Administrative Decision Making and Crisis Management in Education in Public Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

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| This study described the administrative decision-making and crisis management in public elementary schools. It employed purposive sampling and a non-experimental quantitative research design using the correlational method. The respondents were 165 teachers from the Tibungco District, Division of Davao City. Statistical tools used included the mean, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r), and multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that the levels of administrative decision-making and crisis management were high and consistently demonstrated. Contributing factors included the administrators’ responsiveness, clear communication strategies, and adherence to established policies. Moreover, a significant relationship was found between administrative decision-making and crisis management, with the former significantly influencing the latter.  It is recommended that school administrators strengthen professional development programs that focus on strategic decision-making and proactive crisis management to enhance educational leadership in public elementary schools. |

*Keywords*: Administrative decision making, crisis management, public elementary schools, clear communication strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

Crisis management in education has emerged as a crucial concern in the 21st century, particularly as schools face a range of unpredictable challenges including natural disasters, public health emergencies, and security threats (Chatzipanagiotou & Katsarou, 2023). Inadequate preparedness and poor decision-making during these crises often result in disrupted learning, psychological distress among students and staff, and a breakdown of basic school operations (Osegbue, 2025). In many instances, school leaders are caught unprepared, with no clear protocols or leadership strategies in place to address emergencies effectively (Atillo et al., 2025).

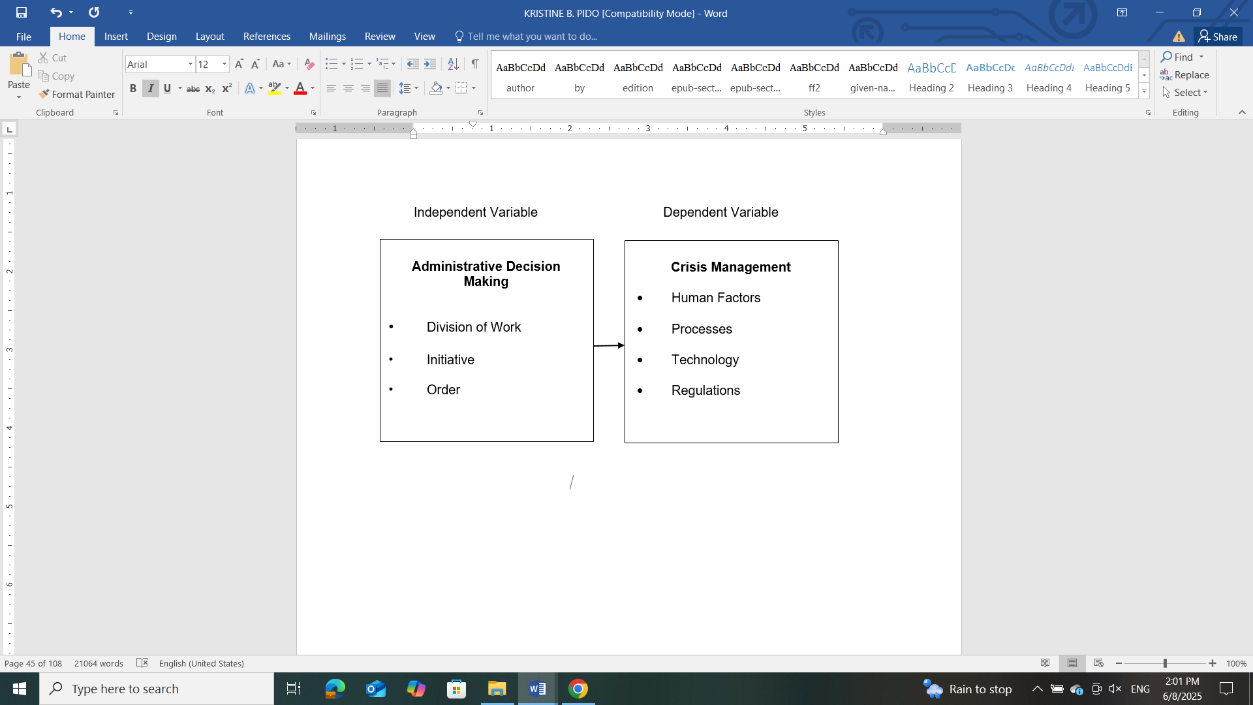
Globally, education systems have been severely tested by crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, armed conflicts, and climate-related disasters (Mohiuddin, 2023). According to UNESCO (2022), millions of children were affected by prolonged school closures, revealing weaknesses in crisis response strategies across different nations. The lack of efficient administrative decision-making during these events exposed gaps in policy implementation, stakeholder communication, and continuity of instruction (Bozkurt et al., 2020). In low-resource countries, the impact was even more severe due to fragile infrastructures and limited access to emergency training and technology (Alsabri et al., 2025).

In the Philippines, crisis management in education is a persistent issue, exacerbated by frequent typhoons, earthquakes, and socio-political conflicts in some regions. Public schools often struggle with insufficient resources, overcrowded classrooms, and limited administrative training in crisis response (Moreno and Sulasula, 2024). The Department of Education (DepEd) has issued policies and guidelines for disaster preparedness and risk reduction; however, these measures are not always effectively implemented at the school level. The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the urgency for robust administrative systems capable of navigating complex educational disruptions (Cruz & Ormilla, 2022).

Previous studies have explored the link between administrative decision-making and crisis management in educational settings. Research by Chatzipanagiotou and Katsarou (2023) emphasizes that effective crisis management is largely dependent on the quality of decisions made by school leaders before, during, and after a crisis. Similarly, a study by Osegbue (2025) found that schools with structured and participatory decision-making frameworks were more capable of managing crises with minimal disruption. These findings suggest a potential correlation between how decisions are made by administrators and the overall effectiveness of crisis response in schools.

Despite these findings, there remains a noticeable gap in localized research focusing on the interplay between administrative decision-making and crisis management in public elementary schools in the Philippine context. Most existing literature either centers on secondary education or broadly addresses school management without exploring specific decision-making practices that influence crisis outcomes. As such, there is a need to understand how administrative decisions at the grassroots level affect crisis management in basic education institutions, particularly in vulnerable districts.

This study aims to determine the relationship between administrative decision-making and crisis management in education among public elementary schools in the Tibungco District, Division of Davao City. Specifically, it seeks to describe the level of administrative decision-making and crisis management, assess the relationship between the two, and identify which domains of decision-making significantly influence crisis response. The findings of this study hope to contribute to evidence-based practices and policies that can enhance school readiness and resilience in the face of crises.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework of the Study

2. methodology

**2.1 Research Design**

This study employed a non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing a descriptive correlational method. Descriptive correlational research is a type of research design that seeks to describe the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them. This method is used to examine whether and how variables are related, providing insights into the direction and strength of their associations (Baguio & Baguio, 2025). This method was chosen because the variables in this study aim to measure the relationship between administrative decision-making and crisis management in education among teachers in public elementary schools in the Tibungco District, Division of Davao City. It also serves to describe the statistical association between these variables, offering a clearer understanding of how administrative decisions influence the management of crises in the educational setting.

**2.2 Research Respondents**

The respondents of the study were teachers from public elementary schools in the Tibungco District, Division of Davao City. Using Slovin’s formula with a 0.05 margin of error, a sample size of 141 was determined from a total population of 217 teachers. These respondents were selected to provide insights into the administrative decision-making and crisis management practices in their respective schools. The selection ensured that the sample was representative of the population. The study was conducted during the school year 2023–2024.

**2.3 Research Instrument**

The instruments used in this study consisted of two main parts: administrative decision-making and crisis management in education among teachers in public elementary schools. Each part was developed based on relevant literature and previous studies in the field of Educational Management. Prior to the administration of the instruments, the initial draft was evaluated for content validity and reliability by a panel of experts in educational leadership and research.

Revisions were made based on their comments and suggestions to improve clarity and appropriateness. To assess the reliability and validity of the instruments, a pilot test was conducted with 30 teachers from a different school within the same district. The results confirmed the reliability of the instruments, with a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.845 for administrative decision-making and 0.914 for crisis management.

**2.4 Data Gathering Procedure**

# The data for this study were collected through a structured and sequential process. Initially, the researcher sought approval and endorsement from the Dean of the Graduate School at Rizal Memorial Colleges. After obtaining the Dean’s approval, the researcher then secured ethical clearance to ensure that all research procedures complied with ethical standards. With this clearance, a formal request was submitted to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent to seek permission to conduct the study within the identified schools.

# Upon receiving approval from the Schools Division Superintendent, an endorsement letter was forwarded to the school heads, along with a formal request letter for permission to administer the survey instruments. Following these approvals, a schedule was arranged for the pilot testing phase, which aimed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the research instruments. The pilot test questionnaires included an overview of the study and clear instructions for participants.

# After the pilot testing was completed and the instruments were confirmed to be reliable and valid, the finalized survey questionnaires were distributed to the selected respondents. Once all responses were collected, the researcher submitted the completed questionnaires to a statistician for analysis. The gathered data were then tallied, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted accordingly.

# 2.5 Data Analysis

Mean. This was used to determine the level of administrative decision-making and crisis management among teachers in public elementary schools.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r). This was used to examine the relationship between administrative decision-making and crisis management in public elementary schools.

Regression Analysis. This was utilized to identify which the domains of administrative decision-making that significantly influence crisis management in education in public elementary schools.

3. results and discussion

**3.1 Level of Administrative Decision-Making among Public Elementary School Teachers**

Table 1. *Level of Administrative Decision-Making among Public Elementary School Teachers*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Domains** | **Mean**  **()** | **Descriptive Equivalent** |
| 1 | division of work | 4.09 | High |
| 2 | Initiative | 4.02 | High |
| 3 | Order | 4.18 | High |
| Overall Mean | | **4.10** | High |
|  | |  |  |

The results revealed that the level of administrative decision-making among public elementary school teachers was high, with an overall mean score of 4.10. Among the domains, order recorded the highest mean (4.18), followed by division of work (4.09), and initiative (4.02), all categorized as high. These findings suggest that teachers consistently demonstrate strong administrative practices, particularly in maintaining structured environments, delegating tasks effectively, and taking initiative in managing responsibilities. Such competencies are crucial for ensuring school stability, promoting organizational efficiency, and supporting effective crisis response strategies.

This finding implies that public elementary school teachers consistently exhibit effective administrative decision-making practices, particularly in maintaining order within their schools. Their high score in division of work suggests a clear understanding and execution of task delegation and role distribution among staff. The strong rating in initiative reflects teachers’ willingness to take proactive steps in addressing administrative responsibilities. Collectively, these high scores indicate that teachers are well-equipped to contribute to organized, efficient, and responsive school environments, which are essential for sustaining quality education and managing daily operational demands.

This finding aligns with the study by Addo-Fordwuor et al. (2024), which emphasized that high levels of administrative decision-making contribute significantly to effective school governance, particularly when leaders ensure clarity in task delegation and policy implementation. Similarly, the research by Jhonshon et al. (2024) highlighted that administrators who engage in strategic and participative decision-making practices foster a more collaborative and productive school environment. Furthermore, the study of Kumar and Limbachiya (2023) revealed that strong administrative decision-making, especially in terms of planning, organizing, and managing school resources, leads to improved institutional performance and enhances the responsiveness of schools to emerging challenges.

**3.2 Level of Crisis Management among Public Elementary School Teachers**

Table 2. *Level of School Plant Management among Public Elementary School Teachers*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Domains** | **Mean**  **()** | **Descriptive Equivalent** |
| 1 | human factors | 4.09 | High |
| 2 | Processes | 4.15 | High |
| 3 | Technology | 4.06 | High |
| 4 | Regulations | 4.13 | High |
| Overall Mean | | **4.11** | High |
|  | |  |  |

Presented in Table 2 is the level of school plant management among public elementary school teachers. The table includes the domains of human factors, processes, technology, and regulations, along with their respective mean scores and descriptive equivalents. Among these, the processes domain recorded the highest mean score of 4.15, categorized as high. This was followed by regulations with a mean of 4.13, also described as high. The domains of human factors and technology had mean scores of 4.09 and 4.06, respectively, both likewise categorized as high. The overall mean score of 4.11, also rated high, indicates a generally strong level of school plant management exhibited by the respondents.

These findings suggest that public elementary school teachers consistently demonstrate effective facility management practices, with particular strengths in structured operational processes and regulatory compliance. The high score in the processes domain reflects the presence of clear, efficient procedures supporting the maintenance and use of physical resources. The strong rating in regulations indicates that schools adhere to established safety and resource-use policies. Additionally, the consistently high scores in human factors and technology highlight the importance placed on skilled personnel and the integration of appropriate technological tools. Collectively, these results point to a comprehensive and well-coordinated approach to school plant management that fosters a safe, functional, and conducive learning environment.

This finding aligns with the study by Heisel (2024), which emphasized that high levels of crisis management in schools are essential for maintaining stability and ensuring continuity of learning during emergencies. Their research highlighted that well-prepared school systems with strong crisis protocols are more capable of minimizing disruption and protecting both staff and students. Similarly, the study by Mizrak (2024) found that schools with proactive crisis management strategies, particularly those involving human factors, technology, and regulatory compliance, were better equipped to respond effectively to unforeseen events. Additionally, research by Stephen (2024) supported the idea that schools demonstrating high crisis readiness often exhibit stronger leadership coordination, effective communication systems, and adaptive problem-solving skills, all of which contribute to resilience and recovery during times of crisis.

**3.3 Significance of the Relationship Between the Administrative Decision-Making and Crises Management**

Table 3. *Significance of the Relationship Between the Administrative Decision-Making and Crisis Management*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** | **X** | **Y** | **r-value** | **Degree of Correlation** | **p-value** | **Decision**  **(Ho)** |
| Administrative Decision-Making  Crisis Management | 4.10 | 4.11 | 0.810 | High  Correlation | 0.000 | Rejected |

Presented in Table 3 is the correlation analysis between administrative decision-making and crisis management among public elementary school teachers. The relationship between administrative decision-making and crisis management has a correlation coefficient (r-value) of 0.810, indicating a high degree of correlation, and a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 significance level. This signifies a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between administrative decision-making and crisis management. The r-value of 0.810 suggests that effective administrative decision-making is closely associated with proficient crisis management in the schools studied.

Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected, confirming that there is a significant relationship between administrative decision-making and crisis management. This indicates that when school administrators make sound decisions in areas such as division of work, initiative, and order, it positively influences the school’s ability to manage crises effectively. These findings underscore the critical role of administrative leadership in enhancing the preparedness and responsiveness of schools during emergency situations.

This finding aligns with the research of Freeman et al. (2021), who emphasized that effective administrative decision-making significantly enhances an organization’s ability to respond to crises. Their study found that schools with strong decision-making frameworks were more agile and better equipped to manage emergency situations through clear delegation, structured protocols, and timely interventions. Similarly, the work of Grissom and Condon (2021) highlighted that when school leaders demonstrate sound judgment and strategic planning, it leads to more coordinated and efficient crisis responses, ultimately reducing the negative impact on school operations. Additionally, the study by Mizrak (2024) confirmed that a significant relationship exists between leadership decision-making and institutional crisis management, stressing that proactive and organized decision-making processes contribute to heightened preparedness, faster recovery, and improved stakeholder confidence during critical events.

**3.4. The Domains of Administrative Decision Making that Significantly Influence the Crisis Management**

**Table 4.** *The Domains of Administrative Decision Making that Significantly Influence the Crisis Management*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Domains** | **B** | **BE** | **Beta** | **t-stat** | **p-value** | **Decision** |
| Constant | 2.82 | 0.60 |  | 4.36 | 0.000 | Significant |
| division of work | 0.70 | 0.58 | 0.48 | 4.24 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Initiative | 0.68 | 0.54 | 0.45 | 4.20 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Order | 0.64 | 0.50 | 0.40 | 4.18 | 0.000 | Significant |
| **Regression Model** | | | | | | |
| Administrative Decision Making 2.82 + 0.70 (division of work) + 0.68 (initiative) + 0.64 (order) | | | | | | |
| R=0.850; R²=0.722; F=94.08; p-value=0.000 | | | | | | |

Presented in Table 4 is the regression analysis examining how the different domains of administrative decision-making significantly influence crisis management among public elementary school teachers. The regression model reveals that division of work, initiative, and order all significantly influence crisis management. Specifically, division of work (B = 0.70, Beta = 0.48), initiative (B = 0.68, Beta = 0.45), and order (B = 0.64, Beta = 0.40) all have positive and significant effects. The t-values range from 4.18 to 4.24, and all p-values are below 0.05, indicating statistical significance. The regression equation is as follows: Crisis Management = 2.82 + 0.70 (division of work) + 0.68 (initiative) + 0.64 (order). The model explains 72.2% of the variance in crisis management (R² = 0.722). Moreover, the F-value of 94.08 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates that the model is statistically significant.

This finding implies that the domains of administrative decision-making positively and significantly influence crisis management in public elementary schools. The strongest influence comes from division of work, suggesting that clear delegation and organization of tasks play a critical role in enhancing a school’s ability to manage crises effectively. Initiative and order also contribute significantly, highlighting the importance of proactive leadership and maintaining systematic procedures in crisis situations. Together, these domains emphasize the need for well-structured administrative practices to promote a resilient and prepared school environment.

This finding aligns with the research of Carter (2024), who emphasized that specific domains of administrative decision-making, such as division of work, initiative, and order, are critical in enhancing a school’s capacity to manage crises effectively. Their study found that when school leaders clearly delegate responsibilities and maintain organizational structure, they create an environment where swift and organized crisis responses are possible. Similarly, Fagel et al. (2021) highlighted that proactive leadership, particularly in initiating timely actions and maintaining order, significantly reduces confusion and facilitates smoother coordination during emergencies. Additionally, the study of Greenwood et al. (2023) argued that comprehensive administrative planning that integrates clear task distribution and procedural consistency builds institutional resilience, enabling schools to withstand and recover more effectively from disruptive events. These findings collectively suggest that the strength of a school’s crisis management heavily relies on the strategic implementation of administrative decision-making practices.

**4. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that the level of administrative decision-making in public elementary schools, particularly in terms of division of work, initiative, and order—is very high and consistently manifested by teachers. This implies that school administrators are effectively implementing management principles that allow for clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, encourage teachers to take initiative in their tasks, and ensure that school operations are organized and systematic. Such practices create a structured working environment where teachers are empowered and guided, contributing to overall school efficiency and preparedness during times of uncertainty or disruption.

Furthermore, it is concluded that the level of crisis management in public elementary schools is also very high, particularly in the domains of human factors, processes, technology, and regulations. This means that schools have put in place effective crisis response mechanisms involving capable and well-informed personnel, streamlined procedures, relevant technological tools, and strict adherence to policies and guidelines. As a result, teachers are confident in their ability to respond to crises, and the school system is able to maintain continuity of education and safety for both learners and staff even in the face of challenges.

The study also found a significant relationship between administrative decision-making and crisis management. This means that schools with strong decision-making practices among administrators tend to also demonstrate strong crisis management capacities. Effective decision-making supports the timely identification of problems, appropriate resource allocation, and the coordination of emergency responses, which are all crucial during crisis situations. It reflects how leadership actions directly shape the school’s ability to manage disruptions effectively.

Moreover, it is concluded that administrative decision-making significantly influences crisis management in public elementary schools. This indicates that the way school leaders make and implement decisions—especially in planning, organizing, leading, and controlling—has a direct impact on how well schools prepare for, respond to, and recover from crises. When administrators are strategic, proactive, and collaborative in their decision-making, it enhances the school’s resilience and ability to protect both the learning process and the welfare of the school community during critical events.

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are offered to enhance administrative decision-making and crisis management in public elementary schools:

Teachers may sustain their active involvement in administrative processes and crisis management efforts within their schools. They may continue to demonstrate initiative, follow established procedures, and collaborate with school leaders in implementing crisis response plans. Engaging in continuous professional development through seminars and training on crisis preparedness, safety protocols, and leadership skills may strengthen their ability to respond effectively during emergencies.

School heads may further enhance their administrative decision-making by adopting participative and evidence-based approaches. Emphasizing clear delegation of tasks, encouraging staff initiative, and maintaining an organized school environment may help sustain high levels of operational efficiency. In addition, school heads may lead the development and regular updating of school-based crisis management plans and conduct drills or simulations to ensure readiness. Investing in leadership training and crisis response frameworks may significantly contribute to the school’s resilience.

The Department of Education (DepEd) may provide more structured and continuous capacity-building programs focused on administrative leadership and crisis management. Developing a standardized framework for school-level crisis response, aligned with national policies, may help ensure consistency across schools. Furthermore, DepEd may consider integrating administrative decision-making and emergency preparedness into performance reviews and school improvement plans to institutionalize these practices as key components of school leadership.

Future researchers may explore similar studies in other districts, regions, or educational levels to validate and compare findings. They may also consider using qualitative or mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into the specific practices, challenges, and lived experiences of educators during crisis situations. Expanding the scope of study to include perspectives from students, parents, or community stakeholders may provide a more holistic understanding of crisis management in education.

Ethical approval and Consent

Ethical considerations were diligently observed throughout the duration of this study to protect the rights, privacy, and well-being of all participants. Prior to data collection, the researcher secured the necessary permissions from the appropriate authorities, including an endorsement from the Dean of the Graduate School and the issuance of ethical clearance from the institution. The study adhered to the ethical guidelines outlined by Pregoner et al. (2025), ensuring strict compliance with current standards for conducting research involving human subjects, particularly in educational and social science contexts.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Respondents were thoroughly briefed on the purpose of the research, the procedures involved, and their right to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, indicating their full understanding and agreement to be involved in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously maintained, with no personal identifiers included in the data or the final presentation of findings. All information gathered was used exclusively for academic purposes and was treated with the utmost respect and discretion. This ethical approach ensured the research was conducted responsibly, transparently, and in accordance with established academic and professional ethical norms.

Disclaimer (Artificial Intelligence)

The author(s) hereby declare that generative AI technologies have been used during the writing and editing of this manuscript. The details of the AI usage are as follows:

1. Grammarly: Used for grammar and spellchecking, as well as suggestions for improving sentence structure and overall clarity.
2. Quillbot: Employed for paraphrasing and refining sentence flow to enhance readability and coherence.

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