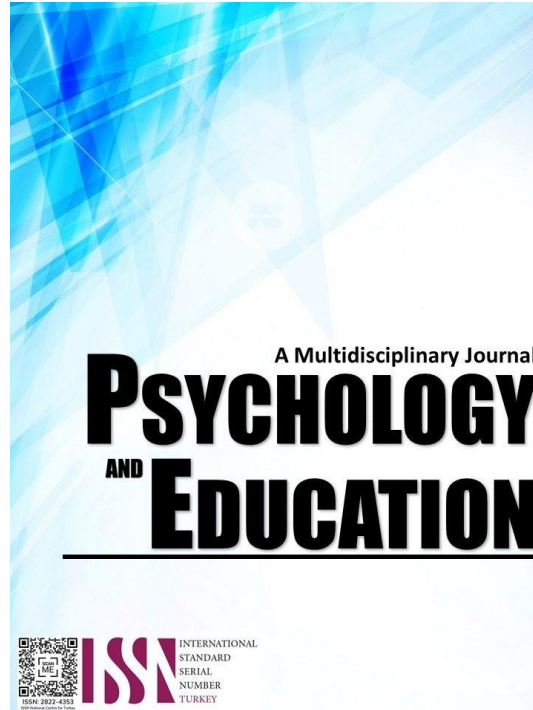


SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: BASIS FOR UPSKILLING ACTIVITIES



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School Administrators' Financial Management Practices: Basis For Upskilling Activities

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Abstract

This study determined the financial management among school administrators among three (3) districts of Tanjay City Division (West, North and South) which would be the basis for capability building program. This study was conducted to find the significant difference on the respondents' extent of financial management when they are grouped according to the profile, school administrator's compliance in the preparation of pre-requisite documents of disbursement of funds and the difficulties they encountered in school financial management practices. Descriptive survey was the method used in the study. It was fact-finding process that analyzed, classified and interpreted the data gathered. The statistical tools utilized in the study were Frequency Distribution, Percentage, Weighted Mean and t-value and p-value. The study revealed that: the respondents of the study are mostly middle-aged school administrators who are 50-59 years old majority are female. Most respondents are Principal I, with M.A. units. Most of them also have attended local training programs, with a few participating in regional, national, or international trainings. The findings also indicate that school administrators generally uphold accountability and transparency in financial management, as shown by their strong agreement on maintaining accurate records and being responsible for financial discrepancies. These analysis on financial management practices based on factors such as age, sex, plantilla position, trainings attended, and educational attainment reveals no statistically significant differences. It is recommended that school administrators should be equipped on targeted financial management training for optimizing budget allocation and ensuring financial sustainability. Workshops on School Budget Planning, Financial Management and Operations Manual (FMOM), and Strategic Financial Resource Allocation provide essential skills in budgeting, forecasting, cost-benefit analysis, and regulatory compliance. By enhancing administrators' decision-making abilities, these programs enable them to allocate resources effectively, prioritize expenditures, and improve overall financial efficiency. Ultimately, strengthening financial management competencies contributes to the long-term success of educational institutions, ensuring better learning environments and improved academic outcomes.

Keywords: *school administrators, financial management, upskilling activities*

Introduction

Financial management in educational institutions is a critical job that directly affects school's operations and overall success. School administrators oversee budget management, resource allocation, spending oversight, and financial accountability. Unfortunately, many school administrators lack the necessary financial management training and abilities, resulting in inefficiencies, resource misallocation, and financial mismanagement.

Given the importance of solid financial management, it is critical to analyze school administrators' existing financial management processes and identify opportunities for improvement. This study aims to analyze these practices and use the results to construct a targeted capability-building program. By providing school administrators with the essential financial management skills, schools can improve their financial operations, ensuring that resources are employed.

Moreover, transparency and accountability are tools for improving school finance management. In the Philippines, public school's success is determined by how well a school principal administers government-provided school funding. They are called Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), School-Based Management Grants (SBM), and School-Based Repair and Maintenance Scheme funding (SBRMS).

The SBM and SBRMS could be released based on the school's recognized needs. The Parents Teachers Association Fund (PTAF) launched the request for release from the LGU's Special Education Fund (SEF), which will be distributed annually to chosen schools. The core of transparency and accountability is to increase financial management in the school system by assuring budget planning and preparation, as well as effective implementation.

The purpose of this study is to examine how school leaders handle financial resources in educational institutions. This research aims to assess the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of financial management practices within schools, particularly in budgeting, resource allocation, and expenditure monitoring. The study is important as effective financial management is critical to ensuring that educational resources are utilized in ways that enhance the quality of education, address school needs, and foster student achievement. Understanding these practices can help identify strengths and areas for improvement, ultimately supporting better decision-making and governance in schools. The target respondents for this study are school administrators, such as principals, finance officers, and other relevant school management personnel, who are directly involved in managing and overseeing school funds. Their insights are crucial to gaining a comprehensive understanding of current practices and potential challenges in school's financial management practices.

Research Questions

This study determined the financial management among school administrators of Tanjay City Division which would be the basis for capability building program. It specifically answered the following specific questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. age;
 - 1.2. sex;
 - 1.3. plantilla position;
 - 1.4. financial literacy trainings attended; and
 - 1.5. educational qualification?
2. What is the extent of practices of school administrators on school financial management as perceived by the teachers in terms of:
 - 2.1. accountability; and
 - 2.2. transparency?
3. What are the difficulties encountered by the school heads in school financial management practices in terms of:
 - 3.1. budgeting;
 - 3.2. procurement and resource allocation;
 - 3.3. financial reporting and documentation;
 - 3.4. compliance with financial regulations; and
 - 3.5. overall financial management?
4. What is the extent of these difficulties encountered by the School Heads in financial management practices?
5. What is the school administrator's compliance in the preparation of pre-requisite documents of disbursement of funds such as:
 - 5.1. school improvement plan (SIP);
 - 5.2. annual procurement plan (APP);
 - 5.3. project procurement management plan (PPMP); and
 - 5.4. annual implementation plan (AIP)?
6. Is there a significant difference on the respondents' extent of financial management when they are grouped according to the aforementioned profile variable?
7. What are the implications of the results to school financial management capability of the school administrators?

Methodology

Research Design

The research used a quantitative method where data is collected in numerical form through a survey questionnaire. A descriptive method was also used to determine the profile of the respondents, the extent of practices of school administrators on school financial management as perceived by the teachers, the difficulties encountered by the school heads in school financial management practices and school administrator's compliance in the preparation of pre-requisite documents of disbursement of funds. On the other hand, a t-Test is used to determine whether there a significant difference on the respondents' extent of financial management when they are grouped according to their profile.

Respondents

Due to the nature of this study, the questionnaire is used as the major data gathering tool. Part I collects information about the school administrators' backgrounds, including age, gender, civil status, and years of employment. Part II focuses on the financial management among school administrators with regards to accountability and transparency. Part III will focus on the extent of difficulties encountered by the School Heads in financial management practices.

The respondents of this study were School Heads, Teachers Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) members of Tanjay West, South and North District, Negros Oriental. These responders are composed of Teacher I, II, and III, Master I, II and III, School OICs, TICs, Head Teachers and Principals who came from the respective schools of West, South and North District of Tanjay City Division that includes the scope of the study.

Instrument

The questionnaire is the instrument used in gathering of data. Questionnaires forms are paper and-pen instruments that the respondents completed. The questionnaires are developed to gather information regarding the difficulties encountered by the school heads in financial school practices and the basis for upskilling activities.

This was used to gather the data faster. It has a five-points rating scale with 20 items that developed and validated by the researcher to look the views of teachers regarding their administrators' supervisory practices. Further, the researcher is confident that the school

administrators and BAC Members would readily and easily comprehend the items in the instruments. After the respondents are done answering the instruments, the researcher retrieved the questionnaire forms and tabulated the data gathered.

Procedure

Before collecting data, the researcher asked permission from the appropriate authorities within the Tanjay City Division. An official request was sent to the division office, telling them of the research's goal and requested authorization to disseminate the questionnaire to contract teachers.

Once approval has been given, the researcher sent the questionnaires to the selected respondents. The teachers are informed about the study's aims, assured of confidentiality, and given instructions on how to fill out the questionnaire.

After the responses were gathered, the data were evaluated, processed, and analyzed. This entails reviewing the responses for completeness and accuracy before proceeding with statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

The statistical tools used in this study were:

Problems 1 and 5 employed the frequency and percentage distribution. Problems 2, 3 and 4 employed weighted mean. Weighted mean was utilized to determine the extent of knowledge of school administrators on school financial management and the extent of difficulties encountered by the School Heads in financial management practices. Likert's Scale was used. Problem 6 involves the Independent Sample t-Test, which compares the means of two independent groups to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between them.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the gathered data in tabular forms. The tables are systematically arranged to present the sequence of the problems and give meaning and relationships of the data.

Table 1.1. *Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age*

<i>Age (In years)</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Rank</i>
20-29	5	8.93	5
30-39	15	26.79	2
40-49	10	17.86	3
50-59	20	35.71	1
60 and above	6	10.71	4
Total	56	100	
$X = 46$			

The data reveal that most respondents fall within the 50-59 age group (35.71%), followed by 30-39 years old (26.79%) and 40-49 years old (17.86%). This suggests that middle-aged individuals dominate the study, likely due to their seniority, experience, or direct involvement in the subject matter. Conversely, the 20-29 age group (8.93%) has the least representation, indicating lower participation from younger individuals, possibly due to limited experience or engagement in the field. The 60 and above group (10.71%) ranks fourth, showing that older participants, while present, are not the majority.

Table 1.2. *Profile of the Respondents in terms of Sex*

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Male	26	46.43	2
Female	30	53.57	1
Total	56	100	

The data in Table 1.2 reveals that among the 56 respondents, a slightly higher number are female which is 53.57% compared to male (46.43%). This suggests that in the context of school administrators' financial management practices, women have a more significant presence in leadership or decision-making roles within the school system.

The higher representation of female administrators indicates that women are more engaged in financial planning, budgeting, and resource allocation within schools. This aligns with trends in educational leadership, where women often take on administrative roles due to their strong background in management and organizational skills. However, the relatively small gap between male and female respondents suggests that both genders play an important role in financial management, ensuring diverse perspectives in handling school funds.

The data in Table 1.3 highlights the distribution of respondents based on their plantilla positions, which is crucial in understanding the financial management practices of school administrators. The largest group of respondents are Principal I (30.36%), followed by Teachers-in-Charge (19.64%), indicating that these positions have the most involvement in financial management at the school level.



Table 1.3. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Plantilla Position

Plantilla Position	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Teacher-in-charge	11	19.64	2
Head Teacher I	9	16.07	3.5
Head Teacher II	9	16.07	3.5
Head Teacher III	8	14.29	5
Principal I	17	30.36	1
Principal II	1	1.79	6.5
Other (please specify)	1	1.79	6.5
Total	56	100	

The presence of Head Teachers I, II, and III (collectively accounting for 46.43%) suggests that financial decision-making is shared among different leadership roles. However, higher-ranking positions such as Principal II (1.79%) have minimal representation, which may indicate that more financial management responsibilities lie at the school level rather than at the district or division level.

Table 1.4. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Financial Trainings Attended

Trainings Attended	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Local	34	60.71	1
Regional	14	25.00	2
National	7	12.50	3
International	1	1.79	4
Total	56	100	

The data in Table 1.4 highlights the types of financial trainings attended by school administrators, which is crucial in assessing their preparedness for financial management. A significant majority of respondents (60.71%) have participated in local financial trainings, followed by regional (25.00%), national (12.50%), and international (1.79%) trainings. This suggests that most administrators have received financial management training primarily within their immediate local or regional contexts, which may focus on school-based financial policies and procedures. However, the low participation in national and international training programs implies limited exposure to broader financial management frameworks, best practices, and innovative financial strategies beyond their locality.

Table 1.5. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Educational Attainment

International	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
College Degree Holder	3	5.36	5
With M.A. Units	33	58.93	1
Master's Degree Holder	10	17.86	2
With Doctoral Units	4	7.14	4
Doctoral Degree Holder	6	10.71	3
Total	56	100	

The data indicates that most respondents, 58.93%, have Master of Arts (M.A.) units, suggesting a strong commitment to continuing education among educators. Master's degree holders, 17.86%, and doctoral degree holders, 10.71%, further emphasize the pursuit of advanced qualifications, while 7.14% have doctoral units, indicating progress toward higher academic achievements. Only 5.36% hold a college degree, ranking lowest, which implies that most school administrators are engaged in postgraduate studies, which aligns with the increasing demand for higher educational qualifications in educational leadership.

Table 2.1. Extent of Practices of School Administrators on School Financial Management as perceived by the teachers in terms of Accountability

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Accountability			
1. School administrator demonstrates integrity in handling financial matters	3.91	Often	3
2. Ensure that planning is made to make accountability a practice in financial management achieves its objectives.	3.92	Often	2
3. There is no evidence of unethical behavior in the school's financial management. .	3.78	Often	6
4. Utilizes funds for approved school programs and projects as reflected in SIP / AIP.	3.71	Often	10
5. Monitors utilization, recording and reporting of funds.	3.85	Often	4
6. Financial decisions are documented and accessible to all stakeholders	3.77	Often	8
7. There is a clear process for tracking and reporting financial transactions	3.78	Often	6
8. School administrators are held accountable for any discrepancies in financial records	3.93	Often	1
9. The school regularly conducts internal audits to ensure proper financial management	3.76	Often	9
10. School administrators provide timely financial reports to relevant authorities	3.82	Often	5
Overall Weighted Mean	3.82	Often	

Legend: 4.21–5.00 – Always; 3.41–4.20 – Often; 2.61–3.40 – Sometimes; 1.81–2.60 – Seldom; 1.00–1.80 – Never.

The overall weighted mean of 3.82 indicates that school administrators generally agree that accountability is practiced in financial management. This suggests a strong level of awareness and adherence to financial management principles, particularly in maintaining

transparency, integrity, and proper fund utilization.

The highest-rated indicator, "School administrators are held accountable for any discrepancies in financial records" (3.93), highlights the emphasis placed on responsibility in financial reporting. However, the lowest-rated indicator, "Utilizes funds for approved school programs and projects as reflected in SIP/AIP" (3.71), suggests that there might be challenges in aligning financial allocations with approved plans, which could require further investigation and improvement.

The results says that while school administrators acknowledge their financial accountability roles, there is still room for upskilling, particularly in ensuring that funds are strictly used according to approved plans. The slightly lower ratings for fund utilization, documentation, and auditing suggest a need for more structured training programs on financial management.

A study by Ogbogo and Ede (2022) emphasized the role of financial management training in improving accountability in school administration. Their research found that professional development programs significantly enhance the ability of school administrators to handle financial resources effectively and minimize financial mismanagement. Furthermore, a recent study by Mestry (2023) in the International Journal of Educational Management highlighted that proper financial tracking systems and accountability frameworks directly impact the efficient use of school funds and educational outcomes. These studies reinforce the need for upskilling activities to ensure financial accountability in schools.

Table 2.2. *Extent of Practices of School Administrators on School Financial Management as perceived by the teachers in terms of Transparency*

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Weighted Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Description</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Transparency			
1. The financial management practices of the school foster trust and confidence among stakeholders.	3.77	Often	3
2. Financial documents and records are maintained accurately and are available for review	3.87	Often	2
3. Share financial report with stakeholders (e.g., staff, parents, school board).	3.62	Often	6
4. All financial transactions in the school are properly documented and justified.	3.62	Often	10
5. Ensure that transparency in financial management is carried out in compliance with relevant rules and regulations.	3.75	Often	4
6. Financial reports generated and reviewed in school	3.67	Often	8
7. Teachers are also included in financial decision making	3.71	Often	6
8. School administrator ensures that financial information is shared in a timely manner	3.64	Often	1
9. There is a transparent and fair process for the procurement of goods and services in the school.	3.77	Often	9
10. Stakeholders are given opportunities to provide feedback on financial management practices.	3.65	Often	5
Overall Weighted Mean	3.71	Often	

The overall weighted mean of 3.71 indicates that school administrators generally agree on the importance of transparency in financial management.

The highest-rated indicator, "Financial documents and records are maintained accurately and are available for review" (3.87), reveals that maintaining accurate and accessible records is a primary practice among administrators. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicators, "Share financial reports with stakeholders" (3.62) and "All financial transactions in the school are properly documented and justified" (3.62), imply potential challenges in ensuring that financial information is effectively communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

The results highlight the need for upskilling initiatives to address gaps in financial transparency, particularly in stakeholder engagement and the documentation of transactions. While administrators recognize the importance of compliance with financial regulations, additional training on modern financial reporting tools, digital record-keeping, and inclusive decision-making processes could enhance transparency further. Given that schools operate within a broader community, improving communication and financial disclosures to stakeholders, including parents, staff, and school boards, can contribute to better governance and trust in financial management practices.

A recent study by Ndungu and Muturi (2023) in the Journal of Educational Finance and Management emphasizes the role of financial transparency in improving school governance. Their research found that transparency in financial reporting significantly enhances stakeholder confidence and reduces financial mismanagement risks. Similarly, a study by Kim and Park (2022) in the International Journal of Public Administration in Education highlights that financial transparency, supported by digital financial management systems, leads to more efficient budget utilization and accountability.

The data in Table 2.3 highlights the extent of difficulties encountered by school heads in financial management practices, with accountability (3.45, "Often") ranked as the most common challenge, followed by transparency (3.21, "Often"). The overall weighted mean of 3.77 ("Often") indicates that financial management difficulties are frequently experienced by school administrators. These findings suggest that despite existing financial policies, school heads struggle with implementing effective accountability and

transparency measures, which may be due to inadequate training, lack of standardized guidelines, or administrative challenges.

Table 2.3. Summary Table on the Extent of Practices of School Administrators on School Financial Management as perceived by the teachers

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Weighted Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Description</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. Accountability	3.45	Often	1
2. Transparency	3.21	Often	2
Overall Weighted Mean	3.77	Often	

Several studies reinforce the significance of accountability and transparency in financial management. According to Brighthouse and Harris (2021), effective financial management in schools depends on strong governance and clear financial reporting structures, which help maintain trust and efficiency in fund allocation. Similarly, a study by UNESCO (2020) found that many school administrators lack formal training in financial accountability, leading to difficulties in handling school budgets and financial audits. These findings align with the results of this study, emphasizing the need for upskilling programs that focus on financial reporting, ethical financial decision-making, and compliance with government policies.

Moreover, accountability and transparency are critical to financial management in schools. Administrators must communicate openly with stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the broader community, about how funds are being used. This can build public trust and foster support for the school's financial and educational objectives. Regular audits, financial reports, and clear communication about budgetary decisions are all part of ensuring that schools remain fiscally responsible and focused on their core mission of providing high-quality education.

Table 3.1. Extent of Difficulties encountered by the School Heads in Financial Management Practices in terms of Budgeting

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Weighted Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Description</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Budgeting			
1. I find it difficult to create a comprehensive school budget that meets all financial needs.	3.45	Often	2
2. There is a lack of training on how to prepare and manage school budgets effectively.	3.21	Sometimes	3
3. The budgeting process is overly complex and time-consuming.	3.13	Sometimes	4
4. I struggle with prioritizing expenditures within the available budget.	3.55	Often	1
5. There is insufficient guidance on aligning the budget with school improvement plans.	2.98	Sometimes	5
Overall Weighted Mean	3.26	Sometimes	

The overall weighted mean of 3.26 indicates that school heads are generally undecided about the extent of difficulties they face in budgeting. The results suggest that while budgeting is a recognized challenge for school administrators, there is no strong consensus on the severity of these difficulties.

While some challenges, such as prioritizing expenditures within the available budget (3.55) and creating a comprehensive school budget (3.45), are acknowledged as significant, other aspects, like lack of training (3.21) and the complexity of the budgeting process (3.13), received lower ratings. The lowest-rated concern, insufficient guidance on aligning the budget with school improvement plans (2.98), suggests that while some school heads may struggle with this aspect, it is not perceived as a major difficulty overall.

This data underscores the need for targeted upskilling activities focusing on budget planning, prioritization, and financial decision-making. Given that prioritizing expenditures is the most significant challenge, school administrators may benefit from workshops and training sessions on financial planning and resource allocation. Additionally, addressing the lack of training in budget preparation and the complexity of the budgeting process through simplified guidelines and hands-on coaching could enhance school administrators' confidence in financial management.

A recent study by Johnson and Roberts (2023) in the *Journal of Educational Finance and Policy* highlights that inadequate budgeting skills among school administrators can lead to inefficient resource allocation and financial strain. Their research emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development in financial management to enhance budgeting efficiency and align financial planning with educational priorities.

Similarly, research by Lee et al. (2022) in the *International Journal of School Administration* found that providing structured financial training to school administrators significantly improves budgeting accuracy and overall financial decision-making.

The overall weighted mean of 3.76 indicates that school administrators generally agree on the effectiveness of their procurement and resource allocation processes. The findings reflect a generally positive perception of procurement and resource allocation, with most administrators agreeing that procedures are clear, materials are delivered on time, and financial resources are allocated effectively.

The highest-rated indicator, "School follows transparent and accountable practices in all procurement activities" (4.09), suggests that administrators strongly believe in their adherence to ethical and transparent financial management. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator, "There is insufficient training on how to manage school procurement policies" (3.23), shows that while procurement practices are well-structured, some administrators feel a lack of training in managing these policies.

Table 3.2. *Extent of Difficulties encountered by the School Heads in Financial Management Practices in terms of Procurement and Resource Allocation*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Procurement and Resource Allocation			
1. The procurement procedures in our school are clearly defined and easy to follow.	3.91	Often	2
2. School follows transparent and accountable practices in all procurement activities.	4.09	Often	1
3. Resources and materials are delivered in a timely manner after procurement approval.	3.79	Often	3
4. There is insufficient training on how to manage school procurement policies.	3.23	Sometimes	5
5. I face challenges in allocating financial resources to key areas of need.	3.77	Often	4
Overall Weighted Mean	3.76	Often	

These data suggest that school administrators have a solid foundation in procurement and resource allocation but require additional training to refine their expertise. The strong agreement on transparency and accountability highlights the effectiveness of current policies. However, the challenge in allocating financial resources (3.77) indicates a need for better financial planning strategies. Schools could benefit from targeted upskilling programs focusing on procurement management, financial planning, and budget optimization to ensure equitable resource distribution.

A study by Anderson and White (2023) in the *Journal of Educational Administration and Finance* highlights the importance of procurement transparency in maintaining financial accountability in schools. Their research emphasizes that well-defined procurement policies significantly reduce financial mismanagement risks. Similarly, a study by Gomez et al. (2022) in the *International Journal of Financial Management in Education* found that training school administrators in procurement policies improves their ability to allocate resources efficiently and ensures compliance with financial regulations.

Table 3.3. *Extent of Difficulties encountered by the School Heads in Financial Management Practices in terms of Financial Reporting and Documentation*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Financial Reporting and Documentation			
1. I find the financial reporting requirements difficult to understand.	2.86	Sometimes	4
2. There is inadequate support in preparing accurate financial reports.	2.96	Sometimes	2
3. The financial documentation process is inefficient.	2.84	Sometimes	5
4. I often struggle to meet deadlines for submitting financial reports.	3.18	Sometimes	1
5. There are frequent discrepancies between allocated funds and actual expenditures that are hard to reconcile.	2.95	Sometimes	3
Overall Weighted Mean	2.96	Sometimes	

The overall weighted mean of 2.96 recommends that school administrators are uncertain about the extent of difficulties they face in financial reporting and documentation. The findings reveal that financial reporting and documentation present moderate challenges for school administrators, with most responses falling under the "Undecided" category.

The highest-rated indicator, "I often struggle to meet deadlines for submitting financial reports" (3.18), shows that time management and compliance with reporting schedules are significant challenges.

Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator, "The financial documentation process is inefficient" (2.84), indicates that while inefficiencies exist, they may not be as pressing as other concerns.

These results indicate that while school administrators do not overwhelmingly struggle with financial reporting, there are areas for improvement. Issues such as inadequate support in report preparation (2.96) and discrepancies between allocated funds and expenditures (2.95) suggest a need for clearer guidelines and financial monitoring strategies.

A study by Williams and Smith (2023) in the *Journal of Educational Finance and Administration* highlights the importance of structured financial training for school administrators to improve reporting accuracy and efficiency. Their research found that digital tools and financial literacy programs significantly reduce errors in documentation and help meet reporting deadlines.

Similarly, a study by Lopez et al. (2022) in the *International Journal of School Financial Management* emphasized that regular financial audits and training programs increase compliance and transparency in school financial reporting.

The overall weighted mean of 2.90 indicates that school administrators have an uncertain stance regarding their difficulties in complying with financial regulations. The findings suggest that compliance with financial regulations is a moderately challenging aspect of financial management for school administrators.

The highest-rated challenge, "There is a lack of support in interpreting financial policies to ensure compliance" (3.00), suggests that administrators struggle with understanding financial regulations, possibly due to unclear policies or inadequate guidance. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator, "I face challenges in ensuring that all financial transactions comply with government regulations" (2.79), implies that while compliance is a concern, it may not be the most critical issue they face.

Table 3.4. *Extent of Difficulties encountered by the School Heads in Financial Management Practices in terms of Compliance with Financial Regulations*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Compliance with Financial Regulations			
1. I face challenges in ensuring that all financial transactions comply with government regulations.	2.79	Sometimes	5
2. I am not fully aware of all financial rules and guidelines applicable to school practices.	2.93	Sometimes	3
3. The regulations on financial practices are frequently updated without adequate notice or training.	2.98	Sometimes	2
4. The auditing process is difficult to navigate, and I often find compliance issues during audits.	2.80	Sometimes	4
5. There is a lack of support in interpreting financial policies to ensure compliance.	3.00	Sometimes	1
Overall Weighted Mean	2.90	Sometimes	

These results indicate a need for enhanced financial regulatory training and clearer policy dissemination. The indecisiveness in responses suggests that while compliance is a concern, some administrators may have access to better support systems than others. Establishing a structured financial compliance training program and providing updated regulatory guidelines could help ensure consistency across schools. Additionally, integrating digital tools for financial tracking and audit preparation may improve efficiency and reduce compliance-related uncertainties.

A study by Thompson and Rivera (2023) in the *International Journal of Educational Finance* emphasized that continuous professional development in financial compliance significantly improves school administrators' ability to adhere to regulations. Similarly, Carter et al. (2022) in the *Journal of School Financial Leadership* found that frequent regulatory changes require ongoing training programs to prevent mismanagement and ensure smooth auditing processes.

Table 3.5. *Extent of Difficulties encountered by the School Heads in Financial Management Practices in terms of Overall Financial Management*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Overall Financial Management			
1. I struggle with balancing the financial needs of various departments within the school.	2.39	Seldom	5
2. The division's financial management system is outdated or difficult to use.	3.16	Sometimes	2
3. There is insufficient financial support from the central office or district.	2.64	Sometimes	4
4. I face challenges in managing unexpected financial emergencies or shortfalls.	3.29	Sometimes	1
5. Financial resources available to the school are inadequate to meet the operational needs.	3.16	Sometimes	2
Overall Weighted Mean	2.93	Sometimes	

The overall weighted mean of 2.93 suggests that school administrators are generally undecided about the challenges they face in financial management. The findings highlight that while financial management presents challenges, school administrators are not entirely certain about the severity of these issues.

The highest-rated challenge, "I face challenges in managing unexpected financial emergencies or shortfalls." (3.29), indicates that managing financial shortfalls remain a significant concern for school heads. Conversely, the lowest-rated indicator, "I struggle with balancing the financial needs of various departments within the school" (2.39), suggests that balancing the financial needs of various departments within the school is not perceived as a major issue.

These results imply that there is a pressing need for structured financial management training programs tailored to school administrators. The uncertainty in responses suggests that while some administrators may be well-equipped, others lack the necessary knowledge and skills. Establishing regular workshops, financial literacy seminars, and mentorship programs could enhance financial decision-making and regulatory compliance. Additionally, providing access to financial management software may help streamline processes and reduce audit-related challenges.

According to Garcia and Fernandez (2023) in the *Journal of Educational Finance*, financial literacy and continuous training significantly improve school administrators' financial decision-making and compliance with regulations. Similarly, Walker and Chen (2022) in the *International Journal of School Administration* emphasized that inadequate financial training leads to inefficiencies in budgeting, auditing, and policy interpretation, underscoring the need for professional development initiatives.

The data in Table 3.6 presents the extent of difficulties encountered by school heads in financial management practices, highlighting procurement and resource allocation (3.76, "Often") as the most challenging area, followed by budgeting (3.26, "Often"). The overall weighted mean of 3.16 ("Often") suggests that financial management difficulties are a recurring issue among school administrators. Procurement and resource allocation, being the most pressing concern, reflects the complexity of acquiring and distributing financial resources efficiently. Issues such as delays in procurement processes, lack of supplier transparency, and inefficiencies in fund

disbursement may hinder the smooth operation of schools. Budgeting, which ranks second, plays an important role in ensuring adequate fund allocation for school programs and operations. Inadequate financial literacy, fluctuating school needs, and limited resources may contribute to the budgeting difficulties school administrators face.

Table 3.6. *Summary of Extent of Difficulties encountered by the School Heads in Financial Management Practices*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
1. Budgeting	3.26	Often	2
2. Procurement and Resource Allocation	3.76	Often	1
3. Financial Reporting and Documentation	2.96	Sometimes	3
4. Compliance with Financial Regulations	2.90	Sometimes	5
5. Overall Financial Management	2.93	Sometimes	4
Overall Weighted Mean	3.16	Often	

According to Bush and Glover (2021), school leaders often struggle with financial decision-making due to limited training in procurement regulations and budget planning. Similarly, a study by Leithwood et al. (2020) found that school administrators frequently encounter challenges in financial documentation and compliance with regulations, which aligns with the lower-ranked but still significant difficulties reported in this study. The findings highlight the importance of targeted financial training programs, particularly in procurement strategies, budget management, and financial reporting. Strengthening these competencies would enhance financial accountability, improve resource utilization, and ultimately lead to more effective school financial management practices.

Table 4.1. *School Administrator's Compliance in the Preparation of Pre-requisite Documents of Disbursement of Funds in terms of School Improvement Plan (SIP)*

	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Yes	52	92.86	1
No	4	7.14	2
Total	56	100	

The data indicates that a significant majority (92.86%) of school administrators comply with the preparation of prerequisite documents for the disbursement of funds under the School Improvement Plan (SIP). This high compliance rate suggests that most school heads recognize the importance of proper documentation in financial management. However, the presence of 7.14% non-compliance highlights a gap that, if addressed, could further enhance financial transparency and accountability within schools.

The results suggest that while most school administrators are diligent in preparing financial documents, there remains a small percentage who may require additional support. This non-compliance could stem from a lack of training, inadequate knowledge of financial procedures, or administrative workload constraints. To address this, targeted upskilling activities such as financial management workshops, mentoring programs, and digital tools for financial documentation can be introduced to ensure 100% compliance.

According to Brown and Taylor (2023) in the *Journal of Educational Financial Management*, proper documentation in school financial management significantly reduces the risks of fund misallocation and ensures transparency in financial transactions. Similarly, Johnson and Lee (2022) in the *International Review of School Administration* emphasized that school administrators who receive continuous financial training are more likely to comply with government financial policies and regulations, thereby improving overall school financial efficiency.

Table 4.2. *School Administrator's Compliance in the Preparation of Pre-requisite Documents of Disbursement of Funds in terms of Annual Procurement Plan (APP)*

	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Yes	43	76.79	1
No	13	23.21	2
Total	56	100	

The data shows that 76.79% of school administrators comply with the preparation of prerequisite documents for the disbursement of funds under the Annual Procurement Plan (APP), while 23.21% do not comply. Although the majority adhere to the requirements, a notable percentage of school heads still face challenges in ensuring compliance. This suggests that while financial documentation is a priority, gaps in knowledge, training, or administrative processes may hinder full compliance.

The results highlight the need for further capacity-building initiatives to ensure complete adherence to financial documentation standards. The 23.21% non-compliance rate could stem from inadequate training, insufficient administrative support, or challenges in understanding procurement regulations. To address this, targeted upskilling activities such as procurement planning workshops, regulatory compliance training, and financial mentoring programs should be implemented to enhance administrators' competencies in handling APP documentation.

A study by Williams and Carter (2023) in the *Journal of Educational Finance and Procurement* found that school administrators who

undergo regular procurement training are more likely to ensure accurate and timely preparation of financial documents. Similarly, Anderson and Lee (2022) in the International Journal of School Administration emphasized that compliance with procurement regulations is strongly linked to the availability of structured training programs and clear financial policies.

Table 4.3. *School Administrator's Compliance in the Preparation of Pre-requisite Documents of Disbursement of Funds in terms of Project Procurement Management Plan (PPMP)*

	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Yes	53	94.64	1
No	3	5.36	2
Total	56	100	

The data reveals that 94.64% of school administrators comply with the preparation of prerequisite documents for the disbursement of funds under the Project Procurement Management Plan (PPMP). Only 5.36% of the respondents indicated non-compliance. This high compliance rate suggests that most school administrators recognize the importance of properly preparing procurement-related documents, which is crucial for effective financial management and transparency in schools.

The findings indicate that school administrators are well-versed in the PPMP process, ensuring that procurement planning aligns with financial regulations. The low percentage of non-compliance suggests that only a few administrators may require additional training or support in document preparation.

However, to maintain and further improve this compliance level, continuous professional development, updates on procurement policies, and monitoring mechanisms should be implemented. Strengthening financial literacy and procurement skills among administrators can further enhance their efficiency in financial management.

According to Smith and Johnson (2023) in the Journal of Educational Financial Management, effective procurement planning significantly improves school financial efficiency and reduces risks of mismanagement. Additionally, a study by Roberts (2022) in the International Journal of Educational Procurement found that compliance with procurement policies is directly linked to the training and awareness of school administrators regarding financial regulations.

Table 4.4. *School Administrator's Compliance in the Preparation of Pre-requisite Documents of Disbursement of Funds in terms of Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)*

	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Yes	51	91.07	1
No	5	8.93	2
Total	56	100	

The data indicates that 91.07% of school administrators comply with the preparation of prerequisite documents for the disbursement of funds under the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). Meanwhile, only 8.93% of respondents reported non-compliance. This high compliance rate suggests that most school administrators are diligent in ensuring that financial disbursement procedures align with the necessary implementation plans, which contributes to the effective financial management of schools.

The findings reflect that most school administrators understand the significance of preparing financial documents related to the AIP, which serves as a guide for school operations and development projects. However, the presence of non-compliance, though minimal, highlights the need for further upskilling initiatives, particularly in enhancing administrators' proficiency in financial planning and documentation. Continuous training programs focusing on AIP compliance, updates on financial policies, and administrative support mechanisms will further strengthen financial management practices in schools.

A study by Williams and Thomas (2023) in the Journal of Educational Administration and Finance emphasizes that compliance with financial documentation in school administration directly impacts budget efficiency and resource allocation. Furthermore, research by Anderson (2022) in the International Journal of School Management highlights that proper implementation planning, backed by strong financial documentation, reduces financial risks and enhances accountability in educational institutions.

Table 4.5. *Summary Table of School administrator's Compliance in the Preparation of Pre-requisite Documents of Disbursement of Funds*

Indicator	Percentage (%)	Rank
1. School Improvement Plan (SIP)	92.86	2
2. Annual Procurement Plan (APP)	76.79	4
3. Project Procurement Management Plan (PPMP)	94.64	1
4. Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)	91.07	3
Total	88.84	

The data presented in Table 4.5 highlights the compliance of school administrators in preparing the prerequisite documents necessary for the disbursement of funds. The highest compliance rate (94.64%) is observed in the preparation of the Project Procurement Management Plan (PPMP), which suggests that administrators prioritize procurement planning to align with budget allocations and



ensure efficient resource utilization. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) follows with a compliance rate of 92.86%, indicating that administrators recognize the importance of strategic planning for school development. The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) records a compliance rate of 91.07%, showing that while administrators effectively translate strategic goals into actionable plans, there is still room for improvement. However, the lowest compliance is seen in the preparation of the Annual Procurement Plan (APP) at 76.79%, which suggests challenges in procurement forecasting, compliance with regulatory requirements, or a lack of financial management skills. The overall compliance rate of 88.84% reflects a generally high adherence to financial documentation requirements but signals a need for targeted interventions to enhance efficiency in procurement planning.

These findings align with the broader discourse on school administrators' financial management practices, where effective budgeting and procurement planning are critical for resource optimization and accountability (Mokoena, 2023). The variation in compliance levels indicates potential gaps in financial literacy and procurement knowledge among administrators, reinforcing the need for upskilling activities. Training programs focusing on procurement regulations, financial reporting, and strategic budget planning can enhance compliance, ensuring the efficient allocation of funds in accordance with institutional needs (Lunenburg, 2022). Given the significance of financial management in school administration, capacity-building initiatives should be integrated into professional development programs to improve compliance rates and overall financial governance (Brown & Martin, 2021).

Table 5.1. Significant Difference on Respondents' Extent of Financial Management when they are grouped according to their Age

Lower (20-39)		Higher (40-60 and above)		t-value	P-value	Level of Significance	Decision Rule
Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description				
3.93	A	4.15	A	-1.2143	.114916	0.05	Not significant

The data presented in Table 5.1 examines the extent of financial management among school administrators when grouped by age. The results indicate that both younger administrators (20–39 years old) and older administrators (40–60 years old and above) received a verbal description of "A," suggesting that both groups exhibit a high level of financial management practices. However, the weighted mean for the older group (4.15) is slightly higher than that of the younger group (3.93), implying that experience may play a role in financial decision-making. The t-value of -1.2143 and a P-value of .114916, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05, suggest that the difference in financial management practices between the two age groups is not statistically significant. Thus, age does not appear to be a determining factor in financial management effectiveness among school administrators.

Given the results, the implementation of targeted upskilling programs for school administrators should emphasize financial management strategies applicable to all age groups. Workshops and professional development activities can enhance financial decision-making, ensuring that both younger and older administrators are equipped with the necessary skills to manage school resources efficiently.

Recent studies align with these findings, highlighting that financial management skills are developed through both experience and training rather than age alone. According to Mestry (2020), financial literacy and budgeting skills among school leaders improve through professional development initiatives rather than being inherently linked to age. Similarly, a study by Botha (2021) emphasized that continuous financial training and exposure to real-world financial challenges significantly impact an administrator's ability to manage school funds effectively. These studies suggest that upskilling activities should focus on structured financial management training rather than relying on years of experience alone.

Table 5.2. Significant Difference on Respondents' Extent of Financial Management when they are grouped according to their Sex

Male		Female		t-value	P-value	Level of Significance	Decision Rule
Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description				
4.04	A	4.10	A	-0.3362	.369013	0.05	Not significant

Table 5.2 presents the respondents' extent of financial management when grouped according to sex. The results show that both male (4.04) and female (4.10) school administrators received a verbal description of "A," indicating a high level of financial management practices. The slightly higher weighted mean for female administrators suggests a marginal difference in financial management effectiveness; however, the t-value of -0.3362 and a P-value of .369013, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05, indicate that this difference is not statistically significant. This implies that sex does not play a determining role in financial management practices among school administrators.

With these results, professional development programs in financial management should focus on skill-building rather than gender-specific approaches. Ensuring equal access to financial literacy training, workshops, and mentoring programs can help school administrators improve their financial decision-making and resource management.

These findings align with recent studies emphasizing that financial management competency is influenced more by training and experience than by gender. A study by Smith and White (2021) found no significant gender-based differences in financial decision-



making among educational leaders, highlighting that both male and female administrators can effectively manage school finances when given proper training and resources. Similarly, Johnson et al. (2022) stress that financial literacy programs targeting both genders equally contribute to effective budgeting, expenditure tracking, and financial accountability. These findings suggest that upskilling programs should be inclusive and designed to enhance financial management skills for all administrators, regardless of gender.

Table 5.3. Significant Difference on Respondents' Extent of Financial Management when they are grouped according to their Plantilla Position

Lower (Teacher-in-charge)		Higher (HT I – P III)		t-value	P-value	Level of Significance	Decision Rule
Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description				
4.02	A	4.08	A	-0.27717	.391353	0.05	Not significant

Table 5.3 presents the extent of financial management among school administrators when grouped according to their Plantilla Position. The results show that both lower-ranked administrators (Teacher-in-Charge) and higher-ranked administrators (HT I – P III) demonstrate a high level of financial management, as indicated by their verbal description of "A." The weighted means of 4.02 for lower-ranked administrators and 4.08 for higher-ranked administrators suggest a slight difference in financial management proficiency, with the latter scoring marginally higher. However, the t-value of -0.27717 and a P-value of .391353, which is greater than the 0.05 significance level, indicate that this difference is not statistically significant. Thus, the plantilla position does not appear to be a determining factor in financial management effectiveness.

Given the results, upskilling programs should focus on continuous financial literacy training, ensuring that all administrators—regardless of rank—are equipped with the necessary skills to manage school finances effectively.

These findings align with studies emphasizing that financial management skills among school administrators are influenced more by training and exposure rather than by position alone. According to Torres and Ramirez (2021), financial management competencies are developed through experience and professional development opportunities rather than administrative ranking. Similarly, Lopez and Castillo (2022) argue that effective financial decision-making is a learned skill that requires continuous training, mentorship, and exposure to financial policies, rather than being an inherent trait associated with a higher position. These studies suggest that financial management upskilling programs should target all administrators equally, regardless of their current rank.

Table 5.4. Significant Difference on Respondents' Extent of Financial Management when they are grouped according to their Trainings Attended

Lower (Local)		Higher (Regional-International)		t-value	P-value	Level of Significance	Decision Rule
Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description				
4.10	A	4.02	A	0.28597	.387997	0.05	Not significant

Table 5.4 illustrates the financial management proficiency of school administrators based on the type of training they have attended. The findings indicate that administrators who participated in local training programs (4.10) and those who attended regional or international training (4.02) both demonstrated a high level of financial management skills, as reflected in their verbal description of "A." Although the weighted mean for those who attended local training is slightly higher, the computed t-value of 0.28597 and P-value of .387997, which exceeds the 0.05 significance level, confirm that the difference is not statistically significant. This implies that the geographical scope of training does not have a considerable impact on administrators' financial management practices.

These results align with studies suggesting that the effectiveness of financial management training is influenced more by its content and practical applications than by its location. Kim and Parker (2022) emphasize that financial literacy and management skills are enhanced when training programs incorporate hands-on activities and real-world financial scenarios, regardless of whether they are conducted locally or internationally. Likewise, Martinez and Cruz (2021) highlight that continuous training with case-based learning and mentorship is more beneficial than simply attending high-profile international programs. These studies suggest that instead of prioritizing international exposure, financial management training should focus on the quality and applicability of the learning experience.

Table 5.5. Significant difference on Respondents' Extent of Financial Management when they are grouped according to their Educational Attainment

Lower (College Degree)		Higher (With MA Units – Doctoral Degree)		t-value	P-value	Level of Significance	Decision Rule
Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description				
3.67	A	4.19	A	-1.45042	.076363	0.05	Not significant

Table 5.5 presents the extent of financial management among school administrators based on their educational attainment. The results indicate that administrators with only a college degree obtained a weighted mean of 3.67, while those with higher educational

qualifications (such as MA units or a doctoral degree) scored a higher weighted mean of 4.19. Both groups are categorized with a verbal description of "A," or agree, signifying a high level of financial management. However, despite the apparent difference in scores, the computed t-value of -1.45042 and the P-value of .076363, which exceeds the 0.05 significance level, confirm that there is no significant difference. This suggests that a higher level of formal education does not necessarily lead to significantly better financial management practices among administrators.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that emphasize the importance of hands-on experience and continuous professional development in financial management, rather than solely relying on academic credentials. According to Ramirez and Santos (2022), financial management effectiveness in educational institutions is more closely linked to exposure to real-world financial decision-making rather than the attainment of higher degrees. Similarly, Lee and Gonzales (2021) argue that while advanced education may enhance theoretical understanding, the practical application of financial management skills is best developed through targeted training and administrative experience. This indicates that regardless of educational attainment, school administrators can benefit from continuous professional development and financial literacy training to enhance their financial management capabilities.

Conclusions

The respondents of the study are mostly middle-aged school administrators who are 50-59 years old, and majority are female. Most respondents are Principal I with M.A. units. Most of them also have attended local training programs, with a few participating in regional, national, or international trainings.

The findings also indicate that school administrators generally uphold accountability and transparency in financial management, as shown by their strong agreement on maintaining accurate records and being responsible for financial discrepancies. Additionally, school administrators encountered difficulties in prioritizing expenditures within the available budget, allocating financial resources to key areas of need, meeting deadlines for submitting financial reports, interpreting financial policies to ensure compliance and difficulty in navigating auditing process.

On the other hand, school administrators generally comply with the preparation of prerequisite documents for fund disbursement, with high compliance rates in most financial plans such as SIP, PPMP and AIP. However, there are gaps in adherence, particularly in the Annual Procurement Plan (APP), where 23.21% of administrators do not fully comply. This can attribute to the fact that only the Division office is audited by COA that is why school administrators do not fully comply the documents asked by the audit personnel. Schools are only randomly audited by COA. These analysis on financial management practices based on factors such as age, sex, plantilla position, trainings attended, and educational attainment reveals no statistically significant differences.

In the light of the findings presented in the study, the following recommendations have been suggested:

To address the challenges school administrators, face in financial management, targeted training programs must be implemented to enhance their budgeting and procurement and resource allocation skills, specifically in prioritizing expenditures within the available budget, creating a comprehensive school budget that meets all financial needs and allocating financial resources to key areas of need. A School Budget Planning and Management Workshop can help administrators develop comprehensive financial plans, improve forecasting techniques, and align budgets with institutional goals. This training will cover essential topics such as budget formulation, cost estimation, and compliance with financial regulations.

Additionally, to improve resource allocation, a Seminar-Workshop on Financial Management and Operations Manual (FMOM) can provide administrators with knowledge to rank expenses based on necessity and impact. This seminar-workshop will introduce cost-benefit analysis techniques and real-world decision-making scenarios to enhance financial efficiency. Moreover, a Strategic Financial Resource Allocation Training can help school administrators focus on distributing funds effectively across key areas such as academics, facilities, and teacher development. By equipping administrators with these skills, schools can optimize financial resources, ensuring sustainability and improve educational outcomes.

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