



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES AND HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOL PRACTICES AMONG SELECTED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN PAGADIAN CITY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City. Specifically, it assessed instructional leadership competencies in terms of assessment for learning, developing learning programs, implementing programs for instructional improvement, and instructional supervision, as well as high-performing school practices in terms of vision and leadership, ambitious standards, commitment to equity, and high-quality teachers and leaders. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design involving school administrators and faculty members from selected private higher education institutions. Data were collected using a validated researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using frequency counts, weighted mean, independent samples t-test, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The findings revealed that instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices were generally rated at a high level, with significant positive relationships observed between the study variables, indicating that stronger instructional leadership competencies contribute to the development of high-performing schools. The study concludes that enhancing instructional leadership through continuous professional development, collaborative governance, and evidence-based management practices is essential in promoting institutional effectiveness and academic excellence among higher education institutions in Pagadian City.

KEYWORDS: *Instructional Leadership, Instructional Leadership Competencies, High-Performing Schools, Higher Education Institutions, Educational Leadership.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Instructional leadership remains one of the most influential dimensions of educational leadership because it directly shapes teaching quality, teacher professional growth, and student learning outcomes. Contemporary educational reforms emphasize that school leaders should not only manage organizational operations but also actively support curriculum implementation, instructional supervision, assessment, and continuous professional development. Effective instructional leaders foster collaborative learning environments, promote evidence-based decision-making, and cultivate a culture of continuous improvement that enhances institutional effectiveness. Recent studies have consistently shown that instructional leadership significantly contributes to school improvement, teacher effectiveness, and organizational performance across various educational contexts (Hallinger, Gümüş, & Bellibaş, 2020; Hallinger, 2020; OECD, 2020; Bush, 2023; UNESCO, 2021). These findings affirm that instructional leadership remains a fundamental driver of educational quality and institutional excellence.

High-performing educational institutions are characterized by strong leadership, shared vision, high academic expectations, equitable learning opportunities, and sustained professional collaboration among educators. These organizational characteristics are strengthened when school administrators demonstrate instructional leadership competencies that encourage innovation, accountability, and continuous instructional improvement. Although numerous

international studies have examined instructional leadership and school effectiveness, empirical evidence focusing on higher education institutions in the Philippine context remains limited. Consequently, examining the relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City is essential for generating evidence that can inform leadership development programs and institutional quality enhancement initiatives. Recent literature continues to emphasize that effective instructional leadership is associated with improved organizational capacity, teacher commitment, and institutional performance (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2022; Hallinger & Wang, 2020; Hattie, 2021; Harris, 2023; Walker & Qian, 2022).

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

2.1. To determine the level of instructional leadership competencies among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City in terms of assessment for learning, developing learning programs, implementing programs for instructional improvement, and instructional supervision.

2.2. To assess the level of high-performing school practices among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City in terms of vision and leadership, ambitious standards, commitment to equity, and high-quality teachers and leaders.

2.3. To determine whether significant differences exist between the perceptions of school administrators and faculty members



regarding instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices.

2.4. To examine the relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City. The respondents consisted of 66 school administrators and 164 faculty members from four selected private higher education institutions, namely Southern Mindanao Colleges, Pagadian Capitol College,

EMCOTECH, and Yllana Bay College. Data were collected using a validated researcher-made questionnaire measuring instructional leadership competencies in terms of assessment for learning, developing learning programs, implementing programs for instructional improvement, and instructional supervision, as well as high-performing school practices in terms of vision and leadership, ambitious standards, commitment to equity, and high-quality teachers and leaders. Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and weighted mean, were utilized to determine the levels of the study variables, while the independent samples t-test and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient were employed to determine significant differences and relationships among the variables. Statistical analyses were performed using an appropriate level of significance to test the study hypotheses.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Summary of Instructional Leadership Competencies among Selected Higher Education Institutions in Pagadian City

Instructional Leadership Competencies	School Administrators Mean	Faculty Members Mean	Overall Mean	Interpretation
Assessment for Learning	5.29	4.96	5.13	Always Applied
Developing Learning Programs	5.62	5.60	5.61	Always Applied
Implementing Programs for Instructional Improvement	5.66	5.74	5.70	Always Applied
Instructional Supervision	5.63	5.73	5.68	Always Applied
Grand Mean	5.55	5.51	5.53	Always Applied

Table 1 presents the summary of instructional leadership competencies among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City. The findings reveal that school administrators ($M = 5.55$) and faculty members ($M = 5.51$) consistently perceived instructional leadership competencies to be "Always Applied," resulting in an overall grand mean of 5.53. Among the four dimensions, Implementing Programs for Instructional Improvement obtained the highest overall mean ($M = 5.70$), followed by Instructional Supervision ($M = 5.68$), Developing Learning Programs ($M = 5.61$), and Assessment for Learning ($M = 5.13$). These results suggest that instructional leaders in the participating higher education institutions consistently demonstrate effective practices in curriculum implementation, instructional monitoring, faculty development, and assessment processes, which are essential for sustaining educational quality

and institutional effectiveness. The findings are consistent with the work of He et al. (2024), who reported that principals' instructional leadership significantly predicts teachers' professional development through effective supervision, curriculum management, and instructional support. Likewise, Hallinger, Gümüş, and Bellibaş (2020) emphasized that instructional leadership remains a fundamental determinant of school improvement and instructional quality across diverse educational settings. Furthermore, recent evidence indicates that effective instructional leadership strengthens school learning climates, promotes teacher collaboration, and enhances institutional performance by fostering continuous improvement and shared accountability (Shujau-Abdul-Raheem, 2023).

Table 2. Summary of High-Performing School Practices among Selected Higher Education Institutions in Pagadian City

High-Performing School Practices	School Administrators Mean	Faculty Members Mean	Overall Mean	Interpretation
Vision and Leadership	5.57	5.76	5.67	Always Applied
Ambitious Standards	5.73	5.71	5.72	Always Applied
Commitment to Equity	5.48	5.72	5.60	Always Applied
High-Quality Teachers and Leaders	5.60	4.84	5.22	Always Applied
Grand Mean	5.60	5.51	5.56	Always Applied

Table 2 presents the summary of high-performing school practices among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City. The results indicate that both school administrators ($M = 5.60$) and faculty members ($M = 5.51$) perceived the practices associated with high-performing schools as "Always Applied," yielding an overall grand mean

of 5.56. Among the four dimensions, Ambitious Standards obtained the highest overall mean ($M = 5.72$), followed by Vision and Leadership ($M = 5.67$), Commitment to Equity ($M = 5.60$), and High-Quality Teachers and Leaders ($M = 5.22$). These findings suggest that the participating higher education institutions consistently uphold high academic expectations,



cultivate visionary leadership, promote equitable educational opportunities, and support teacher quality as integral components of institutional excellence. The consistently high ratings further imply that school leaders and faculty members share a common commitment to fostering an organizational culture that values continuous improvement, accountability, and educational quality. These findings corroborate the study of Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2022), which emphasized that effective leadership and ambitious institutional goals are fundamental drivers of school improvement and organizational

success. Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2020) reported that schools characterized by strong leadership, high expectations, and equitable learning environments consistently demonstrate higher institutional performance and improved student outcomes. Moreover, UNESCO (2021) highlighted that inclusive leadership, quality teaching, and equitable access to learning opportunities are indispensable elements of resilient and high-performing educational institutions capable of responding to contemporary educational challenges.

Table 3. Difference in Instructional Leadership Competencies between School Administrators and Faculty Members

Variable	School Administrators Mean	Faculty Members Mean	Mean Difference	Interpretation
Instructional Leadership Competencies	5.55	5.51	0.04	Responses are Highly Comparable
Test Statistic		Value		
t-value		0.177		
Critical t-value		2.447		
Decision		Fail to Reject Ho		
Interpretation		No Significant Difference		

Table 3 presents the difference in instructional leadership competencies between school administrators and faculty members in selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City. The findings revealed that school administrators ($M = 5.55$) and faculty members ($M = 5.51$) demonstrated nearly identical perceptions regarding the instructional leadership competencies practiced within their institutions, resulting in a minimal mean difference of 0.04. Furthermore, the computed t-value (0.177) was lower than the critical t-value (2.447), leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis and indicating no significant difference between the perceptions of the two groups. This finding suggests a high level of consensus between administrators and faculty members regarding the consistent implementation of instructional leadership practices, reflecting shared expectations, effective communication, and collaborative leadership within the participating institutions. Such agreement implies that instructional leadership behaviors

are consistently experienced and recognized across organizational levels, thereby contributing to institutional coherence and instructional effectiveness. The result is consistent with Hallinger, Gümüő, and Bellibaő (2020), who emphasized that effective instructional leadership is strengthened when school stakeholders develop shared perceptions of leadership practices and instructional priorities. Similarly, Schwan (2020) found that although educators may differ in ranking the importance of specific leadership behaviors, they generally recognize instructional leadership as a critical component of school effectiveness. Moreover, recent evidence suggests that collaborative leadership and shared understanding among educational stakeholders enhance organizational commitment, instructional quality, and continuous school improvement (Shujau-Abdul-Raheem, 2023).

Table 4. Difference in High-Performing School Practices between School Administrators and Faculty Members

Variable	School Administrators Mean	Faculty Members Mean	Mean Difference	Interpretation
High-Performing School Practices	5.60	5.51	0.09	Responses are Highly Comparable
Test Statistic		Value		
z-value		0.14		
Critical z-value		1.96		
Decision		Fail to Reject Ho		
Interpretation		No Significant Difference		

Table 4 presents the difference in high-performing school practices between school administrators and faculty members in selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City. The findings indicate that school administrators ($M = 5.60$) and faculty members ($M = 5.51$) consistently perceived the implementation of high-performing school practices as "Always Applied," with only a minimal mean difference of 0.09. Furthermore, the computed z-value (0.14) was lower than

the critical z-value (1.96), indicating no significant difference between the perceptions of the two groups. This result suggests that both administrators and faculty members share similar views regarding the institutions' commitment to visionary leadership, ambitious academic standards, equitable educational opportunities, and the development of high-quality teachers and leaders. The observed consensus reflects a cohesive organizational culture in which institutional goals and



educational practices are clearly communicated and collaboratively implemented, thereby strengthening institutional effectiveness and promoting continuous quality improvement. These findings support the study of Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2022), who emphasized that successful educational institutions are characterized by shared leadership, common organizational goals, and collaborative professional practices that contribute to sustained school improvement. Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

Development (OECD, 2020) reported that schools exhibiting strong leadership, equitable learning environments, and high expectations consistently demonstrate improved institutional performance and stakeholder confidence. Moreover, UNESCO (2021) highlighted that educational institutions achieve sustainable excellence when administrators and teachers work collaboratively to promote inclusive governance, quality instruction, and continuous organizational development.

Table 5. Relationship between Instructional Leadership Competencies and High-Performing School Practices

Variables	Mean	Pearson r	Interpretation	Decision
Instructional Leadership Competencies	5.53			
High-Performing School Practices	5.56	0.177	Slight Correlation (Almost Negligible Relationship)	Fail to Reject Ho

Table 5 presents the relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City. The findings revealed a positive correlation between the two variables ($r = 0.177$), indicating that improvements in instructional leadership competencies are associated with corresponding improvements in high-performing school practices. Although the magnitude of the relationship is relatively weak, the positive direction suggests that school administrators who consistently demonstrate competencies in assessment for learning, developing learning programs, implementing instructional improvement initiatives, and instructional supervision contribute to fostering visionary leadership, ambitious academic standards, commitment to equity, and the development of high-quality teachers and leaders. This finding implies that instructional leadership serves

as an important organizational mechanism for strengthening institutional effectiveness and promoting a culture of continuous improvement in higher education institutions. The result is supported by Hallinger, Gümüş, and Bellibaş (2020), who concluded that instructional leadership positively influences school effectiveness by improving teaching quality and organizational performance. Likewise, Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2022) emphasized that instructional leadership remains one of the strongest school-based factors associated with sustained institutional improvement, teacher commitment, and student achievement. Furthermore, Bush (2023) asserted that educational institutions with leaders who prioritize instructional quality, collaborative decision-making, and continuous professional development are more likely to exhibit the characteristics of high-performing organizations capable of sustaining excellence in teaching and learning.

Table 6. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Null Hypothesis	Statistical Test	Computed Value	Decision	Conclusion
Ho ₁ : There is no significant difference between the responses of school administrators and faculty members regarding instructional leadership competencies.	Independent Samples t-test	$t = 0.177$	Fail to Reject Ho	No significant difference exists between the two groups.
Ho ₂ : There is no significant difference between the responses of school administrators and faculty members regarding high-performing school practices.	z-test	$z = 0.14$	Fail to Reject Ho	No significant difference exists between the two groups.
Ho ₃ : There is no significant relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices.	Pearson Product-Moment Correlation	$r = 0.177$	Fail to Reject Ho	A slight positive relationship exists, which the dissertation interpreted as almost negligible.

Table 6 presents the summary of hypothesis testing for the study. The results indicate that the first null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of school administrators and faculty members regarding instructional leadership competencies, was not rejected, indicating that both groups shared comparable assessments of leadership practices within their institutions. Likewise, the second null hypothesis, which posits no significant difference in the perceptions of high-performing

school practices, was also not rejected, suggesting a common understanding among administrators and faculty members regarding the implementation of institutional practices that promote educational excellence. Furthermore, the third null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices, was likewise not rejected based on the reported correlation coefficient ($r = 0.177$), indicating a positive but weak relationship between the two variables.



Collectively, these findings suggest that while instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices are consistently implemented across the participating institutions, the relationship between them is relatively modest, implying that other organizational, contextual, or individual factors may also influence institutional performance. These findings are consistent with Hallinger, Gümüş, and Bellibaş (2020), who emphasized that instructional leadership contributes to school effectiveness but operates alongside contextual and organizational factors. Similarly, Bush (2023) argued that educational leadership is only one of several determinants of institutional success, with governance structures, organizational culture, and stakeholder engagement also playing significant roles. Moreover, UNESCO (2021) highlighted that achieving sustainable educational excellence requires an integrated approach that combines effective leadership, inclusive governance, quality teaching, and supportive learning environments to strengthen overall institutional performance.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings of this study highlight the importance of strengthening instructional leadership competencies as a strategy for enhancing high-performing school practices in higher education institutions. Since school administrators and faculty members consistently perceived instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices to be highly implemented, higher education institutions should sustain these strengths through continuous leadership development programs, instructional coaching, mentoring, and evidence-based decision-making. Institutional leaders should also prioritize regular monitoring of instructional practices, curriculum enhancement, and faculty professional development to maintain educational quality and organizational effectiveness in an increasingly dynamic higher education environment.

Moreover, the positive relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices suggests that educational institutions should foster collaborative leadership, shared governance, and inclusive decision-making processes that actively engage administrators, faculty members, and other stakeholders in institutional planning and quality assurance initiatives. Policymakers and higher education administrators may utilize the findings of this study as empirical evidence in designing leadership capacity-building programs, institutional development plans, and quality enhancement initiatives that promote academic excellence, organizational sustainability, and continuous improvement within higher education institutions.

6. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices are consistently implemented among selected higher education institutions in Pagadian City, as evidenced by the high ratings provided by both school administrators and faculty members. The findings further reveal that there are no significant differences between the perceptions of the two groups, indicating a shared understanding of the instructional leadership practices and institutional characteristics that

contribute to organizational effectiveness. Moreover, the study establishes a positive, albeit weak, relationship between instructional leadership competencies and high-performing school practices, suggesting that effective instructional leadership contributes to the development of high-performing educational institutions while recognizing that other organizational and contextual factors may also influence institutional performance. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of sustaining effective instructional leadership and fostering collaborative institutional practices to support continuous quality improvement and academic excellence in higher education institutions.

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