

Instructional Leadership Practices of School Heads and Their Influence on Teacher Motivation in Public Secondary Schools

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Abstract— In rural Philippine schools where numerous challenges often hinder instructional performance, strong instructional leadership practices become essential in fostering teacher motivation and professional growth. This mixed-method study examined the instructional leadership practices of public-school heads in Sta. Magdalena, Philippines, and their influence on teachers' motivation and development, guided by the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). Quantitative data from 30 teachers showed that school heads consistently implemented key practices, with "Managing the Instructional Program" (4.25) and "Setting a Clear Vision for Learning" (4.21) identified as their strongest areas, while "Strategic Resource Allocation" (3.70) emerged as the primary area needing improvement. Thematic analysis of qualitative responses highlighted six core perceptions of leadership effectiveness: mentorship-oriented leadership, promotion of lifelong learning, encouragement of innovation, a collaborative school culture, transformational leadership, and the need for more consistent instructional supervision. Supportive leadership characterized by autonomy, competence-building, and strong connections was found to significantly enhance teacher motivation, confidence, and growth. Nevertheless, challenges like heavy administrative responsibilities, limited resources, and restricted opportunities for professional development for both school heads and teachers were identified as significant obstacles to effective leadership. Overall, the findings indicate that instructional leadership contributes indirectly to student learning by enhancing teachers' skills and classroom practices. The study recommends structured mentoring, professional learning communities, distributed leadership, and reduced administrative burdens as strategies to enhance leadership effectiveness and support school improvement in disadvantaged Philippine contexts.

Keywords— instructional leadership practices, teaching-learning process, leadership effectiveness, lifelong learning, supportive leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Studying the instructional leadership practices of school heads that influence teacher motivation is essential because teacher motivation is a core driver of instructional quality and student learning outcomes. School heads, as principals or administrators, directly shape the teaching environment through clear goal-setting, constructive feedback, professional development opportunities, and resource allocation. By examining these practices, researchers can identify high-impact levers such as fostering teacher autonomy, competence, and commitment that reliably enhance motivation, reducing burnout and turnover while improving instructional continuity and effectiveness across public secondary schools.

Education is universally acknowledged as a cornerstone of national economic advancement and sustainable local development, serving as a primary catalyst for human capital formation, innovation, and societal progress

(Hanushek & Woessmann, 2015; UNESCO, 2017). Within educational systems, effective school leadership, particularly by principals, is a well-established driver of improved student outcomes and institutional enhancement, positioning leaders as critical agents of change (Leithwood et al., 2020; Robinson, 2018).

In a broader societal and economic progress on school leadership as a pivotal mechanism within it. It draws that investing in principals' instructional leadership yields measurable gains in student achievement and school improvement. Among leadership models, instructional leadership exerts a uniquely potent influence by intentionally prioritizing the core activities of teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2018; Urick & Bowers, 2021). Distinct from administrative or transformational approaches, instructional leadership centers on creating the conditions for high-quality pedagogy and student achievement (Hallinger, 2018).

While historically principal-centric (Hallinger, 1985), contemporary practice increasingly emphasizes shared leadership focused on aligning resources, processes, and professional development with learning goals (Grissom et al., 2021; Leithwood et al., 2020; Robinson, 2018). Core practices include establishing a clear academic vision, managing curriculum and assessment, facilitating teacher growth through coaching and mentoring, providing actionable feedback, and safeguarding instructional time (Robinson, 2011; Sebastian et al., 2017; Grissom et al., 2021). Robust empirical evidence consistently demonstrates a significant positive relationship between these practices and increased teacher motivation, manifesting in heightened job satisfaction, self-efficacy, intrinsic drive, and commitment (Collie et al., 2020; Hallinger, 2018; Supovitz et al., 2019; Urick & Bowers, 2021). This motivational boost is foundational for enhancing instructional quality and, ultimately, student learning (Collie et al., 2020).

Teacher motivation itself, underpinned by foundational theories such as Herzberg's (1966) Two-Factor Theory which distinguishes hygiene factors from motivators and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, is indispensable for educational quality. Motivated teachers exhibit greater job satisfaction, lower turnover intentions, and significantly elevate student engagement and academic performance through effective pedagogy and sustained effort (Han & Yin, 2016; Klassen et al., 2019).

However, significant challenges persist, particularly for educators in rural and under-resourced contexts like many areas of the Philippines. Teachers in these settings frequently contend with demotivating factors including professional isolation, inadequate infrastructure and teaching materials, excessive workloads (often involving multi-grade teaching), limited access to professional development, and embedded socio-economic community pressures (Boonen et al., 2014; Reyes et al., 2021; UNESCO, 2016). These conditions can substantially erode intrinsic motivation and commitment, highlighting the critical need for contextually responsive leadership and support strategies.

In the Philippines, the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) (Department of Education, 2020) provides the national framework for effective school leadership. Domains 1 (Leading Strategically)

and 2 (Leading Learning) are particularly relevant, emphasizing vision-setting, resource management, instructional supervision, and teacher development. Emerging national research indicates that PPSSH-aligned practices, especially instructional leadership behaviors within Domain 2 such as coaching, constructive feedback, supporting professional growth, directly enhance teacher motivation by fostering self-efficacy, recognition, and autonomy (Dizon et al., 2022; Reyes & Luna, 2021). Consequently, the PPSSH serves as a vital benchmark for evaluating public school head leadership and linking policy standards to teacher empowerment and educational quality.

Instructional leadership has emerged as a critical factor in shaping educational quality, particularly in public secondary schools where school heads play a pivotal role in influencing teacher motivation and professional growth. Recent studies highlight that effective instructional leadership practices—such as providing constructive feedback, facilitating collaborative lesson planning, and fostering professional learning communities—significantly enhance teacher motivation and classroom effectiveness (Akomodì, 2025; Kilag & Sasan, 2023).

However, challenges persist in the Philippine context, where administrative burdens and limited training often hinder school heads from fully embracing their instructional roles (Anabo, 2024). This study examines these dynamics by exploring the specific leadership practices employed, their perceived effectiveness by teachers, and their impact on motivation, while also identifying systemic barriers and opportunities for targeted professional development (Sariakin et al., 2025).

This study determined the influence of instructional leadership practices of school heads on teacher motivation and professional growth in public secondary schools. Specifically, it examined the instructional leadership practices employed by school heads, teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness, the extent to which these practices affect teacher motivation and professional growth, the challenges encountered in their implementation, and the possible learning and development activities that can be designed to enhance instructional leadership for improved teacher motivation and professional growth.

OBJECTIVES

This research aimed to accomplish the following objectives:

- identify and examine the instructional leadership practices that school leaders typically use in the teaching and learning process.
- investigate teachers' views on the effectiveness of the instructional leadership practices of their school leaders.
- explore how instructional leadership practices affect teachers' motivation and their professional development.
- analyze the challenges encountered by both school leaders and teachers in the execution of instructional leadership practices.
- suggest learning and development initiatives that can boost teacher motivation and professional growth through enhanced instructional leadership.

METHODS

This research utilized a mixed-methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative strategies to thoroughly understand instructional leadership practices in educational settings. The quantitative aspect employed a descriptive survey method to assess the level of instructional leadership practices implemented by school leaders throughout the teaching and learning processes. Meanwhile, the qualitative aspect utilized thematic analysis of open-ended responses to investigate teachers' viewpoints, experiences, and recommendations concerning the effectiveness of their school leaders' instructional leadership.

The mixed-methods approach was deemed appropriate for this study as it allowed for triangulation of data, providing both statistical evidence and rich, contextualized insights into instructional leadership practices. The quantitative data established patterns and frequencies of leadership practices, while the qualitative data provided depth and meaning to these practices from the teachers' perspectives.

This methodological approach enabled the researcher to capture not only the extent to which instructional leadership practices were implemented but also the nuanced experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding these practices and their impact on professional growth and motivation.

The respondents of this study consisted of two distinct groups: school heads and teachers from the two public

schools in the Municipality of Sta. Magdalena. Two school heads participated in the study, purposively selected based on their current administrative positions and willingness to participate in the research.

These school heads provided responses regarding the challenges they encountered in implementing instructional leadership practices. Meanwhile, thirty teachers from the same schools served as the primary respondents for assessing instructional leadership practices and their effects on motivation and professional growth.

The teachers were selected using purposive sampling, ensuring representation from those who had direct experience working under the participating school heads. These teachers provided both quantitative ratings and qualitative responses regarding their school heads' instructional leadership practices, effectiveness, and influence on their professional development.

The selection of respondents was guided by the criterion that they had sufficient exposure to and experience with the instructional leadership practices being studied, ensuring the validity and reliability of their responses. This sampling strategy was considered appropriate given the study's focus on understanding the depth and quality of instructional leadership practices rather than generalizing to a larger population.

RESULTS

The results of the gathered and statistically treated data are presented in this chapter. Qualitative data and information are presented in a thematic format, while the quantitative data are organized in tables. Statistical scrutiny of the data is further provided in this chapter.

1. Instructional Leadership Practices Commonly Employed by School Heads along Teaching-Learning Process

The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSH) serve as the framework for evaluating the effectiveness and success of school leaders. Accordingly, this study aligned its assessment of practices with the aforementioned standards.

Table 1.0 presents the summary of the weighted means obtained for each indicator under the respective strands, together with their corresponding verbal interpretations and descriptions (Barroso & Abaya, 2016; Hallinger, 2011).

Table 1. Practices Employed by School Heads along Teaching-Learning Process

Practices	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Description
Managing the Instructional Program	4.25	High Extent	Practice is frequently implemented
Setting a Clear Vision for Learning	4.21	High Extent	Practice is frequently implemented
Promoting a Positive Learning Environment	4.11	High Extent	Practice is frequently implemented
Engaging in Classroom Walkthroughs	4.06	High Extent	Practice is frequently implemented
Using Data for Decision Making	3.98	High Extent	Practice is frequently implemented
Developing Teacher Capacity	3.82	High Extent	Practice is frequently implemented
Strategic Resource Allocation	3.70	High Extent	Practice is frequently implemented

Table 1.0 shows how school heads manage the teaching and learning process based on the respondents. All areas were rated as being practiced to a high extent. "Managing the Instructional Program" (4.25) received the highest score. On the other hand, "Strategic Resource Allocation" (3.70) had the lowest weighted mean, yet it was still rated as "High Extent."

Teachers' Perception on the Effectiveness of Their School Heads' Instructional Leadership Practices along Teaching-Learning Process

The qualitative responses of teachers were analyzed thematically. Through repeated reading, coding, and

clustering of related ideas, six major themes emerged: (1) Instructional and Professional Mentorship, (2) Promotion of Lifelong Learning and Capacity Building, (3) Instructional Innovation and Program Implementation, (4) Collaborative and Reflective School Culture, (5) Transformational Leadership Orientation, and (6) Need for Strengthened Instructional Supervision.

A summary of the themes, their core descriptions, and sample verbatim statements are presented in Table 2.0.

Table 2. Summary of Themes on the Effectiveness of Instructional Leadership of School Heads

Theme	Core Description	Sample Verbatim Statement
Instructional and Professional Mentorship	School heads provide guidance, advice, and feedback to enhance teachers' instructional delivery and classroom performance.	"Support me by giving advice and guidance in my teaching practices."
Promotion of Lifelong Learning and Capacity Building	Teachers are encouraged to attend trainings, seminars, and pursue further studies for continuous professional growth.	"Encourage us to attend trainings and seminars for professional growth."
Instructional Innovation and Program Implementation	School heads implement programs and initiatives that address learning gaps and improve teaching effectiveness.	"He made a camp program to address learning gaps."
Collaborative and Reflective School Culture	Collaboration, teamwork, and shared responsibility are fostered among teachers to ensure continuous improvement.	"A culture of continuous improvement by encouraging teamwork among teachers."
Transformational Leadership Orientation	School heads demonstrate a motivating and supportive leadership style that inspires teachers to perform better.	"Our school head motivates and supports us in every aspect of teaching."

Need for Strengthened Instructional Supervision	Teachers expressed the need for more consistent classroom monitoring, technical assistance, and follow-up support.	“Classroom observation and technical assistance should be more consistent.”
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Instructional and Professional Mentorship

Teachers perceived their school heads as supportive mentors who provide guidance, advice, and feedback to help improve their teaching practices. Participant 1 stated that “by giving advice and guidance in my teaching practices” instructional leaders were able to show support. Moreover, participant 13 emphasized that “regular feedback through classroom observations were the practices of their school leader that helped in their continuous improvement.” According to the data, school administrators can support teacher development by using instructional mentorship as a fundamental practice. The dual focus on advisory support and systematic classroom observation with feedback suggests a multimodal approach to mentoring that integrates both informal guidance and structured evaluation. This outcome aligns with popular instructional leadership models that emphasize direct engagement with instructional strategies. It may help normalize supervision as a process of development rather than evaluation because the specificity of “regular feedback through classroom observations” suggests that effective mentoring is defined not only by its presence but also by its formality and consistency.

Both formal mechanisms (LAC sessions, trainings, seminars) and underlying philosophical orientations (collaboration, reflective practice) were highlighted in the responses of teachers who consistently identified their school heads' role in facilitating ongoing professional development. The convergence of these viewpoints indicates that structural learning opportunities and the development of a professional culture that prioritizes ongoing development are the two levels at which effective capacity building functions. The emphasis on “reflective practice” is particularly noteworthy because it demonstrates a move away from merely participating in professional development and toward deeper engagement with metacognitive processes that promote long-term professional development.

Promotion of Lifelong Learning and Capacity Building

Respondents emphasized that their school heads encourage them to participate in various professional development activities. Participant 4 mentioned that

through “encouraging teachers to engage in regular professional development activities such as LAC sessions, trainings and seminars” meanwhile, participant 8 highlighted that “promoting collaboration, professional growth and reflective practice” were among the practices of their school leaders in promoting lifelong learning and capacity building. Educators frequently acknowledged the importance of their school leaders in facilitating continuous professional growth. Their responses underscored various approaches, from structured activities like Learning Area Committee meetings, workshops, and seminars to broader concepts such as collaboration and reflective practice. The synthesis of these perspectives suggests that effective capacity building operates at two levels; providing opportunities to learn, and creating a professional culture where continuous improvement is valued. The focus on “reflective practice” is especially important, as it shows a shift from just participating in professional development to engaging more deeply with thinking processes that support long-term growth. The results present strong evidence of leadership for learning in terms of deliberate actions at the appropriate Context. The range of initiatives described, such as targeted interventions to address learning deficits, school-wide reading programs focused on literacy and the school improvement plans from which these strategies emerge demonstrate that effective instructional leadership may take various forms to fit distinctly local circumstances. The characterization of the implementation as “functional” and “explicit,” suggests that successful program implementation requires thoughtful planning, precise execution. This approach helps connect policy with practice.

Instructional Innovation and Program Implementation

Teachers mentioned specific initiatives implemented by their school heads that contributed to improved teaching and student performance. Several initiatives were noted: Participant 3 mentioned “a camp program to address learning gaps”, moreover, according to Participant 28, their school leader “introduced a school-wide reading intervention program” while Participant 2 highlighted a “Functionalized strict implementation of the school improvement plan” as the initiative of their school leader to promote instructional innovation. The data

show that school leaders actively build professional communities based on mutual support and shared responsibility. The shift from peer assistance to teamwork among community members and then to leader-led reflection and encouragement highlights a clear approach to building a positive culture within the school. Importantly, combining evaluative reflection with motivational support indicates that effective school leaders manage to balance challenges with encouragement. This creates a safe environment where teachers can review their practices without feeling defensive. This finding emphasizes the importance of relationships in instructional leadership. They are vital for fostering an atmosphere that encourages professional risk-taking and growth.

Collaborative and Reflective School Culture

Results indicate that school heads promote collaboration and teamwork among teachers. Participant 1 noted that "They always remind us to improve our teaching and to help one another," Participant 5 affirmed that "By reaching our utmost potential. Through teamwork, collaborative effort within community." Furthermore, Participant 13 pointed that "Our school leader inspires us to evaluate our teaching practices to improve our strategies in teaching. He motivates us to enhance our skills to perform our teaching duties effectively." The data show that school leaders actively build professional communities based on mutual support and shared responsibility. The shift from peer assistance to teamwork among community members and then to leader-led reflection and encouragement highlights a clear approach to building a positive culture within the school. Importantly, combining evaluative reflection with motivational support indicates that effective school leaders manage to balance challenges with encouragement. This creates a safe environment where teachers can review their practices without feeling defensive. This finding emphasizes the importance of relationships in instructional leadership. They are vital for fostering an atmosphere that encourages professional risk-taking and growth.

Transformational Leadership Orientation

Teachers described their school heads' leadership style as motivating, supportive, and inspiring. Participant 4 described it as "Transformational leadership style." Meanwhile, Participant 13 stated that "Our school head is a good leader. He shows us a fair treatment without taking any sides. He shows professionalism when it comes to work. He is knowledgeable and has a strong

leadership in managing administration" and Participant 15 added that "He demonstrate strong and effective leadership that ensures that the learning and teaching process is align to the department mission and vision." Teachers described their school heads with traits linked to transformational leadership theory, such as inspiration, professional behavior, fairness, and connection to the school's mission. By specifically mentioning "transformational leadership style" and providing examples of fair treatment, professionalism, knowledge, and administrative skill, teachers showed that they see leadership as both a clear concept and a practical practice. The focus on the connection between teaching and departmental goals shows that transformational leadership here involves more than just personal influence; it also includes a strategic fit, making sure daily activities support larger institutional aims.

Need for Strengthened Instructional Supervision

Although teachers generally provided positive feedback, results also show that some teachers expressed a need for stronger and more consistent instructional supervision. Participant 3 suggested that "Classroom observation and technical assistance should be more consistent," while Participant 4 pointed that "More supportive and collaborative follow-up is needed." Even though opinions are generally favorable, identifying supervision gaps highlights crucial areas for leadership development. Although foundational supervisory structures may exist, their implementation lacks the regularity and relational quality required for maximum impact, as suggested by the calls for "more consistent" classroom observation and technical assistance and "more supportive and collaborative follow-up". Particularly noteworthy is the modifier "collaborative" in the proposal of participant 4, which suggests that teachers prefer partnership-based supervision over unilateral evaluation. The difference between supervision as an organizational practice and supervision as a useful developmental tool is highlighted by this finding, which implies that follow-through frequency and quality may be important mediating factors in converting supervisory activities into better teaching practices.

The Influence of Instructional Leadership Practices on Teacher's Motivation and Professional Growth

The focus of this section is on how the school heads' instructional leadership practices influence teachers'

motivation, professional development, and confidence in their teaching roles.

Teacher Motivation

Across the responses, most teachers indicated that their school head's instructional leadership positively influenced their motivation to perform their teaching duties effectively. Participant 4 noted that "He believes in my potential as a teacher," while according to Participant 9, "He motivates us by providing guidance and support. Encouraging professional growth and creating a positive environment." Consequently, Participant 26 highlighted that "As a teacher I become more zealous especially in terms in terms of submitting the necessary documents that we need to submit in a specific time."

Support and Encouragement for Professional Growth

Teachers reported that their school heads actively encouraged participation in several professional growth endeavors, Participant 7 noted that "He support individual's role in the field. And shows respect to the different personality of the teachers." Meanwhile, according to Participant 9, "By monitoring and creating. Encouraging innovation and creativity in task /teaching." Participant 12 affirmed, "He portrays professional connections and encourages us to be a better and productive individuals/professionals." In addition, Participant 10 highlighted that "He provides mentorship and facilities access to workshop, conference, other professional growth opportunities."

Guidance and Feedback that Boost Confidence and Skills

Participants recounted specific situations where the school head's guidance or feedback enhanced their confidence or teaching competence. According to Participant 2, "During times where there is an activity, the school head guides us," and Participant 4, "By pointing what is first," meanwhile, Participant 12 deemphasized that "Every teacher experiences struggles in classroom management and performance of student especially those in lower sections. However, the school head always guides us and motivates us to make every situation into a fulfilling endeavor."

Comparison of Current and Past Instructional Leadership Practices

When comparing their current school head's leadership with past experiences, most teachers described their present school head's practices as better or more supportive. Participant 5 mentioned that "He is more authoritative, an open-minded one. Supports helpful initiatives for teachers and learners."

Similarly, Participant 12 also stated that "Our current school head has a sense of awareness and initiative. Also, portrays strong leaderships and professionalism which truly make him admirable and will greatly affect you as a teacher positively," moreover, Participant 13 noted that "Our present school head shows a fair treatment in managing us. Unlike our previous school head aren't. Our school head today has a sense of connection by interfering and experiencing the struggles faced by the teachers."

Suggested Actions to Enhance Motivation and Professional Growth

Teachers proposed several ways to further improve their motivation and professional development. Participant 2 suggested that through "Full support to proposed activity with funds and attend seminars." Meanwhile, Participant 16 also suggested that "teachers will be supported by providing appropriate and adequate resources for instructional matters and give encouragement and support in teaching competing teachers."

Challenges Faced by School Heads and Teachers along Instructional Leadership Practices

This section outlines the findings regarding the difficulties faced by school leaders and educators in relation to instructional leadership practices. Data was collected using a checklist that identified whether specific challenges were present or absent.

The analysis of the results was conducted based on frequency, percentage, and rank. The challenges experienced by school heads in instructional leadership are displayed in Table 3.0 below.

Table 3. Challenges Faced by School Heads along Instructional Leadership

Challenge	Frequency	Rank
Heavy administrative workload that limits time for instructional leadership	2	2.5
Lack of access to leadership training or professional development	2	2.5
Insufficient resources (budget, teaching materials, technology)	2	2.5

Large class sizes or high teacher-student ratios	2	2.5
Resistance from teachers to adopt changes or new strategies	1	6
Difficulty balancing leadership, administrative, and community roles	1	6
Frequent curriculum or policy changes causing implementation issues	1	6

The data in Table 3.0 show the specific challenges encountered by the two school heads in the performance of their instructional leadership roles. The table presents the number and percentage of school heads who reported

experiencing each challenge, arranged according to rank based on the frequency of responses. Moreover, table 3.1 below presents the challenges faced by teachers along instructional leadership.

Table 3.1. Challenges Faced by Teachers along Instructional Leadership

Challenge	Frequency	Rank
Lack of instructional materials, digital tools, or other resources	27	1
Limited time for collaboration, coaching, or mentoring	23	2
Burnout and stress exacerbated by large class sizes, limited resources, and unaddressed mental health support needs	21	3
Insufficient access to professional development opportunities	16	4.5
Stress and burnout from workload and expectations	16	4.5
Heavy teaching load and administrative paperwork	14	6
Limited support from school leadership or colleagues	13	7
Limited motivation and recognition opportunities	12	8
Inadequate or infrequent constructive feedback from school heads that hinders professional growth and motivation	11	9
Difficulty adjusting to new teaching strategies or curriculum changes	9	10

The table summarizes the particular difficulties faced by teachers in relation to instructional leadership practices. It displays the frequency and percentage of responses for each identified challenge, organized according to their rank.

Learning and Development Activities that Could be Designed on Instructional Leadership to Enhance Teachers' Motivation and Professional Growth

This proposed Learning and Development (L&D) Activities plan is precisely structured according to the DepEd format, specifically aligning with DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016, which mandates Learning Action Cells (LACs) as the primary mechanism for school-based Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The plan effectively integrates diverse learning formats—including LAC sessions, training workshops, and group studies—to address critical challenges in instructional leadership identified from the provided image (e.g., mentoring, curriculum supervision, and professional growth). Each of the five outlined LAC sessions is detailed with a specific topic that directly addresses a ranked challenge, along with its format, duration, clear objectives, engaging activities, expected outputs, and designated facilitators or resources, ensuring a

comprehensive and actionable framework for professional development within schools.

The plan starts with the 'Strengthening Mentoring/Coaching' session, a key LAC activity that focuses on the most critical challenge. It seeks to enhance mentoring skills in line with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) through hands-on role-playing and peer coaching exercises. Subsequently, "Distributed Leadership Models" is addressed via a group study and workshop, designed to mitigate time constraints on school heads by fostering shared leadership through case studies and delegation exercises, with the outcome being a concrete distributed leadership action plan. The third session, "PLCs & Mentorship for Motivation", combines training with LAC to institutionalize mentorship and action research, using coaching models and research sharing to culminate in a PLC implementation schedule. The fourth session focuses on "Curriculum Supervision & Data-Driven Decisions", employing a seminar-workshop format to enhance supervision through observation protocols and data analysis, yielding revised supervision checklists. Finally, "Teacher Professional Growth Culture" is cultivated through a LAC and

recognition session, aiming to boost motivation and foster a positive school culture through career mapping and the development of a school-level recognition system. The overarching implementation strategy

mandates monthly sessions for a maximum of 20 teachers, with monitoring through pre/post-assessments to ensure alignment with the Basic Education Research Agenda.

Table 4. Proposed Output: Learning and Development Activities (DepEd Format)

LAC Session No.	Topic (Addressing Challenge)	Format & Duration	Objectives	Activities	Expected Output	Facilitator/ Resources
1	Strengthening Mentoring/Coaching	LAC Session (2hrs)	Build mentoring skills per PPSSH	Role-play feedback; peer coaching demo	Personalized mentoring plans	School Head; LAC Toolkit
2	Distributed Leadership Models	Group Study + Workshop (3hrs)	Address time constraints via shared leadership	Case studies; role delegation exercise	Distributed leadership action plan	LAC Leader; DO 35 Guide
3	PLCs & Mentorship for Motivation	Training + LAC (4 hrs)	Institutionalize mentorship/action research	Grow Model coaching; research sharing	PLC implementation schedule	NEAP Trainer
4	Curriculum Supervision & Data-Driven Decisions	Seminar-Workshop (3 hrs)	Enhance supervision sans overload	Observation protocols; data analysis	Revised supervision checklists	Division Supervisor
5	Teacher Professional Growth Culture	LAC + Recognition Session (2 hrs)	Boost motivation via rewards	Positive culture workshop; career mapping	School recognition system	Teachers/HR Focal

Instructional Leadership Enhancement Program

Institution Name: St. Louise de Marillac College of Sorsogon, Inc. Graduate School

Date: December 2025

Prepared by: JOEL H. FRESNIDO

1. Background

The Municipality of Sta. Magdalena in the province of Sorsogon carries with it a distinct educational landscape shaped by its coastal setting and mix of rural and urban schools. Despite the community's strong sense of bayanihan, schools in the municipality continue to grapple with persistent challenges that hinder the full strengthening of instructional leadership. These challenges affect not only school administrators but also the teachers who work daily to meet the needs of their learners.

School heads often find themselves burdened with heavy administrative workloads that leave them with

limited time for essential instructional supervision and coaching. Their roles are further complicated by the municipality's distance from regional training hubs, restricting access to continuous professional development that could enhance their leadership capacity. Resource limitations also weigh heavily on the system, many schools lack basic teaching materials, technological tools, and adequate budget allocations. In some cases, large class sizes, averaging 40 to 45 students per teacher, place additional pressure on both administrators and teachers, making effective instructional monitoring even more difficult.

Teachers, meanwhile, face their own set of interconnected struggles. A significant number, twenty-seven teachers identified the scarcity of instructional materials, digital tools, and basic classroom resources as their primary concern. Collaborative practices such as peer coaching, mentoring, and professional learning communities are difficult to sustain due to time

constraints, with twenty-three teachers reporting limited opportunities for collaboration. Burnout and stress are also widespread, affecting twenty-one teachers who experience the combined weight of large classes and the lack of mental health support. Professional development opportunities remain limited within the municipality, leaving sixteen teachers with few accessible avenues for growth. Additionally, many teachers carry the burden of administrative paperwork and heavy teaching loads, contributing to workload-related stress.

Serving approximately 3,500 to 4,000 learners from agricultural and fishing communities, the Sta. Magdalena district embodies both hardship and hope. Economic challenges faced by many families translate into further strain on school resources. Yet, the community's closeness and strong culture of mutual assistance offer a foundation for improvement. The bayanihan spirit, deeply embedded in the people of Sta. Magdalena, provides a meaningful opportunity to mobilize shared efforts and collaborative solutions, paving the way for stronger instructional leadership and more resilient schools.

2. Rationale

Effective instructional leadership stands as the cornerstone for advancing teaching quality and student learning outcomes throughout Sta. Magdalena's schools. Yet the district faces systemic challenges that significantly constrain school leaders and teachers from fully engaging in the instructional improvement work that matters most. School heads find themselves trapped in an exhausting cycle of administrative compliance, dedicating an estimated 70-80% of their time to paperwork, reporting requirements, and bureaucratic obligations. This leaves precious little opportunity for the core work of instructional leadership: conducting meaningful classroom observations, providing thoughtful mentoring to teachers, and offering strategic support for instructional planning and implementation.

The situation proves equally challenging for classroom teachers, who work largely in isolation despite their deep need for professional connection and collaborative learning. They face each teaching day with limited access to updated teaching materials, minimal technology tools, and scarce opportunities for professional dialogue with their peers. When large class sizes of 40-45 students combine with inadequate resources and insufficient support systems, the result creates not just difficult working conditions but the very

breeding ground for teacher burnout. Innovation stagnates, effective practices remain unshared, and instructional improvement becomes an aspiration rather than a reality.

This proposal emerges from a deep understanding that sustainable change in Sta. Magdalena requires approaches grounded in the community's unique context and strengths. Five key principles guide the proposed program's design and implementation. First, contextual appropriateness demands that all solutions remain realistic for rural and coastal school settings. The program avoids recommendations requiring major infrastructure investments or creating ongoing dependency on external support, recognizing that sustainability depends on working within existing realities rather than against them.

Second, the commitment to local capacity building reflects a conscious choice to develop and leverage expertise already present within the district rather than importing external solutions that may not take root in local soil. The program's success depends on nurturing homegrown leadership and expertise that will continue flourishing long after external facilitation ends. Third, the collaborative approach draws deliberately on Sta. Magdalena's strong bayanihan tradition, channeling this community strength into systematic peer support, intentional resource sharing, and collective problem-solving. The program trusts that solutions emerging from collaborative effort will prove more sustainable than those imposed from above or outside.

Fourth, incremental implementation acknowledges the resource constraints facing the district while maintaining ambition for meaningful change. By starting with high-impact, low-cost interventions that can demonstrate early wins, the program builds momentum and confidence before tackling more complex challenges. Finally, while strengthening school leadership remains crucial, the program maintains a teacher-centered focus, prioritizing direct support for the educators who face the most immediate resource and support challenges in their daily work.

The investment in instructional leadership development promises to create powerful ripple effects throughout the district. Better-supported teachers, equipped with adequate resources and sustained by collaborative professional relationships, deliver higher-quality instruction. This improved teaching translates directly

into enhanced student engagement and learning outcomes. By simultaneously addressing both leadership capacity and teacher support needs, this program creates the conditions necessary for sustained educational improvement across Sta. Magdalena—not through a single dramatic intervention, but through the steady accumulation of better practice, stronger relationships, and more effective support systems that compound over time into transformative change.

3. Objectives

- Strengthen instructional leadership capacity in Sta. Magdalena district schools by reducing administrative burden on school leaders and enhancing their ability to focus on instructional improvement activities.
- Improve resource accessibility for teachers through the establishment of shared resource systems and equitable distribution of instructional materials and technology tools.
- Build collaborative professional learning communities that provide teachers with sustained opportunities for peer support, mentoring, and collective instructional improvement.
- Address teacher wellness and reduce burnout by implementing comprehensive support systems and workload management strategies.
- Streamline administrative processes and increase operational efficiency, allowing both school leaders and teachers to dedicate more time to teaching and learning activities.

4. Strategic Enhancement Activities

This section presents targeted initiatives designed to tackle the challenges faced by teachers and school leaders, with each activity directly linked to a specific challenge.

District Instructional Leadership Academy

Description: Establish a locally-run leadership development program bringing together school heads, assistant principals, and master teachers for regular training and networking.

Initiatives:

- Quarterly full-day leadership workshops held at the Sta. Magdalena National High School
- Topics include: instructional observation techniques, mentoring skills, data-driven decision-making, teacher supervision, change management

- Utilize Division personnel, successful school heads from neighboring districts, and DepEd regional trainers as resource persons
- Create Leadership Learning Circle meeting monthly for peer support and problem-solving
- Develop leadership toolkit with observation protocols, feedback templates, and planning guides

Administrative Process Streamlining Initiative

Description: Systematically reduce non-instructional administrative burden on school leaders and teachers through process improvement and task redistribution.

Initiatives:

- Conduct administrative task audit identifying time-intensive, low-value activities
- Develop standardized templates for routine reports (accomplishment reports, monitoring forms, incident reports)
- Create shared digital filing system using free platforms (Google Drive) to reduce duplicate record-keeping
- Train administrative staff and PTAs to handle routine administrative tasks (visitor logs, facility scheduling, basic record management)
- Negotiate with Schools Division Office for consolidated reporting schedules
- Establish "Administrative Fridays" where teachers are protected from meetings for preparation work

District Resource Hub and Sharing System

Description: Create centralized and shared access to instructional materials, teaching aids, and digital resources to address critical resource shortages.

Initiatives:

- Establish Resource Hub at Sta. Magdalena National High School with reading materials, manipulatives, science equipment, visual aids, and teaching references
- Implement borrowing system with rotating schedule ensuring equitable access across schools
- Create digital resource repository with lesson plans, teaching guides, video lessons, and activity sheets accessible via shared drive
- Organize resource-sharing cooperative where teachers contribute and exchange materials
- Conduct resource mobilization through partnerships with LGU, barangays, alumni, and civic organizations

- Develop low-cost, locally-made teaching materials through teacher workshops
- Create "resource ambassadors" in each school managing material distribution

Strengthened Learning Action Cell (LAC) Program

Description: Revitalize and systematically implement LAC sessions in all schools, providing structured time for professional collaboration, peer learning, and instructional improvement.

Initiatives:

- Establish protected weekly 90-minute LAC sessions integrated into school schedules
- Train LAC facilitators using DepEd LAC guidelines and materials
- Provide focus topics aligned with district improvement priorities (e.g., reading instruction, differentiated learning, formative assessment)
- Implement peer observation cycles where teachers visit each other's classrooms
- Create inter-school LAC clusters for broader networking (e.g., coastal schools cluster, poblacion schools cluster)
- Develop LAC documentation system capturing best practices and insights
- Recognize and showcase effective practices emerging from LAC sessions

Teacher Wellness and Support Initiative

Description: Address teacher burnout, stress, and mental health needs through peer support systems, wellness activities, and workload management strategies.

Initiatives:

- Establish Teacher Support Groups (TSG) in each school zone meeting monthly for peer support and stress management
- Partner with Rural Health Unit for mental health awareness sessions and referral support
- Conduct wellness activities (stress management workshops, mindfulness sessions, recreational activities) quarterly
- Create teacher recognition program celebrating achievements and contributions
- Implement workload auditing tool helping teachers identify and address overwhelming responsibilities
- Develop teacher care packages with basic wellness resources and self-care guides
- Train selected teachers as peer support volunteers

Quarterly District Learning Assemblies

Description: Bring together all schools quarterly for large-scale professional learning, resource sharing, and community building.

Initiatives:

- Host district-wide gathering featuring keynote speakers, workshop sessions, resource fair, and best practice sharing
- Rotate hosting responsibilities among schools building ownership and pride
- Include student showcases highlighting instructional improvements
- Facilitate resource exchange and material sharing
- Provide networking time for relationship building across schools
- Recognize exemplary teachers and school innovations

5. Implementation Timeline

YEAR 1: Foundation and Pilot Phase (School Year 2025-2026)

Quarter 1 (June-August 2025)

- Conduct district-wide orientation and stakeholder consultation
- Form Project Management Team and Working Committees
- Complete administrative task audit in pilot schools
- Launch District Instructional Leadership Academy (Session 1)
- Train first cohort of LAC facilitators (15 teachers)
- Begin Resource Hub setup at Central School

Quarter 2 (September-November 2025)

- Implement LAC sessions in all schools (weekly)
- Hold Leadership Academy Session 2
- Complete Resource Hub setup and launch borrowing system
- Conduct first Teacher Wellness Workshop
- Pilot administrative process improvements in 3 schools
- Hold First District Learning Assembly

Quarter 3 (December 2025-February 2026)

- Continue weekly LAC sessions
- Leadership Academy Session 3
- Launch inter-school LAC clusters (monthly meetings)
- Conduct mid-year program review and adjustments

- Expand resource procurement based on teacher needs assessment
- Second Teacher Wellness Workshop

Quarter 4 (March-May 2026)

- Leadership Academy Session 4
- Second District Learning Assembly
- Conduct Year 1 comprehensive evaluation
- Document best practices and lessons learned
- Plan Year 2 expansion and refinements
- Recognize outstanding participants and schools

YEAR 2: Expansion and Institutionalization (School Year 2026-2027)

Quarter 1 (June-August 2026)

- Scale successful pilot programs to all schools
- Launch Leadership Academy Year 2 with new cohort
- Train second cohort of LAC facilitators
- Implement administrative streamlining across all schools
- Expand Resource Hub with additional materials
- Establish Teacher Support Groups in all school zones

Quarter 2 (September-November 2026)

- Continue all program activities with refinements
- Launch peer observation program district-wide
- Third District Learning Assembly
- Deepen partnerships with LGU and community organizations
- Conduct teacher workload audits and implement redistributions

Quarter 3 (December 2026-February 2027)

- Continue systematic implementation
- Conduct mid-year evaluation with focus on sustainability
- Strengthen teacher recognition programs
- Expand digital resource repository
- Address emerging challenges and gaps

Quarter 4 (March-May 2027)

- Fourth District Learning Assembly with impact showcase
- Conduct comprehensive Year 2 evaluation
- Document program for replication
- Plan sustainability transition for Year 3

- Celebrate achievements and recognize contributions

YEAR 3: Sustainability and Integration (School Year 2027-2028)

Quarter 1 (June-August 2027)

- Integrate all programs into standard school operations
- Transfer program management to permanent district structures
- Train new facilitators and leaders ensuring continuity
- Refine resource systems for long-term sustainability

Quarter 2 (September-November 2027)

- Monitor quality and fidelity of institutionalized programs
- Address sustainability challenges
- Document impact stories and success cases
- Share learnings with other districts

Quarter 3 (December 2027-February 2028)

- Conduct final comprehensive evaluation
- Assess long-term impact on instructional leadership capacity
- Complete program documentation and replication guide
- Present findings to Division and Regional offices

Quarter 4 (March-May 2028)

- Final District Learning Assembly celebrating three-year journey
- Transition to fully integrated, sustainable operations
- Disseminate program model and lessons learned
- Plan for continued improvement beyond project period

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Project Management Structure:
- District Project Management Team: District Supervisor, selected School Heads, Master Teachers
- Monthly monitoring meetings reviewing implementation progress, challenges, and adjustments
- School-level focal persons submitting monthly activity reports

- Quarterly progress reports to Schools Division Office

Monitoring Indicators:

Participation and Engagement

- Number and percentage of school heads participating in Leadership Academy sessions
- Attendance rates at LAC sessions (target: 90% average attendance)
- Number of teachers accessing Resource Hub materials
- Participation in District Learning Assemblies

Implementation Fidelity

- Percentage of schools conducting weekly LAC sessions as scheduled
- Number of peer observations conducted per teacher per semester
- Administrative time logs showing reduction in non-instructional tasks
- Resource borrowing frequency and distribution equity

Process Quality

- LAC session quality assessments using observation rubrics
- Leadership Academy participant satisfaction ratings (target: 4.0/5.0 or higher)
- Teacher feedback on resource adequacy and accessibility
- Administrative process efficiency ratings

Evaluation Framework

Baseline Assessment (Start of Year 1):

- Survey all school heads and teachers documenting current challenges, time allocation, resource access, stress levels, and support needs
- Review existing administrative processes and time requirements
- Inventory existing instructional resources and materials
- Assess current collaboration practices and professional learning opportunities

Formative Evaluation (Quarterly):

- Participant feedback surveys after each major activity
- Focus group discussions with school heads and teachers
- Observation of LAC sessions and leadership activities

- Review of participation and implementation data
- Adjustment recommendations for next quarter

Summative Evaluation (End of Years 1, 2, and 3):

Leadership Capacity Outcomes:

- Time allocation analysis: percentage of school head time dedicated to instructional leadership activities (target: increase from 20% to 40%)
- Leadership practice assessment using instructional leadership rubric
- Number of classroom observations and teacher conferences conducted
- Quality of feedback provided to teachers

Resource Accessibility Outcomes:

- Teacher survey on resource adequacy (target: 80% report improved access)
- Resource Hub utilization data (checkouts, materials accessed)
- Inventory of additional resources acquired
- Teacher-created materials documented and shared

Professional Collaboration Outcomes:

- LAC implementation rate (target: 100% of schools conducting weekly sessions)
- Teacher survey on collaboration opportunities (target: 85% report adequate time)
- Number of peer observations and collaborative activities
- Best practices documented and shared across district

Teacher Wellness Outcomes:

- Teacher stress and burnout survey (target: 50% reduction in stress related to resource inadequacy)
- Participation in wellness activities
- Teacher retention and satisfaction rates
- Workload perception and management ratings

Administrative Efficiency Outcomes:

- Time spent on administrative tasks (target: 30% reduction)
- Teacher satisfaction with administrative support
- Streamlined processes adopted and sustained

Student Learning Indicators:

- National Achievement Test results trends
- Classroom observation data on instructional quality
- Student engagement indicators
- Reading and numeracy assessment results

Evaluation Methods:

Quantitative Data Collection:

- Pre/post surveys for school heads and teachers
- Time-use logs and activity tracking
- Participation and attendance records
- Resource utilization statistics
- Administrative data from school records

Qualitative Data Collection:

- Focus group discussions (3-4 per year)
- Key informant interviews with school heads and teachers
- Classroom observations using standardized protocols
- LAC session observations
- Document review (lesson plans, meeting minutes, reports)
- Success stories and case studies

Data Analysis and Reporting:

- Quarterly progress reports summarizing implementation status, challenges, and adjustments
- Annual comprehensive reports analyzing outcomes against objectives
- Final evaluation report documenting three-year impact, lessons learned, and recommendations
- Dissemination of findings through Division conferences and publication

Sustainability Indicators:

- Integration of programs into School Improvement Plans
- Continuation of activities beyond external support
- Local budget allocation for program components
- Leadership succession and capacity transfer
- Community and stakeholder ownership

Success Criteria

- At least 90% of school heads report increased time and capacity for instructional leadership
- All schools maintain weekly LAC sessions with 85%+ teacher participation
- 80% of teachers report improved access to instructional resources
- Teacher stress levels related to resource inadequacy decrease by 50%
- Administrative workload reduces by 30% as measured by time-use studies
- Instructional quality improves as evidenced by classroom observations

- Programs are fully integrated into school operations and sustainable without external support
- The district model is documented and shared with other municipalities in Sorsogon

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The instructional leadership practices are transformative. From the results of this study, the following conclusions can be made:

- Teachers perceive their school heads' instructional leadership practices as effective and supportive, recognizing efforts in mentorship, professional development, innovation, and collaboration.
- Instructional leadership influence teacher's motivation and professional growth with principals' most significant contribution occurring through developing teacher capacity rather than direct intervention in classrooms.
- Both school heads and teachers face significant challenges including heavy administrative workload, insufficient resources, and limited time for instructional activities that fundamentally constrain instructional leadership effectiveness regardless of individual capacity or commitment.
- Enhancing teacher motivation and professional growth through instructional leadership requires comprehensive, multi-faceted learning and development activities that integrate mentorship, professional development, innovation support, collaboration structures, and consistent supervision.
- Drawing from the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen instructional leadership in the Philippine educational system:
 - Strengthen instructional coaching and mentoring roles of school heads.
 - Train school heads in feedback delivery that emphasizes growth and collaboration.
 - Distribute leadership models to address the constraints on principals' time and broaden instructional expertise.
 - Streamline administrative tasks to free-up time for instructional leadership.
 - Design a leadership development program to include training on instructional supervision and feedback, coaching and mentoring system, workshop on curriculum innovation and teacher motivation, and integration of digital tools for instructional monitoring.

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