



Peer-Review Report Form

Manuscript Title:	Beyond Compliance: Managerial Discretion and the Implementation Gap in Decentralized Education
Type of Article:	Original Article

FIRST ROUND

Editor

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The reviewers acknowledge the significance of your manuscript and recommend several revisions to further improve its clarity, coherence, organization, and overall scholarly quality. In addition, you are advised to thoroughly review and validate all references included in the manuscript. Please ensure that all cited sources are accurate, accessible, and retrievable through Google Scholar to uphold the credibility and reliability of the study. Additionally, make sure to include the DOI or website link for every reference to facilitate verification and accessibility of sources. Furthermore, only sources that are cited within the manuscript should appear in the References section, and all entries listed in the References section must also be cited in the text. For example, if 20 unique sources are cited in the manuscript, then only those 20 sources should be included in the References section. Please note that repeated citations of the same source within the text are counted as a single reference entry; therefore, the total number of references may be lower than the total number of in-text citations.

Reviewer 1

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The manuscript has a strong theoretical ambition and the topic is important, particularly the attempt to explain why formal policy compliance may not translate into meaningful school-level outcomes. However, after examining the manuscript as a whole, I have a serious concern regarding whether the empirical evidence actually tests the central argument being advanced.

<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
Managerial Effectiveness is explicitly defined as the composite mean of the same eight NCBS-SH competency domains, yet Management Competencies is subsequently entered as a predictor of Managerial Effectiveness. As presently operationalized, these do not appear to be genuinely independent constructs; therefore, the finding that management competencies strongly predict managerial effectiveness is partly built into the measurement itself rather than demonstrating a substantive empirical relationship. This problem extends further to H2 and the larger argument of the paper. Table 5 correlates the competency domains with Student Achievement Orientation, but Student Achievement Orientation is itself one of the eight perceived competency domains, not an actual measure of student achievement. Yet the discussion interprets these relationships as evidence regarding localized school performance



outcomes and even states that adaptive behaviors perform independently of compliance-oriented practices. I do not see an independent empirical measure of school performance, institutional alignment, policy compliance, or discretionary behavior capable of supporting these claims. The manuscript itself later acknowledges that Managerial Effectiveness represents perceived rather than objective performance, but this understates the deeper problem because the outcome is also constructed from the competency measures being used to explain it.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The manuscript offers an insightful exploration into the gap between educational policy and actual school outcomes. I find the premise deeply relevant. You synthesize Instructional Leadership Theory with Street Level Bureaucracy to explain how managerial behavior influences local institutional performance.
<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
While conceptually good, the title lacks geographical and methodological specificity. Your abstract successfully outlines the theoretical framework, yet it omits the specific statistical methodologies deployed. You mention a quantitative descriptive correlational design, but you omit mention of analysis of variance and multiple regression. In your introduction, your transition between your two core theories feels sudden. You must establish a smoother conceptual bridge earlier to show exactly why these two distinct theories are necessary together.
Literature Review and Methodology This section thoroughly explores policy disconnects and perceptual differences. A structural issue arises when you embed the hypothesis sections directly within the literature review. Academic convention dictates that hypothesis sections should seamlessly lead into the methodology section. Additionally, your conceptual framework diagram introduces Leadership Management Integration as a bridge mechanism. Still, you explicitly concede that you did not formally model this mechanism. You must resolve this theoretical mismatch. Methodologically, you utilized a proportionate stratified random sample across Samar Island. Conversely, your data collection procedure combined face to face paper surveys with online forms. You attribute minor data discrepancies to this mixed mode approach. You must apply more critical scrutiny to how this mixed administration might introduce method variance.
Statistical Results and Discussion The tables clearly present your statistical results. You correctly note that the domain for interpersonal interaction received the highest score. A severe analytical limitation appears in your demographic profile for administrators. A massive 61.4 percent of the sample falls into an



undefined 'Others' category. This completely obscures the specific roles of the majority of your respondents. Furthermore, your regression analysis collapses all competencies into a single predictor. You miss a critical opportunity to identify which specific behavior domain drives managerial success the most. In your discussion, you introduce a concept termed the Collaborative Chasm. While intellectually sound, this concept appears suddenly without prior theoretical foundation.

Conclusion and References

Your conclusion effectively reiterates the core argument that formal compliance does not guarantee experiential alignment at the learner level. To strengthen this final section, tether your recommendations back directly to the dual theoretical framework you championed. Your reference list is extensive and incorporates highly recent sources up to the year 2026. Be cautious of a potential over reliance on localized journals.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

SECOND ROUND

<u>Decision</u>	<u>Editor</u>	<u>Reviewer 1</u>	<u>Reviewer 2</u>
Accept the manuscript for publication.	/	/	/
Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.			
Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.			