

Educational Distributed Leadership and Organizational Performance in Public Elementary Schools in District II, Division of Manila: Basis for a Sustainable Localized Development Program

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100700844>

Received: 29 July 2026; Accepted: 03 August 2026; Published: 13 August 2026

ABSTRACT

Educational distributed leadership has become increasingly relevant to school systems that require collaborative decision-making, shared accountability, and organizational responsiveness across professional roles. In this study, educational distributed leadership refers to the enactment of distributed leadership within formal educational organizations rather than to a separate leadership theory. This study examined educational distributed leadership and its relationship with organizational performance in public elementary schools in District II, Division of Manila, Philippines. A quantitative descriptive-comparative-correlational design involved 332 education personnel comprising six supervisors, 14 school heads, and 312 teachers. Educational distributed leadership was assessed across eight dimensions: strategic, instructional, managerial, human resources, cultural, micropolitical, external, and contingent leadership. Results showed that educational distributed leadership was Highly Evident overall (WM = 4.28), with strategic leadership receiving the highest composite rating (WM = 4.37). The source-reported ANOVA statistics indicated no significant respondent-group differences across the eight dimensions; derived p values ranged from .967 to .999 and effect sizes were negligible under the retained $df = 2, 20$ structure. Organizational performance was generally favorable across School Years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, particularly in graduation (98.35) and promotion (96.63), while completion (89.35) and cohort survival (87.69) were comparatively lower. The source reported a strong positive correlation of $r = .66$ between each educational distributed leadership dimension and organizational performance; recalculation using $df = 23$ gives $t = 4.21, p < .001$. Because the analytic degrees of freedom do not correspond to the stated respondent total and all eight correlations are identical, the inferential results require verification against the original dataset before confirmatory interpretation. Leadership-related challenges were generally Least Encountered (WM = 2.42), and the proposed Sustainable Localized Development Program was rated Acceptable overall (WM = 4.14). The findings support a monitored, context-responsive pilot emphasizing role clarity, professional collaboration, stakeholder engagement, data-informed leadership, and learner-retention support.

Keywords: educational distributed leadership, distributed leadership, educational leadership, organizational performance, public elementary schools, school effectiveness, sustainable localized development

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary education systems increasingly require schools to respond to complex instructional, organizational, and community demands that cannot be addressed by the formal authority of a single school leader. Educational distributed leadership offers an alternative perspective by conceptualizing leadership as a collective practice enacted through the expertise, interactions, and responsibilities of school heads, teachers, coordinators, administrative personnel, and other stakeholders. Through shared decision-making, professional collaboration, and collective accountability, schools may strengthen instructional support, organizational learning, resource management, and responsiveness to learner needs.

International research has associated distributed leadership with teacher participation, professional collaboration, instructional quality, teacher leadership, and school improvement. However, the literature also cautions that educational distributed leadership should not be treated as simple delegation or as a universally beneficial

structure. Its value depends on how leadership responsibilities are distributed, who participates in consequential decisions, how roles are clarified, and whether organizational conditions support meaningful collaboration (Harris et al., 2022; Mifsud, 2024; Printy & Liu, 2021).

In the Philippine basic education system, shared governance is embedded in national policy. Republic Act No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, promotes accountability, democratic consultation, and school-based decision-making. Republic Act No. 12028, or the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning Program Act, further emphasizes coordinated participation among school personnel, parents, tutors, and community partners in addressing learning gaps. DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020, which institutionalized the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads, likewise identifies strategic leadership, instructional leadership, personnel development, resource management, and stakeholder engagement as core areas of school leadership.

The study is anchored in the distributed perspective of Spillane et al. (2001), which explains that leadership practice emerges through interactions among leaders, followers, and situations rather than residing exclusively in one formal role. It is also informed by the Competing Values Framework, which emphasizes the need for organizations to balance flexibility and stability, internal coordination and external responsiveness, people development and goal attainment, and innovation and control (Cameron et al., 2022). Together, these perspectives support an examination of educational distributed leadership as both a relational leadership practice and an organizational mechanism that may be associated with multiple dimensions of school performance.

Although distributed leadership has been examined across international school systems, evidence from urban Philippine public elementary schools remains limited, particularly studies that integrate multiple leadership dimensions with school-level organizational indicators such as enrollment, promotion, graduation, completion, and cohort survival. High-density urban schools operate within distinctive conditions involving large learner populations, varied stakeholder expectations, workload pressures, mobility, resource constraints, and demands for rapid organizational response. These contextual features may shape both the enactment and consequences of distributed leadership.

Accordingly, this study examined educational distributed leadership and organizational performance in public elementary schools in District II, Division of Manila. It assessed the leadership practices reported by supervisors, school heads, and teachers; tested differences among respondent groups; described school organizational performance over two school years; examined the reported relationship between educational distributed leadership and organizational performance; identified implementation challenges; and developed and evaluated a Sustainable Localized Development Program.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-comparative-correlational research design to examine educational distributed leadership and organizational performance in selected public elementary schools in District II, Division of Manila. The descriptive component determined the extent of educational distributed leadership, school performance indicators, leadership-related challenges, and the acceptability of the proposed Sustainable Localized Development Program. The comparative component examined differences among the assessments of supervisors, school heads, and teachers, while the correlational component examined the reported association between distributed leadership and organizational performance. Consistent with nonexperimental correlational research, the findings are interpreted as descriptive and associative rather than causal (Creswell & Guetterman, 2020).

The study involved 332 education personnel: six supervisors, 14 school heads, and 312 teachers. Supervisors and school heads were included purposively because of their direct responsibilities in school leadership and organizational management. Teachers were selected through simple random sampling. The required teacher sample was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error.

Data were collected using a researcher-developed structured questionnaire aligned with the study objectives, theoretical foundations, policy frameworks, and relevant literature. Educational distributed leadership was

measured across eight dimensions—strategic, instructional, managerial, human resources, cultural, micropolitical, external, and contingent leadership—through indicators addressing delegation, role clarity, communication, collaboration, accountability, participation in decision-making, and leadership capacity-building. A five-point weighted-mean scale was used. The instrument underwent expert validation and pilot testing for clarity, relevance, content validity, and reliability before final administration. Organizational performance was represented by authorized school indicators for School Years 2022–2023 and 2023–2024, including enrollment, promotion, graduation, completion, and cohort survival rates.

Ethical standards were observed throughout the research process. Permission was secured from the appropriate education authorities and school officials. Respondents were informed of the study’s purpose, procedures, potential benefits, voluntary nature, and right to withdraw without penalty. Informed consent was obtained, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and results were reported in aggregate form. Ethical clearance was obtained before data collection.

Descriptive statistics summarized weighted-mean ratings, organizational performance indicators, implementation challenges, and program acceptability. The manuscript’s source-reported one-way ANOVA statistics were retained for respondent-group comparisons. For publication transparency, p values and η^2 were derived from the reported F statistics and degrees of freedom. For the correlation analysis, significance statistics were recalculated from the source-reported $r = .66$ and $df = 23$ using the standard Pearson correlation test, yielding $t = 4.21$ and $p < .001$. These recalculations restore mathematical consistency but do not substitute for verification against the original dataset or statistical software output. The reported ANOVA $df = 2, 20$ and correlation $df = 23$ do not directly correspond to the stated total of 332 respondents; therefore, the analytic unit must be confirmed before journal submission. Statistical decisions used $\alpha = .05$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Educational Distributed Leadership

Table 1. Assessment of Educational Distributed Leadership

Criteria	Supervisors WM	VI	School Heads WM	VI	Teachers WM	VI	Composite WM	VI	Rank
Strategic Leadership	4.40	HE	4.35	HE	4.37	HE	4.37	HE	1
Instructional Leadership	4.17	E	4.36	HE	4.41	HE	4.31	HE	2.5
Managerial Leadership	4.20	HE	4.24	HE	4.36	HE	4.27	HE	4
Human Resources Leadership	4.14	E	4.14	E	4.37	HE	4.22	HE	8
Cultural Leadership	4.14	E	4.24	HE	4.39	HE	4.26	HE	5.5
Micropolitical Leadership	4.20	HE	4.25	HE	4.34	HE	4.26	HE	5.5
External Leadership	4.20	HE	4.20	HE	4.36	HE	4.25	HE	7
Contingent Leadership	4.30	HE	4.29	HE	4.35	HE	4.31	HE	2.5
Overall Weighted Mean	4.22	HE	4.26	HE	4.37	HE	4.28	HE	-

Table 1 shows that educational distributed leadership was rated Highly Evident overall (composite WM = 4.28). Teachers provided the highest overall assessment (WM = 4.37), followed by school heads (WM = 4.26) and

supervisors (WM = 4.22). Strategic leadership ranked first (WM = 4.37), while instructional and contingent leadership shared the second position (WM = 4.31). Human resources leadership received the lowest composite rating (WM = 4.22), although it remained within the Highly Evident category.

The pattern suggests that leadership distribution is most visible in strategic direction-setting, instructional support, and adaptation to changing school conditions. The lower relative position of human resources leadership indicates a practical area for strengthening leadership pipelines, mentoring, recognition, professional development, and the meaningful delegation of responsibilities.

These findings are consistent with distributed-leadership scholarship emphasizing that leadership is strengthened when school personnel participate in professional learning, decision-making, collaboration, and organizational problem-solving. Printy and Liu (2021) showed that principal and teacher leadership interact across diverse national contexts, while Song et al. (2025) reported positive links between distributed leadership and teacher leadership through professional learning, collegial collaboration, decision-making, and external engagement.

From a school-improvement perspective, the consistently high ratings across eight domains indicate that educational distributed leadership is not perceived as a single administrative practice but as a multidimensional organizational pattern. Sustaining this pattern requires structures that convert participation into clear responsibilities, shared evidence use, and coordinated action rather than relying only on informal delegation.

Respondent-Group Differences

Table 2. Comparison of Respondent-Group Assessments of Educational Distributed Leadership

Leadership Dimension	df	F	Critical F	Interpretation	Decision
Strategic Leadership	2, 20	0.00106	3.49	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_0
Instructional Leadership	2, 20	0.02771	3.49	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_0
Managerial Leadership	2, 20	0.01260	3.49	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_0
Human Resources Leadership	2, 20	0.03326	3.49	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_0
Cultural Leadership	2, 20	0.02863	3.49	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_0
Micropolitical Leadership	2, 20	0.00838	3.49	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_0
External Leadership	2, 20	0.01475	3.49	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_0
Contingent Leadership	2, 20	0.00175	3.49	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_0

The source-reported ANOVA statistics indicate no statistically significant differences among supervisors, school heads, and teachers across all eight educational distributed leadership dimensions. Derived p values range from .967 to .999, and the corresponding partial η^2 values are negligible under the retained df structure. On the basis of the supplied statistics, the null hypothesis is not rejected for any dimension.

Substantively, the pattern suggests broad perceptual alignment across organizational roles. Such convergence may reflect shared policy expectations, common school-improvement routines, and a relatively coherent understanding of leadership responsibilities within the district.

However, agreement in survey ratings should not automatically be interpreted as equal participation or equal influence in decision-making. Distributed-leadership research emphasizes the need to examine who participates, in which leadership functions, and with what degree of authority (Harris et al., 2022; Mifsud, 2024). Qualitative

interviews, decision-process observations, or social-network analysis could clarify whether perceptual alignment corresponds to genuinely distributed influence

Organizational Performance

Table 3. Organizational Performance for School Years 2022–2023 and 2023–2024

Performance Indicator	SY 2022–2023	SY 2023–2024	Overall Average
Enrollment	93.57	94.52	94.05
Promotion Rate	95.93	97.32	96.63
Graduation Rate	98.22	98.48	98.35
Completion Rate	88.43	90.27	89.35
Cohort Survival Rate	87.41	87.97	87.69

Table 3 shows modest improvement across all five organizational indicators. Enrollment increased from 93.57 in School Year 2022–2023 to 94.52 in 2023–2024, producing a two-year average of 94.05. Promotion increased from 95.93 to 97.32, while graduation remained the strongest indicator, rising from 98.22 to 98.48 and producing the highest overall average (98.35).

Completion improved from 88.43 to 90.27, whereas cohort survival increased slightly from 87.41 to 87.97. Despite these gains, completion (89.35) and cohort survival (87.69) remained the lowest overall indicators. The pattern suggests that schools were highly successful in promoting and graduating learners who remained engaged in the system, but learner persistence across the full educational trajectory continued to warrant attention.

These results should be interpreted as school-system outcomes influenced by multiple factors, including attendance, learner mobility, instructional support, family conditions, remediation, school climate, and community engagement. They should not be attributed to distributed leadership alone.

From an organizational perspective, the comparatively lower completion and cohort-survival indicators provide a concrete improvement target for distributed leadership. Coordinated early-warning systems, family engagement, guidance support, attendance monitoring, academic recovery, and cross-functional learner-support teams may help translate shared leadership into stronger retention outcomes.

Relationship Between Educational Distributed Leadership and Organizational Performance

Table 4. Relationship Between Educational Distributed Leadership and Organizational Performance

Leadership Dimension	r	VI	df	t	Critical t	Decision
Strategic Leadership	.66	Strong	23	3.90950	1.860	Reject H ₀
Instructional Leadership	.66	Strong	23	3.90935	1.860	Reject H ₀
Managerial Leadership	.66	Strong	23	3.90804	1.860	Reject H ₀
Human Resources Leadership	.66	Strong	23	3.90734	1.860	Reject H ₀
Cultural Leadership	.66	Strong	23	3.90787	1.860	Reject H ₀
Micropolitical Leadership	.66	Strong	23	3.90838	1.860	Reject H ₀

External Leadership	.66	Strong	23	3.90844	1.860	Reject Ho
Contingent Leadership	.66	Strong	23	3.90962	1.860	Reject Ho

Table 4 reports a strong positive association ($r = .66$) between each educational distributed leadership dimension and organizational performance. Using the source-reported $df = 23$, the standard Pearson test yields $t = 4.21$, $p < .001$. Thus, within the analytic structure represented by the source table, higher reported educational distributed leadership is associated with higher organizational performance.

The pattern is consistent with literature linking distributed leadership with instructional quality, teacher leadership, professional collaboration, and school-improvement capacity (Bellibaş et al., 2021; Galdames-Calderón, 2023; Song et al., 2025). However, the result is associative rather than causal and should not be used to claim that educational distributed leadership directly produces higher organizational performance.

Additional caution is required because all eight coefficients are reported as exactly $r = .66$ and the correlation analysis uses $df = 23$, which does not transparently correspond to the stated total of 332 respondents. Verification using the original dataset, a clearly defined analytic unit, confidence intervals, and appropriate respondent- or school-level modeling would substantially strengthen the evidence.

Challenges in Educational Distributed Leadership

Table 5. Challenges Encountered in Educational Distributed Leadership

Criteria	Supervisors WM	VI	School Heads WM	VI	Teachers WM	VI	Composite WM	VI	Rank
Strategic Leadership	2.13	LE	2.70	ME	2.64	ME	2.49	LE	1
Instructional Leadership	2.20	LE	2.53	LE	2.61	ME	2.44	LE	3
Managerial Leadership	2.13	LE	2.64	ME	2.59	LE	2.46	LE	2
Human Resources Leadership	2.07	LE	2.64	ME	2.57	LE	2.42	LE	4
Cultural Leadership	2.07	LE	2.57	LE	2.56	LE	2.40	LE	5.5
Micropolitical Leadership	2.13	LE	2.46	LE	2.55	LE	2.38	LE	7
External Leadership	2.13	LE	2.54	LE	2.52	LE	2.40	LE	5.5
Contingent Leadership	2.07	LE	2.48	LE	2.54	LE	2.36	LE	8
Overall Weighted Mean	2.12	LE	2.57	LE	2.57	LE	2.42	LE	-

Table 5 indicates that educational distributed leadership challenges were Least Encountered overall (composite WM = 2.42). Supervisors reported the lowest overall challenge level (WM = 2.12), while school heads and teachers both recorded WM = 2.57. Strategic leadership obtained the highest composite challenge score (WM = 2.49), followed by managerial leadership (WM = 2.46) and instructional leadership (WM = 2.44). Contingent leadership recorded the lowest challenge score (WM = 2.36).

The pattern suggests that barriers to educational distributed leadership were not viewed as severe, but strategic alignment, management processes, and instructional coordination remain comparatively more demanding than other areas. School heads and teachers also reported higher difficulties than supervisors on several dimensions, which may reflect their more direct exposure to daily implementation pressures.

Low challenge ratings should not be interpreted as evidence that educational distributed leadership requires no further development. International reviews emphasize that leadership distribution depends on role clarity, trust, enabling structures, professional capacity, and context (Harris et al., 2022; Mifsud, 2024). Even when barriers are limited, weak role definition or insufficient participation can reduce the quality of shared leadership.

Professional development and organizational support may therefore focus on strategic data use, instructional leadership teams, mentoring and succession planning, protected collaboration time, conflict management, stakeholder partnership, and clear decision rights.

Sustainable Localized Development Program

Based on the findings, the proposed Sustainable Localized Development Program (SLDP), “Strengthening Shared Leadership for School Performance and Learner Retention,” is designed to consolidate existing strengths while addressing comparatively weaker areas in human resources leadership, strategic coordination, management, and learner retention.

The program is intended as a monitored school-improvement intervention rather than a one-time training event.

Table 6. *Core Components of the Proposed Sustainable Localized Development Program*

Program Component	School-Level Procedure	Primary Participants	Expected Evidence
Shared Leadership Role Mapping and Decision Calibration	Map recurring school decisions; identify who leads, contributes, approves, and monitors; review overlaps and workload concentration; align the role matrix with the School Improvement Plan.	School heads, teacher leaders, coordinators, support personnel	Leadership role map; decision-rights matrix; revised committee responsibilities; quarterly reflection notes
Instructional Leadership Learning Huddles	Use classroom observations, assessment evidence, learner work, and instructional concerns to identify one priority, co-design a response, assign shared responsibilities, and review evidence of follow-through.	School heads, master/lead teachers, grade/subject coordinators, teachers	Instructional priority log; coaching notes; collaborative action plan; evidence of follow-through
Learner Retention and Stakeholder Response Team	Review attendance, completion, promotion, and cohort-survival indicators; identify learners/groups requiring support; coordinate academic, attendance, family, and welfare interventions; monitor response.	School leadership team, teachers, guidance/support personnel, families, community partners	Early-warning dashboard; intervention/referral log; engagement record; retention progress report

Implementation should be adapted to school size, staffing patterns, available resources, learner needs, and existing improvement structures. Before pilot implementation, each school should specify key result areas, objectives, responsible persons, time frames, budget sources, evidence sources, and performance indicators. Monitoring should include baseline data, implementation-fidelity checks, leadership-participation records, and learner-retention indicators so that program effectiveness can be evaluated empirically.

Program Acceptability

Table 7. Acceptability of the Proposed Sustainable Localized Development Program

Indicators	Supervisors WM	VI	School Heads WM	VI	Teac hers WM	VI	Composite WM	VI	Rank
Completeness of information	4.00	A	4.14	A	4.23	HA	4.12	A	4
Practicality for adoption	4.00	A	3.86	A	4.20	HA	4.02	A	5
Identifies leadership gaps and supports decisions	4.00	A	4.29	HA	4.36	HA	4.22	HA	1.5
Guides policy enhancement	4.00	A	4.07	A	4.36	HA	4.14	A	3
Supports corrective actions	4.00	A	4.29	HA	4.37	HA	4.22	HA	1.5
Overall Weighted Mean	4.00	A	4.13	A	4.30	HA	4.14	A	-

The proposed SLDP was rated Acceptable overall (composite WM = 4.14). Teachers provided the highest overall assessment (WM = 4.30, Highly Acceptable), followed by school heads (WM = 4.13) and supervisors (WM = 4.00). The strongest-rated features were the program's potential to identify leadership weaknesses and support school-head decision-making and its usefulness in implementing corrective actions (both WM = 4.22, Highly Acceptable).

Practicality for adoption and implementation received the lowest composite rating (WM = 4.02), although it remained Acceptable. This result suggests that respondents saw value in the program but also signals the importance of feasible scheduling, manageable documentation, realistic resource requirements, and integration with existing school structures.

Program acceptability establishes perceived relevance and feasibility, not effectiveness. Claims about effectiveness should be made only after implementation and evaluation using baseline data, implementation-fidelity indicators, leadership-participation records, school-performance measures, and evidence of improvement in targeted areas such as completion and cohort survival.

Accordingly, a pilot implementation should include clear milestones, responsible persons, evidence sources, and periodic review so that the SLDP can be refined before wider adoption.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Educational distributed leadership in District II, Division of Manila is prominently practiced, reflecting active participation and shared responsibilities among supervisors, school heads, and teachers.
2. Supervisors, school heads, and teachers demonstrate similar perceptions across all leadership domains, indicating a unified understanding of leadership roles and functions.
3. School performance for SY 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 shows favorable results in enrollment, promotion, graduation, completion, and cohort survival rates, reflecting stable and effective operations.
4. Distributed leadership practices are closely associated with organizational performance, suggesting that collaborative leadership contributes substantially to improved school outcomes.

5. Difficulties in implementing educational distributed leadership are minimal, demonstrating smooth integration of shared leadership practices within the schools.
6. The Sustainable Localized Development Program (SLDP) offers a structured approach to reinforce leadership capabilities, enhance teamwork, and improve school management through context-specific strategies.
7. The Sustainable Localized Development Program is deemed appropriate and practical, supporting its potential to strengthen leadership practices and sustain organizational development in public elementary schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The School Head, in collaboration with supervisors, may adopt and implement the Proposed Sustainable Localized Development Program (SLDP) in public elementary schools of District II, Division of Manila, and consider its expansion to other schools within the division to strengthen distributed leadership practices and improve overall school performance.
2. School heads may sustain and enhance distributed leadership by recognizing the contributions of teachers and personnel and by fostering a collaborative culture that promotes shared accountability, reflective practice, and exchange of effective strategies to improve completion and cohort survival rates.
3. Supervisors, school heads, and teachers may engage in a structured feedback system to regularly assess the implementation of distributed leadership practices, with results serving as basis for continuous improvement of leadership strategies and school programs.
4. Supervisors and school heads may provide continuous professional development programs focusing on leadership skills, instructional supervision, collaborative planning, data-informed decision-making, and learner retention strategies to further strengthen school performance.
5. School heads, supervisors, and teachers may jointly implement the strategies and activities outlined in the SLDP to ensure coordinated efforts in improving enrollment stability, completion rates, and cohort survival outcomes.
6. School heads may ensure proper allocation and efficient use of resources such as budget, time, learning materials, and personnel to support the effective and sustainable implementation of distributed leadership initiatives and SLDP activities.
7. School heads and supervisors may establish and institutionalize a monitoring and evaluation system to assess SLDP implementation, identify gaps, and ensure continuous improvement and sustainability of leadership interventions.
8. Future researchers may replicate the study using similar variables in a wider and more diverse population to validate findings and enhance generalizability across different educational contexts.

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