Leadership, Flexibility, and Adaptability Skills as the Driving Force Behind School Heads' Work Performance Through Structural Equation Modeling

Mary Jane C. Laurel

PhD, Teacher III, Congressman Manuel M. Garcia Elementary School, Davao City Division, Davao City, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

The widespread issue of poor work performance among school heads greatly impeded effective educational leadership and administration and must be addressed immediately. The main objective of this study was to determine the best-fit model of work performance of the school heads in the Davao Region by examining the dimensions of leadership, flexibility, and adaptability skills as potential factors. Using an adapted survey questionnaire, the researcher gathered data from 400 public school teachers selected through quota sampling. Data were analyzed using the AMOS statistical tool. Result showed that A best-fit model was derived with Model 1, which met the standard criteria for model fitting as indicated by the following indices: CMIN/DF (1.128), P-VALUE (0.294), NFI (0.994), TLI (0.999), CFI (0.999), GFI (0.986), RMSEA (0.018), and P-CLOSE (0.981), showing the significant influence of the predictive variables on criterion variable. Future researcher may be conducted to further validate the Complexity Leadership Theory.

Keywords: Educational Management, Leadership Skills, Flexibility, Adaptability, Work Performance

INTRODUCTION

The work performance of school heads is a critical concern in education administration globally. Subpar performance among these key educational leaders has been a persistent issue, impacting student achievement and school effectiveness (Adams & Brown, 2021; Bosserman et al., 2019; Leithwood et al., 2016; Robinson et al., 2020). This issue is not confined to a single context, with evidence of underperformance reported across diverse educational systems.

Studies have highlighted the prevalence of this challenge in various countries. For instance, research indicates significant proportions of school heads struggling to meet performance standards in Nigeria (Adewale, 2021; Ojo & Oladipo, 2023), Thailand (Bunyaviroch, 2022), and India (Kumar, 2023; Mitra & Pradhan, 2019). These struggles often correlate with negative consequences for student learning outcomes.

Within the Philippine context, Manalang and Dayag (2022) have identified a similar trend of underperforming school heads, with Castro et al. (2021) estimating that 12% to 15% of Filipino school heads fall short of expectations. This, in turn, can negatively impact student achievement (Pasuquin & Almario, 2018). Focusing specifically on Davao, Garcia (2020) noted a substantial proportion of school heads exhibiting subpar performance, hindering educational progress. Data from the Department of Education (2016) further reveals that 35% of Davao school heads receive less than satisfactory annual evaluations, contributing to lower student achievement (Reyes et al., 2022) and increased teacher turnover (Bautista, 2019). Potential contributing factors include insufficient training (Dela Cruz, 2018), lack of incentives (Ramirez, 2023), and rising administrative burdens (Santiago, 2024).

The consequences of poor school head performance are far-reaching. Schools led by underperforming principals often experience lower student achievement (Reyes et al., 2022), academic stagnation, and a compromised

learning environment. Furthermore, high teacher turnover rates are frequently linked to ineffective school leadership (Bautista, 2019), disrupting classroom stability and negatively impacting the quality of education students receive (Villanueva & Santos, 2018).

This study addresses the critical need for more comprehensive research on school head performance in basic education, particularly in Davao. By investigating the underlying causes of this persistent challenge, this research aims to contribute to the development of targeted interventions and support systems to enhance school leadership and ultimately improve student outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the structural model of the work performance of the school heads by examining the dimensions of leadership, flexibility, flexibility, and adaptability skills as the driving force behind the school heads' work performance.Specifically, this study sought to:

1. To determine the levels of leadership of school heads as perceived by the respondents in terms of administrative skills, technical skills, personal skills, and social skills; flexibility of school heads as perceived by the respondents in terms of educational technology, changing cultural values, diverse workforce, and financial resources; adaptability skills of the school heads as perceived by the respondents in terms of Learning and innovation, communication and life and career; work performance of the school heads as perceived by the respondents in terms of authority, accountability and empowerment.

2. To determine the significance of the correlation between leadership, flexibility, adaptability skills, and the work performance of the school heads as perceived by the respondents.

3. To determine the significance of the individual and combined degree of influence of leadership, flexibility, adaptability skills, and the work performance of the school heads.

4. To identify the best-fit model that explains the work performance of the school heads.

Hypotheses

This research study tested the following null hypothesis tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1. There is no significant relationship between leadership, flexibility, and adaptability skills and the work performance of school heads in basic education.

Ho2. There is no combined significant influence of leadership, flexibility, and adaptability skills on the work performance of school heads in basic education

Ho3. There is no best-fit model that explains the work performance of the school heads in basic education.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

This study investigates the relationship between leadership skills, flexibility, adaptability, and work performance of school heads in basic education, grounded in several key leadership and organizational theories. Five hypothesized models were developed to explore these relationships.

Model 1,based on Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) provides the overarching framework, emphasizing the importance of leadership in navigating complex adaptive systems (CAS). CLT posits that effective leadership in CAS requires fostering self-organization and embracing flexible approaches to address dynamic challenges. The study's first hypothesized model aligns with CLT, positioning leadership skills, flexibility, and adaptability as exogenous variables influencing work performance (the endogenous variable).

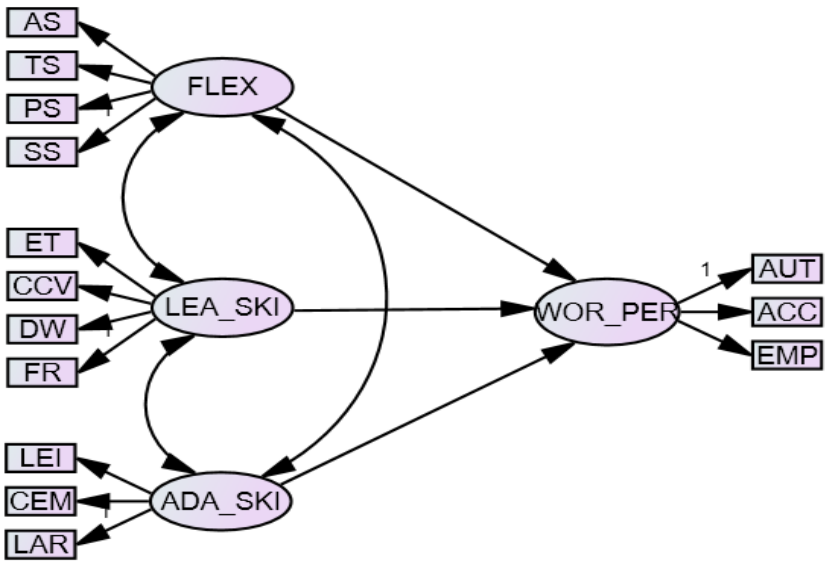

Figure 1. Hypothesized Model 1. A Model Showing the Interrelationships between Flexibility, Leadership skills and Adaptability skills and their Causal Relationship on Work Performance of the school heads in basic education

Model 2 draws upon Adaptive Leadership Theory (ALT) (Heifetz, 1994), viewing leadership as a process of mobilizing individuals to tackle complex problems collaboratively. ALT underscores the leader's role in managing stress during transitions, promoting diverse perspectives, and fostering shared ownership. This model, supported by Holland's (1995) work on integrated leadership and complexity theory, emphasizes learning, creativity, and shared responsibility in dynamic environments. ALT, along with ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and resilience theory (Hamel & Välikangas, 2003), frames leadership as an adaptive system responding to evolving educational demands.

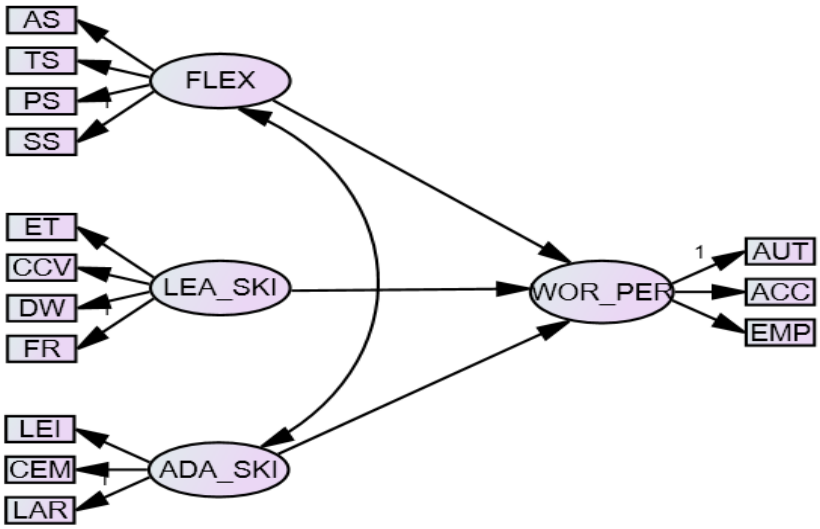

Figure 2. Hypothesized Model 2. A Model Showing the Interrelationships between Flexibility and Adaptability Skills and their Causal Relationships on Work Performance of the School Heads.

Model 3, utilizing Contingency theory (Fiedler, 1964) , proposing that leadership effectiveness hinges on matching leadership style to situational demands. This model emphasizes the need for flexibility and adaptability in responding to organizational challenges and improving work performance. It also incorporates elements of path-goal theory (House, 1971), highlighting the leader's role in setting goals and adapting strategies to changing circumstances.

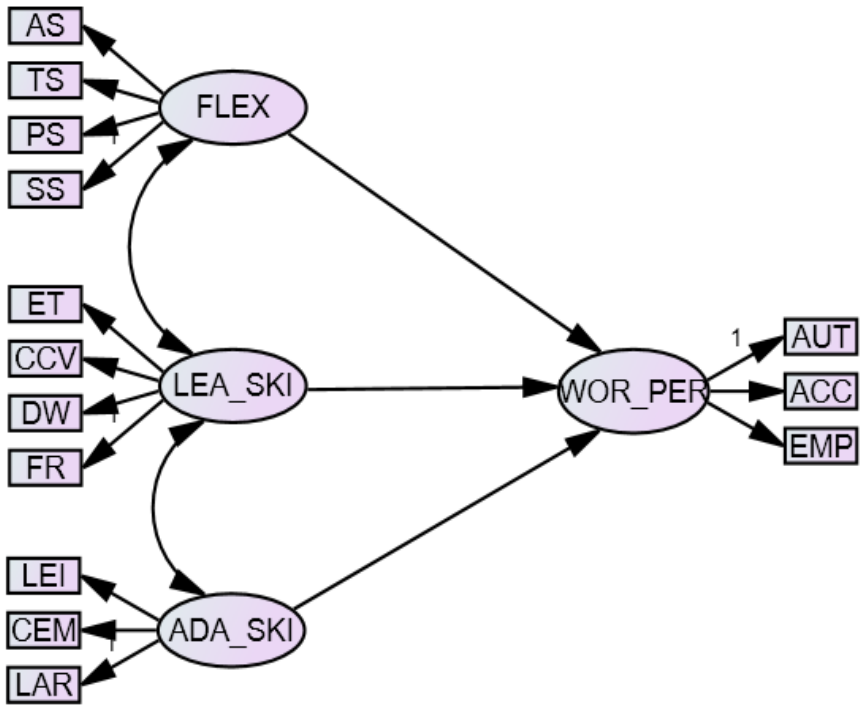

Figure 3. Hypothesized Model 3. A Model Showing the Interrelationships between Flexibility, Leadership Skills, and Adaptability Skills and Its Causal Relationship on Work Performance of the School Heads.

Model 4, utilizes Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT) (Bandura, 1986), emphasizing the reciprocal interplay between behavior, context, and individual capabilities. SCLT suggests that leadership and adaptability skills significantly impact school head performance. This model highlights the importance of self-efficacy, with adaptive leaders driving performance through observation and refinement, ultimately contributing to organizational success and improved student outcomes.

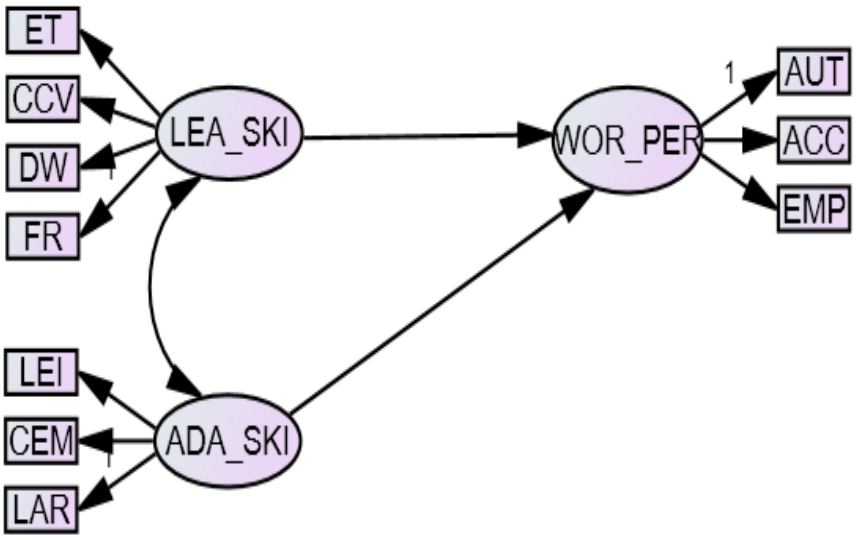

Figure 4. Hypothesized Model 4. A Model Showing the Interrelationships of Leadership Skills of the School Heads and Adaptability Skills towards Work Performance towards Work Performance of the School Heads.

Finally, Model 5 is grounded in resource-based theory (RBV) (Barney, 1991; Wright, 1991), which emphasizes leveraging internal resources for competitive advantage. This model posits that flexibility and adaptability skills serve as valuable internal resources that school heads can utilize to enhance work performance by efficiently allocating and utilizing available resources.

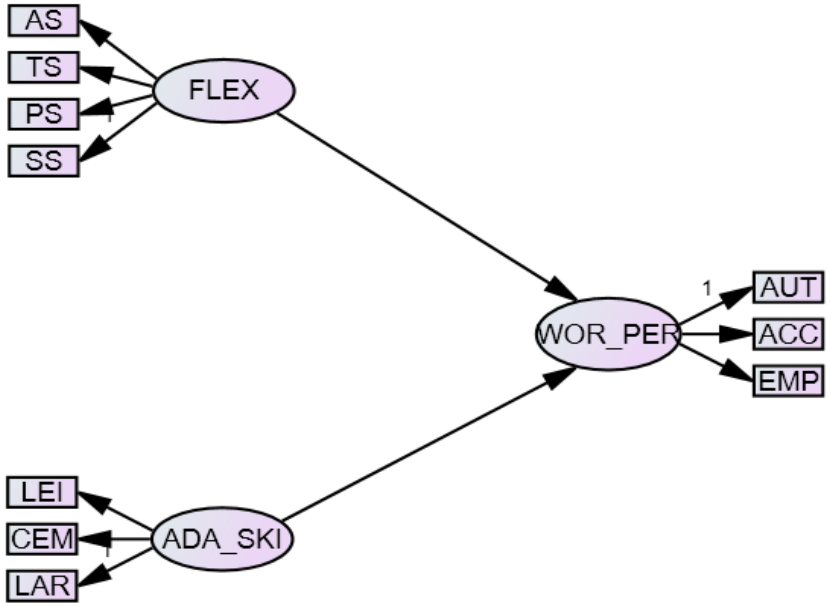

Figure 5. Hypothesized Model 5. A Model Showing Direct Relationships between Flexibility and Adaptability Skills on Work Performance of the School Heads.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This quantitative study employed a non-experimental, inferential correlational design, utilizing a multiple theory-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach (Howell, 2016). This design was chosen to move beyond simple correlations and explore potential causal relationships between exogenous (independent) and endogenous (dependent) variables (Hair et al., 2019). While initial descriptive correlation analyses were conducted to identify trends and patterns within the data (Katrakazas et al., 2020; Howell, 2016), SEM served as the primary analytical tool. This powerful statistical technique allowed for the examination of both observed and latent variables, enabling the quantification of direct and indirect effects and providing insights into the complex interplay of factors influencing the phenomenon under investigation (Hair et al., 2019).

Locale of the Study & Sample and Sampling Technique

This study was conducted in the Davao Region of the Philippines, specifically within six diverse divisions: Mati City, Davao City, Digos City, Panabo City, Tagum City, and the Island City of Samal. These divisions were selected for their varied urban and rural settings, accessibility, and representation of the region's educational landscape, which includes a mix of public and private schools and a rich cultural diversity (Appendix A).

The study's participants were 400 public elementary and secondary school teachers from the Davao Region, each with at least one year of teaching experience. This sample size was deemed sufficient for statistical power based on recommendations by Hair et al. (2019). Quota sampling was employed to ensure representation of key subgroups within the teacher population (Hayet & Westfall, 2020). While acknowledging the potential for bias inherent in quota sampling if quotas are inaccurately determined or selection within quotas is non-random, the researchers aimed to mitigate this risk through rigorous implementation. This method was chosen due to its feasibility and its ability to capture the diversity of the teacher population across relevant characteristics.

The study focused exclusively on public school teachers, regardless of their employment status (probationary, substitute, or permanent), provided they had served for at least one year. Participants were included irrespective of their designation (subject teacher, subject/area coordinator, or grade level coordinator) or educational attainment (BS, MS/MA, or EdD/Ph.D.). Only teachers with classroom instruction responsibilities were included; those in administrative positions without teaching loads were excluded.

Research Instruments

A survey questionnaire was developed to assess the relationships between the study's variables. The questionnaire's items were carefully selected to address the research questions, and all original indicators from the source instruments were retained to ensure comprehensive data collection. Appropriate citations were included for all borrowed materials. The instrument comprised four sections, measuring Leadership Skills of School Heads, Flexibility, Work Performance, and Adaptability Skills of Teachers.

The instrument underwent rigorous development and validation. It was reviewed by the researcher's advisor and a panel of experts, who assessed the clarity of instructions, language appropriateness, grammar, and overall effectiveness. The instrument received a validation rating of 4.41, indicating good quality (Appendix D). Reliability testing was also conducted, yielding high Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all four scales: Leadership Skills (0.978), Flexibility (0.973), Adaptability Skills (0.981), and Work Performance (0.989) (Appendix D). These values, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Taber, 2018), demonstrate strong internal consistency and reliability.

The questionnaire was adapted from existing instruments to ensure relevance to the specific context of the study. The Leadership Skills scale was adapted from Ghanem and Abu Awwad (2019) and comprised 30 items across four indicators: administrative, technical, personal, and social skills. The Flexibility and Adaptability Skills scales were adapted from Atena (2018), while the Work Performance scale was adapted from Lapuz and Pecajas (2022). Following adaptation, the questionnaire was contextualized to align with the local educational setting. The refined instrument was then reviewed by the research advisor and internal and external validators to ensure content validity and reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure and Data Analysis

This study investigated the relationship between school head leadership skills, flexibility, adaptability, and work performance of schools heads in six diverse divisions within the Davao Region, Philippines. A quantitative, non-experimental, correlational design was employed, utilizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze data collected from 400 public elementary and secondary school teachers. Adapted questionnaires, measuring leadership skills, flexibility, adaptability, and work performance, underwent rigorous validation and reliability testing. Data collection involved securing ethical approvals, obtaining informed consent, and administering questionnaires in person. Statistical analyses, including means, Pearson correlations, multiple regression, and SEM, were conducted to explore variable interrelationships and determine the best-fit model.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher recognized the need to follow ethical principles to ensure the study's integrity and credibility. Following the ethical guidelines established by the Department of Science and Technology (2007) and the Philippine Research Ethics Board (2022), the researcher pledged to preserve participants' rights and well-being. Public school teachers provided informed permission, ensuring voluntary involvement and the opportunity to withdraw. The study had little risk and provided significant benefits, including improved instructional understanding. The researcher maintained strong confidentiality, followed fairness and transparency rules, and created a research atmosphere conducive to participant well-being.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigated the influence of leadership skills, flexibility, and adaptability on the work performance of school heads in six DepEd divisions within the Davao Region. Data collected from 400 public elementary and secondary school teachers assessed these variables and their interrelationships. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to examine the direct and indirect effects of leadership skills, flexibility, and adaptability on work performance, aiming to identify the key drivers of effective school leadership. The study sought to determine how these skills contribute to school head performance and develop a model explaining this relationship.

Teachers perceived school heads in Davao City public schools as demonstrating very high levels of leadership skills (overall mean = 4.45), flexibility (4.50), adaptability (4.51), and work performance (4.58). While all dimensions within each variable were rated highly, some variations in perception were observed. For leadership skills, social and administrative skills had the highest mean (4.53), while technical skills were lowest (4.3). For flexibility, changing cultural values scored highest (4.52), and educational technology lowest (4.46). Regarding adaptability, life and career had the highest mean (4.56), and communication the lowest (4.45). Finally, for work performance, empowerment scored highest (4.60), and accountability lowest (4.55). Standard deviations generally indicated moderate response variation, suggesting a reasonable level of agreement among teachers, although some differences in perception existed within each dimension.

Table 1. Descriptive level Descriptive Levels of leadership skills, flexibility, adaptability skills and work performance of school heads as perceived by teachers

Variables	Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Leadership Skills	1.Administrative Skills	0.56	4.53	Very High
	2.Technical Skills	0.60	4.31	Very High
	3.Personal Skills	0.59	4.46	Very High
	4.Social Skills	0.58	4.53	Very High
Overall		**0.53**	**4.45**	**Very High**
	1.Educational Technology	0.63	4.46	Very High
Flexibility	2.Changing Cultural Values	0.59	4.52	Very High
	3.Diverse Workforce	0.61	4.51	Very High
	4.Financial resources	0.66	4.51	Very High
Overall		**0.55**	**4.50**	**Very High**
Adaptability Skills	1.Learning and Innovation; Workforce	0.59	4.53	Very High
	2.Communication	0.62	4.45	Very High
	3.Life and Career	0.58	4.56	Very High
Overall		**0.56**	**4.51**	**Very High**
Work Performance	1.Authority	0.57	4.58	Very High
	2.Accountability	0.58	4.55	Very High
	3.Empowerment	0.54	4.60	Very High
Overall		**0.53**	**4.58**	**Very High**

Teachers in the Davao Region hold very favorable perceptions of school head leadership skills, particularly in social and administrative domains, reflecting effective relationship-building and management (Valmores, 2021; Hall et al., 2020; Soroña & Quirap, 2020; Jimenez, 2022; Olasiman & Torreon, 2024). Personal skills, such as proactive listening, are also highly regarded (Kordestani, 2022; Tai, 2020; Lansing et al., 2023). While technical skills were rated lower, they still indicated competence, though the literature emphasizes adaptive leadership in navigating educational complexity (Karakose et al., 2024; Fullan et al., 2023; Bonini et al., 2024). School heads are also perceived as highly flexible, particularly in responding to cultural values, aligning with research emphasizing culturally responsive leadership (Khalifa, 2018; Duterte, 2024; The Wallace Foundation, 2023). While educational technology received a lower rating, it still signaled perceived flexibility (Karakose et al., 2024; Bass & Riggio, 2016; Fullan, 2018). Adaptability skills are also highly regarded, particularly in life and career management, reflecting resilience in dynamic educational environments (UNESCO, 2021). Communication,

while effective, was identified as an area for potential improvement (Scott, 2021; Lee et al., 2022; Stone & Zhang, 2021; Thompson & Richards, 2023; Kumar et al., 2024). Finally, teachers strongly recognize school head work performance, especially in empowerment, which is crucial for leadership effectiveness (Mestry, 2017; Spillane, 2020; Lim et al., 2021; Brown et al., 2022; Green & Thomas, 2024). Accountability, while viewed positively, has room for development.

Table 2. Table of Correlation

	Work Performance of School Heads			
	r	**p-value**	**Decision on H_0**	**Interpretation**
Leadership Skills	.785	.000	Reject	Significant
Flexibility	.819	.000	Reject	Significant
Adaptability Skills	.847	.000	Reject	Significant

Analysis (Appendix N) revealed significant relationships between school head leadership skills, flexibility, adaptability, and work performance ($p < .05$). Leadership skills correlated with work performance ($r = .785$, $p < .000$). Flexibility also showed a strong positive correlation with work performance ($r = .819$, $p < .000$). The strongest correlation was observed between adaptability skills and work performance ($r = .847$, $p < .000$). These results indicate that all three independent variables are significantly related to school head work performance.

This study found a significant relationship between school head leadership skills, flexibility, adaptability, and work performance. These skills are essential for effective school leadership. Resource-Based Theory (RBV) (Barney, 1991) provides a framework, suggesting that flexibility and adaptability are internal resources that enhance work performance (Harris, 2020; Chen et al., 2023). However, external constraints can limit flexibility (Hallinger, 2018; Evan et al., 2020). The study confirms the positive relationship between these skills and work performance. Strong leadership is linked to improved organizational performance (Hall & Liu, 2021; Hitt et al., 2019), though contextual factors influence leadership effectiveness (Gümüş et al., 2018; Hitt et al., 2019). Adaptability and flexibility enhance decision-making (Adams & Wang, 2022; du Plessis et al., 2024), but the leadership-performance link can be context-dependent (Chen et al., 2023; Vidyarthi et al., 2020) and influenced by resource availability (Gupta et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2024). Adaptive leadership facilitates problem-solving and improves the work environment (Park & Park, 2023; Nelson & Squires, 2017).

Table 3. Table of Degree of Influence

	Work Performance of School Heads						
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				
Independent Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
(Constant)	1.202	.143		8.410	.000		
Leadership Skills	.186	.050	.203	3.722	.000	Reject	Significant
Flexibility	.420	.047	.441	9.033	.000	Reject	Significant
Adaptability Skills	.146	.041	.181	3.576	.000	Reject	Significant

$R = .740$; $R^2 = .548$; F-value = 159.784; p-value = 0.000

Regression analysis revealed that flexibility was the strongest predictor of school head work performance ($\beta = .420$, $p < .000$), followed by leadership skills ($\beta = .186$) and adaptability skills ($\beta = .146$). The model explained

74% of the variance in work performance (R^2 = .740), with the remaining 26% attributed to other unmeasured factors. The resulting model was: WOR_PER = .186 LEA_SKI + .420 FLEX + .146 ADA_SKI + 1.202 (Appendix N). This indicates that work performance is positively influenced by all three variables, with flexibility exerting the greatest impact.

This study found that leadership, flexibility, and adaptability skills significantly influence school head work performance, with flexibility being the strongest predictor. These findings support Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT), which emphasizes the dynamic interplay of these skills for effective leadership in complex educational environments. The study underscores the importance of prioritizing school head development through targeted training programs and professional development initiatives that enhance these key skills (Arrieta & Ancho, 2020; Morales & Sapin, 2020; NASSP, 2021). While acknowledging the need for systemic reforms alongside leadership development (Beam et al., 2016; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), the study emphasizes that developing these competencies empowers school heads to navigate challenges and improve school performance (Bush, 2020; Alhosani et al., 2017; Leithwood, 2020). Effective leadership, characterized by flexibility and adaptability, is crucial for overcoming challenges and fostering innovation (Bush, 2018; Hallinger & Hammad, 2019), though a balance with strategic focus is necessary (Liu et al., 2020; Davis & Brown, 2020; Thompson & Lee, 2021). While leadership skills are important, external factors such as organizational resources and environment also play a crucial role in leadership effectiveness (Carter & Yang, 2022; Harvard Business Publishing, 2023; Baker & Davis, 2023).

Establishing the Best Structural Model

This study investigated the influence of leadership skills, flexibility, and adaptability on school head work performance by identifying the most suitable structural equation model (SEM). Five distinct model hypotheses were tested, each comprising a measurement model and a structural model. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices. The selected model, demonstrating strong and reliable fit, effectively captured the relationships between these key skills and work performance, providing robust support for the hypothesized connections and a credible explanation of school head effectiveness.

Best Fit model on Work Performance of School Heads

Table 4 presents the goodness-of-fit indices for the Structural Equation Model, assessing how well the hypothesized model fits the observed data. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to evaluate the fit of several structural models examining school heads work performance. The table includes key indices: Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom (CMIN/DF), p-value, Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Probability Close (P-CLOSE). Established criteria were used to determine model adequacy.

Table 4. Test of Best Fit Model on Work Performance of School Heads

Index	CMIN/DF	P-VALUE	NFI	TLI	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	P-CLOSE
Criterion	**<5**	**>0.05**	**>0.95**	**>0.95**	**>0.95**	**>0.95**	**<0.05**	**>0.05**
Model 1	1.128	0.294	0.994	0.999	0.999	0.986	0.018	0.981
Model 2	13.453	0.000	0.853	0.828	0.862	0.814	0.177	0.000
Model 3	10.819	0.000	0.883	0.864	0.892	0.830	0.157	0.000
Model 4	4.552	0.000	0.968	0.965	0.975	0.928	0.095	0.000
Model 5	19.992	0.000	0.872	0.834	0.878	0.837	0.207	0.000

Five models were tested, with Model 1 emerging as the best fit. Its indices (CMIN/DF = 1.128, p = .294, NFI = .994, TLI = .999, CFI = .999, GFI = .986, RMSEA = .018, P-CLOSE = .981) all met established criteria. Models

2, 3, and 5 demonstrated inferior fit. While Model 4 showed better fit than these three, it was still inferior to Model 1. The best-fit model (Figure 6) revealed significant direct effects on school head work performance from adaptability skills (β = .63, p < .000), leadership skills (β = .01, p < .000), and flexibility (β = .25, p < .000). Adaptability had the largest effect, followed by flexibility and then leadership skills.

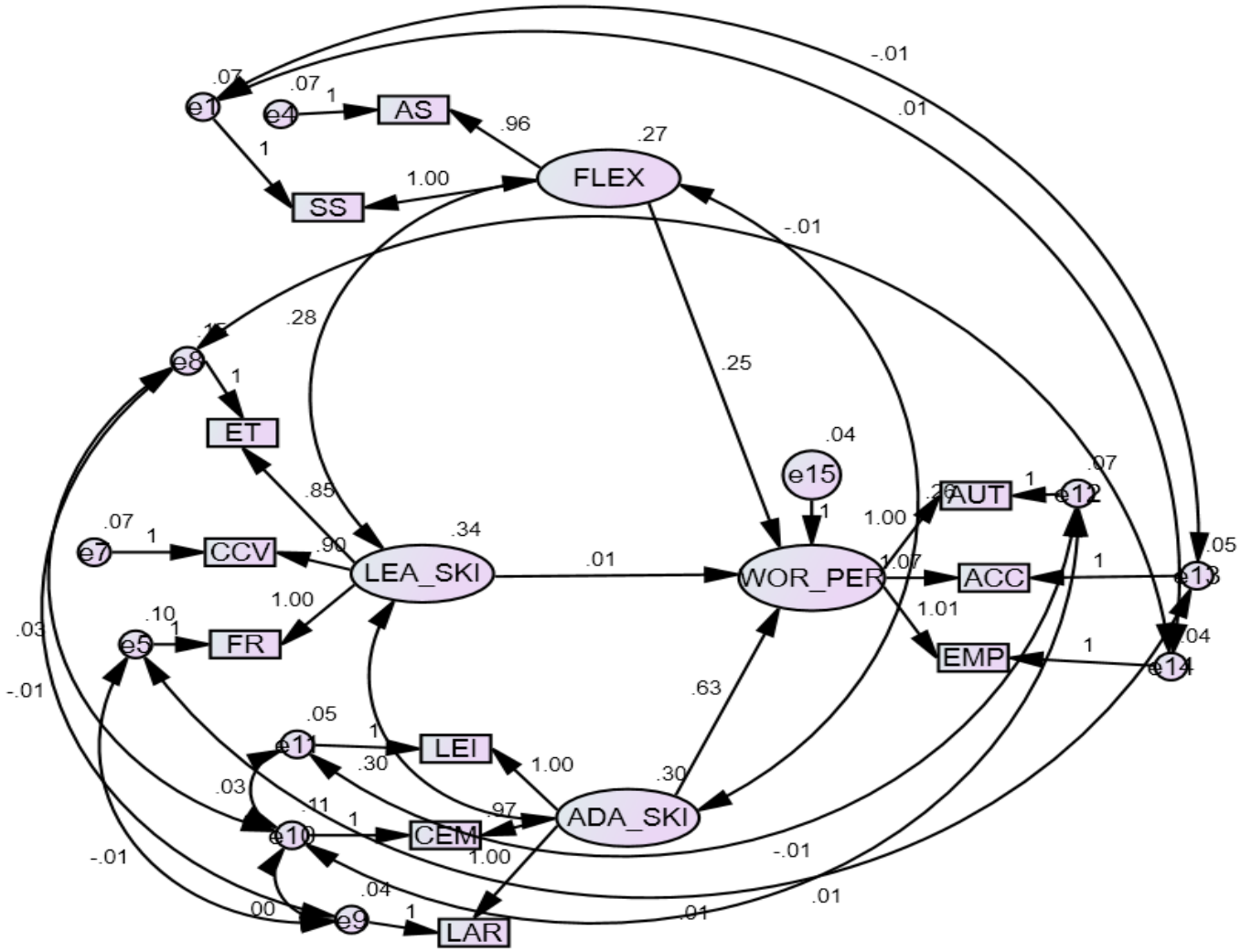

Figure 6. Best Fit Model on Work Performance of School Heads

The model also revealed significant interrelationships between the independent variables. Adaptability skills had a direct effect on flexibility (β = .30, p < .000), with a significant covariance between the two (β = 1.01, p < .000). Leadership skills had a direct effect on adaptability skills (β = .34, p < .000), with a significant covariance (β = .30, p < .000). Flexibility, in turn, had a direct effect on leadership skills (β = .27, p < .000), and a significant covariance was observed between these variables as well (β = .28, p < .000).

SEM analysis highlights the importance of leadership skills, flexibility, and adaptability for effective school head performance. These skills are crucial for creating engaging and productive learning environments. This aligns with Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007), which emphasizes the dynamic interplay of these skills in navigating complex educational settings (Lang, 2019; Chinying, 2019; Marion, 2022; Harvard Business Publishing, 2023). Research supports the link between leadership skills (especially adaptability and flexibility) and improved school outcomes (Davis & Brown, 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Thompson & Lee, 2021). However, external factors, such as structural constraints and resource limitations, also influence leadership effectiveness (Carter & Yang, 2022; Baker & Davis, 2023). Effective school leaders must balance internal dynamics with external regulations, adapting to systemic challenges while prioritizing continuous improvement and student learning (Ross & Smith, 2020; Johnson, 2016; Lang, 2019).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

School heads in the Davao region were perceived as demonstrating high levels of leadership skills (particularly social and administrative), flexibility (especially cultural adaptability), adaptability (notably in life and career management), and work performance (primarily in empowerment). Significant positive correlations were found between these variables, with flexibility, leadership, and adaptability skills all linked to work performance. Regression analysis identified flexibility as the strongest predictor of work performance, followed by leadership and adaptability. The final SEM model confirmed the significant direct influence of these three skills on work performance and revealed significant interrelationships between them.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the conclusion below is derived:

The study successfully addresses its primary aim of determining the best-fit model for the work performance of school heads in the Davao Region, revealing that leadership, flexibility, and adaptability skills are significant predictors of work performance. Model 1 emerges as the best-fit model, meeting the goodness-of-fit indices and their corresponding standard criteria. These findings highlight the foundational role of flexibility in shaping leadership and adaptability skills, which collectively enhance the work performance of school heads in basic education. This conclusion aligns with Complexity Leadership Theory, which underscores the dynamic interplay between leadership, adaptability, and flexibility as vital components for thriving in complex environments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research may further test and validate the assumptions of Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) by employing diverse research approaches and rigorous statistical methods. Replicating the theory in different educational settings would help establish its broader applicability, allowing findings to be generalized across varied environments. This process may deepen the theoretical foundations of CLT and provide valuable insights for educational policymakers and practitioners. By rigorously testing the theory in multiple contexts, researchers can contribute to the ongoing conversation on effective leadership, offering evidence-based strategies relevant to various educational landscapes.

Future SEM studies may also be explored using other variables covering the 26 % variance in work performance. Further qualitative research may explore specific components within strategic management practices that reveal how strategy control interacts with other factors. While this study highlights the relevance of CLT in understanding leadership dynamics, there is potential for additional research into complementary leadership theories. Exploring contextual factors, cultural differences, and individual characteristics of school heads could provide a more nuanced view of leadership performance, paving the way for more tailored approaches to school improvement and the achievement of SDG 4 (Quality Education).

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