

Adaptive Leadership and Learners' Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in the Division of Dasmariñas: Basis for a Strategic Plan

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ABSTRACT

Quality education depends on effective school leadership, particularly as educational systems face increasing complexity and post-pandemic recovery demands. While teacher quality is essential, substantive educational improvement requires adaptive school heads who can navigate change and foster resilience. Limited research exists on adaptive leadership practices in Philippine public secondary schools, particularly regarding their relationship with learner performance. This study assessed adaptive leadership and school performance in selected secondary schools in the Division of Cavite as the basis for an intervention plan. Specifically, it examined stakeholder evaluations of school heads' adaptive leadership across six dimensions, investigated perceptual differences among respondent groups, analyzed the relationship between adaptive leadership and school performance, and proposed an intervention plan. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 249 respondents comprising supervisors, teachers, and SPTA officers across five public junior high schools. Researcher-made questionnaires structured on a 5-point Likert scale were employed, with data analyzed using percentage, weighted mean, One-Way ANOVA, and Pearson r correlation. School heads were perceived as highly effective in adaptive leadership (CM=4.80), with Empowerment and Support Staff ranking highest (CM=4.82). Significant perceptual differences emerged among stakeholder groups in Leadership Behavior ($F=7.718$, $p<.001$), Change Management ($F=14.248$, $p<.001$), and Accountability and Self-Reflection ($F=17.314$, $p<.001$). School performance data showed high graduation (94.98-97.12%) and promotion rates (92.55-98.64%), though dropout rates varied considerably (2.43-8.16%). A weak but significant positive correlation emerged between adaptive leadership and learner performance ($r=0.177$, $p=.005$). The proposed Project SIDLÁK-DASMARIÑAS intervention plan, validated as highly acceptable (WM=4.58), addresses leadership development, collaborative problem-solving, and stakeholder engagement. Findings confirm adaptive leadership as a significant predictor of learner outcomes, though its modest impact suggests the need for comprehensive, integrated approaches to school improvement.

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KEYWORDS: *adaptive leadership, School performance, Stakeholder perceptions, Intervention plan.*

INTRODUCTION

The growing complexity of educational systems in the 21st century has necessitated leadership approaches that are flexible, context-responsive, and capable of addressing the diverse needs of learners. Adaptive leadership, as conceptualized by Heifetz (1994) and further elaborated by Heifetz, Grashow,

and Linsky (2009), emphasizes the capacity of school leaders to navigate change, mobilize stakeholders, and foster resilience in dynamic environments. While numerous studies have established the influence of leadership styles on student outcomes (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005;

Hallinger, 2011), there remains a notable gap in empirical investigations specifically linking adaptive leadership practices to learners' academic performance in localized public secondary school settings, particularly in the Philippine context (Acosta & Acosta, 2017; Bernardo, 2020). This gap is significant because the evolving demands of the K-12 curriculum and post-pandemic recovery require leadership models that can effectively respond to instructional disruptions and learner diversity. At the macro level, global educational reforms underscore the need for school leaders who can adapt to rapid socio-economic and technological changes (OECD, 2019). At the micro level, Philippine basic education continues to confront challenges in learning outcomes, as reflected in national and international assessments (DepEd, 2022; World Bank, 2021), suggesting that leadership effectiveness remains a critical factor. At the mini level, selected secondary schools in the Division of Dasmariñas exhibit varying levels of learner performance, which may be influenced by leadership practices that either promote or hinder adaptive capacities within the school community. Thus, this study is relevant and significant as it seeks to examine how adaptive leadership among school heads correlates with learners' performance, thereby contributing to both theoretical enrichment and practical improvement in educational leadership within specific local contexts.

The legal foundation of this study is anchored on policies and legislative frameworks that emphasize quality education, effective school governance, and leadership accountability. The Philippine Constitution of 1987 mandates the State to provide quality education accessible to all and to ensure that educational institutions uphold standards of excellence (Article XIV, Section 1). This constitutional directive is operationalized through Republic Act No. 9155, also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, which decentralizes educational management and empowers school heads to exercise leadership in improving school outcomes (DepEd, 2001). The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (RA 10533) further reinforces the role of school leadership in implementing the K-12 curriculum, highlighting the necessity for adaptive strategies to meet diverse learner needs (Official Gazette, 2013). Moreover, DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, or the National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), underscores the importance of instructional leadership and continuous professional development in enhancing learner achievement.

Complementarily, DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020, which outlines the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan, explicitly calls for adaptive leadership in addressing unprecedented challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic (DepEd, 2020). Studies by Brillantes and Fernandez (2019) and Malaluan (2016) emphasize that these policies collectively position school leaders as agents of change who must exhibit adaptability, innovation, and responsiveness. Furthermore, DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015, on the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), links leadership performance with measurable outcomes, including learner achievement, thereby reinforcing accountability mechanisms. These legal and policy frameworks substantiate the relevance of examining adaptive leadership as a determinant of learners' performance, as they collectively advocate for responsive, evidence-based, and context-sensitive leadership practices within the Philippine education system.

Statement of the Problem

This study assessed the Educational Environment, Adaptive Leadership and School performance in selected secondary schools Division of Cavite as basis for intervention plan. Specifically, it sought to answer the following dub-problems:

1. How do supervisors, teachers, and SPTA Officers assess adaptive leadership in selected secondary schools in the Division of Dasmariñas in terms of:
 - 1.1. Leadership Behavior;
 - 1.2. Change Management;
 - 1.3. Empowerment and Support staff;
 - 1.4. Collaborative Problem Solving;
 - 1.5. Stakeholder engagement and Relationship Building; and
 - 1.6. Accountability and self- reflection?
2. Is there a significant difference in the assessment of the three groups of respondents as for the aforementioned variables?
3. What is the learner performance for the last two years?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the assessment of adaptive leadership and the learners' performance?
5. Based on the finding what intervention program may be proposed? 6. How acceptable is the proposed intervention plan?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are proposed for testing in this study:

1. There is no significant difference in the assessment of the three groups of respondents as to the aforementioned variables.
2. There is no significant relationship between adaptive leadership and learners' performance for two (2) years.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study examined the relationship between adaptive leadership and learners' performance in selected secondary schools in the Division of Dasmariñas. Specifically, the study is limited to two primary variables: the assessment of adaptive leadership practices and the learners' performance over a two-year period, covering School Years 2023–2024 and 2024–2025. The adaptive leadership variable is operationalized through six key dimensions: leadership behavior; change management; empowerment and support; collaborative problem-solving; stakeholder engagement and relationship building; and accountability and self-reflection. These dimensions were assessed based on respondents' perceptions using a structured survey instrument. On the other hand, learners' performance is measured using aggregated school performance indicators that represent academic achievement within the specified time frame.

The respondents of the study are composed of two hundred nineteen (219) participants, including supervisors, teachers, and School Parents-Teachers Association (SPTA) officers from the selected schools. These respondent groups were chosen because of their direct involvement in school governance, instructional processes, and stakeholder engagement, thereby providing a comprehensive and multi-perspective evaluation of adaptive leadership practices. However, the study does not include learners as direct respondents, and their perspectives are not captured in the assessment of leadership practices, which may limit the holistic understanding of leadership impact at the student level.

The study is delimited to five (5) public secondary schools within the Division of Dasmariñas, namely: Paliparan II Integrated High School located in Paliparan II, Dasmariñas, Cavite; Emmanuel Resurreccion Integrated High School situated in Via Verde Village, San Agustin II, Dasmariñas City; Salawag National High School located at Thailand Street, San Marino City, Barangay Salawag, Dasmariñas, Cavite; Pag-asa National High School in Barangay Victoria, Dasmariñas City; and Francisco E. Barzaga Integrated High School in San Jose, Dasmariñas, Cavite. These schools were selected

for their accessibility and relevance to the study; thus, the findings may not generalize to all schools in other divisions or regions.

In terms of methodology, the study employed a descriptive-correlational research design and statistical tools such as the weighted mean, One-Way ANOVA, and Pearson product-moment correlation. While these tools are appropriate for determining relationships and differences among variables, the study is limited in its ability to establish causality between adaptive leadership and learners' performance. Furthermore, the use of self-reported data from respondents may be subject to bias, such as social desirability or subjective interpretation of leadership behaviors.

Finally, the study is bounded by time constraints and relies on existing performance data within the two-year period, which may not fully capture long-term trends in learner achievement. External factors such as socio-economic conditions, school resources, student characteristics, and policy changes are not directly controlled in the study but may significantly influence learners' performance.

Significance of the Study

The researcher believed that the findings of this study will be beneficial to the following:

Supervisors. The result of this study is a great help in the delivery of quality and relevant education and in the formulation of policies and innovations to be implemented to individual schools to meet the goals and objectives of the school. The supervisors will gain insights from this study on providing technical assistance among school heads to improve the status of the educational environment and their adaptive leadership.

School Heads. The result of this investigation would lead them to start a few changes and advancements that would improve the status of the educational environment in their respective schools. This will help them reflect on the conditions and factors that influence the quality and effectiveness of education within their school. Moreover, the result of the study can help the school heads understand how the different aspects of the Educational Environment can impact the performance of the school.

Teachers. The outcome of this study will be meaningful to the teachers as these will help them recognize their primary duties and responsibilities in the teaching and learning process. In addition, it will give them an idea on the significance of assessing the status of educational the environment and Adaptive leadership styles of school heads. It is believed that

teachers working in more supportive professional environments improve their effectiveness.

Learners. By providing flexible and responsive support to their needs, it promotes a learner-centered environment that helps improve engagement, well-being, and learning outcomes.

Parents. By strengthening school-home collaboration and ensuring that school decisions are responsive to learners' needs. It supports flexible and inclusive approaches in addressing challenges, consistent with DepEd's focus on learner-centered and shared leadership. This results in a supportive learning environment and increased parental trust and involvement.

Future Researchers. This will fill in as a reason for additional examination or exploration on the perceived effects of the status of the educational environment and adaptive leadership on the school's performance. They can also venture on the effectiveness of the proposed programs in another context.

Review of Related Literature

Adaptive leadership is defined as a flexible, responsive approach to management that balances vision, collaboration, and decisive action. In the Philippine setting, Torres et al. (2025) emphasize that principals who articulate clear goals, model professionalism, and practice consistency between values and actions build trust and improve instructional quality. Similarly, Caballero and Bantulo (2025) found that democratic and participative management aligns with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) and raises teacher motivation and school efficiency. However, Mendoza (2024) cautions that excessive participation can slow decision-making during emergencies, especially in under-resourced schools, creating a need to balance consultation with timely action. Internationally, Boyar and Savage (2022) and London (2022) view adaptive leadership as a set of cognitive and emotional competencies including flexibility, emotional intelligence, and situational awareness. These traits allow leaders to respond effectively to unexpected challenges. Yet Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018) argue that adaptive leadership is not only an individual trait but also an organizational dynamic; rigid policies and structures can limit even the most capable principals. This perspective highlights that leadership works within systems, a factor relevant to the Philippine educational bureaucracy.

Famero (2024) observed in Romblon secondary schools that effective adaptive leadership follows

three phases: assessing readiness for change, communicating transparently to gain stakeholder support, and making continuous adjustments based on feedback. This process supports learning continuity amid curriculum reforms and policy shifts. However, Rivera (2024) notes that strict adherence to DepEd memoranda often leaves little room for school-level adjustments, reducing flexibility.

Global literature supports this: Gear and Sood (2021) and Dalstra (2021) explain that successful change requires balancing strategy with operational needs and ensuring teacher commitment. Still, Fullan (2020) warns that top-down reforms often fail because they ignore the emotional and cultural dimensions of change; teachers resist changes imposed without their input. This tension between central policy and local adaptation is critical to examine in Dasmariñas.

Empowerment is a key component of adaptive leadership. Rahman and Ismail (2024) and Paitao-Dumrang (2025) found that providing professional development, autonomy, and recognition increases teacher commitment and innovation, leading to better student outcomes. In Davao City, Bantilan et al. (2024) confirmed that empowering behaviors explained 47% of the variation in teacher commitment.

Foreign studies echo this: Kiral (2025) and Bajaj (2025) link autonomy and trust to improved teaching practices. However, Springer (2024) and Bantilan et al. (2024) both warn that empowerment without sufficient resources, workload support, or authority becomes symbolic and can increase teacher stress. Jumawan and Namocot (2023) further noted only a moderate correlation ($r = 0.34$) between empowerment and performance, suggesting that other factors such as school climate and resources play a major role.

Adaptive leadership relies heavily on collaboration. Research from the Cotabato Division (2025) showed that involving teachers, parents, and community members in decision-making—through bodies like School Governing Councils and Learning Action Cells (LACs)—creates shared ownership and improves intervention implementation. Pozas and Letzel-Alt (2023) and Soipimai and Sanrattana (2023) add that genuine collaboration enhances instructional practices and professional growth.

Yet Aguinaldo and Tagadiad (2024) observed that in some schools, LACs become merely formalities with little meaningful exchange due to time constraints and heavy workloads. Vangrieken et al. (2021) and

Tian et al. (2022) similarly found that forced or excessive collaboration reduces efficiency, leading to conformity and higher coordination costs. The benefit of collaboration thus depends on its quality and purpose.

Engagement beyond consultation is essential. Rivera (2024) and studies in Sto. Niño District (2023–2024) demonstrated that involving parents and community leaders in creating discipline policies and safety protocols improves attendance and student well-being. Internationally, Sattar et al. (2022) and Labe (2024) confirm that partnerships build supportive environments. However, Lontayao (2025) points out that in urbanizing, low-income areas such as Dasmariñas, parents often work multiple jobs and lack time for meetings, while community groups may have conflicting interests. Epstein (2018) adds that over-involvement can cause decision fatigue. Effective engagement therefore requires context-specific strategies rather than one-size-fits-all approaches.

Accountability practices determine how leadership translates into results. Famero (2024), Rivera (2024), and Pestano and Pestano (2025) found that data-driven planning and self-assessment improve student outcomes. In the Philippines, this is formalized through School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs).

Creemers and Kyriakides (2024) affirm that accountability should focus on learning processes rather than just outputs. However, Dellomas and Deri (2021) argue that the current DepEd system prioritizes compliance over genuine reflection, turning planning documents into bureaucratic requirements. MDPI (2025) and Smith and Riley (2023) also warn that high-stakes accountability can lead to “teaching to the test,” narrowing the curriculum and lowering morale.

Local studies provide direct links between adaptive leadership and results. Famero (2024) reported that principals using adaptive practices achieved higher teacher commitment ($d = 0.72$) and student engagement ($d = 0.68$). Lontayao (2025) found that schools led by principals in the top quartile of adaptive leadership had National Achievement Test (NAT) scores 12–15% higher than others. Pestano and Pestano (2025) noted a 15% greater gain in quarterly assessments. Foreign studies support these trends. MDPI (2025) found that adaptive leadership correlated with 0.35 standard deviation higher mathematics gains over two years, equivalent to roughly three months of learning. ResearchGate (2025) linked strong stakeholder engagement to a 32-point advantage in PISA mathematics scores.

However, Grissom et al. (2021) and Hallinger and Gümüş (2020) note that direct effects are small ($r = 0.10$ – 0.20), with most influence working indirectly through teacher efficacy and school climate. Dellomas and Deri (2021) also raise concerns that performance data may sometimes be inflated by compliance-driven behaviors.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a **descriptive-correlational design**, a quantitative non-experimental approach. It systematically describes the variables and examines their natural relationships without researcher manipulation. The design determines the strength and direction of associations between adaptive leadership and learners’ performance, though it does not establish cause-and-effect (Miksza et al., 2023).

Population and Sampling

The population comprised 514 individuals from selected public junior high schools in the Division of Dasmariñas, Cavite: 5 Public Schools District Supervisors, 484 teachers, and 25 School-Parent-Teacher Association (SPTA) officers. A total sample of 249 respondents was drawn.

Purposive sampling was used for supervisors and SPTA officers, selecting them based on their roles, expertise, and direct involvement in school operations (Palinkas et al., 2023; Etikan & Bala, 2023). **Proportionate stratified sampling** was applied for teachers, stratified by school, with sample size computed using Slovin’s formula to ensure representativeness and reduce bias (Lohr, 2022; Taherdoost, 2023).

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a structured survey questionnaire adapted from related studies. It consisted of two parts: respondents’ profile, and assessment of adaptive leadership practices. The instrument underwent **content validation** by experts and the research adviser to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study’s objectives. Confidentiality of responses was guaranteed to all participants.

Data Gathering Procedure

Formal written permission was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent and school principals. After obtaining informed consent, questionnaires were distributed and retrieved personally by the researcher to ensure high response rates. Data were then sorted, coded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The following tools were used:

- **Frequency and Percentage**– to describe respondents' profile.
- **Weighted Mean** – to determine the extent of adaptive leadership practices, interpreted using a 5-point Likert scale.
- **Pearson Product-Moment Correlation**– to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between variables.
- **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)** – to compare assessments across the three respondent groups.
- **T-test**– to determine significant differences between two groups, where applicable.

Results and Discussion**Table 1. Assessment on the Adaptive Leadership**

Adaptive Leadership	S	VI	T	VI	SPTA	VI	CM	VI	Rank
1. Leadership Behavior;	5.00	HE	4.68	HE	4.71	HE	4.80	HE	3.5
2. Change Management;	5.00	HE	4.67	HE	4.77	HE	4.81	HE	2
3. Empowerment and Support staff;	5.00	HE	4.68	HE	4.78	HE	4.82	HE	1
4. Collaborative Problem Solving;	5.00	HE	4.63	HE	4.78	HE	4.80	HE	3.5
5. Stakeholder engagement and Relationship Building; and	5.00	HE	4.67	HE	4.70	HE	4.79	HE	5.5
6. Accountability and self- reflection	5.00	HE	4.68	HE	4.70	HE	4.79	HE	5.5
Overall weighted Mean	5.00	HE	4.67	HE	4.74	HE	4.80	HE	

Table 1 presents the assessment of adaptive leadership practices as perceived by supervisors, teachers, School–Parent–Teacher Association (SPTA) representatives, and reflected in the composite mean. All six dimensions of adaptive leadership were rated Highly Evident (HE) across all respondent groups, with composite means ranging from 4.67 to 4.80. Supervisors gave the highest possible ratings, while teachers and SPTA representatives also reported strong agreement, indicating a consistent and shared perception that school leaders demonstrate adaptability, responsiveness, and effectiveness in addressing evolving educational demands. Among the dimensions, Empowerment and Support of Staff ranked first (composite mean = 4.82), signifying that leaders actively encourage staff participation, professional development, and shared responsibility. This aligns with Northouse (2022) and Kaya & Karatepe (2024), who note that adaptive leadership strengthens empowerment, which in turn boosts organizational resilience and performance. This area thus stands out as a key leadership strength. Change Management ranked second (composite mean = 4.81), showing that leaders are highly capable of guiding the school through transitions and reforms. This finding supports Ramos & Al-Najjar (2023), who emphasize that adaptive leadership enables flexible responses to challenges while preserving organizational stability.

Leadership Behavior and Collaborative Problem Solving shared the third rank (composite mean = 4.80). These results confirm that leaders model positive practices and promote teamwork in addressing school concerns, consistent with Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2022), who identify collaboration and shared decision-making as core components of adaptive leadership. Stakeholder Engagement and Relationship Building and Accountability and Self-Reflection ranked lowest (5.5), though still within the Highly Evident range. This suggests these areas are slightly less emphasized compared to staff empowerment and change management. As Bush & Glover (2023) observe, however, these practices remain vital for sustaining adaptive leadership and continuous improvement. Overall, the findings confirm that adaptive leadership is strongly implemented and uniformly recognized across stakeholders. This consistency reflects a leadership approach centered on adaptability, collaboration, and empowerment—qualities essential for effective educational organizations amid ongoing change (Kaya & Karatepe, 2024; Northouse, 2022). While current practices are robust, further strengthening stakeholder engagement and reflective practice is recommended to ensure inclusive decision-making, continuous leadership growth, and long-term institutional improvement.

Table 2. Comparison of the Assessment of the Respondents

Domain	SS	df	MS	F	*p*
Leadership Behavior	0.031		0.015	7.718	<.001
Change Management	0.280		0.140	14.248	<.001
Empowerment & Support Staff	0.732	2	0.366	2.046	0.131
Collaborative Problem Solving	0.669	2	0.335	1.787	0.170
Stakeholder Engagement & Relationship Building	0.524	2	0.262	1.452	0.236
Accountability & Self-Reflection	0.077	2	0.038	17.314	<.001

Note: All *p* values > .05, indicating no significant differences.

Table 2 presents the results of the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) conducted to determine whether significant differences exist in the assessment of adaptive leadership across supervisors, teachers, and SPTA representatives. Significant differences were found in three domains: Leadership Behavior ($F = 7.718$, $p < .001$), Change Management ($F = 14.248$, $p < .001$), and Accountability and Self-Reflection ($F = 17.314$, $p < .001$). These results imply that perceptions of how leaders act, manage transitions, and demonstrate accountability vary among respondent groups. This variation is consistent with local studies noting that role-based expectations often lead to differing views on leadership and change processes (De la Cruz & Villanueva, 2024; Reyes & Santos, 2023).

Conversely, Empowerment and Support of Staff ($F = 2.046$, $p = .131$), Collaborative Problem Solving ($F = 1.787$, $p = .170$), and Stakeholder Engagement and Relationship Building ($F = 1.452$, $p = .236$) yielded no significant differences ($p > .05$). This indicates strong agreement across all groups regarding the school head's performance in these areas. Such uniformity reflects a shared recognition of key adaptive leadership practices, which fosters trust and supports the smooth implementation of school programs (Dy et al., 2024).

In summary, while adaptive leadership is generally positively perceived, perceptual gaps exist in specific dimensions. To promote consistency, school leaders are encouraged to adopt transparent communication, clearly articulate reform efforts, and institutionalize reflective practices (Lim & Soriano, 2023; De la Cruz & Villanueva, 2024). Meanwhile, the areas with high consensus can serve as a solid foundation for strengthening collaboration, professional development, and inclusive school improvement.

Table 3. Learners' Performance Indicators for Selected Secondary Schools in the Division of Dasmariñas (Two-Year Aggregate)

School	Learners' Performance		
	Year 1	Year 2	Average
Emmanuel Resurrection Integrated High School	44.91	67.53	56.22
Francisco E. Barzaga Integrated High School	46.75	53.26	50.05
Pag-asa National High School	39.52	41.17	40.35
Paliparan II Integrated High School	43.04	47.56	43.04
Salawag National High School	40.57	44.58	42.56

Table 3 presents two-year aggregate data showing an overall upward trend in learner performance across selected secondary schools in the Division of Dasmariñas, though the magnitude of improvement varied by institution. Emmanuel Resurrection Integrated High School posted the most substantial growth, with its performance index rising from 44.91 in Year 1 to 67.53 in Year 2 (average = 56.22). This marked improvement may be attributed to effective adaptive leadership—including clear direction, collaborative culture, and data-driven decision-making—which aligns with findings that such practices positively influence teaching quality and student achievement (Torres et al., 2025; Lontayao, 2025).

In contrast, Pag-asa National High School recorded the lowest average performance (40.35) and only marginal progress from 39.52 to 41.17. This limited gain suggests challenges in translating strategies into outcomes, possibly due to insufficient resources, weak empowerment implementation, or low stakeholder engagement. As noted by Bantilan et al. (2024) and Jumawan & Namocot (2023), empowerment and support yield results only when paired with adequate structural backing, while student performance is also shaped by contextual factors such as school climate and learner readiness. Francisco E. Barzaga Integrated High School (50.05), Paliparan II Integrated High School (43.04), and Salawag National High School (42.56) showed moderate, steady improvements. These incremental gains support the view that participative leadership, collaborative mechanisms like Learning Action Cells, and professional development foster gradual progress

(Caballero & Bantulo, 2025; Rahman & Ismail, 2024). However, the modest changes also confirm that leadership's effect is indirect, mediated primarily through teacher effectiveness and school environment (Hallinger & Gümüş, 2020; Creemers & Kyriakides, 2024). Variations in performance further highlight the importance of change management, adaptability, and stakeholder relations. Schools with stronger gains tended to systematically diagnose needs, mobilize partners, and use evidence-based planning such as School Improvement Plans (Famero, 2024; Pestano & Pestano, 2025). Meanwhile, rigid policies or superficial collaboration may limit innovation and outcomes (Rivera, 2024; Aguinaldo & Tagadiad, 2024). Though stakeholder engagement supports improvement, its impact depends on context-specific strategies, especially in urbanizing areas where parental involvement can be constrained (Cotabato Division Research, 2025; Lontayao, 2025). Consistent with international literature, the results confirm that adaptive leadership creates conditions conducive to learning, but does not operate in isolation (MDPI, 2025; Pozas & Letzel-Alt, 2023; Grissom et al., 2021). Thus, the observed trends reflect a combination of leadership, instruction, resources, and school culture.

Table 4. Pearson's Correlation of Adaptive Leadership and Learners' Performance

	Pearson's r	p
Adaptive Leadership - School Performance	0.177**	.005

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

This analysis examined the association between adaptive leadership practices and learners' performance. Pearson correlation results revealed a *positive but weak statistically significant relationship* ($r = 0.177$, $p = .005$). Since the p -value is below the 0.01 significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected—confirming that adaptive leadership is linked to academic outcomes, though its direct influence is relatively small. The significant positive association aligns with existing literature showing that adaptive leadership supports school improvement. Torres et al. (2025) and Caballero & Bantulo (2025) note that vision-setting, collaboration, and participative practices raise instructional quality and teacher motivation, which in turn benefit student results. Local research by Lontayao (2025) and Famero (2024) further confirms that schools led by adaptive principals consistently demonstrate better learner engagement and achievement. However, the low correlation coefficient ($r = 0.177$) indicates that adaptive leadership explains only a limited portion of performance variation. This finding mirrors Hallinger & Gümüş (2020), who report leadership effects typically range between $r = 0.10$ and 0.20 , and Creemers & Kyriakides (2024), who explain that leadership acts indirectly through mediators such as teacher competence, school climate, and resources. Several factors account for this modest strength. First, contextual and structural constraints matter: limited funding, large class sizes, and socio-economic challenges reduce the translation of leadership actions into learning gains (Bantilan et al., 2024; Jumawan & Namocot, 2023). Bureaucratic systems may also restrict principals' flexibility, limiting how fully adaptive strategies can be implemented (Rivera, 2024). Second, the quality of implementation shapes results: collaborative activities, professional development, and stakeholder involvement must be authentic and well-supported to produce meaningful change; superficial compliance yields little benefit (Aguinaldo & Tagadiad, 2024; Sattar et al., 2022). Third, accountability systems often prioritize compliance over genuine improvement, which weakens the link between planning and outcomes (Dellomas & Deri, 2021). In line with international evidence (Grissom et al., 2021; IJEAS, 2025), this study confirms that leadership is one piece of a larger system. Adaptive leadership creates favorable conditions for success, but its impact depends on concurrent improvements in instruction, resources, and community support.

Sub-problem 5: Based on the finding what intervention program may be proposed?

The assessment results confirm that school heads demonstrate strong adaptive leadership competencies, particularly in **empowerment and staff support** and **change management**, both rated Highly Evident. However, the weak positive correlation between adaptive leadership and learner performance ($r = 0.177$, $p < 0.01$) indicates these strengths are not yet fully translated into tangible classroom and learning outcomes. This aligns with Hallinger and Gümüş (2020) and Creemers and Kyriakides (2024), who explain that leadership influences achievement indirectly—mediated by instructional quality, teacher effectiveness, and school environment.

To bridge this gap, the following strategic directions are proposed:

1. Strengthen Instructional Leadership and Teacher Development

Since leadership impact works through instruction, the plan institutionalizes enhanced Learning Action Cells (LAC+), structured instructional coaching, and peer mentoring programs. These initiatives ensure

adaptive practices directly improve teaching quality, supported by evidence that targeted professional development raises teacher competence and learner results (Rahman & Ismail, 2024).

2. Optimize Stakeholder Engagement and Accountability

While both areas are rated Highly Evident, they ranked lowest among the domains, suggesting current mechanisms are not fully optimized. The plan introduces a Stakeholder Partnership Framework featuring regular consultations, community-based academic activities, and accessible communication channels. This follows Sattar et al. (2022) and DepEd guidelines, emphasizing shared governance to build ownership and support learning.

3. Enhance Alignment and Transparency in Leadership

Significant differences in perceptions across stakeholders regarding leadership behavior, change management, and accountability point to inconsistent understanding and communication. A Leadership Communication and Alignment Program will standardize protocols, promote transparency, and clarify roles—consistent with Lim and Soriano (2023), who link clear communication to better trust and policy implementation.

4. Address Performance Disparities Through Contextualized Support

Learner performance showed uneven progress across schools. The Performance Gap Reduction Initiative provides differentiated interventions: targeted support for low-performing schools and systematic replication of successful practices from high-performing institutions. This reflects the adaptive leadership principle of responding to local needs (Famero, 2024).

5. Institutionalize Data-Driven and Reflective Practice

To strengthen accountability and decision-making, the plan implements a School Data Analytics System (SDAS) and integrates regular performance reviews into School Improvement Plans (SIPs). This shifts data use from mere compliance to meaningful reflection and action, as recommended by Pestano and Pestano (2025) and Dellomas and Deri (2021).

6. Deepen Structured Collaboration

Although collaborative problem-solving is highly evident, its application in academic interventions and monitoring can be expanded. The plan establishes collaborative action research teams, grade-level data reviews, and joint problem-solving forums—practices proven to raise instructional quality and student outcomes (Pozas & Letzel-Alt, 2023; Li et al., 2025).

7. Adopt a Holistic, System-Wide Approach

The weak correlation also confirms that leadership alone cannot overcome constraints such as resources, class size, and socio-economic conditions. As emphasized by Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018) and Fullan (2020), sustainable improvement requires aligning leadership, instruction, community support, and resource management into one coherent system.

Table 5. Acceptability of Proposed Intervention Plan

Indicators	Supervisor		Teachers		SPTA		CM	VI	Rank
	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI			
1.The Proposed Intervention Program provides completeness of facts	4.43	HA	4.67	HA	4.64	HA	4.64	HA	1
2.It is practical enough that warrant adoption and implementation.	4.29	HA	4.60	HA	4.61	HA	4.60	HA	2
3.It will benefit the school as it identifies the weaknesses of leadership competencies.	4.29	HA	4.50	HA	4.57	HA	4.56	HA	3.5
4.It will guide and assist in developing and enhancing policy guidelines	4.57	HA	4.40	HA	4.57	HA	4.56	HA	3.5
5.It provides comprehensive knowledge, especially in the implementation of corrective actions	4.14	HA	4.40	HA	4.56	HA	4.54	HA	5
Mean	4.34	HA	4.51	HA	4.59	HA	4.58	HA	

Legend: S-Supervisor, T – Teachers, SPTA- School-Parent Teacher Association, CM Composite Mean

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

Based on the findings of the study, the following are summarized:

1. School heads in the Division of Dasmariñas demonstrate highly evident adaptive leadership across all dimensions, as consistently rated by supervisors, teachers, and SPTA representatives. This reflects strong competence in guiding schools through changes, fostering collaboration, and ensuring accountability.
2. Significant variations exist in how stakeholders view leadership behavior, change management, and accountability, while strong agreement was observed in empowerment, collaborative problem-solving, and stakeholder engagement. These perceptual gaps point to the need for clearer communication and shared understanding.
3. There is a general upward trend in academic performance, though progress varies widely among schools. Improvements are influenced by leadership, instruction, resources, and school environment, indicating the need for differentiated interventions.
4. Adaptive leadership has a statistically significant but weak positive relationship with learner performance. This confirms that leadership contributes to achievement but operates indirectly and is only one of many influencing factors.
5. A comprehensive intervention plan was formulated to strengthen the link between leadership practices and learning outcomes, focusing on instructional support, collaboration, and data-driven improvement.
6. The proposed plan is highly acceptable to all stakeholders, with strong ratings for completeness, relevance, and feasibility. Minor refinements are needed to provide clearer guidelines and capacity-building support for effective implementation.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn from the findings:

1. School heads possess strong adaptive leadership competencies, effectively demonstrating responsiveness, empowerment, collaboration, and accountability in addressing educational demands.
2. While stakeholders agree on practices related to staff support and partnership, differing

perceptions on leadership conduct, change processes, and accountability suggest inconsistent communication and understanding across groups.

3. Disparities in learner performance confirm that academic success depends on a combination of leadership, teaching quality, resource availability, and community involvement—not on a single factor alone.
4. Adaptive leadership is significantly associated with learner performance, but its impact is modest and indirect, mediated primarily through teacher effectiveness, school climate, and instructional quality.
5. The proposed strategic plan is valid, feasible, and well-received, providing a structured framework to translate leadership strengths into tangible improvements in instruction and student outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

1. **For School Heads and Stakeholders.** Sustain and enhance adaptive leadership through continuous professional development, participatory decision-making, and shared responsibility to strengthen organizational resilience.
2. **For School Administrators.** Improve communication and alignment by holding regular consultations, providing clear updates on policies and changes, and establishing feedback mechanisms to ensure consistent understanding across all groups.
3. **For Teachers and School Leaders.** Adopt data-driven planning and targeted interventions, using assessment results to address learning gaps and strengthen instructional practices.
4. **For the School Community.** Bridge the gap between leadership and classroom outcomes by aligning leadership initiatives, teaching strategies, and student support programs to improve learning quality directly.
5. **For Program Implementation.** Ensure the full and coordinated execution of Project SIDLÁK–DASMARIÑAS, with clear roles, monitoring systems, and capacity-building activities to maximize its impact.
6. **For All Stakeholders.** Leverage the high acceptability of the plan by committing to its implementation, providing regular feedback,

and sustaining partnerships to ensure long-term improvement.

- 7. For Future Researchers.** Conduct further studies using longer timeframes, additional variables, and wider contexts to explore more deeply how adaptive leadership influences education outcomes and to validate the findings across different settings.

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