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# Instructional Leadership and Innovative Teaching Styles

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## A B S T R A C T

Instructional Leadership is one of the most critical fibers to weave with all other aspects of leadership and governance among public schools in the Philippines. This study described and examined the instructional leadership styles of school heads and innovative teaching styles of selected elementary school teachers in the Schools Division of Bulacan. It utilized a descriptive correlational research where it was participated by 100 randomly selected elementary school teachers and 50 school heads among selected public elementary schools in the Schools Division of Bulacan. Hence, developed survey-questionnaire was utilized. Results showed that distributed instructional leadership was highly utilized by school heads to engage their teachers in delivering effective and efficient instruction. Also, transformational and transactional instructional leadership styles were also utilized. In addition, teachers' innovative teaching styles include strategic thinking, creativity and action patters. Teachers as supervised by their school heads were creative and innovative in the formulation and creation of their teaching styles. Hence, as distributed leadership increases, teachers' creativity in their instructional methods may decrease. Interestingly, as distributed leadership increases, teachers' implementation of innovative instructional materials may decrease.

Keywords: Instructional Leadership Styles, innovative, school heads, teachers, transformational, transactional, distributed

## Introduction

Education has long been considered a foundational element in national progress, equipping individuals with vital skills for their personal and professional development. In the Philippines, education is viewed as essential for success, with Filipinos seeing it as a key advantage in life. Accordingly, the education system must implement policies and directives with utmost responsibility to ensure quality learning. This includes the efficient leadership of school heads who oversee the overall performance of their schools and guide both staff and students.

School heads and teachers alike are expected to carry out educational mandates with integrity. Their duties go beyond compliance; they are also tasked with designing meaningful instructional strategies and school programs that foster student development. Given these responsibilities, school heads adopt varied leadership styles to manage and support teaching effectively. They often face challenges related to the selection of appropriate teaching strategies, creation of innovative instructional materials, and support for teachers' professional growth.

Leadership roles in schools inherently involve overcoming various institutional challenges. Transformational leadership, for instance, plays a direct role in shaping school management (Yulianti et al., 2020). Additionally, creativity is a vital aspect of school leadership, as it influences both school practices and climate (Keetanjaly, 2019). School principals are expected to implement instructional leadership focused on enhancing the quality of teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2015).

Both school leaders and educators deal with difficulties—leaders in managing instruction and educators in ensuring its quality. Existing research has mostly concentrated on the effects of leadership on instruction, leaving a gap in understanding how school heads and teachers perceive instructional leadership styles. While prior studies outline school leaders' functions, they fall short in capturing the administrative hurdles encountered during instructional delivery. Instructional leadership remains a critical strategy for fostering effective teaching environments (Manaseh, 2016).

This study aims to bridge these gaps by examining how school heads apply different leadership styles and how teachers respond with innovative teaching practices. By understanding these dynamics, schools can implement more strategic and effective instructional programs.

## Methodology

The study employed a descriptive correlational research design to explore the instructional leadership approaches of school heads and the innovative teaching methods employed by elementary school teachers in the Schools Division of Bulacan

A total of 100 elementary school teachers and 50 school heads participated, selected using a random sampling method. A researcher-developed survey questionnaire was utilized, which underwent validation by education experts, including doctoral-level professors. The reliability test showed acceptable internal consistency, with Cronbach alpha scores of .721 for leadership style items and .874 for teaching innovation items. The instrument used a 4-point Likert scale.

For data collection, participants received a formal request letter outlining the purpose and nature of the research. Short orientations were conducted via Zoom to explain the procedures. Informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality of responses was maintained. Responses were stored securely in Microsoft Excel and personal digital storage and were permanently deleted upon completion of the research. Survey administration was carried out using Google Forms, and Zoom was used to facilitate participant orientations.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Instructional Leadership Styles of School Heads

Instructional delivery is a fundamental aspect of the educational process in the Philippines, directly influencing the standard of education across various subjects.

Based on the data in Table 1, school heads evaluated their own leadership practices alongside the assessments made by their teachers. In the domain of transformational leadership, both groups expressed strong agreement, with school heads and teachers achieving mean scores of 3.33 and 3.31 respectively. This consistency indicates that both parties support initiatives that involve creativity, clear vision-setting, and fostering environments conducive to developing new instructional methods.

Regarding transactional leadership, both school heads (3.38) and teachers (3.36) strongly agreed on the relevance of structured approaches. This suggests that school leaders promote organized instructional processes that help teachers design effective and meaningful learning experiences. Interestingly, differences in perceptions regarding the use of rewards and penalties appeared to contribute to innovative teaching practices by motivating teachers to design effective instructional strategies.

Distributed leadership received the highest mean scores from both school heads (3.75) and teachers (3.67), showing strong agreement. This highlights the value placed on autonomy, shared decision-making, and the collaborative engagement of teachers and stakeholders in shaping instructional approaches.

These outcomes align with Hallinger (2005), who emphasized that leadership styles influence instructional practices based on empirical insights. Horng and Loeb (2010) similarly noted that instructional leadership should focus on organizational development rather than just everyday classroom tasks.

School heads' instructional leadership is viewed as central to their professional growth, especially in areas like vision-building and communication. Teachers, in turn, assumed critical roles influenced by their leaders' guidance. Well-defined instructional structures and consistent routines were identified as key components in supporting quality teaching. Additionally, varied opinions on the role of motivational strategies like rewards led to productive discussions and better alignment in instructional design.

### 2. Innovative Teaching Styles of Teachers

As outlined in Table 2, school heads and teachers provided insights into innovative teaching by evaluating strategic thinking, creativity, and action patterns.

Both groups recognized the need for strategic planning to achieve school goals, showing shared awareness of its importance. The responses also reflected agreement on how innovation contributes to instructional effectiveness, particularly in developing engaging learning strategies. While there was strong support for creativity in instructional delivery, the implementation of progressive educational philosophies appeared to be less emphasized. In the area of action patterns, there was consensus on the use of effective teaching tools and resources. The participants agreed on the necessity of utilizing relevant instructional materials and appreciated the importance of diverse teaching methods. These elements were seen as key drivers in promoting innovation in classroom practices.

This supports Borja (2020), who highlighted that both innovative leadership and teaching are essential to maintaining high standards in education, especially in the evolving context of the new normal.

### 3. Relationship Between Instructional Leadership Styles and Innovative Teaching

Table 3 presents the relationship between different leadership styles and teachers' innovative practices.

The results revealed a significant negative correlation between distributed leadership and both creativity (r = -0.711) and action patterns (r = -0.578). This suggests that an increased use of distributed leadership may actually coincide with a decrease in teachers' creativity and the use of innovative materials. These findings contrast with Goksoy (2015), who argued that distributed leadership helps simplify organizational complexities.

Meanwhile, transformational and transactional leadership styles did not show statistically significant relationships with the identified instructional challenges. Nevertheless, school heads largely favored distributed leadership, reinforcing its dynamic nature. However, the findings indicate a need for balance to avoid unintentionally diminishing teacher innovation while promoting inclusiveness and shared responsibility.

## Conclusion

Instructional leadership is a foundational element in effective school governance. The study concluded that distributed leadership was the most prominently used style among school heads in guiding teachers toward efficient instruction. Transformational and transactional leadership styles were also evident.

Teachers, influenced by their leaders' guidance, showed innovation in areas such as strategic thinking, creativity, and action planning. However, the study also identified an inverse relationship between distributed leadership and certain aspects of teaching innovation. As this leadership style became more dominant, there appeared to be a decline in both the creativity of instructional strategies and the use of innovative materials.

## Recommendations

School heads should maximize the use of distributed instructional leadership style where they should primarily established instructional framework which highlights creative and innovative instructional styles and methods. In addition, they should establish efficient and resource-based instructional model containing detailed programs and activities which their teachers can follow. In addition, teachers and school heads should create strong school-based policies which may help increase their community-linkages to establish consistent support for the development and use of relevant learning resources.

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