



PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOL HEADS AND TEACHER PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF DAVAO DE ORO DIVISION

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the significance of the relationship between professional leadership of school heads and teacher performance among 139 public elementary schools in the Davao de Oro Division. It employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design using a validated survey questionnaire administered to selected teacher-respondents. Findings revealed that the professional leadership of school heads was generally high, while teacher performance was assessed at a very high level. School heads were found to demonstrate strong leadership practices, particularly in strategic leadership and instructional focus, while teachers consistently exhibited effective instructional skills, subject mastery, classroom management, and positive rapport with learners. The results further revealed a strong and significant positive relationship between professional leadership and teacher performance, indicating that effective leadership practices contribute greatly to enhancing teachers' effectiveness in schools. Moreover, professional leadership was found to significantly predict teacher performance, highlighting the important role of school heads in improving instructional quality and school outcomes. Based on the findings, the study recommended that school heads continuously strengthen their instructional leadership and stakeholder engagement practices, while teachers should actively participate in professional development activities to further enhance their competencies. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies using broader variables and mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into leadership and teacher performance in educational settings.

KEYWORDS: *Professional leadership; teacher performance; public elementary schools; Davao de Oro Division*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher performance plays a vital role in ensuring quality education, as it directly influences student learning outcomes and overall school effectiveness. School leaders hold a significant impact on addressing these concerns, as their leadership style, management practices, and ability to create a supportive work environment can inspire teachers, enhance their skills, and promote commitment to their roles. Through effective leadership, school heads can remove barriers to performance, foster professional growth, and cultivate a positive school culture that empowers teachers to perform at their best. However, teachers often encounter challenges that hinder optimal performance, such as heavy workloads, limited resources, lack of professional development, and low motivation caused by inadequate recognition or support. These issues can lead to decreased instructional quality, reduced engagement, and burnout.

In the global setting, South Africa's Ministry of Education reported alarmingly high teacher absenteeism rates in the Southern African Development Community in 2012, with teachers absent an average of 19.7 days during that year (Eze, 2023). Furthermore, reports of professional misconduct, absenteeism, drunkenness, sexual abuse, examination fraud, and unethical behavior are widespread in Tanzania's rural schools, leading to the dismissal of numerous teachers each year (Nnenna et al., 2023). A similar situation unfolds in Uganda, where teacher morale and commitment to their teaching duties have been dwindling, resulting in ineffective classroom management and poor student discipline (Ugwu et al., 2023). In the Philippine setting, the actual teaching hours have been increasingly sidelined by the heavy workload and the multitude of other responsibilities and roles that teachers play. Teachers are often tasked with administrative and ancillary works, including paperwork, training and seminars, tasks related to budget, disaster response, health, and others. Aside from these, teachers were likewise expected to participate in various government programs, such as mass immunization activities, deworming, conditional cash transfers, feeding programs, population census-taking, anti-illegal drug efforts, and elections. This somehow affected their performance in teaching. Heavy workloads influence teachers' overall effectiveness and efficiency (Tarraya, 2023). Teachers' lack of mastery of what they teach and teacher absenteeism have contributed to the Philippines' high learning poverty, a new World Bank report found (Chi, 2023).

In the Division of Davao de Oro, the researcher observed instances where teacher performance is hindered by factors such as inadequate lesson preparation, limited use of varied instructional strategies, and weak classroom management skills. Some teachers rely heavily on traditional, lecture-centered approaches, resulting in low student engagement and minimal



opportunities for active learning. In certain cases, delayed submission of reports, inconsistent monitoring of student progress, and insufficient integration of learning materials have also been noted.

While various international studies documented issues of teacher absenteeism, misconduct, declining morale, and ineffective classroom management in countries such as South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda, similar concerns are evident in the Philippine context, where heavy workloads and multiple non-teaching responsibilities have been shown to affect teachers' instructional performance. National reports have also linked teacher absenteeism and lack of subject mastery to the country's high learning poverty rate. However, despite these findings, there remained limited empirical research focusing on the specific performance-related challenges faced by teachers in the Division of Davao de Oro. This gap underscored the need for a focused investigation into how school leadership management could address these localized performance issues to improve teaching quality and learning outcomes.

This study would be socially relevant and urgent as it addressed pressing concerns in the educational system that directly affected the quality of learning in the Division of Davao de Oro. Teacher performance is a critical determinant of student achievement, yet persistent challenges such as inadequate lesson preparation, limited instructional strategies, and weak classroom management continue to threaten the delivery of quality education. With the Philippines already facing high learning poverty rates linked to teacher absenteeism and insufficient subject mastery, understanding and addressing these local performance issues became imperative. Examining how professional leadership of school heads could respond to these challenges could provide actionable insights that strengthen teacher support systems and lead to improved learning outcomes for students in the community.

The purpose of this study examined the relationship between professional leadership of school heads and the performance of public elementary teachers in the Division of Davao de Oro. The findings would be expected to provide evidence-based recommendations that can guide school heads, education supervisors, and policymakers in developing strategies to improve instructional quality and student learning outcomes. The results would be disseminated through presentations in division-wide conferences, school learning action cell (SLAC) sessions, and professional development seminars to ensure that teachers, administrators, and other education stakeholders can apply the insights in their respective contexts. Copies of the study would also be shared with the Division Office and interested academic institutions to support further research and policy development.

THE STUDY'S OBJECTIVES

The study investigated the relationship between professional leadership of school heads and performance of public elementary teachers. Specifically, it sought to:

1. To assess the level of professional leadership of school heads as perceived by the public school elementary teachers in terms of:
 - 1.1 building connection;
 - 1.2 developing self and others;
 - 1.3 focusing on teaching and learning;
 - 1.4 managing school operations and resources; and
 - 1.5 leading strategically.
2. To determine the level of performance of public elementary teachers in terms of:
 - 2.1 instructional planning skills;
 - 2.2 instructional skills;
 - 2.3 knowledge of the subject matter;
 - 2.4 rapport with the students; and
 - 2.5 classroom management.
3. To examine whether there is a significant relationship between professional leadership of school heads and performance of teachers.
4. To identify which domains of professional leadership of school heads significantly influence the performance of teachers.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology for this study, encompassing the research design, research participants, research tools, data collection procedure, and data analysis to be utilized in this investigation.

Method Used

This study employed a quantitative research methodology, specifically utilizing a descriptive correlational technique. Quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data to uncover trends, compute averages, make predictions, examine causal relationships, and generalize findings to broader populations. In contrast, qualitative research focused on the collection and interpretation of non-numerical data (Bhandari, 2023).



Meanwhile, descriptive correlational research is commonly used when a researcher seeks to discern the characteristics of particular groups or investigate the relationships among different variables. This design focuses on analyzing a single group to gain insights into the relationship between two variables. The significance of employing a descriptive correlational design lies in its ability to examine the interconnections between various variables (Brodowicz, 2024).

The descriptive correlational research design was appropriate for the study because it allowed for the systematic examination of the relationship between professional leadership and teacher performance within the specific context of Davao de Oro Division. This design enabled the researcher to describe the current state of both variables and analyze how they were connected without manipulating any factors, providing a clear understanding of how variations in professional leadership may influence teacher performance. Additionally, it offered a practical approach to gather and analyze data from a defined group, facilitating the identification of patterns and correlations that can inform future interventions, policies, and professional development programs aimed at enhancing educational outcomes in the division.

Sources of Data

The primary sources of data in this study were the responses of 139 public elementary school teachers and school heads from selected schools in the Davao de Oro Division. Data were gathered through survey questionnaires that assessed the professional leadership of school heads and the level of teacher performance. The collected responses served as the main basis for the analysis and interpretation of the study findings.

Secondary sources of data were also utilized to support the study. These included books, published and unpublished theses and dissertations, journal articles, government publications, and other related literature and studies relevant to professional leadership and teacher performance. These materials provided theoretical foundations, supporting concepts, and related findings that strengthened the discussion and interpretation of the results.

Data Gathering Instrument

This study used an adapted survey questionnaire to gather data, specifically crafted for its research objectives. The questionnaire was structured into two distinct sections to effectively address the research aims. The first section evaluated professional leadership, while the second section focused on measuring teacher performance

Professional Leadership. The professional leadership questionnaire was adapted from Esguerra and Quinto (2025). The instrument consists of 35 items. It is composed of five (5) indicators, namely: building connection (1-5), developing self and others (1-9), focusing on teaching and learning (1-8), managing school operations and resources (1-6), and leading strategically (1-7). The questionnaire was subjected to a pilot testing with a Cronbach Alpha of .82. This implies that the questionnaire has a high level of internal consistency and reliability. It indicated that the items in the instrument are well-correlated and consistently measure the same construct, meaning the questionnaire is dependable and suitable for use in the actual data collection. Below was the rating scale professional leadership of school heads.

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Very High	The professional leadership of school heads is always evident.
3.40-4.19	High	The professional leadership of school heads is oftentimes evident.
2.60-3.39	Moderately High	The professional leadership of school heads is occasionally evident.
1.80-2.59	Low	The professional leadership of school heads is seldom evident.
1.00-1.79	Very Low	The professional leadership of school heads is never evident.

Teacher Performance. The teacher performance survey questionnaire was adapted from Padillo et al. (2021). The instrument consisted of 25 items. It had the following indicators, namely: instructional planning skills (1-4), instructional skills (1-11), knowledge of the subject matter (1-3), rapport with the students (1-2), classroom management (1-4). The instrument was subjected to pilot testing leading to a Cronbach Alpha of .83 which indicates a high level of reliability and internal consistency. This means that the items included in the questionnaire were closely related and consistently measured the intended constructs of the study. Below was the rating scale of teacher performance.

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Very High	The performance of teachers is always evident.
3.40-4.19	High	The performance of teachers is oftentimes evident.
2.60-3.39	Moderately High	The performance of teachers is occasionally evident.
1.80-2.59	Low	The performance of teachers is seldom evident.
1.00-1.79	Very Low	The performance of teachers is never evident.



The research instrument for this study was revised to ensure it aligned closely with the research objectives and goals. It was evaluated for content validity by three expert validators. Following this evaluation, the survey questionnaire underwent pilot testing with thirty (30) public secondary teachers who were not part of the designated respondent group to assess its reliability. The researcher consistently integrated feedback, suggestions, and comments from the advisor, panel members, and expert validators in an iterative manner. This process was essential for refining the instrument and ensuring it accurately measured the intended constructs.

Sampling Technique

This study targeted 139 public elementary teachers from the Davao de Oro Division. By applying Slovin's Formula with a margin of error set at 0.05, the initial population of 215 Grade 6 teachers, each with a minimum of two years of teaching experience, was reduced to 139. This approach was aligned with Memon et al. (2020), who suggested that while a minimum sample size of 50 is acceptable for Pearson analysis, a sample size of 100 is generally preferred in research contexts. Therefore, selecting 139 teachers was more than sufficient to fulfill the objectives of the study.

The researcher employed a probability sampling technique called cluster random sampling to select the sample. This method involved dividing the larger population into smaller subgroups, or clusters, and then randomly selecting some of these clusters to form the sample. Cluster random sampling was particularly advantageous for managing large populations and achieving the desired sample size, as it streamlines the research process by minimizing the number of participants needed when the overall population is too large to study comprehensively (Simkus, 2023). In this study, the researcher ensured that the selected schools are adequately represented in the sample.

Participants included public elementary teachers currently teaching Grades 6 within the Davao de Oro Division who have at least two years of teaching experience. Selecting teachers with a minimum of two years of experience further ensured that respondents had sufficient exposure to school leadership practices and had ample time to demonstrate their performance in the classroom. Teachers must be actively employed during the period of the study and willing to provide informed consent to participate. Teachers with less than two years of teaching experience, those not teaching Grade 6, or those on extended leave during the study period were excluded. Participants had the right to voluntarily withdraw from the study at any point without any penalty or negative consequences. Should a participant choose to withdraw, their data were excluded from the analysis if requested, ensuring respect for their autonomy and privacy throughout the research process.

Procedure of the Study

The researcher adhered to a rigorous procedure and protocol in collecting the data. The researcher ensured that the well-being of the respondents was protected. All dimensions of the ethical consideration were rigorously followed in this study.

Permission to Conduct the Study. When the researcher received Certificate from the Ethics Committee last October 11, 2025 and the endorsement from the Dean of Graduate Studies last November 22, 2025, the researcher formally requested permission and endorsement from the Division of Davao de Oro last January 27, 2026. Subsequently, an endorsement letter was sent to the respective school heads to obtain the necessary final authorization and support for the study which was approved in separate dates from February 9 to February 23, 2026. This enabled the researcher to coordinate with the School Heads and set the schedule for distributing the survey questionnaire.

Distribution and Retrieval of the Questionnaire. Following this, a schedule was established for conducting the survey questionnaire, ensuring strict adherence to health and safety protocols. The questionnaire was distributed directly to participants, with all necessary precautions carefully observed. Participants received a comprehensive briefing on the study's objectives and were given one hour to complete the survey. The distribution and collection of the questionnaire happened on school days, considering the participants' availability.

Collation and Statistical Treatment of Data. All the data gathered were tallied, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted confidentially and accordingly. This was made possible with the help of the designated Statistician.

Statistical Treatment

For more comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following statistical tools were utilized. These tools were used to answer the statement of the problem and the hypotheses of the study.

Mean. It is a measure of central tendency that represents the average value of a set of numbers. It is calculated by adding up all the values in a data set and then dividing the sum by the total number of values. This was used to measure the level of school leadership management and teacher performance. It answered the statement of the problem 1 and 2.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. This was utilized to determine the relationship between professional leadership and teacher performance. It answered the statement of the problem 3 and the first hypothesis.

Regression Analysis. This determined the significant influence of professional leadership on teacher performance. It answered the statement of the problem 4 and the second hypothesis.



Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are fundamental to conducting responsible and credible research, ensuring the protection of participants' rights and the integrity of the study. In this research, special attention was given to maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of all respondents to foster trust and encourage honest participation. All ethical standards and research protocols relevant to the quantitative methodology were carefully outlined and adhered to throughout the study. Furthermore, the research rigorously followed the ethical guidelines set forth by the Rizal Memorial Colleges Ethics Review Committee, ensuring compliance with institutional requirements and upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct in educational research.

Social Value. This study would highlight the critical role of effective leadership in fostering a supportive and collaborative school environment. When school leaders actively engage teachers in decision-making and provide clear guidance and resources, teachers are more likely to feel valued, motivated, and empowered, which enhances their job satisfaction and instructional effectiveness. Consequently, students would benefit from improved teaching quality and a more dynamic, responsive learning atmosphere. The findings of this study would provide valuable insights to inform leadership development programs, policy reforms, and school management practices, ultimately contributing to a more efficient and impactful educational system for both educators and learners.

Informed Consent Form. In this study, the researcher secured informed consent from the respondents by providing a clear and comprehensive explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and the potential risks and benefits associated with their participation in examining professional leadership management and teacher performance. The consent form was presented in language that is easy to understand, ensuring that respondents fully grasp what was expected of them and how their information was used to contribute to improving educational leadership and teaching effectiveness. Respondents were given sufficient time to review the form, ask questions, and seek clarification as needed. They were also informed that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time without any negative repercussions. Upon agreeing to participate, respondents signed the consent form, thereby affirming their informed consent to be part of the study.

Vulnerability of the Research Respondents. The researcher protected the vulnerability of respondents by ensuring that their participation in the study on school leadership management and teacher performance was voluntary, confidential, and conducted with the utmost sensitivity to their needs and concerns. Clear and transparent information about the study's purpose was provided, emphasizing participants' rights, including the option to withdraw at any time without facing any negative consequences. To minimize potential emotional or psychological discomfort, the researcher created a safe and supportive environment where respondents felt comfortable expressing their honest experiences and perspectives. Personal information was anonymized, and all data was securely stored to safeguard against any risk of harm or breach of privacy, thereby maintaining the highest ethical standards throughout the research process.

Risks, Benefits, and Safety. The researcher ensured the risks, benefits, and safety of respondents in the study on professional leadership and teacher performance by conducting a thorough risk assessment and implementing measures to minimize any potential harm. Respondents were informed of possible risks, such as emotional discomfort or privacy concerns, and reassured that their personal information was kept confidential and securely stored. The researcher clearly communicated the benefits of the study, including its potential to contribute to professional development and improvements in educational leadership and teaching practices, helping respondents understand how their participation can positively impact their work environment. The study was designed to prioritize the well-being and safety of respondents, with prompt and respectful responses to any concerns raised. Additionally, an open channel for communication was provided, allowing respondents to express concerns or withdraw from the study at any time without facing any consequences. Through these precautions, the researcher upheld ethical standards and ensured a safe research process for all respondents.

Privacy and Confidentiality of Information. In compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, which protects the fundamental right to privacy, respondents in the study on professional leadership and teacher performance was assured that their confidentiality was strictly maintained and that their personal information was not disclosed without their informed consent. Upholding privacy and ensuring confidentiality were core principles of ethical research, especially when exploring sensitive topics related to leadership and teaching effectiveness. To protect respondents' identities, all information was kept confidential throughout the study. Additionally, all data collected from surveys and other sources were securely handled and stored with the highest level of confidentiality, ensuring that participants' privacy was respected at every stage of the research process.

Justice. The researcher ensured justice for respondents in the study on professional leadership and teacher performance by treating all participants fairly and equally, regardless of their background, position, or performance level. This commitment included providing equal opportunities for participation and ensuring that no group was excluded or disadvantaged throughout the research process. Unbiased data collection methods were implemented to maintain the integrity of the study, and the benefits of the research were made accessible to all involved educators. Moreover, the study's findings were reported honestly and accurately, without distortion, and were used to inform practices and policies that support equitable improvements in school leadership and teacher performance for the benefit of the entire educational community.



Transparency. The researcher ensured transparency in the conduct of the study on professional leadership and teacher performance by providing clear and accurate information about the research objectives, procedures, and methodologies used. All respondents were fully informed about the purpose of the study, how their data were collected, and the potential impacts of their participation on improving leadership practices and teacher effectiveness. The researcher openly disclosed any potential conflicts of interest, emphasize the voluntary nature of participation, and explain the measures taken to protect respondents' privacy and confidentiality. Furthermore, the researcher made the study's results accessible to all participants and relevant stakeholders, ensuring that findings were communicated honestly, accurately, and without bias.

Recruitment. The study involved 139 respondents who were clearly informed of the reasons for their selection to participate by means of using the Slovin Formula. To ensure a thorough understanding of the study's objectives related to school leadership management and teacher performance, the researcher provided a detailed explanation of its purpose, helping respondents recognize the significance of their involvement beyond the information presented in the introductory letter accompanying the survey questionnaire.

Conflict of Interest (COI). The researcher avoided any conflict of interest in conducting the study on professional leadership and teacher performance by ensuring that personal, professional, or financial interests do not influence the research process or its outcomes. To maintain objectivity and impartiality, the researcher openly disclosed any potential conflicts of interest from the outset and conducted data collection and analysis with strict neutrality. The researcher also refrained from any actions that could introduce bias, such as exerting undue influence over respondents or manipulating results to fit personal opinions, thereby upholding the integrity and credibility of the study.

Adequacy of Facilities. The researcher ensured the adequacy of facilities in conducting the study on professional leadership and teacher performance by securing the necessary resources and infrastructure to support the research effectively. This included providing access to suitable environments for data collection, reliable technology for gathering and analyzing information, and any additional tools or materials required for the study. Additionally, the researcher ensured that participants have the appropriate support, such as comfortable settings for participation and the necessary equipment to complete surveys or provide feedback, facilitating a smooth and efficient research process.

Permission from Organization/Location. The researcher adhered to established protocols throughout the study on professional leadership and teacher performance. After securing approval from the panelists, advisor, and the Ethics Review Committee, the researcher formally requested permission to conduct the study by submitting an official letter to the Schools Division Superintendent. Additionally, formal communication, including an endorsement from the Schools Division Superintendent, was sent to the school heads of the participating institutions to ensure proper authorization and cooperation for the research process.

Qualification of the Researcher. The researcher conducting this study is a Master of Arts in Educational Management candidate at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc., with direct teaching experience in a public elementary school context within the Department of Education, Division of Davao de Oro. The researcher is currently assigned at Pongpong Integrated School, P-5, Pongpong, Cagan, Andap, New Bataan, Davao de Oro, under the New Bataan District handling Kinder and Grades 4, 5, and 6, teaching English across these grade levels, which provides firsthand exposure to instructional delivery, learner performance, and classroom management in a multi-grade setting. The study was conducted under the supervision of School Division Superintendent Phoebe Gay L. Refamonte, CESO VI, ensuring alignment with DepEd standards and research protocols. Throughout the thesis development, the researcher underwent several revisions guided by the thesis adviser and expert panelists, with the adviser serving as co-author in refining the study's quality, rigor, and relevance to the investigation of professional leadership of school heads and teacher performance in public elementary schools of Davao de Oro Division.

Results

The study revealed that the overall level of **professional leadership among school heads** was **High** ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.589$), indicating that professional leadership practices were frequently demonstrated. Among the leadership dimensions, **Leading Strategically** ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.478$) and **Focusing on Teaching and Learning** ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.507$) obtained **Very High** ratings, while **Building Connections** ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.757$), **Developing Self and Others** ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.604$), and **Managing School Operations and Resources** ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.600$) were rated **High**. These findings indicate that school heads effectively exercise strategic, instructional, and organizational leadership that supports school improvement and educational quality.

The overall level of **teacher performance** was assessed as **Very High** ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.483$). Among the indicators, **Rapport with Students** obtained the highest rating ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.514$), followed by **Knowledge of the Subject Matter** ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.410$) and **Instructional Skills** ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.503$). **Instructional Planning Skills** and **Classroom Management** were likewise rated **High** ($M = 4.17$). The results suggest that teachers consistently demonstrate strong instructional competence, subject mastery, classroom effectiveness, and positive learner relationships.

Correlation analysis showed a **significant positive relationship** between professional leadership and teacher performance ($r = 0.558$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that stronger leadership practices are associated with higher levels of teacher effectiveness. All leadership dimensions were significantly related to teacher performance, with **Leading Strategically** showing the



strongest relationship ($r = 0.565$), followed by **Focusing on Teaching and Learning** ($r = 0.562$). These findings highlight the importance of strategic and instructional leadership in enhancing teacher performance.

Regression analysis further confirmed that professional leadership significantly predicts teacher performance ($R = 0.558$, $R^2 = 0.331$, $F = 12.01$, $p < 0.001$), explaining **33.1%** of its variance. Among the predictors, **Leading Strategically** emerged as the strongest influence ($\beta = 0.565$), followed by **Focusing on Teaching and Learning** ($\beta = 0.562$) and **Developing Self and Others** ($\beta = 0.558$). The findings underscore the critical role of professional leadership in fostering teacher competence, instructional effectiveness, and overall school performance.

Summary

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between professional leadership of school heads and teacher performance in public elementary schools. The study was conducted in the selected public elementary schools of Davao de Oro Division. Based on the responses of the respondents, the summarized findings were the following:

- 1) The findings reveal that the overall level of professional leadership of school heads is high ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.589$), indicating that leadership practices are generally oftentimes evident across schools. Among the indicators, leading strategically ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.478$) and focusing on teaching and learning ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.507$) were rated very high, while developing self and others ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.604$), managing school operations and resources ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.600$), and building connections ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.757$) were rated high.
- 2) The findings reveal that the overall level of teacher performance is very high ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.483$), indicating that teachers consistently demonstrate strong performance across all indicators. Among the domains, rapport with students ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.514$), knowledge of the subject matter ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.410$), and instructional skills ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.503$) were rated very high, while instructional planning skills ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.490$) and classroom management ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.499$) were rated high.
- 3) The findings reveal a strong positive and significant relationship between professional leadership of school heads and teacher performance ($r = 0.558$, $p = 0.000$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. All indicators of professional leadership, building connections ($r = 0.549$), developing self and others ($r = 0.558$), focusing on teaching and learning ($r = 0.562$), managing school operations and resources ($r = 0.555$), and leading strategically ($r = 0.565$), show significant positive correlations with teacher performance.
- 4) The regression analysis shows that all dimensions of professional leadership of school heads significantly predict teacher performance, with leading strategically ($\beta = 0.565$, $B = 0.502$, $t = 8.020$, $p = 0.000$) and focusing on teaching and learning ($\beta = 0.562$, $B = 0.562$, $t = 7.940$, $p = 0.000$) having the strongest effects among the predictors. The model is statistically significant ($F = 12.01$, $p = 0.000$) with an R^2 value of 0.331, indicating that 33.1% of the variance in teacher performance is explained by professional leadership of school heads.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered:

- 1) The professional leadership of school heads is generally high, with strong emphasis on strategic leadership and instructional focus, indicating that leadership practices are consistently evident in schools. However, areas such as building connections, developing self and others, and managing school operations still reflect room for further strengthening to achieve more balanced leadership performance.
- 2) The teacher performance in public elementary schools is very high, showing that teachers consistently demonstrate strong competencies in instruction, subject mastery, classroom management, and rapport with students. This indicates that teachers are effectively fulfilling their instructional roles and contributing to positive learning outcomes.
- 3) There is a strong and significant positive relationship between professional leadership of school heads and teacher performance, meaning that improved leadership practices are associated with better teacher performance. This confirms that all dimensions of leadership significantly contribute to enhancing teachers' effectiveness in schools.
- 4) The professional leadership of school heads significantly predicts teacher performance, with strategic leadership and focus on teaching and learning as the strongest predictors. Furthermore, the findings explain a substantial portion of teacher performance variation, indicating that strengthening school heads' leadership practices can meaningfully improve teacher performance.

The significant and positive relationship between school heads' professional leadership and teacher performance is consistent and affirm the Instructional Leadership Theory proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985), as cited in Munna (2022). This theory emphasizes that instructional leadership is a strong and directive form of leadership focused on curriculum and teaching practices. Instructional leaders are viewed as key agents in enhancing the effectiveness of educational institutions, particularly regarding teaching and learning. The model is widely recognized for its validity and reliability and is structured around three primary dimensions: defining the school's mission, managing instructional programs, and promoting a positive school culture.

The theory underscores the importance of establishing clear academic goals, managing curriculum implementation, monitoring instructional quality, and fostering professional development, all of which are critical elements of effective school leadership. In practice, instructional leaders prioritize the quality of teaching by providing teachers with guidance,



constructive feedback, and the necessary resources to improve classroom performance. This approach cultivates a structured and supportive learning environment in which instructional practices are continuously refined.

Recommendations

The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study:

- 1) School heads are encouraged to further strengthen their professional leadership, particularly in strategic leadership and instructional supervision, as these were found to be the strongest predictors of teacher performance. They should also enhance practices in building connections by actively engaging parents, community stakeholders, and partner institutions to support school programs. In addition, continuous capacity-building through training, coaching, and professional learning communities should be prioritized to sustain and improve leadership effectiveness across all domains.
- 2) Teachers are recommended to continuously improve their instructional practices by engaging in professional development activities that enhance instructional planning, classroom management, and subject mastery. They should also maintain strong rapport with students by promoting respectful, inclusive, and learner-centered classroom environments. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to actively collaborate with school heads and colleagues in sharing best practices to further improve teaching effectiveness and learner outcomes.
- 3) Learners are encouraged to actively participate in classroom activities and engage meaningfully in the teaching-learning process to maximize their academic growth. They should also practice responsibility, cooperation, and respect within the school environment to support positive teacher-student relationships. Additionally, learners may be involved in feedback mechanisms to help improve instructional strategies and school programs.
- 4) Future researchers are recommended to conduct similar studies in other divisions or educational levels to validate and broaden the findings of this study. It is also suggested that future research explore additional variables such as school culture, teacher motivation, or student achievement to further explain teacher performance. Moreover, a mixed-methods approach may be used to gain deeper insights into the lived experiences of school heads and teachers regarding leadership and performance.

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