

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of School Heads in Shared Governance: The Role of Demographic Variates

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Abstract: - Successful school leadership contributes to improving the quality of teaching, accountability and the overall achievement of schools. Grounded in Distributed Leadership Theory, this study examined whether the demographic characteristics of fifty-six public school principals in Catbalogan City relate to their comprehension, viewpoints and actions regarding governance. A quantitative method was utilized, with data analyzed using Spearman's rho, Kendall's Tau and Cramer's V statistics. Most variables, such as gender, educational attainment, and tenure, showed no associations with the KAP aspects. However, age (p-value = 0.042) and marital status were linked to participation, communication, and building trust. The present position was correlated with frameworks (p-value = 0.002), participation (p-value = 0.001), and continuous improvement (p-value = 0.028). Results indicate that shared governance is shaped significantly by leadership principles and the culture within schools more than by demographic characteristics, recommending that upcoming research involve a broader range of participants and employ mixed methodologies.

Key-Words: - School heads, demographics, knowledge, attitudes, practices, shared governance

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1 Introduction

Within this framework, shared governance has emerged as a leadership strategy that emphasizes inclusiveness, active engagement, and responsibility, among administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the wider community [1]. In the Philippines, this framework has gained endorsement through DepEd Order No. 26 S. 2022 Which created School Governance Councils to guarantee that diverse stakeholders are genuinely involved in decision-making and the management of schools. These policy guidelines highlight the significance of cooperation between school administrators and teachers in tackling the growing complexities within the education system [2].

The success of governance, however, depends on the knowledge, attitudes and behaviors (KAP) of the people actively involved in school leadership. Existing studies suggest that leadership effectiveness is strongly shaped by understanding governance

structures [3] openness to inclusive practices [4], and the ability to implement collaborative approaches [5]. Despite existing findings, research is still scarce on how the demographic profiles of school heads and teachers relate to their knowledge, attitudes, and practices concerning shared governance.

Less attention, however, has been directed toward examining how demographic characteristics influence the way school heads and teachers engage in shared governance. Variables like age, sex, educational background, years of service, and professional training can influence how individuals view and carry out leadership and decision-making. [6]. Often seasoned leaders might depend on tried-and-true methods, whereas those with degrees or more up-to-date training may bring fresh viewpoints. Educators, due to their involvement with classroom environments, provide important perspectives on the practical application of governance decisions. Grasping these interactions

gives an understanding of the execution of shared governance within schools [7].

In this setting, the research investigates the connection between the traits of school leaders and teachers and their understanding, perspectives, and behaviors concerning shared governance. It centers on six aspects: formal frameworks and procedures, involvement and participation, transparent communication and teamwork trust and relationships, ongoing assessment and enhancement and functional effectiveness. The findings aim to offer proof that can aid in creating leadership initiatives inform education policy and enhance stakeholder involvement in the education framework.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Distributed Leadership Theory

This research is based on Distributed Leadership Theory, first introduced by Gronn (2000) and later expanded by Spillane (2005). The theory posits that leadership does not reside in one person alone but is a shared process where duties are spread among members of an organization. Leadership is dispersed among participants, such as teachers, administrators, staff and students, enabling diverse expertise and viewpoints to shape decision-making and problem-solving [8], [9].

Within the setting, distributed leadership provides a participatory style of management. It emphasizes teamwork, engaging parties in decision processes and fostering inclusiveness when tackling institutional issues. Educators and school administrators are not just executors of directives. Play an integral role in developing school programs. Parents and students as stakeholders also join in conversations and debates, guaranteeing that choices represent the interests and well-being of the students. This comprehensive strategy promotes responsibility, enhances motivation and nurtures a feeling of ownership across the entire school community [8].

In the context of governance, the distributed leadership model clarifies how demographic traits of school leaders and educators, including their experience, qualifications and educational levels, can influence their understanding, perceptions and behaviors in collaborative leadership. It highlights that successful governance depends not on the power of one leader but arises from the joint capacity of all participants to engage, cooperate and distribute leadership roles.

Consequently, distributed leadership offers the appropriate framework for this research as it closely

corresponds with the concepts of shared governance and directs the analysis of the ways school heads and teachers engage in cooperative frameworks and procedures that foster school enhancement and active participation of stakeholders.

2.2 School Heads' Profile Variates and their Knowledge along Shared Governance

Studies indicate that characteristics of school heads, such as age, sex, educational attainment, years of service, and training attended, are significantly linked to their knowledge of shared governance. Age and sex influence leadership orientation, as generational perspectives and gender roles often affect decision-making styles and collaborative practices [10]. Educational attainment provides school leaders with the theoretical grounding and technical preparation necessary to establish transparent structures and participatory processes. Advanced education strengthens leaders' ability to design accountable systems [11], [12], while formal exposure to governance structures, such as committees and councils, enhances the practice of distributed leadership [13].

Length of service and professional training further contribute to school heads' governance knowledge. Leaders with longer years in service tend to demonstrate stronger organizational commitment and adaptability, which are essential in balancing authority with shared decision-making [14]. Accumulated experience also shapes responsiveness to school-community needs [15]. Moreover, continuous training develops competencies in communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution [16], [17] while inadequate preparation often results in reliance on hierarchical governance and limited stakeholder engagement [18]. Taken together, these findings indicate that school heads' profiles significantly shape their capacity to apply the principles of shared governance in fostering inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between school heads' profile variables (age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, length of service, current position) and their knowledge of shared governance.

2.3 School Heads' Profile Variates and their Attitude Along Shared Governance

Studies note that those with higher educational qualifications and broader professional exposure tend to adopt more positive and participatory attitudes toward decision-making, while longer years of service foster adaptability, patience, and stronger

organizational commitment in managing school-community dynamics [19].

Professional training likewise enhances openness to collaboration, as it equips leaders with skills in communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork, thereby encouraging more favorable attitudes toward inclusiveness and stakeholder engagement [20].

On the other hand, limited preparation and continued reliance on hierarchical structures are often associated with less receptive attitudes toward shared governance, resulting in weaker collaboration and restricted stakeholder involvement [21].

These findings highlight that school heads' profiles not only shape their knowledge but also determine their attitudes toward implementing shared governance in schools.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between school heads' profile variables (age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, length of service, current position) and their attitude toward shared governance

2.4 School Heads' Profile Variates and Their Practices Along Shared Governance

School heads' practices of shared governance are closely associated with their profile variables such as age, sex, educational attainment, length of service, and training attended.

Leaders with higher educational qualifications and professional preparation are more capable of instituting transparent processes, collaborative councils, and participatory mechanisms that align with inclusive governance models [22].

Longer years of service foster the ability to balance administrative authority with stakeholder participation, as experience strengthens adaptability and organizational commitment [3].

Training attended also plays a significant role, as capacity-building programs provide school heads with practical skills in communication, conflict management, and distributed leadership, which translate into consistent practices of consultation, consensus-building, and accountability [1].

Conversely, limited education, training, or reliance on hierarchical models often results in less participatory governance practices, leading to restricted involvement of teachers, parents, and students [23].

Literature underscores that school heads' profile variates strongly and shape the extent and quality of their practices along shared governance.

H₃: There is a significant relationship between school heads' profile variables (age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, length of service, and current position) and their practices along shared governance.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study, illustrating the hypothesized relationships between the respondents' demographic characteristics (age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, length of service, and current position) and their levels of knowledge, attitude, and practices (KAP).

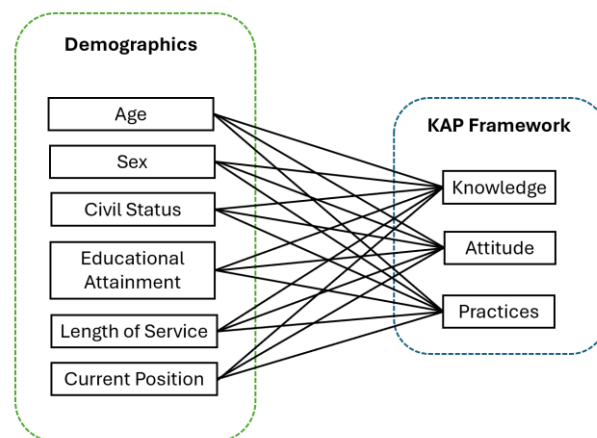


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: created by the authors

3 Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between school heads' demographic characteristics, including age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, length of service, and current position, and their knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) regarding shared governance.

The participants consisted of fifty-six (56) public school heads from the Division of Catbalogan City, Samar, who were selected through complete enumeration to ensure full representation. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to present the respondents' profiles and their KAP of shared governance.

To examine the relationships between demographic variables and KAP, inferential statistics such as Spearman's rho, Kendall's Tau, and Cramer's V were applied. The research conformed rigorously to guidelines, which involved securing informed consent, guaranteeing voluntary involvement and preserving the confidentiality of all participants.

4 Results and Discussions

4.1 Profile Variates

The demographic characteristics of the school head respondents are summarized in Table 1 (Appendix A). The results indicate a varied yet evenly distributed profile across age, gender, marital status, educational background, years of service, and current role.

The mean age of 48.65 years suggests that the majority of respondents are in their 40s to early 50s, indicating a leadership cohort with significant professional expertise and maturity.

The gender split is almost even, which corresponds with the inclusivity highlighted in the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (DepEd, 2020).

The majority of participants are married (78.43%), which could imply stability and a deep bond with the community in their leadership positions.

Table 2 (Appendix B) additionally shows the breakdown of the respondents' qualifications, indicating that most possess higher academic credentials. The majority have earned Master's degrees.

Completed doctoral coursework, demonstrating the Department of Education's focus on ongoing professional development. An average tenure of 22 years underscores their considerable experience, which is a significant benefit in managing and making decisions within schools. Leadership positions vary, with representation across different ranks, though Head Teacher I, Principal III, and Head Teacher VI emerge as the most common, reflecting a blend of middle and senior leadership within schools.

4.2 Relationship between the School Heads' Profile Variates and their Knowledge along Shared Governance

The results in Table 3 (Appendix C) show that sex, educational attainment, and length of service do not significantly influence school heads' knowledge of shared governance, as all related p-values are not significant.

This suggests that these demographic factors have little effect on how school leaders understand governance practices. However, age has a significant relationship with operational efficiency and resource allocation ($p = .042$), indicating that maturity contributes to more effective management of school operations [24]. Civil status is significantly related to teacher participation and engagement ($p = .011$), open communication and collaboration ($p = .027$),

and building trust and rapport ($p = .030$), implying that marital and family backgrounds may shape how school heads foster collaboration and rapport within their schools [4].

Current position also shows significant relationships with formal structure and processes ($p = .002$), teacher participation and engagement ($p = .001$), and continuous evaluation and improvement ($p = .028$), highlighting the influence of positional authority in formal governance functions [22], [25].

While this research did not explicitly assess culture, leadership philosophy, or institutional backing, the few significant links found among most demographic factors imply that understanding of shared governance is not solely influenced by individual traits.

This underscores the need to investigate demographic elements in upcoming studies, including institutional support mechanisms, cooperative school frameworks, and wider organizational circumstances, which might affect how school leaders perceive and implement shared governance.

4.3 Relationship between the School Heads' Profile Variates and their Attitude toward Shared Governance

The analysis of the data in Table 4 (Appendix D) reveals that for Formal Structure and Processes, only civil status shows a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .730$, $p = .051$), suggesting that school heads with a particular civil status are more inclined toward positive attitudes regarding formal structures and processes.

For Teacher Participation and Engagement (TP&E), no significant relationships are observed with any of the profile variables, and similarly, attitudes toward Continuous Evaluation and Improvement (CE&I) show no significant associations. In terms of Operational Efficiency and Resource Allocation (OPERA), none of the profile variates exhibit statistically significant correlations, although age trends toward a negative correlation ($r = -.413$, $p = .082$), which falls short of the significance threshold.

The general absence of strong correlations indicates that positive attitudes toward shared governance dimensions such as formal structures, participation, evaluation, and resource allocation are not confined to any specific demographic or professional characteristic of school heads [26].

These results show that attitudes toward shared governance do not vary substantially across demographic groups. Since demographic factors did

not exhibit strong associations with attitude dimensions, future studies may explore other potential influences, such as school climate, institutional policies, or leadership training, that were not included in the present analysis [16].

The single significant relationship with civil status suggests that personal or social contexts may subtly influence how leaders perceive governance frameworks, yet the broader evidence underscores that attitudes can be strengthened by actively engaging teachers, parents, and community members in decision-making [27].

This reinforces the idea that the sustainability of shared governance depends less on the profiles of school leaders and more on inclusive leadership practices and shared values that nurture collective responsibility for school improvement [28].

4.4 Relationship between the School Heads' Profile Variates and their Practices along Shared Governance

Table 5 (Appendix E) indicates that none of the school heads' demographic variables, including Age, Sex, Civil Status, Educational Attainment, Length of Service, and Current Position, were significantly correlated with Teacher Participation and Engagement (TP&E) or Operational Efficiency and Resource Allocation (OPERA) at the 0.05 significance level.

Correlation coefficients ranged from .107 to .557 for TP&E and from -.353 to .888 for OPERA, with all p-values above .05. This finding aligns with earlier research indicating that leadership effectiveness is often not dependent on demographic factors but rather on organizational capacity and support systems [29].

However, civil status was found to have significant relationships with Teacher Participation & Engagement ($p = 0.011$), Open Communication & Collaboration ($p = 0.027$), and Building Trust and Rapport ($p = 0.030$), suggesting that personal circumstances may subtly shape leadership approaches to collaboration, as also noted by studies emphasizing the influence of social and relational contexts in school leadership [28].

Likewise, the current position revealed significant associations with Formal Structure & Processes ($p = 0.002$), Teacher Participation & Engagement ($p = 0.001$), and Continuous Evaluation & Improvement ($p = 0.028$), supporting the view that leadership roles and positional authority can enhance the ability to establish formal systems and promote teacher involvement [13].

The overall pattern of non-significant findings indicates that demographic factors do not

consistently predict shared governance practices. This points to the possibility that other variables not included in this study—such as organizational systems, collaborative routines, or school-level support mechanisms—may play a stronger role in shaping governance practices, and these merit examination in future research [30].

5 Practical Implications

The results of this research carry consequences for educational policies, leadership approaches, and capacity development programs within the Philippine education system. The weak correlations between demographic variables, like age, gender, level of education, and years of experience, and school leaders' understanding, perspectives and behaviors regarding shared governance imply that collaborative leadership is not inherently influenced by individual traits.

This highlights the necessity for inclusive training initiatives that provide every school leader with competencies in teamwork, openness and resource administration irrespective of their demographic backgrounds. Simultaneously, the notable influence of status on elements, like teacher engagement, transparent dialogue and trust formation, indicates that social and individual circumstances can subtly influence leadership approaches.

This highlights the importance of including socio- intelligence, work-life balance and interpersonal abilities in leadership training since these factors improve relational effectiveness and promote deeper community involvement.

Moreover, the connection between roles and governance aspects like formal frameworks, teacher involvement and ongoing enhancement underscores the need for leadership development tailored to specific roles. Senior school administrators might need training in system architecture and policy execution, while mid-level leaders would gain more from education focused on teacher participation, collaborative decision processes and feedback systems. However, the general absence of indicators for governance approaches emphasizes the key importance of organizational culture, leadership values and institutional backing.

This discovery highlights the necessity of enhancing school-based structures and cooperative frameworks like School Governance Councils, which formalize leadership and promote responsibility among every stakeholder.

At the policy level, the results advocate for advancing frameworks like DepEd Order No. 26 S.

2022 by guaranteeing that governance systems are not just required but adequately funded and reinforced. Embedding professional growth, encouraging inclusive involvement and formalizing cooperative approaches can contribute to making the durability of shared governance depend less on the traits of individual leaders and more on systemic and cultural elements that encourage stakeholder participation and joint accountability, for enhancing schools.

6 Conclusions

This research investigated the relationship between the characteristics of school leaders and their understanding, perspectives and implementation of shared governance. The results indicated that the majority of factors, such as age, gender, level of education and length of service, did not have a significant correlation with the six evaluated governance aspects.

Nonetheless, marital status and present role exhibited connections, with particular elements, including teacher involvement, communication, trust establishment and formal frameworks.

These findings indicate that although individual and role-related elements might affect some facets of leadership, the general success of shared governance is significantly determined by organizational culture, decentralized leadership approaches, and institutional support systems.

The consequences are dual. Initially, leadership training must emphasize uniform and inclusive professional growth of presumptions about demographic benefits. Secondly, education policies need to concentrate on facilitators, such as cooperative frameworks, School Governance Councils and continuous capacity-enhancement programs.

In the end the durability of shared governance relies not on the traits of single leaders but on cultivating participatory mechanisms, joint responsibility and a culture of teamwork that enables every stakeholder to contribute to school advancement.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

During the refinement of this manuscript, the authors utilized ChatGPT to enhance sentence structure, paragraph coherence, and grammar. The authors thoroughly reviewed and edited all content and take full responsibility for the final version of the publication.

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The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

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Appendix A

Table 1: Age and Sex Distribution of the School Head-Respondents

Age	No. of Male	Percent	No. of Female	Percent	Total	Percent
54 - 59	1	14.3	2	28.6	3	21.4
48 - 53	4	57.1	1	14.3	5	35.7
42 - 47	0	0.0	2	28.6	2	14.3
36 - 41	2	28.6	2	28.6	4	28.6
Total	7	100.0	7	100.0	14	100.0
Mean	46.7	-	47.43	-	47.1	-
SD	6.2	-	6.75	-	6.24	-
Percent	50.0	-	50.0	-	100.0	-

Source: created by the authors

Appendix B

Table 2: Civil Status, Educational Attainment, Length of Service, and Current Position Distribution of the School Head Respondents

Profile	No. of School Heads	Percent
<i>Civil Status</i>	Separated	0
	Divorced	9.8
	Married	78.43
	Single	11.76
	Total	100
<i>Educational Attainment</i>	Doctoral Degree	5.88
	with Doctoral Unit	29.41
	Master's Degree	45.1
	with Master's Degree units	19.61
	Total	100
<i>Length of Service</i>	26 - 32	29.41
	19- 25	39.22
	18 Dec	23.53
	11 Apr	7.84
	Total	100
	Mean	-
	SD	-
<i>Current Position</i>	Principal IV	9.8
	Principal III	13.73
	Principal II	1.96
	Principal I	9.8
	Head Teacher VI	13.73
	Head Teacher V	0
	Head Teacher IV	3.92
	Head Teacher III	9.8
	Head Teacher II	9.8
	Head Teacher I	15.69
	Teacher-In-Charge	11.76
	Total	100

Source: created by the authors

Appendix C

Table 3: Relationship between the School Heads' Profile Variates and their Knowledge along Shared Governance

Profile	FS &P		TP&E		OC&C		BT&R		CE&I		OP&RA	
	ρ -value	p-value	ρ -value	p-value	ρ -value	p-value	ρ -value	p-value	ρ -value	p-value	ρ -value	p-value
Age	-.080 ^{ns}	.576	.255 ^{ns}	.071	-.126 ^{ns}	.379	.154 ^{ns}	.280	.011 ^{ns}	.941	-.285 ^s	.042
Sex	.096 ^{ns}	.952	.321 ^{ns}	.262	.338 ^{ns}	.325	.374 ^{ns}	.130	.274 ^{ns}	.428	.311 ^{ns}	.176
Civil Status	.269 ^{ns}	.289	.422 ^s	.011	.446 ^s	.027	.408 ^s	.030	.271 ^{ns}	.483	.235 ^{ns}	.466
Educ. Attainment	.211 ^{ns}	.137	.142 ^{ns}	.321	-.166 ^{ns}	.246	-.198 ^{ns}	.163	.245 ^{ns}	.082	-.027 ^{ns}	.852
Length Of Service	.068 ^{ns}	.640	-.004 ^{ns}	.978	-.056 ^{ns}	.699	.053 ^{ns}	.714	.109 ^{ns}	.453	-.134 ^{ns}	.354
Current Position	.455 ^s	.002	.513 ^s	.001	.334 ^{ns}	.320	.280 ^{ns}	.436	.410 ^s	.028	.21 ^{ns1}	.601

Legend:

1 – Spearman Rho; 2- Carmer's V; s – significant; ns-not significant
Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

FS&P – Formal Structure & Processes

TP&E – Teacher Participation & Engagement

OC&C – Open Communication & Collaboration

BT&R – Building Trust & Rapport

CE&I – Continuous Evaluation & Improvement

OP&RA –Operational Efficiency & Resource Allocation

Source: created by the authors

Appendix D

Table 4: Relationship Between School Heads' Profile Variates and their Attitude Along Shared Governance

Profile	FS&P		TP&E		CEI		OPERA	
	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Correlation Coefficient	p-value
Age	.239 ^{ns}	.314	.177 ^{ns}	.455	.384 ^{ns}	.106	-.413 ^{ns}	.082
Sex	.408 ^{ns}	.127	.277 ^{ns}	.299	.277 ^{ns}	.317	.009 ^{ns}	.998
Civil Status	.730 ^s	.051	.372 ^{ns}	.585	.372 ^{ns}	.585	.707 ^{ns}	.502
Educ Attainment	.144 ^{ns}	.570	-.163 ^{ns}	.520	-.163 ^{ns}	.520	-.192 ^{ns}	.449
Length of Service	.237 ^{ns}	.315	.322 ^{ns}	.172	.205 ^{ns}	.385	-.258 ^{ns}	.273
Current Position	.520 ^{ns}	.875	1.00 ^{ns}	.082	.439 ^{ns}	.952	.750 ^{ns}	.449

Legend:

Due to **OC&C**, and **BT&R** are constant, no statistics are computed; 2 - Cramer's V; s - significant; ns-not significant

Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

FS&P – Formal Structure & Processes

TP&E – Teacher Participation & Engagement

OC&C – Open Communication & Collaboration

BT&R – Building Trust & Rapport

CEI – Continuous Evaluation & Improvement

OPERA -Operational Efficiency & Resource Allocation

Source: created by the authors

Appendix E

Table 5: Relationship Between School Heads' Profile Variates and their Attitude Along Shared Governance

	<i>TP&E</i>			<i>OPERA</i>		
	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Evaluation	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Evaluation
Age ¹	.252	.278	ns	-.353	.138	ns
Sex ²	.522	.148	ns	.174	.515	ns
Civil Status ²	.557	.192	ns	.628	.158	ns
Educ Attainment ²	.299	.229	ns	.185	.467	ns
Length of Services	.107	.643	ns	-.147	.533	ns
Current Position ¹	.494	.148	ns	.888	.200	ns

***Due to FS&P, OC&C, BT&R, and CEI are constant, no statistics are computed**

1 – Kendall's Tau; 2- Carmer's V; s – significant; ns-not significant

Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

FS&P – Formal Structure & Processes

TP&E – Teacher Participation & Engagement

OC&C – Open Communication & Collaboration

BT&R – Building Trust & Rapport

CEI – Continuous Evaluation & Improvement

OPERA -Operational Efficiency & Resource Allocation

Source: created by the authors