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Implementation Practices of School Heads on Learning Intervention Programs: A Study in San Fernando District

Kiwot A. Melitante
Buyo Elementary School, Buyo, San Fernando, Masbate, Philippines

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Email of Corresponding Author: kiwot.arizala001@deped.gov.ph

Abstract

This study determined the implementation practices of school heads on learning intervention programs in San Fernando District. Guided by the Transformational Leadership Theory of Burns (1978), Instructional Leadership Theory of Hallinger and Murphy (1985), and General Systems Theory of Bertalanffy (1940), the study examined how school heads manage planning, resource and personnel management, monitoring and evaluation, and teacher support and capacity-building in implementing intervention programs. A descriptive-quantitative research design was employed using a structured questionnaire validated by experts and administered to 30 public elementary and secondary school heads through convenience sampling. Data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson correlation. Findings revealed that school heads demonstrated a very high level of implementation practices across all dimensions of learning intervention programs, particularly in setting clear objectives aligned with learners' needs, assigning qualified teachers, providing feedback based on monitoring results, and encouraging teacher participation in seminars and workshops. The study further found that school heads moderately encountered challenges such as unstable internet connectivity, lack of trained teachers, heavy administrative workload, insufficient instructional materials, and limited stakeholder support. Moreover, results showed a weak positive linear relationship between the demographic profile of school heads and their implementation practices on learning intervention programs. The study concluded that effective leadership practices contribute significantly to the successful implementation of intervention programs and emphasized the importance of adequate resources, continuous teacher development, stakeholder collaboration, and data-driven monitoring systems. Recommendations focused on strengthening planning practices, adopting standardized monitoring tools, intensifying professional development, and encouraging shared leadership among teachers. The study supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education by promoting effective learning recovery and intervention practices that enhance learner achievement and educational equity. It also aligns with SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through strengthened collaboration among schools, parents, and community stakeholders. The sustainability impact of the study lies in its contribution to improving school leadership practices, strengthening institutional learning recovery systems, and promoting sustainable educational support mechanisms for learners in rural school communities.

Keywords: Capacity-Building, Instructional Leadership, Learning Intervention Programs, Monitoring and Evaluation, Planning, Resource Management, School Heads, Teacher Support, Transformational Leadership

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic caused severe disruptions in education, resulting in learning loss, poor academic performance, and increasing numbers of struggling learners in literacy and numeracy. International assessments showed that the Philippines ranked among the lowest-performing countries in reading, mathematics, and science in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (OECD, 2023). National Achievement Test reports also reflected low learner performance, emphasizing the need for urgent intervention programs (DepEd, 2023). In response, the Department of Education implemented intervention and learning recovery initiatives, including the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP) through DepEd Order No. 013, s. 2023, the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP), School Learning Recovery and Continuity Plans (SLRCP), Brigada Pagbasa, structured literacy remediation, Catch-Up Fridays, and after-class intervention sessions (DepEd Order No. 013, s. 2023; DM 034, s. 2025). These programs aim to address learning gaps and improve foundational competencies among learners. School heads play a critical role in implementing these programs by conducting learner diagnostics, preparing intervention plans, organizing remedial classes, allocating resources, supporting teachers, and monitoring learner progress (Espinosa, 2023; Genciana et al. 2024; Pagdilao & Paguyo, 2023). However, implementation varies across schools due to administrative workload, limited training, inconsistent monitoring systems, and unequal resource availability (Cansoy et al., 2024). These challenges highlight the need to examine how school heads manage intervention programs and how leadership practices influence learning recovery.

Foreign and local literature consistently emphasize that effective leadership is essential to the success of learning intervention programs. Studies by Thierry et al. (2023) and McTigue et al. (2024) revealed that school leader engagement,

resource allocation, monitoring, and teacher support significantly improve intervention implementation and teacher commitment. Collins et al. (2024) and Schultes (2023) further stressed the importance of systematic monitoring and leadership-centered implementation strategies. Research conducted during and after the pandemic highlighted contextual challenges such as limited resources, time constraints, diverse learner needs, and technological barriers (Carbonari et al., 2024; Arrieta-Cohen et al., 2024; Nurhayati, 2024). These studies emphasized adaptive leadership, stakeholder collaboration, and data-driven decision-making as necessary practices for sustaining intervention programs. Local studies similarly underscored the significance of instructional leadership, planning, monitoring, stakeholder involvement, and resource management in learning intervention programs. Arciaga and Astillero (2023), Genciana et al. 2024, Espinosa (2023), and Dionglay and Callo (2024) found that effective leadership improves implementation consistency, teacher performance, and learner outcomes. Research on reading and numeracy interventions also identified the importance of teacher preparedness, professional development, parental involvement, and monitoring systems (Tolentin, 2023; Heguerra & Cacho, 2022; Nobora, 2024; Arevalo, 2023; Miña & Caballes, 2023). Overall, the literature suggests that successful intervention programs depend on strong instructional leadership, systematic monitoring and evaluation, teacher capacity-building, collaborative governance, and responsive school-wide implementation practices.

Globally, educational systems experienced severe learning disruptions during the pandemic, leading governments and institutions to implement recovery initiatives focused on literacy, numeracy, and learner engagement. International studies demonstrated that school leadership significantly affects intervention success and learner recovery (McBrayer et al., 2020; Giri et al., 2025; Marinelli et al., 2024). Nationally, the Philippine education sector implemented learning recovery policies through DepEd programs such as NLRP, BE-LCP, SLRCP, Brigada Pagbasa, and structured remediation initiatives to address poor learner performance and learning gaps (DepEd Order No. 013, s. 2023; DM 034, s. 2025). These reforms aligned with the MATATAG agenda aimed at strengthening foundational education and instructional recovery. Locally, San Fernando District in Masbate presents a unique educational context characterized by rural and coastal communities where families primarily rely on farming and fishing. The district includes elementary, junior high, and senior high schools with varying school sizes, resource capacities, and geographic accessibility. These socioeconomic and contextual conditions directly influence learner participation, parental involvement, and the implementation of learning intervention programs.

This study is anchored on Transformational Leadership Theory by James McGregor Burns (1978), Instructional Leadership Theory by Hallinger and Murphy (1985), and General Systems Theory by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1940). Transformational Leadership Theory explains how school heads motivate teachers, foster collaboration, and encourage professional growth to improve intervention implementation. It emphasizes leadership behaviors that inspire commitment and align teacher efforts with school goals. Instructional Leadership Theory focuses on the direct role of school leaders in improving teaching quality through supervision, monitoring, feedback, curriculum planning, and teacher development. This theory supports the study's focus on monitoring, evaluation, and teacher support in intervention programs. General Systems Theory views schools as interconnected systems in which planning, resource management, monitoring, and teacher support work collectively to achieve effective intervention outcomes. It highlights the interdependence of all school processes in sustaining learning recovery programs. Together, these theories explain that successful intervention implementation requires leadership motivation, instructional guidance, and systemic coordination.

Although numerous studies discuss school leadership and intervention programs, limited localized research examines how school heads implement intervention programs at the district level. Existing studies often focus broadly on learning continuity, literacy programs, or instructional leadership without specifically examining planning, resource management, monitoring, teacher support, and implementation challenges in rural school districts. There is also insufficient evidence on how demographic characteristics of school heads relate to implementation practices and how contextual challenges affect program effectiveness. This study addresses these gaps by investigating the implementation practices of school heads in San Fernando District, identifying challenges encountered, and proposing measures to strengthen intervention delivery and educational recovery efforts.

This study aligns primarily with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):
SDG 4 – Quality Education, because the study focuses on improving learning intervention programs, literacy, numeracy, and educational recovery among struggling learners.
SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, as strengthening educational outcomes contributes to workforce readiness and long-term socio-economic development.
SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, through the integration of monitoring systems, digital interventions, and data-driven educational management.
SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities, by addressing learning gaps among disadvantaged learners in rural and geographically isolated communities.
SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals, through collaboration among schools, parents, community stakeholders, and educational authorities in sustaining intervention programs.

The study supports educational sustainability by promoting effective school leadership, equitable access to intervention programs, and continuous improvement in instructional practices. It also contributes to institutional sustainability by strengthening leadership systems, monitoring frameworks, and collaborative educational governance.

This study contributes to multiple dimensions of sustainability. In terms of educational sustainability, it supports continuous learning recovery, improved literacy and numeracy, and strengthened instructional leadership. In socio-economic sustainability, improved learner outcomes may contribute to better long-term employment opportunities and community development. The study also contributes to technological and innovation sustainability through recommendations on digital intervention systems, monitoring tools, and technology-supported learning delivery. Furthermore, it promotes community and institutional sustainability by encouraging stakeholder collaboration, transparent resource management, and evidence-based school governance. By providing localized evidence on leadership practices and intervention implementation, the study contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable educational leadership and effective post-pandemic learning recovery strategies in rural Philippine schools.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-quantitative research design to determine the implementation practices of school heads on learning intervention programs in San Fernando District. Quantitative methods were employed through structured questionnaires and diagnostic tools to collect numerical data from respondents. The study focused on determining the level of implementation practices of school heads in terms of planning, resource and personnel management, monitoring and evaluation, and teacher support and capacity-building. It also examined the challenges encountered by school heads, the suggested measures to improve implementation, and the significant relationship between implementation practices and respondents' demographic profiles. This design was considered appropriate because it allowed systematic measurement and statistical analysis of the variables under investigation.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in San Fernando District under the Department of Education–Division of Masbate, located in the southern part of Masbate Province in Region V (Bicol Region). The district is composed of coastal and inland communities where farming and fishing serve as primary sources of livelihood. These socioeconomic conditions influence learners' home environments and educational support systems. San Fernando District includes several public elementary and secondary schools with varying sizes, resources, and geographic accessibility. At the elementary level, the district consists of 24 public schools with 204 teaching and 54 non-teaching personnel. The junior high school level includes five public secondary schools employing 91 teaching and 28 non-teaching staff, while four schools offer senior high school programs with 39 teaching and 3 non-teaching personnel. Overall, the district employs 419 personnel composed of 334 teaching and 85 non-teaching staff. The district's diverse educational and socioeconomic conditions made it an appropriate setting for examining the implementation practices of school heads on learning intervention programs.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the public elementary and secondary school heads in San Fernando District, San Fernando, Masbate. These respondents varied in age, sex, educational attainment, years of service as school heads, and number of teachers supervised. They were selected because of their direct involvement in implementing learning intervention programs within their respective schools. Participation in the study was voluntary, and confidentiality of responses was ensured to encourage honest and accurate answers. A total of 30 questionnaires were distributed and successfully retrieved, resulting in a 100% retrieval rate.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study employed convenience sampling in selecting the respondents. This sampling technique was chosen because it allowed the researcher to gather data efficiently from participants who were readily accessible and willing to participate during the data collection period. The respondents were selected based on their availability and relevance to the objectives of the study. Although convenience sampling does not ensure full representativeness, it provided valuable insights from school heads directly involved in the implementation of learning intervention programs.

2.5 Research Instrument

The primary instrument used in the study was a researcher-made questionnaire designed to gather data regarding the implementation practices of school heads on learning intervention programs in San Fernando District. The questionnaire included respondents' demographic profiles such as age, sex, educational attainment, years of service as school heads, and number of teachers supervised. It also measured the level of implementation practices in terms of planning, resource and personnel management, monitoring and evaluation, and teacher support and capacity-building. Furthermore, the instrument

assessed the challenges encountered by school heads and the suggested measures for enhancing implementation practices. The questionnaire utilized Likert-scale items to quantify respondents' perceptions and experiences. To ensure validity, the instrument was reviewed and evaluated by experts in educational research to determine the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items. Reliability testing was conducted through a pilot test involving school heads and individuals similar to the target respondents, and Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. These procedures ensured that the questionnaire produced accurate, consistent, and dependable data.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Upon approval of the thesis proposal by the thesis committee, the researcher secured permission to conduct the study through a letter noted by the adviser and submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent for approval. After approval, the researcher coordinated with school heads for the distribution of survey questionnaires. The survey instrument was prepared and approved by the thesis adviser and validated by school heads and educational professionals familiar with the study context. After revisions and finalization, 30 copies of the questionnaire were reproduced and distributed to the respondents. The retrieval of questionnaires exceeded the one-month timeframe due to school activities and other related concerns, which affected the pace of data collection and manuscript preparation. After retrieval, the responses were tallied and subjected to statistical treatment with the assistance of an expert statistician. The findings were described, analyzed, interpreted, and used as bases for the preparation of the remaining chapters of the manuscript.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Frequency count and percentage were used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents. Frequency count determined the number of respondents under each category, while percentage was computed by dividing the frequency by the total number of respondents and multiplying the result by 100. Weighted mean was utilized to determine the numerical representation of the school heads' level of implementation practices, the challenges encountered, and the suggested measures. This statistical tool allowed the researcher to measure the average responses of the participants regarding each indicator. Pearson Correlation was employed to determine the significant relationship between the implementation practices of school heads on learning intervention programs and their demographic profiles. The Pearson correlation coefficient measured the degree and direction of relationship between the variables using the standard correlation formula and interpretation scale.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

3.1.1 Age of the School Heads

The findings revealed that most school heads belonged to the 51–55 age bracket, comprising 30.00% of the respondents. This was followed by respondents aged 41–45 and 56–60 years old, both representing 20.00%. Smaller percentages were recorded among those aged 36–40, 46–50, and 31–35 years old, while no respondent belonged to the age groups below 30 or above 61 years old. These results indicate that school leadership in San Fernando District is primarily composed of middle-aged and experienced administrators. The concentration of respondents within mature age groups suggests that most school heads have accumulated extensive leadership experience and professional expertise, which may contribute positively to the implementation of learning intervention programs.

3.1.2 Sex of the School Heads

The results showed that female school heads comprised the majority of respondents at 56.67%, while male school heads represented 43.33%. The findings reflect the strong participation of women in educational leadership positions within the district. This trend aligns with the broader educational workforce where women commonly dominate administrative and teaching roles in basic education institutions.

3.1.3 Educational Attainment of the School Heads

Most respondents had earned units toward a Master's degree, accounting for 60.00% of the sample, while 30.00% had completed a Master's degree. A small number had doctoral units, and only one respondent held a Bachelor's degree as the highest qualification. None possessed a completed Doctorate degree. The results suggest that the school heads are academically qualified and committed to professional advancement. Graduate studies and continuing education may contribute to stronger leadership practices, instructional supervision, and decision-making in implementing learning intervention programs.

3.1.4 Years of Service as School Heads

The majority of respondents had served as school heads for 6–10 years, representing 40.00% of the respondents. Others had served for 11–15 years, 2–5 years, and shorter or longer periods of service, while no respondent belonged to the 21–25 years category. The findings imply that most school heads possess moderate administrative experience, allowing them

to develop leadership competence while remaining actively engaged in current educational reforms and intervention strategies.

3.1.5 Number of Teachers Supervised

Most school heads supervised 10 teachers and below, accounting for 73.33% of the respondents. A few supervised larger teacher populations ranging from 21 to 70 teachers. These results indicate that many school heads manage relatively small schools or learning communities. Smaller supervisory loads may allow closer monitoring of teachers and more focused implementation of learning intervention programs.

3.2 Level of Implementation Practices of School Heads on Learning Intervention Programs

3.2.1 Planning

The findings showed that school heads demonstrated a very high level of implementation practices in planning learning intervention programs, with an overall weighted mean of 3.68 interpreted as strongly agree. The highest-rated practice involved setting clear objectives aligned with learners' needs, while involving teachers in intervention planning and reviewing plans based on feedback were also highly rated. The results indicate that school heads systematically plan intervention activities to address learning gaps and align programs with school improvement goals. These findings support Espinosa (2023), who emphasized that effective planning, supervision, and communication systems are essential for successful learning recovery implementation. Likewise, Genciana et al. (2024) stressed the importance of data-driven planning and stakeholder collaboration in implementing intervention programs.

3.2.2 Resource and Personnel Management

School heads demonstrated a very high level of competence in resource and personnel management, with an overall weighted mean of 3.70 interpreted as strongly agree. Assigning qualified teachers and ensuring accountability in the use of funds and materials emerged as the highest-rated indicators. Efficient use of available resources and allocation of intervention funds were also strongly practiced. The findings suggest that school heads effectively mobilize human and material resources to support intervention programs. This aligns with Almagro et al. (2024), who found that leadership practices and resource management significantly influence the success of reading intervention programs and learner outcomes.

3.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

The results revealed that respondents strongly agreed on all monitoring and evaluation indicators, with an overall weighted mean of 3.67. School heads consistently provided feedback to teachers, submitted progress reports, and used evaluation results to improve future interventions. They also monitored learner progress through assessments and regular meetings. The findings imply that school heads maintain systematic monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure effective implementation of intervention programs. These results support Bantulo and Doctora (2025), who emphasized that consistent monitoring, logistical support, and administrative guidance strengthen program implementation and teacher performance.

3.2.4 Teacher Support and Capacity Building

Teacher support and capacity building obtained the highest overall weighted mean of 3.72, interpreted as strongly agree. Encouraging teachers to attend seminars and workshops ranked highest, followed by creating opportunities for teachers to share best practices and maintaining a supportive environment. The findings indicate that school heads actively promote professional growth and collaboration among teachers to improve intervention delivery. Dionglay and Callo (2024) reported that learning recovery programs become more effective when school heads provide active support, guidance, and monitoring to teachers implementing interventions.

3.3 Challenges Encountered by School Heads in Implementing Learning Intervention Programs

The respondents agreed that several challenges affected the implementation of learning intervention programs, with an overall weighted mean of 3.25. The most serious challenge identified was unstable internet or technological access for digital interventions. Other significant concerns included lack of trained teachers, heavy administrative workload, limited funds, and insufficient instructional materials. Moderate challenges included low learner participation, inadequate monitoring tools, and limited parental support. These findings suggest that although school heads demonstrate strong implementation practices, they continue to face institutional and logistical constraints that affect intervention effectiveness. The results support Beltran (2025), who found that limited resources, insufficient support systems, and implementation barriers hinder intervention success. The study further emphasized that proactive leadership and strategic resource management are essential in overcoming these challenges.

3.4 Significant Relationship Between Demographic Profile and Implementation Practices

The results revealed a weak positive linear relationship between the demographic profile of school heads and their implementation practices on learning intervention programs, with a computed r-value of 0.377. Since the computed value exceeded the critical r-value at the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a statistically significant relationship. The findings imply that demographic characteristics such as age, educational attainment, years of service, and supervisory experience moderately influence how school heads implement intervention programs. This

suggests that leadership experience and professional background may contribute to differences in planning, supervision, and management practices related to learning interventions.

3.5 Suggested Measures to Enhance the Implementation of Learning Intervention Programs

The respondents strongly agreed on all proposed measures for improving intervention implementation, with an overall weighted mean of 3.65. Providing adequate budget allocation ranked highest, followed by strengthening collaboration with parents and community partners. Other strongly supported measures included developing localized materials, utilizing learner performance data, strengthening monitoring tools, and integrating technology into intervention delivery. The findings indicate that school heads recognize the importance of strategic planning, sufficient resources, stakeholder collaboration, and continuous monitoring in sustaining effective intervention programs. The results further emphasize the need for systematic support mechanisms to strengthen learning recovery initiatives and improve learner outcomes in San Fernando District.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The findings of the study revealed that the school heads in San Fernando District are predominantly middle-aged, female, professionally experienced, and academically qualified, with most having earned graduate-level units and supervising relatively small groups of teachers. The results further showed that school heads demonstrated a very high level of implementation practices in terms of planning, resource and personnel management, monitoring and evaluation, and teacher support and capacity building, as evidenced by the strong agreement across all indicators. Despite this high level of implementation, school heads moderately encountered challenges such as unstable internet connectivity, lack of trained teachers, heavy administrative workload, limited resources, and insufficient stakeholder support. Moreover, the study established a weak positive linear relationship between the demographic profile of school heads and their implementation practices on learning intervention programs. The findings also emphasized that adequate funding, stakeholder collaboration, data-driven planning, continuous teacher development, and consistent monitoring are essential measures in strengthening the effectiveness and sustainability of learning intervention programs in San Fernando District.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, school heads should continue strengthening data-driven and collaborative planning practices to ensure that learning intervention programs remain responsive to learners' needs. Standardized monitoring and evaluation tools, including digital tracking systems, should be adopted to improve the consistency and documentation of learner progress and intervention outcomes. Continuous professional development through coaching, mentoring, and specialized training should also be intensified to enhance teachers' competence in delivering interventions effectively. Furthermore, teacher leaders and intervention coordinators should be encouraged to take active roles in program planning, implementation, and evaluation to help sustain effective practices and reduce the supervisory burden of school heads. Future researchers may further explore additional variables, broader populations, and other research approaches to validate and enrich the findings of the present study.

Compliance with ethical standards

The authors declare no conflict of interest. This study complied with recognized ethical standards for human-participant research by ensuring voluntary participation with informed consent, the right to withdraw without penalty, and strict confidentiality through anonymous, secure, and aggregated data handling. Given the focus on psychological well-being, procedures were non-invasive, and safeguards were observed to minimize discomfort, with guidance to appropriate support services when needed, and required institutional permissions were secured for instrument use and access to academic records.

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