



**INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL HEADS IN THE
DIVISION OF ALBAY: EFFECTS TO SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

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ABSTRACT

Instructional leadership plays a vital role in enhancing school performance by influencing teaching quality, student learning, and overall school effectiveness. This study investigated the instructional leadership practices of elementary school heads in the Division of Albay, focusing on their demographic profiles, extent of leadership practices, challenges encountered, and the relationship between perceived practices and these challenges. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were gathered from 16 school heads and 440 teachers from central schools. Statistical tools such as weighted mean, frequency count, percentage, ranking, Spearman Rho correlation, t-test, and Wilcoxon Rank Test were used for data analysis. Findings revealed that school heads regularly demonstrated instructional leadership behaviors, with most practices rated as “always practiced” based on Hallinger’s Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale. Despite this, challenges such as conflicting schedules, multiple responsibilities, behavioral attitudes, a high number of teachers to observe, and limited training and skills in curriculum, instruction, data analysis, and contextualization were

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reported. These obstacles may impede leadership effectiveness and, in turn, affect instructional quality and student performance. To address these concerns, an Instructional Leadership Enhancement Program was proposed to strengthen the competencies of school heads and support sustained improvements in teaching and learning outcomes.

Keywords: *instructional leadership practices, school heads, teachers, challenges, demographic profile, school performance*

INTRODUCTION

The instructional leadership practices of educational leaders are essential in improving learning outcomes, as they prioritize on the quality of instruction being provided to the learners as well as on the continuous growth of teachers that affects their classroom practices. Moreover, it also involves organizing the curriculum, setting clear goals, analyzing and allocating resources among other tasks. "It shapes a future vision and outlines strategies to implement the necessary changes to realize that vision" (Hussein, 2019).

Numerous studies worldwide have highlighted the beneficial outcomes of instructional leadership, showing improvements in learner outcomes (Tremont & Templeton, 2019), teacher engagement (Mora-Ruano, et.al 2021), teaching proficiency (Ahmad & Ali, 2021; Ahmad et al., 2021), and educator efficacy (Liu & Gumus, 2021; Ma & Marion, 2019). Additionally, the International Journal of Current Science Research and Review on the Instructional Leadership Practices in Schools in Asia stated that a principal's approach to

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instructional leadership in fulfilling his roles and tasks significantly impacts teacher effectiveness. Principals must involve the teachers in developing and implementing the learning objectives. They must refer to the curriculum set by the government and must work together with the teachers to improve learning programs in class according to learner's needs. A literature review (Ikram et al.,2021) indicates that educational leaders in Asian countries tend to prioritize administrative tasks. When it comes to instructional leadership practices, they place greater emphasis on educational programs and less on curriculum administration. According to research conducted in industrialized Asian nations including Japan, Singapore, and Korea (Kim & Lee, 2000), school leaders' instructional leadership methods have a bigger influence on peer observation, coaching, and mentoring than on other types of professional development.

Mardalena (2019) identified essential qualities for effective school principals, such as having a clear vision, setting high expectations, ensuring effective teaching and learning, managing time and conflicts, utilizing resources wisely, using data for planning, and continually evaluating and improving. As instructional leaders, school heads face numerous challenges. According to Tintore et al. (2022), principals struggle with balancing system demands with learning leadership, handling accountability and autonomy, and managing pressure from families and society. Additionally, Tamadoni et al. (2021) highlighted common difficulties in both centralized and decentralized education systems, like low performance, strained relationships, and inadequate professional development for principals, teachers, and staff.

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A case study in Bhutan found that school leaders often prioritized managerial tasks over instructional leadership, frequently delegating supervision to other staff. This resulted in weakened instructional oversight. Major challenges included excessive workloads, limited time, teacher shortages, and a lack of leadership training, all of which hindered effective instructional leadership.

In the Philippines, Republic Act 9155 defines the roles of school heads, emphasizing their authority and accountability in managing schools. Their responsibilities include setting school goals, creating a positive learning environment, implementing and evaluating the curriculum, developing improvement plans, ensuring equal access to education, introducing innovative teaching strategies, managing resources, addressing staffing needs, supporting staff development, and fostering school-community partnerships. They are also authorized to accept donations and perform additional duties assigned by education officials. The act stresses that school leaders should prioritize instructional leadership over administrative tasks.

Moreover, the Department of Education (DepEd) introduced the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) through DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020, to support administrators in effectively carrying out their responsibilities and enhancing the effectiveness of instruction and learner outcomes. The PPSSH is organized into five core domains: Leading Strategically, Managing School Operations and Resources, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, Developing Self and Others, and Building Connections. These domains define the critical instructional and administrative practices necessary to drive student achievement and school improvement. Of the five domains, Domain 3, which focuses on Teaching and Learning,

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carries the most weight. It emphasizes the tasks of school administrators in fostering excellence in teaching and learning. Administrators are responsible for providing technical support in areas like curriculum, teaching practices, and performance. They should lead initiatives that help improve instructional practices by ensuring access to resources, offering coaching and mentoring, and facilitating development opportunities based on teachers' unique requirements.

Lincuna and Caingcoy (2000) found that school administrators in El Salvador City, Philippines, were actively involved in key areas of instructional leadership, such as providing expert support, supervising instruction, and encouraging innovation. However, they encountered challenges including teacher resistance, scheduling conflicts, and reluctance to adopt change. In response, leaders emphasized aligning instruction with learning standards, adapting curricula to local needs, and strengthening classroom supervision.

A study conducted in Toledo City, Cebu, examined the challenges principals face in instructional leadership and their effects on educational reform. Major obstacles identified included political issues, corruption, limited resources, and instructional difficulties such as overcrowded classrooms, language barriers, and poor infrastructure. These factors negatively impacted curriculum delivery and learning outcomes. The study recommended policy reforms, enhanced capacity-building initiatives, and stronger community engagement to help overcome these challenges.

Lozada (2024) found that public secondary school administrators in Albay faced challenges in promoting learner-centered instruction, applying varied teaching strategies, and

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encouraging student engagement. A lack of familiarity with specific learning standards hindered their ability to offer meaningful technical support during teacher development and classroom supervision. The study recommended enhancing school leaders' competencies through targeted seminars, capacity-building efforts, inter-school collaboration, and expert consultations. This literature highlights the influence of school heads' instructional leadership on academic performance, as well as the challenges in implementing these responsibilities.

DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2024, has recently transferred several non-teaching duties, including managing physical facilities, coordinating feeding programs, overseeing school safety initiatives, and other related tasks, from teachers to school heads. While this adjustment reduces the administrative burden on teachers, it increases the managerial responsibilities of school leaders, which could limit their capacity to prioritize instructional leadership."

In July 2024, the Division of Albay conducted an Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) validation, revealing that most school heads scored perfectly in the domains of Leading Strategically, Managing Operations and Resources, and Building Connections. However, some school heads did not achieve perfect scores in the domains of Focusing on Teaching and Learning and Developing Self and Others. These two domains, which focus on instructional leadership, are crucial for ensuring quality learning, providing technical support to teachers, and designing professional development plans tailored to teachers' needs.

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In addition, looking at the Pre-Test results of the division in the various assessments conducted in the Schools Division Office of Albay along literacy and numeracy SY. 2024-2025, there's still a significant percentage of learners along literacy belonging to the Low and High Emerging level in Grade 1-3 learners based on the BOSY CRLA Result, and Frustration Level in Grades 4-6 learners as seen in the PHIL-IRI Result. For the Albay Numeracy Assessment Results (ALNAT), Albay Division has significant percentage of learners from Grade 1 to 6 under Needs Major Support. These assessments somehow reflect the competencies mastered by the learners along literacy and numeracy which they acquired through classroom instruction. This calls for the school heads instructional leadership practices such as intensifying the delivery of technical support to educators and other instructional support to address the educational gaps as manifested in the various assessments. Thus, it is significant to assess the level of practice of elementary school heads in the Division of Albay along instructional leadership, identify challenges in fulfilling their roles as instructional leaders and propose an Instructional Leadership Enhancement Program to improve the attainment of their instructional leadership tasks.

OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to determine the instructional leadership practices of school heads in the Division of Albay. Specifically, it sought to address several key objectives. First, it aimed to determine the demographic profile of both school heads and teachers in terms of the number of years they have served as school heads or teachers, their current positions or

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designations, educational attainment, the number of trainings attended related to instructional leadership over the last three school years (SY 2021–2022, SY 2022–2023, SY 2023–2024), and their most recent Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) rating. Second, the study aimed to assess the level of instructional leadership practices demonstrated by school heads as perceived by themselves and their teachers across several dimensions: framing and communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and students, promoting professional development, and creating a positive learning environment. Third, the study aimed to identify the challenges encountered by school heads, as perceived by both the heads themselves and their teachers. Fourth, it sought to determine the significant relationships between the perceptions of school heads and teachers regarding instructional leadership practices and the challenges encountered. Lastly, based on the findings, the study aimed to propose an Instructional Leadership Enhancement Program (ILEP) to support school heads in effectively fulfilling their instructional leadership responsibilities.

FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in three interrelated leadership theories that collectively highlight the vital role of school heads in promoting effective teaching and learning within schools. At its core, the research draws on Hallinger and Murphy’s Instructional Leadership Theory, which emphasizes that effective school leaders are primarily responsible for improving

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student learning outcomes. This theory outlines three key dimensions of instructional leadership: establishing the school mission, managing the instructional program, and fostering a positive learning environment. These dimensions' guide leaders in setting clear goals, enhancing teachers' professional competencies, and creating a school culture that supports academic success. Through this lens, school heads are viewed as instructional leaders who guide staff efforts toward improving instructional practices and student achievement.

Complementing this, the study also incorporates Path-Goal Theory, introduced by Robert House in 1971. This theory focuses on the leader's role in clarifying goals, providing support, and removing obstacles that hinder progress. In the context of schools, this approach translates into setting SMART goals, offering tailored support to teachers, maintaining open communication with stakeholders, and establishing systems for recognition and rewards. By adapting their leadership styles to the needs of their teams, school heads can create a motivating environment that enables both teachers and students to succeed.

Furthermore, the research is informed by Transformational Leadership Theory, as defined by James Burns in 1978. This theory sees leadership as a process of mutual inspiration, where both leaders and followers elevate one another to achieve a shared vision and moral purpose. In schools, transformational leaders inspire trust and commitment, working collaboratively with their staff to foster professional growth, innovation, and a deep sense of purpose. Such leaders cultivate a school culture centered on collaboration, continuous improvement, and the holistic development of both educators and learners.

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Together, these theoretical frameworks provide a comprehensive understanding of how school leaders can exercise meaningful instructional leadership. They highlight that beyond administrative functions, effective school heads are those who inspire, guide, and support their teachers in ways that directly enhance the quality of instruction and student learning.

The conceptual framework was developed to determine the necessary procedures and outcomes in the study. The Input-Process-Output Model was employed.

First, this study aimed to determine the demographic profile of the school heads and teachers in terms of number of years as school head/teacher, current position/designation, educational attainment, number of trainings attended along instructional leadership for the last 3 school years (SY. 2021-2022, SY. 2022-2023, SY.2023-2024) and latest Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) Rating. Second, it assessed the level of instructional leadership practices being demonstrated by the school heads as perceived by themselves and their teachers along framing and communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and students, promoting professional development and creating a positive learning environment. Moreover, the study identified the challenges faced by school heads and teachers, examined the relationship between their perceptions of instructional leadership practices and the challenges encountered, and proposed an Instructional Leadership Enhancement Program (ILEP) to address these issues.

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To attain the research objectives, step-by-step procedures were done from planning to its implementation. The researcher followed strict ethical protocols to ensure the rights and confidentiality of the participants. Approval from the appropriate authorities was sought clearly outlining the purpose of the study and the voluntary participation of the respondents. Upon the retrieval of the questionnaires, data obtained were analyzed and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools. Findings of the study served as the baseline in the crafting of a Proposed Instructional Leadership Enhancement Program.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, which sought to illustrate specific variables and assess the magnitude and direction of the relationships between them. Such a design is valuable for identifying patterns and associations without manipulating any of the variables involved. For this inquiry, it was used to examine the instructional leadership practices of school heads and the challenges they faced, as well as how these were perceived by teachers. The design allowed for an analysis of how these elements were connected, offering a deeper understanding of how leadership practices and experienced challenges may influence one another within the school context.

Schools Division Office of Albay (SDO-Albay) is one of the divisions under the Department of Education (DepEd) Region V, Bicol. The Division of Albay encompasses a broad range of public elementary and secondary schools located across 15 municipalities. These schools represent diverse educational settings, from urban to rural, and serve learners from

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various socio-economic backgrounds. The participants of this study were all school heads and sampled teachers in the elementary schools categorized as medium and large central schools in the first, second and third congressional districts in the said division. There were 16 school heads and 440 teachers who became the respondents of the study, a total of 456.

The researcher utilized a survey questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection in this research. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: Part 1 was the demographic profile of the elementary school head with regard to their tenure as school head, current position/designation, educational attainment, number of trainings attended along instructional leadership for the last 3 years and their latest OPCR rating. On the demographic profile of the teachers, these include the number of years as teachers, current position and academic qualifications.

Part II of the questionnaire assessed the level of instructional leadership practices exhibited by the school heads in the central schools. The leadership behavior indicated in the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) by Hallinger were adopted and enhanced in this study. Some modifications were made applicable to the context of the respondents.

The following 4-point Likert Scale was utilized to qualitatively and quantitatively analyze the data gathered.

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Numerical Value	Range	Description
		<i>Level of Practice</i>
		<i>Along Instructional Leadership</i>
4	3.25-4.00	Always Practiced
3	2.50-3.24	Sometimes Practiced
2	1.75-2.49	Rarely Practiced
1	1.00-1.74	Never Practiced

Part 3 of the questionnaire determined the challenges of school heads along their instructional leadership practices and as perceived by their teachers by checking the items/challenges that the respondents have met.

To ensure credible and reliable data, the researcher conducted a validation process for the survey questionnaire. The process included getting feedback from school heads from other schools/districts not included in this study. Their suggestions and recommendations to improve the instrument were considered in the finalization of the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study examined the demographic profiles of both school heads and teachers. For school heads, data was collected on their years of service as an administrator, current position,

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highest educational qualifications, number of instructional leadership trainings attended in the past three years, and their most recent OPCR (Office Performance Commitment and Review Form) rating. For teacher-respondents, information was gathered on their years of teaching experience, current designation, and educational qualifications.

1.a Number of Years as Teacher/school Head

Table 1.a shows the respondents' number of years as teacher/school head.

Table 1.a
Number of Years as Teacher/School Head

NUMBER OF YEARS	SCHOOL HEADS N=16		TEACHERS N=440	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
25 & up	6	37.50	96	21.82
20-24	4	25.00	52	11.82
15-19	2	12.50	81	18.41
10-14	3	18.75	105	23.86
5-9	1	6.25	64	14.55
4 & below	0	0	42	9.55
Total	16	100.00	440	100.00

Based on the data from school heads regarding their years of service, majority, accounting for 37.50%, had been serving as school heads for 25 years or more, particularly those assigned to central schools. For the teacher-respondents, most of them have been in the service for 10-14 years, reflecting a workforce that has moved beyond the early stages of professional development. The findings suggest that most school heads assigned to Central Schools, having served in their roles for 20–24 years, have likely developed the essential competencies required for effective school leadership. Their extensive experience may

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contribute to stable and strategic school management, along with the successful implementation of instructional leadership practices.

Research supports the idea that experienced school leaders and teachers contribute significantly to educational effectiveness. Daing (2020) found that seasoned administrators positively impact teacher performance and self-efficacy through their instructional leadership. Similarly, Podolsky et al. (2019) and Villa and Tulod (2020) highlighted that teaching experience enhances student achievement and strengthens instructional competencies. Together, these findings suggest that a school staffed with experienced leaders and teachers fosters continuous improvement and sustained academic success.

1.b Current Position of the Respondents

Table 1.b illustrates the current position of the respondents.

Table 1.b
Current Position of the Respondents

SCHOOL HEADS N=16			TEACHERS N=440		
Position	Frequency	Percentage	Position	Frequency	Percentage
P-1	6	37.50	T-1	78	17.73
P-2	10	62.50	T-2	82	18.64
			T-3	237	53.86
			MT-1	37	8.41
			MT-2	6	1.36
TOTAL	16	100.00	TOTAL	440	100

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The distribution of school heads in Central Schools reveals that 62.50% are Principal II, indicating strong leadership capacity, while 37.50% are Principal I, reflecting a balanced mix of experience. Among teachers, the majority (53.86%) are at the Teacher III level, suggesting a competent workforce, though the low percentage of Master Teachers (only 8.41% Master Teacher I and 1.36% Master Teacher II) highlights limited opportunities for peer mentoring and instructional leadership, pointing to a need for enhanced career advancement and development.

The presence of experienced school heads indicates strong leadership; however, the low number of Master Teachers highlights a need for improved promotion pathways and professional development. Addressing this gap could strengthen instructional leadership and curriculum innovation. Unlike Arombo's (2023) findings, where most teachers were Master Teachers, this study reflects a stable leadership structure with an experienced teaching force—key factors in supporting continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

1.c Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Table 1.c shows the educational attainment of the school heads and teachers.

Table 1.c
Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational Level	SCHOOL HEADS N=16		TEACHERS N=440	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
With MA Units	1	6.25	213	48.41
Master's Degree-CAR	5	31.25	191	43.41
Master's Degree	5	31.25	26	5.91
With units in Doctorate Degree	1	6.25	6	1.36
Doctorate Degree-CAR	0	0	2	0.45
Doctorate Degree	4	25.00	2	0.45
Total	16	100	440	100

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The educational qualifications of school heads and teachers reflect a strong commitment to advanced studies, especially in education. While a significant portion of school heads hold Master’s (31.25%) or Doctorate degrees (25%), most teachers are still in progress (48.41%) have completed Master’s units and 43.41% are candidates for graduation. However, only 5.91% have fully completed their Master’s degrees, and few are pursuing doctorates, suggesting possible barriers such as time, financial constraints, or academic challenges. The advanced educational qualifications of school heads indicate strong leadership capacity and potential to enhance student outcomes. However, the lower rate of postgraduate completion among teachers highlights challenges such as time, financial constraints, and limited access to graduate programs. Addressing these through flexible policies like scholarships, online courses, or workload adjustments could support more teachers in earning advanced degrees, thereby improving instructional quality. This aligns with findings from Vicera et al., where all respondents pursued postgraduate studies, and Quimerista (2021), who reported a stable, experienced workforce with most holding master’s degrees.

1.d Number of Trainings Attended by School Heads along Instructional Leadership

Table 1.d shows the number of trainings attended by school heads along instructional leadership

Table 1.d
Number of Trainings Attended by the School Heads along Instructional Leadership

No. of Trainings	Number of School Heads with Training Along Instructional Leadership & its level N=16														
	SY.2021-2022					SY.2022-2023					SY.2023-2024				
	Dist	Div	Reg	Nat'l	Int'l	Dist	Div	Reg	Nat'l	Int'l	Dist	Div	Reg	Nat'l	Int'l
1-5	5	10	7	6	4	5	12	6	3	1	4	13	5	3	0
6-10	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
11 or more	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	6	12	7	6	4	6	13	6	3	1	5	13	5	3	0
PERCENTAGE	38	75	44	38	25	38	81	37	19	6	31	81	31	19	0

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Data from the past three school years show that division-level training is the most attended and valued form of professional development for school heads, with participation rates consistently between 75% and 81%. In contrast, district- and regional-level training showed a gradual decline, suggesting a shift in focus toward more localized and relevant training. Notably, international-level training participation dropped to zero in SY 2023–2024, down from 25% in SY 2021–2022, raising concerns about its accessibility or perceived relevance. These trends highlight the importance of strengthening division-level programs and exploring ways to reintroduce and enhance access to international training such as through virtual formats or financial support to broaden school heads' exposure to global educational practices.

This study contrasts with Peregrino et al. (2021), where most school heads participated in international-level training. The current findings show a shift toward division-level training, which Spillane and Hopkins attribute to school leaders' growing preference for professional development that directly addresses their day-to-day challenges. This trend reflects a demand for practical, context-specific training aligned with immediate school improvement goals.

1.e Latest OPCRf Rating of the School Heads

The OPCRf results show that all 16 elementary school heads in Central Schools received outstanding ratings, with 62% earning perfect scores across all domains of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). However, 38% scored lower in

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Domain 3, "Focusing on Teaching and Learning," indicating a need for improvement in instructional leadership.

While school heads excel in operational and strategic areas, these findings highlight the importance of strengthening their capacity to lead teaching and learning. This need aligns with Republic Act No. 9155 and DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020, which emphasize ongoing capacity-building in instructional leadership.

Research underscores the importance of strengthening instructional leadership among school heads. Leithwood et al. (2020) highlight that while leaders often excel in managing operations, their impact on teaching and learning can be limited without targeted training echoing OPCRF results where many scored lower in Domain 3. Hargreaves and Shirley (2019) and Robinson (2019) emphasize that prioritizing instructional leadership leads to better student outcomes, while Fullan (2020) stresses the need for leaders to build teachers' instructional capacity. These findings suggest that school heads in Central Schools should focus more on improving their instructional leadership skills. Providing targeted support in areas like instructional supervision, data-driven decision-making, and fostering professional learning communities can close gaps in Domain 3 and drive long-term improvements in teaching quality and student achievement.

2. Level of Practice Demonstrated by School Heads Along Instructional Leadership

The level of instructional leadership practiced by the school heads was assessed both through self-evaluation and based on the perceptions of their teachers. This assessment

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covered key dimensions of instructional leadership, including: framing and communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, maintaining high visibility within the school, providing incentives for both teachers and students, promoting professional development, and fostering a positive learning environment.

2.a Framing and Communicating School Goals

Table 2.a shows the level of practice of the school heads along framing and communicating goals.

Table 2.a
Framing and Communicating School Goals

Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1. Develop goals that seek improvement over current levels of academic performance	3.88	Always Practiced	3.86	Always Practiced	3.87	Always Practiced
2. Use needs assessment or evidence-based results such as learner's academic performance to secure staff input on goal development	3.88	Always Practiced	3.82	Always Practiced	3.85	Always Practiced
3. Discuss the school's academic goals with teachers during staff meetings	3.94	Always Practiced	3.74	Always Practiced	3.84	Always Practiced
4. Communicate the school's academic goals to learners, teachers and stakeholders during meetings, assemblies and orientation	3.94	Always Practiced	3.79	Always Practiced	3.87	Always Practiced
5. Ensure that the school's goals are reflected in highly visible displays in the school premise (e.g., posters or bulletin boards indicating the importance of literacy or numeracy)	3.44	Always Practiced	3.52	Always Practiced	3.48	Always Practiced

Legend: 3.50-4.00 = Always Practiced
 2.50-3.49 = Sometimes Practiced
 1.50-2.49 = Rarely Practiced
 1.00-1.49 = Never Practiced

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The findings indicate that school heads demonstrate strong leadership in setting and verbally communicating academic improvement goals, with both practices receiving the highest rating (3.87). However, the visible display of these goals received the lowest rating (3.48), suggesting it is less emphasized. To strengthen goal awareness and foster a shared commitment, school leaders should enhance visual reinforcement through creative displays like posters and bulletin boards. This highlights the need for a more holistic communication approach that combines both verbal and visual strategies.

Supporting literature emphasizes the importance of effective communication in school leadership. Studies by Decir & Paglinawan (2024) and Anggorowati et al. (2020) highlight that strategic communication enhances goal clarity and stakeholder alignment. Wekesa (2023) links leadership style to effective goal framing, while Kanjira et al. (2024) suggest using digital platforms like WhatsApp to improve the accessibility and immediacy of goal-related information. Other studies (Yörük & Kocabaş, 2021; Ingsih et al., 2021; Patzun, 2021) stress that strong communication skills help leaders engage staff, foster collaboration, and improve motivation. Ng (2019) and Blasé & Blasé (2000) further reinforce that defining and clearly communicating a school's mission is essential for improving student learning. Collectively, these findings support the need for both visual and digital communication strategies to effectively share school goals and drive educational success.

2.b Supervising and Evaluating Instruction

Table 2.b shows the level of practice of the school heads along supervising and evaluating instruction.

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Table 2.b
Supervising and Evaluating Instruction

Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1. Conduct informal and formal observations in classrooms on a regular basis	3.81	Always Practiced	3.75	Always Practiced	3.78	Always Practiced
2. Ensure that the competencies being taught by the teachers are consistent with the curriculum standards	3.94	Always Practiced	3.80	Always Practiced	3.87	Always Practiced
3. Lead teachers to recognize specific strengths and areas of improvement in teacher instructional practices during post observation	3.88	Always Practiced	3.75	Always Practiced	3.82	Always Practiced
4. Note specific strengths and areas for improvement of the teacher's instructional practices in the observation notes	4.00	Always Practiced	3.83	Always Practiced	3.92	Always Practiced
5. Note learners time-on-task and give feedback after classroom observations	3.75	Always Practiced	3.77	Always Practiced	3.76	Always Practiced

Legend: 3.50-4.00 - Always Practiced
2.50-3.49 - Sometimes Practiced
1.50-2.49 - Rarely Practiced
1.00-1.49 - Never Practiced

The data shows that school heads demonstrate strong instructional leadership, especially in supervising and evaluating instruction. The highest-rated practice (mean of 3.92) involves providing detailed feedback on teachers' instructional strengths and areas for improvement, indicating a consistent focus on professional growth. However, the lowest-rated indicator (mean of 3.76) relates to monitoring student engagement and giving feedback, suggesting this aspect of supervision may receive less attention and could be an area for further development.

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The findings indicate that while school heads are effective in providing teacher-centered feedback, there is less focus on monitoring student engagement, particularly in observing and responding to learners' time-on-task. This suggests the need for a more comprehensive approach to instructional leadership. Research by Nguyen, Ng, and Springer (2019), along with studies by Castillo (2024) and Naguit (2024), supports that regular observations, feedback, and support improve teacher performance and instructional quality. However, for these practices to drive full school improvement, attention must also be given to student engagement, as strengthening student-focused observations can lead to better learning outcomes and more effective instructional strategies.

2.2.c Coordinating the Curriculum

Table 2.c shows the level of practice of school heads along coordinating the curriculum.

Table 2.c
Coordinating the Curriculum

Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1.Ensure that the school's academic goals are translated into common curricular objectives	3.94	Always Practiced	3.78	Always Practiced	3.86	Always Practiced
2.Draw on the results of the school assessment when making curricular decisions	3.94	Always Practiced	3.75	Always Practiced	3.85	Always Practiced
3.Monitor the implementation of the curriculum to see that it covers the curricular objectives/competencies	3.75	Always Practiced	3.70	Always Practiced	3.73	Always Practiced
4.Assess the overlap between the curricular objectives and the achievement test/post-test used for program evaluation	3.56	Always Practiced	3.73	Always Practiced	3.65	Always Practiced
5.Participate in the conduct of review, contextualization, implementation of learning standards and selection of curricular materials relevant for learners	3.50	Always Practiced	3.66	Always Practiced	3.63	Always Practiced

Legend: 3.50-4.00 — Always Practiced
2.50-3.49 — Sometimes Practiced
1.50-2.49 — Rarely Practiced
1.00-1.49 — Never Practiced

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The data reveal that schools excel in aligning academic goals with curricular objectives, as shown by the highest rating for this indicator (mean of 3.86), reflecting strong leadership in curriculum planning. However, the lowest-rated indicator points to limited teacher involvement in reviewing, contextualizing, and selecting curriculum materials. This imbalance suggests that while goals are clearly communicated, educators are not fully engaged in shaping or localizing curriculum content. As a result, instructional materials may lack relevance to students' cultural and contextual realities, potentially reducing engagement and instructional effectiveness. To address this gap, professional development and policy reforms are needed to promote greater teacher participation in curriculum development, fostering a more collaborative and responsive educational environment.

The findings align with Hallinger and Wang (2020), who stressed that shared leadership and clear academic goals lead to effective curricular alignment and school improvement. However, the low rating for teacher involvement in curriculum contextualization mirrors concerns raised by Alviator (2020) and Sevilla et al. (2022), who noted that centralized control, limited training, and restricted decision-making hinder teacher participation. Tan and Ramos (2021) found that allowing teachers to adapt learning materials enhances student engagement and achievement, while Gaston (2024) emphasized the critical role of school heads in supporting teacher development through active curriculum involvement. Reimers and Schleicher (2020) further highlighted the need for flexible, context-responsive curricula, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. These findings support the call for greater

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teacher participation and instructional leadership in curriculum review and contextualization to ensure relevance, foster teacher growth, and improve overall academic outcomes.

2.d Monitoring Student Progress

Table 2.d indicates the level of practice of the school heads along monitoring student progress.

Table 2.d
Monitoring Student Progress

Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1.Meet individually with teachers to discuss learners academic progress	3.69	Always Practiced	3.63	Always Practiced	3.66	Always Practiced
2.Discuss the item analysis of tests with the teachers to identify both instructional strengths and weaknesses	3.56	Always Practiced	3.69	Always Practiced	3.63	Always Practiced
3.Use test results to assess progress toward school goals	3.75	Always Practiced	3.73	Always Practiced	3.74	Always Practiced
4.Ensure that test results are communicated to learners and parents in a timely manner	3.75	Always Practiced	3.76	Always Practiced	3.76	Always Practiced
5.Lead in the development of data-based intervention to sustain learner achievement or address the learning gaps	3.75	Always Practiced	3.63	Always Practiced	3.69	Always Practiced

Legend: 3.50-4.00 - Always Practiced
2.50-3.49 - Sometimes Practiced
1.50-2.49 - Rarely Practiced
1.00-1.49 - Never Practiced

The data reveal that school heads demonstrate strong instructional leadership in monitoring student progress, with all indicators rated as "always practiced." The highest-rated

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indicator, "ensuring timely communication of test results to learners and parents," highlights the priority placed on transparency and feedback. However, the lowest-rated indicator, "discussing test item analysis to identify instructional strengths and weaknesses," suggests that while assessment results are communicated effectively, using data for instructional improvement is slightly underemphasized. This indicates a need for stronger focus on data-driven instruction. To address this, professional development should focus on enhancing assessment literacy and data interpretation, helping school heads and teachers link test results to targeted teaching strategies and learner interventions, ultimately improving learning outcomes.

Hallinger and Wang (2020) highlight that effective instructional leaders guide teachers in using data to improve instruction, aligning with the strong communication of test results observed in the study, but also pointing out the need for more focused use of instructional data. Reyes and Arcilla (2021) found that while school heads in the Philippines meet administrative assessment requirements, their leadership in data-driven discussions for pedagogical improvement varies. De Guzman and Florendo (2019) noted limited use of item analysis due to training and time constraints, despite its potential value in identifying instructional strengths and weaknesses. Jensen et al. (2020) emphasize that item-level test analysis is key for differentiated instruction and targeted interventions, and leadership support in this area can significantly enhance overall learning quality.

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2.e Protecting Instructional Time

Table 2.e shows the level of practice of school heads along protecting instructional time.

Table 2.e
Protecting Instructional Time

Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1.Ensure that the instructional time is not interrupted by school announcements	3.63	Always Practiced	3.66	Always Practiced	3.65	Always Practiced
2.Guarantee that teachers and learners are not called to the office during instructional time	3.75	Always Practiced	3.70	Always Practiced	3.73	Always Practiced
3.Confirm that tardy or truant learners make up lost instructional time	3.88	Always Practiced	3.74	Always Practiced	3.81	Always Practiced
4.Visit classrooms to see that instructional time is used for learning and practicing new skills and concepts	3.94	Always Practiced	3.63	Always Practiced	3.79	Always Practiced
5.Employ alternative learning modalities such as modular/online learning in the event of cancelled or suspended face-to-face classes	3.88	Always Practiced	3.77	Always Practiced	3.83	Always Practiced

Legend: 3.50-4.00 = Always Practiced
 2.50-3.49 = Sometimes Practiced
 1.50-2.49 = Rarely Practiced
 1.00-1.49 = Never Practiced

The data shows that school heads and teachers are highly adaptable and prepared, with a strong ability to employ alternative learning modalities (like modular or online learning) during disruptions, reflected in the high score for Indicator 5 (3.83). This indicates effective management of external challenges, ensuring continuity of learning in crises like natural

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disasters or health emergencies. However, Indicator 1, related to minimizing interruptions to instructional time from school announcements, received the lowest mean score (3.65), suggesting that while instructional time is generally protected, minor disruptions still occur.

This disparity highlights that schools are well-equipped to handle external challenges but may need to improve internal practices to reduce interruptions. The findings suggest that better coordination of administrative communications such as limiting announcements to designated times or utilizing digital platforms could further protect instructional time, ensuring smoother lesson flow and more focused student engagement.

The findings align with research by Gultiano (2022), which emphasizes that effective time management and adaptive learning strategies are crucial for enhancing student achievement. Studies by Trinidad and Tumapon (2021) and Magsambol (2020) also support the importance of flexible learning, particularly digital and modular approaches, in maintaining educational continuity during disruptions, as outlined in DepEd’s Learning Continuity Plan (2020). Hallinger (2020) and Capulong and Tan (2021) further highlight that frequent interruptions, such as school announcements, can hinder effective teaching. To address this, Dizon and Santos (2019) suggest structured scheduling and time-on-task policies. These insights underscore the importance of school leadership in protecting instructional time. By minimizing non-instructional disruptions, school leaders create a more conducive learning environment, ultimately improving teaching effectiveness and student academic performance.

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2.f Maintaining High Visibility

Table 2.f shows the level of practice of school heads along maintain high visibility.

**Table 2.f
Maintaining High Visibility**

Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1. Take time to talk with learners and teachers during recess and breaks	3.75	Always Practiced	3.51	Always Practiced	3.63	Always Practiced
2. Make rounds during classes	4.00	Always Practiced	3.71	Always Practiced	3.86	Always Practiced
3. Attend or participate in co-curricular and extracurricular activities	3.88	Always Practiced	3.80	Always Practiced	3.84	Always Practiced
4. Substitute classes if the teacher is late or absent	3.38	Always Practiced	3.23	Sometimes Practiced	3.31	<u>Always Practiced</u>
5. Assist teachers who need help for better classroom management	3.94	Always Practiced	3.67	Always Practiced	3.81	Always Practiced

Legend: 3.50-4.00 - Always Practiced
 2.50-3.49 - Sometimes Practiced
 1.50-2.49 - Rarely Practiced
 1.00-1.49 - Never Practiced

The data indicate that school heads frequently conduct classroom walk-throughs, as indicated by the highest mean score of 3.86 for Indicator 2, showing strong instructional leadership and a visible presence during teaching hours. This practice helps maintain discipline, focus, and accountability within the school.

However, Indicator 4, which involves substituting for absent teachers, received a lower mean of 3.31, indicating differing views on the school leader's role in covering for teacher

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absences. This gap suggests that there may be unclear expectations or logistical challenges in this area. While classroom monitoring is prioritized, the lower score for teacher substitution points to potential gaps in managing staff absences, which could disrupt instructional continuity. To address this, schools may need to implement clear protocols for handling teacher absences to minimize the impact on instructional time and student performance.

The findings align with research by Sule et.al (2022), which shows that regular classroom walkthroughs and visible leadership improve classroom management, teacher motivation, and student outcomes. Hallinger and Wang (2020) also emphasized that a leader's presence fosters collaboration and high expectations, enhancing school performance. Additionally, Bush and Glover (2019) noted that visible leadership reinforces school culture and instructional alignment. However, Reyes and Arcilla (2021) highlighted that unclear leadership roles in managing teacher absences can cause operational challenges. De Vera and Roxas (2020) supported this by showing that schools with clear plans for handling teacher absences experience fewer disruptions. The research suggests that implementing strategies such as preparing substitute teachers, adopting team-teaching models, and using digital tools can ensure instructional continuity and maintain student achievement during staff absences.

2.g Providing Incentives for Teachers and Learners

Table 2.g shows the level of practice of school heads along providing incentives for teachers and learners.

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Table 2.g
Providing Incentives for Teachers and Learners

Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1.Reinforce teachers' exceptional efforts or performance in memos, during staff meetings/assemblies or by posting tarpaulin	3.88	Always Practiced	3.58	Always Practiced	3.73	Always Practiced
2.Compliment teachers for their efforts or performance	4.00	Always Practiced	3.80	Always Practiced	3.90	Always Practiced
3.Reward special efforts of teachers with opportunities for professional development, giving of certificate of recognition or simple token	3.88	Always Practiced	3.59	Always Practiced	3.74	Always Practiced
4.Recognizes learners' progress/efforts in improving their performance especially on literacy and numeracy through praises or rewards	3.88	Always Practiced	3.62	Always Practiced	3.75	Always Practiced
5.Acknowledge learners' performance through simple quarterly/annual recognition ceremony	3.88	Always Practiced	3.82	Always Practiced	3.85	Always Practiced

Legend: 3.50-4.00 - Always Practiced
 2.50-3.49 - Sometimes Practiced
 1.50-2.49 - Rarely Practiced
 1.00-1.49 - Never Practiced

Based on the data gathered, school heads effectively exercise instructional leadership through recognition practices, with the highest average weighted mean (AWM) of 3.90 for complimenting teachers for their efforts. This underscores the importance of positive reinforcement, suggesting that teachers' motivation and performance improve when acknowledged. However, the lowest AWM (3.73) was recorded for reinforcing teachers' efforts during staff meetings or through official memos, indicating room for improvement in public recognition. While private compliments are meaningful, public recognition can further boost morale and foster a culture of excellence within the school community.

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The findings suggest that school heads should expand public recognition during formal events or written communications, and leadership training should include strategies for delivering effective recognition. Additionally, education authorities may consider implementing policies that balance private and public recognition to inspire teachers, enhance school culture, and support long-term educational success.

Research by Buenvenida and Ramos (2019) suggests that school heads who consistently show appreciation and moral support for teachers lead to higher motivation and improved school performance. This aligns with broader studies that emphasize well-structured recognition systems as crucial for educational success. Public recognition has been shown to increase teacher satisfaction and engagement, which positively impacts student outcomes. Studies in Tanzania and Uganda also underscore the strong link between teacher recognition and improved academic performance. The OECD further supports this, noting that regular appraisals and recognition encourage teachers to adopt more effective teaching practices, thereby fostering professional growth and enhancing instructional quality.

2.h Promoting Professional Development

Table 2.h describes the level of practice of school heads along promoting professional development.

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Table 2.h
Promoting Professional Development



Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1. Lead and guide the teachers in the conduct of LAC sessions or collaborative expertise on classroom instruction	3.94	Always Practiced	3.83	Always Practiced	3.89	Always Practiced
2. Ensure that in-service trainings attended by teachers are consistent with their professional development needs	3.81	Always Practiced	3.83	Always Practiced	3.82	Always Practiced
3. Support the application of knowledge and skills acquired during trainings in the teaching learning process	3.94	Always Practiced	3.71	Always Practiced	3.83	Always Practiced
4. Set aside time during staff conference for teachers to share ideas and concerns on instruction or information from in-service trainings attended	4.00	Always Practiced	3.78	Always Practiced	3.89	Always Practiced
5. Inform teachers of opportunities for professional development	3.81	Always Practiced	3.88	Always Practiced	3.85	Always Practiced

The study reveals that school heads demonstrate strong instructional leadership, especially in promoting teachers' professional development. High ratings were given to indicators like leading Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions and providing time for teachers to share instructional insights, reflecting a collaborative culture focused on continuous growth. However, a slightly lower score was given to aligning in-service training with teachers' specific needs, suggesting room for improvement in tailoring professional development programs. This highlights the importance of effective leadership in fostering collaboration and enhancing teacher efficacy, with a need for better alignment between training activities and teachers'

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actual needs, potentially through needs assessments and greater teacher involvement in planning.

The findings support existing research on the crucial role of instructional leadership in promoting collaborative professional development. Studies by Hallinger and Wang (2020) and Brix and Levinsen (2020) highlight the importance of leadership in fostering reflective practices and effective learning communities. In the Philippines, the successful implementation of Learning Action Cells (LACs), as mandated by DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016, reflects this leadership approach. Research by Rivera and Domingo (2021) shows that strong leadership boosts teacher collaboration and innovation, while Darling-Hammond, Hyster, and Gardner (2019) emphasize that the most effective professional development is ongoing, collaborative, and connected to classroom practice. Additionally, Gu, Sammons, and Chen (2020) found that leaders who promote shared learning and reflection significantly improve teaching quality and school performance, benefiting student outcomes.

2.i Creating a Positive Learning Environment

Table 2.i indicates the level of practice of school heads along creating a positive learning environment

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Table 2.i
Creating a Positive Learning Environment

Indicators	School Heads N=16		Teachers N=440		AWM	A.I
	WM	A.I	WM	A.I.		
1.Ensure that teachers have access to the materials, technology, and other learning resources they need in their classroom instruction	3.94	Always Practiced	3.78	Always Practiced	3.86	Always Practiced
2. See to it that teachers organize the classroom seating arrangement where pupils can work individually as well as participate in a group activity	3.88	Always Practiced	3.82	Always Practiced	3.85	Always Practiced
3.Promote collaboration and open communication among learners, teachers and parents	3.94	Always Practiced	3.81	Always Practiced	3.88	Always Practiced
4.Ensure that teachers provide positive reinforcement in the classroom	4.00	Always Practiced	3.83	Always Practiced	3.92	Always Practiced
5.Create a school climate in which there is a sense of trust, shared commitment and sense of belonging among teachers, learners, parents, and wider community	4.00	Always Practiced	3.86	Always Practiced	3.85	Always Practiced

Legend: 3.50-4.00 - Always Practiced
 2.50-3.49 - Sometimes Practiced
 1.50-2.49 - Rarely Practiced
 1.00-1.49 - Never Practiced

The data reveals that school heads excel in ensuring positive reinforcement in the classroom, as indicated by the high average weighted mean (AWM) of 3.92 for Indicator 4. This reflects a strong commitment to creating a motivating environment that enhances student engagement, motivation, and academic outcomes. However, Indicator 5, which focuses on creating a climate of trust and shared commitment among teachers, students, parents, and the community, received a slightly lower AWM of 3.85, suggesting room for improvement in involving external stakeholders like parents in building a more unified school community. While

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positive reinforcement is successfully practiced and leads to improved student behavior and performance, the slightly lower score on fostering a supportive, inclusive school climate suggests that efforts to enhance trust and collaboration with parents and the broader community could be strengthened.

The study's findings support research highlighting the importance of positive reinforcement and a supportive school climate in improving educational outcomes. Studies by Rantala and Ahonen (2020) and Hattie (2020) show that trust, collaboration, and encouragement enhance student engagement, achievement, and well-being. Sullivan and Ziegler (2021) emphasize the benefits of inclusive and respectful school environments, while leadership research by Lateef, Tu, and Nickerson stresses the role of emotional and physical safety. Gu, Sammons, and Chen (2020) also underline how instructional leadership fosters collaboration and teaching quality. Additionally, Feagin (2019) found that positive reinforcement improves student behavior and participation. Together, these studies reinforce the importance of a supportive, inclusive, and collaborative approach in creating effective schools.

3.Challenges Encountered by the School Heads and Teachers along Instructional Leadership

This examines the challenges faced by school heads in fulfilling their roles as instructional leaders, as well as the difficulties teachers encounter regarding the leadership practices of school heads. By exploring both perspectives, the section provides a

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comprehensive understanding of the barriers that hinder effective instructional leadership and its impact on teaching and learning.

3.a Challenges Encountered by the School Heads Along Instructional Leadership

The data identifies major systemic and operational challenges hindering school heads from fully executing their instructional leadership roles. Key issues include administrative overload from overlapping activities (100%) and multiple responsibilities (94%), as well as teacher resistance to instructional changes (88%). Structural barriers such as supervising large teacher loads (56.3%) and limited time for supervision (25%) further reduce their effectiveness. Additional concerns include limited support from higher authorities, lack of curriculum expertise, and inadequate training.

These challenges suggest that school heads are often diverted from core leadership duties, which can negatively affect teaching quality, teacher development, and student outcomes. The findings highlight the need for reforms such as reducing administrative burdens, enhancing training, and building a collaborative school culture. Addressing these barriers is essential to empower school heads to lead more effectively in areas like curriculum implementation and instructional supervision.

Research highlights that excessive administrative duties often prevent school leaders from providing essential instructional support, limiting their impact on teaching quality and student achievement (Hallinger & Wang, 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2019). Teacher resistance to change, noted by Gu, Sammons, and Chen (2020), poses further challenges in

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fostering a collaborative culture for instructional improvement. Operational issues such as supervising large numbers of teachers, inconsistent attendance, and limited oversight from higher authorities also weaken leadership effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2020). Additionally, gaps in curriculum contextualization and data use indicate a need for stronger adaptive and analytical leadership. These challenges echo findings from Lincuna and Caingcoy in the Philippine context, emphasizing time limitations and teacher resistance as key barriers to effective instructional leadership.

3.b Challenges Encountered by the Teachers in Relation to the Instructional Leadership Practices of the School Heads

The data reveals that teachers face multiple challenges affecting instructional effectiveness, with the most significant being overlapping activities with school heads (88.18%), leading to workload strain. Other major issues include inadequate learning resources (61.4%) and poor infrastructure (51.14%). Less frequent but notable concerns involve unplanned supervision (22.5%), limited support for data-driven interventions (12.05%), weak communication and supervisory practices, and insufficient curriculum guidance from school heads.

These challenges point to both structural and leadership-related issues. Teachers struggle with conflicting schedules, resource shortages, and ineffective instructional supervision. Some school heads lack the necessary skills to provide technical support or conduct data-informed supervision, which hampers curriculum implementation and

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professional growth. Overall, the findings highlight that many teachers challenges stem from administrative and systemic factors, underscoring the need for improved leadership practices, better planning, and enhanced resource support. The study's findings align with Kilag et al. (2023), who identified resource limitations such as large class sizes, language barriers, and poor infrastructure as major obstacles to curriculum implementation in Toledo City. Similarly, this study highlights teacher challenges including conflicting schedules, lack of materials, and inadequate instructional supervision due to leadership gaps.

4. Significant Relationship in the Perception of the Respondents along Instructional Leadership Practices and Challenges Encountered

This section discusses the significant relationship between the respondents' perceptions of instructional leadership practices and the challenges they encounter.

4.a Relationship in the Perception of the School Heads and Teachers along Instructional Leadership Practices

Results showed significant relationship along framing and communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress, providing incentives for teachers and learners and creating a positive learning environment. However, no significant correlation was found in areas like protecting

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instructional time, maintaining high visibility, and promoting professional development, indicating perceptual gaps between leaders and teachers.

This misalignment suggests differing expectations or misunderstandings, which may hinder effective leadership and school performance. Supporting research by Hallinger and Wang (2020) and Gu, Sammons, and Chen (2020) stresses the importance of aligning leadership actions with teacher needs—especially in professional development and time management—for successful instructional outcomes. Addressing these gaps through improved communication, collaboration, and teacher involvement in decision-making can enhance instructional leadership and overall school effectiveness.

4.b Relationship in the Challenges Encountered by School Heads and Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Relation to the Instructional Leadership Practices of the School Heads

The Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test was used to assess the relationship between the challenges faced by school heads and teachers regarding instructional leadership. The test results showed a value of zero for the school heads' group (U1) and 132 for the teachers' group (U2). Since U1 (zero) was smaller than the critical value, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates a significant relationship between the challenges encountered by school heads and teachers in the context of instructional leadership.

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The result suggests that the challenges faced by school heads are closely linked to those experienced by teachers. Issues like overlapping activities, multiple responsibilities, and resistance to instructional changes affect both groups, creating a shared experience that impacts the overall functioning of the school. This reciprocal relationship highlights the interconnectedness of leadership and teaching challenges, as noted by Hallinger & Wang (2019) and Leithwood & Sun (2020).

Studies highlight that alignment between school heads and teachers on challenges is crucial for improving instructional quality and student outcomes (Day et al., 2019). Addressing shared challenges through collaboration fosters a productive learning environment and encourages communication, problem-solving, and collective responsibility (Gu, Sammons, & Chen, 2020). To overcome these barriers, school leaders should engage in open dialogue with teachers, provide targeted professional development, and develop strategies to manage overlapping responsibilities. This collaborative approach can lead to improved instructional practices and better student achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data gathered, several conclusions were drawn. School heads in central schools possess significant leadership experience and have received high ratings in the OPCRF, with many having pursued postgraduate studies. However, there are areas in instructional leadership, particularly in Domain 3 - Focusing on Teaching and Learning, that require improvement. Similarly, teachers, despite their considerable experience and professional

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development, also show dedication to their roles, but continued growth is essential to further enhance their teaching effectiveness.

The findings indicate that school heads demonstrate strong instructional leadership with high ratings across the nine leadership functions. While some differences exist between the responses of school heads and teachers, the overall ratings suggest that these practices are consistently "always practiced." Nonetheless, the lower weighted means in certain indicators signal areas for improvement, offering opportunities for school heads to refine their leadership practices and enhance the learning environment.

Additionally, school heads and teachers share both common and distinct challenges in instructional leadership, emphasizing the need for open communication and a coordinated approach to address these obstacles. There is a significant relationship between school heads' and teachers' perceptions of key instructional leadership practices, such as setting school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress, providing incentives, and creating a positive learning environment. However, no significant correlation was found in practices like protecting instructional time, maintaining visibility, and promoting professional development. The challenges faced by both groups are closely interconnected, underscoring the importance of addressing these shared difficulties to improve school leadership and instructional effectiveness. Finally, an Instructional Leadership Enhancement Program for School Heads has been proposed to address these challenges and further strengthen the instructional leadership practices of school heads.

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