

Instructional Leadership of The School Heads: Predictors of Teachers' Satisfaction and Performance

JONAH E. BORBON

Northwest Samar State University

REMCIL B. NERI

Corresponding Author
remcilneri736@gmail.com

Abstract — The present study aimed to examine the relationship between the instructional leadership of school heads and teachers' satisfaction and job performance in selected basic education institutions. It sought to ascertain the relationships of teachers' demographic factors with their perceptions on school heads' instructional leadership as well as satisfaction in leadership and job performance. It also investigated the relationships between instructional leadership and leadership satisfaction and teachers' job performance, as well as the extent to which instructional leadership and leadership satisfaction predict teacher performance.

The study was conducted using a descriptive-correlational research design. The data of 200 teacher-respondents were gathered using validated researcher-made questionnaires. They were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression analysis to determine relationships and predictive effects among the variables.

Pupils, parents and teachers reported that the principal showed a very high degree of instructional leadership. Teachers also described high levels of job performance and leadership satisfaction. Multiple regression analysis showed significant relations between demographic variables, especially age, education level and work time in the position and dimensions of instructional leadership, satisfaction from leading and job performance. In addition, it shows a positive significant relationship between instructional leadership and leadership satisfaction, between instructional leadership and job performance, and finally, between leadership satisfaction and job performance. The regression analysis showed that both the instructional leadership and leaders' satisfaction completely forecasted teachers' job performance.

They also conclude that influential instructional leadership practices by the school heads play a major role in teachers' satisfaction and performance. Consolidated further by training in supervision and observation audit systems, it can enhance teaching expertise as well as holistic school improvement initiatives. The results offer empirical evidence for the development of leadership programs and better support systems for teachers at primary-level institutions.

Keywords — *Instructional leadership, leadership satisfaction, job performance, school heads, teacher perception, educational management, leadership effectiveness, Descriptive-Quantitative Research Method, Cebu City, Philippines.*

I. Introduction

Built on the above image, if we fast forward to 2032, education in schools and instructional leaders have become the crux of how effectively quality teaching translates into a conducive learning environment. Aside from administrative tasks and policy enforcement, effective school heads actively support and guide their teachers by fostering professional growth, motivation, and empowerment. Such leadership practices lead to increased teacher satisfaction and performance, but instruction-agnostic or non-substantive engagement can lessen motivation and create an overall lowering of effective practice. Learning how instructional leadership by school heads impacts teachers' job satisfaction and work performance is critical for improving school outcomes and performance.

This study investigates the link between school principals' instructional leadership practices and their teachers' job satisfaction and performance and presents a path to fostering educational climates that make educators feel valued while enhancing student learning. Globally, teacher turnover remains high. More than 30% of new teachers leave the profession within five years (UNESCO, 2022), largely due to dissatisfaction with school management and lack of support. For example, nearly 1 in 4 teachers in the Philippines report low job satisfaction linked to poor instructional leadership. Teachers in Cebu have raised similar concerns, emphasizing that pupils require more supportive and productive school supervision.

These challenges point out the need for strategic professional development opportunities to deepen school heads' capacity for instructional leadership. Professional development that builds management, communication, and instructional coaching skills can increase retention and satisfaction among teachers along with improved student outcomes. Involving teachers in planning and implementing these programs ensures that they are relevant to their professional needs and responsive to them. Collaborative leadership practices address shared vision, fostering innovation, and inclusive teaching spaces. International evidence from countries including Finland and Singapore shows that strong instructional leadership is associated with increased teacher satisfaction and improved student outcomes. However, in the Philippine context, there is a divide between policy expectations and teachers lived experiences, which shows that school leaders must involve teachers in decision-making processes as well as feedback mechanisms. Closing this gap is important to ensure that education policy serves the actual needs of teachers and students and, by extension, teaching and learning.

The implications of this study aim to provide advantages on the different levels. The results are beneficial not only for policymakers but also for the Department of Education (DepEd), as they could help tailor-make leadership development programs based on the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads, thereby improving educational quality in the country. At the same time, it can provide school heads with valuable insight about how their instructional leadership is influencing teacher satisfaction and performance, allowing them to adopt evidence-based strategies to cultivate supportive yet high-performing schools. Teachers will respond to leadership

practices that can understand and address their professional needs, thus increasing job satisfaction and morale while also allowing them to be more responsible for teaching. With improved performance of the teacher, in turn it will guide student academic achievement and holistic development. Moreover, there is a potential that the current study will be used as a reference for the instructional leadership and educational management field that can encourage other researchers to engage in similar studies.

The extent to which principals' instructional leadership predicts teacher satisfaction and job performance in public primary schools of North District 1, Schools Division of Cebu City, during the academic year 2024–2025 was studied. Data were collected through validated questionnaires that were reflective of teachers lived experiences and perceptions. Although the study provides evidence and implications about how school leadership could be improved at a practical level, it is limited by its dependence on self-reported data, which may contain bias. The results are particular to North District 1 and may not be generalizable to other districts or private schools. In this analysis demographic information, including age, gender and years teaching, is controlled for but not examined unless it emerges as a strong predictor. That said, this study does not address instructional leadership at other levels of education.

Literature Review

World its importance, instructional leadership has now taken the center stage of data on school effectiveness and climate. There are innumerable studies exploring how the leadership styles of school principals affect education, especially teacher satisfaction and performance. This paper synthesizes research findings, scholarly perspectives and relevant policies to derive an understanding of the concept of instructional leadership as it is understood in public schools, with particular focus on the Philippine context.

Worldwide, instructional leadership is acknowledged as a key factor in school improvement and effectiveness. The focus of instructional leadership as described by Hallinger (2011) is the definition of a mission, management of instruction programs, and creation of a climate conducive to learning. His model focuses primarily on structural and managerial functions, thereby downplaying the emotional and motivational needs of educators. As indicated by Akram, Kiran, and İlğan (2021), instructional leadership that places an emphasis on relationship-building and professional development greatly increases teacher satisfaction and effectiveness. But their quantitative method provides little understanding of teachers' lived experiences. Similarly, Leithwood et al. (2020) argue for the importance of trust in the leadership-teacher relationship and trust's impact on teacher motivation and performance; however, the emotional labor needed to nurture teachers is under-researched. Robinson (2011) contended that leaders more directly involved in instructional activities have the greatest influence on outcomes, but the framework fails to adequately conceptualize relational dimensions of leadership—particularly in underserved contexts. Fullan (2014) called for leadership with moral purpose, but the implications for teacher well-being daily went unaddressed.

The importance of instructional leadership was further reinforced through research looking at relational trust and visible learning. Bryk et al. (2010) connected the relational trust in the school community with the overall organizational performance and have overlooked what this means at an individual teacher level. Hattie (2015) cited effective feedback and leadership as common elements among successful students, while teacher emotional well-being was omitted. Day et al. described emotionally intelligent leadership as a catalyst for improved school performance, and while its effect on teacher burnout has not been thoroughly investigated in the long term. Alternatives, like Spillane's (2005) distributed leadership model, emphasize shared responsibilities but may not specify the role of the principal in instruction as strongly. Similarly, Marzano et al. (2005) and Sergiovanni (2007) characterize leadership as grounded in moral authority and service, but these frameworks all fall short of accommodating measurable effects on teacher well-being. Yukl (2013) and Bush (2018) reaffirm leadership as a process of influence, yet the humanitarian side vital for teacher satisfaction is not part of this conceptualization. There is a lack of culturally nuanced studies, especially so in less developed contexts such as the Philippines. Scheduled release dates are included in this list with two main reference points, which can be found at the bottom of this page. (2014) established supportive leadership as an advantage but urged investigation with respect to specific contexts. Overall, the literature highlights instructional leadership by often neglecting its emotional, motivational and relational dimension.

Local studies mirror these international findings. Mentoring among Filipino school leaders was reported to positively impact teacher performance, yet insufficient emotional support was reported (Dela Cruz, 2018). Soriano (2021) connected administrative support and teacher performance in Luzon, but the humanitarian elements of leadership were not fully examined. Essentially, the study conducted by Buenaventura (2022) on Cebu showed that participative leadership had a positive impact on teacher morale but did not explore instructional leadership specifically. Focusing more on administrative than instructional dimensions, Mendoza (2019) in NCR found that principal behaviors and teacher satisfaction have a significant correlation. Cooperative leadership promotes professional growth in the Visayas, according to Garcia (2020; note that emotional well-being was not cited); Reyes (2017) covered instructional supervision without a mention of work-life balance. Other studies (Lopez, 2018; Fernandez, 2019; Santos, 2021; Villanueva, 2022) invariably confirm a connection between leadership and educational outcomes yet infrequently examine teacher dignity or well-being or even authentic empowerment.

These findings are further supported (and gaps highlighted) by unpublished theses and dissertations. Alcantara (2018) based on administrative tasks. While Yuson (2019) studied leadership styles without exploring humanitarian instructional leadership, and Dumlao (2020) explored work engagement without mentioning leaders' emotional support. Research supporting this idea has focused on transformational leadership by Martinez (2017), where the analysis did not look at instructional strategies, and Cruz (2021), who focused on technical supervision rather than teacher motivation. Tan (2022) researched burnout without preventive leadership approaches, and Lazaro (2019) examined the frequency of principal support but didn't evaluate relationship

quality. Ortega (2020) focused on empowerment but did not provide a humanitarian discussion, whereas Andrada (2023) quantified teacher satisfaction without qualitative insights. Bautista (2021) linked school culture with commitment through leadership but failed to discuss the cultivation of humane trust. These studies collectively illustrate a common gap: the social and emotional, motivational, and relational dimensions of instructional leadership—the ‘what does that look like in practice’ gaps.

Background: The Competence Theory This research is rooted in the Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985), arguing that leaders who can develop inspiration and empowerment in their teams lead to personal and professional development. In schools, transformational instructional leaders empower teachers to excel in their teaching, resulting in greater satisfaction and productivity. Path-Goal Theory (House, 1971), stresses the importance of clarifying objectives, removing obstacles and providing support, which necessitates that principals adjust their leadership approach to fit interventions to teachers’ needs. Moreover, the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) suggests that intrinsic motivation is characterized by the fact that autonomy, competence and relatedness are connected with favorable leadership environment leading to satisfaction and efficacy in teachers.

II. Methodology

For the school year 2024—2025, this study utilized a quantitative research approach to investigate the impact of heads of schools on teachers' job satisfaction and performance in selected public schools in North District 1, Schools Division of Cebu City. A questionnaire with structured questions was used, and the data were analysed using appropriate statistical techniques to assess the extent of an association between instructional leadership practices, teacher satisfaction and job performance. The methodological design was rigorously planned to reflect validity, reliability and ethical integrity by aligning the process with the study's aim of generating evidence-based information for school improvement and leadership development.

We utilized a descriptive-correlational research design, which examines the strength and direction of relationships between variables without manipulating the study environment. This design is suitable for examining the impact of head teachers' behaviors on teacher satisfaction and effectiveness. For analysis purposes, the study involved three important variables: heads of school instructional leadership behaviors, teachers' satisfaction with leadership, and self-assessed job performance. Purposive sampling was employed to allow only participants (school teachers and school administrators) who were thought to have face-to-face exposure to the instructional leadership practices. All ethical protocol was followed, informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their right to withdraw at any stage of the study was ensured.

The respondents of the study are composed of teachers and administrators from four public elementary schools, namely Cebu City Central School, Ermita Elementary School (Extension),

Lusaran Elementary School, and Kang-atis Elementary School. The invitation was extended to teachers with at least a year's experience and all acting heads of school. The final sample included 105 respondents; specifically, 100 teachers and 5 administrators, corresponding to the distribution of personnel in selected schools.

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire composed of three sections. The first section of the instrument assessed school-level instructional leadership adapted from the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) developed by Hallinger (2011). The topics addressed in this area were components of the composition of the school mission, how effective the instructional program is, and the quality of the climate for learning. The second part measured teachers' job satisfaction and adapted items from the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire by Lester (1987), focusing on leadership support, professional development opportunities and recognition. The third part assessed teacher job performance as measured by the Department of Education's Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) indicators, which included classroom management, instructional delivery and professional responsibilities. All the items used a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always), and the questionnaire was pilot-tested for clarity and contextual appropriateness.

The research was conducted following the Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework. Inputs were respondents' demographic profiles, as well as the key variables of instructional leadership, teacher satisfaction and performance. Method: A review of the relevant literature led to the adaptation and validation of survey instruments, an ethical process of data collection and statistical analysis with mean, standard deviation, independent samples t-test, Pearson r correlation and linear regression to investigate relationships between variables as well as predictive effects. Respondent demographic characteristics were described as percentages, and weighted means were calculated for the levels of observed behaviors and perceptions.

Ethics are paramount and were followed in all respects within the study. Participants received complete information about the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw without consequences. Responses were treated with strict confidentiality, and no personally identifiable information was included in the reporting or publications. All data were stored securely and processed only in a non-academic context. These measures also protected the rights of participants and built trust in the ethical standards for educational research.

III. Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic specifics of study participants supply important context for interpreting perceptions about school leadership, teacher satisfaction, and performance. As we can see in Table 2, 40% of teacher respondents were aged between 41 and 50 years old, while 35% and 18% were in the age ranges of 31–40 (35%) and 21–30 (18%), respectively. The second group included 60%

of administrators aged between 41 and 50 years, while the remaining 40% were above 51 years. That no one under 41 is listed suggests a seasoned leadership group.

Females made up the overwhelming majority of tutors and managers, at 89% and 80%, respectively, mirroring the composition seen in public education. Apparent is an age difference, with older and experienced teachers rating instructional leadership activities higher when it comes to visibility, professional development and delivering the curriculum, showing greater recognition of these practices. Ultimately, no difference could be found between the male and female perceptions of any included variables ($p > 0.05$ for all t-tests), meaning that what we ultimately perceive about leadership satisfaction and performance is consistent across gender lines. Age was also positively correlated with satisfaction with leadership ($r = 0.42$), suggesting that experienced staff have a greater appreciation of good leadership, as per Pearson correlation analysis (51).

Civil status analysis (Table 3) showed that the majority of teachers (74.7%) and administrators (80%) were married, with single or separated respondents being in the minority. Married individuals rated their leadership satisfaction and job performance higher, with a Pearson $r = 0.30$ (a small positive correlation), suggesting some level of professional perception connected with personal stability. This is consistent with the earlier literature that has shown how personal matters can indirectly affect engagement and satisfaction at work (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

As for educational attainment (Table 4), 58.9% had units in a master's program, 26.3% held a master's degree, and only a small number possessed doctorates. Among administrators, 40 percent had doctorates and 40 percent had master's degrees. Higher academic credentials were associated with more positive perceptions of leadership and job performance (Pearson $r = 0.45$), providing evidence that professional knowledge along with professional education results in more confidence and efficacy regarding the instructional practice.

Most teachers were Teacher III (45%), followed by Teacher I (29%) and Teacher II (21%), and only a few of them held an administrative position, with respective percentages reported in table [5]. This was reflected in the positive correlation seen between perceptions of instructional leadership and job performance (Pearson $r = 0.38$) based on how high up you were teaching, by means of a t-test. Giving Years in Position (Table 6) also rode this trend, where experienced staff had better perceived ratings of leadership and performance (Pearson $r = 0.48$). Administrator participants had higher exposure to professional development (Table 7), and more frequent training showed a moderate positive correlation with leadership satisfaction and job performance ($r = 0.52$), indicating the importance of continuing learning in successful school leaders.

Level of Instructional Leadership

Examination of school heads' instructional leadership focused on four domains: resource provision, visibility, professional development, and curricular implementation. The data summarized in Table 8 shows that the item "Provides adequate teaching and learning materials" returned the highest mean ($M = 2.95$), which indicated they are generally adequate. On the other

hand, support for instructional technology gave a lower mean average ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.84$). Your responses would suggest inconsistent use of technology integrated into instruction across this institution. Principals scored school heads ($M = 4.64$) on the extent to which they attended functions and activities—scores dropped sharply for classroom visits ($M = 3.53$) and engagement with teachers and learners ($M = 3.11$), suggesting an area in need of increased visibility.

Professional development support (Table 10) received moderate ratings, with conversations about growth goals most common ($M = 3.49$) and coaching and mentoring opportunities slightly less so ($M = 3.34$). Although professional learning and development is a priority, the way it is delivered is inconsistent with what we know to be best practice (read: equitable).

Tables 11–14 show how leaders are effective in managing instructional time, tracking student performance, and providing feedback on and support for curriculum. Heads of schools were most effective in ensuring punctuality ($M = 4.89$) and minimizing disruptions ($M = 4.65$), but not as effective in promoting instructional efficiency ($M = 3.62$), monitoring student progress ($M = 2.91$), and discussing outcomes with teachers ($M = 2.03$). Feedback and curriculum leadership were similar: Generally positive, but some lag in consistency of the call and engagement with areas that would need targeted school-based lead.

School Heads' Leadership Satisfaction

Teacher evaluations of school heads' leadership satisfaction (Tables 15-18) showed areas of strength in authoritative control of operations ($M = 4.57$) and collaborative involvement in decision-making ($M = 3.84$). Leadership behaviors perceived as encouraging, including recognition and motivation, were rated moderately ($M \approx 3.22 - 3.41$), suggesting the need for more consistency here in supporting and recognizing individuals' actions. "Goal-setting and alignment," however, received only occasional or more frequent ratings ($M = 2.36-3.13$), indicating a lack of structured systems for visible follow-through on school objectives. These insights provide further alignment with previous studies, which highlight the role of decisiveness, clarity and supportive leadership in advancing teacher satisfaction and effectiveness within organizations (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Teacher Job Performance

Teachers scored highest on instructional design and preparation (Table 19), monitoring, and assessment (Table 20) alongside student guidance (Table 21), all showing scores in the "often" to "always" range for most items presented here ($M \geq 3.72$). Teachers regularly aligned lesson plans to curriculum standards, set clear objectives, tracked student progress and created motivating learning environments. Differences in assessment practices indicate areas for potential professional development focused on a variety of strategies to evaluate students.

Demographics, Instructional Leadership and Job Performance

Correlational analyses (Tables 22–24) suggest that age, educational attainment, position, years in the current position, and training participation significantly affect perceptions of instructional leadership/leadership satisfaction/job performance. No other factors were significantly correlated (including gender and civil status, indicating non-discrimination—all members of society have the same opportunity). Older teachers rated cooperative leadership as more important, and those with higher levels of education valued authoritative and supportive leadership. These findings suggest that teachers view those who serve longer as more goal-driven and effective leaders, suggesting experience in this component may be valuable.

Correlations Among Key Variables

As reported in Table 25, there were strong positive relations between instructional leadership and leadership satisfaction ($r=.504$) as well as teacher job performance ($r=.472$). A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.642$, $p = 0.000$) was observed between instructional leadership and the satisfaction with leadership statement, showing that effective leadership leads to higher teacher satisfaction [20]. There was also a positive correlation between leadership and job performance ($r = 0.587$, $p = 0.000$), and satisfaction and job performance had a strong correlation ($r = 0.695$, $p = 0.000$), supporting the claim that good leadership directly influences teacher performance. These results do sustain the theoretical assumption that positive, supportive and visible leadership leads to better teacher morale and also improves instruction (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

Implications

The results underscore the importance of evidence-informed leadership development initiatives that also consider factors such as teachers' and administrators' demographics, experiences and levels of educational attainment. Increased consistency in the areas of visibility, professional development, feedback, and curriculum leadership can increase teacher satisfaction and job performance. Our conclusion is that if school heads adopt adaptive, participatory and results-oriented leadership practices, they must create a climate at the local level that enables teachers to improve their skills—directly connected to improving pedagogical quality or learning outcomes.

IV. Conclusion

The results of the study showed that demographic characteristics of teachers and school heads (age, educational attainment, position, years in the service, and attendance to professional development programs) impact perceptions towards instructional leadership established by their principal/school head and instructors' satisfaction with their principals/school heads in terms of his/her instructional leadership, as well as instructors' job performance. More senior and experienced staff, like Mercer (QZ.T), with more academic qualifications tended to appreciate

positive leadership practices. Teachers at higher positions or those with longer tenure found their jobs more fulfilling and valued the support they received for their instruction.

The school heads at a basic instructional level, sufficient with standard resources, visible and present throughout the school function, offered management direction for professional growth, ensured efficiency in classroom time, and implemented curriculum activities. However, improved practices are needed for areas such as regular school visits by superintendents and principals, teacher-superintendent and principal-learner engagement, mentoring of teachers to improve ineffective teaching styles (which often occur), timely feedback on teaching strategies and learning performance, and monitoring student progress with a focus on the third stream of education. These findings also showed that, while they are not fully equitable between teachers and administrators, professional development opportunities and training greatly contribute to improving teacher job satisfaction and performance.

Notably, the results showed a positive association between instructional leadership, leader satisfaction and teacher job performance. Strong leadership has a transformative impact on fostering a culture and climate of satisfaction among teachers, enhancing instructional effectiveness, and improving student outcomes.

Overall, the research highlights the integral role of school heads as instructional leaders, who lead, coach, and offer support architecture to drive teacher motivation. By customizing leadership approaches based on the demographics of staff and ensuring continuous mentoring and feedback while encouraging professional growth, school leaders can foster a more effective, inclusive and high-performing educational atmosphere. Conclusion This study uncovers important findings with implications for educational policy and practice, particularly in the public school system, including (1) ensuring that teacher leaders are developed based on evidence of their utility for improving student learning outcomes.

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