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CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY ADMINISTRATIVE AIDES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Administrative aides are crucial for the smooth functioning of public schools, as they handle key administrative and clerical tasks. This study identified the difficulties faced by administrative aides in managing public schools within Bayombong District I, Nueva Vizcaya, during the 2025–2026 academic year. It specifically outlined the respondents' demographics, evaluated the challenges related to skills and training adequacy, resource and facility availability, clarity of roles and job expectations, administrative support and supervision, and work stress and time management. Additionally, it investigated whether there were notable differences in the challenges faced when respondents were categorized based on their demographic variables. The study utilized a descriptive-comparative quantitative research approach, selecting 30 administrative aides through purposive sampling. Data collection was conducted using a validated questionnaire developed by the researcher, and analysis was performed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA. The results indicated that most respondents were female, married, college-educated, aged between 40 and 49, and had 6 to 10 years of experience. Among the various dimensions, work stress and time management were the most challenging, while skills and training adequacy, along with role clarity and job expectations, posed moderate challenges. Resource and facility availability, as well as administrative support and supervision, were also noted as challenges. Significant differences were observed based on educational attainment and years of service, whereas age, gender, and marital status did not show significant differences. The study suggests enhancing professional development programs, improving resource distribution, boosting supervisory support, and implementing effective workload management strategies to enhance the performance and well-being of administrative aides in public schools.

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Introduction

Administrative aides, or non-teaching staff, are essential for keeping public schools running smoothly. They handle all the essential administrative tasks that ensure that everything runs smoothly (Oliveira & Peixoto, 2021). Recently, there have been some major changes in how schools are managed. Policies now focus on giving schools more control over their own administration, which has made things a bit more complicated (Oliveira & Peixoto, 2021). According to DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024, the idea is to shift administrative duties from teachers to non-teaching staff. This way, teachers can concentrate more on teaching, while administrative aides take on more management roles (Oliveira & Peixoto, 2021). But these changes have also led to more admin work and challenges like not having enough staff, lack of specialized training for admin roles, and ongoing financial and resource issues (Katangolo-Nakashwa & Mfidi, 2025; Oliveira & Peixoto, 2021). These are bigger problems in school administration that need to be sorted out to ensure that public schools run effectively and efficiently (Katangolo-Nakashwa & Mfidi, 2025; Oliveira & Peixoto, 2021).

Recent studies have investigated the challenges faced by administrative aides and non-teaching staff in schools, and it is clear that they face some tough issues. Bucoy and Punzalan (2025) highlighted problems such as limited administrative skills, lack of formal training, and unclear roles, all of which lead to more stress and burnout. Gueriba and Morales (2025) also mentioned how manual administrative tasks and heavy workloads make job dissatisfaction worse. Maca (2023) found that a lack of administrative support and insufficient ICT integration are major hurdles for these aides. Sadewo and Shinta (2025) supported these findings, showing that these challenges hurt job performance and how efficiently schools run. In the Philippines, administrative aides in public schools particularly feel these challenges, which affect how well they perform their jobs and how satisfied they are with their work. The combination of unclear roles and insufficient support from institutions directly impacts how smoothly schools operate. To tackle these issues, it is important to understand how these aides cope, as this can help shape evidence-based recommendations for policy changes, targeted training programs, and better resource allocation that fit the needs of public school management (Almaghrabi et al., 2024; Baes et al., 2025). The aim is to boost the effectiveness of administrative aides, which in turn should lead to better school administration and maintain the quality of education.

The research gaps identified highlight a predominant focus on non-teaching personnel, with administrative aides receiving limited specific attention. Existing studies tend to emphasize higher-level administrative staff, overlooking the unique challenges faced by administrative assistants. There is a scarcity of empirical research exploring their daily experiences and how these challenges impact operational efficiency, employee well-being, and service delivery effectiveness. Additionally, few studies have considered administrative aides within the framework of recent DepEd reforms, especially DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024. This underscores the need for localized evidence to guide policies, professional development, and support systems tailored to administrative aides.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the challenges encountered by administrative aides in public school management. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions.

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. Age;
 - b. Sex;
 - c. Civil status;
 - d. Highest educational attainment; and
 - e. Length of service?
2. What are the challenges encountered by administrative aides in public school management in terms of:
 - a. Skills and training adequacy;
 - b. Availability of resources and facilities;
 - c. Role clarity and job expectations;
 - d. Administrative support and supervision; and
 - e. Work stress and time management?
3. Is there a significant difference in the challenges encountered by administrative aides when grouped according to their profile variables in terms of:
 - a. Age;
 - b. Sex;
 - c. Civil status;
 - d. Highest educational attainment; and
 - e. Length of service?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-comparative quantitative research design to examine the challenges encountered by administrative aides in public-school management. The descriptive component was used to

determine the respondents' profile and assess the extent of the challenges encountered in terms of skills and training adequacy, availability of resources and facilities, role clarity and job expectations, administrative support and supervision, and work-related stress and time management. The comparative component determined whether significant differences existed in the perceived challenges when respondents were grouped according to selected profile variables, namely, age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service. This design was appropriate because it enabled systematic collection, analysis, and comparison of quantitative data without manipulating the study variables.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public schools in Bayombong District I, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya, during the School Year 2025–2026. The district was selected because it employs administrative aides who perform clerical, financial, records management, and administrative support functions essential to effective school management. The locale provided an appropriate setting for examining the workplace challenges experienced by administrative aides in carrying out their daily responsibilities.

Research Participants

The respondents of the study consisted of 30 administrative aides assigned to public schools in the Bayombong District I. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that only personnel directly involved in school administrative functions participated in this study. To be included, respondents had to be officially designated as administrative aides, actively employed during the study, and willing to participate voluntarily. Their direct involvement in school administration enables them to provide reliable information regarding the challenges encountered in public school management.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a researcher-developed structured questionnaire based on an extensive review of related literature and previous empirical studies on educational administration and non-teaching personnel. The instrument consisted of two sections. The first section collected the respondents' demographic profile, including age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service. The second section measured the challenges encountered by administrative aides across five dimensions: skills and training adequacy, availability of resources and facilities, role clarity and job expectations, administrative support and supervision,

and work stress and time management, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument underwent expert validation to establish content validity and was pilot-tested to determine reliability using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable for the final administration.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured approval from the Graduate School, Schools Division Superintendent, and the respective school heads of the participating schools. After obtaining the necessary permissions, informed consent was obtained from all respondents before the questionnaires were administered. The purpose of the study, confidentiality of responses, voluntary participation, and the participants' right to withdraw at any stage were clearly explained. Completed questionnaires were immediately retrieved, checked for completeness, coded, and encoded for statistical analysis.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe respondents' demographic profiles. The weighted mean and standard deviation were computed to determine the extent of the challenges encountered by administrative aides across the five dimensions. To determine whether significant differences existed in the perceived challenges when respondents were grouped according to their profile variables, an independent samples *t*-test was employed for variables with two categories (sex), while one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for variables with three or more categories (age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service). All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance using the appropriate statistical software.

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to the established ethical principles of educational research. Approval was obtained from the appropriate institutional and school authorities before data collection began. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from each respondent. Participants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that all information gathered would be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic and research purposes only. The collected data were securely stored, reported only in aggregate form, and handled in accordance with the provisions of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173) and the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence,

and justice.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	20–29	6	20.0
	30–39	8	26.7
	40–49	10	33.3
	50 and above	6	20.0
Sex	Male	9	30.0
	Female	21	70.0
Civil Status	Single	10	33.3
	Married	18	60.0
	Widowed/Separated	2	6.7
Highest Educational Attainment	High School Graduate	4	13.3
	Vocational/ALS Graduate	3	10.0
	College Undergraduate	9	30.0
	College Graduate	13	43.3
	Others	1	3.4
Length of Service	Less than 1 year	3	10.0
	1–5 years	8	26.7
	6–10 years	9	30.0
	11–15 years	6	20.0
	More than 15 years	4	13.3

Table 1 presents the demographic profiles of the 30 administrative aides in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service. The findings show that most respondents were 40–49 years old (33.3%), female (70.0%), married (60.0%), college graduates (43.3%), and had 6–10 years of service (30.0%). These results indicate that the

respondents are generally experienced administrative personnel with sufficient educational qualifications and years of service to effectively perform school management. The predominance of female and married respondents also reflects the typical composition of non-teaching staff in public schools. Furthermore, the varied distribution across age groups and years of service provides a diverse range of experiences and perspectives, contributing to a more comprehensive assessment of the challenges encountered by administrative aides in public school management.

Table 2. Challenges Encountered by Administrative Aides in Terms of Skills and Training Adequacy

Indicator	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Adequate training received	3.18	0.82	Neutral
Confidence in using digital tools	3.47	0.76	Agree
Orientation and guidance provided	3.60	0.70	Agree
Overall Mean	3.42	0.76	Moderately Challenged

Nursing interns and trainees across various fields face multiple challenges related to skills acquisition and training adequacy. For nursing interns preparing for medical technical skills competitions, obstacles include balancing heavy training workloads with recovery, integrating knowledge effectively, inconsistent training standards, team cohesion issues, and emotional and motivational difficulties. Their coping strategies emphasize structured training schedules, innovative methods, and psychological support to enhance competence and resilience (Luo et al., 2025). Similarly, teachers in bilingual education benefit from interactive and locally relevant online training, but often struggle with limited infrastructure and low digital literacy, which hinders competency development (Sani et al., 2025). Moreover, continuing professional development in specialized fields such as architecture and trauma surgery highlights barriers such as time constraints, resource limitations, institutional support gaps, and the need for interdisciplinary collaboration to maintain and enhance skills (Ahmad et al., 2025; Gaarder et al., 2025). Vocational education trends stress the importance of cognitive and communication skills alongside technical abilities to meet evolving labor market demands (Vasilev, 2025). Graduates and

students report a disconnect between educational curricula and workplace expectations, with insufficient explicit teaching and practical application of soft skills, underscoring the need for integrated learning experiences and stronger academia-industry connections (Otermans et al., 2025). Together, these insights reveal that overcoming training challenges requires structured, well-resourced, and context-sensitive programs that balance technical, cognitive, and emotional skills development for enhanced professional competence.

Table 3. Challenges Encountered by Administrative Aides in Terms of Availability of Resources and Facilities

Indicator	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Adequacy of office equipment	3.83	0.68	Agree
Availability of materials	3.77	0.65	Agree
Overall Mean	3.80	0.67	Challenged

The data in Table 3 indicate that administrative aides face challenges related to the availability of resources and facilities, with relatively high mean scores for the adequacy of office equipment (3.83) and availability of materials (3.77), both interpreted as "Agree." The overall mean of 3.80 suggests that resource adequacy remains a notable challenge for these aides. This aligns with broader evidence from healthcare and other resource-constrained settings, where the availability and adequacy of equipment and materials significantly impact work effectiveness and satisfaction. For example, in low-resource healthcare environments, shortages of essential equipment and supplies lead to compromised care quality and increased worker strain (Alshawwaf et al., 2025). Similarly, neonatal wards in resource-limited contexts experience persistent barriers to infection control due to inadequate supplies, despite gains made through targeted interventions (Maina et al., 2025). The importance of resource availability is also highlighted in contexts such as emergency airway management in low-resource settings, where limited materials and infrastructure delay interventions and elevate complication risks (Olatunji et al., 2024). Moreover, systematic assessment tools emphasize that perceived resource adequacy critically influences staff well-being, workload, and care quality, underscoring the need for reliable provision of material support (Cerela-Boltunova et al., 2025).

Table 4. Challenges Encountered by Administrative

Aides in Terms of Role Clarity and Job Expectations

Indicator	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Responsibilities clearly defined	3.53	0.72	Agree
Instructions clearly communicated	3.67	0.66	Agree
Conflicting tasks minimized	3.30	0.80	Neutral
Overall Mean	3.50	0.73	Moderately Challenged

Legend: 4.21–5.00 = Highly Challenged; 3.41–4.20 = challenged; 2.61–3.40 = Moderately Challenged; 1.81–2.60 = Slightly Challenged; 1.00–1.80 = Not Challenged.

The data in Table 4 reveal that administrative aides generally agree that their responsibilities are clearly defined (mean = 3.53) and that instructions are clearly communicated (mean = 3.67). However, the neutral rating for the minimization of conflicting tasks (mean 3.30) suggests ambiguity or overlap in task delegation. The overall mean of 3.50 indicates that aides face moderate challenges concerning role clarity and job expectations. Role clarity is a critical factor influencing employee job satisfaction and performance, as extensively documented in the organizational research literature. For instance, clear job roles and well-communicated instructions have been shown to buffer the negative effects of workplace stressors, including technological challenges, by improving job satisfaction and motivation (Alshammery & Hilmi, 2024; Asamani et al., 2025). Conversely, role ambiguity and conflicting tasks contribute to role pressure and job dissatisfaction, as highlighted among hospital administrators who face role gaps and overloads that undermine well-being and organizational effectiveness (Xia et al., 2024). Furthermore, the interplay between role clarity, resource availability, and motivation enhances employee performance and organizational outcomes (Asamani et al., 2025). Research also emphasizes that minimizing role conflicts and clarifying expectations can reduce workplace stress and alienation, thereby fostering job satisfaction (Mohamed et al., 2025).

Table 5. Challenges Encountered by Administrative Aides in Terms of Administrative Support and Supervision

Indicator	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Support from school heads	3.73	0.64	Agree
Support from colleagues	3.80	0.59	Agree
Overall Mean	3.77	0.62	Challenged

Table 5 shows that administrative aides generally perceived administrative support and supervision as a challenge, with an overall mean of 3.77, interpreted as challenged. Among the indicators, support from colleagues obtained the highest mean (3.80), followed by support from school heads (3.73), both verbally interpreted as Agree. These findings suggest that while respondents acknowledge receiving assistance from both supervisors and coworkers, they still experience challenges related to the adequacy and consistency of administrative support. Effective supervision and collaborative working relationships are essential for improving employee performance, reducing workplace stress, and promoting organizational effectiveness. Supportive leadership and positive collegial relationships enable employees to perform their responsibilities more efficiently and confidently, particularly in demanding work environments such as public schools (Alshammary & Hilmi, 2025; Alshammary & Hilmi, 2024).

Table 6. Challenges Encountered by Administrative Aides in Terms of Work Stress and Time Management

Indicator	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Work overload experienced	4.07	0.63	Agree
Difficulty meeting deadlines	3.93	0.68	Agree
Stress due to workload	4.03	0.65	Agree
Overall Mean	4.01	0.65	Highly Challenged

Table 6 reveals that administrative aides were highly challenged in terms of work stress and time management, with an overall mean score of 4.01. The respondents agreed that they experienced work overload ($M = 4.07$), stress because of workload ($M = 4.03$), and difficulty in meeting deadlines ($M = 3.93$). These findings indicate that administrative aides face considerable pressure from multiple responsibilities

and limited time to accomplish their tasks, which may negatively affect their productivity and their well-being. Similar studies have shown that excessive workload, time constraints, and role demands contribute to occupational stress and reduce employees' job satisfaction and performance. Organizations can mitigate these challenges by implementing effective workload management, providing adequate staffing, and offering stress management and professional support programs to improve employee well-being and organizational productivity (Baes et al., 2025; Mohamed et al., 2025).

Table 7. Significant Differences in the Challenges Encountered by Administrative Aides According to Their Profile Variables

Profile Variable	Statistical Test	Computed Value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	ANOVA	2.21	0.104	Accept H_0	Not Significant
Sex	Independent Samples t -test	1.28	0.210	Accept H_0	Not Significant
Civil Status	ANOVA	1.75	0.182	Accept H_0	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	ANOVA	3.05	0.048	Reject H_0	Significant
Length of Service	ANOVA	2.87	0.049	Reject H_0	Significant

Level of Significance: $\alpha = 0.05$ Decision Rule: Reject the null hypothesis (H_0) if $p \leq 0.05$; otherwise, accept the null hypothesis.

The analysis of Table 7 indicates that among the profile variables of administrative aides, educational attainment and length of service have statistically significant differences in the challenges they encounter, while age, sex, and civil status do not show significant effects. Specifically, for educational attainment, the ANOVA test yielded a computed value of 3.05 with a p-value of 0.048, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and signifying a meaningful

difference in challenges based on educational levels. This finding aligns with broader research emphasizing the role of educational qualifications in influencing job-related experiences and competencies. For example, studies show that higher educational attainment is associated with greater knowledge, skills, and professional readiness, which can affect how workplace challenges are perceived and managed (Sabanal et al., 2025; Sun & Liu, 2023). Moreover, educational level often correlates with access to training and capacity building, impacting the adequacy of preparation to face job demands (Stoffberg et al., 2023). Length of service also showed a significant effect (ANOVA computed value 2.87, $p = 0.049$), indicating that experience influences the nature or perception of challenges encountered. This resonates with literature suggesting that tenure might affect workers' adaptation, role clarity, and coping mechanisms to workplace difficulties (Sabanal et al., 2025). In contrast, nonsignificant findings for age, sex, and civil status suggest that these demographic factors are less determinative of challenge differences in this context, which is consistent with some educational workforce studies where these variables show weaker relationships with job readiness or challenge perception (Sabanal et al., 2025).

Conclusion

The research determined that administrative aides in public schools face diverse challenges in fulfilling their management responsibilities. The participants were mainly middle-aged, female, married, college-educated, and had extensive service experience, suggesting a workforce with considerable expertise in the field. Among the various aspects examined, work stress and time management were identified as the most significant challenges, while the adequacy of skills and training, role clarity, and job expectations posed moderate difficulties. Issues concerning the availability of resources and facilities, as well as administrative support and supervision were also apparent. Additionally, the study revealed that educational level and years of service had a notable impact on the challenges faced by administrative aides, whereas age, sex, and marital status did not. In summary, the results highlight the importance of improving capacity-building programs, ensuring sufficient workplace resources, providing supportive supervision, and managing workloads effectively to enhance the performance and well-being of administrative aides in public school management.

Recommendation

Drawing from the results, the study advises the

Department of Education and school leaders to create thorough professional development initiatives that emphasize administrative skills, digital record-keeping, and time management for administrative aides. Schools should ensure the availability of sufficient office supplies, materials, and technological tools to enhance administrative productivity. School leaders are urged to bolster supervisory support by offering consistent feedback, mentorship, and open dialogue to tackle workplace issues. Additionally, it is important to reassess workload distribution to alleviate excessive work pressures and decrease stress among administrative aides. Special focus should be placed on newly recruited staff and those with lower educational qualifications through mentoring and specialized training programs. Lastly, future researchers might consider replicating the study in different school districts with larger sample sizes and incorporating additional organizational factors, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee resilience, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by administrative aides in public school management.

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