

The Extent of Association Between Instructional Leadership of School Heads and Teachers' Performance Among Schools in the Ligao City Division

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Abstract

This study determined the extent of association between instructional leadership of school heads and teachers' performance in public elementary schools in the Ligao City Division as basis for the development of a professional development guide. The study was anchored on the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), the Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT), and the researcher-developed Empowered Instructional Leadership Theory (EILT). A descriptive-quantitative research design was utilized, supported by unstructured informal interviews. The respondents consisted of 170 teachers and 35 school heads selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire validated through a dry run and analyzed using frequency count, percentage, ranking, weighted mean, Likert scale, Chi-square test, and Kruskal-Wallis H Test. The findings revealed that instructional leadership of school heads based on OPCRF was "Highly Associated" as perceived by both teachers and school heads. Teachers' performance based on RPMS and IPCRF was rated "Very Satisfactory." Significant differences existed between the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding teachers' performance, while a significant relationship was also found between instructional leadership and teachers' performance. The study further identified the need for additional training in planning, monitoring, evaluation, human resource management, and professional development processes. Consequently, a professional development guide was developed to strengthen instructional leadership practices and instructional competencies. The study supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by promoting instructional quality, professional development, and improved learner outcomes. It also aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) through strengthened collaboration, teacher empowerment, and institutional support mechanisms. The findings contribute to educational, institutional, and socio-economic sustainability by supporting evidence-based leadership practices, teacher development, and continuous school improvement.

Keywords: Educational leadership, Instructional leadership, OPCRF, Professional development, IPCRF, Teacher performance

1. Introduction

Instructional leadership plays a critical role in improving teacher performance and learner achievement by fostering professional growth, accountability, and effective instructional practices. School heads are expected to implement curriculum standards, supervise instruction, and support teachers through mechanisms such as the Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) and Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF). Effective instructional leadership strengthens collaboration, sustains professional development, and enhances instructional quality, thereby contributing to teacher competence and student success (Nguyen et al., 2022). In response to existing challenges in instructional supervision, teacher motivation, and performance evaluation, this study examined the extent of association between instructional leadership of school heads and teachers' performance in public elementary schools in the Ligao City Division. The study also aimed to develop a professional development guide grounded in policy mandates, theoretical foundations, and empirical evidence.

1.1 Background of the Study on Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Performance

Instructional leadership is considered a fundamental component of effective school administration because it directly influences teacher performance and learner outcomes. School heads are responsible not only for ensuring curriculum implementation but also for cultivating a culture of continuous improvement, accountability, and academic excellence. Leadership practices such as instructional supervision, mentoring, and professional development significantly affect teachers' confidence, motivation, and instructional effectiveness (Nguyen et al., 2022). Several legal and policy frameworks support the role of instructional leadership in Philippine basic education. Republic Act No. 9155 or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 defines school heads as instructional leaders responsible for creating effective learning environments. DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017 institutionalized the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers

(PPST), emphasizing teacher growth and instructional quality. Likewise, DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016 institutionalized Learning Action Cells (LACs) as collaborative professional development mechanisms. These policies underscore instructional leadership as both an administrative and professional responsibility. Despite these policies, schools continue to encounter challenges related to ineffective managerial practices, inadequate supervision, limited resources, weak collaboration, and low teacher morale. Teachers who receive regular mentoring and instructional support demonstrate greater confidence in implementing innovative teaching approaches, whereas those lacking administrative support often rely on traditional instructional methods that reduce learner engagement. Observations during supervisory visits further revealed that weak coordination, insufficient resources, and limited motivation negatively affect teacher performance and student achievement. Given these concerns, the study sought to determine the extent of association between instructional leadership of school heads and teachers' performance in public elementary schools in the Ligao City Division. The findings served as the basis for developing a professional development guide for school heads and teachers.

1.2 Themes and Insights from Related Literature on Instructional Leadership and Teacher Development

Related literature emphasized the importance of instructional supervision, professional development, teacher motivation, and leadership competence in improving educational outcomes. Constructive post-observation feedback, strong professional rapport, and effective instructional supervision significantly enhance teacher performance and instructional quality (Mataboge and Mampane, 2024; Lynch and Hall, 2024). Teacher well-being and supportive leadership environments also contribute to learner achievement and instructional engagement (Zhang, 2023). Studies further highlighted that instructional supervision supports continuous professional development, classroom management, and pedagogical innovation (Warnick, 2024; Rahmawati, 2024). Supervision that integrates digital literacy and emerging educational technologies improves teachers' instructional delivery and adoption of innovative teaching methods (Jones et al., 2020). Effective instructional leadership also promotes professional growth, cultural sensitivity, and ethical teaching practices in diverse educational settings (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2020; Saro et al., 2022; Simmons and Holloway, 2021; Lee et al., 2022; Udenka, 2021). Leadership competencies such as communication, accountability, subject expertise, digital competence, and collaborative leadership are essential in supporting teachers' professional development (So-Oabeb and Du-Pless, 2023). Several studies confirmed that strong instructional leadership positively influences teacher self-efficacy, work engagement, instructional competence, and school culture (Battad, 2022; Magboo et al., 2023; Khan, 2022). Leadership practices involving supervision, feedback, mentoring, and professional training were consistently associated with improved teacher performance and learner outcomes (Landawe et al., 2023; Huma et al., 2024; Yoder, 2024). Other studies, however, found negligible or no direct relationship between instructional leadership and teacher performance, suggesting that additional variables such as motivation, work environment, school culture, and teacher experience may influence educational outcomes (Rivera, 2024; Maxino et al., 2022; Leonor and Rodriguez, 2022; Diva and Bautista, 2024).

1.3 Local, National, and Global Context of School Heads' Instructional Leadership

Globally, instructional leadership has been recognized as an important determinant of teacher effectiveness, learner engagement, and school improvement. International studies emphasized the significance of leadership practices in promoting professional growth, pedagogical innovation, and organizational effectiveness (Bakokonyane, 2022; Gultom et al., 2021; Siraj et al., 2022). Leadership approaches that encourage collaboration, instructional supervision, and change management contribute to stronger educational performance and improved teacher motivation. Nationally, the Department of Education institutionalized policies such as the RPMS, OPCRF, and IPCRF to align teacher and school head performance with educational standards and accountability measures. DepEd Memorandum No. 017, s. 2025 reinforced the implementation of performance management systems aligned with the PPST. Republic Act No. 9155 and the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) also strengthened the role of school heads in improving instructional quality and professional development. Locally, studies conducted in various Philippine divisions highlighted the importance of instructional leadership in enhancing teacher motivation, instructional supervision, work engagement, and professional competence (Appellido and Ventura, 2024; Matamorosa, 2022; Perez, 2024). However, concerns regarding teacher workload, evaluation systems, limited resources, and inadequate support continue to affect teacher performance and instructional effectiveness.

1.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Basis of Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Performance

The study was anchored on the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and the Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) by Eccles and Wigfield (2020). PIMRS identified three core domains of instructional leadership: defining the school mission, managing instructional programs, and promoting a positive learning climate. The framework emphasized that effective leadership behaviors strengthen teacher development, school climate, and learner achievement (Lani & Pauzi, 2024). The Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) explained teacher motivation through expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Teachers are more motivated when they believe their efforts will result in successful performance and meaningful outcomes. The theory highlighted the importance of supportive leadership, recognition, and professional development in improving teacher commitment and instructional practices. The study also introduced the researcher-developed "Empowered Instructional Leadership Theory (EILT)," which emphasized strategic mission definition, optimized instructional management, and motivational leadership approaches. The theory integrated

PIMRS and EVT to explain how instructional leadership influences teacher performance and learner achievement through effective supervision, professional development, and teacher empowerment.

1.5 Research Gaps and Rationale on the Association Between Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Performance

Existing studies explored leadership styles, instructional supervision, teacher motivation, school culture, and teacher performance. However, limited studies specifically examined the extent of association between instructional leadership of school heads and teachers' performance as basis for developing a professional development guide, particularly within the Ligao City Division. Moreover, research on locally relevant instructional leadership routines such as classroom observations, feedback mechanisms, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) facilitation within a mediation framework remains limited. The present study addressed these gaps by determining the association between instructional leadership and teacher performance and by developing a professional development guide intended to strengthen instructional leadership practices and improve educational outcomes.

1.6 Alignment with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The study aligns primarily with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), which promotes inclusive, equitable, and quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. Effective instructional leadership enhances teaching quality, strengthens teacher competencies, improves learner achievement, and supports continuous professional development. The study also supports SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) through the promotion of teacher professional growth, motivation, and improved workplace practices. Furthermore, the emphasis on collaboration, professional learning communities, and institutional support mechanisms contributes to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by strengthening cooperation among school heads, teachers, stakeholders, and educational institutions.

1.7 Importance of the Study to Multidisciplinary Sustainability

The study contributes to educational sustainability by promoting continuous teacher development, effective instructional supervision, and improved learner outcomes. It supports institutional sustainability through the development of evidence-based professional development strategies for school heads and teachers. The findings also contribute to socio-economic sustainability by improving teacher competence, motivation, and instructional effectiveness, which may positively influence learner achievement and long-term human capital development. In addition, the study promotes policy and governance sustainability by providing evidence that may guide the Department of Education, school administrators, curriculum developers, and local government units in strengthening leadership practices, teacher evaluation systems, and professional development programs.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study utilized the descriptive-quantitative method of research. Creswell (1994) defined descriptive-quantitative research as a method that uses numerical data to describe a population or phenomenon systematically and objectively. The descriptive method was also employed to gather information regarding existing conditions and present occurrences. This design was appropriate in determining the extent of association between school heads' instructional leadership and teachers' performance and in developing a professional development guide based on the findings of the study. In addition, unstructured informal interviews were conducted to provide a clearer understanding of issues related to the research problems and variables included in the study. These interviews supplemented the quantitative data by providing relevant insights into instructional leadership and teacher performance.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in public elementary schools within the Ligao City Division. The setting included schools under East and West District of the division where the respondents were assigned. The locale was selected because it provided the necessary context for examining instructional leadership practices and teachers' performance within the public elementary school system.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study consisted of 205 participants composed of 170 teachers and 35 school heads from public elementary schools in the Ligao City Division. This composition reflected an approximate ratio of five teachers for every school administrator, consistent with the organizational structure of the schools. The respondents served as the primary sources of information regarding instructional leadership and teacher performance. Learners, ALS teachers, parents, and community stakeholders were excluded from the study to maintain focus on professional school dynamics.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study employed purposive selection of respondents from public elementary schools within the Ligao City Division. The researcher included 35 school heads and 170 teachers who were directly involved in instructional leadership and

performance evaluation processes. The respondents were chosen because of their relevance to the objectives of the study and their direct participation in the implementation of OPCRF and IPCRF performance systems.

2.5 Research Instrument

The primary instrument used in gathering data was a researcher-made questionnaire. The questionnaire underwent validation through a dry run involving 20 teacher-respondents from districts not included in the study to determine its strengths and weaknesses and to improve its content. Suggestions gathered during the dry run were incorporated into the final revision of the instrument. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part I focused on the extent of association of school heads' instructional leadership to teachers' performance along the Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) with indicators measuring leadership practices. Part II dealt with the extent of association between instructional leadership and teachers' performance, while Part III focused on teachers' performance levels based on the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF). The questionnaire was developed following the criteria identified by Fao.org, which emphasized clear research objectives, completeness and accuracy of information, ease of response, and efficient tabulation of data. The draft instrument was reviewed by the researcher's adviser for critique and improvement before final distribution. To ensure validity, the instrument was subjected to a dry run to assess clarity, specificity, grammatical correctness, singleness of purpose, and time requirements. The responses gathered were systematically classified and tabulated according to the research problems included in the study. Narratively, the first figure in the study presented the overall methodological flow beginning with the preparation and validation of the questionnaire, followed by data gathering, analysis, and interpretation procedures. It illustrated how the research instrument was utilized to gather information on instructional leadership and teachers' performance, which served as basis for developing the professional development guide. Likewise, Table 1 presented the five-point Likert scale used to measure the extent of association between instructional leadership and teachers' performance, including the corresponding scale ranges and verbal interpretations from Very Low Association to Very High Association.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Schools Division Office of Ligao City and from the school principals and school heads of participating schools. The questionnaires were personally distributed and administered to the respondents to ensure proper orientation and accurate responses. Retrieval of questionnaires was also conducted personally through coordination with the division office and school administrators. Communication regarding distribution and retrieval was facilitated through personal communication, letters, and mobile phones. The gathered data were organized, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted quantitatively. The researcher ensured that respondents answered the questionnaires freely and without inhibition during the administration process.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The study utilized several statistical tools, including frequency count, ranking, five-point Likert scale, percentage technique, weighted mean, and Kruskal Wallis H Test. Frequency count was used to tally respondents' answers and determine the percentage of each response. Ranking was applied to compare indicators according to their degree of association. The five-point Likert scale measured the extent of association between school heads' instructional leadership and teachers' performance. The scale ranged from Very Low Association to Very High Association and was used to quantify and interpret the weighted mean for each indicator. Percentage technique was employed to determine nominal data and frequency distributions of responses. Weighted mean was used to compute the average responses and provide objective interpretation of the data gathered regarding instructional leadership and teachers' performance. The Kruskal Wallis H Test was utilized to test the significant relationship between the variables included in the study. This statistical tool determined the degree of relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' performance based on the responses of the participants.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to institutional and national ethical standards in conducting research involving human participants. Consent was secured from all respondents prior to participation. Confidentiality and privacy were strictly observed throughout the study. The identities of the respondents and the names of their schools were concealed, and respondents were not required to indicate their names in the questionnaires. The accomplished questionnaires were securely kept to prevent unauthorized access and leakage of confidential information.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Performance

3.1.1 Instructional Leadership of School Heads Based on OPCRF

The findings revealed that teachers generally perceived the instructional leadership of school heads as "Highly Associated," with an overall weighted mean of 3.47. The highest-rated indicator involved the provision of SLAC and other professional development activities that improved teaching practices and learner performance. Other highly rated indicators included improving learners' reading and numeracy skills, implementing Annual Implementation Plans (AIP) aligned with School Improvement Plans (SIP), conducting classroom observations, and monitoring school performance. The lowest-rated indicators involved the application of the 4-stage cycle of planning, monitoring, evaluation, and development, as well as workforce management and monitoring mechanisms. School heads also rated their instructional leadership as "Highly Associated," with the highest ratings given to professional development, budget alignment, key deliverables, and management of school records. However, the lowest ratings were again associated with the application of the 4-stage cycle and learner proficiency improvement initiatives. The combined average weighted mean of both groups was interpreted as "Highly Associated." The results imply that both teachers and school heads adhered to the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) and recognized the importance of fair performance evaluation and professional growth. The findings highlighted the importance of instructional supervision, mentoring, and professional development in improving teacher morale and instructional effectiveness. The study further suggested the need for additional training related to planning, monitoring, evaluation, and development processes in instructional leadership. These findings support Magboo et al. (2023), who emphasized that instructional leadership behaviors inspire teachers to work with greater enthusiasm, commitment, and dedication while promoting teacher and learner welfare. The findings also reinforced the importance of developing training guides and professional development materials related to OPCRF and IPCRF implementation.

3.1.2 Instructional Leadership of School Heads in Relation to Teachers' Performance

The results showed that teachers perceived the extent of instructional leadership in relation to teachers' performance as "Highly Associated," with an overall weighted mean of 3.50. The highest-rated indicator involved the use of supplementary instructional materials such as activity sheets, lesson plans, digital materials, and video lessons. Other highly rated indicators included the application of higher-order thinking strategies, integration of ICT resources, learner-centered instruction, participation in professional development activities, and the preparation of lesson exemplars and modules. The lowest-rated indicator involved human resource management and the provision of technical assistance and professional development opportunities. School heads also rated instructional leadership as "Highly Associated," with the highest ratings given to stakeholder relationships, supplementary instructional materials, learner-centered teaching strategies, and participation in professional learning activities. The findings suggest that teachers and school heads demonstrated competence in implementing instructional leadership practices, preparing Means of Verification (MOVs), and aligning instructional plans with school improvement goals. Functional SIPs and AIPs were evident in the schools, contributing to teachers' satisfactory and outstanding performance. The findings support Diva and Bautista (2024), who reported that school heads demonstrated very high instructional competence in curriculum implementation, mentoring, communication, and resource management. The study emphasized that mentorship programs and continuous professional development are essential in strengthening instructional quality and educational outcomes.

3.1.3 Performance Levels of Teachers Based on IPCRF

The results revealed that teachers rated their overall performance as "Very Satisfactory," with an average weighted mean of 3.74, while school heads also rated teacher performance as "Very Satisfactory," with an average weighted mean of 4.10. Teachers rated themselves highest in monitoring and evaluating learners' progress, maintaining updated learner records, and collaborating with stakeholders to improve schools. Other highly rated indicators included mastery of content knowledge, professional development activities, and preparation of Means of Verification. The lowest-rated indicator involved participation in planning, monitoring, and reviewing the RPMS cycle. School heads rated teachers highest in performance quality, efficiency, and timeliness, followed by the preparation of Means of Verification, professional development, mastery of content knowledge, and learner monitoring activities. The findings indicate that most respondents complied with RPMS requirements and demonstrated awareness of proper performance evaluation procedures and accountability mechanisms. Teachers and school heads recognized the importance of documentation, professional responsibility, and instructional competencies in achieving satisfactory performance ratings. However, the findings contrasted with Cruz (2024), who found that the IPCRF had low effectiveness in assessing teacher performance due to inadequate technical assistance and insufficient support mechanisms. The study recommended more professional development and supervisory training to improve instructional delivery and evaluation practices.

3.2 Significant Differences in Teachers' Performance Levels

The findings showed a significant difference in the performance levels of teachers based on the Results-Based Performance Management System. The computed Chi-square value of 365.28 exceeded the tabular Chi-square value of 36.415 at a 0.05 level of significance with 24 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding teacher performance. The results also showed that many respondents perceived performance ratings differently depending on instructional competencies, accountability, quality of service, and the completion of Means of Verification requirements. The findings suggest that performance ratings are influenced by fairness in evaluation, workload demands, and the complexity of preparing documentary requirements. Some teachers reportedly avoided rating themselves as outstanding despite deserving higher ratings because of the burden associated with extensive documentation and MOV preparation. The results support Rivera (2024), who emphasized that effective instructional leadership, professional development, and student-centered learning climates contribute to highly satisfactory school performance and innovation. The findings further highlight the need for balanced evaluation systems that recognize teacher performance while minimizing excessive clerical demands.

3.3 Significant Relationship Between Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Performance

The results revealed a significant relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' performance based on the Kruskal-Wallis Ranks Test. The computed Z-score (W') was 12.42, with an effect size of 347.76, interpreted as having a "Large Effect." The findings led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating a significant relationship between the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding instructional leadership and teacher performance. The results demonstrated that instructional leadership practices significantly influenced teacher effectiveness and school performance. The findings imply that strong instructional leadership contributes to improved teaching practices, teacher motivation, collaborative teaching strategies, and overall school performance. The results support Appellido and Ventura (2024), who emphasized the importance of work environment, instructional leadership, intrinsic motivation, and access to teaching resources in fostering teacher effectiveness. The study recommended additional professional development activities, leadership training, and the continuous use of effective leadership styles to improve instructional supervision and teacher performance.

3.4 Professional Development Guide for Teachers and School Heads

The study developed a professional development guide for teachers and school heads based on the identified needs and lowest-rated indicators from the findings. The guide focused on improving the application of the 4-stage cycle of planning, monitoring, evaluation, and development in instructional leadership and school management. It also addressed the need for stronger human resource management, technical assistance, professional development support, and increased participation in RPMS planning and monitoring activities. The proposed professional development guide emphasized self-assessment, identification of strengths and skill gaps, objective setting, and regular review mechanisms. It also included training activities such as workshops, Learning Action Cells (LAC), mentoring, coaching, webinars, graduate studies, technical assistance programs, and participation in international online seminars. The findings highlight the importance of continuous professional development in strengthening instructional leadership competencies and enhancing teachers' instructional performance and learner outcomes.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that the instructional leadership performance of school heads based on the Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) was highly associated as perceived by both teachers and school heads. The performance level of teachers based on the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) was very satisfactory. The findings further revealed significant differences in the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding teachers' performance and instructional leadership. Moreover, instructional leadership was significantly associated with teachers' performance, indicating that effective instructional leadership contributes to improved teacher performance and professional growth. Based on these findings, a professional development guide for school heads and teachers was developed to strengthen instructional leadership practices and instructional competencies.

The study recommended that school heads should provide more instructional support and administrative guidance to teachers to help them achieve higher performance ratings in their IPCRF. Teachers should also be encouraged to apply the 4-stage cycle of planning, monitoring, evaluation, and development in their professional practices. More INSETs, SLAC sessions, webinars, seminars, and technical assistance programs should be conducted to address instructional gaps and improve professional competencies. Furthermore, the developed professional development guide may be utilized during INSETs, webinars, and school-based Learning Action Cell sessions with appropriate feedback mechanisms to evaluate its usefulness and effectiveness in enhancing instructional leadership and teacher performance.

The study was limited to determining the extent of association between instructional leadership and teachers' performance among 170 teachers and 35 school heads from East and West Districts in the Ligao City Division. The investigation focused

only on the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding OPCRf and IPCRF performance indicators and did not include learners, parents, community stakeholders, or other educational personnel. The study also relied on descriptive-quantitative survey methods and self-reported responses, which were confined to the variables and indicators included in the research instrument.

Compliance with ethical standards

The authors declare no conflict of interest. This study received no external funding and was conducted in public elementary schools within the Ligao City Division with the participation of teachers and school heads who voluntarily took part in the study after informed consent was obtained. Data were gathered using non-invasive survey questionnaires and informal interviews, and all responses were treated with strict confidentiality by withholding the identities of the respondents and schools to ensure privacy and prevent disclosure of identifying information.

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