
School Heads' Instructional Leadership and Performance: Basis for Strategic Leadership Program

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Abstract

During the School Year 2022-2023 in Valencia City and Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, this research focused on the pivotal role of school heads in educational organizations. School administrators, serving as leaders, bear significant responsibilities and are key figures in fostering instructional capacity within their institutions. This study aimed to comprehensively evaluate the instructional leadership and overall performance of school heads, recognizing the importance of their influence on the smallest organizational unit—the teachers. The research encompassed 290 randomly selected teachers and 168 purposively chosen school heads, employing a descriptive-correlational approach. The study delved into various facets, including the examination of school heads' characteristics, self-perceived instructional leadership, teacher-perceived instructional leadership, and the overall assessment of their performance. Utilizing modified questionnaires from Ledesma (2018), the research utilized statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, independent t-test, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation to analyze the data. Results indicated that the majority of school heads held master's degrees, some with additional PhD units, and possessed 15 to 19 years of experience. Notably, they demonstrated excellence in instructional leadership, receiving high ratings from both teachers and fellow school heads. While their overall performance was generally satisfactory, strengths were identified in relationship-building, with opportunities for growth in self and leadership development. Discrepancies in perception between school heads and teachers were observed, particularly in areas related to goals and instruction supervision. However, alignment was evident in aspects such as professional development, resource management, and incentives. The study underscored the positive correlation between attending seminars and enhanced instructional leadership, emphasizing the imperative role of ongoing professional development for school heads. As a culmination, the research proposed the development of a strategic leadership program by the Schools Division, tailored to the specific needs of school heads in instructional leadership, based on competency frameworks and practical learning.

Keywords: Demographic Characteristics, Instructional Leadership, and School Heads' Performance

1. Introduction

School heads have more responsibility and accountability in the organization. The foundation of instructional capacity lies in the ability of the teachers, the administrator who serves as the leader, to handle the smallest unit in an organization. Managing a school is analogous to driving

a car. It is often up-hill alongside what at times may seem overwhelming odds. Supervisory function is difficult, requiring complete commitment. According to Brandon et al. (2017), instructional leadership roles play pivotal roles in leading institutions to their path to erudition.

Undeniably, school heads who form the core of the school leadership team are increasingly touted as important determinants of school performance. Existing research on effective schools suggests that effective school heads influence a variety of school outcomes, including student achievement, through their recruitment and motivation of quality teachers, their ability to identify and articulate school vision and goals, their effective allocation of resources, and their development of instructional structures to support instruction and learning (Hornig, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2019).

The position of school heads was chosen for investigation because it has been identified as an important component of an effective school. However, in spite of the endless and untiring efforts of the school heads, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to address the issues confronting public schools, the ability of the Philippines, as one of the signatories in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, to meet the Millennium Development Goals for 2025 in the three areas most fundamental to human life (poverty alleviation, health, and education) is very remote. Improving the quality of basic education in the Philippines has become more critical and urgent than ever. For the majority of Filipinos who suffer from the various consequences of poverty, a good education is the only hope of it.

With this perspective, the researcher recognized this premise based on the evidence that once the school heads or organizations implement the concepts of strong instructional leadership in their respective schools, it improves the overall school performance. For these, this assessment's results can be the basis for a leadership-enabling program.

This study is anchored on the Trait Leadership Theory by Carlyle (1941). The trait theory of leadership suggests that certain inborn or innate qualities and characteristics make someone a leader. These qualities might be personality factors, physical factors, intelligence factors, and so on. In essence, trait theory proposes that the leader and leaders' traits are central to an organization's success. The assumption here is that finding people with the right traits will increase organizational performance. Trait theory focuses exclusively on the leader and neglects the follower.

According to Mango (2018), Stogdill's groundbreaking effort marked one of the earliest comprehensive endeavors to assess trait-based leadership research. This pivotal study meticulously examined more than a hundred research papers spanning a four-decade timeframe. Stogdill's findings revealed that individuals in leadership roles exhibited superiority in various aspects compared to the typical group member, such as intelligence, academic achievement, reliability, and social skills. Though Stogdill determined that there was a high consistency in the relationship between intelligence and being a leader, he concluded that it is difficult to isolate a set of traits characteristic of leadership without factoring situational effects into the equation. A leader in some situations might not be a leader in other situations.

In the realm of instructional leadership, the application of trait leadership theory has been instrumental in pinpointing the qualities and attributes crucial for school leaders aiming to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Several pivotal traits have been recognized within this framework, including intelligence, innovation, adaptability, empathy, and

resoluteness, as outlined by Lakomski and Evers (2021). Trait theory suggests that effective leadership is based on certain personal traits and characteristics of the leader. In the context of instructional leadership, this theory suggests that successful leaders possess certain qualities that enable them to improve teaching and learning in their schools.

In a study conducted by Parveen, Tran, Kumar, and Shah (2022), it was observed that certain traits, specifically a deep understanding of instructional processes, a clear vision, and proficient communication skills, exhibited a positive correlation with effective instructional leadership. The research highlighted that leaders equipped with a strong grasp of instructional processes were more adept at facilitating the professional growth of teachers, resulting in enhanced student performance. Furthermore, leaders who effectively conveyed their vision for the school and actively engaged stakeholders demonstrated a greater ability to drive positive transformations within the educational setting.

Studies have indicated that instructional leaders who possess these attributes are more adept at establishing constructive connections with educators and other involved parties, fostering an environment of trust and cooperation, and facilitating the growth of teachers (Munna, 2023). For instance, leaders characterized by creativity and adaptability can effectively respond to evolving situations and innovate new approaches to assist both teachers and students. Additionally, leaders who exhibit empathy are proficient at forging robust bonds with teachers and comprehending their requirements and apprehensions.

It is worth acknowledging that Trait Leadership Theory has its share of limitations. One critique of this theory is its presumption that leadership effectiveness hinges exclusively on inherent traits, disregarding the influence of situational elements and contextual factors (Miles, 2022). In essence, a leader's effectiveness can be shaped by variables like organizational culture, the attributes of the school community, and the unique challenges confronted by the school.

Figure 1 presents the interplay of the variables of the study. It shows that the independent variable is instructional leadership which is measured by communicating goals, supervising instruction, promoting professional development, managing resources, and providing incentives. In Brolund's study (2017), instructional leadership is a multifaceted construct that comprises several distinct dimensions. Firstly, communicating goals involves the capacity of educational leaders to effectively articulate the educational objectives, priorities, and long-term goals of the institution to staff and stakeholders, fostering a shared vision and direction. Secondly, supervising instruction pertains to the active oversight and guidance provided by educational leaders in monitoring and evaluating instructional practices, ensuring alignment with established educational standards and goals.

The study aimed to determine the school heads' instructional leadership and performance in the Divisions of Valencia City and Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, School Year 2022-2023. The results of the study would be the basis for school heads' strategic leadership program.

Specifically, the paper sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the school heads' characteristics in terms of:
 - 1.1 Highest Educational Attainment;
 - 1.2 Position;
 - 1.3 Length of Experience as School Head; and
 - 1.4 Related Seminars/Trainings Attended?

2. What is the level of school heads' instructional leadership as perceived by themselves and teachers based on:
 - 2.1 Communicating Goals;
 - 2.2 Supervising Instruction;
 - 2.3 Promoting Professional Development;
 - 2.4 Managing Resources; and
 - 2.5 Providing Incentives?
3. What is the level of school heads' performance in terms of:
 - 3.1 Leading Strategically;
 - 3.2 Managing School Operation and Resources;
 - 3.3 Focusing on Teaching and Learning;
 - 3.4 Developing Self and Others;
 - 3.5 Building Connections; and
 - 3.6 Plus Factors?
4. Is there a significant difference in the instructional leadership as perceived by the teachers and the school heads?
5. Is there a significant relationship between school heads' instructional leadership and their characteristics in terms of:
 - 5.1 Highest Educational Attainment;
 - 5.2 Position;
 - 5.3 Length of Experience as School Head; and
 - 5.4 Related Seminars/Trainings Attended?
6. Based on the findings of the study, what school heads' strategic leadership program can be developed to improve school heads' leadership and performance?

2. Methodology

The study employed the descriptive-correlational. McCombes (2019) asserts that descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation or phenomenon. Therefore, a descriptive research design is appropriate for this study in describing the school heads' characteristics and identifying the level of school heads' instructional practices and school performance. In addition, Bhandari (2021) describes correlation as the degree of relation between two variables that are not manipulated by the researcher. In this study, the significant relationship between the school heads' characteristics and instructional leadership practices against school performance was assessed. The study was conducted in the Divisions of Valencia City and Malaybalay City. The City of Valencia is located in the central part of the Province of Bukidnon.

There were two sets of respondents in the study. The first set of the respondents are the public elementary school teachers of the Division of Valencia City, Bukidnon. The teachers were tasked to assess the school heads' instructional leadership practices. Slovin's formula was used to calculate the minimum sample size needed to estimate a statistic based on an acceptable margin of error. Thus, a total of 290 teachers was drawn through simple random sampling, considering the large number of the population. Simple random sampling is a type of probability sampling in which the researcher randomly selects a subset of participants from a population. Each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. Data is then collected from as large a percentage as possible of this random subset.

The second set of respondents are the school heads from the Divisions of Valencia City and Malaybalay City. These respondents were totally enumerated. Total enumeration is a sampling technique in which all members of a population are included in the sample. This means that every element of the population is examined and included in the analysis without any randomization or selection. In other words, total enumeration involves examining the entire population rather than a sample of it. Total enumeration is typically used when the population is relatively small or when the cost of sampling is low.

The study utilized a survey questionnaire consisting of three (3) parts. The first part is a self-made questionnaire. The second part is the school heads' instructional leadership. Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, informed consent was secured from the participants for their voluntary participation in this study. The anonymity of responses was maintained and used for the purpose of the study only. All information provided remains confidential and was reported as aggregate data. The participant may withhold any participant-identifiable information. The research questionnaires were immediately collected, checked, tallied, tabulated, and analyzed to obtain substantial information for the study.

Descriptive analysis, such as frequency and percentage were utilized in describing the school heads' characteristics. In quantifying school heads' instructional leadership practices and performance, the weighted scores and mean values were used as the measure of the central tendency of the responses while standard deviation was employed as the measure of variations. To determine the significant difference in the instructional leadership as perceived by the teachers and the school heads, independent t-test were employed. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was utilized to determine the significant relationship between school heads' instructional leadership and their characteristics.

3. Results, Analysis, and Discussion

Summary of the Distribution of School Heads' Instructional Leadership as Rated by Them

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Communicating Goals	3.42	.382	At all Times
Supervising Instruction	3.36	.372	At all Times
Promoting Professional Development	3.28	.373	At all Times
Managing Resources	3.19	.446	Most of the Time
Providing Incentives	3.11	.444	Most of the Time
Overall	3.27	.346	At all Times

Legend: 3.26 - 4.00 = At all times (AAT)/Very High 2.51 - 3.25 = Most of the Time (MT)/High
1.76 - 2.50 = Sometimes(S)/Low 1.00 - 1.75 = Never (N)/Very Low

Result illustrates the summary of the distribution of school heads' instructional leadership as rated by them with an overall mean of 3.27 (SD=.346), described as At all Time and interpreted as Very High. This means that school leaders are deeply engaged in shaping and guiding the instructional processes within the institution. They are likely to be actively involved in curriculum development, teacher professional development, and the implementation of best teaching practices. Their emphasis on instructional leadership indicates a strong commitment to ensuring that the quality of education is at the forefront of their agenda. A very high rating in this regard suggests that school leaders are deeply engaged in shaping and guiding the instructional processes within the institution. They are likely to be actively

involved in curriculum development, teacher professional development, and the implementation of best teaching practices. Their emphasis on instructional leadership indicates a strong commitment to ensuring that the quality of education is at the forefront of their agenda.

The indicator communicating goals obtained the highest mean of 3.42 (SD=.382), described as At all Times and interpreted as Very High. This means that the school heads are adept at articulating a clear vision and mission for the school community. They excel in conveying long-term objectives, academic targets, and broader educational aspirations to both teachers and students, creating a sense of purpose and direction. Such clarity in communication fosters a shared understanding of what the school aims to achieve, aligning the efforts of all stakeholders toward common goals. It implies that school leaders value transparency and inclusivity in their leadership approach, ensuring that everyone is on the same page regarding the school's mission and objectives.

However, the indicator providing Incentives got the lowest mean of 3.11 (SD=.444), described as Most of the Time and interpreted as High. This means that school leaders understand the significance of fostering a positive and motivating work environment for teachers and staff. By offering incentives, they acknowledge the dedication and hard work of their teachers and other personnel, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and a stronger commitment to achieving the school's objectives.

Summary of the Distribution of School Heads' Instructional Leadership as Rated by Teachers

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Communicating Goals	3.52	.523	At all Times
Supervising Instruction	3.55	.500	At all Times
Promoting Professional Development	3.36	.598	At all Times
Managing Resources	3.10	.708	Most of the Time
Providing Incentives	3.04	.884	Most of the Time
Overall	3.31	.561	At all Times

Legend: 3.26 - 4.00 = At all times/Very High) 2.51 - 3.25 = Most of the Time/High
1.76 - 2.50 = Sometimes/Low 1.00 - 1.75 = Never/Very Low

Table presents the summary of the distribution of school heads' instructional leadership as rated by teachers with an overall mean of 3.31 (SD=.561), described as at all Times and interpreted as Very High. This means that school leaders consistently prioritize and actively shape the institution's educational processes and culture. Also, school leaders are deeply involved in curriculum development, assessment strategies, and the promotion of research-based teaching methods, ensuring that the educational standards are consistently upheld. They offer mentorship and coaching, conduct classroom observations, and provide constructive feedback to help teachers improve their instructional skills. Furthermore, school heads actively engage in discussions with teachers about pedagogical approaches, curriculum innovations, and student performance data, fostering a collaborative environment that emphasizes the importance of effective teaching and student success.

The indicator supervising instruction got the highest mean of 3.55 (SD=.500), described as at all Times and interpreted as Very High. This means that school heads demonstrate strong leadership and a deep commitment to ensuring the quality of teaching and learning within the school. In the same manner, school leaders are actively involved in supervising and evaluating

instructional practices, which can lead to a more effective and engaging learning environment for students.

The indicator providing incentives got the lowest mean of 3.04 (SD=.884), described as Most of the Time and interpreted as High. It means that school heads strongly emphasize recognizing and rewarding the efforts of its teachers and staff. School leaders acknowledge the dedication and hard work of their teachers and staff by frequently offering incentives, which can come in various forms, such as financial bonuses, professional development opportunities, or public recognition. This recognition is crucial in fostering a positive work environment, enhancing morale, and motivating staff to continue striving for

Problem 3. What is the level of school heads' performance in terms of:

3.1 Leading Strategically;

3.2 Managing School Operation and Resources;

3.3 Focusing on Teaching and Learning;

3.4 Developing Self and Others;

3.5 Building Connections; and

3.6 Plus Factors?

Distribution of School Heads' Performance in terms of Leading Strategically

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
<i>The school head...</i> Formulated transitional framework for school plan, policies, and implementation vis-a- vis vision, mission, and core values of DepEd.	4.66	.476	Outstanding
Established systematic practices in capacitating school personnel, research productivity and dissemination, and utilization of innovation and programs.	3.59	.760	Very Satisfactory
Established systematic practices in capacitating school personnel, research productivity and dissemination, and utilization of innovation and programs.	4.42	.519	Very Satisfactory
Overall	4.22	.426	Very Satisfactory

Legend: 4.500 – 5.000 = Outstanding 3.500 – 4.499 = Very Satisfactory
2.500 – 3.499 = Satisfactory 1.500 – 2.499 = Unsatisfactory
1.000 – 1.499 = Poor

Table illustrates the school heads' performance in terms of leading strategically with an overall mean of 4.22 (SD=.426), described as Very Satisfactory. This means that school heads possess a strong vision for the school's future, a deep understanding of the educational landscape, and the capacity to set long-term goals and objectives that align with the school's mission. School leaders who excel in strategic leadership are adept at identifying emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in education, and they proactively develop plans and initiatives to address these factors.

The indicator formulated a transitional framework for school plan, policies, and implementation vis-a-vis vision, mission, and core values of DepEd, obtained the highest mean

score of 4.66 (SD=.476), described as Outstanding. This means that school leaders have gone above and beyond to ensure that their school's strategic initiatives and policies are closely aligned with the broader educational mission of DepEd. It signifies that they are not only well-versed in the educational guidelines and objectives established by DepEd but also adept at translating these principles into actionable strategies and policies within their school.

Nevertheless, the indicator established systematic practices in capacitating school personnel, research productivity and dissemination, and utilization of innovation and programs, got the lowest mean of 3.59 (SD=.760), described as Very Satisfactory. This means that school leaders are committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement and professional growth among their staff. They have put in place structured and effective mechanisms for capacity building, which may include ongoing training, workshops, and professional development opportunities for teachers and staff. This approach reflects a commitment to equipping school personnel with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to excel in their roles and contribute to the school's success.

Summary Distribution of School Heads' Performance

Indicators	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
Leading Strategically	4.22	.426	Very Satisfactory
Managing School Operation and Resources	4.34	.483	Very Satisfactory
Focusing on Teaching and Learning	4.22	.528	Very Satisfactory
Developing Self and Others	3.71	.556	Very Satisfactory
Building Connections	4.48	.512	Very Satisfactory
Overall	4.19	.501	Very Satisfactory

Legend: 4.500 – 5.000 = Outstanding 3.500 – 4.499 = Very Satisfactory
 2.500 – 3.499 = Satisfactory 1.500 – 2.499 = Unsatisfactory
 1.000 – 1.499 = Poor

Table summarizes the school heads' performance with an overall mean of 4.19 (SD=0.501), described as Very Satisfactory. This means that school heads have successfully met or exceeded the expected standards and objectives set forth for their position. Such leaders are likely to have demonstrated strong organizational skills, effective communication, and a clear vision for the school's development. They have likely fostered a positive and productive work environment, both for the staff and students, which can lead to improved academic outcomes and overall school success. A very satisfactory performance evaluation suggests that these leaders have been able to effectively navigate the complexities of educational management and have made a significant positive impact on the school community. well, making a positive impact on education for everyone.

The indicator building connections got the highest mean of 4.48 (SD=.512), described as Very Satisfactory. This means that school heads have excelled in establishing and nurturing relationships with various stakeholders within the educational community. This achievement signifies that the school head has effectively connected with teachers, parents, students, and other staff members, fostering a sense of trust, collaboration, and unity within the school. It suggests that they have successfully bridged communication gaps and created an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone feels valued and heard. In such cases, school heads often demonstrate exceptional interpersonal skills, empathy, and a genuine commitment to the well-being and success of the individuals they interact with.

Meanwhile, the indicator developing self and others obtained the lowest mean of 3.71 (SD=.556), described as Very Satisfactory. This means that school heads excel in their role as leaders in promoting personal and professional growth among themselves, the staff, and the wider school community. This rating suggests that school heads are committed to their own ongoing development, staying current with educational trends, leadership strategies, and best practices. They actively seek out opportunities for learning and growth, which ultimately benefits the school by keeping its leadership at the forefront of educational innovation and effectiveness.

Problem 4. Is there a significant difference in the instructional leadership as perceived by the teachers and the school heads?

Significant Difference in the Instructional Leadership as Perceived by Teachers and School Heads

Indicators	Groups	Mean	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Communicating Goals	School Heads	3.42	2.151	0.032	Significant
	Teachers	3.52			
Supervising Instruction	School Heads	3.35	4.366	0.000	Highly significant
	Teachers	3.55			
Promoting Professional Development	School Heads	3.27	1.687	0.092	Not significant
	Teachers	3.36			
Managing Resources	School Heads	3.18	1.432	0.153	Not significant
	Teachers	3.10			
Providing Incentives	School Heads	3.11	0.936	0.349	Not significant
	Teachers	3.04			

Table depicts a significant difference in the perception of school heads' instructional leadership in terms of communicating goals, as perceived by two distinct groups of raters. The results indicate a significant difference in how teachers' mean of 3.52 and school heads of 3.42 perceive the school heads' communicating goals. This difference is supported by the t-value (2.151) and its corresponding p-value of 0.032, confirming the statistical significance of the observed distinctions. This means a potential disconnect or divergence in how these two key stakeholder groups perceive the leadership and communication styles within the educational institution. Such differences can be indicative of varying expectations, priorities, or levels of engagement between teachers and school heads. These differences suggest that school heads need to engage in more transparent and inclusive communication practices. Teachers perceived a gap between what they consider effective goal communication and what the school heads believe they are doing. In line with Camp's (2018), it is essential for school leaders not only to communicate their goals clearly but also to actively solicit feedback from teachers and engage them in the goal-setting process. Closing this gap in perception can cultivate a more collaborative and unified school culture, where everyone is on the same page regarding the school's mission and objectives.

In the same vein, there was a significant difference in the perception of school heads (with a mean of 3.35 and teachers of 3.55 in the way the school heads supervised instruction. This is supported by the t-value (4.366) with its corresponding p-value (0.000), which is highly significant. This discrepancy means that there may be varying expectations and experiences related to the role of school heads in overseeing instruction. The lower perception score among

school heads may indicate a potential need for self-reflection and improvement in their supervisory practices. This suggests that school heads might not fully align with the way teachers perceive their instructional supervision. Selvaraj and Azmanin (2020) recommend that in such cases, school heads should actively seek feedback from teachers to better understand their needs and concerns regarding instructional support. Adjusting their supervisory approaches to better match teachers' expectations can lead to a more collaborative and productive instructional environment.

Meanwhile, both school heads and teachers did not significantly differ in their perceptions in terms of school heads' promoting professional development ($t=1.687$; $p=0.092$), managing resources ($t=1.432$; $p=0.153$), and providing incentives ($t=0.936$; $p=0.349$). Based on the correlation coefficient (r) and the accompanying p -value, both of which are below the commonly accepted significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This alignment suggests that school heads are actively engaged in supporting the professional development needs of their teaching staff. This shared understanding can contribute to a culture of learning and improvement within the school, ultimately benefiting students by ensuring that educators are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills. The absence of significant differences in perceptions related to school heads' management of resources and provision of incentives indicates that both groups perceive a fair and equitable allocation of resources and rewards within the school. This alignment between school heads' instructional leadership and various characteristics is crucial for maintaining a positive working environment where teachers feel valued and adequately supported in their instructional efforts. A harmonious connection between leadership attributes and teachers' needs fosters a collaborative atmosphere that is conducive to professional growth and student success. Furthermore, this alignment suggests effective resource management, ensuring that educational materials, personnel, and financial resources are strategically allocated to support instructional goals.

Is there a significant relationship between school heads' instructional leadership and their characteristics in terms of:

- 5.1 Highest Educational Attainment;**
- 5.2 Position;**
- 5.3 Length of Experience as School Head; and**
- 5.4 Related Seminars/Trainings Attended?**

Result of the Test on the Relationship between School Heads' Characteristics and Performance

School Heads' Characteristics	Instructional Leadership Indicators					OVER ALL <i>r</i> -value <i>p</i> -value	Interpretation
	Communica-ting Goals <i>r</i> -value <i>p</i> -value	Supervising Instruction <i>r</i> -value <i>p</i> -value	Managing Professional Develop-ment <i>r</i> -value <i>p</i> -value	Managing Resources <i>r</i> -value <i>p</i> -value	Providing Incentives <i>r</i> -value <i>p</i> -value		
Highest Educational Attainment	0.122 (NLR) 0.096 NS	0.098 (NLR) 0.183 NS	0.087 (NLR) 0.239 NS	0.001 (NLR) 0.999 NS	0.011 (NLR) 0.882 NS	0.015 (NLR) 0.847 NS	Not significant

Position	0.006 (NLR)	0.087 (NLR)	0.143 (NLR)	0.204 (NLR)	0.048 (NLR)	0.114 (NLR)	Not significa nt
	0.932 NS	0.239 NS	0.051 NS	0.065* NS	0.517 NS	0.143 NS	
Length of Experience as School Head	0.104 (NLR)	0.068 (NLR)	0.045 (NLR)	0.137 (NLR)	0.046 (NLR)	0.050 (NLR)	Not significa nt
	0.156 NS	0.356 NS	0.543 NS	0.062 NS	0.534 NS	0.520 NS	
Related Seminars/Trainings Attended	0.057 (NLR)	0.011 (NLR)	0.034 (NLR)	0.132 (NLR)	0.041 (NLR)	0.423 (WPR)	Significa nt
	0.440 NS	0.878 NS	0.641 NS	0.074 NS	0.578 NS	0.000* S	

Legend: *significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level S – significant NS – not significant

Table presents the test of relationship between school heads' characteristics and performance. Results indicated that school heads' related seminars/trainings attended yielded a significant relationship with their performance ($r=0.423$; $p=0.000$). Given that both the correlation coefficient (r) and the associated p -value are below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, it follows that the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that professional development opportunities play a vital role in enhancing the effectiveness of school leaders. This finding indicates that school heads who actively participate in relevant seminars and training programs tend to perform at a higher level in their leadership roles. Such professional development can provide them with new knowledge, skills, and perspectives that enable them to better address the complex challenges and evolving needs of the educational environment.

Conversely, highest educational attainment ($r=0.015$; $p=0.847$), position ($r=0.114$; $p=0.143$), and length of experience as school head ($r=0.050$; $p=0.520$). This means that these particular factors are not strong predictors of their effectiveness in their leadership roles. These findings suggest that performance as a school head is not solely dependent on the highest degree they have obtained, their position within the school hierarchy, or the number of years they have served in that role. Instead, other variables or qualities may play a more influential role in determining their success as educational leaders.

Based on the findings of the study, what school heads' strategic leadership program can be developed to improve school heads' leadership and performance?

In light of the study's findings, the formulation of a targeted school heads' strategic leadership program emerges as a crucial initiative to enhance leadership and performance within educational institutions. The program is designed to address specific areas identified in the study, such as refining communication strategies for goal setting, bolstering skills in instructional supervision, fostering a culture of continuous professional development, optimizing resource management, and strengthening the provision of incentives. Additionally, the program could incorporate modules on strategic planning, self-development, and community building to comprehensively address the multifaceted dimensions of effective leadership.

Three-Year Strategic Leadership Program

The three-year school heads' strategic leadership program represents a pivotal and comprehensive initiative within our educational institution, driven by the recognition of the pivotal role that school leaders play in shaping the future of our schools and the quality of education our students receive. This program is designed to address the unique challenges and opportunities that school heads encounter in their roles. It is rooted in a dual-focused approach, emphasizing both “providing incentives” and “developing self and others.”

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

School heads, equipped with advanced education and substantial experience, are demonstrably well-prepared for their leadership roles. School heads' strong instructional leadership skills, as perceived by both teachers and peers, indicate effective leadership in supporting and guiding the instructional aspects of their schools.

While overall performance is very satisfactory, the identified need for improvement in fostering self-development and the development of others highlights the importance of leadership training programs focused on personal growth and mentorship. Notable differences in perception between school heads and teachers in specific areas emphasize the necessity for improved communication and alignment of goals to enhance leadership effectiveness.

Conversely, alignment in perceptions regarding professional development, resource management, and providing incentives underscores the potential for collaboration in these critical areas, benefiting the school community. The positive correlation between attendance at related seminars and training programs and enhanced instructional leadership abilities highlights the value of continued investment in professional development opportunities, emphasizing their crucial role in strengthening school leadership.

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