



LEADERSHIP CHARACTER OF SCHOOL HEADS AND MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE OF HEAD TEACHERS

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Abstract:

The study determined the domain in school heads' leadership character significantly influences head teachers' managerial competence. Using the quantitative-correlational design, 269 teacher-respondents from the elementary and secondary schools in the Samal district division of the Island Garden City of Samal were selected through stratified random sampling to participate in this investigation. Data collection was made through the administration of survey questionnaires to the respondents. Two adapted survey questionnaires were used and subjected to content validity and reliability test: the data analysis used Mean, Pearson Product Moment, and Regression. The results revealed that the level of leadership character of school heads and the managerial competence of head teachers were very high. The indicators: Lack of Blame, Accountability, Courage, and Focus on the Whole, are the domains of leadership character that significantly influence the managerial competence of head teachers. Indeed, school leaders who acquire leadership character and managerial competence can effectively run schools meaningfully and appropriately.

Keywords: educational management, leadership character, managerial competence, quantitative-correlational design, regression, Philippines

1. Introduction

The managerial competence of school leaders nowadays is in crisis due to constant changes in managerial jobs. During this time of the pandemic, School heads are more challenged with the new normal delivery of instruction, making it more difficult to run a

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school smoothly (Egwu, 2020). Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed how school heads' jobs are carried out. In a time when the pace of change has accelerated exponentially, school heads are now expected to be exceptional managers and excellent leaders (Pollock, 2020). To achieve institutional goals, managerial competence and leadership character are essential for sustainability. Hence, qualified school principals should possess and show capable managerial skills (Heller, 2019 & Ganaden, 2020).

The conduct of the study, which explores the managerial competence of school heads, is of great significance as this will help improve the delivery of services, especially in the Department of Education. The birth of Republic Act 9155, an Act Instituting a Framework of Governance for Basic Education, shifted schools into a new paradigm of school-based management which aims at empowering Filipino school administrators and teachers to strengthen professional motivation and to conform with the determined policies of the Department of Education because their mismanagement will significantly affect the performance of the entire school. They must be well equipped with not only knowledge and competence as managers but also with exemplary character and attitudes in leadership to surpass many situations they will encounter (Baroa, 2018).

Several studies show the link between leadership character and managerial competence. For one, the study of Raisiene (2019) emphasized that leadership character has been associated with managerial competence in modern organizations. In the study of Raišienė (2019), she developed a model of modern leaders' characteristics. It stated that a leader could overcome managerial challenges in modern administrations with specific values, competencies, attitudes, abilities, and professional characteristics. Further, a study by Burcar (2019) and Karisa (2018) has presented that a school administrator's executive and leading actions perceive two different actions. An agent who uses many competencies is the manager's role while leading is acting with the achievement of plans as its purpose. The school leader finds material, human, and financial teaching resources through managing and leading while modelling various positive characters in the school environment. In spreading influence, school leaders must lead with their behavior.

The school administrator's role has three aspects: leading and managing with values, action, and knowledge. It is behaving, motivating, and influencing expressed through actions and competence (Burcar, 2019).

Based on an interview with Nenita A. Aldamia, school head of Tagbitanag Elementary School in the Island Garden City of Samal since 2018, asserted that head teachers and school heads needed additional pieces of training and workshops to carry their responsibilities as competent school managers fully. The school is the image of its leader; the school administrator is the focus on the school community they are in and on how they run it for the good of all its stakeholders. Further, Ganaden (2020) study emphasized that schools may design and pursue activities that can help improve strategic thinking and innovation. Managerial leadership competency aspects of principals aimed to adequately address the growing expectations and demands of the students and other stakeholders.

Given the aforementioned condition, it is deemed urgent to conduct this study to explore the administrative status of school heads and be able to propose interventions if

necessary. As to the gap, the researcher has yet to come across any study relating to the lead character of school heads and its effect on the managerial competence of head teachers in the Island Garden City of Samal. With this, the researcher is determined to conduct this study as this could benefit teachers, head teachers, and school heads. Moreover, the findings could be a basis for intervention for educational management and improvement in IGACOS and the conduct of future researchers.

2. Research Objectives

This study was conducted to determine the influence of the leadership character of school heads on the managerial competence of head teachers in the division of the Island Garden City of Samal. The following objectives are formulated:

1. To determine the level of leadership character of school heads in terms of the following:
 - 1.1 Integrity
 - 1.2 Empathy
 - 1.3 Lack of Blame
 - 1.4 Humility
 - 1.5 Emotional Mastery
 - 1.6 Accountability
 - 1.7 Self Confidence
 - 1.8 Courage
 - 1.9 Focus on the Whole
2. To determine the level of managerial competence of head teachers in terms of the following areas:
 - 2.1 Leadership Skills
 - 2.2 Instructional Leadership
 - 2.3 Resource Management and Allocation
 - 2.4 Human Resource Management
 - 2.5 Program Monitoring and Reporting
 - 2.6 Professional Development Practices
 - 2.7 Community Collaboration
3. To determine the significant relationship between school heads' leadership character and head teachers' managerial competence.
4. To determine which domain in the lead character of school heads significantly influences head teachers' managerial competence.

2.1 Hypothesis

The following hypotheses will be tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

- 1) There is no significant relationship between the lead character of school heads and the managerial competence of head teachers.
- 2) No domain in the leadership character of school heads significantly influences or determines the managerial competence of head teachers.

3. Literature Review

This section discussed related readings from books, journals, theses, and internet sources to give an overview of this study. This part includes leadership character, managerial competence, and the correlation between leadership character and managerial competence.

The independent variable is the leadership character of school heads which will be measured in terms of *integrity, empathy, lack of blame, humility, emotional mastery, accountability, self-confidence, courage, and focus on the whole* (Turknett Leadership Group, 2018). The dependent variable is the managerial competence of head teachers. It will be measured regarding *leadership skills, instructional leadership, resource management and allocation, human resource management, program monitoring and reporting, professional development practices, and community collaboration* (Sherman, et al., 2019).

3.1 Leadership Character

In recent years, the nature of the character and its relationship to leaders has taken much greater importance. Character is an invisible source of personal consistency, according to Hillman (2019). Although research limits their way in the affective domain of leadership, most research approves that moral character greatly influences the complexity of leadership (Spears, 2019; Poloncic, 2018).

Moreover, a leader who bases his judgment on morality pursues to develop shared followership by depending on ideas, values, and commitment in the school. This kind of leadership makes parents, principals, teachers, and students respond from within. School heads should be familiar with the leadership traits highly valued by teachers as this is beneficial in attaining higher instructional effectiveness (Costellow, 2018; Cummins, 2019; Parker, 2019).

- **Integrity.** It has been denoted that integrity is honesty, authenticity, and truthfulness. It is seen as the foundation of an ethical leader. In the many areas where leadership is explored, integrity is the central area of emphasis. For leaders to be influential, they must lead with integrity (Brown, 2018).
- **Empathy.** Empathy in an organization leads to trust and creates strong bonds. It is in the front and center of human connectedness. It benefits the community because no human linkages will exist without empathetic function. Empathy is the power of listening (Fitzpatrick, 2018).
- **Lack of Blame.** Leaders who project blame lack integrity and are irresponsible. Blame is both an internal and external component. Its internal component consists of affective and other phenomenological states. Negative judgments, anger, rage, and indignant commitment are among its hostile behavior. Blame's external component is the outward manifestation of the internal component. One blamer may speak up angrily and express her negative opinion with a disgusted face (Priest, 2018).
- **Humility.** School leaders must keep the honest conversation open and not appear arrogant or self-righteous. In an organization, leaders must not seek the spotlight

and must not value themselves as more special than one. They must let their accomplishment speak for themselves (Thun, 2019).

- **Emotional Mastery.** A leader who lacks emotional mastery and is explosive also lacks empathy and consideration for others. They don't hear the truth in the organization. Emotional mastery is a subgroup of social intelligence which is the ability to monitor one's feelings and other individuals' emotions. They can discriminate among them and use this information to guide their actions and to think in an organization (Segredo, 2019).
- **Accountability.** School heads that are accountable are committed, and they are willing to hold another individual accountable. School administrators' leadership accountability can be defined as the willingness to accept responsibilities inherent in their position. It is the expectation linked to his actions. Accountability is managing stakeholders' expectations which are somewhat conflicting interests. It is handling relations between institutions, controlling power, and defining responsibilities. This aims to create trust in the organization (Thompson, 2018).
- **Self Confidence.** Self-confident leaders are assertive enough to speak their minds. A mark of a great leader is building confidence in others. It is the upbeat "can-do" attitude and self-assurance built upon successes over time (Weismuller, et al., 2019).
- **Courage.** The courage of a leader is the willingness to address uncomfortable issues and take risks even when it endangers their position. It is defined as perseverance in times of adversity. Leaders do what they perceive is correct, was described as courage. It is the desire to do the right thing strongly against external pressure. Some contended that it is overcoming fear in certain situations and the fear of social disapproval. It could be correlated with creativity and innovation as this is the exercise of the idea. The foundation of courage is the motivation of the leader to justify moral action. A courageous leader has particular benefits in the organization because he gives clear direction and the means to move forward without being influenced by fear. In the workplace, courageous leaders are viewed as influential performers who can have long-term organizational success (Palanski, et al., 2019).
- **Focus on the Whole.** Leaders who focus on the whole see the larger picture and put aside their interests above the organization's goal. With the complex job of a school principal nowadays, such as high expectations, greater accountability, and many others, they require a system of thinking that advocates a process in viewing any issue at hand. Systems thinking is about highlighting the relationships of every component of an issue rather than focusing only on the component itself. It is a kind of approach that will help principals develop significantly performing schools that cope successfully with the challenges of today's era of leadership education and management (Shaked, et al., 2018)

The combined conclusions of Costellow 2018 and Cummins 2019 indicate that morality in leadership produces good results as it attracts school stakeholders to participate in management activities fully. Therefore, school leaders must be vigilant in

their character when running their schools. The nine domains presented according to Turknett Leadership Group 2018, which are integrity, empathy, lack of blame, humility, emotional mastery, accountability, self-confidence, courage, and focusing on the whole, teach school leaders that moral management, when put into practice inside the organization, will produce good results for the learners and the entire school.

3.2 Managerial Competence

Management in an organization is vital, so managers' competence in their managerial tasks should be important. A manager's job is complex and challenging. They must possess competence concerning finances, administration, information technology, and strategies. A manager should understand followers' feedback and reactions since this is their way to have ideas on how to motivate them toward one goal. Also, the manager must know their behavior and emotions for successful organizational interaction. The impact of their managerial work affects the whole organization. Competence involves knowledge, skills, attitudes, experiences, and interactions that make a good performance. To possess competence, one must put it into concrete actions and practice since it is a learning process. Managerial competence can be developed through training because managers must continue to learn, relearn, and unlearn (Rintala, 2019; Karisa, 2018).

In addition, competency is using knowledge, attitude, skills, and judgment for a successful performance. For head teachers, it is the state of being functionally adequate to the position's duty. It is acting based on standards of ability acquired through experiences and training. To sum up, a competent head teacher manages effectively if they possess specific competencies needed for the effective administration of schools. The product of improved additional training and workshops for headteachers are competitive managers equipped with specialized skills and systematic principles needed to acquire administrative skills (Ikegbusi, 2019).

- **Leadership Skills.** Everybody has the potential to be a leader since leadership skills can be developed. And from those skills leading, anyone or even an organization can benefit from it (Panait, 2019). Management education faces diverse challenges due to the evolving and competitive environment. Applying the necessary leadership skills is one key to being an effective leader. Leadership skills are abilities that can be developed through training and workshops. In entrusting administrative duties in schools, it is necessary to provide training beforehand. Some arguments proclaim the need to emphasize developing leadership skills since managers can learn and develop these abilities. The skills of managers are technical, interpersonal, and conceptual. In addition, leadership skills are only sometimes inborn. It is manifested in performance and action, not merely in potential. Leadership skills are all about skilfulness projected by the performance of action under various situations (Kalargyrou, et al., 2019).
- **Instructional Leadership.** This leadership function is related to teaching and learning. School administrators are curriculum leaders and are considered the primary source of educational experience. They are tasked to monitor curriculum and students' progress and supervise teachers and their instruction. They need to

ensure that teachers teach and that curriculum implementation is successful. This is forming an influential learning community and developing education systems outside the school. It is a core function of the school leader. It creates a clear direction by sustaining a school environment where effective schooling occurs. School leaders must carefully hire and assign teachers to specific classrooms, ensuring that students are learning towards excellence (Naidoo et al., 2018; Thompson, 2018).

- **Resource Management and Allocation.** Distribution and alignment of financial resources are directed toward the student's learning needs. Its equal allocation involves not only the school leader but also the staff and stakeholders of the school. The wise and skillful use of resources to maximize students' learning is termed the financial plan. The school and the school leaders are held accountable for how they spend their money and its impact on students' achievement. Any money spent must have a bearing on student's attainment of standard and quality education. In addition, it is a need for the school to have a planning team in which they make the expert preparation and alignment on the materials, money, people, and time needed for the implementation (Haynes, 2019).
- **Human Resource Management.** Human resources are the most critical resources of an organization that must be given the highest attention. The management area has been fast changing in recent years due to globalization. A conclusive factor in the organization's successful development is its proper human resource management. A human resource manager faces many stressful challenges due to the changing technology, the need for more talent, social media, and many others.
- **Program Monitoring and Reporting.** The use of data is helpful to the school leader. In the effective operations of the school, managers need to carefully treat data for improved student performance. Carefully collecting and analyzing information benefits leaders in deciding on interventions and instructional practices. Measurements of this data student's voice, the achievements of the school, and the process on which this data results (Haynes, 2019).
- **Professional Development Practices.** Leaders of schools are primarily responsible for students' learning improvement. Therefore, they must promote excellence in teaching by committing to sustaining professional development for themselves and the teachers. Effective school managers help their teachers realize goals and ensure a staff development program aligns with the school's vision. Administrators need an action plan supporting their staff in professional development so that teachers realize their big role in completing the large picture of the school's improvement. These professional development plans must be extended- termed, and carefully analyzed to focus on students' achievement. It would be a reflective practice that enables teachers to discuss and solve issues with peer coaching. It is also noted that this staff development aligns with the actual happenings in the workplace. With this, school managers must view their staff as an agent of change. They must foster a sense of teacher leadership and inject the

notion of teacher learning, not only student learning. School leaders must model that professional development is a valuable experience (Haynes, 2019).

- **Community Collaboration.** School managers are not only instructional leaders but also community leaders in the sense that they need to bring the external and internal stakeholders in the school to provide desired outcomes for students to be ready and of use to society. When stakeholders work together for the common good and better service in addressing the needs of the community and the children's performance, there is a greater possibility of improvement since all are accountable and responsible for the student's outcomes. When the community leader achieves this social responsibility, this could be the social capital to improve student's learning experiences. The school leader must use a developmental collaborative approach to fully achieve their complex purpose in the community. A strong connection with parents could build trusting school-community relations. The student's progress will attain high levels of development if parents are advised to come to school to discuss issues related to their student. Moreover, a related study suggests that the higher academic performance of the student is primarily related to the active involvement of parents (Gassaway, 2019 & Haynes, 2019).

Rintala 2019 makes a convincing case when he argues that school managers will be updated with the recent trends in school management through attending training and seminars. These will help leaders to learn new skills and prowess in managing organizations. Ikegbusi 2019 is also correct when he states that competent school managers are technically skillful in guiding teachers in producing good instruction and creating bonds and healthy relationships with the school community for the best learner achievement.

The readings above discuss comprehensively that leadership character encompasses integrity, empathy, lack of blame, humility, emotional mastery, accountability, self-confidence, courage, and focus on the whole. These ingredients of moral leaders help produce quality results for learners and success in the organization. On the other hand, managerial competence includes leadership skills, instructional leadership, resource management and allocation, human resource management, program monitoring and reporting, professional development, and community collaboration. Several authors were cited about their views on these seven domains of managerial competence and nine domains of leadership character. These readings could help achieve answers on which of the domains in leadership character of school heads significantly influence the managerial competence of head teachers since the affective and competent goals of leading and managing were linked in several points according to the study of Raisiene 2019, Porvaznik 2018 and Crossan et al., 2019.

3.3 Correlations between Measures

Leadership character has been associated with managerial competence in modern organizations. In the study of Raišienė (2019), she develops a model of modern leaders' characteristics. It stated that a leader could overcome managerial challenges in modern

administrations with specific values, competencies, attitudes, abilities, and professional characteristics. This idea requires managerial competence to be in possession of a leader based on a person's high social and emotional intellect. Relations with other people are much necessary for a leader nowadays. With technological advancement and other environmental changes, a leader needs to renew his managerial skills, behavior, and attitudes to cope with these challenges. Leadership character and competence are necessary ingredients for managerial success in an organization. However, there is research evaluating separately leadership character and managerial competence. It has been stated in those studies that the leader has unquestionable influences, whether they possess positive or negative character. Still, the organizations' management is affected effectively or harmfully. Thus, the model stresses that the leaders' values influence managers' competence and abilities (Raišienė 2019).

Moreover, failures are made because of the leaders' weaknesses and their competence. Still, the main reason for these mistakes is character. A person can do competence, while character signifies what they will do. In an organization, sound decision-making is determined by character, such as listening to other ideas and dealing with discriminatory behaviors. Generally, the character becomes at the forefront of crisis management. A leader's success is due to their character because values, counts, and competencies matter (Crossan et al., 2019).

In addition, competence refers to skills, while character embodies values. Management finds predictability and order, while leadership strives to produce organizational change. The term manager has been used together with the leader. Leadership is a leader's activities, while managing is a manager's job. It is contended that leadership is more on forming good relations and management is completing tasks. Therefore, from this point of view, leadership is more of a positive character and values that will enhance harmonious relationships inside and outside the organization. In contrast, managing is achieving skills and competence to complete necessary appointed tasks. These two school leader roles are beneficial (Porvazník, 2018).

The two different actions a school administrator perceives are executive action and leading action. An agent who uses many competencies is the manager's role while leading is acting with the achievement of plans as its purpose. The school leader finds material, human, and financial teaching resources through managing and leading while modelling various positive characters in the school environment. In spreading influence, school leaders must lead with their behavior.

The school administrator's role has three aspects: leading and managing with values, action, and knowledge. It is behaving, motivating, and influencing and is expressed through actions and competence (Burcar, 2019).

However, the challenges of modern organizations are a poorly led and richly managed school will eventually need more purpose. Leadership necessitates amplifying strengths and managing things to reduce weaknesses. Both things need to be progressive. Organizations need a bright spark of commitment and vision; this is wise leadership. An objective perspective of a manager is having budgeting, controlling, and directing skills

in an organization. School leaders are both managers and leaders. Long-term thinking is leadership, and thinking short-term is managing in a K-12 school (Vaught, 2019).

Managerial competence is centered on the administrative functions and tasks that will meet the managerial goals effectively. Effective formal leaders show characteristics of self-awareness and emotional intelligence. A managerial component in leadership was discovered. A decent leader is also an ideal manager. A leader has this power relation using the desired character. Managing requires skills and competence to carry out functionality and coordination. Therefore, these two roles of a school administrator need not be separated from each other because they are related and interconnected from each other. When one of these two is lacking, there could be failures in an organization. It needs to be equal and partly not exceeding from each other (Hofmeyer et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Williams and Seaman, 2019; Markovic, 2019 claim that successful managerial performance is influenced by ethical leadership. The ethical implications of a leader's decisions interconnect managers' emphasis on performance. The demand for the ethical conduct of a leader is higher since they assume that it corresponds to higher managerial performance. Management pursues the mission since it corresponds to competence that will make things right. Leadership strives for its vision because it imbues character in doing the right thing. Between leadership character and managerial competence, school administrators will be capable of setting intrinsic goals while managing proper means for their achievement. True leadership was infused with its ethical implications. It is necessary for managing and leading values to have followers being task-oriented and achieve excellent performance. Finally, the joint roles of managing competence and leading character of school administrators will help them get to the heights of striving for success in any challenges they may encounter in this contemporary school environment.

In summary, the discussion of various literature focuses on the study's two variables: school heads' leadership character and head teachers' managerial competence. Cited works, readings, findings, and studies helped connect the two variables. The presentation of literature also serves as a support for the findings, results, and development of the study.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in the servant-leadership theory of Greenleaf (1970), which describes its practical approach to organizational management and conceptualizes character in leadership. Greenleaf describes the servant-leadership theory as not only a management technique but a way of being a servant leader. Furthermore, this research study relates also to ethical or moral leadership by Bass and Steidlmeier (1999), which stated that leaders need to be moral individuals and moral managers by using their social power to influence and make excellent decision-making. As explained in the previous page, influencing is leading with character, while decision-making is managing competently. Moreover, the model of Raišienė (2019) supports this study which states that in modern organizations, several challenges are faced by school administrators.

These managerial challenges can be overcome by having specific and desirable values, attitudes, abilities, and competencies (Smith, 2018; Parris et al., 2018; Resick et al., 2019; Raišienė, 2019).

The theory was chosen due to its relevance to the contemporary world of school leadership and management. Developing leadership character must be emphasized today as competence in management. These two school administrator roles must be viewed together. It is leading and managing a school with a head and a heart. Thus, the following theory, proposition, and model were carefully used to support this study.

5. Conceptual Framework

Presented in Figure 1 is the conceptual framework showing the study's variables. The independent variable is leadership character which consists of nine indicators, namely: *integrity* is honesty, authenticity, and truth-telling; *empathy* refers to creating strong bonds and earning trust; *lack of blame* denotes spending time fixing problems and not projecting blame; *humility* states in keeping leaders from appearing arrogant or self-righteous; *emotional mastery* is managing anxiety under challenging situations; *accountability* discusses following through commitments and willingness to hold other people accountable; *self-confidence* corresponds to being assertive enough to speak their minds; *courage* resembles in addressing uncomfortable issues and taking risks willingly; and *focus on whole* which means helping other people see their contribution to the success of organization (Turknett Leadership Group, 2018).

The dependent variable of the study is managerial competence which comprises seven indicators: *leadership skills* refer to modeling appropriate professional behavior; *instructional leadership* describes monitoring the curriculum design process. *Resource management and allocation* connote allocating and managing budgets effectively. *Human resource management* is hiring, evaluating, recruiting, and terminating staff. *Program monitoring and reporting* describes promoting clear processes in collecting, documenting, and reporting data, professional development practices encourage staff professional development, and community collaboration defines building relationships within the community (Sherman et al., 2019).

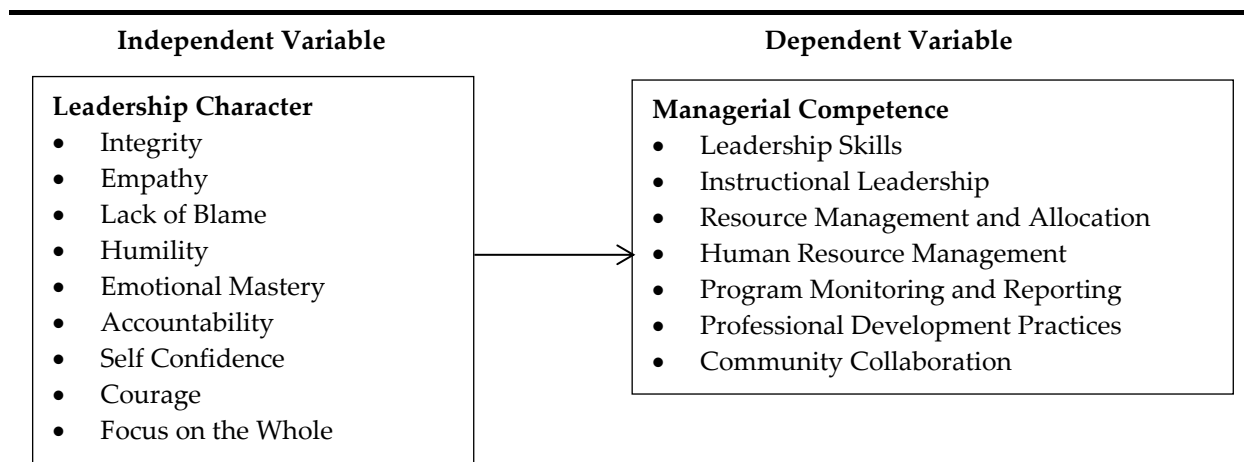


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of the Study

5.1 Significance of the Study

In the global setting, the result of this study shall contribute to the growing importance of identifying the strengths and weaknesses of school leaders and their impact on the entire educational setting. This study emphasizes that only leaders with the necessary competencies, skills, values, and attitudes can recover managerial issues in the current organization. It is managing with competence and leading by heart. Each school leader and manager must renew managerial competence and positive character leadership to cope with these problems (Raišienė, 2019).

The findings of this study will benefit *Department of Education officials*, particularly school heads or head teachers, concerning the proper management and leadership of schools. The information obtained from this study will also aid in designing effective interventions and programs by DepEd offices in deepening the improvement and development of competence and character of school heads in leading and managing schools. *Teachers, students, parents, the community, and other stakeholders* can use this study to acquire ideas about leading with character and managing with competence. A realization may occur that a school head or the head teacher needs not to be competent in management only. Still, the most important is leading with appropriate character. These two could not be separated from each other. *Future researchers* may use this study as a guide and reference to further their study in leadership and management with competence and character.

6. Materials and Methods

This chapter describes the research design, locale, population and sample, research instrument, data collection, statistical tools, and ethical considerations.

6.1 Research Design

This study implemented a quantitative non-experimental research design using a correlational technique. Quantitative research is quantifiable data, numeric and empirical. In non-experimental research, variables are studied as they exist and are not

manipulated by the researcher (Belli, 2018). This research design was utilized because it deals with the significant relationship between school heads' leadership character and head teachers' managerial competence.

This study's descriptive-correlational technique was appropriate because it aims to provide a relevant relationship between two variables. In this study, the lead character of school heads was studied to establish its relationship with the managerial competence of head teachers. Specifically, the study determined which domain in leadership character significantly influences managerial competence. In this study, the researcher described the variables and their natural relationship. (Clearinghouse for Labor Education and Research, 2019).

The study employed a causal approach since it described the cause-and-effect relationship between leadership character and managerial competence. The independent variable, leadership character, will provide immediate changes in another variable, managerial competence. In the causal approach, the researcher obtained data on which domain of leadership character significantly influences managerial competence.

6.2 Research Locale

The study was conducted in the elementary and secondary schools of Samal District in Island Garden City of Samal. Samal Island is a city composed of islands in the heart of Davao Gulf in the Southern part of the Philippines. It is part of the province of Davao del Norte. It lies only 900 meters east of Davao City and 10 kilometers West of Compostela Valley Province. And it is also a 10-15 minute ride from Davao City via motorboat or ferry boat. It is a city created last March 17, 1998 by Republic Act 8471. IGaCos is located between latitude 6° 54'00" and 7° 11'28" north, and between longitude 125° 39'30" and 125° 47'28" east.

Island Garden City of Samal comprises the Babak District, Samal District, and Kaputian District. Samal district is the research location of this study. It comprises 15 barangays and 20 public and private elementary and secondary schools.

6.3 Population and Sample

The study was conducted in the private and public elementary and secondary schools of Samal District in Island Garden City of Samal. The researcher employed the stratified random sampling technique to fit better this correlation study involving the total population of elementary and secondary teachers in Samal District. This was purposely included to answer the survey questionnaire on the leadership character of school heads and the managerial competence of head teachers. The researcher distributed 300 questionnaires, and only 269 of these were returned



Figure 2: Geographic Location of the Study

The researcher used a stratified sampling technique to avoid biases. She ensured that every profile or characteristics of the teacher population in Island Garden City of Samal are well presented in her sample. The study respondents were chosen wisely to ensure that they belonged in one stratum. In this way, the objectives of the research will be studied well, and the results will be valid and reliable.

The non-teaching personnel and school principals were not included in the respondents of the study. Teaching personnel is only included. The researcher will

encourage voluntary participation among the respondents of the study. Rest assured that the informants will not be forced to participate just because their principal or school head told them to. Upon the administration of the survey, they should be informed about the purpose of the study, and refusal to participate will neither affect their job nor will they be charged with violations or penalties.

6.4 Research Instruments

A survey questionnaire in the form of a checklist was employed in the study. The leadership character questionnaire was used to gain information about the study's independent variable. It is adapted from the Turknett Leadership Group (2018). It comprises nine parts: integrity, empathy, lack of blame, humility, emotional mastery, accountability, self-confidence, courage, and focus on the whole. However, the original questionnaire was modified to suit the local setting, and some terms were simplified to clearly understand the respondents. The following scale was used to evaluate the level of leadership character of school heads.

Range of Means	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Very High	Measures of leadership character of the school head are always manifested.
3.40-4.19	High	Measures of leadership character of the school head are oftentimes manifested.
2.60-3.39	Moderate	Measures of leadership character of the school head are sometimes manifested.
1.80-2.59	Low	Measures of leadership character of the school head are seldom manifested.
1.00-1.79	Very Low	Measures of leadership character of the school head are never manifested.

The managerial competence survey questionnaire was used to acquire data about the dependent variable of the study. It is adapted from Sherman et al. (2019). It has seven parts: leadership skills, instructional leadership, resource management and allocation, human resource management, program monitoring and reporting, professional development practices, and community collaboration. However, the original questionnaire was modified to suit the local setting, and some terms were simplified to clearly understand the respondents. The following scale was used to evaluate the managerial competence level of head teachers.

Range of Means	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Very High	Measures of managerial competence of the head teacher are always manifested.
3.40-4.19	High	Measures of managerial competence of the head teacher are oftentimes manifested.
2.60-3.39	Moderate	Measures of managerial competence of the head teacher are sometimes manifested.
1.80-2.59	Low	Measures of managerial competence of the head teacher are seldom manifested.

1.00-1.79	Very Low	Measures of managerial competence of the head teacher are never manifested.
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Before administering the survey questionnaires, these were subjected to a dry run-in order to determine the Cronbach Alpha values before content validation by experts with the external validator. The researcher proceeded with her pilot testing to nearby schools and administered 30 survey questionnaires to teacher-respondents. The researcher gathered 30 questionnaires from four nearby schools a day later. Likert scale was used in describing the level of leadership character of school heads and the managerial competence of head teachers. The result of the pilot testing indicated 0.977 for the 46-item questions on leadership character and a result of 0.976 for the 26 questions on managerial competence. This means that the responses of the respondents vary with an internal consistency of excellent. After the pilot testing, the researcher submitted the survey questionnaire for validation to expert validators with one external validator. The overall mean score of validation is 4.64 with a descriptive equivalent of Very Good.

6.5 Data Collection

The researcher conducted the following procedures accordingly.

First, the adapted survey questionnaires were validated by the research experts of the University of Mindanao Professional Schools who were also the panel members during the researcher's outline defense. Apart from that, one external validator was recommended by the researcher's adviser to validate the said instrument.

Second, after the validation, the researcher had made minor revisions on the instrument as instructed by the validators.

Third, after finalizing the research instrument, the researcher had set out to administer the survey questionnaires to 30 respondents for pilot testing. Once the instruments were retrieved, the researcher submitted the results to the statistician for a reliability test. The results for reliability statistics showed an average Cronbach's Alpha of 0.977. This means that the survey questionnaires are reliable and acceptable.

Fourth, after accomplishing the validation and reliability testing, the researcher submitted her manuscript as well as several attachments to the University of Mindanao Ethics Review and Committee (UMERC) for ethics review. After obtaining the certificate of approval, the researcher requested an endorsement from Eugenio S. Guhao, Jr., DM, the Dean of the Professional Schools of the University of Mindanao Davao City. The letter from Dean was dated September 16, 2021.

Fifth, the university's dean's endorsement letter was attached to the permission letter sent to the Schools Division Superintendent of IGACOS, Dr. Winnie E. Batoon, CESO VI. On October 4, 2021, the researcher sent a permission letter to the SDS of IGaCoS. On October 6, 2021, the SDS permitted the conduct of the study, provided that proper coordination with the concerned school heads was applied to avoid disruption of their official duties, no money shall be collected from respondents, and the results of the study will be discussed immediately to concern school heads. Upon the approval of the Schools Division Superintendent, another permission letter with an attached approval letter from

the Superintendent was sent to the school heads and head teachers of Samal district. On October 6-8, 2021, the researcher personally appeared to 23 schools of Samal district handing in a letter request to the principal to ask permission to conduct the study. After the approval, the researcher had set the date for the distribution and retrieval of survey questionnaires. The researcher had given the questionnaires on October 8, 2021. A week after, the researcher gathered the questionnaires from 11 schools in Samal District. On October 22, 2021, the researcher gathered again the questionnaires from six schools. And on October 29, 2021, the researcher finally finished gathering the remaining questionnaires from six schools to complete it all. The researcher had difficulty in retrieving the questionnaires because teacher-respondents in schools employed the Work from the home scheme due to the pandemic. It is necessary for the researcher to visit twice or thrice the schools for the retrieval of questionnaires.

Lastly, after the retrieval of all survey questionnaires, the data obtained were tallied and tabulated. On November 25, 2021, the researcher is finally done with the tabulation and submitted the result to the statistician for analysis. On December 2, 2021, the statistician was done analyzing the results. Data collection was completely done for two months period.

6.6 Statistical Tools

The following statistical tools were used for data analysis and interpretation.

- **Mean and Frequency.** These were used in determining the level of leadership character of school heads and the level of managerial competence of head teachers.
- **Pearson Product Moment Correlation.** This was used in determining the significant relationship of the leadership character of school heads and the managerial competence of head teachers.
- **Multiple Regression.** This was used in determining which among the domains of the leadership character of school heads significantly influence the managerial competence of the head teacher.

6.7 Ethical Considerations

This section presents the ethical concerns that may arise during the conduct of this study. Ethical considerations are discussed to avoid unpredictable circumstances that may put the respondents at risk. Through this, the respondents were assured that this study will pose no harm to them and that their identity is kept confidential.

- **Voluntary Participation.** The researcher encouraged voluntary participation among the respondents of the study. Rest assured that the informants were not forced to take part just because their principal or school head told them to. Upon the administration of the survey, they were informed about the purpose of the study and refusal to participate will neither affect their job nor they will be charged with violations or penalties.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality.** Upon the retrieval of the survey questionnaires, the researcher ensured optimum confidentiality regarding the identity of the participants. All necessary information will not be disclosed to the public to

protect the individual's welfare, and the obtained data shall solely be used for the completion of the study.

- **Informed Consent Form.** In the course of this study, the respondents' rights and protection is the researcher's utmost priority. Hence, to ensure that the participants are well-versed with the purpose and objectives of the study, the researcher gave a copy of the Informed Consent Form to the informants who fit the inclusion criteria. They were given enough time to understand the given conditions and shall decide whether they will participate in the said survey. The consent form includes all the necessary information that the respondent needs to know upon participating in the study. More importantly, the informants' participation is voluntary, and they were not forced or threatened if they refuse to take part in the survey.
- **Recruitment.** Identifying and recruiting respondents for the study are crucial in establishing the probability of the results. Therefore, the researcher assumed full responsibility for careful consideration on the recruitment procedure that entails identification and contacting the target respondents of the study. The researcher identified and contacted these respondents personally and they presented with the Informed Consent Form as they took part in the study.
- **Risks.** The researcher assured that there were no harmful effects that the study may impose on the respondents. Keeping their identity and all the responses that reflected in the survey questionnaires private will keep them from feeling inferior whenever they found out that they possess symptoms of anxiety. This will prevent them from the psychological effect of underestimating and belittling themselves which may cause an unfavorable effect on their well-being.
- **Benefits.** This study will be beneficial to the teachers and school heads of IGACOS. The results may help the school heads provide possible interventions to improve the leadership character of school heads and the managerial competence of head teachers. Also, the respondents of the study may also reflect on their practices and assess whether they fit the criterion of being competent in the field.
- **Plagiarism.** The researcher saw to it that this study is her original work and there is no duplication of work between her and other authors. In addition, the researcher tried her best to paraphrase the claims and cite the authors properly. To ensure that plagiarism will be attained at a minimal level, she will use Turnitin software to check the authenticity of ideas.
- **Fabrication.** The results of the study shall solely be based on the data gathered. The articles and existing literature used are all based on the recent studies published and no falsification was done. There will be no fabrication of information to suffice the findings or conclusions of the study. No making up of data or results, or purposefully putting forward conclusions that are not accurate.
- **Falsification.** The researcher assured that no trace of presenting misleading data to come up with the expected output. The conclusions of the study shall be based on the actual result. The researcher saw to it that there is no over-representation, omission or substitution of information on the results of the study.

- **Conflict of Interest.** The researcher assured that there is no conflict of interest between her and the head teacher participants of the study. The participants' welfare was the topmost priority of the researcher. The researcher ensured the validity of the research and that it was influenced by the intentions of acquiring professional acknowledgement or recognition.
- **Deceit.** The researcher refrained from deceiving the respondents about the purpose of the study. The participants were informed about their rights and protection upon participating. No hidden intentions prevailed in the course of the study which may pose potential risk and harm towards the respondents.
- **Permission from Organization/ Location.** The researcher sought permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Davao Del Norte through written permission. If permitted, the researcher sent a letter of permission addressed to the principals or school heads to ask permission for the conduct of the study in their respective schools. They were also informed about the procedure for the administration of the survey questionnaires in advance.
- **Authorship.** This study is the original work of the researcher. Ideas from various authors were given due recognition through proper citation and referencing. The researcher acknowledges the support, understanding, advice and encouragement of her adviser, Dr. Jerlyn G. Balones as she takes part in revising the manuscript, editing the adapted questionnaires, and even finding the most appropriate tools for the study. In addition, the author also recognizes the effort of the panel members in providing feedback on improving the instrument during questionnaire validation.

7. Results and Discussion

7.1 Results

The data obtained from the respondents are presented, analyzed, and interpreted in this section based on the research objectives previously stated. The order of the discussions on the above-mentioned topic is as follows: level of leadership character of school heads, level of managerial competence of head teachers, and correlation between leadership character of school heads and managerial competence of head teachers.

7.1.1 Level of Leadership Character of School Heads

In Table 1, the overall level of Leadership Character among School Heads gained a mean score of 4.70 with a standard deviation of 0.42 and is verbally interpreted as *Very High*. The standard deviation of 0.42 signifies that the data was clustered closely around the mean, and it implies reliability. Further, the study results also show that in all indicators, the Leadership Character of the School Heads is *Very High*. Specifically, the indicator, *Focus on the Whole* got the highest mean of 4.77 which means that the School heads are able to put the organization's interest or even the larger community's interest above their own self-interest or their own department's interest. Moreover, the indicator, *Lack of*

Blame, got the lowest mean score of 4.64 which means that the school heads' project blame is seen as irresponsible and lacking in integrity.

Table 1: Level of Leadership Character of School Heads

Indicator	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Integrity	0.46	4.69	Very high
Empathy	0.45	4.73	Very high
Lack of Blame	0.52	4.64	Very high
Humility	0.46	4.73	Very high
Emotional Mastery	0.50	4.66	Very high
Accountability	0.49	4.68	Very high
Self Confidence	0.45	4.72	Very high
Courage	0.49	4.67	Very high
Focus on the Whole	0.44	4.77	Very high
Overall	0.42	4.70	Very high

7.1.2 Level of Managerial Competence of Head Teachers

In Table 2, the overall level of Managerial Competence of Head Teachers gained a mean score of 4.71 with a standard deviation of 0.43 and is verbally interpreted as *Very High*. The standard deviation of 0.43 is more reliable because it implies that data was closely clustered to the mean. Further, the study results also show that in all indicators, the level of Managerial Competence of Head Teachers is Very High. Specifically, the indicators, Professional Development Practices and Community Collaboration gained the highest means of 4.75 while the indicator, Human Resource Management got the lowest mean of 4.67.

Table 2: Level of Managerial Competence of Head Teachers

Indicator	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Leadership Skills	0.46	4.71	Very high
Instructional Leadership	0.48	4.70	Very high
Resource Management and Allocation	0.49	4.70	Very high
Human Resource Management	0.49	4.67	Very high
Program Monitoring and Reporting	0.50	4.71	Very high
Professional Development Practices	0.47	4.75	Very high
Community Collaboration	0.47	4.75	Very high
Overall	0.43	4.71	Very high

7.1.3 Relationship between Leadership Character of School Heads and Managerial Competence of Head Teachers

Table 3 reveals the results of the test of the relationship between leadership character and managerial competence. Reflected in the hypothesis, the relationship was tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The overall r-value of 0.884 with a p-value of 0.000 signified the rejection of the null hypothesis. This means that there is a significant relationship between leadership character and managerial competence. Also, the data reveals that leadership character is correlated with managerial competence and that a positive correlation between the two variables exists.

Table 3: Significance on the Relationship between Leadership Character and Management Competence

Leadership Character	Management Competence							Overall
	LS	IL	RMA	HRM	PMR	PDP	CC	
Integrity	.773** .000	.650** .000	.690** .000	.639** .000	.694** .000	.704** .000	.700** .000	.779** .000
Empathy	.798** .000	.615** .000	.673** .000	.594** .000	.676** .000	.706** .000	.674** .000	.760** .000
Lack of Blame	.747** .000	.683** .000	.733** .000	.681** .000	.733** .000	.731** .000	.717** .000	.808** .000
Humility	.754** .000	.669** .000	.741** .000	.650** .000	.727** .000	.751** .000	.708** .000	.804** .000
Emotional Mastery	.670** .000	.550** .000	.614** .000	.655** .000	.647** .000	.638** .000	.602** .000	.703** .000
Accountability	.738** .000	.736** .000	.778** .000	.668** .000	.748** .000	.727** .000	.749** .000	.827** .000
Self Confidence	.720** .000	.624** .000	.685** .000	.700** .000	.696** .000	.661** .000	.693** .000	.769** .000
Courage	.750** .000	.710** .000	.763** .000	.718** .000	.721** .000	.740** .000	.746** .000	.827** .000
Focus on the Whole	.794** .000	.718** .000	.773** .000	.674** .000	.772** .000	.782** .000	.748** .000	.845** .000
Overall	.836** .000	.739** .000	.801** .000	.743** .000	.796** .000	.799** .000	.787** .000	.884** .000

7.1.4 Domain in Leadership Character of School Heads Significantly Influences the Managerial Competence of Head Teachers

It can be gleaned in Table 4 that the indicators, Lack of Blame, Accountability, Courage, and Focus on the Whole resulted in a p-value of 0.000 which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. This further implies that these are the domains of leadership character that significantly influence the managerial competence of head teachers. The r-squared value of 0.83 indicates that 83% of the variance of managerial competence being studied was explained by the variance of leadership character. The model used has a good fit for the study.

Table 4: Significance on the Influence of Leadership Character and Management Competence

Management Competence					
Leadership Character		<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Constant		.563		4.344	.000
Integrity		-.020	-.022	-.391	.696
Empathy		.059	.063	1.169	.243
Lack of Blame		.225	.275	5.403	.000
Humility		-.070	-.075	-1.105	.270
Emotional Mastery		-.050	-.058	-1.224	.222
Accountability		.223	.255	4.291	.000
Self Confidence		-.081	-.085	-1.480	.140
Courage		.220	.253	3.940	.000
Focus on the Whole		.378	.385	7.422	.000

R	.912				
R ²	.831				
ΔR	.825				
F	141.655				
Q	.000				

7.2 Discussion

This section presents the descriptive results of the variables used in the study and the description and interpretation of the indicators of each variable. This section likewise presents the discussion and interpretation of the significant relationship between the leadership character of school heads and the managerial competence of head teachers as well as the domain which significantly influences it.

7.2.1 Leadership Character of School Heads

The level of leadership character of school heads is *very high*. This implies that the school heads were able to observe integrity defined by honesty, authenticity, and truth-telling as the foundation for being seen as an ethical leader. This resembles with what was emphasized from the study results of Costellow (2018) and Cummins (2019) which stipulated that a high level of leadership character is observed by relying on concepts, beliefs, and dedication in the school. Further, a leader who bases his decision on morality seeks to establish shared followership as a leader that inspires parents, teachers, principals, and students to act on their own initiative. Hence, in order to achieve greater instructional effectiveness, school leaders should be aware of the leadership qualities highly valued by teachers.

The very high leadership character of the respondents of this study further manifests that they can overcome managerial challenges in modern administrations for they have specific values, competencies, attitudes, abilities, and professional characteristics as explained in the model of leader's characteristics of Raisiene (2019). Additionally, other study results have also emphasized that in today's world, a leader's relationships with others are extremely important. To cope with these problems, a leader must refresh his managerial abilities, behavior, and attitudes in light of technological advancements and other changes in our environment (Palanski, et.al., 2019; Greenacre, et al., 2019).

Although research limits their way in the affective domain of leadership, most research approves that moral character greatly influences the complexity of leadership (Spears, 2019; Poloncic, 2018). The study of Dimopoulos (2020) made emphasis that all of these aspects have been proven to be essential for educational efficiency and are regarded so by research. As discrete pieces in an integrated system, each one has its own relative influence on the efficacy of educational leadership effectiveness, it is also believed that they have strong connectivity. In addition, there is a consensus that, in addition to characteristics, styles, and behaviors, educational leadership effectiveness is influenced by a variety of other factors such as timing, special circumstances, legislation, personnel qualifications, the importance of expected outcomes, and many others. These are evident in the study results of the current study since even if the respondents resulted to a very

high leadership character, still there are indicators, which need also of improvement based on the presented results.

7.2.2 Managerial Competence of Head Teachers

The results revealed a very high level of managerial competence among the head teachers. Hence, the viewpoints of Ikegbusi (2019), Rintala (2019), and Karisa (2018) hold true that competitive managers with specialized talents and methodical principles needed in obtaining administrative skills are the result of better extra training and workshops for head teachers. With the several exposures of head teachers in training and workshops, the result of this study serves as evidence that the head teachers have truly used their full potential and skills in functioning as head teachers in their respective workstations.

Further, the very high level of managerial competence of the respondents corroborates with the claim of Williams and Seaman (2019) and Markovic (2019) as they emphasized that ethical leadership has an impact on management performance. The ethical consequences of a leader's actions are intertwined with a manager's focus on results. Because they believe that ethical leadership equates to better management performance, there is a larger demand for ethical leadership. Also, in today's educational climate, school administrators' dual tasks of managing competency and leading character will assist them in reaching new heights of aiming for success in any problems they may face.

Lastly, the result of this study also an additional emphasis on the existence of high-level performance of head teachers as this confirms the result from the study of Dalanon, Diano, Belarmino, Hayama, Miyagi and Matsuka (2018) which stated that females with tenure in high positions were likewise shown to be more dedicated. On the topic of teaching practice, this study also found a link between the ability of younger teachers with more experience to better manage diverse students, master their pedagogical skills, improve planning, assessing, and reporting student outcomes, create better learning environments, and have a positive social attitude toward learning, among other things. In terms of personal integrity and interpersonal effectiveness, male teachers are more likely to recognize management skills.

7.2.3 Relationship between Leadership Character of School Heads and Managerial Competence of Head Teachers

The overall r-value of 0.884 with a p-value of 0.000 signified the rejection of the null hypothesis. There is a significant relationship between the two variables. Leadership character is correlated with managerial competence and that positive correlation between the two variables exists.

This confirms the study of Raišienė (2019) which mentioned about the model of modern leaders' characteristics and stated that managerial challenges in modern administrations can be overcome by a leader who has specific values, competencies, attitudes, abilities, and professional characteristics. This idea requires managerial competence to be in the possession of a leader based on the high social and emotional

intellect of a person. Relations with other people are much necessary for a leader nowadays. With technological advancement and other changes in our environment, it is important for a leader to renew his managerial skills, behavior, and attitudes in order to cope with these challenges. Leadership character and managerial competence are necessary ingredients for managerial success in an organization.

7.2.4 Domain in Leadership Character of School Heads Significantly Influence the Managerial Competence of Head Teachers

On the domain that significantly influences managerial competence, the indicators: Lack of Blame, Accountability, Courage, and Focus on the Whole were the most significant based on the results. Specifically, the indicator, lack of blame, is believed as significant. The respondents of the study adhere that the leaders are not into blaming others whenever there are problems in the organization making them efficient as they do not practice negative judgments, anger, rage, and indignant commitment (Priest, 2018).

Additionally, in terms of accountability, the character can be activated temporarily in a specific context to help strengthen the relationship between competence and performance, whereas in cases of high entanglement, the character can be activated temporarily in a specific context to help strengthen the relationship between competence and performance. Our main premise is that a strong bond between character and skill will result in exceptional results over time (Sturm, et al., 2019).

Lastly, the result of the study supported the Theory of Greenleaf which describes its practical approach to the management of organization and conceptualizes the use of character in leadership. A well-developed leadership character together with a necessary competence in management will result in a positive impact on the school organization.

8. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the very high result in all the items is very overwhelming. Nonetheless, as leaders and school heads, it is best that they can maintain and sustain a good leadership performance. Hence, it is recommended that other leadership factors can also be explored over focusing only on leadership character and managerial competence. Specifically, with the new normal delivery system, it is best if school heads and leaders are given additional leadership enhancement activities such as Blended Learning Competence training and assessments for them to explore their potential as leaders.

Further, it is also recommended for future researchers to conduct studies that explore other leadership factors that could have arisen during the pandemic and studies which explore the experiences and struggles not just of school leaders but also of teachers who continue to hurdle delivering quality education in a blended learning set-up.

9. Conclusion

The study findings affirmed that the indicators: Lack of Blame, Accountability, Courage, and Focus on the Whole are the domains of leadership character that significantly influence the managerial competence of head teachers. The findings showed that the level of Leadership Character among School Heads and the level of Managerial Competence of Head Teachers are very high.

Therefore, there is a significant relationship between leadership character and managerial competence. Also, the data reveals that leadership character is correlated with managerial competence and that a positive correlation between the two variables exists. Lastly, the result of the study conforms to the Servant-Leadership Theory of Greenleaf (1970) which describes its practical approach to organizational management and conceptualizes the use of the character in leadership. The very high level of leadership character among school heads cascades to a very high level of managerial competence among head teachers which justifies that from the locale of the study, it can be expected that teachers and administrators work together for the good of their institution.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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