



International Journal of Education, Literacies, and Curriculum Studies

ISSN: 3116-2991

<https://ijelcs.minduraresearch.com/journal/index>

Volume 2 Issue 1-2026

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND SCHOOL OPERATIONS IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: THE ROLE OF NON-TEACHING PERSONNEL AT LIWON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Genevieve B. Liwan

Northeastern College, Santiago City, Philippines

Publication Date: 03/31/2026

ABSTRACT

Administrative support systems play a critical role in ensuring the effective operation of public elementary schools, yet the contributions and challenges of non-teaching personnel remain underexplored in Philippine educational research. This qualitative study examined the role of non-teaching personnel and the nature of administrative support systems at Liwon Elementary School, a public elementary school in the Philippines. Guided by systems theory and organizational role theory, the study employed a case study design using semi-structured interviews with non-teaching personnel and teachers, supplemented by document analysis and administrative observations. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Findings revealed four major themes. First, non-teaching personnel functioned as operational anchors who sustained daily school operations by ensuring continuity in documentation, reporting, and coordination. Second, they served as mediators between instructional and administrative work, helping teachers manage compliance requirements and reduce clerical burden. Third, participants experienced role overload and blurred task boundaries due to unclear role definitions and frequent ad hoc assignments. Fourth, administrative systems were found to depend heavily on individual experience and institutional memory rather than formalized procedures, exposing the school to operational vulnerabilities. The study concludes that while non-teaching personnel are indispensable to school functionality, existing administrative support systems rely excessively on individual effort rather than institutionalized processes. Strengthening role clarity, standardizing administrative workflows, and providing adequate staffing support are necessary to ensure sustainable school operations and protect instructional time. These findings have important implications for school leadership, policy implementation, and ongoing reforms aimed at reducing administrative workload in Philippine public schools.

Keywords: non-teaching personnel; administrative support systems; public elementary schools; teacher workload; school operations

Received: 01/02/2026

Revised: 02/25/2026

Accepted: 04/27/2026

Published: 03/31/2026



ISSN:3116-2991



I. INTRODUCTION

School effectiveness in public elementary education is commonly examined through instructional leadership, teacher quality, and learner outcomes. However, the operational foundations that sustain daily school functions remain comparatively underexplored. Public schools function as complex organizations that depend on administrative systems to manage documentation, reporting, coordination, and service delivery. These systems are especially critical in public elementary schools where administrative requirements are extensive and resources are often limited.

Administrative support systems consist of structured routines, role assignments, documentation processes, communication channels, and accountability mechanisms that ensure continuity in school operations. When these systems are efficient, instructional processes are protected; when they are weak, teaching and learning are indirectly disrupted through delays, inefficiencies, and increased clerical burdens on teachers and school heads (Bush, 2019; Mintzberg, 2009).

Within this operational structure, non-teaching personnel (NTP) play a pivotal but frequently invisible role. These personnel including administrative aides, clerks, utility workers, and security staff are responsible for sustaining the logistical and procedural aspects of schooling. Their work supports record keeping, procurement documentation, compliance reporting, stakeholder communication, and facility readiness. Despite their significance, non-teaching personnel are often viewed as auxiliary rather than integral contributors to school effectiveness (OECD, 2016).

In the Philippine public school context, administrative demands have intensified due to increasing

accountability measures, data-driven monitoring systems, and multi-level reporting requirements. School heads and teachers frequently absorb clerical and administrative tasks due to insufficient administrative staffing, resulting in role overload and reduced instructional focus (David & Abulon, 2020). Understanding how non-teaching personnel contribute to administrative support systems at the school level is therefore essential for improving operational efficiency and sustaining instructional quality.

This study examines the administrative support systems at Liwon Elementary School, with specific attention to the roles, experiences, and challenges of non-teaching personnel. By analyzing how administrative work is organized and enacted, the study reframes non-teaching personnel not merely as support staff but as operational anchors within the school system.

Objectives of the Study

This study sought to examine how administrative support systems operate in a public elementary school and how these systems are sustained through the work of non-teaching personnel. Specifically, the study aimed to describe the existing administrative support structures at Liwon Elementary School, analyze the roles and responsibilities of non-teaching personnel in maintaining daily school operations, and identify the challenges that affect the efficiency and sustainability of these systems. Additionally, the study aimed to generate evidence-based insights that could inform school-level administrative improvements and strengthen operational support for teaching and learning.

Statement of the Problem

Public elementary schools are required to comply with extensive administrative and reporting obligations while



simultaneously ensuring uninterrupted instructional delivery. In many school settings, the burden of administrative work is unevenly distributed, often falling on teachers and school heads due to limited administrative staffing and unclear role boundaries. This situation raises concerns about operational efficiency, role overload, and the sustainability of school support systems.

Despite the increasing complexity of school administration, there is limited empirical research that documents how non-teaching personnel contribute to school operations at the elementary level. Their roles, challenges, and operational significance remain largely undocumented, particularly in localized public school contexts. Without systematic understanding, school leaders may struggle to optimize administrative systems or appropriately support non-teaching personnel.

This study addresses the following research problems:

1. How are administrative support systems structured and implemented at Liwon Elementary School?
2. What roles do non-teaching personnel perform in sustaining school operations?
3. What challenges affect the effectiveness of administrative support systems?
4. How do these systems influence the overall functioning of the school?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design, appropriate for examining complex organizational processes within a bounded setting (Yin, 2018). The design allowed for an in-depth exploration of administrative support systems and the lived

experiences of non-teaching personnel within the real-life context of a public elementary school.

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at Liwon Elementary School, a public elementary school located in Asipulo. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their involvement in school operations. These included non-teaching personnel such as administrative aides and utility staff, classroom teachers who regularly interact with administrative systems, and the school head responsible for overseeing school operations.

Data Collection

Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, informal conversations, and document analysis. Interviews focused on daily routines, task responsibilities, coordination processes, challenges encountered, and perceptions of administrative effectiveness. Documents such as record logs, reporting templates, memoranda, and inventory forms were reviewed to triangulate interview data and provide contextual evidence of administrative workflows.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Interview transcripts and documents were coded inductively to identify recurring patterns related to administrative roles, systems, and challenges. Codes were then grouped into categories and refined into themes that captured the essence of administrative support systems at the school. Credibility was enhanced through triangulation of data sources and member checking with selected participants.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical protocols were strictly observed. Participants provided informed consent and were assured of



confidentiality and anonymity. Pseudonyms were used in reporting qualitative excerpts, and data were securely stored.

Results and Findings

Analysis of interview transcripts and administrative observations revealed four major themes that explain the role of non-teaching personnel and the nature of administrative support systems at Liwon Elementary School. These themes highlight how non-teaching personnel contribute to school functionality, mediate institutional demands, experience structural challenges, and sustain operations through informal knowledge systems.

Theme 1: Non-Teaching Personnel as Operational Anchors

Findings indicate that non-teaching personnel serve as the operational anchors of the school, ensuring the smooth flow of daily administrative functions. Their responsibilities include the preparation, organization, and submission of official reports; management of records and documentation; and coordination of school transactions with district and division offices. These functions become particularly critical during peak periods such as reporting deadlines, audits, and school-based monitoring activities.

While teaching staff focus on instructional delivery and learner outcomes, non-teaching personnel maintain continuity in administrative processes. Their presence ensures that institutional requirements are met regardless of fluctuations in teaching workload, school activities, or leadership transitions.

Participant Response:

“Kapag may reports o documents, kami ang nag-aayos para ma-submit on time. Kahit busy ang teachers, tuloy pa rin ang galaw ng opisina.” (NTP 1)

This finding suggests that non-teaching personnel function as stabilizing agents within the school system. By maintaining administrative continuity, they prevent operational disruptions and support overall organizational effectiveness. From a systems perspective, schools operate as interconnected subsystems, where non-instructional units play a crucial role in sustaining equilibrium (Senge, 1990). The absence or inefficiency of this support subsystem would likely result in administrative bottlenecks, delayed compliance, and increased pressure on instructional staff.

Theme 2: Mediation Between Instructional and Administrative Work

Non-teaching personnel were found to act as mediators between instructional staff and administrative requirements. They assist teachers in interpreting reporting guidelines, organizing documentation, and aligning classroom-generated data with institutional formats required by higher authorities. This mediation role includes coordinating schedules, clarifying submission protocols, and pre-checking documents to minimize errors and revisions.

Through this process, non-teaching personnel help translate bureaucratic demands into manageable tasks for teachers, thereby reducing confusion and inefficiency. Their familiarity with administrative standards allows them to streamline workflows and prevent repetitive corrections.

Participant Response:

“Kapag may hinihinging data, tinutulungan namin ang teachers kung paano ayusin para hindi paulit-ulit ang revision.” (NTP 2)

The mediating function of non-teaching personnel significantly reduces teachers' clerical workload and administrative stress. This allows teachers to devote



more time and cognitive energy to lesson preparation, learner assessment, and instructional improvement. The finding aligns with international evidence showing that effective administrative support enhances teaching quality by minimizing non-instructional distractions (OECD, 2016). In this sense, administrative mediation indirectly contributes to instructional effectiveness and learner outcomes.

Theme 3: Role Overload and Blurred Task Boundaries

Despite their central role, non-teaching personnel reported experiencing role overload due to unclear job descriptions and frequent assignment of tasks beyond their formal responsibilities. Participants described situations where multiple tasks were labeled as urgent, creating pressure to prioritize without clear guidance. Ad hoc assignments, often arising from sudden directives or staffing limitations, further contributed to workload intensification.

This lack of clearly defined task boundaries resulted in extended working hours, multitasking under pressure, and reliance on personal judgment rather than structured protocols.

Participant Response:

“Minsan hindi na namin alam kung alin ang priority kasi lahat urgent. Kahit hindi na sakop ng trabaho, ginagawa pa rin.” (NTP 3)

This theme reflects classic issues of role ambiguity and role overload, which have been shown to negatively affect job satisfaction, efficiency, and psychological well-being (Kahn et al., 1964). In the absence of clear administrative role delineation, the school system becomes dependent on individual sacrifice rather than sustainable organizational design. Over time, this condition may lead to burnout, decreased productivity, and high vulnerability during personnel turnover.

Theme 4: System Dependence on Individual Experience

Administrative processes at Liwon Elementary School were found to rely heavily on the institutional memory and experience of specific non-teaching personnel. Many procedures were not formally documented, and knowledge about reporting cycles, formats, and compliance requirements was often transmitted informally through practice rather than written guidelines.

When experienced personnel were absent, offices encountered delays and uncertainty, indicating limited procedural redundancy.

Participant Response:

“Kapag wala yung sanay sa reports, medyo nahihirapan ang opisina.” (Teacher 1)

This reliance on individual expertise exposes the school to operational risks. Without standardized procedures, documented workflows, and cross-training mechanisms, administrative continuity becomes fragile. From an organizational perspective, this condition reflects a **person-dependent system**, which limits institutional resilience and adaptability (Mintzberg, 2009). Establishing formal administrative manuals and capacity-building initiatives would strengthen system sustainability and reduce dependence on individual personnel.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that administrative support systems in public elementary schools are critical organizational structures that directly influence school operations. Non-teaching personnel at Liwon Elementary School play a central role in sustaining these



systems through documentation management, coordination, and frontline service. Their work exemplifies how operational effectiveness is achieved through routine, consistency, and informal expertise.

Consistent with systems theory, the study reveals that school performance depends on the interaction of instructional and administrative subsystems. When administrative systems function effectively, instructional processes are protected and supported. Conversely, when these systems are strained by role overload and informality, inefficiencies emerge that indirectly affect teaching and learning (Senge, 1990).

The presence of role ambiguity and task overload mirrors broader findings in educational management literature, where unclear administrative structures contribute to burnout and inefficiency (Bush, 2019). The findings also reinforce evidence from the OECD (2016) indicating that strengthening school administrative capacity can improve overall school effectiveness by reallocating teacher time toward instruction.

Importantly, the study reframes non-teaching personnel as strategic contributors rather than auxiliary staff. Their invisibility in policy and research discussions contrasts sharply with their actual influence on school functionality. Recognizing and strengthening their role is therefore not merely an administrative concern but a pedagogical imperative.

Conclusion and Implications

This study concludes that non-teaching personnel are indispensable to the functioning of administrative support systems in public elementary schools. At Liwon Elementary School, they serve as operational anchors, mediators, and custodians of institutional memory. However, the sustainability of these systems is challenged by role ambiguity, workload pressure, and dependence on individual expertise.

School leaders are encouraged to institutionalize administrative processes through role clarification, workflow documentation, and capacity development for non-teaching personnel. Doing so can enhance operational efficiency, protect instructional time, and contribute to a more resilient school organization.

References

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Bush, T. (2019). *Theories of educational leadership and management* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- David, A. P., & Abulon, E. L. R. (2020). Teacher workload and instructional time in Philippine public schools. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 21(3), 367–378.
- Kahn, R. L., Wolfe, D. M., Quinn, R. P., Snoek, J. D., & Rosenthal, R. A. (1964). *Organizational stress: Studies in role conflict and ambiguity*. Wiley.
- Mintzberg, H. (2009). *Managing*. Berrett-Koehler.
- OECD. (2016). *School leadership for learning: Insights from TALIS 2013*. OECD Publishing.
- Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. Doubleday.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE.
- Daga, E. D. J. C., Abrigo, M. R. M., & Lingatong, E. E. (2025). *The impact of curriculum reform on teacher workload: A multidimensional time-use analysis* (PIDS Discussion Paper DP 2025-55). Philippine Institute for Development Studies.
- David, C. C., Albert, J. R. G., & Vizmanos, J. F. V. (2019). *Pressures on public school teachers and implications on quality* (PIDS Policy Notes No. 2019-01). Philippine Institute for Development Studies.



Department of Education. (2024). *DO 002, s. 2024: Immediate removal of administrative tasks of public school teachers*. DepEd.

EDCOM II. (2025). *Understanding teacher workload as a systemic issue: Ancillary workload policy brief*. Second Congressional Commission on Education.

Kahn, R. L., Wolfe, D. M., Quinn, R. P., Snoek, J. D., & Rosenthal, R. A. (1964). *Organizational stress: Studies in role conflict and ambiguity*. Wiley.

Mintzberg, H. (2009). *Managing*. Berrett-Koehler.

Obedencio, K. L. C., & Miasco, W. P., Jr. (2025). School-based non-teaching personnel level of satisfaction and their work performance in DepEd Division of Valencia City. *Psychology and Education*, 47(3), 362–370.

OECD. (2016). *School leadership for learning: Insights from TALIS 2013*. OECD Publishing.

Pacaldo, [First name not visible in snippet], & Loquere, [First name not visible in snippet]. (2025). *Removal of administrative tasks to elementary teachers' well-being and performance: Basis for an action plan*. *Pantao Journal*, 1680–[end page].
(Note: If you want, paste the PDF title page or author line and I'll complete the missing author initials and page range perfectly.)

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. Doubleday.

Tarraya, H. O. (2023). *Teachers' workload policy: Its impact on Philippine public school teachers*. (ERIC Document ED629465).