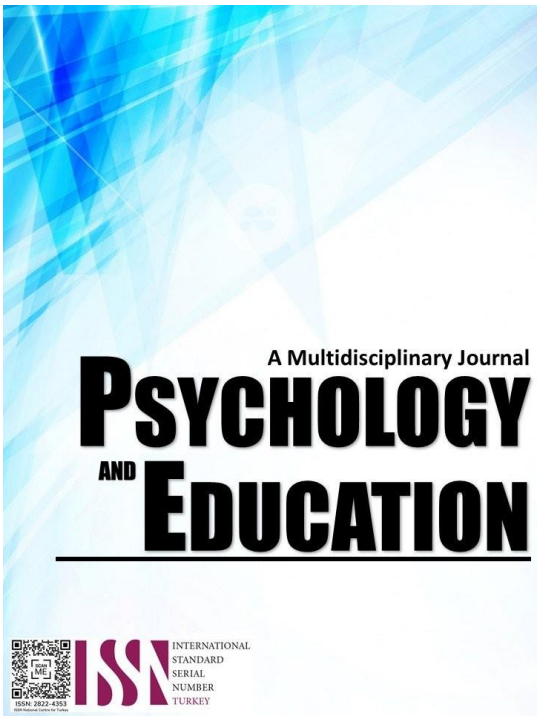
FORERUNNERS' ADVERSITY QUOTIENT, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN THE NEW NORMAL



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Research Article

Forerunners' Adversity Quotient, Leadership and Management Skills and their Influence on School Performance in the New Normal

Karen May P. Urlanda,* Mildred F. Accad
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply impacted the field of education, highlighting many problems to be considered by educational leaders as schools emerge from the pandemic. The study examined the relationship between forerunner's adversity quotient, leadership and management skills, and how these factors jointly influence school performance of DepEd Region 12. This study used descriptive and correlational research designs. The respondents were the twenty-four school principals certified as school-based management level III practitioners and two hundred ninety-three secondary school teachers of the DepEd in SOCCSKSARGEN. Adopted survey questionnaires were used. Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and regression analysis were used for accurate data analysis and interpretation. Results showed that the forerunners' adversity quotient profile (AQP) of the public secondary schools in the region SOCCSKSARGEN was an average descriptive interpretation. The level of Leadership and management skills of forerunners were very high. In addition, the school performance in the new normal did not vary significantly in the past two academic years. There is no significant correlation between the independent variables of adversity quotient, leadership skills, and management skills on school performance in the new normal. The demographic profiles of the forerunners were found to be insignificantly related to school performance. Their adversity quotient reflects competence in addressing daily challenges, but further development is needed to handle greater adversities effectively. Policymakers and educational institutions should address gender disparities, promote diversity in leadership roles, and support professional development opportunities, including training in advanced degrees and administrative skills. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that the forerunners can continuously engage in professional development for adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills enhancement.

Keywords: *adversity quotient, leadership skills, management skills, school performance, new normal*

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply impacted the field of education, highlighting many problems to be considered by educational leaders as schools emerge from the pandemic. It contests school leaders' adversity quotient®, leadership, management skills, and capacity to make decisions and lead change.

According to Pino and Merin (2021), adversity will always be a part of life that one must deal with. Adversity is a measure of how an individual strives to overcome or respond to challenges (Aquino, 2013). With the nature of the work that school principals need to do with the trends of the new normal education, it is necessary to consider their ability to overcome adversities and challenges. One of these qualities is a high adversity quotient (Okorji & Epetuku, 2019).

In the Philippine setting, as schools returned to in-person learning, the teaching and learning process significantly changed, school roles have shifted, and education leaders have been stretched to their limits (Harris, 2020). Problematic and anti-social behaviors will be evident in the school (Fisher et al., 2021). Lack of access to educational opportunities (Javurek & Mendenhall, 2020) and reduced opportunities for socialization and connection, both in the classroom and on the playground (Flanagan, 2020). The mental health of students and staff has emerged as a key concern for school leaders (Harmey & Moss, 2021). Additionally, unexpected and unavoidable levels of adversity are currently confronting school leaders, Villar (2021), and stressful situations in the new normal elicit varied responses among educators due to different degrees of adversity quotient (Marashi & Fotoohi, 2017).

Since educators are pressured to cope with the trends in the new normal, their adversity quotient could be a potent tool to identify their effectiveness (Pino & Merin, 2021), and they must be well-equipped with not only knowledge but with the right attitude toward the adversities they may experience (Napire, 2019). Additionally, the adversity quotient can be used to understand leaders' ability to withstand difficult work conditions and fulfill their potential (Shen, 2007).

Specifically, leadership in Region 12 is being tested and challenged in how they lead and implement various school programs, projects, and activities in the new normal (Pecson & Pogoy, 2021). Furthermore, the availability of resources to make up for the learning gains missed during a pandemic, limited decision-making, school-teacher-student-related problems, health and safety of students and teachers (Tarkar, 2020; Kilic, 2018; Briones, 2020). Principals had to swiftly adapt to new technological tools, communication methods, and logistical challenges (Aya, 2022). Upon the reopening of the school, upheaval and new problems emerged (Addis & McNulty, 2021). School principals face and see challenges as their worst constant companions, with many responsibilities and accountabilities underlying their position (Napire, 2019).

In this context, the leadership and management skills of school principals played multiple roles in facilitating transition efforts (Pasia,

2019), and school principals were forced to change their leadership skills in prioritizing urgent needs (Espolong, 2024) that could have a greater influence on the performance of an institution (Napire, 2019). Leadership and effective management skills are equally crucial and continue to be essential for managing resources, addressing logistical hurdles, optimizing teaching and learning environments, and facilitating a smooth transition. Given the duties and responsibilities of school principals, they must have the necessary expertise, skills, and disposition to deal with obstacles in the workplace (Master, 2018).

Lamas (2015) states that various factors can influence a school's performance. In such instances, the actions of a school principal have a critical impact on the overall academic achievement of the school and its constituents, including students, teachers, and support personnel (Constantia et al., 2021).

Despite the study that has been conducted on adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills, there is still a significant gap in understanding how these factors interact with school performance, especially in the new normal. The researcher acknowledges the potential to fill gaps through this study, emphasizing the urgency of addressing them. Hence, the study examined the relationship between the forerunner's adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills and how these factors jointly influence the school performance of DepEd Region 12.

Research Questions

This research investigated the relationship between forerunners' adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills on school performance in the new normal. It answered the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the forerunners in terms of age, gender, highest educational attainment and length of service as educational administrator?
2. What is the level of adversity quotient exhibited by school forerunners in terms of control, ownership, reach and endurance?
3. What is the performance level of leadership skills exhibited by school forerunners such as educational leadership, resolving complex problems, communication skills and developing self and others?
4. To what extent are the forerunner's management skills in terms of communicating directives, motivating and inspiring, empowering and delegating, managing stress and developing resiliency, managing conflicts, building effective teams and teamwork, and leading positive change?
5. What is the school performance as categorized into participation rate, gross enrolment rate, retention rate, drop-out rate, completion rate, teacher-student ratio and transition rate?
6. Do the forerunners' adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills significantly influence school performance in the new normal?
7. Does the forerunners' profile significantly intervene in the school performance in the new normal?
8. What are the potential barriers and challenges faced by educational leaders in utilizing their adversity quotient, leadership skills, and management skills in the new normal.

Literature Review

Forerunners' Adversity Quotient

Adversity is one of the most potent forces in life. It shapes one's character, clarifies priorities, and defines an individual's path. It can also be fuel for greatness. Each person faces a rich assortment of adversities every day, ranging from minor hassles to major setbacks and even tragedies. The path to success in business and life is learning how to convert adversity into a genuine advantage (Stoltz & Weienmayer, as cited by Cornista & Macasaet, 2013). Adversity strikes without warning (Canivel, 2010), but adversities are part of living, and people choose how they react to adversity (Brunkhorst, in Cornista & Macasaet, 2013). In addition, forerunners possess a moderate to high capacity for dealing with adversity, aligning with the demands of their leadership roles (Smith, 2024).

According to Stoltz (as cited by Enriquez & Estacio, 2009), the adversity Quotient® is an established science, theory, and approach for becoming more resilient. It is a measure of how an individual strives to overcome adversities or how a person responds to challenges and resolves these. Phoolka (2012) and Hidayat (2017) proposed that the adversity quotient refers to the intellectual capacity possessed by individuals to attain achievement by effectively addressing the challenges they encounter.

Finally, according to Stoltz in Napire (2019), the adversity quotient measures an individual's capacity to overcome and succeed in the presence of challenges, suffering, and unfortunate circumstances. This text elucidates how individuals react to unfavorable circumstances and how they surpass them. The adversity quotient comprises four distinct sub-sections or dimensions: C, O, R, and E. Control pertains to the level of perceived authority one possesses over an unfavorable occurrence or circumstance. Ownership pertains to an individual's investigation into the root cause of adverse events and their willingness to take responsibility for the resulting negative consequences. They are being accountable means taking ownership of the outcome. R (reach) refers to the degree to which adversity affects multiple aspects of an individual's life. Lastly, endurance is the quantitative assessment of how long a person will experience adversity and its underlying factors in their own life.

A local study by Baroa (2015) aimed to establish the correlation between AQ (Adversity quotient) and leadership skills, considering

the demographic profiles. The research revealed that the school administrators' AQ in all four dimensions was below average despite their good leadership qualities in three areas. Meanwhile, Cabrera, Isidro, and Ablana (2016) conducted a study to examine the relationship between the adversity quotient and the job performance of Local Government Unit (LGU) employees in Tayabas City. The study indicated that the adversity quotient does not determine an employee's performance at work and does not affect job performance. Similarly, Maiquez et al. (2015) conducted a study that showed no significant correlation between Adversity Quotient, emotional intelligence (EI), and academic achievement.

In addition, the study by Verma, Aggarwa, and Bansal (2017) stated that people with high AQ are considered more effective and efficient when considering high work performance. Similarly, Cornista and Macasaet (2013) found a substantial correlation between adversity quotient and performance. Consequently, the study of Solfema (2017) yields a relationship between the level of adversity intelligence and the tutor's performance. In contrast, Cabual's (2011) findings indicate that the performance levels of school leaders were not substantially correlated with their adversity quotient.

Leadership and Management Skills

Lunenburg (2010) asserts that effective school leaders view the entire school as a single entity and resolve conflicts to best serve the populace's needs. Thus, school administrators need a variety of leadership abilities to keep the school running smoothly and raise student achievement (Piaw et al., 2018). Northouse (2018) and Wu et al. (2020) both talk about leadership as a powerful relationship in which one person (the leader) encourages others (the followers) to make moves or changes. Conversely, Bass (2008) asserted that leadership involves how individuals and groups interact, considering various factors such as the situation, the members' expectations, and their perceptions.

The study by Chen and Adams (2020) found that principals who adopted a distributed leadership approach fostered a collaborative culture, enhancing teacher morale, increasing student engagement, and improving school performance.

Tonich (2021) cites Grissom and Loeb's (2011) study, which conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) on a wide range of talents and identified five dimensions such as instructional leadership, organizational management, internal and external relations, and administration. The study found that only principals' organizational management skills were associated with school performance metrics, such as student achievement gains.

Drewziecka and Roczniewska's (2018) study suggests that a leader's leadership style is not the only factor driving school success. At the same time, Padilla's (2018) findings stated that poor management and problem-solving can negatively affect the performance of students, parents, and the school community.

According to CFI (2019), management skills are defined as certain attributes or abilities that a leader should possess to fulfill specific organizational tasks. It consists of identifiable sets of actions to perform and lead to certain outcomes using a core set of observable attributes such as Communicating directives. The school principal can provide directives and technical assistance to subordinates to achieve institutional goals and objectives. Motivating and inspiring refer to the ability of the school principal to encourage teachers to enthusiastically perform and be involved in academic activities. Empowering and delegating pertains to empowering teachers to lead and be held accountable and responsible for productively accomplishing a given task. Managing stress and developing resilience refers to the ability of school principals to productively cope with adversities in the workplace and to be self-resilient. Managing conflicts refers to the school principal's ability to effectively manage workplace struggles and maintain a balanced approach toward various situations or individuals. They are building teamwork and teamwork. This aspect pertains to creating a community of teachers and a school community system geared towards common goals and objectives. Leading positive change means transforming school policies, procedures, programs, projects, and overall developmental change in the educational system.

Moghrabi et al. (2014) found a substantial positive association between managerial capabilities and JKB managerial conduct. The findings also showed that JKB managers demonstrated moderate teambuilding skills while demonstrating high drive and technical abilities. In contrast, Memisoglu's (2015) study on teachers' opinions of school principals' management skills found that principals with high-quality capabilities aim to internalize current management methods. There are no significant differences between the components except for the branch variable. Furthermore, Smith et al. (2021) study indicated no substantial link between managerial abilities and schools' performance. The study shows that school performance may be more significantly affected by technology preparedness, effective communication, and community support.

Balares (2013) studied how school management competencies impact institutional performance. The study provided a significant link between leadership skills and performance. Educational institutions succeed when leaders maintain high school performance and productivity while developing their organization (Napire, 2019).

School Performance

Lamas (2015) states that school performance aims to achieve educational goals like learning. Wahab et al. (2015) define school performance as the yearly progress of activities, including learning, productivity, working environment, staff and parent satisfaction, and teacher morale. Furthermore, Septiyani et al. (2017) added that the success of a school can be assessed based on its effectiveness, quality, productivity, efficiency, innovation, quality of life, and work morale.

On the other hand, various performance metrics account for school performance. According to Gamala and Marpa (2022), performance indicators aid in describing and analyzing important facets of education. School dropout refers to children who have previously gained access to education discontinuing their schooling, which indicates their academic achievement. Furthermore, Johnson (2018) stresses that other factors, such as family support, academic performance, and peer influence, play a more significant role in determining whether a student continues their education. Barry (2005) also argues that the impact of the school environment on student performance might vary, either facilitating or hindering academic achievement.

Yukl (2012) conducted additional research and determined that the outcome of effective principal leadership is attaining optimal school performance. the study of Swanson and Clark (2012) examines the relationship between principal tenure (length of service) and two primary outcomes. It suggests that experienced principals may contribute to better school performance. Similarly, the study by Wang and Qian (2021) investigates the relationship between the age and educational attainment of principals and school performance. Findings suggest that experienced and well-educated principals may contribute to maintaining a favorable teacher-to-student ratio, which is crucial for effective learning in the new normal. The study by Clark, Martorell, and Rockoff (2009), cited in Napire (2019), uses detailed data from New York City to estimate how the characteristics of school principals relate to school performance. Researchers find little evidence of a relationship between school performance and principal education and pre-principal work experience.

However, Osborne, Folsom, and Herrington (2014) conducted a study to investigate the impact of a principal's tenure on enhancing student achievement. The results indicated no correlation between the length of a school year and student achievement—furthermore, The study by Feyisa, Ferede, and Amsale (2016). The results show no direct correlation between school principals' leadership effectiveness and their service year, education level, or length of service on good performance of the school. Lastly, Knoeppel and Rinehart's 2007 study found no link between a principal's experience in education and student accomplishment when combined with other characteristics.

Methodology

Research Design

The descriptive correlational research design was utilized to determine the forerunner's adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills concerning the school performance in Region 12. It is a descriptive-correlational research approach because it is meant to find the correlations between or among variables (Davis et al. 2011). The correlation method was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables, the forerunners' adversity quotient, leadership and management skills, and the dependent variable, the school performance aligned with DepEd Order No. 29 (2020).

Respondents

The study had two groups of respondents. The first group comprised the current school principals with School-Based Management (SBM) Level III of practice in the DepEd, Region XII. On the other hand, the second group consists of the teachers under the supervision of these school principals during the school year. Incorporating teachers in the process strengthens the validity and reliability of research findings, reducing bias and enhancing the robustness of the study through diverse perspectives. (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

Table 1. *Population Distribution of Respondents*

Division	*Principal*	*Teachers*	*Total*
Cotabato Division	16	122	138
General Santos City Division	7	118	125
Kidapawan City Division	14	100	114
Koronadal City Division	5	117	122
Saranggani Division	9	172	181
South Cotabato Division	30	168	198
Sultan Kudarat Division	11	175	186
Tacurong City Division	3	130	133
Total	N=95	N= 1,102	N= 1,197

To determine the sample size of the forerunners, the researcher considered the minimum number of schools in each category (one for medium and two for large schools). Complete enumeration for the secondary school principals and a random sampling method to calculate the number of teachers as respondents in the identified secondary school with the practice of SBM Level III in each division.

Table 2. *Sample Distribution of Respondents*

Division	*Principal*	*Teachers*	*Sample size*
Cotabato Division	3	122	32
General Santos City Division	3	118	31
Kidapawan City Division	3	100	27
Koronadal City Division	3	117	31

Saranggani Division	3	172	46
South Cotabato Division	3	168	45
Sultan Kudarat Division	3	175	46
Tacurong City Division	3	130	35
Total	N=24	N= 1,102	N= 293

Instrument

The study used two questionnaires as its research instrument, one for school administrators and another for teachers. The forerunner's questionnaire aims to collect data on the school's adversity quotient, leadership, management abilities, and school performance. The purpose of the teacher's questionnaire is solely to gather input on the leadership and management skills of the forerunners. The study used three adopted survey questionnaire types and secondary data that adhered to DepEd Order No. 29, s. 2022. Part I of the questionnaire was about the forerunners' demographic characteristics, including age, gender, educational attainment, and length of service as a school administrator.

Part II of the questionnaire focused on the forerunners' adversity quotient profile score, obtained from Stoltz (2023) under the memorandum of agreement granted on August 15, 2023. The details of this agreement outline the terms and conditions of its usage. The specific question for each parameter cannot be disclosed, and only the complete result is offered through the link to the adversity quotient profile score. This was a self-rating tool to evaluate the forerunner's level of adversity. The respondents accessed the online questionnaire.

Part III of the questionnaire was about forerunners' leadership skills; the instrument was adopted from the 21st-century school administrator skills survey by the NASSP Professional Development Service (2010), which consists of four skill areas.The questionnaire comprised 50 items and can be answered using the five-point Likert scale.

Part IV was a survey questionnaire that measured the school forerunners' management skills. The tool was adopted from the study of Napire 2019. The instrument was a 35-point self-assessment consisting of seven (7) core areas. Each indicator consists of five (5) items. The tool used a 5-point Likert scale.

Part V was a structured open-ended question to be answered only by the forerunners. Measuring the school's performance was based on The Adoption of the Basic Education Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Set the Performance Measures of the Agency (DepEd Order No. 29, 2022).

Procedure

Initially, researcher requested permission to use the author's Adversity Quotient Profile exam via their official website. The approval of the Dean of Graduate School to conduct the study was secured. Subsequently, upon securing such approval, a letter of request was forwarded to the Regional Director of DepEd Region 12 for approval. With the consent of the Regional Director, a similar letter was drafted and sent to the Schools Division Superintendents and School Heads of the respondent schools for information. The researcher had a short orientation of the respondents before answering the survey questionnaires. The respondents were assured that their answers would be kept completely anonymous for ethical reasons and that the findings would be used only for research and professional development. The research instruments were retrieved from the respondents as soon as they completely answered all the items. After retrieval, data were encoded, organized, and presented appropriately using tables and figures. The data were consolidated and underwent statistical analysis and interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were strictly followed throughout the research process to ensure integrity and respect. Researcher obtained permission from school head before conducting a survey.

Results and Discussion

As revealed, the socio-demographic profile of respondents at SOCCSKSARGEN shows that 50% were 41-50 years old, with 29% aged 51-60. Most school heads were male, with 63% being male. Only 38% had a master's degree, and 58% had a service of 10 years or more. The youngest school head was under 30-40 years old.

Table 3. *Demographic Profile of Forerunners*

Demographic Profile	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Age		
30-40	1	4
41-50	11	46
51-60	7	29
61 and above	5	21
Gender		
Male	15	62

Female	9	38
Educational Attainment		
with MA units	2	8
with master's degree	12	50
with doctoral units	1	4
with doctoral degree	9	38
Length of Service		
1-3 years	0	0
4-6 years	5	21
7-9 years	5	21
10 years and above	14	58

This result is supported by the ideas of (Stoltz, 2004), as cited in Napire (2019), emphasizes that school leaders have spent more years in their roles or are more experienced, attributed to their existing capacity, including experiences, knowledge, talents, and career growth, which have developed their leadership qualities.

Furthermore, they have already improved their skills to effectively address challenges and difficulties that arise in schools (Cura and Gozum, 2011). Meanwhile, in the aspect of gender, the primary reason for women's underrepresentation in organizational top management positions is due to gender roles (Larocca, 2003), as cited in Napire 2019, in which women are generally expected to support affirmative action more than their male counterparts (Eddy, 2008).

Table 4. *Adversity Quotient Level of Forerunners*

Adversity Quotient Dimension	*Score*	*Verbal Description*
Control	31.25	Below Average
Ownership	31.71	Below Average
Reach	29.75	Average
Endurance	32.46	Average
Score	125.17	Average

The data reveals that the forerunners' Adversity Quotient® level was average, with scores ranging from 29.75 to 32.46 across the control, ownership, and reach dimensions. The It suggests that forerunners showed patience while carrying out their duty and viewed challenges as transient and likely to eventually resolve.

According to Carnivel (2010) handling adversity is crucial to successful management. In addition, forerunners possess a moderate to high capacity for dealing with adversity, aligning with the demands of their leadership roles (Smith et al.., 2024).

Table 5. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of The Leadership Skills of Forerunners in Terms of Educational Leadership*

Indicator	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
A. Setting Instructional Direction forerunners….			
1. articulates a clear vision for the school and its efforts related to teaching and learning.	4.38	0.66	Very High
2. encourages innovation to improve teaching and successful learning for every student.	4.44	0.64	Very High
3. generates enthusiasm and persuades others to work together to accomplish common goals for the success of every student.	4.43	0.68	Very High
4. Develop alliances and resources outside the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning.	4.26	0.78	Very High
5. seeks commitment of all involved to a specific course of action to improve student learning.	4.33	0.70	Very High
6. acknowledges and celebrates the achievements and accomplishments of others in their efforts to ensure student success.	4.46	0.70	Very High
Mean	4.38	0.69	Very High
B. Teamwork.			
1. supports the ideas and views offered by team members to resolve problems and improve learning.	4.36	0.73	Very High
2. encourages others to share their ideas and opinions regarding improved teaching and learning.	4.41	0.67	Very High
3. contributes my ideas and opinions toward solutions and improving student success.	4.43	0.70	Very High
4. seeks input from team members regarding ideas to improve learning.	4.27	0.69	Very High
5. assists the team in maintaining the direction needed to complete tasks.	4.36	0.70	Very High
Mean	4.37	0.70	Very High
C. Sensitivity			
1. interacts appropriately and tactfully with people from different backgrounds.	4.32	0.69	Very High
2. elicits perceptions, feelings, and concerns of others.	4.41	0.73	Very High
3. communicate necessary information to the appropriate persons promptly.	4.41	0.68	Very High
4. responds tactfully to others in emotionally stressful situations or conflict.	4.35	0.74	Very High
5. take action to divert unnecessary conflict.	4.31	0.75	Very High
Mean	4.36	0.72	Very High
Overall Mean	4.37	0.70	Very High

As shown in Table 5, the educational leadership of forerunners along three components manifested the same level of skills. It reveals that educational leadership in terms of setting instructional direction had the highest (M=4.38, SD=0.69), followed by educational leadership in terms of teamwork with a (M=4.37, SD=0.70), lastly sensitivity (M=4.36, SD=0.72). The overall mean of the educational leadership along its three components was (M=4.37, SD=0.70) denoted a very high level of leadership skills in terms of educational leadership.

This is a significant finding that sheds light on forerunners' leadership capabilities and ability to effectively manage and improve educational outcomes within their schools. Leithwood (2021) supported the results and underscored the importance of empowering principals with the knowledge and skills to effectively lead instructional initiatives, ultimately contributing to improved educational outcomes. Furthermore, Baroa (2015) emphasizes that principals can generate innovative ideas and solutions to enhance the organization. Moreover, the study by Lloren (2019) emphasizes that collaboration among team members facilitates the coordination of organizational aims and objectives. Spahr (2015) also added that moral support leads leaders and employees to work together to achieve high support.

Contrary to this, Smith (2018) stressed that an excessively elevated level of sensitivity could hinder decision-making and dispute resolution, thus diminishing the cohesiveness of the school climate. Okimoto, Thorsteinson, and Hogg (2013) added that while cooperation toward corporate goals may be easier, it comes at the cost of ethical decision-making.

Table 6. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of The Leadership Skills of Forerunners in Terms of Resolving Complex Problems*

Indicator	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
A. Judgement forerunners….			
1. assigns priority to issues and tasks within the school's vision for teaching and learning.	4.25	0.71	Very High
2. Exercise caution when dealing with unfamiliar issues and individuals.	4.35	0.69	Very High
3. Evaluate information to determine the elements that affect teaching and learning.	4.39	0.67	Very High
4. communicates a clear learning-related rationale for each decision.	4.42	0.70	Very High
5. uses relevant sources for data and information to confirm or refute assumptions.	4.34	0.69	Very High
Mean	4.35	0.69	Very High
B. Results Orientation			
1. takes action to move issues toward closure promptly.	4.29	0.69	Very High
2. takes responsibility for implementing initiatives to improve teaching and learning.	4.40	0.68	Very High
3. determines criteria that indicate a problem or issue is resolved.	4.36	0.69	Very High
4. considers the long-term and short-term implications of a decision on teaching and learning before taking action.	4.36	0.71	Very High
5. sees the big picture related to student learning as the school's mission	4.36	0.69	Very High
Mean	4.35	0.69	Very High
C. Organizational Ability			
1. monitors the progress and completion of delegated responsibilities.	4.32	0.68	Very High
2. develop action plans to achieve goals related to student learning.	4.38	0.73	Very High
3. monitors progress and modify plans or actions as needed.	4.44	0.68	Very High
4. establishes timelines, schedules, and milestones	4.43	0.71	Very High
5. Use available resources effectively to accomplish the student learning goals of the school.	4.42	0.67	Very High
Mean	4.40	0.69	Very High
Overall Mean	4.37	0.69	Very High

As revealed, forerunners' leadership skills in resolving complex along its three components indicated a very high level. It showed in the result that forerunners organizational ability, denoting the highest mean (M = 4.40, SD = 0.70), followed by judgement and results orientation with the same mean of 4.35 and spread of 0.70 respectively. The results highlight those forerunners making high-quality decisions based on the information at hand and performing very well in utilizing their educational leadership skills through their organizational abilities.

Relative to this finding, research by Yusuf and Oyebode (2016) shows high-level leadership skills effectively resolve complex issues by fostering a collaborative environment, encouraging innovation, and promoting a shared vision. Similarly, Robbins and Alvy (2017) suggest that leaders can improve their judgment and decision-making skills through evidence-based practices and reflective inquiry, leading to more effective problem resolution. Lambert (2002) contends that strong judgment is a quality that distinguishes great educational leaders and helps them to successfully negotiate the demands of running schools.

On the other hand, Tu et al. (2015) found out that low-level leadership practices are less likely to effectively address complex issues and achieve better school outcomes. Furthermore, Brooks et al. (2019) believed that excessively high leadership skills can lead to negative outcomes, and excessive focus on these skills can hinder organizational success.

As indicated in the table 7, the grand mean for educational leadership skills of forerunners in communication is very high, with an overall mean of 4.35 and a spread of 0.69. It manifested the same level of skills in oral communication with (M=4.40, SD=0.65) and

written communication (M=4.35, SD=0.66). The overall results showed that the secondary forerunners performed very well in utilizing their leadership skills in communication. They excel in conveying their messages effectively through communication, a significant asset in leadership roles.

Table 7. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of The Leadership Skills of Forerunners in Terms of Communication*

Indicator	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
A. Oral Communication forerunners….			
1. monitors the progress and completion of delegated responsibilities.	4.32	0.64	Very High
2. Develop action plans to achieve goals related to student learning.	4.38	0.65	Very High
3. monitors progress and modify plans or actions as needed.	4.44	0.68	Very High
4. establishes timelines, schedules, and milestones	4.43	0.71	Very High
5. use available resources effectively to accomplish the student learning goals of the school.	4.42	0.68	Very High
Mean	4.40	0.67	Very High
B. Written Communication			
1. writes concisely.	4.30	0.68	Very High
2.demonstrates technical proficiency in writing.	4.34	0.65	Very High
3. expresses ideas clearly in writing.	4.45	0.63	Very High
4. write appropriately for each of the different audiences in the school community.	4.31	0.68	Very High
Mean	4.35	0.66	Very High
Overall Mean	4.38	0.67	Very High

Kim (2018) supported this, stating that leaders with high-level communication skills effectively convey clear messages during crises. Marzano et al. (2010) added that strong communication enables principals to lead schools, promoting collaboration, goal setting, and feedback.

However, Kowalski and Leithwood (2016) found that principals' low level of communication can lead to negative outcomes like misunderstandings and disagreements due to confusing language, affecting leadership reputation and school culture. Additionally, the study by Thomas (2012) stated that principals should arrange communication routes to enhance the flow of information.

Table 8. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of The Leadership Skills of Forerunners in Terms of Developing Self and Others*

Indicator	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
A. Developing Others forerunners….			
1. shares information and expertise from my professional experiences to assist the professional growth of others.	4.35	0.64	Very High
2. motivates others to change behaviors that inhibit their professional growth and student learning.	4.37	0.63	Very High
3. suggests specific developmental activities to improve others' professional capacity to contribute to student learning.	4.33	0.67	Very High
4. gives behaviorally specific feedback focusing on behaviors, not the person.	4.36	0.67	Very High
5. ask a protégé what he/she perceives to be strengths and weaknesses and what he/she wants to improve	4.27	0.68	Very High
6. seeks agreement on specific actions to be taken by a protégé for his/her development and growth.	4.29	0.70	Very High
Mean	4.33	0.67	Very High
B. Understanding Own Strengths and Weaknesses			
1. writes concisely.	4.30	0.63	Very High
2. demonstrates technical proficiency in writing.	4.34	0.65	Very High
3. expresses ideas clearly in writing.	4.45	0.65	Very High
4. Write appropriately for each of the different audiences in the school community.	4.31	0.63	Very High
Mean	4.35	0.64	Very High
Overall Mean	4.34	0.66	Very High

Results of the study reveal that the forerunners in Region 12 have very high leadership skills in developing self and others, with an overall mean of 4.35 and a standard deviation of 0.66. Among these leadership skills, understanding strengths and weaknesses got the highest (M=4.35, SD=0.64). Developing other skills with the lowest (M=4.33, SD=0.67).

The data showed that forerunners have a strong emphasis on and proficiency in leadership skills aimed at developing others, recognizing their strengths and flaws, and actively pursuing developmental activities and continuous learning to improve themselves.

Congruent with the result, Gupta (2014) highlights that the high-level principle of educational leadership inspires and motivates individuals to achieve significant results. Furthermore, Day et al. (2004) findings suggested developing others to foster a professional learning community. They contended that educational leaders who effectively support and nurture teachers' professional growth help to improve student learning results. Moreover, Day, Gillespie, and Hoy (2017) revealed that highly self-aware educational leaders are

better equipped to make informed decisions, foster a healthy school culture, and enhance academic performance.

Finally, Day, Harris, and Bradley, 2010 concluded that the significance of self-awareness in high-level leadership aids in making informed decisions, adapting to challenges, and fostering a healthy school environment.

Table 9. *Summary of Mean and Verbal Description of Forerunners' Leadership Skills*

Indicator	*Score*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
The forerunner-			
1. Educational Leadership	4.37	0.70	Very High
2. Resolving Complex Problems	4.37	0.69	Very High
3. Communication	4.38	0.67	Very High
4. Developing Self and Others	4.34	0.66	Very High
Overall Mean	4.37	0.68	Very High

As revealed in the table, the forerunners in Region 12 have high leadership skills, with a mean of 4.37 and a standard deviation of 0.68. Among these forerunners' leadership skills, communication had the greatest (M=4.38, SD=0.67), followed by educational leadership (M=4.37, SD=0.70) and resolving complex problems (M=4.37, SD=0.69), and developing oneself and others got the lowest (M=4.33, SD=0.66).

Results implied that the forerunners exhibit very high levels of leadership skills across various dimensions. This suggests they are committed to performing their duties and responsibilities as school managers (Lloren, 2019).

Additionally, regarding handling complicated difficulties, Hallinger and Heck (2010) discovered that school principals with good problem-solving abilities successfully tackled various challenges, resulting in increased school performance.

Moreover, Grossman and Mackin (2008) emphasize the importance of effective communication for educational leaders in engaging with stakeholders, sharing visions, and building strong connections within the school community. A good principal is open to new ideas and listens to others. Reflective listening builds trust in joint decision-making (Thomas, 2012).

Table 10. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of the Management Skills of School Forerunners in Terms of Communicating Directives*

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
1. Being considerate with subordinates when communicating with them.	4.36	0.64	Very High
2. Encouraging engagement of subordinates as appropriately needed.	4.43	0.65	Very High
3. Being responsive to subordinate's needs rather than just own point of view.	4.31	0.72	Very High
4. Taking responsibility for the decisions rather than blaming others	4.32	0.71	Very High
5. Devoting time to identify areas of agreement on school issues with subordinates with different opinion	4.31	0.71	Very High
Overall Mean	4.38	0.69	Very High

As revealed, forerunners had very high management skills in communicating directives (M=4.38, SD=0.69). The results indicated that forerunners showed significant regard for their subordinates when conveying instructions and policies. A study by Khojastehpour and Sadeghi-Jorabchi (2016) highlighted that these principals were considerate towards their subordinates while communicating directives and policies. Akinfolarin and Rufai (2017) added that effective communication among teachers, students, and administrators is crucial for achieving educational goals across all levels.

Likewise, a study conducted by Kemp (2017) explored the management skills of principals. The findings highlighted the importance of strong communication skills for principals to foster positive relationships with staff, parents, and students, ultimately contributing to a more effective and inclusive school environment. As a result, an effective principal maintains equilibrium in all their responsibilities and endeavors to ensure they act in the best interest of all parties involved (Meador, 2017).

Table 11. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of the Management Skills of School Forerunners in Terms of Motivating and Inspiring*

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
1. Motivating and inspiring subordinates to achieve professional goals	4.29	0.71	Very High
2. Providing compliments and recognition for meaningful accomplishments	4.35	0.74	Very High
3. Making a positive mindset in school management and operations	4.38	0.71	Very High
4. Focusing on positive results and performances (rather than problems)	4.32	0.68	Very High
5. Devoting time to motivating subordinates and inspiring them to engage in school programs and projects	4.30	0.70	Very High
Overall Mean	4.33	0.70	Very High

Table 11 shows the result of the forerunners' management skills in motivating and inspiring. The overall mean for forerunner's management skills was 4.33; a standard deviation of 0.70 was described as very high. The data presented suggested that the leaders

exhibited a significant level of proficiency in managerial abilities and in motivating and inspiring others. It suggests their primary focus was their subordinates' professional advancement and progress. Whetten and Cameron (2011) state that successful managers dedicate a significant amount of time to assessing and enhancing the motivation of their subordinates, as evidenced by their level of effort and concern.

In support of these findings, a study by Dhawan (2019) examined the management skills of principals in motivating and inspiring their staff. The study found that effective principals possess strong communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills, significantly motivating staff.

Moreover, Gurumurthy's (2021) study explores the link between principals' management skills and their ability to motivate and inspire teachers during the pandemic. It found that effective communication, empathetic leadership, and adaptive strategies positively impacted teacher motivation.

Table 12. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of the Management Skills of School Forerunners in Terms of Empowering and Delegating*

	Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
1.	Feeling confident with subordinates when delegate	4.29	0.67	Very High
2.	Helping subordinates feel competent in their task by recognizing and celebrating their successes	4.38	0.66	Very High
3.	Delegating tasks carefully and appropriately to subordinate‘s capabilities	4.41	0.70	Very High
4.	Providing regular feedback and support to subordinates	4.42	0.72	Very High
5.	Communicating school objectives and expectations.	4.36	0.67	Very High
	Overall Mean	4.37	0.68	Very High

As indicated in the data, the grand mean for management skills of forerunners in empowering and delegating is very high, with a score of 4.37 and a spread of 0.68. The overall results showed that the secondary forerunners performed very high in utilizing their management skills empowering and delegating.

The findings imply that forerunners showed significant confidence while assigning tasks to their subordinates. Furthermore, encouraging teachers to participate in school programs and initiatives demonstrated their responsibility and accountability (Lloren, 2019). In addition, leaders who granted authority and assigned responsibilities eliminated restrictions and limitations rather than inspiring or encouraging action, as Whetten and Cameron (2011) stated.

The study of Ibay and Pa-alisbo (2020). supports the result. The study found that principals with strong management skills were more effective in empowering their staff and delegating responsibilities from remote to in-person learning during the shift. It emphasizes the need for principals to enhance their management skills to better support their school communities, especially during a crisis.

Table 13. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of the Management Skills of School Forerunners in Terms of Managing stress and Resiliency*

	Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
1.	Supporting school priority programs and projects amidst different situations	4.28	0.68	Very High
2.	Maintaining open and trusting professional relationships with subordinates	4.30	0.67	Very High
3.	Managing overcome different changes mandated by the Department of Education (DepEd)	4.30	0.64	Very High
4.	Using time management approaches on the submission of school reports, records, and the like	4.32	0.65	Very High
5.	Facing adversities, difficulties, and stress arising in the school	4.30	0.68	Very High
	Overall Mean	4.30	0.67	Very High

Table 13 shows the forerunners' management skills, including managing stress and developing resiliency. Forerunners demonstrated exceptional management abilities, with an overall mean of 4.30 and a standard deviation of 0.67 for stress management and resilience development.

This implies that forerunners support school priority programs and projects, considering internal and external workplace aspects during implementation. Kendra (2017) affirmed that resilient individuals can use their abilities and qualities to overcome difficulties and challenges.

In support of these findings, a study by Edwards, Smith, and Johnson (2021). The study examines the impact of high and low levels of management skills on the stress and resilience of principals during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings revealed that principals with high management skills were likelier to maintain a positive outlook, seek colleague support, and engage in self-care practices to cope with stress. In contrast, Principals with low management skills experienced higher stress levels.

Table 14 displays the extent of the forerunners' conflict management skills based on the data. The overall mean of 4.32 and spread of 0.74 indicated high conflict management expertise among the forerunners. It is noteworthy that, of the indications provided, helping both parties agree on the neutral ground when conflict arises had the greatest overall score (M = 4.40, SD = 0.68), while seeking

additional information and asking subordinates opinion before making decisions had the lowest score (M = 4.26, SD = 0.69). These results imply that forerunners demonstrated strong conflict management skills.

Table 14. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of the Management Skills of School Forerunners in Terms of Managing Conflict*

	Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
1.	Seeking additional information and asking subordinates' opinions before making decisions	4.26	0.69	Very High
2.	Encouraging two-way interaction in conflict management	4.30	0.70	Very High
3.	Not taking sides but remaining neutral in prevailing issues	4.33	0.73	Very High
4.	Helping both parties agree on the neutral ground when conflict arises	4.40	0.68	Very High
5.	Avoiding making personal judgments on school or subordinates' problems and attributing self-serving intentions	4.32	0.71	Very High
	Overall Mean	4.32	0.70	Very High

A study by Grossman and Holloway (2011) likewise investigates the role of principals in crisis management. The study found that effective crisis management requires principals to have strong communication skills, the ability to make quick decisions, and the capacity to maintain a sense of order and stability during crises. The Wallace Foundation (2013) also suggests that principals should focus on creating a professional community of teachers who improve instruction, work towards achievement, and promote high expectations. The capacity to effectively manage stress promotes personal growth and has a significant financial impact on the entire school community. (Whetten and Cameron, 2011).

Table 15. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of the Management Skills of School Forerunners in Terms of Effective Teams and Teamwork*

	Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
1.	Encouraging group participation in making decisions	4.28	0.71	Very High
2.	Encouraging subordinates to innovate and promote continuous improvement	4.41	0.64	Very High
3.	Providing clear and motivating vision to achieve specific goals	4.35	0.70	Very High
4.	Employing different ways to build strong professional relationships and unity among subordinates	4.39	0.68	Very High
5.	Developing mutual agreement with subordinates before moving forward with task accomplishment	4.37	0.69	Very High
	Overall Mean	4.36	0.69	Very High

As revealed in Table 15, the extent of the management skills of forerunners in building effective teams and teamwork. An overall mean of 4.36 and a spread of 0.69 obtained along the lines of building effective teams and teamwork indicated the high extent of forerunners' management skills in seeking the participation of subordinates and the community.

Buckner (2017) confirmed the findings by asserting that a school leader's ability to establish a unified objective throughout the school community and include staff in a collaborative decision-making framework is frequently critical for success in implementing reforms to improve student performance. Similarly, according to Mulder (2010), the school administrator should enhance their approach to establishing mutual consensus with subordinates to achieve task objectives.

Table 16. *Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of the Management Skills of School Forerunners in Terms of Leading Positive Change*

	Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
1.	Using positive comments in giving feedback and communicating results than negative ones	4.30	0.69	Very High
2.	Communicating school goals and objectives clearly and kindly	4.42	0.71	Very High
3.	Creating positive teamwork in school when interacting with subordinates	4.41	0.66	Very High
4.	Giving attention to building subordinates' strengths, not just overcoming their weaknesses	4.38	0.72	Very High
5.	Knowing how to engage subordinates commit to envision positive change	4.45	0.70	Very High
	Overall Mean	4.39	0.69	Very High

Table 16 illustrates the extent of the management skills of the forerunners in leading positive change. It could be gleaned from the table that the highest perceived rating of the respondents was on knowing how to engage subordinates to envision positive change (M = 4.45, SD = 0.70). Among the indicators, using positive comments in giving feedback and communicating results over negative ones had the lowest overall (M = 4.30, SD = 0.69).

The overall mean for leading positive change as perceived by the school principals and teachers was 4.39, with a standard deviation of 0.69. It denoted that the forerunners possessed a very high degree of management skills in this function. The result indicates that school principals proactively guide schools toward achieving excellence.

Chester Barnard's Systems Approach to Management Theory, as Chand (2010) mentioned, supports the notion that a system consists of interconnected and interdependent elements that, when interacting, create a unified entity.

Table 17. *Summary of Mean Distribution and Verbal Description of the Management Skills of School Forerunners in SOCSKSARGEN*

Indicators	*Score*	*SD*	*Verbal Description*
1. Communicating directives	4.38	0.69	Very High
2. Motivating & inspiring	4.33	0.70	Very High
3. Empowering and delegating	4.37	0.68	Very High
4. Managing stress and developing resiliency	4.30	0.67	Very High
5. Managing conflict	4.32	0.70	Very High
6. Building effective teams and teamwork	4.36	0.69	Very High
7. Leading positive change	4.39	0.65	Very High
Overall Mean	4.35	0.68	Very High

As presented in Table 17, the extent of management skills of the forerunners along the seven (7) aspects: leading positive change got the highest (M = 4.39, SD = 0.65), followed by communicating directives (M = 4.38, SD = 0.69), empowering and delegating (M = 4.37, SD = 0.68), building effective teams and teamwork (M = 4.36, SD = 0.69), motivating and inspiring (M = 4.33, SD = 0.70), and managing conflict (M = 4.32, SD = 0.70), and managing stress and resiliency got the lowest (M = 4.30, SD = 0.67). The overall mean of 4.35 and spread of 0.68 showed that the forerunners had a very high extent of management skills.

The results indicated that the forerunners had high management skills, demonstrating their genuine commitment to fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as school managers.

Napire 2019 supported these findings, stating that their increased knowledge in school leadership and management could assist the Department of Education (DepEd) in elevating their respective schools to higher levels of achievement and excellence in the performance of schoolchildren and school community systems. Lee Tan Luck (2017) confirmed that crucial parts of the school principal's managerial style necessitate a good educational background, great management abilities, and expertise. Finally, Nixon (2017) underlines that school leaders significantly impact data-driven decision-making.

Figure 1. *Forerunners School Performance in the New Normal*

Figure 1 presents the result of the school's performance for the school year 2020-2023. It shows no significant change in participation rates between 2020 and 2023. With a slight increase of 0.56% in enrollment, retention rates remain strong despite a slight decline of 0.32%. A slight increase of 0.11% has occurred in students who dropped out of school. The completion rate has seen a minimal increase of 2.05%. The teacher-student ratio slightly increased by 0.79% due to increased enrollment or teacher shortages. The transition rate increased slightly (0.58%).

The results highlight the need for ongoing monitoring and targeted interventions to ensure the continued improvement of the education system. Yukl (2012) concluded that the outcome of effective principal leadership is attaining optimal school performance. Furthermore, Septiyani et al. (2017) added that the success of a school can be assessed based on its effectiveness, quality, productivity, efficiency, innovation, quality of life, and work morale.

Table 18. *Results of Regression Analysis of the Forerunner's Adversity Quotient, Leadership Skills, and Management Skills and Schools' Participation Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	134.93	31.24	4.32	0.0003
Adversity Quotient	-0.08	0.12	-0.65	0.5227
Leadership Skills	-34.21	22.46	-1.52	0.1434
Management Skills	27.19	20.11	1.35	0.1914

Notes: R2=.1252, F(3,20)=0.9543; p=.43

The study reveals that predictors AQ, LS, and MS explain 12.52% of the variance in school participation rates. However, the linear regression model does not provide a better fit, and forerunners' adversity quotient, leadership skills, and management skills do not predict participation rates in the new normal. The findings suggest that the adversity quotient (AQ), leadership skills (LS), and management skills (MS) do not significantly affect school participation rates in the new normal of education.

The results supported by the study of Williams (2019) stated that while leadership and management abilities are important in educational contexts, they have no substantial effect on school participation rates in the new normal. These findings, in contrast with Huijuan's (2009) and Bakare's (2015) study, found a significant correlation between Adversity Quotient and academic achievement. Furthermore, Johnson (2018) stresses that other factors, such as family support, academic performance, and peer influence, play a more significant role in determining whether a student continues their education.

Table 19. Results of Regression Analysis of the Forerunner's Adversity Quotient, Leadership Skills, and Management Skills and Schools' Enrolment Rate in the New Normal

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	66.79	26.18	2.55	0.0190
Adversity Quotient	0.19	0.10	1.86	0.0779
Leadership Skills	23.85	18.83	1.27	0.2198
Management Skills	-21.19	16.86	-1.30	0.2068

Notes: R2=.1984, F(3,20)=1.6502; p=.2097

As shown, the R square is equal to 0.1984. It means that the predictors AQ, LS, and MS explain 19.84% of the school gross enrolment rate variance. However, the linear regression model does not provide a better fit (F(3,20)= 1.6502, p-value = 0.2097). With p-values greater than 0.05, the independent factors do not appear to be good predictors of the dependent variable, gross enrollment rate. Forerunners' adversity quotient, leadership, and management qualities are not significantly related to school gross enrollment rates in the new normal.

The result implies that forerunners' adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills were not major predictors or influential determinants in predicting school gross enrollment rates. This finding, supported by the concept of Septiyani et al. (2017), stated that the success of a school can be assessed based on its effectiveness, quality, productivity, efficiency, innovation, quality of life, and work morale.

Furthermore, Kaabi (2017) concluded that school leaders had already implemented exceptional management practices, resulting in strong leadership and governance within the school's framework of school-based management. In contrast, Korir and Kipkemboi (2014) affirmed that school principals' characteristics, including school structure, school makeup, and school climate (which includes the school environment), significantly impact school performance. Barry (2005) also argues that the impact of the school environment on student performance might vary, either facilitating or hindering academic achievement.

Table 20. *Results of Regression Analysis of the Forerunner's Adversity Quotient, Leadership Skills, and Management Skills and Schools' Retention Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	115.23	29.53	3.90	0.0009
Adversity Quotient	-0.11	0.12	-0.92	0.3663
Leadership Skills	-31.84	21.24	-1.50	0.1494
Management Skills	30.38	19.01	1.60	0.1258

Notes: R2=.1416, F(3,20)=1.0994; p=.37

As revealed in Table 20, the forerunner's adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills are unrelated to the retention rate of the school's performance. There is no substantial association between the adversity profile and their level of leadership and management skills. This finding implies that the forerunner's adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills are not significantly related to their school performance, particularly the retention rate.

It indicated that school principals possessed a remarkable ability to recognize positive or negative occurrences during the delivery of instruction, considering the challenges and weaknesses brought about by the pandemic. The principals' authentic leadership skills played a crucial role in the effective management of the school (Napire, 2019). However, school administrators' adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills do not significantly affect governance. These duties are already inherent in school leaders' roles and responsibilities (Baroa, 2015).

Table 21. *Results of Regression Analysis of the Forerunner's Adversity Quotient, Leadership Skills, and Management Skills and Schools' Drop-Out Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	6.96	3.85	1.81	0.0856
Adversity Quotient	0.02	0.02	1.05	0.3054
Leadership Skills	-0.71	2.77	-0.26	0.8009
Management Skills	-1.23	2.48	-0.50	0.6255

Notes: R2=.3010, F(3,20)=2.8707; p=.06

The study reveals that AQ, LS, and MS predict 30.10% of the school drop-out rate variance. However, the linear regression model does not provide a better fit, indicating that these factors are not good predictors of the dependent variable, drop-out rate. The analysis also shows that adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills do not significantly impact the dropout rate.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Cabual (2011), which indicate that the performance levels of school leaders were not substantially correlated with their adversity quotient. Nevertheless, the finding aligned with Canivel's (2011) research, which indicated a favorable association between principals' performance and adversity quotient. Similarly, Cornista and Macasaet (2013) found a substantial correlation between adversity quotient and performance.

Table 22. *Results of Regression Analysis of the Forerunner's Adversity Quotient, Leadership Skills, and Management Skills and Schools' Completion Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	153.02	27.87	5.49	0.0000
Adversity Quotient	-0.27	0.11	-2.50	0.0213*
Leadership Skills	-1.42	20.04	-0.07	0.9442
Management Skills	-3.93	17.94	-0.22	0.8288

Notes: R2=.2733, F(3,20)=2.5068; p=.08

The study reveals that AQ, LS, and MS predict a variance of 27.33% of the school completion rate. The adversity quotient of forerunners manifested a significant influence on the completion rate. It was evident along the adversity quotient with a correlation coefficient of -1.42 and a significance of 0.0213. However, the linear regression model does not provide a better fit, indicating that these factors are not good predictors of the dependent variable, the drop-out rate. Nevertheless, it did not significantly influence the completion rate, with a p-value of 0.08. The analysis also shows that adversity quotient, leadership, and management skills do not significantly impact the completion rate in the new normal.

Drewziecka and Roczniewska (2018) confirmed this study by finding that a leader's leadership style is not the only factor driving school success. However, poor management and problem-solving can negatively affect the performance of students, parents, and the school community (Padilla, 2018). Thus, the necessity for competent management is omnipresent. Mukherjee (2013).

Table 23. *Results of Regression Analysis of the Forerunner's Adversity Quotient, Leadership Skills, and Management Skills and Teachers-Student Ratio in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	-94.48	46.90	-2.01	0.0576
Adversity Quotient	0.31	0.19	1.67	0.1110
Leadership Skills	24.74	33.72	0.73	0.4716
Management Skills	-3.39	30.19	-0.11	0.9118

Notes: R2=.2927, F(3,20)=2.7585; p=.07

The R square is 0.2927, indicating that AQ, LS, and MS explain the variance of 29.27% of the teacher-student ratio. However, the linear regression model does not provide a better fit, as all independent variables do not predict the dependent variable, the teacher-student ratio. It shows that although the model approaches significance, it may not be statistically significant overall at the traditional 5% threshold. Therefore, given the factors included, the model might not be a good fit for describing the variability in the Teacher-Student Ratio.

According to Nurabadi (2020), the main indicators of school success are still based on the learning process. Therefore, the number of staff in each school is expected to be able to provide services and carry out school administration. Andang et al. (2014) also emphasize that the school heads have strong managerial skills in managing the resources that achieve the school's mission.

Table 24. *Results of Regression Analysis of the Forerunner's Adversity Quotient, Leadership Skills, and Management Skills and Transition Rates in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	73.89	37.76	1.96	0.0645
Adversity Quotient	-0.07	0.15	-0.47	0.6418
Leadership Skills	9.63	27.15	0.35	0.7266
Management Skills	-4.34	24.31	-0.18	0.8602

Notes: R2=.0344, F(3,20)=0.2377; p=.87

The study reveals that the predictors AQ, LS, and MS explain 3.44% of the variance in the transition rate. The model does not meet the 0.05 significance level requirements, with a p-value of 0.87. All independent variables do not predict the dependent variable, the transition rate. The findings indicate no statistically significant correlation between the independent variables (Adversity Quotient, Leadership Skills, and Management Skills) and the transition rate of schools in the new normal.

Smith et al. (2021) conducted a study supporting these findings, indicating no substantial link between managerial abilities and schools' performance throughout the transition period. The study shows that the transition rates may be more significantly affected by technology preparedness, effective communication, and community support. School principals encountered difficulties in effectively managing their schools by the mandates of the school-based management (SBM) level of practice, Napire (2019).

Table 25. *Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis of Forerunners Profile and Participation Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	97.03	14.80	6.56	0.000
Gender	-2.67	4.36	-0.61	0.548
Age	0.09	0.26	0.35	0.732
Education	0.98	1.95	0.50	0.620
Length of Service	-0.52	0.30	-1.75	0.097

Notes: R2=0.1769, F(4,19)=1.0211, p=.42)

As revealed in Table 27, the forerunners' demographic profiles across different factors are unrelated to their participation rate. There is no substantial association between the forerunners profile and school performance particularly the participation rate. This finding implies that the forerunner's profiles are not significantly related to their participation rate. This finding contradicts the findings of Raza (2021) that the age and education level of principals have a significant positive impact on school performance. In contrast, gender does not have a significant impact on school performance.

Table 26. *Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis of Forerunners Profile and Retention Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	88.74	14.74	6.02	0.000
Gender	0.85	4.34	0.20	0.847
Age	-0.06	0.26	-0.22	0.831
Education	2.48	1.94	1.28	0.217
Length of Service	0.10	0.30	1.28	0.735

Notes: R2=.1036, F(4,19)=0.5490, p=.70)

As revealed in Table 26, forerunners' demographic profile across different factors is unrelated to their retention rate. There is no substantial association between the forerunners profile and school performance particularly the retention rate. This finding implies that the forerunner's profiles are not significantly related to their retention rate. Cognizant of this, a study by Liu and Zhang (2014) found no significant relationship between the age of principals and student retention rates. However, principals with longer years of service and higher levels of educational attainment were associated with higher student retention rates.

Table 27. *Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis of Forerunners Profile and Gross Enrolment Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	116.32	9.73	11.96	0.000
Gender	-1.87	2.87	-0.65	0.521
Age	-0.14	0.17	-0.83	0.417
Education	0.69	1.28	0.54	0.597
Length of Service	-0.81	0.20	-4.08	0.001*

Notes: R2=.1036, F(4,19)=0.5490, p=.70)

As revealed in Table 27, only the length of service (p=0.001) is related to the enrolment rate. It indicates that the longer the length of service, the greater the enrolment rate. However, other factors like gender, age, and education could not better predict school performance. When combined with all factors, this finding implies that the forerunner's profiles are not significantly related to their enrolment rate.

Osborne, Folsom, and Herrington (2015) conducted a study to investigate the impact of a principal's tenure on enhancing student achievement. The results indicated no correlation between the length of a school year and student achievement. In contrast, the study of Swanson and Clark (2012) examines the relationship between principal tenure (length of service) and two primary outcomes. It suggests that experienced principals may contribute to better school performance.

The table shows that the R square is equal to 0.4756. It indicates that 47.56% of the variance in the school drop-out rate can be explained by the predictors of age, gender, educational attainment, and length of service.

Nevertheless, a better fit is provided by the linear regression model (F(4,19)=4.3087, p-value = 0.01). All factors seem to predict the dependent variable, the drop-out rate, with p-values higher than 05. The drop-out rate of schools in the new normal seems to be significantly connected with the forerunners' profile.

Table 28. *Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis of Forerunners Profile and Drop-Out Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	3.11	1.63	1.91	0.071
Gender	-0.77	0.48	-1.60	0.125
Age	0.03	0.03	0.94	0.360
Education	-0.72	0.21	-3.35	0.003*
Length of Service	-0.06	0.03	-1.83	0.082

Notes: R2=0.4756, F(4,19)=4.3087, p=.01)

The results supported by the study of Clark, Martorell, and Rockoff (2009) cited in Napire (2019) investigate how the characteristics of school principals relate to school performance. Results find little evidence of a relationship between school performance and principal education and pre-principal work experience. Similarly, a study by Venas and Daing (2020) suggested that the school leader or school principal is considered one of the most influential factors in making the school and making the school refers to the good performance of the school that may have direct or indirect impact to the students like the enrollment, drop--out, retention and promotion.

Table 29. *Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis of Forerunners Profile and Completion Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	102.16	15.38	6.64	0.000
Gender	-1.73	4.53	-0.38	0.706
Age	-0.01	0.27	-0.04	0.972
Education	0.05	2.03	0.03	0.979
Length of Service	-0.33	0.31	-1.04	0.310

Notes: R2=.0722, F(4,19)=.3699, p=.83)

As revealed in Table 29, forerunners' demographic profiles across different factors are unrelated to their completion rate. There is no substantial association between the forerunners profile and school performance particularly the completion rate. This finding implies that the forerunner's profiles are not significantly related to their completion rate. The study by Feyisa, Ferede, and Amsale (2016) supported the outcome. The results show no direct correlation between school principals' leadership effectiveness and their service year, education level, or length of service. Furthermore, Knoeppel and Rinehart's 2007 study found no link between a principal's experience in education and student accomplishment when combined with other characteristics.

Table 30. *Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis of Forerunners Profile and Teachers-Student Ratio in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	-31.33	18.31	-1.71	0.103
Gender	19.17	5.40	3.55	0.002*
Age	0.22	0.33	0.68	0.508
Education	9.82	2.41	4.07	0.001*
Length of Service	-0.18	0.37	-0.48	0.635

Notes: R2=.5478, F(4,19)=5.7545, p=.00)

The table showed that the school forerunners' profile significantly influenced the teacher-student ratio in the new normal with a square value of 0.5478 and a p-value of 0.00. Significant influence was noted between the forerunner's gender and educational attainment, with p-values of 0.002 and 0.001, respectively. However, age and length of service did not significantly influence the teacher-student ratio, with p-values of 0.508 and 0.635. The overall significance of the model is tested using the F-statistic. The model does not meet the traditional 0.05 significance level requirements, with a p-value of 0.00. This finding implies that the forerunner's profiles are significantly associated with the teacher and student ratio. The results were supported by the study of Wang and Qian (2021) investigates the relationship between the age and educational attainment of principals and school performance. Findings suggest that experienced and well-educated principals may contribute to maintaining a favorable teacher-to-student ratio, which is crucial for effective learning in the new normal.

Table 31. *Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis of Forerunners Profile and Transition Rate in the New Normal*

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	119.04	16.27	7.32	0.000
Gender	-2.74	4.79	-0.57	0.574
Age	-0.52	0.29	-1.81	0.087
Education	-1.97	2.14	-0.92	0.369
Length of Service	0.54	0.33	1.63	0.119

Notes: R2=.2488, F(4,19)=1.5735, p=.22)

As revealed in Table 31, the forerunners' demographic profiles across different factors are unrelated to their transition rate. There is no substantial association between the forerunners' profile and school performance. This finding implies that the forerunner's profiles are not significantly related to school performance.

Kuhfeld, Ma, and Tarasawa (2020) found that principals from diverse backgrounds, including underrepresented minority groups, experienced higher transition rates during face-to-face instruction. It suggests targeted support and retention strategies to ensure their continued success.

Table 32. *Potential Barriers and Challenges in Utilizing Adversity Quotient and Leadership and Management Skills*

Barrier/Challenges	*Rank*
1. Availability of Resources	2
2. Sudden change of curriculum.	1
3. Mental health and well-being	3
4. Technology integration	4
5. Support from stakeholders	5

As indicated in Table 32, the most significant challenge reported by respondents is the sudden curriculum change, followed by resource availability. Mental health concerns among educators and students rank third, indicating challenges in integrating technology into teaching practices. The least cited challenge is support from stakeholders like parents, administrators, or policymakers.

This conclusion aligns with Combalicer's (2016) and Sañoza's (2013) findings, who reported that schools lacked instructional resources, modules, and other relevant references in teaching-learning. The school's main issue is now a shortage of instructional resources. Thus, the availability of resource materials, as well as the availability of suitable facilities, are major factors influencing curriculum implementation (Reyes & Dizon, 2015).

Furthermore, Zhang et al.'s (2020) research showed a decline in students' psychological welfare. Current research studies attribute this reduction to feelings of social isolation and the deterioration of social relationships, including difficulties with friends and family. The American Psychological Association (APA) assessment has shown that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted mental health. It stated that around 81% of teenagers belonging to Generation Z reported experiencing mental health issues. The COVID-19 pandemic causes heightened levels of stress, primarily related to their educational pursuits, for adolescents belonging to Generation Z, specifically those between the ages of 13 and 17.

Conclusions

Based on the salient findings of the study, the following conclusions and recommendations are drawn:

Forerunners in the region are predominantly male, and well-qualified with advanced educational backgrounds and substantial administrative experience. The average score on the adversity quotient profile of forerunners indicates their competence in overcoming everyday problems. However, they may need further support and development to effectively face more significant adversities. Policymakers and educational institutions in Region 12 may consider addressing gender disparities among forerunners and promoting diversity and inclusion in educational leadership roles. Additionally, support professional development opportunities for aspiring forerunners, including advanced degrees and relevant administrative experience. Emphasize the role of forerunners' adversity quotient in improving specific skills, especially in control, ownership, reach, and endurance dimensions.

In addition, forerunners very high leadership and management skills can be an avenue in ensuring the stability and progress of educational institutions. Their adaptability, strategic vision, and ability to foster a supportive and collaborative environment have been key to overcoming the unprecedented challenges faced by schools. Their leadership and management have been essential in overcoming challenges and maintaining the quality of education. Forerunners may continuously undertake professional development engagements for efficient and effective public service delivery. Provide training and development opportunities for school administrators to improve their leadership skills and effectively manage challenges.

Furthermore, the school performance in the region has remained stable over the past academic years. There has been no significant variation, indicating that the educational outcomes have been consistent. This stability might suggest that the factors influencing school performance have been maintained at a steady level. Forerunners may continuously enhance their management abilities by fostering transparent and reliable communication with their subordinates to ensure a more efficient school performance. Forerunners may enforce sustainable practices and enhance existing methods to achieve more productive school performance and improve learning outcomes.

Lastly, the forerunners adversity quotient, leadership and management skills and demographic characteristics have nothing to do with school performance. Although correlation analyses showed a negative link between adversity quotient, leadership and management skills and school performance, forerunners can continuously engage in professional development for adversity quotient®, leadership, and management skills enhancement. Explore additional variables or external factors that could better explain variations in school performance. Forerunners may employ strategies to proactively involve stakeholders and the school community to ensure their ownership of the performance. Lastly, Challenges and barriers of the forerunners may be addressed immediately with the help and

guidance of the educational leaders in Region 12 through carrying out programs, projects, and activities to implement strategy and improve school leadership and administration.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Karen May P. Urlanda
Mamali National High School
Department of education – Philippines

Mildred F. Accad
Sultan Kudarat State University – Philippines