



# TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

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## ABSTRACT

*Understanding teachers' perceptions of school leadership is important in determining how leadership practices influence teaching effectiveness and the overall school environment. School leaders play a significant role in guiding teachers, improving instructional practices, and promoting a positive school culture within educational institutions. However, inconsistencies in leadership behaviors may create challenges in achieving educational goals and maintaining effective school management. Examining teachers' perceptions of school leadership can therefore provide valuable insights into improving leadership practices and strengthening instructional support in schools. This study examined teachers' perceptions of effective school leadership at Balo-i Central Elementary School in Lanao del Norte. Guided by Transformational Leadership Theory, the study aimed to determine teachers' perceptions of the instructional competence and management practices of school heads. A descriptive research design was utilized to describe and analyze the existing leadership practices observed in the school setting. The participants consisted of 20 teachers selected through simple random sampling to ensure fair representation. Data were collected using an adopted and validated questionnaire consisting of three parts: teachers' demographic profile, instructional competence of school heads, and management practices. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation, as well as Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to determine relationships between variables. The findings revealed that teachers generally perceive school leadership as effective, particularly in instructional supervision, communication, and collaborative decision-making. The study recommends continuous leadership development programs and strengthened teacher engagement initiatives to further improve school leadership practices and support educational effectiveness.*

**KEYWORDS:** School Leadership, Teacher Perception, Instructional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, School Management, Educational Leadership

## I. INTRODUCTION

Effective school leadership is widely recognized as a critical factor in improving educational outcomes, shaping school culture, and supporting both teacher performance and student achievement. School leaders are no longer expected to focus solely on administrative responsibilities but are also required to act as instructional leaders, collaborators, and agents of change within their schools (Hallinger, 2011). Effective leadership practices help create a positive learning environment, strengthen teacher commitment, and promote continuous improvement in teaching and learning processes.

Teachers, as the primary implementers of educational programs, are directly influenced by the leadership practices of school heads. Their perceptions of leadership effectiveness provide valuable insights into how leadership behaviors affect teaching practices and school performance. Research suggests that positive perceptions of school leadership are associated with higher levels of teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and professional collaboration (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Conversely, ineffective leadership may lead to reduced morale, lack of trust, and

resistance to change, which can negatively influence instructional quality and student outcomes (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008).

This study is grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes the ability of leaders to inspire and motivate followers while promoting trust, collaboration, and shared goals within the organization (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders encourage professional growth and empower teachers to actively participate in decision-making processes. Understanding teachers' perceptions of leadership practices is therefore essential for strengthening collaborative school environments and aligning school goals with classroom practices to improve overall school effectiveness.

### Study Objectives

This study aims to:

1. Determine teachers' perceptions of school heads' instructional competence.
2. Assess teachers' perceptions of school heads' management practices.



3. Examine differences in perceptions based on teachers' demographic profiles.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a descriptive research design to examine teachers' perceptions of effective school leadership, particularly the instructional competence and management practices of school heads. The study was conducted at Balo-i Central Elementary School in Balo-i, Lanao del Norte, Philippines, a public elementary school serving learners from nearby barangays and managed by a principal responsible for both instructional and administrative leadership. The participants consisted of 20 teachers selected through simple random sampling to ensure

equal representation and minimize sampling bias. Data were collected using an adopted and validated questionnaire composed of three parts: Part I gathered the demographic profile of the respondents, Part II assessed the instructional competence of school heads, and Part III measured the management practices of school heads. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale (5 – Always, 4 – Often, 3 – Sometimes, 2 – Rarely, 1 – Never) to determine the frequency of leadership practices observed in the school. The collected data were organized, encoded, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly the mean and standard deviation, to determine teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of school leadership practices (Joshi et al., 2015; Harpe, 2015).

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Instructional Competence of School Heads

**Table 1. Teachers' Perceptions of Instructional Competence**

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
Demonstrates knowledge of curriculum	4.60	Always
Provides timely feedback	4.45	Often
Supports professional development	4.35	Often
Monitors instructional practices	4.25	Often
Encourages innovation	4.50	Always
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.43</b>	<b>Often</b>

The findings show that teachers have a positive perception of the instructional competence of school heads. The overall mean of 4.43, interpreted as Often, indicates that school heads consistently demonstrate effective instructional leadership. Among the indicators, demonstrating knowledge of the curriculum obtained the highest mean of 4.60, interpreted as Always, suggesting that teachers strongly recognize the school heads' expertise in curriculum implementation. Similarly, encouraging innovation also received a high mean of 4.50, interpreted as Always,

indicating that school heads frequently promote new ideas and improvements in teaching practices. Meanwhile, providing timely feedback (4.45), supporting professional development (4.35), and monitoring instructional practices (4.25) were all interpreted as Often, showing that these practices are regularly observed by teachers. Overall, the results suggest that school heads play an active and supportive role in strengthening instructional practices and maintaining effective school leadership.

### 2. Management Practices of School Heads

**Table 2. Teachers' Perceptions of Management Practices**

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
Promotes collaborative decision-making	4.30	Often
Maintains transparency	4.25	Often
Communicates effectively	4.50	Always
Handles conflicts fairly	4.20	Often
Ensures resource allocation	4.15	Often
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>Often</b>

The findings show that teachers generally perceive the management practices of school heads as effective. The overall mean score of 4.28, interpreted as "Often," indicates that school heads frequently demonstrate good leadership and management in their schools. Among the indicators, communicating effectively received the highest mean of 4.50, interpreted as "Always," suggesting that communication is a strong leadership practice of school heads. Other practices such as promoting collaborative decision-making (4.30), maintaining transparency

(4.25), handling conflicts fairly (4.20), and ensuring proper resource allocation (4.15) were all rated "Often," showing that these practices are regularly observed by teachers. Additionally, when teachers were grouped according to years of service, the results showed only minimal differences in their perceptions, with mean scores ranging from 4.30 to 4.50. This indicates that teachers, regardless of experience, share similar positive views about the effectiveness of their school heads' management practices.



### 3. Differences Based on Length of Service

**Table 3. Differences in Perceptions by Years of Service**

Years of Service	Mean	SD
0–5 years	4.30	0.12
6–10 years	4.35	0.11
11+ years	4.50	0.09

The findings in Table 3 show that there are only minimal differences in teachers' perceptions of school leadership based on their years of service. Teachers with 0–5 years of service reported a mean score of 4.30 with an SD of 0.12, while those with 6–10 years had a slightly higher mean of 4.35 and an SD of 0.11. Teachers with 11 or more years of service gave the highest mean score of 4.50 with the lowest SD of 0.09, indicating more consistent responses among the most experienced teachers. Overall, the results suggest that teachers, regardless of their length of service, have similar and positive perceptions of the effectiveness of their school heads' leadership and management practices.

### IV. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that teachers generally perceive the leadership of school heads at Balo-i Central Elementary School as effective in terms of both instructional competence and management practices. School leaders were observed to frequently demonstrate collaborative decision-making, transparency, effective communication, fair conflict management, and proper allocation of resources. Such leadership behaviors contribute to the development of a supportive and positive school environment, which enhances teacher motivation, satisfaction, and overall instructional effectiveness. Research has shown that effective leadership practices in schools significantly influence teacher performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Zhao, Saidin, & Jaafar, 2025; Sun & Lee, 2024).

Furthermore, the results align with the principles of Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes inspiring and motivating teachers, fostering collaboration, and building a shared vision within the school community. Transformational leadership has been widely recognized as a key factor in strengthening school culture, improving teacher satisfaction, and promoting better educational outcomes (Restiani, Hariri, & Rini, 2024; Zhang, 2023).

Overall, the study highlights the importance of strong and supportive school leadership in achieving school effectiveness. By continuing to practice transformational and collaborative leadership approaches, school heads can further enhance teacher engagement, professional growth, and the quality of education provided to learners.

### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strengthen resource allocation and management practices. Since ensuring proper resource allocation received the lowest

mean among the indicators, school heads should focus on improving planning, distribution, and monitoring of school resources. This may include better coordination with teachers to ensure that instructional materials, facilities, and other resources are provided effectively to support teaching and learning.

2. Enhance fairness in conflict management. As handling conflicts fairly also showed a relatively lower rating, school leaders should adopt clearer procedures for addressing concerns and disputes among staff. Promoting open communication, mediation strategies, and transparent decision-making can help maintain a harmonious and supportive school environment.

3. Maintain and further strengthen effective communication and collaboration. Although communication and collaborative decision-making received higher ratings, these practices should continue to be reinforced through regular meetings, consultations, and teacher feedback mechanisms to sustain positive leadership and continuous school improvement.

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