussion

Strategic Leadership Behaviors in Terms of Strategic Direction and Visioning

The data presented in Table 1 show the level of strategic leadership behaviors in terms of strategic direction and visioning. The overall mean of 4.20, interpreted as Evident, indicates that school leaders in the Municipality of Esperanza demonstrate effective strategic direction in guiding school goals and programs.

Table 1. *Level of Strategic Leadership Behaviors in Terms of Strategic Direction and Visioning*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. The school leader clearly communicates the school vision and mission to teachers and staff.	4.28	Evident
2. The school leader sets long-term goals aligned with DepEd priorities.	4.21	Evident
3. The school leader involves teachers in planning the strategic direction of the school.	4.10	Evident
4. The school leader regularly reviews and updates school improvement plans.	4.17	Evident
5. The school leader ensures that school programs align with the vision and mission.	4.25	Evident
Overall Mean	4.20	Evident

Note. 4.46-5.00 - Highly Evident; 3.25-4.45 - Evident; 2.50-3.24 - Moderately Evident; 1.75-2.49 - Less Evident; 1.00-1.74 - Least Evident

Among the indicators, the highest mean is “The school leader clearly communicates the school vision and mission to teachers and staff” ($M = 4.28$), suggesting that school leaders effectively articulate the direction and priorities of the school community. This is followed by “The school leader ensures that school programs align with the vision and mission” ($M = 4.25$) and “The school leader sets long-term goals aligned with DepEd priorities” ($M = 4.21$), indicating strong strategic planning and goal alignment within the school. The lowest mean is for “The school leader involves teachers in planning the strategic direction of the school” ($M = 4.10$), which is still interpreted as Evident, suggesting that collaborative planning practices are present but may be enhanced to further strengthen teacher participation in decision-making processes. These findings support the study of Silcox and MacNeill (2021), indicating that effective school leadership requires clear vision-setting and strategic planning to guide institutional improvement. School leaders who communicate clear goals and involve teachers in strategic processes are more likely to foster collaborative cultures and improve school performance (Vanlommel & Steeno, 2025).

Strategic Leadership Behaviors in Terms of Instructional Management and Supervision

Table 2 illustrates the level of strategic leadership behaviors in terms of instructional management and supervision. The overall mean of 4.17, interpreted as Evident, indicates that school leaders consistently support and supervise instructional practices to ensure quality teaching and learning.

Table 2. *Level of Strategic Leadership Behaviors in Terms of Instructional Management and Supervision*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. The school leader regularly monitors classroom instruction.	4.23	Evident
2. The school leader provides constructive feedback to teachers.	4.18	Evident
3. The school leader supports teachers in implementing effective instructional strategies.	4.20	Evident
4. The school leader conducts classroom observations to ensure quality teaching.	4.14	Evident
5. The school leader provides opportunities for instructional professional development.	4.12	Evident
Overall Mean	4.17	Evident

Note. 4.46-5.00 - Highly Evident; 3.25-4.45 - Evident; 2.50-3.24 - Moderately Evident; 1.75-2.49 - Less Evident; 1.00-1.74 - Least Evident

The highest-rated indicator is “The school leader regularly monitors classroom instruction” ($M = 4.23$), suggesting that instructional monitoring is an important leadership responsibility in schools. This is followed by “The school leader supports teachers in implementing effective instructional strategies” ($M = 4.20$) and “The school leader provides constructive feedback to teachers” ($M = 4.18$). The lowest mean, though still interpreted as Evident, is “The school leader provides opportunities for instructional professional development” ($M = 4.12$), implying that professional development opportunities are available but may still be expanded to strengthen teachers’ instructional competencies. The instructional leadership plays a critical role in improving teaching quality and student learning outcomes (Kazi, 2023). Effective school leaders actively monitor classroom instruction, provide feedback, and support teacher development to enhance instructional effectiveness (Liu et al., 2024).

Strategic Leadership Behaviors in Terms of Resource and Human Capital Management

Table 3 presents the level of strategic leadership behaviors in terms of resource and human capital management. The overall mean of 4.17, interpreted as Evident, indicates that school leaders effectively manage resources and personnel to support the school’s educational goals.

Table 3. Level of Strategic Leadership Behaviors in Terms of Resource and Human Capital Management

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. The school leader ensures that learning resources are available for teachers and students.	4.19	Evident
2. The school leader effectively manages school funds and materials.	4.15	Evident
3. The school leader encourages teachers to participate in professional development.	4.21	Evident
4. The school leader assigns tasks based on teachers' competencies.	4.12	Evident
5. The school leader promotes teamwork and collaboration among personnel.	4.18	Evident
Overall Mean	4.17	Evident

Note. 4.46-5.00 - Highly Evident; 3.25-4.45 - Evident; 2.50-3.24 - Moderately Evident; 1.75-2.49 - Less Evident; 1.00-1.74 - Least Evident

The highest mean is “The school leader encourages teachers to participate in professional development” (M = 4.21), suggesting that school leaders recognize the importance of continuous professional learning. This is followed by “The school leader ensures that learning resources are available for teachers and students” (M = 4.19) and “The school leader promotes teamwork and collaboration among personnel” (M = 4.18). The lowest mean is “The school leader assigns tasks based on teachers’ competencies” (M = 4.12), although still Evident, indicating that while competency-based task delegation exists, it may still be strengthened to optimize human resource utilization. Lewis et al. (2025) emphasize that effective leadership involves the efficient allocation of resources and the fostering of collaboration among school personnel. Schools that prioritize human capital development and resource management are more likely to achieve improved organizational performance (Zhai et al., 2025).

Strategic Leadership Behaviors in Terms of Stakeholder Engagement and Implementation Leadership

Reveals the correlation results between the School Heads’ Management Behavior and Teachers’ Motivation. Table 4 presents the level of strategic leadership behaviors in terms of stakeholder engagement and implementation leadership. The overall mean of 4.15, interpreted as Evident, indicates that school leaders actively engage parents, community members, and other stakeholders in supporting school initiatives.

Table 4. Level of Strategic Leadership Behaviors in Terms of Stakeholder Engagement and Implementation Leadership

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. The school leader actively involves parents and community members in school programs.	4.11	Evident
2. The school leader collaborates with stakeholders to support school initiatives.	4.18	Evident
3. The school leader ensures effective implementation of school projects and activities.	4.23	Evident
4. The school leader communicates school achievements and concerns to stakeholders.	4.16	Evident
5. The school leader encourages community participation in improving school programs.	4.09	Evident
Overall Mean	4.15	Evident

Note. 4.46-5.00 - Highly Evident; 3.25-4.45 - Evident; 2.50-3.24 - Moderately Evident; 1.75-2.49 - Less Evident; 1.00-1.74 - Least Evident

The highest mean is “The school leader ensures effective implementation of school projects and activities” (M = 4.23), suggesting that school leaders prioritize translating plans into effective actions. This is followed by “The school leader collaborates with stakeholders to support school initiatives” (M = 4.18) and “The school leader communicates school achievements and concerns to stakeholders” (M = 4.16). The lowest mean is for “The school leader encourages community participation in improving school programs” (M = 4.09), although still Evident, indicating that while stakeholder engagement is present, stronger partnerships with the community could be developed. Studies have shown that school-community partnerships and stakeholder collaboration significantly improve school performance and student outcomes (Bradbury, 2023).

Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas in Terms of Foundational Literacy

The data presented in Table 5 show learners' achievement levels in foundational literacy. The overall mean of 4.12, interpreted as Evident, indicates that learners in the district demonstrate satisfactory literacy skills necessary for academic success.

Table 5. Level of Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas in Terms of Foundational Literacy

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Learners demonstrate the ability to read grade-level texts with understanding.	4.18	Evident
2. Learners show improvement in reading comprehension skills.	4.12	Evident
3. Learners can express ideas clearly through writing activities.	4.05	Evident
4. Learners demonstrate correct pronunciation and fluency in reading.	4.10	Evident
5. Learners actively participate in reading-related classroom activities.	4.16	Evident
Overall Mean	4.12	Evident

Note. 4.46-5.00 - Highly Evident; 3.25-4.45 - Evident; 2.50-3.24 - Moderately Evident; 1.75-2.49 - Less Evident; 1.00-1.74 - Least Evident

The highest mean is “Learners demonstrate the ability to read grade-level texts with understanding” ($M = 4.18$), suggesting that learners generally comprehend grade-level texts. This is followed by “Learners actively participate in reading-related classroom activities” ($M = 4.16$), indicating that students are engaged in literacy-based learning experiences that enhance reading development. The lowest mean is for “Learners can express ideas clearly through writing activities” ($M = 4.05$), which is still interpreted as Evident, implying that while learners demonstrate writing skills, further improvement in written expression may still be encouraged. Noordan & Yunus (2022) highlight the importance of foundational literacy as a key component of academic achievement and lifelong learning. It indicates that strengthening early reading comprehension and writing skills contributes significantly to learners’ cognitive development and academic performance. Furthermore, literacy-focused instructional practices enhance student engagement and reading proficiency in elementary education (Pratiwi & Bayu, 2024).

Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas in Terms of Foundational Numeracy

Table 6 presents the level of learner achievement in terms of foundational numeracy. The overall mean of 4.11, interpreted as Evident, indicates that learners demonstrate adequate competence in fundamental mathematical concepts and problem-solving skills.

Table 6. *Level of Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas in Terms of Foundational Numeracy*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Learners demonstrate understanding of basic mathematical concepts.	4.14	Evident
2. Learners can solve basic arithmetic problems accurately.	4.11	Evident
3. Learners apply mathematics skills in solving real-life problems.	4.05	Evident
4. Learners participate actively in numeracy-related classroom activities.	4.16	Evident
5. Learners show improvement in computation and problem-solving skills.	4.18	Evident
Overall Mean	4.11	Evident

Note. 4.46-5.00 - Highly Evident; 3.25-4.45 - Evident; 2.50-3.24 - Moderately Evident; 1.75-2.49 - Less Evident; 1.00-1.74 - Least Evident

The highest mean is “Learners participate actively in numeracy-related classroom activities” ($M = 4.16$), suggesting that classroom engagement plays a significant role in developing learners’ mathematical understanding. This is followed by “Learners demonstrate understanding of basic mathematical concepts” ($M = 4.14$) and “Learners can solve basic arithmetic problems accurately” ($M = 4.11$). The lowest mean is “Learners apply mathematical skills in solving real-life problems” ($M = 4.05$), although still interpreted as Evident, indicating that while learners demonstrate mathematical knowledge, further emphasis on real-life application of numeracy skills may enhance their problem-solving abilities. Nallonar (2026) emphasizes that numeracy competence is fundamental to learners’ academic development and daily life problem-solving. Effective numeracy instruction strengthens students’ logical thinking and analytical skills, which are essential for academic achievement and future career readiness (Alo, 2025). Additionally, integrating interactive learning strategies in mathematics improves learners’ engagement and conceptual understanding (Lagura & Bulay, 2025).

Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas in Terms of Values Formation and Holistic Development

Table 7 illustrates the level of learner achievement in terms of values formation and holistic development. The overall mean of 4.23, interpreted as Evident, indicates that learners demonstrate positive values and behaviors that contribute to their overall development as responsible individuals.

Table 7. *Level of Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas in Terms of Values Formation and Holistic Development*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Learners demonstrate respect for teachers, classmates, and others.	4.30	Evident
2. Learners show responsibility in completing their school tasks.	4.18	Evident
3. Learners practice honesty and integrity in their daily activities.	4.22	Evident
4. Learners participate in activities that promote teamwork and cooperation.	4.25	Evident
5. Learners demonstrate positive attitudes toward learning and personal growth.	4.20	Evident
Overall Mean	4.23	Evident

Note. 4.46-5.00 - Highly Evident; 3.25-4.45 - Evident; 2.50-3.24 - Moderately Evident; 1.75-2.49 - Less Evident; 1.00-1.74 - Least Evident

The highest mean is “Learners demonstrate respect for teachers, classmates, and others” ($M = 4.30$), suggesting that respect and positive interpersonal relationships are strongly manifested among learners. This is followed by “Learners participate in activities that promote teamwork and cooperation” ($M = 4.25$) and “Learners practice honesty and integrity in their daily activities” ($M = 4.22$). The lowest mean is for “Learners show responsibility in completing their school tasks” ($M = 4.18$), which is still interpreted as Evident, indicating that learners generally

demonstrate responsible behaviors but may still benefit from strengthened values education initiatives. Alhakim & Sumardiono (2020) indicate that values education plays a crucial role in shaping learners' behavior, emotional development, and social skills. Values-based education helps cultivate moral responsibility, empathy, and positive attitudes among learners, which contribute to their holistic development. Bylkova (2021) also emphasizes that values formation programs strengthen students' emotional intelligence and social responsibility within the school environment.

Strategic Leadership Behaviors and Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas

The results indicate a statistically significant positive correlation between these two variables ($r = 0.617$, $t = 4.148$, $p = 0.00028$). The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.617 suggests a moderately strong positive relationship. This indicates that as the demonstration of strategic leadership behaviors increases, learner achievement in MATATAG priority areas tends to increase as well. The computed t -value of 4.148 is statistically significant, with a p -value of 0.00028. Since the p -value is less than the typical alpha levels of 0.01 and 0.05, the null hypothesis (that there is no relationship between the two variables) is firmly rejected. This provides strong evidence that the observed correlation is highly significant and not due to chance.

Table 8. *Correlation Results Between Strategic Leadership Behaviors and Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas*

Variables	Correlation	t - computed	p - value	Interpretation
Strategic Leadership Behaviors Learner Achievement in MATATAG Priority Areas	.617	4.148	0.00028	Highly Significant

The findings suggest that the effective application of strategic leadership behaviors in schools is associated with enhanced learner achievement. Strategic leadership, which involves establishing a clear vision, allocating resources efficiently, and driving continuous school improvement, creates an environment where educators can focus on deepening students' mastery of the core subject matter. It aligns with established educational leadership models, in which principals, acting as strategic drivers of institutional change, directly reinforce the overall quality of teaching and learning (Alsharija & Watters, 2020). The MATATAG curriculum, implemented by the Department of Education to streamline learning content and focus on foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, and values education, aims to strengthen overall educational quality and build resilient learners (Diquito, 2025). In addition, Lee (2023) emphasizes that strategic school leaders are pivotal in bridging academic gaps and elevating student achievement by ensuring school priorities align with these curriculum goals. Leaders exhibiting these behaviors may demonstrate better data-driven decision-making and personnel management, thereby shaping more effective and supportive instructional practice. Furthermore, Berkovich & Eyal (2020) found that effective strategic leadership serves as a strong motivator and support system for teachers, ultimately leading to the best academic results for their students.

Conclusion

This study transcends a simple observation of correlation to establish a critical framework for educational leadership amid localized curriculum reform. The findings confirm that school leaders in the Municipality of Esperanza demonstrate strategic leadership behaviors in visioning, instructional supervision, resource management, and stakeholder engagement. Crucially, the highly significant positive relationship between these behaviors and learner achievement in foundational literacy, numeracy, and values formation proves that global strategic leadership paradigms are highly effective when contextualized to address specific reform challenges. The research contributes to the existing literature by confirming that deliberate human capital management and targeted instructional support are indispensable for mitigating the implementation hurdles of new educational frameworks. Consequently, the results establish explicit implications for practice, policy, and instructional improvement within the MATATAG framework. For leadership practice, school heads must shift from purely operational roles to active strategic facilitators who align resource allocation directly with foundational learning priorities. In terms of policy development, educational authorities should design targeted professional development programs that equip school leaders with advanced competencies in strategic resource management and data-informed decision-making. Furthermore, for instructional improvement, fostering robust stakeholder collaboration will ensure that teachers receive the necessary material and community support to execute the decongested curriculum effectively. To build upon these contributions, future research should explore the enactment of these strategic behaviors through qualitative methodologies to understand the nuanced daily practices of highly effective school heads. Additionally, conducting longitudinal studies across diverse school districts will help determine the sustained impact of strategic leadership on learner outcomes as the MATATAG

curriculum matures over time.

Contributions of Authors

The principal author contributes to the study's writing and implementation. The co-author edits and supervises the data.

Funding

This research paper received no specific grant from any funding agency.

Conflict of Interests

The authors assert no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Acknowledgment

The researchers would like to express their sincere gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals, who generously shared their time, encouragement, effort, guidance, and motivation in making this study a reality.

References

- Albino, E. (2023). The school heads leadership styles and qualities to the teachers' effectiveness and school performance of selected public elementary schools in Laguna. *International Journal of Research Publications*, 125(1). <https://doi.org/10.47119/ijrp1001251520234893>
- Alhakim, L., & Sumardiono. (2020). Positive learners' responses on moral values based stories: Constructing and developing knowledge. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 8(2), 168–174. <https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2020.8220>
- Almaiman, S. (2023). Analyzing the Saudi vision 2030: A critical examination of strategic planning and implementation for long-term goals. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4510404>
- Alo, R. (2025). Numerical literacy orientation and mathematical problem-solving skills among senior high school students. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educational Technologies, Psychology, and Social Sciences*, 1(2), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.70847/628900>
- Alsharija, M., & Watters, J. (2020). Secondary school principals as change agents in Kuwait: Principals' perspectives. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 49(6), 883–903. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143220925090>
- Berkovich, I., & Eyal, O. (2020). Principals' emotional support of teachers and teachers' occupational identity. *A Model of Emotional Leadership in Schools*, 79–97. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429344442-8>
- Bradbury, S. (2023). The role of community-based projects in enhancing student learning in a planning curriculum. *Routledge Handbook of University-Community Partnerships in Planning Education*, 158–174. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003347873-14>
- Brondolo, E. (2021). Theory of the problem: Understanding research designs. *Psychology Research Methods*, 171–205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-815680-3.00008-6>
- Bylkova, S. (2021). Role of the university socio-cultural environment in formation of students' emotional intelligence. *European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 1359–1366. <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2021.05.02.173>
- Costa, K.F. (2025). School management and organizational climate: How strategic leadership impacts educational community performance. *Brazilian Journal of Development*, 11(12), e84341. <https://doi.org/10.34117/bjdv11n12-023>
- Diquito, T. (2025). Basic education curriculum under the newly implemented K to 10 (MATATAG) curriculum in the Philippines: The case of science education. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5078756>
- Fuentes, M. (2025). Teacher experiences, challenges, and support needs in the implementation of the Philippine MATATAG curriculum: An integrative literature review. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 3(12), 167–179. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2025.716>
- Irby, B. (2023). Enhancing leadership instructional practices in turnaround schools using longitudinal external root cause analyses. *Proceedings of the 2023 AERA Annual Meeting*. <https://doi.org/10.3102/2018194>
- Kazi, M. (2023). Can teacher collaboration and school context be the compass for improving teaching practices and student outcomes? The importance of instructional leadership. *AERA 2023*. <https://doi.org/10.3102/ip.23.2010567>
- Kilag, O. (2024). Character and competence: The values education in the MATATAG curriculum. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4859338>
- Lagura, R.M., & Bulay, M. (2025). Enhancing students' engagement and conceptual understanding on select biological concepts in an interactive learning management system. *2025 14th International Conference on Educational and Information Technology (ICEIT)*, 273–280. <https://doi.org/10.1109/iceit64364.2025.10975885>
- Lee, C. (2023). School context, school leaders' data-informed decision making, and student achievement: Evidence from Florida. *Proceedings of the 2023 AERA Annual Meeting*. <https://doi.org/10.3102/2018184>
- Lewis, H., Campbell, S.-A., Shaffer, S., & Altunel, V. (2025). The role of assistant principals in fostering teacher collaboration and professional growth. *Holistic Approaches to Teacher Development*, 121–146. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3373-0472-4.ch006>
- Liu, J., Hill, H., & Demszky, D. (2024). Improving teachers equitable mathematics instruction through integrating automated feedback and coaching: A randomized controlled trial. *AEA Randomized Controlled Trials*. <https://doi.org/10.1257/rct.14383>
- Merano, E. (2025). Early childhood curriculum innovation: Balancing play-based learning with foundational literacy and numeracy. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, IX(IX), 7683–7703. <https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2025.909000628>
- Muhia, J. (2021). Influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Njoro District, Nakuru County. *Edith Cowan Journal of Human Resource and Leadership*, 1(1), 1–10.
- Nallonar, A. R. (2026). Learners' critical thinking skill and problem-solving competence. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2026.v08i01.67542>
- Noordan, M.N., & Md. Yunus, M. (2022). Using digital comprehension to improve reading comprehension skills among young learners. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped.v11-i2/13208>
- Pratiwi, N.K., & Bayu, G.W. (2024). Augmented reality-based comic media: A Metacognitive approach to enhance cultural literacy and reading engagement in elementary education. *International Journal of Elementary Education*, 8(3), 536–546. <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijee.v8i3.89796>
- Salvalda, R. (2026). School heads' managerial capability, adaptability, and challenges in implementing educational reforms. *International Journal on Science and Technology*, 17(1). <https://doi.org/10.71097/ijstat.v17.i1.9936>
- Silcox, S., & MacNeill, N. (2021). Moral leadership guiding school change and vision setting. *Leading School Renewal*, 44–62. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003139935-4>
- Vanlommel, K., & Steeno, K. (2025). Navigating tensions in processes of school improvement: Strategic versus defensive responses among teachers and leaders. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 36(4), 556–572. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2025.2544016>
- Westover, J. (2024). Who should be promoted to management? Developing promotion criteria to ensure organizational success. *Human Capital Leadership Review*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.70175/hclreview.2020.14.2.4>
- Zhai, X., Huang, F., & Tian, X. (2025). The role of country-level human capital in the high-performance work systems and organizational performance association: A meta-analysis. *Human Resource Management Review*, 35(1), 101057. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2024.101057>