Decision-Making Practices and Challenges Encountered by The School Heads: A Perspective Analysis

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Abstract — This study investigated the decision-making practices and leadership challenges encountered by school heads as perceived by both administrators and teachers in Matalom North District, Schools Division of Leyte, during the School Year 2024–2025. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational design, the research explored the relationship between demographic profiles and perceptions of decision-making efficacy and leadership difficulties. Findings revealed that school heads demonstrated high competency in areas such as data utilization, decentralization, and policy adaptability. However, a significant gap was noted in stakeholder engagement, particularly in the inclusion of teachers in governance processes, with teacher respondents rating their involvement notably lower than their administrative counterparts. The study also revealed moderate to high levels of leadership challenges, with school heads identifying sustainability and long-term planning as the most pressing concerns, while teachers emphasized ethical dilemmas and conflicting stakeholder interests. Despite strong institutional experience among respondents—most having over two decades of service the results showed that demographic and experiential variables had limited predictive power in explaining either leadership effectiveness or perceived challenges. Civil status emerged as the only statistically significant predictor, indicating that deeper relational or systemic factors play a more decisive role in leadership quality. Furthermore, a moderate positive correlation was observed between active decision-making and the level of challenges encountered, suggesting that increased engagement in inclusive or ethical leadership may expose deeper systemic tensions. The findings call for a shift toward collaborative leadership models, enhanced stakeholder participation, and ethical leadership development. The study underscores the need for systemic reforms and capacity-building programs that move beyond individual attributes and foster resilient, participatory, and adaptive school leadership.

Keywords — School leadership, Decision-making practices, Ethical challenges, Stakeholder engagement, educational governance.

I.   Introduction

T This study explores ethical decision-making and leadership succession planning in the context of school leadership. Ethical decision-making is defined as a process that starts with recognizing ethical content in a situation and continues through evaluation and action. While past research identifies qualities of ethical leaders, it emphasizes that understanding the decision-making process itself is more crucial for avoiding misconduct such as dishonesty, coercion, or corruption. School leaders regularly face complex ethical dilemmas involving multiple stakeholders, requiring them to balance personal values, professional ethics, and social justice considerations.

The significance of the study lies in its potential to inform leadership training and policy development by revealing the real-world challenges school administrators face. Insights from the study can enhance leadership effectiveness and school outcomes.

The scope focuses on decision-making practices within a specific educational context, analyzing the factors influencing school leaders' choices, including policy constraints, stakeholder expectations, and limited resources. However, the findings may not generalize beyond the selected district and may be influenced by self-reported data.

The study also acknowledges the broader role of ethical decision-making in students' development, highlighting its importance for the entire educational community. A systematic literature review serves as the foundation for examining how ethical leadership practices are applied in schools.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study investigated the decision-making practices and the challenges encountered by the school heads as perceived by the respondent groups Matalom North District Schools Division of Leyte during the School Year 2024-2025 as basis for a _____.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:

    1.1 School Heads

        1.1.1 Age;

        1.1.2 Gender;

        1.1.3 Civil Status;

        1.1.4 Educational Attainment; and

        1.1.5 Years of Service;

        1.1.6 Length of Administrative Experience;

        1.1.7 Seminars/Trainings attended?

    1.2 Teacher

        1.2.1 Age;

        1.2.2 Gender;

        1.2.3 Civil Status;

1.2.4 Highest Educational Attainment;

1.2.5 Years of Service;

1.2.6 Length of Teaching Experience;

1.2.7 Seminars/Trainings attended;

2. As perceived by the respondent groups, what is the extent of decision-making practices of school heads in terms of:

2.1 Stakeholder Involvement;

2.2 Data Utilization;

2.3 Decentralization; and

2.4 Policy Implementation and Adaptability?

3. As perceived by the respondent groups, what are the current challenges encountered by the school heads in terms of:

3.1 Conflicting Stakeholder Interests;

3.2 Policy and Ethical Dilemmas;

3.3 Resource Constraints; and

3.4 Sustainability and Long-Term Impact?

4. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondent groups and their perceived extent of decision-making practices of school heads?

5. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondent groups and their perceived challenges encountered by the school heads?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the respondent groups' perceived extent of decision-making practices and the challenges encountered by the school heads?

7. Based on the findings of the study, what _____?

II.   Methodology

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design (Creswell, 2014). It was descriptive-quantitative as it aimed to determine the profile of elementary and secondary school heads based on age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, length of administrative

experience, their level of decision-making practices, and the challenges they faced. It was also correlational, as it examined the relationships among these variables. The researchers obtained permission from the appropriate office and presented a transmittal letter to the Schools Division Superintendent to secure authorization. They then distributed, administered, and retrieved the questionnaires from the respondents. The collected data were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using statistical tools such as percentage, simple mean, and the sum of ranks.

2.1 Procedure

To ensure accuracy and reliability, the study titled "Decision-Making Practices and Challenges Encountered by the School Heads: A Perspective Analysis" followed a systematic process. It began with a review of relevant literature to establish the theoretical foundation. Data were collected through surveys, interviews, and academic performance records using a descriptive-correlational research design. Purposive sampling was employed to select participating schools, and statistical methods such as correlation analysis were applied to determine the relationship between professional development and student outcomes. Throughout the study, ethical standards—including informed consent and confidentiality—were strictly observed.

2.2 Data processing

The primary method of data collection was the personal in-depth interview (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Each interview was scheduled for one hour and followed a semi-structured format. While the interview questions provided a framework, the researcher also prompted for further reflection and elaboration when appropriate. With permission, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Participants also engaged in a think-aloud procedure during a document analysis to determine academic program placement. This semi-structured approach offered valuable insights into the key factors considered by school leaders. During the interviews, the researcher focused on asking the prepared questions and actively listening to participants' responses.

III. Results and Discussion

This section presents the profile of the school heads in terms of age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, years of service, length of administrative experience, and seminars/trainings attended. The finding is shown below.

Table 2

The demographic profile of school heads revealed key insights into their leadership capacity and decision-making practices. Most were aged 42–48, male, married, and had over 20 years of administrative experience—traits linked to maturity, stability, and participative leadership. While a majority held master's units, few had doctorates, indicating a need for continued academic development. Most were designated as Principal I or Head Teacher III, roles

vital to collaborative leadership. Their extensive experience, along with active participation in professional trainings at various levels, suggests they are well-equipped to foster shared leadership, mentor staff, and support a culture of continuous school improvement.

Table 3

The demographic profile of teachers highlighted key factors influencing their involvement in school decision-making. Most teachers were mid-career (ages 35–48), combining experience with energy for active participation in reforms. A large majority were female, reflecting a common trend in education and underscoring the need for inclusive leadership structures. Most were married (68.1%) and highly educated, with over 80% holding or pursuing master's degrees—indicating strong capacity for professional contribution.

Over half had more than 20 years of teaching experience, and nearly half had over 11 years in administrative roles, revealing a significant pool for distributed leadership. Although seminar participation was mostly at the division level, it showed strong engagement in professional development. Collectively, these factors suggest that teachers are well-positioned and equipped to play a meaningful role in collaborative school governance and decision-making processes.

Table 8

The overall grand mean of 3.45 (SD = 0.98) indicates a high level of ethical decision-making among school heads. Among the four domains, **policy adaptability** ranked highest, followed by **decentralization**, **data utilization**, and **stakeholder involvement**, the latter being the lowest. This suggests a need to improve inclusive participation in decision-making processes. While school heads demonstrate strong leadership in adapting and decentralizing decisions, the lower engagement of stakeholders, particularly teachers, highlights a gap. These results support previous findings (Hoy & Miskel, 2012; Lee & Nie, 2014) that emphasize the importance of inclusive decision-making for motivation, policy effectiveness, and improved school outcomes.

Table 8 Summary Results on the Extent of Decision-making Practices of school Heads

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Policy Adaptability	16	3.60	0.92	High
Decentralization	16	3.51	0.94	High
Data Utilization	16	3.48	1.01	High
Stakeholder Involvement	16	3.21	1.03	Moderate
Grand Mean	16	3.45	0.98	High

Legend	Range	Description
	4.21-5.00	Very High
	3.41-4.20	High
	2.61-3.40	Moderate
	1.81-2.60	Low
	1.00-1.80	Very Low

Table 13

The summary table showed a high overall grand mean of 3.54 (SD = 0.85), with the strongest areas being data utilization (3.84) and decentralization (3.66). Policy adaptability (3.40) and stakeholder involvement (3.24) were rated only moderately, pointing to gaps in responsiveness and inclusive decision-making. The wide gap between the highest and lowest scores suggests that while school leaders are strategic and evidence-based, they are less effective in engaging stakeholders—particularly teachers—in decision processes.

These findings echo concerns from Stosich et al. (2021) about the limited role of teachers in leadership and emphasize the need for a shift toward cooperative leadership, as advocated by Badruzaman & Adiyono (2023), where educators are active contributors to school policy and vision development.

Table 13 Summary Results on the Extent of Decision-making Practices of school heads

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Data Utilization	16	3.84	0.78	High
Decentralization	16	3.66	0.94	High
Policy Adaptability	16	3.40	0.75	Moderate
Stakeholder Involvement	16	3.24	0.92	Moderate
Grand Mean	**16**	**3.54**	**0.85**	**High**

Legend	Range	Description
	4.21-5.00	Very High
	3.41-4.20	High
	2.61-3.40	Moderate
	1.81-2.60	Low
	1.00-1.80	Very Low

Table 18

The grand mean of 3.34 (SD = 0.75) indicated a moderate level of challenge encountered by school heads. Sustainability and long-term impact ranked highest (3.50), reflecting increasing concern for the future effects of ethical decisions. This was followed by resource constraints and conflicting stakeholder interests, with policy and ethical dilemmas rated lowest but still notable.

The close range of scores suggests that challenges are consistently experienced across all domains, though they differ in type. These results support Louis et al.'s (2010) view that ethical decision-making is a system-wide issue, not merely an individual concern. To address these challenges, the study echoes call by Hulpia et al. (2011) and Harris (2013) for collaborative leadership, where engaging teachers and students in shared decision-making can reduce the burden on school leaders and promote ethical resilience.

Table 18 Summary Results on the Level of Challenges Encountered by the school heads

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Sustainability and Long-Term Impact	16	3.50	0.71	High
Resource Constraints	16	3.31	0.68	Moderate
Conflicting Stakeholder Interests	16	3.30	0.87	Moderate
Policy and Ethical Dilemmas	16	3.25	0.74	Moderate
Grand Mean	**16**	**3.34**	**0.75**	**Moderate**

Legend	Range	Description
	4.21-5.00	Very High
	3.41-4.20	High
	2.61-3.40	Moderate
	1.81-2.60	Low
	1.00-1.80	Very Low

Table 23

With a grand mean of 3.54 (SD = 0.80), the results indicate a high overall perception of challenges faced by school heads. Policy and ethical dilemmas (M = 3.61) and sustainability and long-term impact (M = 3.57) emerged as the most pressing concerns, followed by resource constraints and conflicting stakeholder interests. This suggests that teachers view strategic and systemic issues as more challenging than interpersonal ones.

The consistent high scores reflect teachers' awareness of the complex pressures school leaders face. These findings support Musengamana et al. (2024) and Uy et al. (2023), emphasizing that when teachers are actively involved in school decision-making, they not only understand leadership challenges more deeply but also contribute meaningfully to ethical, practical, and sustainable solutions that enhance school leadership and student outcomes.

Table 23 Summary Results on the teachers' perception Level of Challenges Encountered by the School Heads

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Policy and Ethical Dilemmas	16	3.61	0.83	High
Sustainability and Long-Term Impact	16	3.57	0.73	High
Resource Constraints	16	3.49	0.71	High
Conflicting Stakeholder Interests	16	3.47	0.91	High
Grand Mean	**16**	**3.54**	**0.80**	**High**

Legend	Range	Description
	4.21-5.00	Very High
	3.41-4.20	High
	2.61-3.40	Moderate
	1.81-2.60	Low
	1.00-1.80	Very Low

Table 24

The regression model showed a strong positive correlation (R = 0.801) between school heads' profile variables (e.g., age, gender, experience, education) and their perceived extent of ethical decision-making practices. However, while the R Square value indicates that 64.2% of the variance is explained, the Adjusted R Square drops significantly to 23.2%, suggesting that not all predictors are meaningful and that the model may be overfitted or include irrelevant variables.

The standard error of 0.37443 shows the average deviation between predicted and actual values. Despite the high correlation, the lower adjusted R Square and supporting ANOVA results suggest that only some profile factors meaningfully impact ethical decision-making, highlighting the need for a more refined model with relevant predictors.

Table 24 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.801a	.642	.232	.37443

Table 25

The ANOVA results (Table 25) show an F-value of 1.568 and a p-value of 0.283, indicating that the regression model is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This means the profile variables of school heads do not significantly predict their extent of ethical decision-making practices.

With only 16 participants (df = 8 predictors, 7 residual), the small sample size weakens statistical power and increases the likelihood that the findings are due to random variation rather than meaningful relationships. The low mean square values and total sum of squares further suggest limited explanatory power. These results highlight the need for either a larger sample or a more focused model to draw reliable conclusions about the impact of school heads' profiles on their decision-making practices.

Table 25 ANOVA Analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value	Decision
1	Regression	1.759	8	.220	1.568	.283	Not Significant
	Residual	.981	7	.140			
	Total	2.740	15				

Table 26

Table 26 showed that among eight profile variables, only civil status was a statistically significant predictor of ethical decision-making practices among school heads (β = 1.242, p = 0.041), suggesting that those with more stable personal lives (e.g., married) may feel more confident in navigating ethical decisions.

Other variables—such as years of service (β = 1.283) and gender (β = 0.802)—showed positive but non-significant trends, while position/designation (β = -1.634) and length of administrative experience (β = -0.717) had negative coefficients, possibly indicating a disconnect between higher roles and perceived ethical engagement.

These findings echo Stosich et al. (2021), who argue that as leaders rise in hierarchy, their roles become more bureaucratic and less participatory, potentially weakening ethical inclusiveness. This supports Badruzaman & Adiyono's (2023) call for more cooperative and inclusive leadership models. Overall, the results suggest that personal characteristics alone are weak predictors, and fostering ethical decision-making depends more on building participatory, teacher-inclusive leadership systems.

Table 26 Multiple Regression Analysis on test of relationship between the profile of the school heads and their perceived extent of decision-making practices

Variables	Beta	p-value	Decision
Age	.452	.624	Not Significant
Gender	.802	.320	Not Significant
Civil Status	1.242	.041	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	-.515	.501	Not Significant
Position/ Designation	-1.634	.201	Not Significant
Years of Service	1.283	.179	Not Significant
Length of Administrative Experience	-.717	.219	Not Significant
Seminars/Trainings attended	-.973	.348	Not Significant

Table 36

This section presented the test of relationship between the school heads' perceived extent of decision-making practices and the challenges encountered. The findings are shown below.

Table 36 revealed a moderate positive correlation (r = 0.477) between school heads' perceived extent of decision-making practices and the challenges they encounter, suggesting that greater engagement in ethical decision-making tends to coincide with more perceived challenges. However, the p-value of 0.062 indicates that this relationship is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

This trend implied that ethical, inclusive leadership may bring increased complexity, accountability, and stakeholder pressure—especially in the post-pandemic educational context. It aligns with Dreer's (2022) view that participatory leadership can heighten awareness of systemic issues such as burnout, limited resources, and policy constraints.

While not conclusive, the results highlight a nuanced reality: ethical leadership is vital but must be supported by strong systems—like professional development and peer networks—to prevent added strain. The findings underscore the need for a balanced and sustainable approach to school leadership.

Table 36 Pearson r Correlation on relationship between the school heads' perceived extent of decision-making practices and the challenges encountered

Variables		extent of decision-making practices	challenges encountered	Decision
extent of decision-making practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.477	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.062	
	N	16	16	
				Not Significant
challenges encountered	Pearson Correlation	.477	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.062		
	N	16	16	

Table 37

This section presented the test of relationship between the teachers perceived extent of decision-making practices and the challenges encountered by the school heads. The findings are shown below.

Table 37 showed a moderate positive correlation (r = 0.392, *p* = 0.000) between teachers' perceptions of school heads' decision-making practices and the challenges those leaders face. The statistical significance at the 0.01 level indicates a real and measurable relationship: as teachers perceive more active and ethical decision-making by school heads, they also recognize that these leaders encounter more complex challenges.

This suggests that collaborative and transparent leadership may bring added visibility to systemic issues, especially in under-resourced schools. Teachers may observe that inclusive leaders face greater stakeholder demands and ethical dilemmas. These findings align with Adams et al. (2013) and Darling-Hammond (2020), who emphasize that authentic leadership involves relational trust and navigating institutional pressures.

Rather than being viewed as a drawback, this correlation highlights the moral and practical weight of leadership today. To support school heads effectively—particularly in high-need contexts—systems must prioritize leadership training, shared governance, and whole-school support structures that address both academic and social-emotional challenges.

Table 37 Pearson r Correlation on test of relationship between the teachers perceived extent of decision-making practices and the challenges encountered by the school heads

Variables		extent of decision-making practices	challenges encountered	Decision
extent of decision-making practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.392	Not Significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	216	216	
challenges encountered	Pearson Correlation	.392**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	216	216	

4. Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic profile of school heads, as shown in Table 2, revealed a leadership group with substantial professional experience, primarily within the 42–48 and 56–62 age ranges. Over 81% had more than 20 years of administrative service, and nearly 88% had over 11 years of leadership experience. This indicated a mature cohort capable of implementing long-term strategies but also highlighted the need for succession planning and leadership development among younger staff, aligning with Harris's (2014) call for distributed leadership.

Similarly, the teacher profile in Table 3 showed a highly experienced and academically qualified faculty, with 80% aged between 35 and 55 and over 83% holding or pursuing graduate degrees. This supported research advocating for teachers' inclusion in decision-making processes (Chatziioannidis, 2013; Lee & Nie, 2014). Their professional maturity and academic readiness positioned them well to contribute to participatory school governance.

However, participation in professional development was more concentrated at the division level, with lower access to regional and national training for both teachers and school heads. This highlighted the need for more equitable opportunities for advanced professional growth. Expanding such access could enhance leadership capacity, foster inclusive practices, and strengthen school climate—particularly in high-need communities where institutional resilience and teacher well-being were most critical (Garcia & Weiss, 2019; Dreer, 2022).

Extent of decision-making practices of school heads

The study revealed that school heads generally demonstrated a high level of decision-making practices, particularly in data utilization, decentralization, and policy adaptability. However, stakeholder involvement consistently lagged, as reflected in both administrative and teacher perspectives. Teacher involvement, with scores as low as 2.71, was notably weak, highlighting a troubling disconnect between policy formation and those responsible for its implementation.

The high ratings for data utilization indicated a strong orientation toward evidence-based decision-making, with both groups acknowledging the effective use of student outcomes and stakeholder feedback. However, the study emphasized that data-driven leadership must also include participatory interpretation, warning that without the active engagement of teachers and students, the process risked becoming overly technical and detached from classroom realities.

Decentralization was also seen as a strength, as both teachers and administrators recognized increased empowerment of staff in classroom and curriculum decisions. Still, variations in implementation suggested that while the intent to distribute leadership existed, its actual practice was inconsistent and heavily context dependent.

Lastly, a gap in perceptions of policy adaptability emerged: school heads viewed themselves as responsive to changing needs, while teachers rated adaptability only moderately. This misalignment pointed to issues in communication and the lack of visible feedback mechanisms. The findings underscored the need for more transparent and inclusive policymaking, where teachers are engaged not just in policy execution but in its ongoing design and revision.

Level of Challenges Encountered by the school heads

The study revealed that school heads encountered moderate to high levels of challenges across four key areas: conflicting stakeholder interests, policy and ethical dilemmas, resource constraints, and sustainability and long-term impact. School heads rated the overall challenge level as moderate (grand mean = 3.34), with sustainability being the most pressing concern. In contrast, teachers perceived a higher challenge level (grand mean = 3.54), identifying policy and ethical dilemmas as the most critical issue. This discrepancy suggested that school heads may have become accustomed to certain systemic challenges, while teachers remained more sensitive to their implications.

Conflicting stakeholder interests were a consistent source of ethical tension for both groups, particularly in balancing parental expectations, institutional demands, and fair disciplinary actions. Teachers rated these issues slightly higher, reinforcing the argument for inclusive, collaborative governance to mitigate ethical stress, as emphasized by Harris (2013).

Policy and ethical dilemmas, ranked highest by teachers, pointed to a lack of ethical leadership training and overly rigid institutional mandates. School heads often felt constrained by bureaucratic directives, which limited their ethical discretion. This supported Hulpia et al.'s (2011) argument for more principled yet adaptable leadership and highlighted the need for policy reforms that promote both accountability and ethical flexibility.

Both groups also viewed sustainability and long-term impact as critical. Teachers emphasized professional development as key to ethical sustainability, while school heads cited challenges in long-term planning due to resource limitations and short-term pressures. This shared concern underscored the urgency of building leadership pipelines and support systems that promote ethical foresight. As noted by Ruter et al. (1979) and supported by more recent research, schools that foster shared leadership and ethical resilience were better positioned to achieve institutional credibility and long-term student success.

Tests of relationships of the Variables

The analysis examined the relationship between the demographic and professional profiles of school heads and teachers, and their perceptions of decision-making practices and leadership challenges. The findings from regression and correlation analyses indicated limited predictive power of individual profile variables. While civil status emerged as a statistically significant predictor among school heads, most other variables such as age, gender, and experience did not

significantly predict decision-making practices or perceived challenges. The initial strong correlation (R = 0.801) between profiles and decision-making practices was weakened by a low adjusted R² (0.232), suggesting possible overfitting due to irrelevant predictors or a small sample size.

For teachers, demographic characteristics also showed minimal influence, with only civil status contributing weakly to perception variance. The adjusted R² was extremely low, reinforcing the notion that organizational culture and leadership dynamics played a greater role than personal attributes.

Correlation results revealed moderate positive relationships between perceived decision-making and challenges among both school heads (r = 0.477, p = 0.062) and teachers (r = 0.392, p = 0.000), though only the latter was statistically significant. These results suggested that more participatory and ethical leadership practices often coincided with greater awareness of leadership challenges, reflecting the complexity and demands of inclusive governance.

Overall, the findings underscored that demographic data alone were insufficient to predict leadership practices or perceptions. Instead, they pointed to the importance of systemic and relational factors, such as communication, school culture, and participatory structures. The study recommended reorienting leadership development and education policy to prioritize ethical engagement, collaboration, and adaptive leadership over technical qualifications or tenure.

IV.   Conclusion

The study offered a comprehensive understanding of the demographic, behavioral, and contextual factors that shaped school leadership. The demographic profile of school heads and teachers reflected a mature and academically qualified workforce, which contributed to institutional stability and presented opportunities for mentorship and shared leadership. Although school heads demonstrated high levels of decision-making competence, gaps in stakeholder participation—particularly in teacher involvement—highlighted the need for more inclusive and transparent governance. The challenges faced by school heads, especially in ethical leadership, stakeholder conflict, and sustainability, emphasized the complexity of managing schools in diverse and resource-constrained contexts.

Demographic and experiential variables exhibited limited predictive power in explaining leadership effectiveness or perceived challenges. Instead, the findings reinforced the importance of institutional culture, ethical commitment, and participatory leadership practices. Overall, the research supported a shift away from focusing on individual traits toward systemic reforms. These included collaborative leadership models, enhanced professional development, and inclusive policy frameworks aimed at strengthening school leadership and improving educational outcomes.

V.   Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance school leadership practices and institutional effectiveness:

1. **Mentorship and Succession Planning**: Due to the maturity and experience of current educators, formal mentorship programs and succession planning should be prioritized to prepare emerging leaders.

2. **Inclusive Governance**: School heads must enhance teacher and stakeholder participation through structured consultative bodies to promote transparent and collaborative decision-making.

3. **Ethical and Inclusive Leadership Training**: Professional development should target ethical reasoning, conflict resolution, and inclusive leadership, using case-based and scenario-driven approaches.

4. **Equitable Access to Training**: Authorities should ensure broader access to regional and national-level training and policy engagement to foster innovation and growth.

5. **Revised Leadership Frameworks**: Leadership competency standards should value emotional intelligence, adaptability, and relational skills over tenure or credentials alone.

6. **Distributed Leadership Models**: Schools should implement shared leadership structures that empower staff at all levels, improving responsivenesss and ownership.

7. **Support Systems for Leaders**: School heads should be provided with peer networks, resource hubs, and strategic tools to build resilience and long-term planning capacity.

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