

Instructional Supervision Strategies of School Head, Teachers' Skills in Fostering Critical Thinking and Knowledge Application in the Classroom and Academic Performance of Grade 6 Learners

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Abstract — This study evaluates the effective instructional supervision strategies of school head, teachers' skills in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom and academic performance of grade 6 learners. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design utilizing a survey adapted and modified from the study of Alkrdem & Mofareh (2015) to assessed the school heads' supervisory practices that were implemented in conducting the instructional supervision to teachers such as resource provider, instructional specialist, curriculum specialist, learning facilitator, and school leader and the level of teachers' skills in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom. Further, the researcher gathered the rating of the learners in quarter 4 for all learning areas. The research results affirm the presence of a significant relationship between instructional supervision strategies of school head, the skills of teachers in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom and level of academic performance of grade 6 learners. The findings highlight that effective instructional supervision practices significantly enhance teachers' skills, which, in turn, positively influence learners' academic performance. The consistently high ratings in the various dimensions of instructional supervision, teachers' skills, and classroom practices, along with the very strong and strong correlations found, underscore the crucial role of school leaders in providing consistent guidance, resource management, and professional support to teachers. Accordingly, strengthening instructional supervision systems, fostering continuous teacher development, and providing adequate administrative support are essential in improving the quality of instruction and raising learners' academic achievement. Equally important is addressing areas such as teacher confidence, anxiety reduction, and sustained professional growth to ensure that both teachers and learners fully benefit from these interventions.

Keywords — *Instructional Supervision Strategies, School Head, Teachers' Skills, Fostering Critical Thinking, Knowledge Application, Classroom, Academic Performance, Grade 6 Learners*

I. Introduction

Instructional supervision is one of the most important roles and responsibilities of the school head to ensure that teachers are in the right path of achieving educational goals of the learners or they properly deliver quality education. An instructional supervisor is an experienced and knowledgeable professional who provides guidance, support, and supervision to educators and schools. Their role is multifaceted and encompasses various responsibilities, including curriculum development, instructional leadership, teacher evaluation, and professional development. They work closely with teachers, and other stakeholders to promote effective teaching practices, enhance learner's outcomes, and ensure adherence to educational standards and policies.

Instructional supervisors play a crucial role in curriculum development and implementation. They work closely with teachers and administrators to ensure that the curriculum is aligned with educational standards, goals, and needs of learners. They may provide guidance on the selection of instructional materials, the design of assessments, and the integration of technology into curriculum. They monitor curriculum implementation, review learner performance data, and provide feedback to enhance the effectiveness of instructional practices.

As instructional leaders, instructional supervisor play a pivotal role in guiding and inspiring teachers. They provide feedback and coaching to teachers, observing their instructional practices and offering constructive suggestions for improvement. Instructional supervisors serve as a resource for teachers, offering support in areas such as lesson planning, classroom management, and learner engagement to make them effective instructional managers. By promoting instructional leadership, instructional supervisors create a culture of continuous improvement and professional growth within educational institution.

Generating motivation is a fundamental supervisory responsibility that can yield substantial benefits, including happier, healthier, and more engaged employees who perform better at work, resulting in improved teachers' performance (Valcour, M., 2017). Moreover, teachers, as one of the key factors in the education system, play essential roles in the teaching and learning process; their efficacy in instruction must be supported and strengthened through constant supervision. The quality of education they provide partially depends on how they are trained and supervised. Research conducted in Sri Lanka (Khan. R., et al., 2021) revealed that supervisory commitment had a positive effect on teachers' efficacy. It was also found that it was anchored to the appropriate use of instructional resources. Moreover, a study revealed that supervision could enhance classroom performance by strengthening and enhancing teachers' performance (Kholid, I., & Rohmatika, RV., 2019).

Research has shown that effective instructional supervision can lead to significant improvements in teacher performance. Accordingly, teachers who received regular, constructive feedback reported increased instructional efficacy and job satisfaction (Kurt & Duyar, 2023). Similarly, comprehensive supervision strategies could lead to higher student achievement (Hoehn et al., 2023). Through instructional supervision, teachers critical thinking and knowledge will be

developed to support the needs of the learners. Importantly, instructional supervision is a core aspect of effective school leadership with an intentional focus and demonstrated impact on continuous improvement in quality teaching and learning (Education Improvement Research Centre, 2022).

One of the primary roles of an instructional supervisor is to support the professional development of educators through the conduct of classroom visitation, provision of appropriate technical assistance and providing the material needs of the teachers to improve the teaching and learning process. They provide guidance and resources to help improve their instructional techniques, implement innovative teaching strategies, and adapt to changing educational trends. Instructional supervisors may facilitate workshops, seminars, and training sessions to enhance educators' content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and classroom management strategies. By investing in the professional growth of teachers, instructional supervisors empower them to excel in their roles and positively impact students learning.

Thus, this study has been formulated to evaluate the effective instructional supervision strategies of school head, teachers' skills in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom and academic performance of grade 6 learners. From there, the instructional leaders can formulate activities to develop professional growth of teachers and continually improving their performance to attain the desired goals of the school.

This study evaluates the effective instructional supervision strategies of school head, teachers' skills in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom and academic performance of grade 6 learners in Milagro Elementary School, Ormoc District 8, Ormoc City Division. The findings of the study will be the basis for the proposed instructional supervision plan.

Further, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the extent of instructional supervision strategies of school head employed to teachers in terms of the following:
 - 1.1 resource provider,
 - 1.2 instructional specialist,
 - 1.3 Curriculum specialist,
 - 1.4 learning facilitator, and
 - 1.5 school leader?
2. What is the level of skills of teachers in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom based on the following:

- 2.1 plans instruction,
 - 2.2 knowledge of the subject matter, and
 - 2.3 students' engagement?
3. What is the level of academic performance of grade 6 learners
 4. Is there a significant relationship between:
 - 4.1 the extent of instructional supervision strategies of school head employed to teachers and level of skills of teachers in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom
 - 4.1 level of skills of teachers in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom and level of academic performance of grade 6 learners?

What instructional supervision plan can be proposed based on the findings of this study?

II. Methodology

Design. This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to evaluate effective instructional supervision as a tool to foster critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom. It was considered descriptive because it described the variables — the instructional supervision of school heads in terms of resource provider, instructional specialist, curriculum specialist, learning facilitator, and school leader — as well as the level of performance of teachers in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom based on planned instruction, knowledge of the subject matter, and students' engagement. Furthermore, it was also correlational as it determined the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The research was conducted at Milagro Elementary School, located in Barangay Milagro, Ormoc City, Leyte, within District 8 of the Schools Division of Ormoc City. Situated in a rural setting surrounded by lush greenery and agricultural fields, the school provided a serene and inspiring learning environment for its students. It served elementary learners from various barangays, delivering high-quality basic education in line with the guidelines established by the Department of Education (DepEd). Classified as medium-sized in terms of student population, the school was led by a dedicated School Head, with a faculty comprising one Teacher I, six Teacher IIs, four Teacher IIIs, and one Master Teacher II, along with one administrative officer. A stable internet connection supported the teachers in utilizing online resources to enhance their lessons, while staff meetings were typically held in the principal's office. The school also featured a playground and a stage for programs and activities, while classrooms were well-structured and consistently maintained, with strategically placed garbage bins ensuring a clean and welcoming environment.

Sampling. The respondents of this study were the twelve (12) teachers and one (1) school head assigned to the said locale. Complete enumeration was employed in selecting the respondents for the study.

Research Procedure. After the research had been approved, data gathering followed. Letter requests to conduct the study were submitted to the proper authorities for approval. First, a letter request was submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent for approval to proceed with data gathering among the identified respondents. After the approval of the SDS, permission letters were also submitted to the Public Schools District Supervisor and School Principal of the school. Once all approvals were granted, the researcher proceeded with data gathering. The researcher conducted an orientation for the respondents. During the orientation, the respondents were informed about the study's objectives and their right to confidentiality. Anonymized data were used solely for research purposes to minimize any burden on the participants. The data were stored securely and were accessible only to the research team, ensuring confidentiality. Participation was purely voluntary, and the respondents had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time. The presentation of findings maintained strict transparency, highlighting participants' views without bias or alterations. Furthermore, a permit from the respondents was obtained, stipulating their consent to be included in the study. After the orientation, survey questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. The respondents were given ample time to complete the survey. After the surveys were accomplished, they were collected, tallied, and submitted for statistical treatment.

Ethical Issues. The researcher obtained the necessary written permission from the authorities to conduct the study. While developing and checking the survey used in the study, the use of offending, discriminatory, or other undesirable terminology was eschewed. The names of the respondents and other personal information were not included in this study to ensure confidentiality. The respondents were also voluntarily participating. Orientation was done for the respondents. During orientation, concerns and issues were clarified, and consent to be part of the study was signed. The researcher-maintained objectivity in discussing and analyzing the results. All authors whose works were cited in this study were correctly quoted and were acknowledged in the reference.

Treatment of Data. The quantitative responses were tallied and tabulated. The data were treated statistically using the following tools: The Simple Percentage and Weighted Mean were employed to evaluate effective instructional supervision in terms of resource provider, instructional specialist, curriculum specialist, learning facilitator, and school leader, as tools to foster critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom based on planned instruction, knowledge of the subject matter, and student engagement. The Pearson r was used to determine the significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1
Extent of Instructional Supervision Strategies for School Head

	Resource Provider	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1	demonstrates effective use of time and resources.	5.00	Always
2	plan, organizes, schedule, and prioritize work to be done.	5.00	Always
3	delegates work as appropriate.	5.00	Always
4	assigns staff members according to their strengths.	5.00	Always
5	establishes ongoing process for planning and making necessary changes within the school.	5.00	Always
6	creates a positive climate and nurture creative approaches to change.	5.00	Always
7	demonstrates the ability to motivate teachers.	5.00	Always
8	knows the teachers' strengths about instructional resources that may be helpful to them.	5.00	Always
	Mean	5.00	Always
	B. Instructional Specialist		
1	demonstrates the ability to evaluate and reinforce appropriate and effective instructional strategies.	5.00	Always
2	uses knowledge and skill in effective instructional strategies.	5.00	Always
3	supervises the teachers using strategies that focus on the improvement of instruction	5.00	Always
4	provides teachers with evidence of continuity between clinical supervision observations.	5.00	Always
5	develops intervention procedures designed to identify strengths and remediate weaknesses.	5.00	Always
6	conducts conferences effectively with teachers regarding performance	5.00	Always
7	knows the importance of student learning objectives to the implementation of the instructional	5.00	Always
8	communicates to staff and community the extent to which learning objectives for the school have been mastered	5.00	Always
	Mean	5.00	Always
	C. Curriculum Specialist		
1	focuses on knowledge, skills and ability towards curriculum improvement and staff development	5.00	Always
2	displays mastery in the discussion of curriculum planning and implementation.	5.00	Always
3	guides teacher in delivering accurate and updated content knowledge using appropriate methodologies, approaches, and strategies.	5.00	Always
4	helps teacher to select, prepare, and utilize available technology and other instructional materials appropriate to the learners and the learning objectives.	5.00	Always
5	assists the teacher to align the lesson objectives, teaching methods, learning activities and instructional materials or resources appropriate to the learners.	5.00	Always
6	develops and organize in-service training programs for teachers and provide continuous and effective professional development.	5.00	Always
7	develops and use a variety of appropriate curriculum assessment strategies to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning.	5.00	Always
8	creates and utilizes appropriate instructional planning and implementation.	5.00	Always
	Mean	5.00	Always
	D. Learning Facilitator		
1	monitors teachers to determine instruction that include elements of effective instruction.	5.00	Always

2	engages teachers in mutual inquiry which aims for the improvement of instruction.	5.00	Always
3	shares the responsibility of the instructional supervision and teaching improvement.	5.00	Always
4	intensifies the conduct of instructional supervision to include all school aspects.	5.00	Always
5	provides teachers with an adequate amount of information to become familiar with the supervisory process.	5.00	Always
6	makes efforts to reduce teachers' level of anxieties concerning the supervisory practices.	4.00	Often
7	ensures that all teachers in the school receive supervisory feedback.	5.00	Always
8	helps teachers to identify appropriate teaching and learning processes.	5.00	Always
	Mean	4.88	Always
E. School Leader			
1	places priority on curriculum and instruction issues.	5.00	Always
2	creates a climate of high expectations characterized by a tone of respect for teachers, students, parents, and community.	5.00	Always
3	functions as a leader with direct involvement in instructional policy by communicating the school policies.	5.00	Always
4	demonstrates commitment to academic goals, ability to develop and articulate a clear vision of long-term goals for the school.	5.00	Always
5	monitors student progress toward school achievement and teacher effectiveness in achieving goals.	5.00	Always
6	consults with others by involving the faculty and other groups in school decision processes.	4.00	Always
7	mobilizes resources such as materials, time, and support to enable the school and its personnel to meet academic goals.	5.00	Always
8	works cooperatively with the staff and the community to develop clear goals that relate to the organization's mission.	5.00	Always
	Mean	5.00	Always
	Grand Mean	4.98	Always

Legend: 4.21- 5.00 – Always
 3.41- 4.20 – Often
 2.61-3.40 - Sometimes
 1.81- 2.60- Rarely
 1.00-1.80- Never

The data gathered on the instructional supervision roles of school leaders revealed consistently high ratings across all dimensions, with a grand mean of 4.98, interpreted as Always, based on the weighted mean scale. All roles—Resource Provider, Instructional Specialist, Curriculum Specialist, and School Leader—obtained perfect mean scores of 5.00 (Always), indicating that school leaders consistently demonstrated effective resource management, instructional supervision, curriculum support, and strong leadership. The role of Learning Facilitator received a mean of 4.88 (Always), slightly lower than other dimensions, primarily due to a lower score in addressing teachers' anxieties regarding supervision, suggesting room for improvement in creating a more supportive supervisory environment. Overall, the findings imply that instructional supervision is effectively and regularly implemented, significantly contributing to teacher growth, enhanced instructional practices, and a positive learning environment, with minor areas for improvement to further strengthen teacher support and professional development.

Table 2
Level of Skills of Teachers

	Plans of Instruction	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1	prepare lessons relevant and aligned to the prescribed curriculum.	5.00	Excellent
2	formulate attainable learning objectives.	4.00	Very Good
3	plan activities according to the pupils' abilities.	5.00	Excellent
4	consider time available in planning.	5.00	Excellent
5	develop long-range plans and daily lessons.	5.00	Excellent
6	demonstrate flexibility in planning.	5.00	Excellent
7	choose activities, materials, and resources appropriate for pupils' needs	4.50	Excellent
8	plan instruction based on formative and summative assessment based on learners' interest.	5.00	Excellent
	Mean	4.81	Excellent
	Knowledge of the Subject Matter		
1	teach accurate and up-to-date information.	5.00	Excellent
2	coordinate learning content with instructional objectives	5.00	Excellent
3	use effective examples and illustrations.	4.50	Excellent
4	present learning content in a logical sequential order.	5.00	Excellent
5	express knowledge in lesson presentation and put ideas across logically	5.00	Excellent
6	demonstrate an understanding and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy.	5.00	Excellent
7	establish an awareness of developments in the subject and curriculum areas	5.00	Excellent
8	foster and maintain students' interest in the subject being taught	5.00	Excellent
	Mean	4.94	Excellent
	C Student Engagement		
1	create a climate in which students display initiative and assume a personal responsibility for learning	5.00	Excellent
2	provide opportunities for each student to meet success regularly	5.00	Excellent
3	use evaluative feedback to determine level of skill acquisition.	4.50	Excellent
4	encourage active participation from all students.	5.00	Excellent
5	use higher order questioning techniques to promote critical thinking skills.	5.00	Excellent
6	make use of time for an effective learning with the students.	5.00	Excellent
7	formulate methods of evaluation clear and purposeful to all learners.	5.00	Excellent
8	build opportunities for conferences to discuss student progress.	4.00	Very Good
	Mean	4.81	Excellent
	Grand Mean	4.85	EXCELLENT

Legend: 4.21- 5.00 – Excellent
 3.41- 4.20 – Very Good
 2.61-3.40 - Good
 1.81- 2.60- Fair
 1.00-1.80- Poor

The data gathered on the performance of teachers in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom showed consistently high ratings across all dimensions, with a grand mean of 4.85, interpreted as Excellent, based on the weighted mean scale. Specifically, the Plans of Instruction dimension obtained a mean of 4.81 (Excellent), indicating that teachers consistently prepared lessons aligned with the curriculum, demonstrated flexibility

in planning, and selected appropriate activities and materials for their learners, although the slightly lower score in formulating attainable learning objectives suggests room for refinement in setting realistic targets. The Knowledge of the Subject Matter dimension recorded the highest mean of 4.94 (Excellent), reflecting the teachers' mastery of content, logical presentation of lessons, and ability to maintain student interest while promoting high standards of literacy. The Student Engagement dimension also received a mean of 4.81 (Excellent), indicating that teachers effectively encouraged active participation, critical thinking, and provided regular opportunities for student success, with a slightly lower score noted in building opportunities for conferences to discuss student progress. Overall, the results imply that teachers demonstrated a high level of competence in lesson planning, content mastery, and student engagement, which are essential in promoting critical thinking and enhancing learning outcomes.

Table 3
Academic Performance of Learners

No.	Interpretation	Scale	Frequency	Percentage
5	Outstanding	90-100	11	21
4	Very Satisfactory	85-89	15	28
3	Satisfactory	80-84	26	49
2	Fairly Satisfactory	75-79	1	2
1	Did Not Meet Expectations	Below 75	0	0
	Total		53	100
	Average		85.00	Very Satisfactory

The data on teachers' performance showed that the majority of respondents, comprising 26 teachers or 49%, received a Satisfactory rating, while 15 teachers or 28% were rated as Very Satisfactory, and 11 teachers or 21% obtained an Outstanding rating. Only 1 teacher or 2% received a Fairly Satisfactory rating, and none fell under the Did Not Meet Expectations category. The overall average rating was 85.00, which falls under the Very Satisfactory interpretation based on the given scale. These results indicate that while most teachers met the expected standards in their performance, there remains a significant portion who performed satisfactorily, highlighting areas for continuous improvement to elevate overall teaching performance and move more teachers towards higher performance categories.

Table 4
Test of Relationship

Variables Correlated	r	Computed value or t	Table Value @.05	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Extent of Instructional Supervision Strategies for School Heads to Skills of Teachers	0.93	4.769	0.728	Reject Ho	Significant Relationship (Very Strong)
Skills of Teachers' and Academic Performance of Learners	0.85	3.928	0.794	Reject Ho	Significant Relationship (Strong)

The results of the correlation analysis revealed a very strong significant relationship between the extent of instructional supervision strategies of school heads and the skills of teachers, as indicated by a computed r-value of 0.93, a computed t-value of 4.769, which is greater than the table value of 0.728, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This implies that effective instructional supervision from school heads is strongly associated with the enhancement of teachers' skills. Likewise, a strong significant relationship was found between the skills of teachers and the academic performance of learners, with an r-value of 0.85, a computed t-value of 3.928, which exceeds the table value of 0.794, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests that improved teacher skills significantly contribute to better academic performance among learners.

IV. Conclusion

The research results affirm the presence of a significant relationship between instructional supervision strategies of school head, the skills of teachers in fostering critical thinking and knowledge application in the classroom and level of academic performance of grade 6 learners. The findings highlight that effective instructional supervision practices significantly enhance teachers' skills, which, in turn, positively influence learners' academic performance. The consistently high ratings in the various dimensions of instructional supervision, teachers' skills, and classroom practices, along with the very strong and strong correlations found, underscore the crucial role of school leaders in providing consistent guidance, resource management, and professional support to teachers. Accordingly, strengthening instructional supervision systems, fostering continuous teacher development, and providing adequate administrative support are essential in improving the quality of instruction and raising learners' academic achievement. Equally important is addressing areas such as teacher confidence, anxiety reduction, and sustained professional growth to ensure that both teachers and learners fully benefit from these interventions.

V. Recommendations

1. Apply the recommended instructional supervision plan to attain the research goal.

2. School heads should strengthen their instructional supervision practices by placing a specific focus on observing, coaching, and supporting teaching strategies that promote critical thinking and knowledge application, such as Socratic questioning, problem-solving tasks, inquiry-based learning, and real-life performance tasks.
3. Organize regular training and workshops aimed at improving teachers' ability to design and deliver lessons that challenge learners to analyze, evaluate, and apply knowledge in meaningful ways. This includes strategies like project-based learning, debate formats, and contextualized assessment tasks.
4. Include indicators related to critical thinking, reasoning, and real-world application in lesson observation tools, lesson plan reviews, and post-observation conferences to ensure these skills are being prioritized in classroom instruction.
5. Encourage teachers to reflect regularly on their teaching strategies, assess learner engagement in higher-order tasks, and share innovative approaches during Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions.
6. Use learner performance data, especially in formative assessments and authentic performance tasks, to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies and supervision support in developing critical thinking and application skills among learners.
7. Provide instructional materials and real-life contextual resources that help teachers create learning experiences that connect classroom lessons to learners' lives, encouraging knowledge application and deeper understanding, and
8. Future researchers are encouraged to replicate this study to incorporate other locales and other variables beyond the ones identified in this study.

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AUTHOR'S PROFILE



MS. MARICHU D. PADUA

Marichu D. Padua was born on May 8, 1991, in Brgy. Dolores, Ormoc City, Leyte. She is a dedicated educator who is committed to fostering a culture of continuous learning and empowerment among her students. Her educational journey began at Milagro Elementary School and continued at New Ormoc City National High School. Marichu embarked on her academic journey at Visayas State University in the picturesque Baybay, Leyte. With a deep-seated passion for shaping young minds, she immersed herself in her studies and, in 2013, proudly graduated with a Bachelor of Elementary Education, majoring in General Education. Her time at the university was marked by rigorous coursework and invaluable practical experiences that prepared her for the challenges of the classroom. That same year, she demonstrated her commitment to the teaching profession by successfully passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), a significant milestone that heralded the official start of her rewarding teaching career. This achievement opened the door to a world of opportunities for Marichu, allowing her to inspire and educate future generations. Marichu has admirably balanced her demanding roles as a full-time teacher and a caring mother to her daughter, Mavis, demonstrating remarkable resilience and dedication. Understanding the importance of continual growth, she decided to pursue a Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) program, focusing on School Administration and Supervision. With determination and perseverance, she completed the academic requirements for her MAEd in May 2022. Throughout this journey, she drew from her varied experiences, which not only enriched her understanding but also reflected her commitment to providing the best for both her students and her daughter. As a Grade 6 teacher at Milagro Elementary School, Marichu inspires her students

while fostering a vibrant learning environment that encourages curiosity and critical thinking. Through her dedication, she significantly impacts her students' academic and personal growth, helping them realize their potential.