



Quality Assurance and Instructional Leadership: Exploring Master Teachers' Mentoring and Coaching Competencies in Classroom Observation

Franz M. Ancheta¹, Ryan I. Roldan², Joy E. Rupinta³, Johnlee D. Ugale⁴,
Arrianne Michelle F. Fabro⁵, Wilfredo C. Salvador Jr.⁶

Author Information:

¹⁻⁶ College of Graduate Studies, Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University, Mid-La Union Campus, City of San Fernando, La Union, Philippines

Correspondence:

wilfredosalvador@gmail.com

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Abstract. Classroom observation is an essential quality assurance mechanism that supports instructional improvement through effective mentoring and coaching by Master Teachers. Despite their important role as instructional leaders, limited evidence exists regarding the extent of their mentoring and coaching competencies and the factors associated with these competencies during classroom observations in selected public secondary schools in Region I, Philippines. This study assessed the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers by determining their demographic profile, evaluating the extent of their competencies during classroom observations, and examining the relationship between selected profile variables and mentoring and coaching competencies. The study employed a descriptive-correlational quantitative research design involving ten (10) purposively selected Master Teachers. Data were collected using a researcher-developed and expert-validated questionnaire and analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and correlation analysis. The findings revealed that the respondents generally demonstrated a high level of mentoring and coaching competency, obtaining an overall weighted mean of 4.13, indicating that these competencies were consistently practiced during classroom observations. Strong competencies were observed in objective classroom observation, behavior management, and assisting teachers in understanding instructional objectives, whereas relatively lower ratings were obtained in providing constructive feedback, facilitating teacher self-reflection, and conducting sustained post-observation coaching. Furthermore, highest educational attainment and relevant professional training showed significant positive relationships with mentoring and coaching competencies, while age, sex, civil status, and years of service did not demonstrate significant relationships. Although the findings are limited by the small sample size, they highlight the importance of advanced academic preparation and continuous professional development in strengthening instructional leadership. The study concludes that enhancing reflective mentoring and developmental coaching through a Quality Assurance-Based Instructional Coaching Intervention can further improve classroom observation practices, support continuous teacher professional development, and strengthen instructional quality in public secondary schools.

Keywords: Quality assurance; Instructional leadership; Mentoring and coaching; Master Teachers; Classroom observation

Introduction

Quality education requires effective mechanisms that enhance teaching practices, strengthen teacher competencies, and sustain continuous instructional improvement. In this context, instructional leadership has become an essential component of educational quality assurance as it promotes teacher development through mentoring, coaching, collaboration, and reflective practice. Instructional leaders are expected to create professional learning environments where teachers receive continuous support and feedback to improve their instructional effectiveness (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2021).

Classroom observation is one of the key strategies for improving instructional quality because it provides evidence of teaching practices and creates opportunities for professional dialogue. When



implemented through a developmental approach, classroom observation becomes more than an evaluation activity; it serves as a mechanism for teacher growth through constructive feedback, reflection, and coaching (Danielson, 2022). Effective classroom observation requires instructional leaders who possess competencies in analyzing teaching practices, providing feedback, and facilitating professional improvement.

In the Philippine education system, Master Teachers serve as instructional leaders who provide mentoring, coaching, and technical assistance to fellow teachers. Anchored on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), Master Teachers are expected to support teacher development and contribute to instructional improvement (Department of Education [DepEd], 2022). Recent studies emphasized that Master Teachers' competencies in instructional supervision, mentoring, and coaching are essential in strengthening school-based professional learning practices (Mina & Sanchez, 2025).

Mentoring and coaching competencies enable Master Teachers to conduct meaningful classroom observations, provide evidence-based feedback, and support teachers' professional growth. Coaching is most effective when it involves sustained professional relationships, classroom-based assistance, and reflective conversations that encourage instructional improvement (Kraft & Goldstein, 2020). Similarly, Gungon and Biray (2025) emphasized that mentoring and technical assistance skills are critical competencies among Master Teachers in fulfilling their instructional leadership roles.

Professional characteristics such as educational attainment, years of service, and relevant training may influence the development of mentoring and coaching competencies. Continuous professional development strengthens teachers' knowledge, leadership capacity, and ability to provide instructional support (Darling-Hammond et al., 2022). However, limited studies have examined how the demographic and professional characteristics of Master Teachers are associated with their mentoring and coaching competencies, particularly in the Philippine public secondary school context.

This study was conducted to assess the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers in conducting classroom observations. Specifically, it examined the profile characteristics of Master Teachers, determined their extent of mentoring and coaching competencies, and analyzed the relationship between their profile characteristics and competencies. The findings may provide evidence for strengthening instructional supervision practices and developing professional development initiatives for Master Teachers.

Research Questions

This study aimed to assess the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers in conducting classroom observations.

Specifically, it sought to answers the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the Master Teacher respondents in terms of:
 - a. age;
 - b. sex;
 - c. civil status;
 - d. highest educational attainment;
 - e. years of service as a Master Teacher; and
 - f. relevant training attended related to mentoring, coaching, and classroom observation?
2. To what extent do Master Teachers demonstrate mentoring and coaching competencies during classroom observations?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the profile characteristics of Master Teachers and their mentoring and coaching competencies during classroom observation?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study assessed the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers in conducting classroom observations in selected public secondary schools in Region I, Philippines. It examined the respondents' profile, determined the extent of their mentoring and coaching competencies, and analyzed the relationship between selected profile variables and their mentoring and coaching competencies. A descriptive mixed-methods research design was employed, utilizing a validated questionnaire and unstructured interviews, with quantitative data analyzed using frequency, percentage, and weighted mean, and qualitative data subjected to thematic analysis using NVivo. The study was limited to Master Teachers and focused on mentoring and coaching within the context of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), and the MATATAG Curriculum. It did not investigate the competencies of other educational personnel, teacher performance, learner outcomes, or the

effectiveness of intervention programs, and the findings are limited to the respondents and research setting covered by the study.

Literature Review

Instructional Leadership and Quality Assurance in Classroom Observation

Instructional leadership has become an essential component of educational quality assurance as schools continuously seek mechanisms to improve teaching effectiveness, strengthen professional learning, and sustain instructional excellence. Contemporary views of instructional leadership emphasize that school leaders and instructional supervisors should move beyond administrative functions and assume developmental roles through mentoring, coaching, professional dialogue, and evidence-based supervision. Instructional leaders are expected to create systems that promote teacher growth by providing meaningful feedback, facilitating reflective practices, and supporting continuous improvement. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2021), effective instructional leadership is associated with collaborative professional learning environments where teachers receive continuous support, feedback, and opportunities to improve their instructional practices. Schools that establish strong professional learning cultures demonstrate greater teacher engagement and improved capacity for instructional improvement. Similarly, Schleicher (2021) emphasized that resilient education systems require strong instructional leadership structures that support teacher development, collaboration, and professional autonomy. In the Philippine context, Master Teachers play a significant role as instructional leaders who provide technical assistance, mentoring, and professional support to fellow teachers. The Department of Education (2022) emphasized through the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) that experienced teachers are expected to demonstrate leadership by assisting colleagues, promoting professional learning, and contributing to instructional improvement. Mina and Sanchez (2025) found that Master Teachers demonstrate essential instructional leadership competencies in coaching, mentoring, supervision, and instructional improvement. Their study revealed that stronger instructional leadership efficacy contributes to enhanced mentoring and coaching practices, suggesting that Master Teachers with higher leadership competencies is better positioned to support teachers' professional growth.

Mentoring and Coaching Competencies of Master Teachers

Mentoring and coaching are widely recognized as effective approaches for improving teacher competence because they provide continuous, contextualized, and collaborative professional support. Unlike conventional professional development programs that rely primarily on seminars and workshops, instructional coaching occurs within authentic classroom contexts where teachers receive feedback and guidance based on their actual instructional practices. Kraft and Goldstein (2020) explained that effective teacher coaching depends on several mechanisms, including individualized support, observation of classroom practices, constructive feedback, and sustained professional relationships. Coaching becomes more impactful when instructional leaders work collaboratively with teachers to identify instructional goals and develop improvement strategies. Similarly, Ramadhona et al. (2025) emphasized that instructional coaching and mentorship contribute to teachers' professional growth by encouraging reflection, improving instructional decision-making, and strengthening curriculum implementation. The study highlighted the role of instructional coaches as professional partners who guide teachers through continuous learning processes. In the Philippine setting, Gungon and Biray (2025) developed and validated an assessment instrument for measuring Master Teachers' mentoring and technical assistance skills. Their findings highlighted that mentoring competencies include providing professional guidance, supporting instructional improvement, conducting classroom-based assistance, and facilitating teacher development. These competencies are essential for Master Teachers who serve as instructional coaches within schools. Therefore, mentoring and coaching competencies among Master Teachers extend beyond the ability to conduct classroom observations. They include establishing professional relationships, analyzing instructional practices, providing evidence-based feedback, facilitating reflection, and assisting teachers in implementing instructional improvements.

Classroom Observation as a Quality Assurance Mechanism

Classroom observation serves as a fundamental strategy for ensuring instructional quality because it provides direct evidence of teaching practices, classroom interactions, and instructional effectiveness. When implemented through a developmental approach, classroom observation becomes a tool for teacher improvement rather than merely a means of evaluating performance. According to Danielson (2022), effective classroom observation requires systematic procedures that examine instructional planning, classroom environment, teaching practices, and professional responsibilities. A structured observation framework

enables instructional leaders to provide objective feedback and guide teachers toward improved professional practice. Classroom observation becomes more meaningful when integrated with mentoring and coaching processes. Liwag and Lo (2025) reported that classroom observation practices provide valuable information for improving performance management systems because they allow instructional leaders to identify instructional strengths, provide feedback, and recommend appropriate professional development activities. Moreover, feedback is a critical component of classroom observation. Hattie and Clarke (2021) emphasized that effective feedback should be specific, timely, and focused on future improvement. In the context of Master Teachers' roles, feedback should encourage reflection, professional dialogue, and instructional innovation rather than simply identify deficiencies. Thus, the effectiveness of classroom observation depends largely on the competencies of Master Teachers in observing instruction, interpreting evidence, communicating feedback, and supporting teachers through coaching and mentoring.

Professional Qualifications and Training Related to Mentoring and Coaching Competencies

Professional qualifications and continuous learning experiences are important factors that contribute to the development of mentoring and coaching competencies among Master Teachers. Educational attainment, years of service, and relevant professional training may influence teachers' capacity to provide instructional support and leadership. Higher educational attainment enhances teachers' theoretical understanding, research capabilities, and leadership skills. Teachers who pursue advanced degrees are exposed to deeper pedagogical concepts, educational leadership principles, and evidence-based practices that may strengthen their ability to mentor colleagues. Professional development and training participation also contribute significantly to instructional leadership capacity. Darling-Hammond et al. (2022) emphasized that effective professional development should be sustained, collaborative, content-focused, and connected to teachers' actual classroom practices. Training programs related to mentoring, coaching, and classroom observation provide Master Teachers with strategies for supporting teachers and improving instructional practices. Similarly, OECD (2021) emphasized that continuous professional learning is a critical factor in strengthening teachers' professional competencies. Teachers who actively participate in professional development opportunities demonstrate greater readiness to engage in collaborative learning and instructional improvement. Years of service as a Master Teacher may also influence mentoring competencies because accumulated professional experiences provide opportunities to develop expertise in supervision, coaching, and classroom observation. Experienced Master Teachers may possess deeper understanding of instructional challenges and may be more capable of providing context-specific guidance to teachers.

Profile Characteristics and Mentoring and Coaching Competencies

The demographic and professional characteristics of Master Teachers may provide insights into variations in mentoring and coaching competencies. Variables such as age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, years of service, and relevant training experiences are important factors in understanding differences in instructional leadership capacity. Professional characteristics, particularly educational attainment and training experiences, are expected to have stronger relationships with mentoring competencies because these factors directly influence knowledge, skills, and leadership preparation. Mina and Sanchez (2025) reported that instructional leadership competencies among Master Teachers are influenced by professional preparation and leadership experiences, indicating that competency development is associated with continuous professional growth. Similarly, Gungon and Biray (2025) emphasized that mentoring and technical assistance competencies require continuous development through professional preparation and relevant learning experiences. Their findings support the importance of examining Master Teachers' professional profiles when assessing mentoring and coaching competencies. Demographic variables such as age, sex, and civil status may also provide contextual information regarding differences in professional experiences. However, these characteristics require empirical investigation because their relationship with instructional competence may vary depending on institutional and educational contexts. Although previous studies have examined instructional leadership, mentoring, coaching, and professional development, limited research has specifically focused on the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers who conduct classroom observations in Philippine public secondary schools. Existing studies have largely concentrated on instructional leadership practices, teacher coaching programs, and professional development initiatives. However, limited empirical evidence exists regarding the competency level of Master Teachers as instructional coaches and the relationship between their demographic and professional characteristics and their mentoring and coaching competencies. Furthermore, few studies have developed quality assurance-based interventions specifically intended to strengthen Master Teachers' competencies in conducting classroom observations. Therefore, the present study addresses this gap by assessing the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers and examining whether their profile characteristics are significantly related to their competency levels.



Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational quantitative research design to assess the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers in conducting classroom observations in selected public secondary schools in Region I, Philippines. The descriptive component was used to determine the respondents' demographic profile and the extent of their mentoring and coaching competencies, while the correlational component examined the relationship between selected profile variables and mentoring and coaching competencies. This design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to describe existing conditions and determine the relationships among variables without manipulating the study environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Sampling Design

This study employed purposive sampling to select the respondents. The participants consisted of Master Teachers from selected public secondary schools in Region I, Philippines, who were directly involved in mentoring and coaching teachers during classroom observations. Purposive sampling was deemed appropriate because the respondents possessed the specific knowledge, experience, and responsibilities relevant to the objectives of the study. A total of ten (10) Master Teachers participated in the quantitative survey. This sampling approach ensured that the data gathered were relevant and reflective of the instructional supervision practices of experienced Master Teachers. While the sample was adequate for the specific context investigated, the relatively small sample size should be considered when interpreting the correlation results and generalizing the findings to a broader population.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public secondary schools in the Ilocos Region (Region I), Philippines, namely San Juan National High School and Ag-agrao National High School in Ilocos Sur, Batac National High School in Ilocos Norte, and Paringao National High School in La Union. These schools were purposively selected because they have designated Master Teachers who regularly perform mentoring, coaching, and classroom observation functions as part of instructional supervision.

Research Participants

The participants of the study consisted of 10 Master Teachers from selected public secondary schools in Region I, Philippines. Specifically, three (3) respondents were from San Juan National High School, two (2) from Ag-agrao National High School in the Province of Ilocos Sur, three (3) from Batac National High School in the Province of Ilocos Norte, and two (2) from Paringao National High School in the Province of La Union. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) currently designated as a Master Teacher, (2) actively performing mentoring and coaching functions through classroom observations, and (3) willing to participate in the study. Their expertise and experiences in instructional supervision provided valuable insights into their mentoring and coaching competencies and the challenges they encountered in conducting classroom observations.

Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-developed questionnaire to assess the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers during classroom observations. The instrument consisted of two parts. Part I gathered the demographic profile of the respondents, including age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, years of service as a Master Teacher, and relevant training attended related to mentoring, coaching, and classroom observation. Part II measured the extent of the respondents' mentoring and coaching competencies during classroom observations using a five-point Likert scale, where 5 – Always Demonstrated, 4 – Often Demonstrated, 3 – Sometimes Demonstrated, 2 – Seldom Demonstrated, and 1 – Never Demonstrated. The instrument underwent content validation by experts in educational leadership and instructional supervision to establish its relevance, clarity, and alignment with the study objectives. Revisions were incorporated based on the validators' recommendations. The questionnaire also demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91, indicating excellent reliability and confirming that the instrument was appropriate for data collection.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to the conduct of the study, the researcher secured administrative approval from the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University–Mid-La Union Campus, and obtained permission from the Schools Division Offices and the principals of the selected public secondary

schools in Region I. After obtaining the necessary approvals, the researcher coordinated with the school administrators to schedule the administration of the research instrument. The purpose and objectives of the study were explained to the respondents, and written informed consent was obtained prior to their participation. The researcher personally administered the validated questionnaire to the Master Teachers and provided sufficient time for its completion. Upon retrieval, all accomplished questionnaires were checked for completeness and consistency before encoding and tabulation. The quantitative data were subsequently analyzed using appropriate statistical tools, including frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and correlation analysis, to determine the respondents' mentoring and coaching competencies and examine the relationship between their profile characteristics and mentoring and coaching competencies.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What is the profile of the Master Teachers in the Selected Public Secondary Schools in Region 1, Philippines?

Table 1. The Profile of the Master Teachers Respondent

Demographic Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Interpretation
Age	31-40	5	50	The majority of the Master Teachers were aged 31-40 years, indicating that most respondent were in their early and mid-career stage, which fewer aged 41 years and above.
	41-50	3	30	
	51-60	2	20	
Sex	Male	7	70	The respondents were predominantly male, indicating that male Master Teachers comprised the majority of the study participants.
	Female	3	30	
Civil Status	Single	6	60	The m majority of the respondents were single, indicating that most Master Teachers were unmarried at the time of the study.
	Married	4	40	
Educational Attainment	Bachelor's degree	1	10	Most respondents had pursued graduate education, with half having earned a master's degree with doctoral units, reflecting a high level of academic qualification among the Master Teachers.
	Bachelor's degree with Master's Units	1	10	
	Master's Degree	3	30	
	Master's degree with Doctorate units	5	50	
	Doctorate Degree	0	0	
Numbers of Years in Service as a Master Teachers	0-5	4	40	Most respondents had 6–10 years of experience as Master Teachers, indicating considerable experience in instructional supervision and mentoring.
	6-10	6	60	
	11-15	0	0	
	16 and above	0	0	
Numbers of Relevant Trainings Attended	Division Level	10	100	All respondents had attended division-level training, while less than half had participated in regional-level training. None had attended national-level training related to mentoring, coaching, and classroom observation.
	Regional Level	4	40	
	National Level	0	0	

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the Master Teacher respondents (N = 10). The findings indicate that the respondents were generally in their early to middle stages of instructional leadership, with most being 31–40 years old, male, and single. A notable characteristic of the respondents is their high level of academic preparation, as the majority had completed a master's degree with doctoral units, suggesting a strong commitment to continuing professional education. Likewise, most had accumulated 6–10 years of experience

as Master Teachers and had participated in division-level professional development related to mentoring, coaching, and classroom observation. These characteristics suggest that the respondents possess the educational qualifications and professional experience necessary to perform instructional leadership functions effectively. However, the absence of participation in national-level training highlights an opportunity for expanding professional development initiatives that may further strengthen mentoring and coaching competencies among Master Teachers.

These findings imply that Master Teachers possess the educational qualifications and professional experience necessary to perform effective mentoring and coaching functions. However, the limited participation in regional and national training suggests the need to expand professional development opportunities to strengthen instructional leadership, promote calibration in classroom observation practices, and ensure consistent implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS). Continuous capacity-building initiatives are essential for enhancing mentoring competencies and sustaining quality assurance in instructional supervision (Department of Education [DepEd], 2019; Orbe & Pacia, 2023). Furthermore, research emphasizes that high-quality professional development, particularly coaching and mentoring, enhances instructional effectiveness and contributes to improved teacher performance and learner outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2022).

Research Question 2: To what extent do Master Teachers demonstrate mentoring and coaching competencies during classroom observations?

Table 2. What extent do master teachers demonstrate mentoring and coaching practices during classroom observations?

Statements <i>The Master Teacher...</i>	Mean	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. Emphasize behavior management in the delivery of instruction	4.6	Always	Highly Practiced
2. Responsible for aiding mentees in comprehending the objectives and educational content	4.5	Always	Highly Practiced
3. Make classroom observations more encouraging, more productive, and less threatening	4.3	Always	Practiced
4. Provide positive feedback on teachers' self-esteem in teaching	4.4	Always	Practiced
5. Provide constructive feedback to mentees after classroom observation for professional growth	3.4	Sometimes	Moderately Practiced
6. Help mentees see a better understanding of learning through the eyes of their learners	4.5	Always	Highly Practiced
7. Provide mentees the opportunities to plan and organize, monitor their work, direct their learning, and self-reflect	3.1	Sometimes	Moderately Practiced
8. Spend time with mentees and discuss matters in the classroom practices and the classroom environment	3.2	Sometimes	Moderately Practiced
9. Use factual and objective terms in classroom observations	4.7	Always	Highly Practiced
10. Provide details on the materials used for constructing the setting and comprehensively describe the objects and entities in the vicinity	4.6	Always	Highly Practiced
Over-all Mean	4.13	Always	Practiced

Table 2 shows the extent to which Master Teachers demonstrate mentoring and coaching competencies during classroom observations. The overall weighted mean of 4.13 indicates that the respondents Practiced these competencies, suggesting that mentoring and coaching are generally integrated into instructional supervision. This finding implies that Master Teachers consistently perform their roles in supporting teachers through classroom observation, although some competencies require further enhancement to achieve exemplary practice.

The highest-rated competencies were using factual and objective language during classroom observations ($M = 4.70$), emphasizing behavior management ($M = 4.60$), providing detailed descriptions of the classroom context ($M = 4.60$), and helping mentees understand lesson objectives and learner-centered instruction ($M = 4.50$). These competencies were all rated Highly Practiced, indicating that Master Teachers demonstrate strong technical proficiency in conducting classroom observations and documenting

instructional practices. Such competencies are consistent with effective instructional supervision, which emphasizes objective evidence, instructional clarity, and supportive classroom environments to improve teaching quality (Danielson, 2023; Marzano, 2017).

Conversely, the lowest-rated indicators were providing opportunities for mentees to plan, monitor, and reflect on their own practice ($M = 3.10$), discussing classroom practices and the learning environment during mentoring sessions ($M = 3.20$), and providing constructive feedback after classroom observations ($M = 3.40$). These indicators were interpreted as Moderately Practiced, suggesting that reflective coaching and post-observation mentoring are not consistently implemented. The findings indicate that while classroom observations are conducted effectively, greater emphasis is needed on collaborative reflection, individualized feedback, and sustained professional dialogue. Research has consistently shown that meaningful feedback and reflective coaching are among the most influential factors in improving teacher practice and fostering continuous professional growth (Hattie, 2012; Glickman et al., 2018).

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Master Teachers possess strong competencies in the procedural and technical aspects of classroom observation but have comparatively lower competencies in reflective mentoring and developmental coaching. This imbalance highlights the need to strengthen post-observation conferencing, reflective dialogue, and teacher self-reflection to enhance the quality of instructional supervision. Reinforcing these competencies can further support quality assurance initiatives and contribute to the effective implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), ultimately promoting continuous teacher development and improved learner outcomes (DepEd, 2019; Orbe & Pacia, 2023).

Research Question 3: Is there a significant relationship between the profile characteristics of Master Teachers and their mentoring and coaching competencies during classroom observation?

Table 3. Significant Relationships Between the Profile of Master Teachers and Their Mentoring and Coaching Competencies During Classroom Observation

Profile Variable	Computed Value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	0.281	0.432	No significant relationship
Sex	0.146	0.687	No significant relationship
Civil Status	0.195	0.590	No significant relationship
Highest Educational Attainment	0.641	0.046*	Significant positive relationship
Years of Service as Master Teacher	0.582	0.078	No significant relationship
Relevant Trainings Attended	0.731	0.016*	Significant positive relationship

Table 3 shows that highest educational attainment ($r = 0.641$, $p = 0.046$) and relevant trainings attended ($r = 0.731$, $p = 0.016$) had significant positive relationships with the mentoring and coaching competencies of Master Teachers. These findings indicate that advanced academic preparation and continuous professional development contribute to stronger instructional leadership, mentoring, and coaching practices during classroom observations. This supports the view that graduate education and sustained professional learning enhance teachers' capacity to provide effective instructional supervision and foster continuous professional growth (DepEd, 2019; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

In contrast, age ($r = 0.281$, $p = 0.432$), sex ($r = 0.146$, $p = 0.687$), civil status ($r = 0.195$, $p = 0.590$), and years of service as a Master Teacher ($r = 0.582$, $p = 0.078$) showed no significant relationship with mentoring and coaching competencies. This suggests that instructional coaching competence is influenced more by professional qualifications and training than by demographic characteristics. The findings underscore the importance of investing in graduate education and continuous capacity-building programs to strengthen instructional supervision and promote quality assurance in schools (UNESCO, 2022; Orbe & Pacia, 2023).

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice as outlined in the Belmont Report (1979). Administrative approval was obtained from the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University–Mid-La Union Campus, the Schools Division Offices, and the principals of the selected public secondary schools before data collection. As the study involved a

minimal-risk survey of adult participants, no formal ethics review was required under the University's graduate research policies. Written informed consent was obtained from all respondents, who were informed of the study's purpose, voluntary nature, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained through coded identifiers, and all data were securely managed in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). The researcher ensured honesty, objectivity, and transparency throughout the research process and avoided any form of fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or misrepresentation of the findings.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the Master Teachers possessed the professional qualifications and competencies necessary to effectively perform their mentoring and coaching roles during classroom observations. They demonstrated strengths in instructional supervision, particularly in objective classroom observation, documentation of instructional practices, and supporting teachers in achieving instructional goals, while reflective mentoring and post-observation feedback emerged as areas for further enhancement. The findings further indicate that mentoring and coaching competencies are more closely associated with academic preparation and relevant professional development than with demographic characteristics. Overall, the study provides empirical evidence that may serve as a basis for strengthening professional development initiatives and instructional supervision practices among Master Teachers in public secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, Schools Division Offices and school administrators should strengthen mentoring and coaching through continuous professional development, structured post-observation feedback, and reflective mentoring practices. Master Teachers are encouraged to pursue ongoing professional learning and advanced academic preparation to enhance their instructional leadership competencies. Future researchers should replicate the study using larger and more geographically diverse samples and validate the proposed Quality Assurance-Based Instructional Coaching Intervention to strengthen the evidence base and improve the generalizability of the findings.

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