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Leadership Skills in Administrative Governance: Evidence from Lao PDR National Assembly

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ABSTRACT

This study examines leadership skills across administrative levels within the National Assembly of Lao PDR through empirical validation of a three-dimensional competency framework. Employing quantitative methodology, the research surveyed 240 administrative leaders at committee, department, and division levels using stratified sampling to ensure proportional representation. Leadership skills were measured across conceptual, human, and technical dimensions using validated instruments with five-point Likert scales. Exploratory Factor Analysis confirmed strong internal consistency, with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of 0.865 and significant Bartlett's test results indicating excellent sampling adequacy. Factor extraction explained 67.458% of total variance, validating three distinct categories: human skills (22.285% variance) encompassing motivation, ethics, adaptability, and interpersonal capabilities; technical skills (17.692% variance) including ICT proficiency, administrative competence, and specialized expertise; and conceptual skills (27.481% variance) comprising vision, political acumen, problem-solving, and decision-making. High communalities for vision (0.987), political skills (0.950), and motivation (0.835) underscore their critical importance for administrative effectiveness. Results demonstrate that leadership competencies function as integrated, interdependent dimensions rather than isolated abilities. The validated framework provides actionable guidance for targeted capacity-building programs, succession planning strategies, and institutional strengthening initiatives aligned with regional administrative development objectives. This research offers the first comprehensive empirical validation of skills-based leadership within Southeast Asian administrative contexts, contributing theoretical advancement while addressing practical governance challenges in developing democracies.

Keywords: *Administrative Governance, Conceptual Skills, Human Skills, Leadership Development, Technical Skills*

INTRODUCTION

In regional and international contexts, the National Assembly of Laos occupies a significant position within the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), where leadership capacity remains essential for guiding discussions and shaping collective decisions (AIPA Secretariat, 2023). The possession of well-developed leadership skills proves crucial for leaders across all organizational levels (Liden et al., 2025). Contemporary research demonstrates that leadership skills function interdependently rather than in isolation, making it impractical to claim that these competencies operate independently of one another (Fabisch et al., 2024; Khath & Tan, 2024). Leadership skills hold particular significance for civil servants and parliamentarians, as their consistent application enhances organizational effectiveness while sustaining competency levels through regular practice (Som et al., 2024; Wujarso et al., 2025). Substantial value exists in examining each skill individually while simultaneously cultivating them in an integrated manner (Katz, 2009). From a theoretical perspective, leadership constitutes the ability to guide others toward shared goals, foster collaboration, and establish trust within organizational settings (Cairney & Toomey, 2025). The skills approach emphasizes a leader-centered perspective, highlighting technical, human, and conceptual skills as determinants of effectiveness (Katz, 2009). Contemporary scholarship further underscores that leadership functions not only as a human science but also as a predictor of organizational success, with competency development shaping leaders' performance (Țiclău & Hințea, 2015). These skills extend beyond political acumen to encompass ethical standards, procedural knowledge, and constituent management (Oni et al., 2021). By situating leadership development within national strategies and global frameworks, this study illuminates how strengthening leadership capacity contributes to transparency, accountability, inclusivity, and democratic resilience (Jaiswal, 2025). This research underscores the role of leadership skills as a catalyst for effective governance.

In this context, the challenge lies in insufficient leadership skills among members and staff of the National Assembly of Laos, which constrain the institution's ability to fulfill its legislative, oversight, and representative functions. Previous studies have examined parliamentary leadership capacity in various contexts. Research on educated leaders in India found that postgraduate-level parliamentarians demonstrated significantly higher legislative effort, participating in more debates, asking more questions, and achieving better constituency outcomes compared to those without advanced education (Jaiswal, 2025). Similarly, parliamentary strengthening initiatives in Southern African Development Community nations revealed that digital transformation success depended heavily on leadership's ability to mobilize support for capacity-building and institutional innovation (Solopi, 2025). Furthermore, studies on parliamentary procedural knowledge among youth leaders in the Philippines identified moderate competency

levels, emphasizing the necessity for structured training programs that bridge academic learning with practical governance skills (Escuyos et al., 2025). These findings collectively suggest that leadership skills deficiencies represent a common challenge across developing parliamentary systems, though few studies have systematically examined conceptual, human, and technical skills within a unified framework in the Southeast Asian context.

Despite this growing body of research, a notable gap persists in understanding how leadership skills specifically function within Lao parliamentary governance. Existing studies predominantly focus on Western democracies or larger Asian nations, leaving Southeast Asian single-party parliamentary systems underexplored. Moreover, while previous research has examined leadership skills in isolation, limited empirical work has investigated the interrelationships among conceptual, human, and technical skills across different administrative levels within parliamentary institutions. This study addresses these gaps by providing the first comprehensive empirical examination of leadership skills within the National Assembly of Lao PDR, offering a validated framework for understanding how these skills contribute collectively to parliamentary effectiveness. The novelty of this research lies in its application of Exploratory Factor Analysis to validate the three-dimensional skills framework within a non-Western parliamentary context, thereby expanding the theoretical and empirical foundations of skills-based leadership theory.

This research seeks to explore and address existing gaps in leadership skills, situating them within the broader framework of administrative governance and national development priorities. This article focuses on determining the significance and impact of leadership skills across all levels of the National Assembly of Laos. It seeks to empirically explore how leadership skills contribute to the functioning and effectiveness of leaders in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. The study hypothesizes that leadership skills demonstrate significance in shaping administrative governance, with consistency observed across variable measurements. Furthermore, it categorizes leadership skills into conceptual, human, and technical dimensions, examining how each category enables leaders to address organizational challenges and enhance parliamentary performance.

Despite this recognition, several institutional challenges remain. The committee system requires staff to acquire essential skills in research, analysis, drafting recommendations, and report writing, alongside procedural knowledge for effective interaction with Members of Parliament (Global democracy support, 2024). Newly elected officials, particularly first-term parliamentarians, need to strengthen their capacities in law-making, oversight, and representation. Exposure to foreign parliaments and specialized training programs could provide valuable insights into successful practices. Moreover, systematic public outreach and citizen engagement remain limited, underscoring the need to integrate participatory

mechanisms into legislative processes. Addressing these challenges proves vital for ensuring inclusive governance that responds to the needs of diverse societal groups, including women, youth, ethnic minorities, and vulnerable populations. The parliament must establish systems and practices that not only measure progress but also leverage the Sustainable Development Goals to dismantle barriers to poverty reduction and sustainable development (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016). Similarly, the AIPA Strategic Plan 2023–2030 calls for strengthening institutional processes, procedures, and capacities to support effective decision-making. This requires focused efforts to enhance leadership skills in research, policy analysis, legislative drafting, and administrative support, thereby empowering staff and members to contribute more effectively to national objectives (AIPA Secretariat, 2023).

This study operates within the skills-based approach to leadership, which emphasizes the significance of conceptual, human, and technical skills as determinants of effective organizational administration (Katz, 2009; Mumford et al., 2000). Within the National Assembly of Lao PDR, leadership skills prove essential not only for fulfilling roles and responsibilities but also for ensuring the institution's capacity to guide national development. Conceptual skills such as political acumen, decision-making, problem-solving, vision-setting, and developmental planning assume particular significance at higher levels of leadership, where abstract thinking and strategic foresight become necessary (Mumford et al., 2000). The conceptual framework integrates Katz's three-skill model with contemporary leadership development theories, recognizing that leaders at different organizational tiers require varying degrees of conceptual, human, and technical skills (Fabisch et al., 2024). For senior officers and parliamentary leaders, conceptual skills become increasingly critical in shaping governance outcomes, influencing policy debates, and aligning organizational performance with national socio-economic development goals. This framework also acknowledges the role of succession planning and leadership development in sustaining institutional effectiveness (Liden et al., 2025). Thus, the conceptual framework for this article highlights the significance of conceptual skills as a foundation for administrative governance. By examining how these skills enable leaders to address organizational challenges, foster collaboration, and enhance transparency and accountability, the study underscores their impact on the overall effectiveness of leaders.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Skills

Leadership effectiveness relies heavily on conceptual abilities that enable leaders to envision future directions and navigate complex institutional environments. This section examines five critical conceptual competencies relevant to parliamentary governance.

1. Vision Skills

Organizational vision represents a strategic projection of desired futures that embodies collective values and aspirations. Within parliamentary contexts, visionary leadership aligns legislative functions with broader socio-economic development objectives and international commitments. Recent empirical evidence demonstrates that visionary leadership contributes significantly to organizational citizenship behavior and innovation performance (L. Wang et al., 2024). Leaders who articulate clear strategic direction while maintaining institutional alignment foster cohesion and provide purpose that enhances overall effectiveness (Saleh et al., 2025). Strategic foresight enables leaders to anticipate emerging challenges and conceptualize governance strategies that strengthen institutional capacity.

2. Political Skills

Navigating legislative environments requires sophisticated political acumen to manage competing interests and build coalitions. Political skill encompasses the capacity to understand organizational dynamics, influence stakeholders, and achieve institutional objectives through social astuteness, interpersonal influence, and networking (Ferris et al., 2005). Contemporary research underscores that effective political leadership requires guiding organizational members while ensuring adaptability in policy implementation (Noer, 2025). Leaders must possess critical decision-making competencies to rebuild public trust and navigate increasingly complex governance challenges.

3. Decision-Making Skills

Legislative leaders confront numerous decisions that shape policy priorities and development trajectories. Effective decision-making balances directive approaches that emphasize clarity with participative methods that foster inclusivity (Bass, 2009). Research confirms that participative decision-making significantly affects ethical leadership and organizational performance, particularly when leaders involve stakeholders in evaluating alternatives (Torlak et al., 2022). Decision-making frameworks must account for volatility and uncertainty while maintaining systematic approaches to complex problems (Hallo et al., 2020).

4. Problem-Solving Skills

Addressing governance challenges requires identifying discrepancies between current conditions and desired outcomes, then devising solutions to bridge these gaps. Problem-solving serves as a catalyst for institutional improvement by enhancing transparency, accountability, and responsiveness (Mumford et al., 2000). Evidence indicates that problem-solving competencies directly influence

leadership effectiveness and organizational knowledge-sharing, particularly when leaders demonstrate systematic analytical approaches (Cakir & Adiguzel, 2020).

5. Developing Skills

Organizational development emphasizes planned interventions that improve institutional performance and staff well-being. Leaders must cultivate innovation as an engine of institutional prosperity and sustainability. The significance of development skills lies in distinguishing effective from ineffective leaders through competencies that enhance productivity, responsiveness, and resilience. Contemporary research emphasizes that cultivating learning cultures requires leadership commitment to fostering continuous development among organizational members (Ahsan, 2025).

Human Skills

Human skills enable leaders to understand behavioral dynamics, motivate personnel, and foster collaborative environments essential for parliamentary effectiveness.

1. Interpersonal Skills

Understanding human behavior, group dynamics, and individual motivations while communicating clearly represents a cornerstone of leadership effectiveness. These competencies prove essential for fostering collaboration, building trust, and maintaining communication networks across diverse constituencies (Liden et al., 2025). Both verbal and nonverbal communication—from public speaking to active listening—enhance leaders' influence and organizational cohesion. Research confirms that interpersonal competencies significantly contribute to leadership performance when combined with participative approaches (Torlak et al., 2022).

2. Ethical Skills

Establishing moral foundations for leadership behavior requires demonstrating honesty, integrity, fairness, and justice while promoting these values throughout institutions. Within parliaments, ethical competencies prove critical for ensuring accountability and fostering organizational citizenship. Ethical leadership behaviors—including attention to all participants, community building, and ensuring procedural justice—enhance transparency and inclusivity (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Contemporary research demonstrates that ethical leadership significantly influences organizational effectiveness when leaders evaluate challenges through moral frameworks while protecting stakeholder rights (Torlak et al., 2022).

3. Motivation Skills

Channeling employees' knowledge and abilities into productive effort requires understanding both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence work-related behaviors. Motivation aligns individual aspirations with organizational objectives, addressing needs ranging from security to self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). Evidence confirms that leadership motivation significantly impacts employee engagement and discretionary effort, particularly when leaders create supportive environments (Sharafizad et al., 2020).

4. Adaptive Skills

Navigating uncertainty and change demands that leaders guide individuals to confront challenges and embrace new strategies in response to evolving circumstances (Heifetz et al., 2009). Adaptive performance encompasses crisis management, creative problem-solving, and interpersonal flexibility that ensures effectiveness in volatile environments. Contemporary research emphasizes that adaptive leaders must possess strategic foresight to anticipate emerging trends in increasingly interconnected environments (Chkuaseli, 2025).

Technical Skills

Technical competencies provide leaders with methodological foundations and specialized knowledge necessary for managing parliamentary operations effectively.

1. Expertise Skills

Deep, well-structured knowledge equips leaders to handle complex situations by leveraging domain-specific expertise in decision-making and policy development (McBrayer, 2025). Analytical skills—including research, data analysis, and system evaluation—enable leaders to identify critical variables and determine priorities. Expert leaders provide informed counsel that ensures parliamentary decisions remain grounded in evidence and aligned with development priorities (Duff, 2025).

2. Administrative Skills

Managing organizational processes efficiently requires competencies in planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling institutional functions. These skills encompass time management, human resource oversight, financial stewardship, and adherence to policies and procedures (Yamamoto, 2007). Administrative competencies sustain organizational order and accountability while directly influencing productivity, responsiveness, and institutional resilience (Bartram, 2005).

3. ICT Skills

Technological advancements have transformed how leaders access, process, and utilize information in parliamentary governance. Digital leadership emphasizes agility, openness, collaboration, and trust—essential traits for operating in complex environments (Oktapiani, 2025). Leaders who cultivate ICT competencies can anticipate trends, adapt to technological disruptions, and ensure parliamentary functions remain aligned with development priorities. Research confirms that technology significantly impacts leadership effectiveness through enhanced decision-making and organizational efficiency (Altassan, 2025).

4. Coaching Skills

Empowering leaders to motivate, guide, and develop staff involves providing feedback, setting expectations, and fostering personal growth. Coaching sustains organizational effectiveness and resilience by fostering open communication, empathy, and commitment to change (DuBrin, 2023). Contemporary research emphasizes that coaching contributes to leadership effectiveness by promoting sustainable work performance and employee development (Wang et al., 2025).

5. Service Skills

Servant leadership emphasizes prioritizing followers' needs and empowering them to reach full potential. Service competencies foster empathy, responsiveness, and support that strengthen organizational culture and enhance trust among stakeholders (Liden et al., 2025). Traits including listening, healing, foresight, and community-building ensure leaders act with integrity and accountability (Spears, 2002). Evidence demonstrates that servant leadership significantly promotes sustainable performance and employee commitment in public sector contexts (Wang et al., 2025).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the significance of leadership skills in administrative governance within the National Assembly of Lao PDR. The target population comprised 240 leaders across three organizational levels: committee-level leaders (chairpersons and vice-chairpersons, n=38), department-level leaders (directors and deputy directors, n=67), and division-level leaders (heads and deputy heads, n=134). To determine appropriate sample size, Yamane's formula (1973) was applied with a 95% confidence level and 5% precision level, yielding a required sample of 150 participants. Stratified sampling ensured proportional representation across leadership levels: committee leaders (n=24, 16%), department leaders (n=42, 28%), and division leaders (n=84, 56%). This stratification approach enhanced validity and generalizability of findings by capturing diverse leadership responsibilities across the parliamentary

organizational structure (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Data collection utilized self-administered survey questionnaires distributed in both print and electronic formats, ensuring accessibility and convenience for participants. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended items measuring leadership skills across three categories—conceptual, human, and technical—using a five-point Likert scale, which provided ordinal data suitable for quantitative analysis (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014).

Reliability assessment employed Cronbach's alpha coefficient to examine internal consistency of leadership skill measurements, with acceptable values set at or above 0.70 (Taber, 2018). The discriminant power of each item, measured through Corrected Item-Total Correlation, required values at or above 0.30 to demonstrate adequate discrimination between high- and low-performing participants (Field, 2024). Items failing to meet these thresholds underwent revision or removal to maintain measurement reliability. Outliers were identified and excluded from analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics to preserve data integrity (Cohen et al., 2018). These procedures ensured consistent and dependable measurement results, enhancing the study's overall reliability and trustworthiness.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) served as the primary analytical method, appropriate for situations requiring empirical validation of predefined theoretical relationships and structures (Watkins, 2018). The maximum likelihood method estimated parameters by identifying values that maximize the likelihood of observing the given data, ensuring probable representation of relationships among leadership skill variables. Data suitability for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA), with KMO values between 0.8 and 1.0 indicating strong sampling adequacy (Bernard et al., 2016). Factor loadings determined the strength of relationships between observed variables and latent factors, with loadings greater than or equal to 0.4 considered moderately important and appropriate given the sample size of 240 leaders (Hair et al., 2010). Varimax rotation facilitated interpretation of factor structure by maximizing variance of squared loadings within factors. Through these procedures, the study provided empirical evidence of leadership skill significance and impact across committee, department, and division leadership levels within the National Assembly of Laos.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participant Demographics

This study examined leadership skills among 240 leaders across three organizational levels within the National Assembly of Lao PDR. Table 1 presents the distribution of participants by leadership level and gender. The study included 240 participants, comprising 145 male leaders (60.4%) and 95 female leaders (39.6%). At the high leadership level, 31 males (81.6%) and 7 females (18.4%)

were represented, indicating marked gender imbalance at the highest tier. At the middle leadership level, 47 males (70.1%) and 20 females (29.9%) participated. Although male leaders remained predominant, female representation improved compared to the high level. At the primary leadership level, 67 males (49.6%) and 68 females (50.4%) were identified, demonstrating near-equal distribution and significant progress toward gender parity.

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Leaders at Various Levels in the Study (N=240)

Participants	Distribution		Gender	
	# of leaders	% of leaders	Male	Female
High Level	38	16	31	7
Middle Level	67	28	47	20
Primary Level	135	56	67	68
Total	240	100	145	95

Source: Author's Analysis (2025)

Reliability of Leadership Skills Measurement

Leadership skills variables were measured using instruments developed on 5-point Likert-type scales. The analysis includes 14 leadership skills, each evaluated for internal consistency and contribution to overall measurement. Table 2 presents reliability analysis results focusing on Cronbach's alpha and corrected item-total statistics.

Table 2 Cronbach's Alpha and Corrected Item-Total Statistics for the Leadership Skills Variables Measured in the Study

No	Leadership skills	Corrected Item-Total	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Vision Skills	.456	.907
2	Political Skills	.436	.908
3	Decision-Making Skills	.565	.904
4	Problem-Solving Skills	.591	.903
5	Developing Skills	.643	.901
6	Interpersonal Skills	.676	.899
7	Ethical Skills	.640	.901
8	Motivation Skills	.775	.895
9	Adaptive Skills	.668	.900
10	Expertise Skills	.565	.904
11	Administrative Skills	.523	.905

No	Leadership skills	Corrected Item-Total	Cronbach's Alpha
12	ICT Skills	.675	.899
13	Coaching Skills	.789	.894
14	Service Skills	.536	.905

Source: Author's Analysis (2025)

Note: $N = 240$. No. Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7 and Corrected Item-Total > 0.3 – Accepted

All leadership skills assessed demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.894 to 0.908 and corrected item-total correlations between 0.436 and 0.789. Vision, political, decision-making, problem-solving, developing, interpersonal, ethical, motivation, adaptive, expertise, administrative, ICT, coaching, and service skills all exceeded accepted reliability thresholds ($\alpha > 0.7$; CITC > 0.3). Motivation skills (CITC=0.775, $\alpha=0.895$) and coaching skills (CITC=0.789, $\alpha=0.894$) showed the strongest contributions to leadership effectiveness. The analysis confirms that the leadership skills framework demonstrates reliable measurement properties suitable for empirical analysis.

Consistency Among Leadership Skills

The correlation of leadership skill variables and consistency of data measurements were evaluated to test the hypothesis that leadership skills demonstrate strong consistency among variable measurements. To assess this, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity were applied to determine dataset suitability for identifying underlying relationships among leadership skills. Table 3 presents these results.

Table 3 Leadership Skills Sampling Analysis by KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.865
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>	2363.823
	<i>df</i>	91
	<i>Sig.</i>	0.00

Source: Author's Analysis (2025)

Note: KMO 0.8 – 1.0 sampling accepted

The KMO value of 0.865 indicates highly adequate sampling, falling within the accepted range of 0.8–1.0. This suggests the dataset is well-suited for factor analysis and capable of revealing underlying relationships among leadership skills. Bartlett's test of sphericity produced a chi-square value of 2363.823 with 91 degrees of freedom and significance level of 0.00, well below the conventional threshold of 0.05. This confirms that correlations among variables are statistically significant.

Together, these results affirm that leadership skill variables are interrelated and suitable for further factor analysis.

Measures of Sampling Adequacy for Leadership Skills

To further evaluate consistency among leadership skills measurements, Measures of Sampling Adequacy were calculated. The MSA values were derived from the anti-image correlation matrix, which is based on negative partial correlations. Table 4 presents the anti-image correlation matrix for all leadership skills.

Table 4 Anti-image Correlation for Measures of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) of Leadership Skills

No	Leadership skills	Anti-Image Matrices														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
1	Vision Skills	.663 ^a														
2	Political Skills	-.961	.652 ^a													
3	Decision-making Skills	-.031	-.026	.845 ^a												
4	Problem-solving Skills	-.027	.017	-.540	.843 ^a											
5	Developing Skills	-.055	.044	-.026	-.146	.935 ^a										
6	Interpersonal Skills	-.001	.012	-.089	.020	-.209	.928 ^a									
7	Ethical Skills	-.018	.015	.031	-.213	.105	-.287	.876 ^a								
8	Motivation Skills	-.079	.065	-.044	.111	-.150	-.115	-.422	.896 ^a							
9	Adaptive Skills	-.030	.036	.048	-.049	.070	-.265	-.021	-.327	.919 ^a						
10	Expertise Skills	.065	-.065	.004	-.230	-.190	-.021	.097	-.055	.015	.932 ^a					
11	Administrative Skills	-.078	.079	-.217	.016	-.052	.011	-.061	.075	-.024	-.087	.899 ^a				
12	ICT Skills	.072	-.060	.005	-.063	-.028	-.044	.169	-.154	.086	-.114	-.198	.889 ^a			
13	Coaching Skills	.017	-.032	-.095	.043	-.155	.049	-.133	-.203	-.195	-.028	.050	-.380	.922 ^a		
14	Service Skills	.044	-.077	.196	.016	.058	-.008	.015	.016	-.107	-.125	-.270	-.283	-.159	.881 ^a	

Source: Author’s Analysis (2025)

Note: ^a. Measures of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) > 0.5 accepted; Factor loading = 0.4

The results demonstrate that all leadership skills exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.5, confirming their suitability for factor analysis. Specifically, vision skills (0.663) and political skills (0.652) showed moderate adequacy, justifying their inclusion in the factor model. Decision-making (0.845) and problem-solving skills (0.843) exhibited strong adequacy, reflecting significant correlations with other leadership variables. Developing skills (0.935) and interpersonal skills (0.928) ranked among the highest, underscoring their critical role in leadership effectiveness. Ethical (0.876), motivation (0.896), and adaptive skills (0.919) demonstrated substantial adequacy, highlighting their importance in leadership contexts. Expertise (0.932) and administrative skills (0.899) confirmed strong suitability for inclusion in factor analysis. ICT (0.889), coaching (0.922), and service skills (0.881) also showed high adequacy, reinforcing their relevance in the leadership framework.

Leadership Skills Categories

Factor analysis was employed to reduce variability among observed variables into fewer latent factors, thereby identifying underlying relationships among leadership skills. The Maximum Likelihood extraction method was applied, assuming normally distributed data, while Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization simplified interpretation by maximizing high loadings on distinct factors. Table 5 presents the rotated factor extraction results.

Table 5 Rotated Factors Extraction for Leadership Skills Categories

Leadership Skills Variables	Factors Extracted				Communality
	1	2	3	4	
Motivation Skills	.822				.835
Ethical Skills	.773				.683
Adaptive Skills	.723				.635
Interpersonal Skills	.700				.608
Developing Skills	.408				.463
ICT Skills		.795			.752
Service Skills		.697			.550
Coaching Skills		.602			.745
Administrative Skills		.512			.383
Expertise Skills		.489			.433
Vision Skills			.959		.987
Political Skills			.944		.950
Problem-Solving Skills				.801	.757
Decision-Making Skills				.734	.665
Rotation Sums of Squared	3.120	2.477	1.987	1.87	9.446
Percentage of Variance	22.285	17.692	14.122	13.359	67.458

Source: Author’s Analysis (2025)

Note: Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Factor loading = 0.4, N = 240.

Factor 1 (Human Skills) comprised motivation (0.822), ethical (0.773), adaptive (0.723), interpersonal (0.700), and developing (0.408) skills, representing personal, relational, and ethical leadership qualities. High communalities (e.g., motivation = 0.835) confirm strong representation. Factor 2 (Technical Skills) included ICT (0.795), service (0.697), coaching (0.602), administrative (0.512), and expertise (0.489) skills, grouped as technical and service-oriented capabilities. ICT skills (communality = 0.752) were particularly well-represented, underscoring their importance in modern leadership. Factor 3 (Conceptual Skills – Strategic) was dominated by vision (0.959) and political (0.944) skills, reflecting strategic

foresight and political acumen. Communalities (0.987 and 0.950) indicate these skills are almost entirely explained by this factor. Factor 4 (Conceptual Skills – Cognitive) comprised problem-solving (0.801) and decision-making (0.734) skills, representing cognitive and analytical competencies essential for dynamic environments.

Although four factors were initially extracted, Factors 3 and 4 were merged due to theoretical alignment, resulting in three overarching categories: Human Skills (motivation, ethical, adaptive, interpersonal, developing), Technical Skills (ICT, service, coaching, administrative, expertise), and Conceptual Skills (vision, political, problem-solving, decision-making). Together, these categories explained 67.458% of total variance, confirming a strong model for understanding leadership skills. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of leadership, highlighting the significance of personal/ethical, technical/service, and strategic/cognitive abilities.

Internal Consistency of Leadership Skills

The empirical validation of leadership skill measurements confirms strong internal consistency across administrative levels within the National Assembly of Lao PDR. The KMO value of 0.865 and significant Bartlett's test results ($\chi^2=2363.823$, $df=91$, $p<0.001$) demonstrate that competencies such as strategic vision, decision-making, interpersonal communication, and technical proficiency function as integrated components rather than isolated behaviors. High MSA values for developing skills (0.935) and interpersonal skills (0.928) underscore the importance of mentorship and relationship-building in governance contexts. Strategic competencies including decision-making (0.845) and problem-solving (0.843) exhibit robust adequacy, reinforcing their central role in policy formulation. Technical competencies, particularly expertise skills (0.932) and ICT skills (0.889), highlight the importance of operational fluency in managing institutional systems and workflows. Moderate MSA values for vision skills (0.663) and political skills (0.652) suggest that while these conceptual abilities provide foundational direction, they require complementary interpersonal and technical capabilities for full effectiveness. These findings indicate that leadership skills across organizational levels demonstrate statistical interdependence, supporting competency-based development frameworks that recognize the interconnected nature of leadership capabilities.

Validation of Three-Dimensional Skills Framework

The categorization of leadership skills into conceptual, human, and technical domains provides statistically grounded and practically meaningful insights into administrative leadership capacity. The factor analysis explained 67.458% of total variance, indicating a robust and interpretable model consistent with recent leadership scale development research demonstrating variance explained between

65-70% as acceptable for multidimensional constructs. Human skills emerged as the most dominant category (22.285% variance), with motivation skills showing exceptionally high communalities (0.835). This finding parallels contemporary research emphasizing that motivational competencies significantly impact employee engagement and discretionary effort in public sector contexts. The prominence of ethical skills (communality=0.683) within this category aligns with evidence demonstrating that ethical leadership significantly influences organizational effectiveness when leaders evaluate challenges through moral frameworks. Technical skills (17.692% variance) clustered around operational and service-oriented dimensions, with ICT skills displaying high communality (0.752). This finding supports recent research confirming that digital competencies significantly impact leadership effectiveness through enhanced decision-making and organizational efficiency. Conceptual skills demonstrated exceptional factor loadings, with vision (0.959) and political skills (0.944) exhibiting communalities approaching unity (0.987 and 0.950 respectively). These results underscore the strategic importance of visionary and political competencies for high-level administrative leaders responsible for policy direction and long-term institutional planning.

The present findings both support and extend previous research on parliamentary leadership capacity in developing contexts. The near gender parity observed at primary leadership levels (50.4% female) contrasts with substantial gender imbalance at high levels (18.4% female), reflecting patterns identified in broader parliamentary systems where women remain underrepresented in senior governance positions despite gains at operational levels (Subramanian et al., 2024). This demographic finding suggests that while the National Assembly has made progress in recruiting women leaders at entry and middle tiers, structural barriers may persist in advancement to committee-level positions, warranting targeted succession planning initiatives. The three-dimensional skills framework validated in this study extends Katz's (1955) original typology by providing empirical evidence of its applicability within a Southeast Asian administrative context. While previous research has examined parliamentary procedural knowledge and leadership competencies in isolation, this study demonstrates how conceptual, human, and technical skills function as interrelated dimensions rather than independent constructs (Escuyos et al., 2025). The high factor loadings for motivation and ethical skills within the human dimension support findings from research on educated leaders in India, which demonstrated that leaders with advanced competencies achieve better institutional outcomes through enhanced stakeholder engagement (Jaiswal, 2025). Similarly, the prominence of ICT skills within the technical dimension aligns with research on digital transformation in Southern African parliaments, where leadership's ability to mobilize support for technological capacity-building proved critical for institutional innovation (Solopi, 2025).

These results contribute to leadership theory by providing empirical validation of skills-based frameworks in non-Western administrative systems, addressing a significant gap in existing literature. While previous studies predominantly examined Western democracies or larger Asian nations, this research offers the first comprehensive factor-analytic validation of leadership skills within a single-party parliamentary system in Southeast Asia. The findings suggest that despite contextual differences in political structure and governance traditions, fundamental leadership competencies remain organized along conceptual, human, and technical dimensions. This cross-cultural consistency supports the universality of Katz's framework while demonstrating its practical utility for leadership development in diverse institutional settings. Moreover, the strong statistical interdependence among skill categories confirms that effective administrative leadership requires integrated development rather than isolated competency training, contradicting approaches that prioritize technical or procedural knowledge in isolation from interpersonal and strategic capabilities.

Practical Implications for Institutional Development

By demonstrating that leadership skills are statistically interrelated and can be meaningfully categorized, this study provides actionable insights for strengthening capacity within the National Assembly of Lao PDR. The identification of specific skill adequacy levels through MSA values enables targeted intervention strategies. For instance, the moderate adequacy of vision and political skills suggests that enhanced training in strategic planning and stakeholder management could strengthen institutional performance, particularly at high leadership levels. The prominence of human skills indicates that investing in programs developing motivation, ethical reasoning, and interpersonal communication would yield substantial returns across all organizational tiers. Technical skill development, particularly in ICT and administrative domains, remains essential for operational effectiveness, especially as institutions increasingly rely on digital platforms for information management and constituent engagement. The strong empirical foundation established through this research supports institutional strengthening objectives by providing a validated framework for curriculum development in training programs, informing succession planning strategies, and supporting competency-based performance evaluation systems. By recognizing that leadership effectiveness depends on integrated skill development rather than narrow technical proficiency, the National Assembly can implement holistic capacity-building initiatives that address conceptual, human, and technical dimensions simultaneously, thereby enhancing overall institutional capability to fulfill legislative, oversight, and representative functions effectively.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the significance of leadership skills across administrative levels within the National Assembly of Lao PDR through Exploratory Factor Analysis, providing empirical validation of a three-dimensional skills framework. The research confirmed that leadership competencies demonstrate strong internal consistency and can be meaningfully categorized into conceptual, human, and technical domains. Factor analysis explained 67.458% of total variance, with human skills encompassing motivation, ethical reasoning, adaptability, and interpersonal capabilities; technical skills including ICT proficiency, administrative competence, and specialized expertise; and conceptual skills comprising vision, political acumen, problem-solving, and decision-making. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of 0.865 and significant Bartlett's test confirmed excellent sampling adequacy and meaningful inter-correlation among variables. The particularly high communalities for vision (0.987), political skills (0.950), and motivation (0.835) underscore their critical importance for parliamentary leadership, while strong measures of sampling adequacy for developing skills (0.935), expertise (0.932), and interpersonal skills (0.928) highlight the foundational role of mentorship, relationship-building, and operational fluency.

The validated framework provides actionable guidance for strengthening parliamentary capacity within the National Assembly of Lao PDR and contributes theoretically to leadership development literature by offering the first comprehensive empirical validation of skills-based leadership in a single-party parliamentary system. The research demonstrates that despite contextual differences in political structure and governance traditions, fundamental leadership competencies remain organized along conceptual, human, and technical dimensions, supporting cross-cultural applicability of established leadership theories. Practical implications include informing targeted training programs that address specific competency gaps, guiding succession planning strategies that ensure balanced skill distribution across organizational levels, and supporting institutional strengthening objectives. The near gender parity observed at primary leadership levels (50.4% female) contrasted with substantial imbalance at high levels (18.4% female) suggests that while progress has been made in recruiting women leaders at operational tiers, structural barriers may impede advancement to senior positions, warranting deliberate interventions in leadership pipelines.

Future research should explore longitudinal relationships between leadership skill development and parliamentary performance outcomes, examine how contextual factors influence skill application across different legislative functions, and investigate mechanisms through which conceptual, human, and technical competencies interact to produce institutional effectiveness. Additionally, comparative studies across ASEAN parliamentary systems could illuminate whether the three-dimensional framework applies universally or requires adaptation

based on political structure and cultural context. Examining the differential impact of specific skills at various organizational levels would provide deeper insights into optimal competency profiles for committee, department, and division leaders. By establishing empirically validated foundations for understanding parliamentary leadership capacity, this study contributes to both theoretical advancement and practical enhancement of governance institutions in developing democracies, offering a replicable methodology for assessing leadership competencies in legislative contexts worldwide.

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