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Instructional Leadership and Management Practices of School Heads: Perspectives of Teachers at Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School

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Abstract. Despite the growing emphasis on instructional leadership, limited understanding remains regarding how school heads translate leadership and management practices into meaningful improvements in teacher development, instructional delivery, and school learning climate, particularly within the local context of public elementary schools. This study examined the instructional leadership and management practices of the school head as perceived by teachers in Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, Polomolok East District, South Cotabato, Philippines, during School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it explored three domains: Strategic School Management and Professional Development, Instructional Leadership, and School Learning Climate. A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was employed, wherein quantitative and qualitative data were collected through a survey questionnaire and a self-administered open-ended questionnaire, respectively. Total population sampling was utilized, involving all seven grade chairpersons of the school as respondents. Quantitative data were analyzed using the mean, while qualitative responses were examined through thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and significant insights. Findings revealed that the school head demonstrated highly effective instructional leadership and management practices across all three domains, as reflected in the Very High ratings. Qualitative findings reinforced these results, highlighting curriculum contextualization, Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, instructional coaching, stakeholder engagement, and continuous teacher support as essential practices contributing to effective school leadership. The integration of both data sets demonstrated consistency between the quantitative ratings and qualitative experiences of the respondents. The study concludes that effective instructional leadership and strategic school management play an important role in strengthening teacher development, improving instructional practices, and fostering a positive learning environment. Its findings may serve as a practical reference for school heads in enhancing leadership and management approaches, promoting professional growth, and sustaining a supportive and conducive school learning climate.

Keywords: Grade Chairpersons; Instructional Leadership; Mixed-Methods Research; School Learning Climate; School Management Practices

Introduction

Instructional leadership and school management practices are recognized as important factors in promoting school effectiveness, improving teaching quality, and supporting learner achievement. Globally, effective school leadership extends beyond administrative responsibilities to include setting instructional directions, strengthening teaching practices, supporting teacher professional development, and establishing a positive school climate (Bush & Glover, 2020). School heads play an important role in aligning school goals with classroom practices and providing sustained support for teachers to improve the quality of instruction (Hallinger et al., 2020). These responsibilities highlight the importance of instructional leadership and effective school management in achieving continuous school improvement.

In regional and developing educational contexts, instructional leadership is likewise regarded as an essential component of school improvement. Research emphasizes that school heads who actively engage in instructional supervision, collaborative management, and teacher support contribute to the improvement of

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teaching practices and learner achievement (Hallinger et al., 2020). These responsibilities require school leaders to understand not only the administrative demands of school operations but also the experiences of teachers who carry out instructional programs and activities. Examining leadership practices through the perspectives of school personnel can therefore provide a more contextualized understanding of how leadership is experienced and implemented in schools.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has established the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) to define and strengthen the professional expectations for school leadership. The standards emphasize the responsibilities of school heads in strategic management, instructional leadership, and the development of a positive learning environment (Department of Education, 2020). Despite the existence of these standards, their implementation may vary across school contexts because of differences in available resources, workload distribution, and leadership competencies. This makes it important to examine how school heads translate leadership standards into actual management and instructional practices, particularly in public elementary schools.

At the local level, Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, under the Polomolok East District, South Cotabato, provides a specific setting for examining these practices. In this school, grade chairpersons are directly involved in coordinating grade-level academic activities and working closely with the school head in implementing instructional and management initiatives. Their roles place them in a position to observe and experience how school leadership decisions are translated into instructional support, teacher coordination, professional development, and the overall learning environment. Their perspectives are therefore valuable in understanding the leadership and management practices implemented within the school.

Although existing studies have examined school leadership, instructional practices, and teacher performance, limited attention has been given to the perspectives of grade chairpersons as middle leaders, particularly in localized elementary school settings (Shaked, 2023; Tang et al., 2022). Moreover, the use of quantitative or qualitative approaches separately may not fully capture both the measured level of leadership practices and the experiences underlying these assessments. This highlights the need for localized mixed-methods evidence that brings together numerical assessments and participants' descriptions of school leadership practices (Ducalie & Mahlangu, 2024; Tang et al., 2022). The need for such an investigation is particularly relevant in Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, where the perspectives of grade chairpersons can provide context-specific insights into strategic school management and professional development, instructional leadership, and school learning climate.

In response to this need, the study examined the instructional leadership and management practices of the school head as perceived by the grade chairpersons of Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School through a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach, focusing on strategic school management and professional development, instructional leadership, and school learning climate.

Research Questions

This study aimed to examine the instructional leadership and management practices of school heads as perceived by grade chairpersons.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What was the level of instructional leadership and management practices of the principal in terms of:
   1.1. Strategic School Management and Professional Development,
   1.2. Instructional Leadership, and
   1.3. School Learning Climate.
2. How did the grade chairpersons describe the school head's instructional leadership and management practices in terms of:
   1.1. Strategic School Management and Professional Development,
   1.2. Instructional Leadership, and
   1.3. School Learning Climate.
3. What similarities and differences can be observed between the quantitative results and qualitative findings regarding the school head's instructional leadership and management practices?
4. How did the quantitative results and qualitative findings complement or explain each other in describing the school head's instructional leadership and management practices?
5. What overall integrated interpretation can be drawn from the combined quantitative and qualitative data of the study?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on the instructional leadership and management practices of the school head of Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, under the Polomolok East District, South Cotabato, during School Year 2025–2026. It involved seven grade chairpersons who served as the study's respondents. The investigation covered three domains: (1) Strategic School Management and Professional Development, (2)

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Instructional Leadership, and (3) School Learning Climate. Using a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach, the study examined the respondents' perceptions through quantitative and qualitative data. The study was delimited to the perceptions and experiences of the seven grade chairpersons in one public elementary school. It did not include a comparison of leadership and management practices across other schools or districts. The findings were therefore limited to the context and respondents of Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School during the 2025–2026 timeframe and were not intended to represent all school heads or elementary schools in other settings.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundations of School Leadership

Instructional Leadership Theory provides a foundation for understanding how school heads influence teaching and learning. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) identified three major dimensions of instructional management: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive learning climate. These dimensions emphasize establishing academic goals, coordinating curriculum and instruction, supervising teaching practices, and creating conditions that support learning. Leithwood et al. (2008) similarly highlighted the contribution of school leadership to school improvement through its influence on organizational conditions. Although instructional leadership traditionally emphasizes the principal's role, Shaked (2023) recognized that middle leaders also contribute to instructional improvement through expertise, collaboration, and professional example.

Transformational Leadership Theory, as discussed by Bass (1985), explains how leaders motivate organizational members to work toward shared goals through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In educational settings, this theory complements instructional leadership by emphasizing trust, shared vision, collaboration, and professional growth. Alcaide-Aranda and Aguilar Alcaide (2023) likewise highlighted the organizational effects of school leadership on educational improvement. Together, these theories provide a foundation for examining the school head's leadership and management practices. In the present study, Strategic School Management and Professional Development concerns organizational direction, personnel support, and professional growth; Instructional Leadership focuses on guidance and supervision of teaching and learning; and School Learning Climate refers to the relationships and organizational conditions that support collaboration and effective school operations. These are study-specific operational dimensions informed by the theories, not the original dimensions of either theoretical framework.

Strategic School Management and Professional Development

Strategic school management involves aligning school priorities, resources, personnel responsibilities, and professional development activities with institutional goals. Professional development supports this process by strengthening the competencies of teachers and other school personnel. In the Philippine setting, Gamboa (2023) examined the implementation of School Learning Action Cells and the monitoring and evaluation strategies employed by teachers and school heads, highlighting the importance of organizational support in sustaining professional learning. Similarly, Torres et al. (2024) emphasized honesty, confidentiality, collegiality, and actionable feedback in classroom observation. Although these studies examined different professional activities, both point to the importance of supportive leadership and constructive professional relationships in improving instructional practice.

School-based management also requires the participation of school personnel in planning and implementing improvement initiatives. Gile and Despi (2025) examined school heads' leadership styles in relation to the implementation of School-Based Management, providing another perspective on the relationship between leadership and school-level management. Collectively, these studies suggest that effective management involves more than administrative tasks; it requires coordination, participation, professional support, and alignment with school improvement goals. However, further attention is needed to understand how grade chairpersons experience these management and professional development practices in their respective grade-level responsibilities.

Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership involves the actions and decisions of school heads that support the improvement of teaching and learning. These include communicating instructional goals, monitoring classroom instruction, providing feedback, supporting curriculum implementation, and facilitating professional collaboration. Philippine studies have examined these responsibilities from different perspectives. Aureada (2021) identified difficulties in particular instructional supervision and monitoring responsibilities, whereas Amancio (2024) reported commendable competence among school heads in areas

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such as strategic leadership, resource management, and focus on teaching and learning. These findings are not necessarily contradictory because leadership competence and the implementation of specific supervisory responsibilities may vary across school settings.

More recent studies have further explored instructional leadership practices, challenges, and outcomes. Abio (2026) investigated the instructional leadership practices of school heads in Bukidnon, while Tambis et al. (2025) examined the relationships among school heads' demographic profiles, leadership practices, and associated challenges. Ipis and Libradilla (2026) investigated the effectiveness of school heads' instructional leadership in relation to teachers' and students' performance in Toledo City. Taken together, these studies demonstrate the relevance of instructional leadership to school management, instructional implementation, and educational improvement. However, they provide comparatively less direct attention to how grade chairpersons perceive and experience the school head's instructional guidance and supervision.

School Learning Climate

School learning climate refers to the relationships and organizational conditions that influence teaching, learning, and professional interaction. It includes communication, collaboration, mutual respect, shared responsibility, and an environment conducive to academic improvement. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) recognized the promotion of a positive instructional climate as an important component of instructional leadership. Alcaide-Aranda and Aguilar Alcaide (2023) also emphasized the organizational effects of leadership on educational improvement. In the Philippine context, Gamboa (2023) and Torres et al. (2024) highlighted the importance of school head support, collaboration, collegiality, and constructive feedback in professional learning and instructional supervision.

A positive school learning climate depends not only on established policies but also on how school leaders communicate expectations, respond to concerns, encourage participation, and build professional relationships. Grade chairpersons can provide useful insights into these conditions because they participate in grade-level coordination and work closely with the school head. Examining their experiences can help explain how communication, collaboration, and school improvement initiatives are practiced within a particular elementary school.

Grade Chairpersons as Middle Leaders

Grade chairpersons occupy an important position in school organizations because they help connect school administration with grade-level instructional activities. Their responsibilities may include coordinating academic programs, assisting teachers, communicating school directions, and participating in instructional and management initiatives. International studies recognize the contribution of middle leaders to instructional improvement. Shaked (2023) emphasized leadership through expertise, collaboration, and professional example, while Shaked (2025) examined how principals' instructional leadership influences the expectations and organizational positions of middle leaders. Similarly, Kubheka et al. (2025) investigated the instructional leadership experiences of departmental heads in South African public primary schools, and Tang et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of developing the knowledge base of instruction-oriented middle leadership.

These studies demonstrate the contribution of middle leaders to instructional coordination and school improvement. However, departmental heads and other middle leaders should not automatically be considered equivalent to grade chairpersons in Philippine public elementary schools because their authority, responsibilities, and organizational functions may differ. The international literature therefore provides a conceptual foundation for understanding middle leadership but does not fully represent the experiences of Philippine grade chairpersons. Their perspectives are relevant to the present study because of their involvement in coordinating grade-level activities and implementing school-level directions.

Synthesis of Related Studies and Research Gaps

The reviewed international and Philippine studies establish the importance of instructional direction, strategic management, professional development, and a positive learning environment in school improvement. International studies by Shaked (2023, 2025), Kubheka et al. (2025), and Tang et al. (2022) emphasize the contribution of middle leaders to instructional improvement, whereas Philippine studies by Aureada (2021), Amancio (2024), Abio (2026), Tambis et al. (2025), and Ipis and Libradilla (2026) examine school heads' leadership practices, competencies, challenges, and effectiveness. Gamboa (2023), Torres et al. (2024), and Gile and Despi (2025) provide additional perspectives on professional development, instructional supervision, and school-based management. Although these studies collectively contribute to understanding school leadership, they differ in their participants, settings, and specific research concerns.

Three gaps are particularly relevant to the present study. First, a participant-related gap concerns the comparatively limited direct evidence on how grade chairpersons in Philippine elementary schools perceive and experience school heads' leadership and management practices. Second, a methodological gap concerns

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the need to meaningfully integrate quantitative assessments and qualitative accounts to identify similarities, differences, and complementary explanations. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) and Fetters et al. (2013) provide foundations for such integration through the examination of convergence, divergence, and complementarity. Third, a contextual gap highlights the need for localized research because leadership practices are shaped by the organizational conditions and resources of particular schools. Findings from other educational settings may not fully explain the experiences of grade chairpersons at Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, Polomolok East District.

Mixed-Methods Integration in Educational Leadership Research

Mixed-methods research combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to develop a more comprehensive understanding of complex educational concerns. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) explained that these approaches must be purposefully combined, while Fetters et al. (2013) emphasized that integration may occur during research design, analysis, interpretation, and reporting. Ducalie and Mahlangu (2024) examined different leadership approaches through a mixed-methods perspective, illustrating the relevance of considering multiple forms of evidence in leadership research. In the present study, quantitative results establish the perceived levels of Strategic School Management and Professional Development, Instructional Leadership, and School Learning Climate, while qualitative findings explain the grade chairpersons' experiences of these practices. Integrating the two forms of evidence allows the study to identify similarities and differences, examine complementary explanations, and develop an overall interpretation of the school head's leadership and management practices.

The present study addresses the identified participant-related, methodological, and contextual gaps by examining the instructional leadership and management practices of the school head through the perspectives of grade chairpersons at Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, Polomolok East District. By focusing on the three study dimensions and integrating quantitative and qualitative findings, it seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how these practices are perceived and experienced within the specific school context.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods research design to examine the instructional leadership and management practices of the school head of Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, Polomolok, South Cotabato, Philippines, as perceived by the grade chairpersons. This design involves the concurrent collection and separate analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, followed by the integration of both datasets to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. In a convergent parallel design, the two forms of data are given complementary roles, allowing researchers to compare numerical results with participants' narrative accounts to identify areas of convergence, divergence, and complementarity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The quantitative component measured the extent of the school head's instructional leadership and management practices across three major domains: (1) Strategic School Management and Professional Development, (2) Instructional Leadership, and (3) School Learning Climate. These domains were further examined through five specific areas: Leading Strategically, Managing School Operations and Resources, Developing Self and Others, Focusing on Teaching and Learning, and Learning Environment. A structured survey questionnaire containing 33 indicators was administered to obtain numerical assessments of the leadership and management practices demonstrated by the school head. Meanwhile, the qualitative component involved a researcher-developed, self-administered questionnaire containing five open-ended questions. These questions explored the grade chairpersons' experiences, observations, and perceptions of the school head's leadership and management practices. The qualitative component provided contextual explanations of the numerical findings, particularly regarding the strategies, activities, and practices implemented in school management, instructional supervision, teacher development, and the establishment of a positive learning environment. The quantitative and qualitative datasets were analyzed independently before being compared and integrated during the interpretation stage. This integration enabled the researchers to determine whether the qualitative accounts supported, explained, or differed from the quantitative results. Through this approach, the study sought to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the school head's instructional leadership and management practices within the specific context of the school. The data gathering process begins with sending letters of permission and consent, followed by the simultaneous collection of quantitative and qualitative data. In the quantitative phase, data collection involves administering a survey questionnaire covering (I) Strategic School Management and Professional Development, (II) Instructional Leadership, and (III) School Learning Climate, while data analysis is conducted through descriptive analysis. In the qualitative phase, data

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collection involves a self-administered questionnaire, while data analysis is conducted through thematic analysis. The quantitative and qualitative findings are then integrated and compared, followed by the final interpretation under the convergent parallel mixed-method research design.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, a public elementary school under the Polomolok East District, located in Polomolok, South Cotabato, Philippines. The school serves learners from Kindergarten to Grade 6 and provides the institutional setting in which the school head exercises instructional leadership, strategic management, resource allocation, teacher supervision, and school climate development. Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School was selected as the research locale because it provides an appropriate setting for examining how instructional leadership and management practices are implemented and experienced within an elementary school environment. The grade chairpersons, who perform coordinating responsibilities at their respective grade levels, were considered appropriate sources of information because of their involvement in academic activities, instructional coordination, and school-based programs. The selection of this locale allowed the researchers to examine the leadership practices of the school head within the actual organizational and instructional context of the institution.

Research Participants

The participants of this study were the seven grade chairpersons of Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School under the Polomolok East District. They were selected because they are directly involved in coordinating academic activities and working closely with the school head in the implementation of instructional and management practices. Their roles in supervising grade-level activities, assisting teachers, and participating in school programs make them suitable respondents for the study. The selected participants were expected to provide reliable information that would help the researchers better understand the instructional leadership and management practices implemented in the school.

Research Instrument

The study utilized two researcher-administered instruments: a quantitative survey questionnaire and a qualitative self-administered questionnaire. Both instruments were designed to gather information regarding the instructional leadership and management practices of the school head as perceived by the grade chairpersons. The quantitative questionnaire was adapted from Rollo (2023) and aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) established by the Department of Education (2020). The instruments were contextualized to the research setting and underwent content validation by three experts to assess their relevance, clarity, and appropriateness to the study's objectives. A five-point Likert scale was employed to measure the frequency with which the school head demonstrated the identified leadership and management practices. The responses were assigned the following numerical values and corresponding verbal descriptions: 5 – Almost Always, 4 – Frequently, 3 – Sometimes, 2 – Seldom, and 1 – Almost Never. This scaling system provided a structured basis for quantifying respondents' assessments of the school head's leadership and management practices. The responses provided a quantitative basis for determining the perceived extent of the school head's implementation of instructional leadership and management practices across the three major domains. Moreover, the qualitative instrument consisted of five open-ended questions developed to obtain more detailed explanations of the participants' experiences, observations, and perceptions. The questions were organized according to the three major domains of the study: two questions focused on Strategic School Management and Professional Development, two on Instructional Leadership, and one on School Learning Climate. The questions were developed based on the research objectives and the specific leadership and management areas covered by the quantitative instrument. This arrangement ensured that the qualitative responses were relevant to the same major domains measured quantitatively while allowing participants to express their observations and experiences in their own words. Both instruments underwent expert validation involving three validators to establish the content relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of the questions and indicators. Recommendations and corrections provided by the validators were considered and incorporated into the final versions of the instruments before administration. For the quantitative instrument, internal consistency reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha to determine the extent to which the 33 indicators consistently measure the intended constructs. The reliability coefficient should be computed from the appropriate pilot-test responses before the final administration, where applicable. The resulting coefficient should be reported in the manuscript once the actual computation is available. No reliability coefficient is reported in this section because no computed value was provided.

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Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering procedure commenced after the researchers' secured permission from the appropriate school authority to conduct the study at Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School. The researchers then informed the seven grade chairpersons about the purpose of the study, the nature of their participation, and the procedures involved in answering the research instruments. The participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would be treated confidentially and used solely for research purposes. Before the administration of the instruments, both questionnaires underwent expert validation by three validators. Their comments and recommendations were considered in refining the instruments to ensure that the questions were clear, relevant, and aligned with the research objectives. For the quantitative phase, the researchers prepared the validated 33-item survey questionnaire using Google Forms. The online questionnaire was distributed to the seven grade chairpersons through an appropriate electronic communication channel. Participants were provided with instructions on the purpose of the survey, the response scale, and the manner of completing the questionnaire. They were given sufficient time to accomplish the online survey independently and provide responses based on their actual experiences and observations of the school head's leadership and management practices. For the qualitative phase, a separate Google Forms questionnaire containing five open-ended questions was administered to the same participants. The questions were organized according to the three major domains of the study. Participants were encouraged to provide honest, clear, and detailed responses based on their experiences and observations. This procedure enabled the researchers to obtain narrative data that could further explain and contextualize the quantitative findings. After the online administration, the researchers retrieved and reviewed the submitted responses for completeness and consistency. The quantitative responses were organized and prepared for statistical analysis, while the qualitative responses were compiled, reviewed, and organized for thematic analysis. Appropriate measures were observed to maintain the confidentiality of participants' identities and responses throughout the research process. Finally, the independently analyzed quantitative and qualitative findings were compared and integrated to identify areas of agreement, differences, and complementary insights. The integration provided a more comprehensive interpretation of the school head's instructional leadership and management practices within the research locale.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What was the level of instructional leadership and management practices of the principal in terms of Strategic School Management and Professional Development; Instructional Leadership; and School Learning Climate?

Table 1. Interpretation of the Level of instructional leadership and management practices of the principal (Source: Authors)

Mean Range	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. 1.0 – 1.49	Very Low	Almost Never
2. 1.50 – 2.49	Low	Seldom
3. 2.50 – 3.49	Moderate	Sometimes
4. 3.50 – 4.49	High	Frequently
5. 4.50 – 5.0	Very High	Almost Always

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Strategic School Management and Professional Development

Table 2. Level of instructional leadership and management practices of the principal in terms of Strategic School Management and Professional Development as perceived by the respondents

Items	M	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. 1	5.0	0.00	Very High	Almost Always
2. 2	4.71	0.49	Very High	Almost Always
3. 3	4.29	1.11	High	Frequently
4. 4	4.29	1.11	High	Frequently
5. 5	4.71	0.49	Very High	Almost Always
6. 6	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
7. 7	4.71	0.49	Very High	Almost Always
8. 8	4.86	0.38	Very High	Almost Always
9. 9	4.57	0.79	Very High	Almost Always
10. 10	4.23	0.79	High	Frequently
11. 11	4.57	0.79	Very High	Almost Always
12. 12	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
13. 13	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
14. 14	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
15. 15	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
16. 16	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
17. 17	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
18. 18	4.57	0.79	Very High	Almost Always
19. 19	4.43	1.13	High	Frequently
20. 20	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
21. 21	4.43	0.79	High	Frequently
Overall Mean	**4.52**	**0.18**	**Very High**	**Almost Always**

Table 2 indicate that the principal's practices in Strategic School Management and Professional Development were perceived as Very High (M = 4.52, SD = 0.18). This can be interpreted as the principal demonstrating the strategic school management and professional development practices almost always. The differences in the item ratings suggest that, although the principal's overall performance in this dimension was rated Very High, some aspects of strategic management and professional development were not perceived to be demonstrated as consistently as others. The overall standard deviation of 0.18, classified as Very Consistent, indicates that the respondents' overall ratings were closely grouped, reflecting a high level of agreement in their perceptions.

The findings can be supported by Wang et al. (2025) stating that effective school management helps ensure that school goals, programs, and teacher development activities are properly implemented to improve overall school performance. Similarly, Llemit (2024) explained that effective management practices positively influence the performance of both teachers and schools. This means that the principal is able to maintain coordination, organization, and collaboration among school personnel, which contribute to a more effective and productive school environment.

Nevertheless, these findings indicate that the respondents found the principals as highly effective in strategic school management and professional development. The school head is able to provide clear direction in school operations, support teachers' growth, and foster professional learning activities within or outside the school demonstrating management practices that contribute to the improvement of teacher performance and school effectiveness.

Instructional Leadership

Table 3. Level of instructional leadership and management practices of the principal in terms of Instructional Leadership as perceived by the respondents

Items	Mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. 22	4.71	0.76	Very High	Almost Always
2. 23	4.71	0.76	Very High	Almost Always
3. 24	4.71	0.48	Very High	Almost Always
4. 25	4.86	0.38	Very High	Almost Always
5. 26	4.86	0.38	Very High	Almost Always
6. 27	4.71	0.49	Very High	Almost Always
7. 28	4.86	0.38	Very High	Almost Always
8. 29	4.71	0.49	Very High	Almost Always
Total Responses	**4.77**	**0.16**	**Very High**	**Almost Always**

Table 3 revealed that the principal's has a Very High (M = 4.77, SD = 0.16) instructional leadership practices. All eight indicators received Very High ratings, with means ranging from 4.71 to 4.86. These

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results indicate that the grade chairpersons generally perceived the principal as demonstrating the identified instructional leadership practices almost always. An overall standard deviation of 0.16 suggests that there is a high level of agreement in their perception of the principal's instructional leadership.

The consistent high ratings suggest that the principal is actively involved in guiding and improving teaching and learning. These practices include supporting the implementation of learning standards, providing instructional guidance and training, using feedback to improve teaching practices, setting learning outcomes, and guiding the use of assessment results. The narrow range of the item means further indicates that the respondents gave similarly high evaluations across the different indicators.

This is supported by the study of Ahmad and Rizvi (2026), which emphasized that instructional leadership practices have a significant effect on teacher effectiveness and academic resilience of students. Effective instructional leaders establish a vision for academic success, promoting a collaborative culture among teachers, and utilizing data to inform instructional decisions (Akomodi, 2025).

Overall, the results suggest that instructional leadership is a recognized strength of the principal's management practices. It emphasized that the principal actively supervises instruction, supports teachers in improving classroom practices, and promotes quality teaching and learning.

School Learning Climate

Table 4. Level of instructional leadership and management practices of the principal in terms of School Learning Climate as perceived by the respondents

Items	Mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
30	4.85	0.38	Very High	Almost Always
31	4.85	0.38	Very High	Almost Always
32	4.71	0.49	Very High	Almost Always
33	4.57	0.79	Very High	Almost Always
Total Responses	**4.75**	**0.19**	**Very High**	**Almost Always**

Based on the findings of Table 4, the principal's practices in establishing a positive School Learning Climate were perceived as Very High (M = 4.75, SD = 0.19), indicating a strong overall evaluation across all indicators, with mean scores ranging from 4.57 to 4.85, which can be interpreted as the principal identifies practices are done almost always. The standard deviation of 0.19 suggests that the respondents' ratings were closely group, agreeing on the school head's practices in promoting a positive school learning climate.

The consistently Very High ratings recognize the principal's efforts in promoting school safety and maintaining an environment conducive to teaching and learning. These practices emphasize the importance of school leadership in ensuring that the physical and organizational conditions of the school support the welfare and learning needs of both teachers and learners.

According to Caay and Valle (2025), a positive school climate supports effective teaching, learner engagement, and academic success. Mamuaya (2025) further explained that supportive school environments foster collaboration, respect, and positive behavior among members of the school community.

As interpreted, this suggests that the principal give importance to maintaining a safe, child-friendly, and supportive school environment. The indicators cover the provision of a safe and child-friendly learning environment, adherence to child-friendly standards and programs, implementation of child protection mechanisms, and the preparation of disaster risk reduction and management activities.

Research Question 2: How did the grade chairpersons describe the school head's instructional leadership and management practices in terms of Strategic School Management and Professional Development; Instructional Leadership; and School Learning Climate?

Theme 1: Strategic School Management and Professional Development

Across participants, school heads were consistently described as facilitators of curriculum management, teacher development, instructional support, and collaborative professional learning. Grade chairpersons emphasized that school heads actively contextualize curriculum standards, organize professional development activities, facilitate Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, and provide instructional guidance to teachers. These practices reflect strategic instructional leadership that prioritizes both curriculum responsiveness and teacher capability enhancement. One participant stated:

"School heads lead the review and adaptation of curriculum standards to fit local needs and resources." (P1)

This reflects adaptive instructional leadership, wherein school heads recognize that effective curriculum implementation requires contextual responsiveness to learner needs and available school

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resources. Curriculum contextualization allows instructional programs to become more meaningful and relevant to the realities of the learners and the school community.

Similarly, participants also emphasized the importance of professional development activities. One participant shared:

"They organize workshops for teachers to align lessons with standards." (P1)

"Design development programs, trainings and seminars aligned to teachers' needs." (P3)

These responses underscore the school heads' commitment to strengthening instructional competence through continuous professional development initiatives. The organization of trainings, seminars, and workshops demonstrates leadership practices that support instructional alignment and teacher effectiveness.

Collaborative professional learning also emerged from the responses. One participant noted:

"Learning Action Cell (LAC) to share new ideas." (P2)

This illustrates the promotion of collaborative learning structures that encourage professional sharing, reflective practice, and peer support among teachers.

Furthermore, participants described school heads as responsive to teacher needs through capacity-building activities and training needs assessment:

"Assign master teachers to conduct trainings." (P4)

"Identify training needs of teachers." (P6)

These suggests that the school heads' role in sustaining instructional improvement by identifying professional gaps and mobilizing available expertise within the school organization. The emphasis on capacity-building reflects leadership practices that aim to enhance teacher competence and instructional quality.

It was also emphasized the importance of localization in curriculum implementation as stated by one participant:

"Promote localization." (P7)

This response suggests that school heads encourage teachers to adapt instructional materials and teaching approaches according to local contexts and learner backgrounds. Such practices reflect responsive educational leadership that recognizes the importance of culturally and contextually relevant instruction.

These findings are consistent with Hallinger (2020), These findings are consistent with Hallinger (2020), who emphasized the role of instructional leaders in promoting teacher development and curriculum alignment through collaborative professional learning. Similarly, Bush (2021) highlighted that strategic school leadership involves curriculum contextualization, instructional support, and capacity-building initiatives that strengthen school effectiveness. The findings were also supported by the work of Asio et al. (2022), who noted that professional development programs and collaborative learning communities contribute significantly to teacher growth and instructional improvement.

Overall, this revealed that school heads demonstrate strategic school management and professional development practices by integrating curriculum contextualization, teacher training, collaborative learning, and instructional support. These leadership practices contribute to instructional improvement, teacher empowerment, and organizational effectiveness within the school setting.

Theme 2: Instructional Leadership

The findings indicate that grade chairpersons describe school heads as active instructional leaders who guide teaching and learning through supervision, monitoring, coaching, assessment management, and data-driven decision-making.

Across participants, school heads were consistently described as leaders who establish instructional goals, monitor learner performance, supervise curriculum implementation, and provide instructional support to teachers. These practices reflect leadership approaches centered on instructional improvement and learner achievement.

One participant stated:

"Set goals and work with teachers to make sure every student improves." (P2)

This response highlights the school heads' role in setting instructional directions and fostering collaborative accountability among teachers. The emphasis on improving learner outcomes reflects results-oriented leadership that prioritizes academic achievement and continuous school improvement.

Participants also emphasized instructional supervision and monitoring practices. One participant shared:

"Ensuring the curriculum is strictly implemented through observation." (P4)

Another stated:

"Monitor and give feedback." (P7)

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These responses indicate the school heads' active involvement in classroom supervision and instructional monitoring. Through classroom observations and feedback mechanisms, school heads are able to identify instructional strengths, address challenges, and support teachers in improving classroom practices. Such leadership practices reinforce instructional accountability and continuous professional growth.

Data-driven instructional leadership likewise emerged as a recurring pattern in the participants' responses. One participant noted:

"Use results to guide decisions on curriculum and instruction." (P1)

Another shared:

"Checking grades and attendance to find who needs help." (P2)

These statements reveal that school heads utilize assessment data and learner performance records to inform instructional decisions and learner interventions. This reflects evidence-based leadership practices that support instructional responsiveness and learner-centered decision-making.

Participants also described school heads as providers of instructional coaching and technical assistance. One participant stated:

"Observing classes to give helpful coaching." (P2)

This response underscores the developmental dimension of instructional leadership, wherein school heads not only supervise teachers but also mentor and support them in strengthening instructional practices. Coaching and constructive feedback contribute to teacher competence and instructional effectiveness.

Furthermore, participants emphasized the role of school heads in ensuring fairness and alignment in assessment practices. One participant shared:

"Assessment practices are purposeful, fair, data-informed." (P6)

This reflects leadership practices that uphold accountability, fairness, and instructional integrity in assessment implementation. Assessment quality assurance contributes to valid learner evaluation and improved instructional planning.

These findings align with Bush (2025) who emphasized that instructional leadership involves goal-setting, supervision, instructional monitoring, and teacher support aimed at improving learner outcomes. Similarly, Leithwood et al. (2020) highlighted that effective school leaders use evidence-based decision-making and instructional coaching to strengthen teaching quality and school performance. The findings also support the study of Fullan (2020), who argued that collaborative instructional leadership fosters continuous improvement and teacher development.

Overall, the findings indicate that school heads demonstrate strong instructional leadership practices through supervision, instructional monitoring, assessment management, data-informed decision-making, and teacher coaching. These leadership behaviors contribute significantly to instructional effectiveness, teacher growth, and improved learner achievement.

Theme 3: School Learning Climate

The findings reveal that grade chairpersons perceive school heads as key contributors to the development of a positive, safe, inclusive, and supportive school learning climate. Across participants, school heads were consistently described as leaders who maintain safe learning environments, support teacher and learner welfare, promote positive school culture, and encourage stakeholder collaboration. These practices reflect leadership approaches that prioritize both educational effectiveness and the holistic well-being of the school community. One participant stated:

"Facilities are safe, clean, and well equipped." (P1)

Another expressed:

"Everyone feel secure, valued, and motivated." (P3)

These responses highlight the school heads' role in maintaining physical and psychological environments conducive to learning. Safe, clean, and resource-equipped school environments contribute positively to learner engagement, teacher productivity, and overall school effectiveness. The emphasis on creating supportive environments further reflects leadership practices that value inclusivity, motivation, and positive interpersonal relationships within the school community.

Participants also emphasized teacher and learner welfare as important dimensions of school climate leadership. One participant noted:

"Supporting teachers' well-being." (P4)

Another added:

"Supporting learners holistically." (P6)

These responses indicate that school heads are perceived to recognize the importance of addressing the holistic needs of both teachers and learners. Supporting emotional well-being, professional welfare, and learner development contributes to positive school experiences and improved educational outcomes.

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Positive school culture and discipline were also identified in the participants' responses. One participant stated:

"Nurturing a positive school culture." (P6)

Another mentioned:

"Providing school policies and disciplinary measures." (P5)

These statements reflect leadership practices that establish organizational order, shared values, and respectful behavior within the school community. Positive school culture contributes to harmonious relationships, improved morale, and stronger organizational commitment among stakeholders.

Furthermore, participants emphasized the importance of stakeholder participation. One participant stated:

"Engage stakeholders." (P7)

One participant also added:

"Brigada Eskwela." (P7)

These responses demonstrate the role of school heads in encouraging collaboration between the school and its stakeholders. Activities such as Brigada Eskwela provide opportunities for parents and community members to participate in school improvement efforts.

These findings align with Cohen et al. (2021), who emphasized that positive school climate is associated with safe learning environments, supportive relationships, and collaborative school culture. Similarly, Wang et al. (2020) highlighted that effective school leadership contributes significantly to learner well-being, teacher satisfaction, and school connectedness. The findings also support the study of Khalifa et al. (2021), who argued that inclusive and community-centered leadership practices strengthen stakeholder participation and promote equitable learning environments.

Collectively, the findings reveal that school heads contribute significantly to the establishment of a positive school learning climate through safe environment management, teacher and learner support, positive culture-building, and stakeholder engagement. These leadership practices foster inclusive educational environments that support both academic success and holistic development.

Research Question 3: What similarities and differences can be observed between the quantitative results and qualitative findings regarding the school head's instructional leadership and management practices?

Comparative Analysis of the Quantitative Results and Qualitative Findings

The quantitative and qualitative findings revealed similarities in the grade chairpersons' perceptions of the school head's instructional leadership and management practices. Both sets of findings highlighted the importance of strategic school management and professional development, instructional leadership, and the establishment of a positive school learning climate.

In Strategic School Management and Professional Development, the quantitative results showed an overall Very High rating (M = 4.52, SD = 0.18). The narrative findings supported this result through participants' descriptions of curriculum contextualization, teacher training, LAC sessions, and the identification of teachers' professional needs. These responses provided specific examples of the practices assessed in the quantitative questionnaire.

In Instructional Leadership, the numerical findings obtained a Very High rating (M = 4.77, SD = 0.16), with all indicators receiving Very High interpretations. Similarly, the qualitative responses described classroom supervision, instructional monitoring, coaching, feedback, and the use of assessment results in decision-making. Both sets of findings emphasized the school head's role in guiding teachers and improving teaching and learning.

Furthermore, School Learning Climate received a Very High overall rating (M = 4.75, SD = 0.19). The qualitative findings supported this result through participants' descriptions of school safety, teacher and learner welfare, positive school culture, discipline, and stakeholder engagement. These responses provided examples of how school heads contribute to maintaining a supportive school environment.

Despite these similarities, several differences were also observed in the type and level of information provided by the two sets of data. The quantitative results presented numerical measurements of the respondents' perceptions, showing the overall level of the principal's practices and the variations in individual ratings. In contrast, the qualitative findings provided specific descriptions of the practices and activities associated with each dimension. For instance, the quantitative data showed Very High level of Strategic School Management and Professional Development, while the qualitative findings revealed specific strategies such as identifying teacher training needs, contextualizing lessons, assigning master teachers to conduct training, and organizing SLAC sessions.

Another important difference was the level of detail provided by the two methods. While the quantitative results summarized the respondents' perceptions through means and standard deviations, the

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qualitative responses provided additional descriptions of the practices and experiences shared by the grade chairpersons. These descriptions also highlighted relational aspects of leadership, including teacher well-being, learner support, and stakeholder participation.

Overall, the quantitative and qualitative findings were similar in identifying the three dimensions as strengths of the school head's instructional leadership and management practices. However, they differed in the type and depth of information they provided. The quantitative results established the perceived levels of practice, while the qualitative findings described the specific activities and experiences associated with those practices. No major contradiction was evident between the two sets of findings.

Research Question 4: How did the quantitative results and qualitative findings complement or explain each other in describing the school head's instructional leadership and management practices?

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings on the School Head's Instructional Leadership and Management Practices

The quantitative and qualitative findings consistently revealed that the school head demonstrates effective instructional leadership and management practices in the areas of strategic school management and professional development, instructional leadership, and school learning climate. The quantitative results perceived levels of practice across the three dimensions, while the qualitative findings provided specific examples of how these practices were described by the grade chairpersons.

In the first dimension (Strategic School Management and Professional Development), the Very High quantitative rating was further explained by participants' descriptions of curriculum contextualization, teacher training, LAC sessions, and the identification of professional development needs. These responses provided practical examples of the management and professional development activities reflected in the survey results. The qualitative findings also helped explain why the overall rating was Very High while some individual indicators received High ratings. Participants identified several professional development and management activities, although the quantitative results showed that not all indicators received the same level of rating.

In Instructional Leadership, the Very High quantitative rating was complemented by qualitative descriptions of classroom observation, instructional monitoring, coaching, feedback, and the use of learner assessment results. These practices helped explain how school heads guide teachers and support instructional improvement. The consistency of the quantitative ratings across all indicators was also supported by the range of instructional leadership practices described by the participants.

In the dimension of School Learning Climate, the quantitative results were further explained by participants' accounts of maintaining safe facilities, supporting teacher and learner welfare, promoting positive school culture, implementing school policies, and engaging stakeholders. These responses provided a clearer understanding of the practices associated with maintaining a positive and supportive learning environment.

Additionally, the qualitative findings also added information that was not fully captured by the numerical ratings. While the quantitative results indicated the overall frequency with which the identified practices were perceived to be demonstrated, the qualitative responses provided details about the activities and approaches used by school heads. In this way, the qualitative data expanded the understanding of the quantitative findings by presenting the descriptions and experiences shared by the grade chairpersons.

This supports the idea that effective school leadership contributes significantly to school improvement and learner success. According to Hallinger (2020), instructional leadership helps improve teaching quality through supervision, professional development, and collaborative learning practices. Moreover, Leithwood et al. (2020) emphasized that effective school leaders influence teacher effectiveness and student outcomes by creating supportive learning environments and promoting continuous improvement.

Taken together, the integration of the quantitative and qualitative findings confirms that the school head demonstrates management strategies and leadership practices that positively contribute to instructional effectiveness and school development.

Research Question 5: What overall integrated interpretation can be drawn from the combined quantitative and qualitative data of the study?

Overall Integrated Interpretation and Discussion

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that the school head demonstrates highly effective instructional leadership and management practices in the areas of Strategic School Management and Professional Development, Instructional Leadership, and School Learning Climate.

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Quantitatively, results showed that all three dimensions received Very High overall ratings. Strategic School Management and Professional Development obtained a mean of 4.52 (SD = 0.18), Instructional Leadership obtained 4.77 (SD = 0.16), and School Learning Climate obtained 4.75 (SD = 0.19). These findings indicate that grade chairpersons generally perceived the school head as effective in managing school operations, supervising instructional practices, supporting teacher development, and maintaining a positive learning environment.

Qualitatively, the findings were further supported through the participants' descriptions of curriculum contextualization, teacher training, collaborative professional learning, instructional supervision, coaching, assessment management, teacher and learner support, and stakeholder engagement. These leadership practices demonstrate how school heads effectively translate leadership responsibilities into concrete actions within the school setting.

The quantitative and qualitative findings complement one another by showing consistency between the perceived effectiveness of school leadership and the actual practices observed by the participants. While the quantitative findings provided measurable evidence of effective instructional leadership and management practices, the qualitative findings explained how these practices were implemented and experienced within the school context.

Overall, the integrated findings suggest that effective instructional leadership and management practices contribute significantly to teacher growth, instructional improvement, learner support, and the development of a positive and collaborative school environment. These findings further imply that effective school leadership plays an important role in promoting school effectiveness and achieving educational goals.

Ethical Consideration

This study adhered to established ethical principles and standards in educational research to safeguard the rights, dignity, privacy, and welfare of the participants throughout the research process. Prior to the conduct of the study, permission was secured from the school head of Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School, Polomolok East District, South Cotabato, to undertake the research and gather data from the identified participants. The study also observed applicable Department of Education (DepEd) research guidelines, institutional research policies, and other relevant ethical standards governing the conduct of educational research. Informed consent was obtained from the seven grade chairpersons who served as the study's respondents. Before data collection, the participants were provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose, research procedures, expected participation, and intended use of the findings. They were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty or adverse professional consequences. The participants were also given the opportunity to seek clarification regarding the research before providing their consent. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the research process. The identities of the respondents were protected through the use of codes or pseudonyms, and personally identifiable information was excluded from the presentation, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of the findings. Data gathered through the quantitative survey and qualitative self-administered questionnaire were treated with utmost confidentiality and used solely for academic and research purposes. All research records were securely stored, protected against unauthorized access, and made accessible only to the five authorized members of the research team. The researchers jointly ensured the proper handling, processing, and storage of personal information in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). The integrity and accuracy of the research data were upheld throughout the study. The researchers ensured that no data were fabricated, falsified, manipulated, or deliberately misrepresented. Quantitative results were analyzed and reported accurately, while qualitative responses were examined thematically and interpreted faithfully to reflect the actual perspectives and experiences of the participants. In integrating the quantitative and qualitative findings, the researchers' maintained objectivity and ensured that conclusions were grounded in the collected evidence. All sources of information were properly acknowledged to uphold academic honesty and avoid plagiarism. Furthermore, the study observed the principle of beneficence by ensuring that participation would not expose respondents to physical, psychological, emotional, social, or professional harm. Particular consideration was given to the professional sensitivity of examining teachers' perceptions of the school head's instructional leadership and management practices. Participants were encouraged to provide honest responses without fear of judgment, discrimination, or retaliation. The findings were intended to be presented constructively and used to provide meaningful insights into strategic school management and professional development, instructional leadership, and school learning climate, with the broader aim of supporting teacher development, improving instructional practices, and strengthening the school's learning environment. Finally, the researchers ensured that the conduct of the study remained consistent with applicable DepEd research guidelines, institutional policies, and recognized standards of ethical research practice. Through these measures, the study upheld respect for persons, confidentiality, data

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integrity, beneficence, and academic responsibility while recognizing the valuable contributions of the seven grade chairpersons in providing insights into the instructional leadership and management practices of the school head at Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that the principal's instructional leadership and management practices in Perfecto B. Salada Elementary School were perceived by respondents as Very High across all three dimensions (Strategic School Management and Professional Development (M = 4.52, SD = 0.18), Instructional Leadership (M = 4.77, SD = 0.16), and School Learning Climate (M = 4.75, SD = 0.19). This indicates that the principal was generally perceived to demonstrate the identified practices almost always. The qualitative findings further supported these results through the grade chairpersons' descriptions of curriculum contextualization, teacher training, collaborative professional learning, instructional supervision, coaching, assessment management, teacher and learner support, and stakeholder engagement. The results highlighted the need for DepEd and school leaders to sustain leadership development programs, professional learning activities, instructional coaching, and school-community partnerships. School heads may use the results to assess their current practices and identify areas for improvement, while grade chairpersons may continue supporting school leadership through collaboration and instructional coordination. At the policy level, the findings may serve as a reference in strengthening school-based leadership practices and aligning leadership support with the needs of the school community. In addition, this study contributes to the existing knowledge on instructional leadership and school management by providing a school-based understanding of these practices through the combined perspectives of grade chairpersons. It also provides context-specific insights into how strategic school management, instructional leadership, and school learning climate are reflected in the daily operations of an elementary school. Through this integration, the study offers a more detailed understanding of school leadership from the perspective of teachers who hold coordinating responsibilities. On the other hand, although the findings provide useful insights, the study was limited to the perceptions and descriptions of the grade chairpersons from one elementary school. Future researchers may include more participants, other school settings, and additional stakeholder perspectives to gain a broader understanding of instructional leadership and explore its relationship with teacher performance and learner outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, school heads are encouraged to sustain their effective instructional leadership and management practices by conducting quarterly assessments of teachers' professional development needs, maintaining regular Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, providing coaching and mentoring, and strengthening instructional supervision and feedback mechanisms. Teachers are uplifted to actively participate in LAC sessions, professional development activities, and collaborative initiatives to share effective teaching strategies and improve instructional practices. Similarly, grade chairpersons are encouraged to facilitate grade-level discussions, participate in collaborative decision-making, and communicate teachers' needs and concerns to school heads to strengthen instructional support. For future researchers, similar studies may be conducted in other schools using larger samples and including additional respondents, such as teachers, pupils, coordinators, and other school personnel. They may also employ longitudinal or comparative research designs to explore instructional leadership practices across different school contexts and their relationships with teacher performance and school learning climate.

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