



Managerial Competencies, Financial Management, and Level of Liquidation Practices of Secondary School Administrators

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship of managerial competence to financial management and liquidation practices, respectively, among 48 public secondary school administrators in the schools division of Eastern Samar, Philippines. Using the researcher-developed survey instrument, the data collected were analysed using frequency count, median, and spearman rho analysis at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed a very high level of perceived managerial competence among the respondents. Moreover, they are practicing financial management protocols at all times, while oftentimes for liquidation protocols. Further analysis revealed no significant association among the variables, which indicates independence among them. Hence, the researcher recommends further exploration using other tools and a bigger sample size.

Keywords: Managerial Competencies; Financial Management; Liquidation Practice; Public Secondary School Administrators.

INTRODUCTION

Managing an organization is one of the most challenging duties of a secondary school administrator. According to Bhardwaj and Punia (2013, p.4), “effective and efficient managers are vital for improving organizational performance mainly because human resources are the most important resource to any organization”. In addition to that, Stark, Briggs, and Rowland-Poplowski (2002) opined that their encouragement of continuing curriculum development defines successful leaders. According to Javani, Abolhallaje, Jafari and Hashemi (2017), administrator effectiveness is critical for achieving organizational goals, though it is highly dependent on their skills and expertise. While, Bryman (2007) theorized leadership as one directed “with emphases on vision, integrity, consideration and sense of direction” (p.5). Hence, the school manager should possess exemplary characteristics for the school, including its

operations and practices, to serve their most appropriate purposes. Likewise, school programs, activities, and practices should be anchored in the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the organization.

As a consequence of effective leadership and management, other essential aspects of school practices, especially on financial management and liquidation practices, improve. According to Phyliters, Mulwa, and Kyalo (2018), despite instilling “financial management skills offered by the Kenya Education Management Institute, some school heads continue to engage in financial mismanagement through misuse of funds, misappropriation, and embezzlement of the school’s meager funds” (p. 3). Nyamwea (2006) confirmed that principals receive limited induction and support to help them improve their financial management skills, noting that most school heads are appointed based on their past teaching records rather than their leadership potentials. Similarly, Narain (2015) noted that students’ enormous persistence of low school performance is attributed to incompetent school management and financial management, eliciting outrage from stakeholders. In the current context, it is a consistent observation that a good school administrator is the one who can manifest managerial skills, in accordance with financial and liquidation practices, as it thrives on maintaining better performance on school-based management.

The Department of Education (2008) indicated in the fourth principle of School-Based Management, namely Management of Resources, that best practices of all secondary schools in the country is undeniably dependent on the efficacious, timely and quality-oriented schools’ utilization and liquidation of Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE). Mestry (2006) states that many school principals are under tremendous pressure to manage their school finances. Ochada and Gempes (2018) mentioned using the School’s Transparency Board as an indicator of punctual submission of liquidation reports to concerned government offices. Indeed, some school heads face problems crafting practical solutions to financial problems, mostly on account of their lack of financial knowledge, skills and expertise.

Although school administrators are strictly advised to perform at the top of their professional management skills, through provisions of adequate managerial training and by holding regular management committee meetings, some are still involved in poor financial management. The school head has inadequate knowledge of Schools Act 84, specifically on financial matters, thereby becoming a victim of mismanagement or misappropriation of funds (Mestry, 2004). Hence, this investigation was conducted to examine the relationship among perceived level of managerial competencies, financial management, and liquidation practices of public secondary schools’ administrators in the schools division of Eastern Samar during the school year 2020-2021.

RELATED LITERATURES

Managerial Competence of School Administrators

Managerial competence is the capacity to oversee resources effectively through planning, organizing, and monitoring to accomplish organizational goals. Brillantes and Fernandez (2011) stated that leaders’ competence plays a key role in developing an effective and workable plan and programs. They mentioned confidence, vision span, empowerment, modesty, good behavior, and shared vision as characteristics that a

leader must possess to act as an agent in reforming an institution. The inclusion of the public sector is contingent on transformational leaders and citizen participation.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education defines the principal's role concerning fiscal reporting about the country's public schools (Zarate, 2009). Financial management in schools is frequently incorporated into a broader management framework that encompasses all stakeholders. As a result, authority at the school level is not centralized around the principal, but is distributed widely among all relevant stakeholders. This necessitates the "active participation of a range of stakeholders, including teachers, in school policy-making and decision-making processes, particularly those involving finances" (Chaka, 2008, p.3)

Cañete (2009) found a very satisfactory performance evaluation among school administrators. Also, Camero (2010) revealed the school administrators' competency level, in all areas, as significant attributes to their performance, which may serve as the basis for training programs in school management. Another study on enhancing the managerial performance of school heads presented by Cruz and her colleagues (2016) found some areas in management to be satisfactory to very satisfactory. But then, the study also discovered weaknesses in performing some functions which can be attributed to several factors, including the external hindrances, specifically "establishing school and community networks and encouraging the active participation of all of the stakeholders". School heads bear enormous responsibility and accountability for ensuring that school finances are free of irregularities. Similarly, parents, students, and the community all contribute significantly to school heads' success in their various areas of school administration.

In the study conducted by Bueno (1999), it was found out that the majority of school heads' performance evaluation, coming from the Key Result Areas, are evidence that their competency level in the set criteria for managerial skills are the basis for the holistic development of the school and practices of liquidation and financial management. School leaders in the twenty-first century must possess a variety of different types of leadership capabilities in addition to the expected managerial and political attributes.

Jesusimo (2014) identified a number of challenges confronting school administrators in the country, including budget cuts, school safety, contract management, monitoring, database management, and advertising. In line with these premises, Usman and Murziqin (2018) discovered that principals' managerial competence could be measured by their ability to articulate and maximize doable plans in the areas of the school system, student affairs, personnel development, and education services. Hence, it guided the researcher in examining school administrators' managerial competence regarding human and material resources.

Financial Management Practices of School Administrators

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the emphasis on value maximization becomes an unavoidable element. The art of financial management is a critical discipline for establishing and maintaining financial sustainability in any organization (Villegas, 2015). In the book of Brigham and Houston (2012), they mentioned

four financial management functions for the institutions to succeed efficiently, namely (1) planning which refers to the process of developing a series of actions or programs to accomplish organization goals; (2) budgeting which completes the program planning process by allocating

financial resources to carry out the planned activity or program; (3) controlling which ensures that actions adhere to the plan and that efforts are made to monitor it; and (4) evaluating which serves as a tool for determining success” (p.7).

Villegas’s (2015) investigation of the factors affecting administrators’ empowerment and financial management effectiveness revealed that “financial management effectiveness and efficiency increase as planning, budgeting, control, and evaluation functions are complemented by factors affecting administrators’ empowerment and supported by financial management training” (p. 473). This implies the important role of school managers in ensuring school effective financial management. Mutua (2013) suggests that the lack of financial management skills and prior financial management training forced the school administrators to rely on advice from the finance department.

Baraka (2010) emphasized the importance of school account clerks in assisting principals with school finances, even though the majority of them lack adequate financial management training. The lack of financial management skills, poor fees payment of schools is principals’ common problems. He suggested that “the government should establish financial management training programs for school leaders prior to and/or shortly after they are appointed to headship positions” (p.1)

A budget is a financial plan that shows the distribution of fund for specific purposes over time and serves as a tool for planning and coordinating the use of limited resources to achieve organizations’ strategic goals (Allen, Schiavo-Campo, & Garrity, 2003). School budgeting is an executive and legislative function of the school principal whereby the budget becomes a legal document that serves as the basis for annual expenditures, accounting and auditing (Pepito & Acibar, 2019). School budgets are typically focused on producing goods and services to stakeholders rather than financial gain. As a result, their budgets are designed to authorize expenditure and limit managerial decisions (Mutua, 2013). According to Ndumbi and Okello (2015), the process of budgeting is hierarchical in nature that “starts at the bottom and works its way up, with school departments being required to prepare and present organizational expenditures to the school’s central appropriations department, which will then include them in the completed general fund” (p.5).

According to Phyliters *et al.*, (2009), developing systems would enable budget developers and department heads to implement efficient budgeting and decision-making procedures. School administrators must use budget proposals from school departments when putting together the school budget, which is then factored into the decision-making process (Kuria, 2012). Woollard (2009) suggest that organizations should specify needed goods and services to be included in budget proposals before submitting them to the school central tender committee, which will award the tenders. Obulemire (2006) studied the budgeting practices of school heads in Nairobi area province unveiled “Activity Based Budgeting (ABB) as the commonly used budgeting approach which ensured students’ participation and had a lot of perceived benefits such as cost control, coordination of operations and efficient and effective resource allocation” p.1. However, in several government schools, the budgeting process does not allow for departmental input, a flaw that prevents the school from receiving high-quality goods and services (Ho, 2018).

In schools, financial management is important because it allows for more efficient planning and deployment of school funds. According to Miriti and Moses

(2014), effective financial management training was hampered by a lack of motivation among principals and insufficient time to attend training programs. In addition to that, Rangongo's (2016) inquiry into "Limpopo province principals' awareness of their legal responsibilities in financial management uncovered a culture of non-accountability and non-adherence to prescripts as a result of the principals' limited knowledge of financial management legislation, expertise, and experience, as well as widespread misconceptions that principals in South Africa are accountable for everything" (p. 2). To help principals do their jobs more precisely, Wagithunu, Muthee, and Thinguri (2014) suggest that they continue their professional development by acquiring the necessary financial skills to manage schools' resources.

Each of the public schools must work out appropriate mechanisms by which all stakeholders will approve major projects before they commence, although being included in the list of priorities does not imply approval by stakeholders (Munyiri, 2008). Ogbonnaya (2000) and Akanji *et al.*, (2005) asserts that educational administrators should optimize available financial resources to ensure academic excellence. The literature highlights the organization's responsibility and the management of devolved budgets with the professional knowledge and expertise of the school central procurement to enhance existing educational services.

Given all the problems faced by secondary school heads in managing schools finances, the researcher is prodded to examine the financial management practices of secondary administrators in terms of financial planning, control, and decision-making regarding Brigham and Houston (2012) financial budgeting framework.

Liquidation Practices of School Administrators

Section 10 of the Republic Act No. 9155 provides that the regional and field offices (elementary/secondary schools division offices) are to be allocated directly and released immediately by the DBM to the said offices. Mayor (2019), in his action research, stipulated problems that hindered many of the school heads from utilizing and liquidating the monthly MOOE, such as "the lack of means of transportation wherein the administrator will sometimes use his/her vehicle and spend his/her own money, the supplier will not deliver the goods or charge expensive delivery cost, insufficient funds to pay out-sourced services due to the delayed release of checks, and the lack of carpenters or workers to do repairs" (p.4).

Financial accountability for school funds has always been a source of contention in a large number of schools, causing several news articles to circulate in various media outlets informing the public about the corruption of school principals and other school administrators, as well as the misappropriation of MOOE and IGP funds. For instance, Ochada and Gempes (2018) phenomenological study on MOOE utilization showed a lack of teacher involvement and the integrity of MOOE spending. Moreover, Patrinos and Kagia (2019) reported an instance where DepEd principals are investigated due to mismanagement of funds, suggesting useful remedial measures among the public that are prone to corruption and critical to sector performance.

As the researcher reviewed available articles related to liquidation practices of school administrators, he realized a very few investigations made on this aspect. Hence, drove him to look into three aspects of liquidation procedure: accounting, document preparation, and document submission.

The present study hopes to unveil certain realities regarding the ways and means of public secondary institutions.

Relationship between the Managerial Competence of School Administrators and Their Financial Management Practices

Management competencies and leadership abilities play a critical role in a variety of organizational structures. Likewise, several studies have ventured on the factors affecting managerial competencies of school administrators from school-based up to national level. For instance, Wang and Van Wart (2017) hypothesized that “informed citizens can actively and constructively contribute to decision making on policy issues, regulatory requirements, and even service levels in all but the most technical areas” (p. 265). Using path modelling, he learned that ethical behaviours and service competence are significantly related to academic trust. Victor (2017) found out that “secondary school principals’ in Anambra State do not have managerial competencies in the procurement of physical and instructional materials, provision of e-library facilities and equipping classrooms and offices with needed furniture for effective material resource management” (p.1).

Using Pearson-product moment correlation analysis, Cañete (2020) discovered a moderate but significant relationship between 26 school heads’ managerial competence and their performance evaluation coming from their Key Result Areas (KRA) to wit school financial management is included. Also, the result revealed a very high level of competence in the utilization of school funds for school programs and projects. Similarly, Muraina (2014) discovered a significant link between principals’ managerial skills and administrative effectiveness and a high level of professional spirit and a high moral norm in educational institutions. By employing simple regression analysis, Koskie, Sang, and Ngeno (2020) uncovered 665 headteachers’ communication competencies as a significant predictor of school management effectiveness. However, results showed that school heads are ineffective in managing the organization, and therefore must “consider scaling up their application of acquired communication skills, for instance, by setting and communicating targets to both teachers and pupils” (p. 2).

Principals who engage in misappropriation of funds, wastage, incompetence, and lack moral authority in their duties are prone to failure to achieve the institution’s set goals, according to a critical analysis report written by Wagithunu, Muthee, and Thinguri (2014, p.4). Notably, in Kenya, headship is not awarded based on predefined leadership qualities such as financial management; as a result, principals and deputy principals are only trained in management when they become principals or deputy principals (Mutua, 2013).

In an evaluative study conducted by Cruz *et al.*, (2016) students and teachers on the managerial competence of school heads in the Division of Cavite, the findings “exhibited school heads’ very satisfactory level in performing their managerial functions in all management areas identified, and that there were significant differences in the managerial performance of school heads in the areas of vision mission-goals, financial and budgeting, physical plant and facilities, community relations and management of school improvement plan” (p. 705). According to Pandy (2004), managerial skills are key components for successful management of school finances, which requires keeping all planning and cash in/out-flow records.

Noting a number of studies that established a very good connection between managerial competence and financial management direct the researcher in examining whether the same is true among public secondary school teachers in the schools division of Eastern Samar. However, the major difference of the present study to the reviewed ones will be on the use of non-parametric correlational analysis known as Spearman rho test of correlation, in contrast to the usual Pearson product-moment correlational test. In this manner, existing theories will be tested based on the use of a non-conventional correlational tool for non-normal data.

Relationship between the managerial competence of school administrators and their liquidation practices

In a qualitative study conducted by Magak (2013) among 41 public secondary schools in Kisumo revealed the “major forms of challenges included overspending and under-spending, entry into books of accounts, doubling of roles, low salaries of bursars and accounts clerks incompetent accounts clerks and storekeepers, teachers failure to handover accounting supportive documents, delay in disbursement of FSE funds, school fees defaulting, unauthorized levies, inadequate knowledge by the headteachers, inadequate knowledge by the headteacher, incompetent procurement committee, and inadequate auditing knowledge by the headteacher” (p. 14).

Suleman and Pakhtunkhwa (2015) probed the managerial issues experienced by recently hired public sector secondary school principals in promoting secondary education using a self-developed structured questionnaire. Results from the analysis of variances regarding the differences of challenges on finances revealed that they statistically shared the same sentiments in terms of accounting, adequacy of funds, and delivery of such. A similar finding was observed in Kinuthia (2004) study on the causes of poor financial management by head teachers of public schools.

Ongori used a concurrent triangulation design and Kitainge (2021) in “examining the Influence of KEMI’s Capacity Building Programme on Head Teachers’ Competencies in Financial Management in Public Primary Schools in UasinGishu, to wit findings indicated that there was a moderate positive correlation between KEMI capacity building programme and head teachers’ competency in financial management” (p. 2). In addition, head teachers’ adherence to the school budget and understanding of the value of forming a tendering committee. The systematic review of available literature has shown poor and limited studies conducted regarding managerial and liquidation practices of school administrators. The present study offers novelty in terms of relating two variables which is uncommon among related studies.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a descriptive-correlational design was employed. Initially, the study took the descriptive aspect through the survey method to collect respondents’ financial management, managerial competencies, and liquidation practices. Finally, it advanced to the correlation aspect to identify if a significant relationship exists among the variables. The study considered all secondary school administrators in the schools division of Eastern Samar. Therefore, it transpired in all secondary schools within the division. A total of 48 public secondary schools from the division Eastern Samar, were identified as respondents (See table 1).

Table 1. Respondents of the study

| Schools Division of Eastern Samar (Municipality) | No. of secondary schools | Number of respondents/ School administrators |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| CLUSTER 1 | | |
| (Guiuan, Mercedes, Salcedo, Lawaan) | 14 | 14 |
| CLUSTER 2 | | |
| (Giporlos, Quinapondan, Gen. Mc. Arthur, Hernani, Llorente, Balangkayan, Maydolong) | 10 | 10 |
| CLUSTER 3 | | |
| (San Julian, Sulat, Taft, Can-Avid, Dolores) | 14 | 14 |
| CLUSTER 4 | | |
| (Oras, San Poli, Maslog, Arteche, Jipapad) | 10 | 10 |
| TOTAL | 48 | 48 |

The researcher made use of a researcher-made survey questionnaire in the collection of data necessary to address the objectives of the study. However, for the first set of questionnaire of managerial competencies, the items/indicators contained in the instrument were only lifted from the study of Victor (2017). The items had been lifted verbatim because they sufficed the purported intention of the study.

To ensure validity and reliability of the researchers-made survey questionnaire, it was subjected to validity and reliability tests. To come up with meaningful interpretations of all information collected from the respondents, data were organized and tabulated for convenient analyses. For the descriptive objectives, frequency counts, percentage, and median were utilized. The median was used, considering that the data were ordinal in nature. To successfully find the existing relationship among the variables, the Spearman rank correlation was utilized. This was deemed appropriate considering that at least one of the variables was ordinal in nature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Public Secondary School Administrators Perceived Level of Managerial Competence in Terms of Effective Human Resource Management

Table 2 shows a “very high level” of managerial competence in terms of effective human resource management as perceived by the respondents in terms of delegating tasks, teachers’ involvement in decision making, imposing discipline at all times, and staff appraisals with a median score of 5. Similarly, an equivalent level was perceived in terms of providing incentives to staff members and supervision for professional guidance with a median score of 4.5.

Finally, they perceived a “high” level of managerial competence in terms of organizing seminars, providing incentives to students, and orienting new staff with a median score of 4. The data revealed a very high level of managerial competence in

effectively managing human resources, which are instrumental in the planning, implementing, and evaluating activities deemed integral in an organization. The result shares the findings of Cañete (2009) and Cruz *et al.*, (2016) on the very satisfactory performance evaluation made among public secondary school administrators in the Philippines. This implies the indispensable efforts of Principals to uplift the academic spirit of the school community.

Table 2. Public secondary school administrators perceived level of managerial competence in terms of effective human resource management

| Effective Human Resource Management | Frequency Distribution | | | | | Median | Interpretation |
|---|------------------------|----|---|---|---|--------|----------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Delegation of tasks to teachers' in order to give them sense of responsibility | 27 | 20 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Very High |
| Involving teachers' in decision making for school improvement. | 29 | 17 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Very High |
| Ensuring teachers' and students' discipline | 29 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Very High |
| Organizing seminars and workshops for professional advancement of teachers | 15 | 28 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4 | High |
| Providing incentives for teachers' to increase their motivation to work | 24 | 18 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 4.5 | Very High |
| Appraising staff in order to improve their job performance | 26 | 19 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Very High |
| Providing incentives to students' to improve academic performance | 15 | 25 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 4 | High |
| Orienting new staff and students on school activities and goals | 19 | 25 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4 | High |
| Promoting teachers' welfare to increase their commitment to instructional tasks | 28 | 19 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Very High |
| Supervising teachers' and students' in order to render professional guidance. | 24 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.5 | Very High |

Legend: 1.00–1.80 (Very Low), 1.81–2.60 (Low), 2.61–3.40 (Average), 3.41–4.20 (High), 4.21–5.00 (Very High)

Public secondary school administrators perceived level of managerial competence in terms of effective material resource management

Table 3 shows the public secondary school administrators' perceived level of managerial competence in terms of effective material resource management using frequency distribution and median scores. The result showed a 'very high' level of managerial competence in terms of the procurement of teaching and learning materials and regular school clean-up with a median score of 5. Also, an equivalent level is observed in maintaining instructional materials for instructional improvement with a median score of 4.5. Surprisingly an "average" level of managerial competency is observed on "enforcing punishment on teachers and students who vandalize school facilities" and "providing e-library facilities to aid teachers' and students' research", respectively with a median score of 3.

The result is related to the findings of Cruz *et al.*, (2016) on the need to enhance the managerial performance of school heads in some areas in management that the school head can handle from satisfactory to very satisfactory, however, the same study also discovered weaknesses in performing some functions which can be contributed to several factors including the external hindrances. These results imply that while school administrators are generally effective in managing material resources in the organization. It can be perceived that there is a need on instilling discipline in the students regarding the proper utilization of school properties and infrastructures. The result suggests the need to capacitate further schools on IT infrastructures that are very important in today's technology-driven world. The data provide insights into the need for full participation among school stakeholders in the realization of school project and programs, especially in beautifying the school. Finally, material management should not be the sole responsibility of the school administrators but of the academic community as a whole, whereby stakeholders can be tapped for the improvement of the school.

Table 3. Public secondary school administrators perceived level of managerial competence in terms of effective material resource management

| Material Resource Management | Frequency Distribution | | | | | Median | Interpretation |
|---|-------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|-----------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Procurement of physical and instructional materials for teaching and learning | 27 | 19 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Very high |
| Ensuring regular school clean-up for a conducive leaning environment | 36 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Very high |
| Enforcing punishment on teachers and students' who vandalizes school facilities | 12 | 10 | 15 | 7 | 4 | 3 | Average |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|---|---|-----|-----------|
| Maintaining instructional materials for instructional improvement | 24 | 21 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4.5 | Very high |
| Providing e-library facilities to aid teachers' and students' research | 10 | 12 | 19 | 5 | 2 | 3 | Average |
| Equipping classrooms and offices with needed furniture | 18 | 24 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | High |
| Inculcating maintenance culture in school through proper orientation of staff and students' | 23 | 20 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4 | High |

Legend: 1.00–1.80 (Very Low), 1.81–2.60 (Low), 2.61–3.40 (Average), 3.41–4.20 (High), 4.21–5.00 (Very High)

Public secondary school administrators perceived level of financial management practice in terms of financial planning

Table 4 presents the frequency distribution and median results of respondents' perceived level of financial management practice in terms of financial planning along with its four indicators. Surprisingly, it could be seen from the matrix that three out of four indicators of financial planning are “always practiced” in terms of preparation of school budget, maintenance of auditable records, and preparation of quarterly financial reports with a median score of 5. The aggregate median indicates that the financial management practice of secondary school administrators as to financial planning is very high.

The result is in accordance with the findings of Villegas (2015), revealing effective financial planning and budgeting of school administrators. Furthermore, the oftentimes practice of school administrators in the collection of school income was explained by Baraka (2010) as caused by the presence of school clerks or administrative staff who are specifically assigned to handle the job. As it is commonly implemented in school, it could be discerned that school administrators could have a high level of performance in such aspect of financial management practices.

Table 4. Public secondary school administrators perceived level of financial management practice in terms of financial planning

| Financial Planning | Frequency Distribution | | | | | Median | Interpretation |
|---|------------------------|----|---|---|---|--------|----------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Collection and recording of school income | 22 | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |
| Assisting in the preparation of a school budget | 26 | 19 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----|---|---|---|---|------------------|
| Maintenance of auditable records of all school expenditure | 33 | 12 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |
| Preparation of quarterly financial reports for Board of Management meetings and community | 527 | 18 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |

Legend: 1–1.80 (Never), 1.81–2.6 (Rarely), 2.61–3.4 (Sometimes), 3.41–4.2 (Oftentimes), 4.21–5 (Always)

Public secondary school administrators perceived level of financial management practice in terms of financial control

Table 5 shows that the respondents' level of practice on financial management as to the indicators of financial control are "always practiced" in terms of efficient use of resources and safekeeping of financial records and transactions, with a median score of 5. In comparison, the implementation of the financial management act is rated "oftentimes practiced" by the respondents with a median score of 4. In general, the level of financial management practices on financial control of the respondents is always practiced. According to Corporate Finance Institute Education Inc. (2015), financial controls direct school managers to control the allocation and use of their financial resources. Financial controls are at the heart of any organization's resource management and operational efficiency. This means that Eastern Samar's school administrators conduct a thorough analysis of existing policies and the future outlook to successfully implement financial control.

Table 5. Public secondary school administrators perceived level of financial management practice in terms of financial control

| Financial control | Frequency Distribution | | | | | Median | Interpretation |
|--|------------------------|----|---|---|---|--------|----------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Ensuring that resources are efficiently utilized | 30 | 15 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |
| Safe keeping of all financial records | 29 | 17 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |
| Ensuring that the Financial Management Act is followed. | 20 | 22 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |
| Proper written records or documents are kept of all financial transactions | 36 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |

Legend: 1–1.80 (Never), 1.81–2.6 (Rarely), 2.61–3.4 (Sometimes), 3.41–4.2 (Oftentimes), 4.21–5 (Always)

Public secondary school administrators perceived level of financial management practice in terms of financial decision making

Table 6 presents the frequency distribution and median result of respondents' financial management practices regarding financial decision-making along with three evaluated indicators. The result shows that the respondents "always" practice shared decision making and proper reporting procedures with a median score of 5, while they "oftentimes" practice proper and timely acquittals and embedding of reasons for changes in budget with a median score of 4. The results suggest the need to retool school administrators on effective financial decision-making and review the inherent and important role of school managers.

The overall result supports Watson's (2013) findings about the significance of having sound financial decision-making processes to ensure that resources allocated benefit student achievement and the critical role educational leaders play in the development of the academic community. Cruz *et al.*, (2016) also emphasized the importance of involving stakeholders in the planning, monitoring, and evaluating the school's progress.

Table 6. Public secondary school administrators perceived level of financial management practice in terms of financial decision making

| Financial decision making | Frequency Distribution | | | | | Median | Interpretation |
|--|------------------------|----|----|---|---|--------|----------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Proper and timely acquittals and reports are made; | 23 | 14 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |
| The school budget is followed and reasons for changes are provided | 23 | 17 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |
| Shared decision making and reporting procedures are carried out | 31 | 16 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |

Legend: 1–1.80 (Never), 1.81–2.6 (Rarely), 2.61–3.4 (Sometimes), 3.41–4.2 (Oftentimes), 4.21–5 (Always)

Public secondary school administrators perceived level of liquidation practice in terms of accounting

Table 7 shows that the secondary school administrators "often" practice all of the three accounting indicators, specifically posting of transparency report, use of school's card, and proper procurement using school funds following RA 9184.

The results coincide with the study conducted by Bueno (1999), which revealed the majority of school heads' performance evaluation, coming from the Key Result Areas, are evidence that their competency level in the set criteria for managerial skills is the basis for the holistic development of the school and practices of liquidation and financial management.

Table 7. Public secondary school administrators perceived level of liquidation practice in terms of accounting

| Accounting | Frequency Distribution | | | | | Median | Interpretation |
|--|------------------------|----|---|---|---|--------|----------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Posts information on the sources, intended use, and actual utilization of school funds in the Transparency Board | 22 | 19 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |
| Uses School card to formally communicate/present the sources and uses of school funds. | 20 | 19 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |
| Ensures that all procurements using the school funds conform to the provisions of RA 9184 | 23 | 16 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |

Legend: 1–1.80 (Never), 1.81–2.6 (Rarely), 2.61–3.4 (Sometimes), 3.41–4.2 (Oftentimes), 4.21–5 (Always)

Public secondary school administrators perceived level of liquidation practice in terms of document preparation

Table show liquidation practices as to document preparation presented in frequency distribution and median score along with the three evaluated indicators, of which all of the given indicators are “always” practiced. It only shows that all the secondary schools’ administrators of Eastern Samar are advanced/ equipped in terms of document preparations.

Conversely, Jesusimo (2014) found that effective principals only needed to have good managerial and political skills. However, school principals are now expected to have various leadership skills in the twenty-first century, which may include document preparation as a step in the liquidation process.

Table 8. Public secondary school administrators perceived level of liquidation practice in terms of document preparation

| Document preparation | Frequency Distribution | | | | | Median | Interpretation |
|--|------------------------|----|---|---|---|--------|------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Prepares the Report of disbursement using general form in three (3) copies | 25 | 18 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |
| Outlines the intended utilization of funds | 26 | 19 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |
| Includes in the report the names of suppliers and service providers where | 24 | 20 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4.5 | Always Practiced |

there is procurement of goods and services.

Legend: 1–1.80 (Never), 1.81–2.6 (Rarely), 2.61–3.4 (Sometimes), 3.41–4.2 (Oftentimes), 4.21–5 (Always)

Public secondary school administrators perceived level of liquidation practice in terms of document submission

Table 9 reveals respondents' liquidation practices presented in frequency distribution along four indicators evaluated. As shown in Table 9, all of the given indicators are practiced oftentimes with the median scores of 4 and 5, however looking further on the indicators 1, 2 and 4 around 37.5%, 35.4% and 25%, there is an indication of "oftentimes" practice in terms of "petty operating expenses and field operating expenses are liquidated within 20 days after the end of the year", "official travels are liquidated within 30 days after return to the station in case of local travel" and "submits to the auditor the documents to settle disallowance/ suspensions".

This is the weakness / poor practices of secondary schools' administrators in Eastern Samar, which is in comparison to the findings of Cruz *et al.*, (2016) on enhancing the managerial performance of school heads, it is evident there are some weaknesses in performing some functions which can be attributed to several factors including the external hindrances.

Table 9. Public secondary school administrators perceived level of liquidation practice in terms of document submission

| Document submission | Frequency Distribution | | | | | Median | Interpretation |
|--|------------------------|----|---|---|---|--------|----------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Petty Operating Expenses and Field Operating Expenses are liquidated within 20 days after the end of the year. | 18 | 23 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |
| Official travels are liquidated within 30 days after return to station in the case of local travel | 17 | 22 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 4 | Oftentimes Practiced |
| Submits Report of Disbursement with accomplished vouchers/payroll and other supporting documents | 28 | 16 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Always Practiced |
| Submits to the Auditor the documents to settle disallowance | 25 | 12 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 5 | Always Practiced |

Legend: 1–1.80 (Never), 1.81–2.6 (Rarely), 2.61–3.4 (Sometimes), 3.41–4.2 (Oftentimes), 4.21–5 (Always)

Relationship between the perceived level of managerial competence and financial management practice of public secondary school administrators

Table 10 shows the statistical information on the spearman rho-based correlation between managerial competencies and financial management practices of the respondents. As can be seen, data reveal statistically low relationships found between the managerial competence and human resource management ($\rho = .070$, $p = .636$), and material resource management ($\rho = -.217$, $p = .139$), respectively. Moreover, such a relationship is statistically not significant since their p values are greater than the significance set at 0.05. From this finding, it is implied that the level at which financial management practices performed by administrators among the secondary schools in Eastern Samar are not influenced, in any manner, by their competencies for human and material resources management.

The result opposes the findings made by Cañete (2020) and Muraina (2015) on the significant relationship between managerial competence and financial management. The results imply that the appointment to headship is not on the basis of predetermined leadership qualities, including financial management.

Table 10. Relationship between the perceived level of managerial competence and financial management practice of public secondary school administrators

| Criterion variable | Predictive variable | rho | p value | Decision | Interpretation |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Financial management practice | Human Resource Management | -.070 | .636 | Retain H_0 | Not Significant |
| | Material Resource Management' | -.217 | .139 | Retain H_0 | Not Significant |

$\alpha = .05$

Relationship between the perceived level of managerial competence and the liquidation practices of public secondary school administrators

Meanwhile, the correlation between respondents' managerial competencies and liquidation practices is also tested to address the investigation's last objective. Table 11 provides the statistical information obtained from the correlation test conducted. As revealed, it is evident that there is no significant relationship between the variables under consideration. Looking at the computed p values that are higher than the significance level at 0.05, it is safe to retain the second null hypothesis set for the study. In other words, while parameters of managerial competencies and liquidation practices are found to be at high and very high levels, the correlation test suggested that there is no linear association. Hence, liquidation practices are not influenced by effective human and material resource management.

In comparison, Lipman (2020) remarked that effective traits of an administrator are limited to the following: "commitment to the mission, strategic mission, conceptual skill, attention to detail, delegation, grow talent, hiring savvy, balance emotions, creativity, and digital communication experience" p.12. Therefore, exemplary

performance on liquidation practices in public secondary schools of Eastern Samar does not have any relation to the administrators' managerial skills.

Table 11. Relationship between the perceived level of managerial competence and the liquidation practices of public secondary school administrators

| Criterion variable | Predictive variable | rho | p value | Decision | Interpretation |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Liquidation Practice | Human Resource Management | -.211 | .150 | Retain H ₀ | Not Significant |
| | Material Resource Management' | -.102 | .489 | Retain H ₀ | Not Significant |

$\alpha = .05$

CONCLUSIONS

The public secondary schools' administrators in the schools division of Eastern Samar showcase a high level of competency in managing human and material resources of their respective stations. They always perform various financial management practices, which is suggestive of good financial planning. In addition, they often practice proper liquidation protocols observed, indicating how obedient school managers are to the rules and regulations set by governing authorities. Meanwhile, the perceived level of managerial competence does not influence their financial management and liquidation practices suggesting how independent the parameters are.

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