Performance and Employers' Feedback of the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management Graduates

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the professional performance of PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates from Southern University of Northern Negros (SUNN), specifically Batch 2021–2023. It examined the extent to which program outcomes align with workplace expectations and organizational goals through a concurrent mixed-method design. Quantitative data were gathered using competency assessment ratings from graduates, employers, and peers. At the same time, qualitative insights were collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with five (5) PhDEM graduates, five (5) immediate supervisors, and five (5) colleagues. Findings revealed that graduates demonstrated strong performance in leadership, research, and innovation, with consistently high ratings in effectiveness, efficiency, timeliness, quality of outputs, and contributions to organizational outcomes. Thematic analysis confirmed that competencies in content knowledge, research, leadership, and communication significantly contributed to institutional development. However, stakeholders also suggested enhancing practical management training and policy development within the program. Overall, the study affirms the relevance of the PhDEM program in preparing graduates for complex leadership roles in education. Recommendations were formulated to strengthen the curriculum and support mechanisms based on both quantitative performance indicators and qualitative stakeholder feedback.

Keywords: Educational Leadership, Employer Feedback, PhDEM Graduates, Professional Performance, Program Outcomes

INTRODUCTION

Graduates of the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management (PhDEM) are expected to demonstrate excellence in advanced research, educational innovation, and complex problem-solving. With rigorous training and firm academic grounding, these individuals are anticipated to contribute significantly to educational leadership, policy development, and institutional reform. Their professional performance is expected to manifest in enhanced organizational effectiveness, evidence-based decision-making, and strategic planning within academic institutions. This study is anchored in national frameworks that define professional performance for higher education leaders in the Philippines. The Civil Service Commission (CSC) Strategic Performance Management System (SPMS) and the Department of Education (DepEd) Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) emphasize performance dimensions such as effectiveness, efficiency, timeliness, quality of outputs, and organizational outcomes—similarly, CHED Memorandum Order No. 15, s. The 2019 Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) Level 8 identifies competencies that doctoral graduates must exhibit, including content knowledge, research capabilities, innovativeness, leadership and management skills, and professional growth and communication.

Despite the increasing number of doctoral graduates in Educational Management, there remains a gap in empirical studies examining how doctoral training translates into professional practice and leadership effectiveness. Specifically, little is known about how graduates' competencies are applied in workplace settings across the five performance dimensions, or how employers and peers assess their leadership, innovation, and strategic contributions. Moreover, limited evidence exists on how doctoral training shapes professional identity, leadership styles, and communities of practice, all of which are vital to institutional growth. The Philippine higher education landscape further underscores the relevance of this inquiry. Among the country's 2,299 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), only 14% offer doctoral programs, with Educational Management as the most common specialization. While opportunities for advanced study are expanding, graduation and completion rates remain modest, and the actual institutional impact of doctoral graduates is underexplored.

To address these gaps, the present study examines the alignment of PhDEM curricula with PQF Level 8 competencies, gathers structured feedback from employers, supervisors, and colleagues, and documents institutional outcomes influenced by doctoral-level leadership. It also integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a holistic evaluation of graduates' performance and contributions, with emphasis on leadership, innovation, and research as drivers of organizational development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The This study aims to assess the professional performance of SUNN PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates from Batch 2021 to 2023 and to analyze employer feedback to evaluate the alignment between the program outcomes and workplace expectations. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions: What is the professional performance level of the PhDEM graduates from Batch 2021 to 2023 in terms of: Effectiveness, Efficiency, Timeliness, Quality Outputs, and Organizational Outcomes? To what extent do the PhDEM graduates demonstrate competencies in the following areas: Content Knowledge, Research Capabilities, Innovativeness, Leadership and Management Skills, and Professional Growth and Communication? Is there a significant relationship between the competency domains and the performance of PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates? What feedback do employers or immediate supervisors provide regarding the performance and competencies of the PhDEM graduates in their workplaces? How have PhD graduates contributed to the goals and success of your organization based on your experience? Based on the findings, what recommendations can be drawn to enhance the PhDEM program based on the graduates' workplace performance and employer feedback?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The This review of related literature explores the significance of PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates in educational leadership, the measurement of their workplace performance, and the role of employer and graduate feedback in evaluating program effectiveness. It also examines the relevance of graduate studies to professional practice, key performance indicators, and the challenges in assessing graduate outcomes.Importance of PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) Graduates. PhD graduates in Educational Management are envisioned as visionary leaders, research-driven innovators, and agents of systemic change in educational institutions. Their advanced academic training equips them with competencies to manage complex educational systems, lead reforms, and address institutional challenges through evidence-based solutions (Caldwell, 2020).

Alaba and Dela Cruz (2022) highlight that PhD graduates contribute to enhancing academic quality, developing a research culture, and formulating policies within higher education institutions. Similarly, Torres and Villanueva (2021) emphasize their mentoring role in promoting professional growth and scholarly engagement in educational communities.

In the Philippine context, graduate education is guided by national frameworks such as the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) CMO No. 15, s. 2019, which sets policies, standards, and guidelines for graduate programs, and the Civil Service

Commission (CSC) qualification standards, which require advanced degrees for leadership and supervisory positions. These reinforce the importance of doctoral studies in ensuring alignment with national human resource and educational development goals.Relevance of Advanced Studies in the Workplace. Advanced studies serve as a pathway for professional and career advancement. Doctoral graduates often translate their academic training into leadership practices, research outputs, and innovative solutions that directly benefit their institutions.

Cruz and Jamir (2023) argue that PhD programs contribute not only to personal academic growth but also to the broader organizational culture by fostering evidence-based decision-making. Doctoral graduates' competencies in research, leadership, and communication align with the workplace requirements identified by the CSC, ensuring their qualifications are both academic and practical. Thus, advanced studies serve as a bridge between theoretical knowledge and workplace application. Measuring Graduate Performance. The performance of PhDEM graduates can be assessed through structured evaluations that assess competencies such as Content Knowledge, Research Capability, Leadership and Management Skills, Innovative Practice, Professional Development Engagement, and Communication Proficiency.

Castillo and Ramos (2020) argue that doctoral performance assessment should be outcome-based and aligned with institutional learning outcomes. Tools such as Likert-scale rubrics, employer surveys, and key performance indicators (KPIs) are widely used for objective evaluation. In educational leadership, Arriola (2019) suggests a multi-dimensional model that includes institutional impact, innovation, and stakeholder feedback.Job Performance Indicators. Performance indicators for doctoral graduates extend beyond academic accomplishments. They include the ability to initiate organizational reforms, mentor colleagues, conduct and apply research, and contribute to strategic planning.

Cruz and Jamir (2023) emphasize that indicators should reflect both technical competencies (e.g., research outputs, leadership initiatives) and behavioral attributes (e.g., teamwork, ethical leadership, communication). The CHED's Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) framework further underscores that graduate performance must be assessed across knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values, aligned with national and institutional goals.Challenges in Assessing Graduate Performance. Evaluating doctoral graduates' performance presents several challenges.

Lopez and Mendez (2021) note that employer feedback may be influenced by bias or limited exposure to the graduate's competencies. Similarly, leadership and innovation are context-dependent and may not be easily quantified in short-term evaluations. Manuel and Flores (2023) highlight the lack of standardized performance tools, leading to inconsistencies across institutions. Employers' and Graduates' Feedback. Employer feedback is a vital metric in assessing the workplace relevance of doctoral programs.

Delos Santos et al. (2022) argue that such feedback validates the alignment of academic preparation with organizational needs. However, Tan and Villareal (2023) caution that feedback must be triangulated with self-assessment and institutional evaluation to avoid bias. Graduate feedback is equally important, as it provides first-hand accounts of how doctoral training influences professional practice. This feedback also contributes to program improvement by identifying gaps between academic preparation and workplace realities.Theoretical Lens: Communities of Practice. Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2020) emphasize the role of communities of practice in shaping knowledge sharing and collaborative learning. PhD graduates actively engage in these communities, where they apply and disseminate expertise, promote organizational learning, and sustain professional growth. This theoretical lens highlights how doctoral education and workplace practice intersect through collaboration and reflective practice.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a concurrent mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess the professional performance of PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates from SUNN, Batch 2021–2023. Data were collected and analyzed simultaneously to validate and enrich findings. The research is anchored on CHED Memorandum Order No. 15, s. 2019, and grounded in national performance standards, particularly the Civil Service Commission's Strategic Performance Management System (SPMS), the Department of Education's Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS. In this design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed simultaneously, allowing the researcher to validate and enrich findings from one method with insights from the other.

Quantitative Phase

The quantitative phase of this study aimed to evaluate the professional performance of SUNN PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates from Batch 2021 to 2023 using structured, measurable data collected from their employers or immediate

supervisors. This phase focused on determining the extent to which the graduates demonstrated the key competencies developed through the PhDEM program.

Respondents to the study

The respondents for the quantitative phase are the 31 employers of the 39 PhDEM graduates. These individuals are selected for their direct professional interaction with graduates and their ability to objectively assess workplace performance.

Research Instrument

A self-made structured questionnaire was developed and utilized as the primary instrument for the quantitative phase of this study. It was designed to assess the professional performance and competency demonstration of PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates from Southern University of Northern Negros (SUNN), Batch 2021–2023. The questionnaire consisted of two major parts: the first measured professional performance across five key dimensions—effectiveness, efficiency, timeliness, quality outputs, and organizational outcomes—while the second focused on the extent to which graduates demonstrated competencies in content knowledge, research capabilities, innovativeness, leadership and management skills, and professional growth and communication. The construction of the instrument was anchored on established standards and frameworks, including the Civil Service Commission's Strategic Performance Management System (SPMS), the Department of Education's Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), and CHED Memorandum Order No. 15, s. 2019, and the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) Level 8. These served as the basis for aligning the indicators with national expectations for doctoral-level professionals. The questionnaire employed a Likert scale to quantify responses and support statistical analysis, particularly in determining the relationship between competency domains and professional performance. Prior to data collection, the instrument underwent expert validation to ensure content clarity and relevance and was pilot-tested to confirm its reliability and refine any ambiguous items.

Validity

The content validity of the research instrument was established using Lawshe's Content Validity Ratio (CVR). This method is a widely accepted quantitative approach for assessing the importance of each item on a test or questionnaire relative to the construct being measured.A panel of five experts—consisting of a 2- Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS), 1- Chief of the School Governance and Operations Division (SGOD), 1- Chief of the Curriculum and Instruction Division (CID), and 1- Senior Education Program Specialist (SEPS) in Research and Planning—was requested to evaluate each item in the questionnaire.

The minimum acceptable CVR value at $\alpha = 0.05$ for five panelists is 0.75 (based on Lawshe's critical values table). Items with CVR values ≥ 0.75 were retained, while those below this threshold were either revised or removed.
Based on the CVR analysis, the majority of items were rated as essential by all four validators, yielding CVR values of 1.00, indicating strong content validity. A few items were refined for clarity based on qualitative feedback, but no items fell below the minimum CVR threshold. The initial validation round yielded an overall CVI of 0.84, while the final version of the questionnaire achieved a CVI of 0.88, indicating high validity. These results confirmed that the instrument was both statistically reliable and content-wise valid, making it appropriate for assessing the performance and competencies of PhDEM graduates based on employer feedback.

Reliability

To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the research instrument, reliability and validity testing were conducted. The questionnaire's reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, a commonly used statistical method for assessing the internal consistency of Likert-type scales. A pilot test was administered to 30 respondents with characteristics similar to those of doctoral graduates from the same institutions, but these respondents were not included in the study. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), yielding a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.828 across 50 items, indicating high internal consistency and reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher obtained permission from SUNN and relevant authorities before distributing the structured questionnaire to 31 employers of 39 PhDEM graduates from the 2021–2023 batches. The survey was administered in person, by email, or via Google Forms, accompanied by an informed consent form to ensure ethical compliance. Follow-up reminders were sent to maximize response rates. Quantitative data were encoded and prepared for statistical analysis, while qualitative responses from open-ended questions and brief interviews were transcribed and thematically organized. This ensured a systematic, ethical, and comprehensive data collection process.

Data Analysis Procedure

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, to determine the performance levels of PhDEM graduates across core competency areas. The instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure internal consistency. When necessary, inferential statistics, such as t-tests or ANOVA, were used to identify significant differences across selected variables. Statistical analysis was conducted using software tools such as SPSS or Excel to ensure accuracy and objectivity in interpreting the results.

Qualitative Phase

The qualitative phase of the study involved collecting in-depth feedback from five employers, five PhD graduates, and five colleagues through open-ended questions and follow-up interviews, employing a triangulated approach. Their responses offered valuable insights into the strengths, weaknesses, and workplace contributions of the PhDEM graduates. A thematic analysis was applied to identify common patterns, which were organized into key categories: demonstrated competencies, areas needing improvement, and suggestions for program enhancement. This qualitative component complemented the quantitative results by providing richer context and actionable recommendations for improving the PhDEM program.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study consisted of a total of fifteen (15) purposively selected individuals who provided qualitative data regarding the professional performance of PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates from SUNN, Batch 2021 to 2023. To ensure data triangulation and a diversity of perspectives, the participants were grouped into three categories: five (5) employers or immediate supervisors, five (5) PhDEM graduates, and five (5) peers or colleagues. The employers were selected based on their direct supervisory roles and capacity to evaluate the graduates' workplace performance. The graduates themselves were included to offer self-assessments and insights into how their doctoral training influenced their professional growth. Meanwhile, the peers provided lateral observations on the graduates' collaboration, communication, and leadership within their respective institutions. The participants represented both the basic and higher education sectors, contributing to a comprehensive and balanced understanding of graduates' impact across varied educational contexts.

Research Instrument

In the qualitative phase, the questionnaire included open-ended questions to gather detailed insights from employers or immediate supervisors of PhDEM graduates. To ensure the validity of the qualitative instrument, content validation was conducted by five experts in educational management and research. A pilot test was also administered to refine question clarity and relevance. Triangulation was used by comparing qualitative insights with quantitative findings, and member checking was employed to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations of responses. An audit trail was maintained throughout the data collection and analysis process to enhance transparency and trustworthiness. These questions focused on the graduates' strengths, areas for improvement, and suggestions for enhancing the PhDEM program. Responses were collected in writing and, where possible, via brief follow-up interviews. This instrument enabled a deeper understanding of graduates' workplace performance and provided valuable context to complement the quantitative findings.

Data Gathering Procedure

For the qualitative phase, data were gathered through open-ended questions in the main questionnaire and brief follow-up interviews with selected employers of SUNN PhDEM graduates. Respondents were informed of the study's purpose and asked to provide informed consent before participating. Their written responses and interview feedback were collected over two weeks and maintained in strict confidence. These qualitative data provided in-depth insights into the graduates' strengths, areas for improvement, and suggestions for enhancing the PhDEM program.

Data Analysis Procedure

For the qualitative phase, responses to open-ended questions and follow-up interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. The researcher organized the data by reviewing all responses, identified recurring ideas, and grouped them into meaningful themes related to the strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations for the PhDEM program. These themes supported the quantitative findings and provided more profound insights into how graduates performed in the workplace from employers' perspectives. This process enhanced the overall interpretation of results by capturing rich, contextual feedback.

Data Trustworthiness

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the qualitative data, the researcher applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for establishing trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To enhance credibility, data were collected from participants who had direct supervisory roles over the PhDEM graduates. Triangulation was employed by comparing open-ended survey responses with follow-up interview data to validate consistency and enrich interpretation. Transferability was addressed by providing thick, detailed descriptions of the research context, participant profiles, and emergent findings, allowing other researchers to assess the applicability of the results in similar settings. To establish dependability, the researcher maintained a transparent documentation process and audit trail, outlining how themes were identified, coded, and interpreted during data analysis. Lastly, confirmability was ensured by minimizing researcher bias through the use of verbatim quotes from participants and engaging in peer debriefing to cross-validate interpretations. These strategies collectively strengthened the trustworthiness of the qualitative findings and ensured that the data accurately reflected participants' perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ethical Consideration

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Prior to data collection, the researcher sought approval from the appropriate research ethics committee or institutional authorities. All potential participants—including employers and supervisors—received a clear explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants. They were asked to sign an informed consent form, indicating their voluntary participation and their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Anonymizing names and institutional affiliations upheld confidentiality and privacy in the reporting of results. All data collected—both quantitative and qualitative—were securely stored and used solely for academic purposes. No identifiable information was disclosed, and access to the raw data was limited to the researcher. These ethical safeguards ensured the integrity of the study and protected participants' rights and dignity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mixed Method

The result indicates that PhDEM graduates from SUNN performed at a very satisfactory level according to employer assessments, with an overall mean score of 3.54. The highest-rated indicator was "Implements school programs or projects successfully" (M-3.95), reflecting the graduates' strong ability to lead and execute institutional initiatives. This was closely followed by "Uses data in crafting and implementing interventions" (M-3.92), suggesting their proficiency in applying evidence-based strategies to address school needs. On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicators were "Mentors or coaches peers or subordinates effectively" (M-3.18), "Drives student or staff improvement results" (M-3.31), and "Integrates research into practice" (M-3.38), all of which fell into the "satisfactory" category. These findings imply that while graduates are effective in management and planning, there is room for growth in mentoring, research utilization, and driving measurable performance improvements. Recent studies support these findings. Delos Reyes and Manalo (2023) emphasized that educational management graduates excel in operational leadership but often require further training in instructional coaching and staff development. Similarly, Santos (2024) found that while doctoral graduates demonstrate strong leadership in implementing school programs, their capacity to apply research-based solutions consistently remains a development area. In a regional study by Lim and Quinto (2022), effective data use and program implementation were common strengths among EdD and PhD graduates. In contrast, research translation and mentoring skills were less evident, suggesting a need to reinforce these competencies in the program. These findings collectively highlight the importance of aligning doctoral training with the practical demands of school leadership to enhance overall professional effectiveness.

The data presents the performance of PhDEM graduates in terms of efficiency, with an overall mean of 3.51, indicating very satisfactory performance. Among the ten indicators, the highest-rated was "Coordinates tasks to avoid duplication" with a mean of 4.00 and a relatively low standard deviation, indicating both high efficiency and consistency in task coordination. This highlights the graduates' strong capacity for organized and collaborative work processes. In contrast, the lowest-rated indicator was "Stays within budget when implementing projects" (M- 3.41), though it still falls within the very satisfactory range. This suggests that while financial management is adequate, it may not be a primary strength compared to other operational areas. These findings are consistent with recent studies. Garcia and Mendoza (2023) noted that doctoral graduates in educational leadership programs typically demonstrate strong time and resource management, especially when leveraging digital tools and structured workflows. Lopez (2024) emphasized the importance of efficiency in school leadership, noting that graduates with PhDs tend to excel at task delegation and the use of technology to enhance performance, though budget compliance remains a challenge. Likewise, Fernandez and Reyes (2022) found that coordination, the use of templates, and task monitoring were notable strengths among educational leaders, findings that align with this study's results. Overall, the findings affirm the effectiveness of PhDEM graduates in managing workloads and systems efficiently, while identifying budgeting as an area for further development in program training. The results reveals that the overall mean timeliness rating for Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates is 3.37, indicating Satisfactory. This indicates that while graduates generally meet expectations

in completing tasks on time, this is a relative area of improvement compared to their effectiveness and efficiency ratings. The highest-rated indicator is "Returns student outputs or feedback promptly" with a mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of .777, classified as Very Satisfactory. This suggests that graduates are highly responsive, providing timely feedback to learners, a crucial aspect of instructional leadership. Similarly, "Conducts activities as scheduled" (M = 3.89) and "Responds to official communications promptly" (M = 3.51) also received Very Satisfactory ratings, indicating strengths in day-to-day scheduling and professional communication. Conversely, the lowest-rated indicator is "Attends meetings and appointments punctually" with a mean of 2.89, indicating Satisfactory performance. This suggests occasional issues with punctuality. Other indicators, such as "Completes implementation of plans on time" (M = 3.05) and "Submits reports on or before deadlines" (M = 3.08), also indicate only satisfactory levels, suggesting that while graduates fulfill their roles, improvements are needed to meet administrative timelines consistently. Recent studies support these findings. Martinez and Cruz (2024) found that time management is a common challenge among educational leaders who juggle multiple responsibilities, often affecting punctuality and timely documentation. Reyes and Abad (2023) observed that while doctoral-level educators excel in instructional delivery, logistical and time-bound tasks, such as meeting deadlines and preparing reports in advance, tend to be less prioritized. Meanwhile, Santos et al. (2022) recommended that graduate leadership programs integrate more training in strategic planning and time management to ensure leaders can balance instructional and administrative duties effectively. In summary, while PhDEM graduates perform well in specific time-sensitive tasks such as feedback and communication, there is room to improve their consistency in punctuality and meeting deadlines—areas essential to optimal leadership performance.

The data presents the performance of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates in terms of quality outputs, with an overall mean of 3.39, indicating Satisfactory performance. This suggests that while graduates are generally able to produce acceptable outputs, there remains potential to enhance the quality and impact of their deliverables. The highest-rated indicator is "Demonstrates clarity in teaching or leadership" with a mean of 3.89 and a standard deviation of .852, falling under Very Satisfactory. This indicates that graduates are perceived as clear and effective communicators in their respective roles. Following closely are "Aligns outputs with MELCs or program goals" (M- 3.82) and "Facilitates focused and productive sessions" (M-3.51), both of which are rated Very Satisfactory. These results highlight the graduates' strengths in aligning their work with curricular goals and in managing sessions that are both organized and outcome-driven. On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicator is "Delivers presentations based on data" with a mean of 2.95, suggesting only a Satisfactory level of performance. This implies a need to improve data-based reporting and evidence-driven communication. Other indicators that received only satisfactory ratings include "Produces well-structured and complete documents" (M- 3.10), "Uses valid tools for assessment or monitoring" (M- 3.15), and "Produces outputs following required formats" (M- 3.20), suggesting room for improvement in technical accuracy and adherence to standards. These findings are in line with recent literature. Lazaro and Delos Reyes (2023) emphasized the importance of strengthening academic writing and documentation skills in doctoral programs, noting that even experienced educators may fall short in meeting technical requirements. Ortega and Pascual (2024) found that while educational leaders exhibit strong leadership presence, they sometimes lack the rigor needed for evidence-based outputs and innovation proposals. Furthermore, Villanueva (2022) recommended integrating more output-based assessments in educational management training to reinforce the value of structure, clarity, and impact in professional work. In conclusion, PhDEM graduates are recognized for their leadership clarity and alignment with program goals. However, efforts should be made to improve document formatting, data-driven presentations, and the technical validity of their outputs. Strengthening these areas will further elevate the quality of their contributions in educational settings.

The data presents the performance ratings of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates based on their contributions to organizational outcomes. The overall mean is 3.42, which corresponds to a Very Satisfactory rating. This suggests that the graduates were generally effective in enhancing school-wide impact and institutional growth. The highest-rated indicator is "Improves school community partnerships," with a mean of 4.00 (SD = .794), indicating that graduates were particularly effective at strengthening collaboration with stakeholders—an essential trait for transformational school leadership. Following closely is "Supports dropout reduction or increased attendance," with a mean of 3.92, indicating its positive role in maintaining student engagement. Additionally, "Leads initiatives that receive recognition" (M-3.56) and "Enhances classroom or school discipline" (M-3.54) were both rated Very Satisfactory, indicating successful leadership in both recognition-worthy projects and maintaining school order. On the other hand, the lowest-rated item was "Contributes to SBM, ISO, or other benchmarks," with a mean of 2.95, placing it in the Satisfactory category. This suggests a relative weakness in engaging with institutionalized performance frameworks, such as School-Based Management (SBM), and quality assurance systems, such as ISO. Similarly, "Builds linkages or secures external support" and "Helps raise academic performance indicators" both received a mean of 3.13, which is categorized as Satisfactory, indicating opportunities to improve external relations and instructional outcomes. These findings echo the results of recent studies. Andaya and Francisco (2023) emphasized that while school heads trained under advanced leadership programs often excel in stakeholder engagement, their technical competencies in benchmarking systems and academic performance indicators need reinforcement. Lopez and Aquino (2022) found that effective community partnerships are among the most visible leadership strengths among Ph.D. graduates, yet the documentation and sustainability of school reforms remain inconsistent. Morales and Santos (2024) recommended that future leadership training should focus on enhancing competencies in evidence-based planning, accountability metrics, and strategic external networking to bridge these performance gaps. In conclusion, PhDEM graduates performed very satisfactorily in promoting community

collaboration and student welfare. However, there is room to improve alignment between leadership practices, institutional benchmarks, and academic progress indicators. Strategic capacity-building in these areas can significantly enhance their holistic impact on organizational outcomes.

The data illustrates the level of content knowledge competency demonstrated by Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates. The overall mean rating is 4.66 with a standard deviation of .395, which falls under the Excellent category. This indicates that the graduates consistently exhibited a high level of mastery in the core domains of educational leadership and management. The highest-rated competency is "Demonstrates mastery of core concepts in educational management" with a mean of 4.85, suggesting that graduates possess a strong foundational understanding essential to their field. Close behind are "Applies theoretical knowledge to solve real-world educational issues" and "Integrates interdisciplinary knowledge to inform decision-making" (both with a mean of 4.74), highlighting the graduates' ability to bridge theory and practice effectively.
Other competencies such as "Understands local, national, and global education trends" (M- 4.72), "Applies data-driven insights to improve teaching and learning" (M = 4.72), and "Shows in-depth understanding of education laws and policies" (M- 4.67) further confirm the graduates' deep and relevant understanding of current and emerging issues in education. Even the lowest-rated item, "Links academic concepts to practical school or organizational settings" with a mean of 4.41, still falls within the Excellent category, indicating consistently strong performance across all content areas. These findings are supported by recent literature. Garcia and Tolentino (2023) emphasized the positive correlation between doctoral-level training and content mastery, particularly in policy application and curriculum innovation. Similarly, Delos Reyes et al. (2022) observed that PhD graduates in educational leadership consistently outperform their peers in demonstrating theoretical and contextual expertise in school-based planning and governance. Bautista and Chan (2024) also confirmed that advanced educational programs that integrate research, data analysis, and leadership frameworks produce graduates with superior subject-matter command and policy literacy. In conclusion, the PhDEM graduates showed excellent competencies in content knowledge, affirming the effectiveness of the doctoral curriculum in cultivating highly competent, theoretically grounded, and practice-oriented school leaders. These competencies are vital for driving evidence-based decisions and sustaining high-impact school reforms.

The data presents the research-related competencies of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates. The overall mean rating is 4.05 with a standard deviation of .199, indicating a Very Satisfactory level of research proficiency. This suggests that graduates have acquired strong research skills that align with institutional and national education needs. Among the ten indicators, the highest-rated competencies are "Guides others (e.g., colleagues, students) in conducting research" and "Aligns research topics with national education priorities", both with a mean of 4.13. This reflects the graduates' leadership in research mentoring and their responsiveness to broader educational agendas. It also suggests their potential contribution to institutional improvement through policy-relevant research. Other indicators, such as "Conducts independent or collaborative research aligned with institutional needs" (M = 4.10), "Publishes or presents research in credible academic forums" (M = 4.08), and "Uses research evidence to support innovations and reforms" (M = 4.08), emphasize the practical impact and dissemination of their scholarly work. These findings affirm that PhDEM graduates are not only consumers of research but also contributors to educational knowledge and practice. Meanwhile, the relatively lower but still Very Satisfactory ratings were seen in "Uses appropriate data analysis techniques and tools" (M- 3.87) and "Designs relevant and methodologically sound research projects" (M- 4.03). While these scores remain high, they suggest areas for potential enrichment through continuous training in advanced statistical techniques and emerging research methodologies. These results echo the findings of Reyes and Domingo (2023), who noted that doctoral graduates in education are increasingly expected to serve as research leaders within their institutions, influencing both policy and practice. Furthermore, Santos et al. (2022) reported that effective doctoral programs are those that not only train scholars in research fundamentals but also develop their ability to translate findings into innovations for teaching, management, and leadership. In summary, the PhDEM graduates demonstrated Very Satisfactory research competencies, with notable strengths in aligning research with institutional and national priorities, mentoring others, and producing actionable outputs. These capabilities are critical in sustaining a research-driven culture in education and enhancing evidence-informed decision-making in schools and educational organizations.

The results reveal the level of innovativeness among Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates, with an overall mean of 3.97 and a very low standard deviation of 0.073, indicating Very Satisfactory performance. The near-uniform ratings suggest a consistent perception among evaluators that the graduates possess strong innovation competencies. Notably, nine out of ten indicators received a perfect mean score of 4.00, covering areas such as introducing new ideas for organizational efficiency, using digital tools, fostering a culture of innovation, and supporting institutional change through innovation leadership. This suggests that PhDEM graduates are highly capable of integrating innovation into educational settings at both strategic and operational levels. Slightly lower but still very satisfactory ratings were observed in "Applies innovative strategies in instruction or administration" and "Develops pilot programs or prototypes for educational improvement", both scoring 3.85. This may indicate opportunities for enhancing creativity in actual program development and pedagogical approaches.
The consistent high ratings across the board align with Del Rosario and Garcia's (2022) findings, which emphasize that innovation leadership is a defining trait of effective educational managers in the 21st century. Furthermore, Villanueva (2023) argued that doctoral programs must produce leaders who can drive school transformation through data-informed experimentation and scalable innovations. In conclusion, the data indicate that PhDEM graduates demonstrate very satisfactory

levels of innovativeness, particularly in fostering an innovation culture, leveraging technology, and leading change. These competencies are crucial for sustaining relevance and responsiveness in today's evolving educational landscape.

The results present the self-reported and/or evaluated leadership and management competencies of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates, with an overall mean of 4.14 and a standard deviation of .399, indicating a Very Satisfactory performance level. This result reflects that the graduates possess well-developed leadership capabilities essential for managing educational institutions. Notably, five indicators were rated Excellent, with mean scores of 4.20 and above. These include effective resource management, constructive conflict resolution, ethical leadership, consistent policy implementation, and stakeholder trust-building. In particular, the highest ratings were given to "Leads with integrity and ethical standards" and "Evaluates programs and projects for continuous improvement" (both with a mean of 4.23), suggesting that the graduates excel at embodying moral leadership and ensuring accountability through data-informed evaluation.

Meanwhile, the competencies related to team building, delegation, and collaboration received relatively lower—but still Very Satisfactory—scores (ranging from 3.92 to 3.95). These areas, while not weak, may benefit from further development, especially considering the increasing emphasis on distributed leadership and inclusive management in contemporary school systems. These findings affirm the conclusions of Reyes and Alcantara (2021), who emphasized the roles of leadership integrity, evaluative practices, and policy implementation in educational success. Similarly, Manlapig (2023) stressed that effective delegation and collaborative leadership are critical in sustaining high-performing school systems.

In summary, PhDEM graduates are highly competent in core leadership and management skills, with particular strength in ethical, strategic, and evaluative leadership, though opportunities remain to sharpen their collaborative and team-oriented leadership approaches further.

The result presents the competencies of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates in the areas of professional growth and communication. The overall mean score was 3.93 with a standard deviation of .189, which falls under the Very Satisfactory category. This indicates that the graduates consistently demonstrate a high level of professional engagement and practical communication skills. All indicators in this domain were rated Very Satisfactory, with the highest mean observed in "Prepares professional reports, proposals, and presentations" (M = 4.03) and the lowest in "Builds positive relationships with internal and external stakeholders" (M = 3.67). These results suggest that while graduates are proficient in written and verbal communication and maintain professionalism across contexts, their relationship-building skills are slightly weaker, a crucial aspect of leadership and community engagement. Graduates also performed well in indicators such as "Demonstrates confidence and clarity in public speaking", "Participates actively in professional development activities", and "Advocates for educational change through professional discourse" (all with M- 4.00), affirming that they are not only open to continuous learning but also capable of influencing and inspiring others through professional dialogue. These findings align with those of Garcia and Ramos (2022), who emphasized that communication competence and sustained professional development are essential traits of effective educational leaders. Furthermore, Soriano (2023) highlighted that school leaders must not only be communicative but also collaborative and relationship-oriented—areas that the data suggest may benefit from further enhancement. In summary, PhDEM graduates demonstrate strong competencies in professional development and communication, with a commitment to continuous learning and clear, practical expression. However, there is room to strengthen interpersonal and stakeholder relations further to maximize leadership effectiveness in diverse educational settings fully.

The data indicates that the correlations between effectiveness and the various competencies of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates are not statistically significant. The r-values are very close to zero, and all p-values are above the 0.05 threshold, suggesting that there is no meaningful linear relationship between perceived effectiveness and the competencies measured—including content knowledge, research capabilities, innovativeness, leadership and management skills, and professional growth and communication. This finding implies that while graduates may exhibit high levels of competence, this competence does not automatically translate into observable or measurable effectiveness in organizational settings. This result is consistent with recent studies. In a study by Gomez and Realosa (2023), it was found that while school leaders rated themselves highly in leadership and academic competencies, institutional constraints, such as a lack of autonomy and rigid policy structures, often hindered their capacity to implement effective change. Similarly, Morales and Intia (2022) highlighted that organizational culture and stakeholder dynamics play a more significant role in determining the effectiveness of school leaders than individual competencies alone. Moreover, a 2024 study by De Jesus and Ventura noted that leadership effectiveness in the Philippine educational context is more strongly influenced by contextual responsiveness, including community engagement and adaptive leadership, than by technical competencies. These findings suggest that institutional and environmental factors may moderate the relationship between competency and actual performance, reinforcing the need for a more holistic approach to leadership development in educational management programs.

The result presents the correlation between the efficiency performance of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates and their competencies. The findings reveal that all relationships are statistically not significant, with p-values exceeding the 0.05 threshold. Although the correlation between efficiency and research capabilities (r=.272) was the highest among the variables, it remained statistically insignificant (p=.095). The remaining variables—content knowledge, innovativeness, leadership and management skills, and professional growth and communication—also yielded weak, non-

significant correlations. This suggests that while graduates may demonstrate strong competencies in these domains, such competencies do not directly translate to increased efficiency in their professional roles.

This observation aligns with the recent study by Castillo and Ramos (2023), which found that systemic inefficiencies in public educational institutions—such as bureaucratic delays, limited resource allocation, and inconsistent support systems—often negate the impact of individual competencies on overall performance outcomes. Similarly, Salazar and Magsino (2022) emphasized that while school administrators possess firm academic and professional profiles, their ability to act efficiently is constrained by institutional bottlenecks and rigid administrative protocols. Furthermore, in the study of Aquino and Belmonte (2024), it was highlighted that managerial efficiency in educational settings is often influenced more by external conditions such as staff morale, stakeholder engagement, and workload distribution than by the individual capabilities of educational leaders. These studies underscore the importance of enhancing organizational systems and support structures to complement and maximize the competencies of educational managers.

The results display the correlation between the timeliness performance of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates and their assessed competencies. The data show that not all correlations are statistically significant, as indicated by p-values greater than 0.05. The highest correlation was observed between timeliness and leadership and management skills (r=.277, p=.088), which, while still not significant, suggests a slight trend worth noting. Similarly, content knowledge (r=.179, p=.227) and research capabilities (r=.210, p=.199) showed weak positive relationships with timeliness. However, innovativeness, professional growth, and communication showed very weak to negligible correlations (r = .087 and r = .005, respectively), indicating no substantial association. These findings align with the study of Navarro and Cruz (2023), which revealed that organizational timelines and deliverables in schools are often more influenced by institutional culture, delegation of responsibilities, and administrative support than by individual professional competencies. Likewise, de la Peña and Morales (2022) found that time-bound performance metrics in educational settings often depend on external factors, such as workload, communication flow, and policy constraints, rather than on personal knowledge or leadership skills. In a more recent study, Lopez and Santiago (2024) emphasized that while educational leaders may be skilled and knowledgeable, delays in project implementation and reporting often stem from system-level inefficiencies and limited logistical support. Together, these related studies highlight that improving timeliness in educational performance may require broader organizational and structural reforms beyond individual capacity-building alone.

The result presents the correlation between the performance of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates in terms of Quality Outputs and their competency variables. The analysis shows that none of the relationships are statistically significant, as all p-values exceed the 0.05 threshold. The highest observed correlation is between research capabilities and quality outputs (r=.272, p=.094), which, while approaching significance, still does not indicate a strong or reliable association. Content knowledge also demonstrated a weak positive correlation (r=.203, p=.214), followed by innovativeness (r=.197, p=.229), suggesting that these areas may have a slight influence on quality output performance, but not to a statistically meaningful degree. Leadership and management skills (r = .046, p = .783) and professional growth and communication (r = .061, p = .713) showed negligible correlations. These results mirror those of Rivera and Salazar (2024), who reported that while educational leaders may demonstrate high competence, the quality of their outputs often depends on contextual enablers such as access to resources, administrative support, and collaborative culture rather than on individual skill alone. Similarly, Manalo et al. (2023) noted that graduate-level performance output quality is often linked to institutional capacity and team synergy rather than to specific competencies in leadership or communication. Torres and De Jesus (2022) further emphasized that although content knowledge and research skills are critical foundations, quality outputs require time, systemic alignment, and opportunities for implementation — factors that may fall outside the control of even the most competent individuals.

In summary, while competencies provide a vital base for producing high-quality outputs, these findings and supporting studies suggest that external institutional factors and operational dynamics play a more decisive role in determining the actual quality of performance outcomes.

The result presents the correlation analysis between the performance of Ph.D. in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates in terms of Organizational Outcomes and their competency variables. The results reveal that not all computed correlations are statistically significant, as indicated by p-values greater than the 0.05 threshold. The highest observed correlation was between content knowledge and organizational outcomes (r=.181, p=.271), followed by professional growth and communication (r=.157, p=.340), and research capabilities (r=.084, p=.612). The weakest correlation was with innovativeness (r = .008, p = .961), suggesting an almost negligible relationship. These findings imply that, despite graduates demonstrating high competence across various domains, their perceived impact on broader organizational outcomes may not be directly attributable to these competencies. This suggests the presence of mediating variables such as organizational culture, administrative structures, or policy implementation effectiveness that may play a more significant role in translating individual competence into organizational success. This result is supported by Garcia and Mendoza (2023), who emphasized that leadership competencies alone are insufficient to drive systemic change unless supported by a conducive organizational climate and participatory governance. In a related study, Castro and Lim (2022) found that school and organizational outcomes are more strongly influenced by institutional readiness, stakeholder engagement, and collective vision rather than individual leader competencies. Similarly, Bautista (2024) concluded that while professional skills are essential, achieving organizational outcomes requires strategic alignment between

individual performance and institutional goals, as well as effective collaboration among departments. In summary, the absence of significant correlations in Table 16 suggests that organizational outcomes are multidimensional and not solely dependent on the competencies of educational leaders, highlighting the importance of systems thinking, collaboration, and context-specific strategies for achieving broader institutional impact.

Qualitative Results

2. Employers' Feedback on the Performance and Competencies of PhDEM Graduates. Employers consistently described PhDEM graduates as high-performing, reliable, and capable leaders in their institutions. Graduates were recognized for their strengths in strategic leadership, research application, and professional communication. They effectively facilitated training programs and project implementation that addressed organizational needs.

One supervisor emphasized: "Our PhDEM graduate has been instrumental in mentoring younger faculty members and guiding us in research-based solutions to address classroom and institutional challenges."
Another remarked on their leadership qualities:
"They provide direction with clarity and ensure that initiatives are aligned with our school's mission and vision."
Despite these strengths, employers noted areas for improvement, particularly in technological adaptability and data-driven decision-making, reflecting the growing demands of digital transformation in education.
2. Contributions of PhDEM Graduates to Organizational Goals and Success
Employers acknowledged that PhDEM graduates contributed significantly to strategic direction, curriculum innovation, and teacher professional development. Graduates spearheaded school-based research, designed innovative instructional programs, and facilitated in-service training, which led to measurable gains in teaching effectiveness and student outcomes.
As one employer shared: "Our graduate introduced a school-based research initiative that not only improved teaching strategies but also became a model for other schools in the division." Another noted their policy influence:
"They actively participate in committees and help craft policies that guide reforms within the institution. Their input is both practical and visionary." Employers also highlighted their role in cultivating a culture of continuous improvement. Graduates fostered peer mentoring, encouraged reflective practice, and promoted professional learning. These initiatives resulted in regional recognition, innovative curriculum models, and enhanced organizational efficiency.
A participant summarized this impact:. "Their leadership has raised the bar in our institution. We are seeing higher student achievement and stronger collaboration among teachers because of the initiatives they introduced."

Overall Results

The overall work performance of PhDEM graduates is generally regarded as exemplary. One supervisor stated, "The PhDEM graduate under my supervision consistently demonstrates a high level of professionalism, commitment, and initiative in fulfilling her tasks." In terms of competencies, graduates were observed to excel most in leadership, research, and communication. A respondent noted, "She has excellent research capabilities and can clearly communicate results during planning sessions and trainings." Despite these strengths, some employers mentioned minor gaps. One shared, "They need to improve in the area of digital innovations. While they are good with traditional approaches, there is still hesitation in fully integrating new technologies." Compared to other employees, PhDEM graduates are perceived as well at bridging theory and practice. "They are more analytical and apply theories they learned to contextualize problems and propose workable solutions," as one supervisor explained. In terms of impact, respondents cited positive effects on the department, such as: "He organized a mentoring program for new teachers and helped raise our performance in the regional evaluation."

Regarding organizational contributions, supervisors affirmed the strategic alignment that PhDEM graduates bring. One employer stated, "Her input helped us recalibrate our SIP to better align with the division's five-year roadmap." Many have led or supported initiatives with measurable outcomes. "He led the school-based research initiative that improved our reading recovery program," reported one respondent. Their influence on policy and leadership was also highlighted: "He served as a key member of our policy review committee and proposed enhancements now adopted division-wide." Their role in fostering continuous improvement was clear: "She encourages action research and CPD among peers, promoting a learning culture here." Success stories were also shared. A respondent noted, "Our school won a regional award because of the inclusive education program she helped design and implement." These responses consistently affirm that PhDEM graduates are seen as assets whose competencies contribute meaningfully to their institutions' success.

CONCLUSION

The Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the PhD in Educational Management (PhDEM) graduates from 2021 to 2023 demonstrated a high level of competence and satisfactory workplace performance as perceived by their immediate supervisors. Their strengths lie in leadership, research application, and professional communication, contributing significantly to organizational goals, innovation, and professional development within their institutions. However, despite these positive

perceptions, the statistical analysis showed no significant correlation between competency domains and performance indicators, indicating that other contextual or organizational factors may influence actual performance outcomes. While the graduates have made meaningful contributions, continuous support in emerging areas such as digital literacy and data-driven leadership is recommended to strengthen their impact in dynamic educational environments further.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, which revealed that PhDEM) graduates generally obtained very satisfactory ratings in core competencies, but also showed some areas of only satisfactory performance, and no significant correlation was found between specific competencies and workplace performance. The following recommendations may be considered:

1.Integration of Local Educational Leadership Realities: The PhDEM program may include modules or case studies that highlight the realities of school leadership in the Philippines, particularly in public and rural school settings where leadership challenges are context-specific. This may enhance graduates' practical readiness to handle diverse educational environments.

2.Enhancement of Mentoring and Coaching Capacities: Since mentoring and coaching competencies received only satisfactory ratings in some areas, capability-building seminars or refresher workshops may be offered to PhDEM graduates. This may strengthen their role as leaders who are expected not only to manage but also to develop colleagues and subordinates.

3.Research Utilization and Policy Translation: While graduates demonstrate strength in research, further emphasis may be given to training on how research can be translated into localized policies and contextual practices. This may encourage doctoral graduates to contribute more directly to evidence-based policymaking in DepEd divisions, SUCs, and LGU-managed schools.

4.Strengthening Digital Literacy and Technological Leadership: Considering employer feedback on limited adaptability to digital transformation, PhDEM programs may enhance components on ICT integration, online/blended learning management, and digital leadership. This may align with DepEd's evolving framework for digital education.

5.Promotion of Community and Stakeholder Engagement: Since educational leadership in the Philippines frequently involves Barangay officials, parents, LGUs, and other stakeholders, training on community mobilization, stakeholder mapping, and partnership building may be incorporated into the PhDEM curriculum. This may strengthen graduates' ability to generate support and resources through the Local School Board (LSB) system.

6.Practicum and Immersion in Local DepEd Contexts: Field-based practicum or immersion experiences in local schools, district, or division offices may be considered to expose students to real managerial and supervisory tasks. This experience may help them bridge theory and authentic practice.

7.Continuous Professional Development through Regional Partnerships: The program may encourage continuous learning through partnerships with DepEd Regional/Division offices, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), and Local Government Units (LGUs). Capacity-building activities such as leadership forums, policy workshops, and alums mentoring may sustain graduates' professional growth beyond program completion.

8.Employer and Alumni Feedback Mechanism: It may be valuable to institutionalize a systematic feedback loop involving employers (school heads, supervisors, superintendents) and graduates themselves. Such feedback may provide evidence on strengths, competency gaps, and emerging needs that can guide program revision.

9.Policy and Curriculum Implications The PhDEM program may consider curriculum revisions focusing on:

A.Strengthening modules on mentoring and coaching, since these were among the lowest-rated competencies.
B.Embedding ICT integration and digital school leadership as core components.
C.Expanding stakeholder engagement and community leadership strategies to align with Philippine governance realities.

Conflict of Interest

The researchers declare that there is no conflict of interest in the conduct of this study entitled "Performance and Employers' Feedback of the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management Graduates." The researchers have no financial, professional, or personal relationships that could have influenced the design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of the findings. The respondents, including employers and supervisors of the graduates, participated voluntarily, and their responses were treated with confidentiality and used solely for academic and research purposes. The study was conducted with objectivity, integrity, and adherence to ethical research standards.

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