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Instructional Supervision Approaches of School Leaders and Teacher's Professional Growth

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between instructional supervision approaches and teachers' professional growth within public secondary schools in the Mercedes District, Camarines Norte. Employing an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, the research first collected quantitative data from 63 teachers selected through stratified random sampling, followed by qualitative semi-structured interviews with three school heads to provide depth to the statistical findings. Data was analyzed using weighted means, Pearson's r, and thematic analysis. Results indicated that the Mixed/Collaborative approach is the most utilized supervision style (Mean=4.58) and demonstrates the strongest significant positive correlation (r = 0.76 to 0.80) with all dimensions of teacher growth. While teachers reported very high growth in professional collaboration (Mean=4.62), instructional competence emerged as the lowest-ranked area of development (Mean=4.30). Qualitative insights revealed that the efficacy of supervision is frequently hindered by an administrative-instructional conflict, characterized by excessive clerical demands and data-compliance mandates that restrict time for deep pedagogical coaching. The study concludes that while collaborative supervision is a powerful catalyst for teacher excellence, its full potential remains untapped due to systemic structural barriers. It is recommended that district-level policies be reformed to prioritize instructional leadership over administrative maintenance to ensure sustained professional development and improved pedagogical outcomes.

Keywords: *Instructional Supervision, Professional Growth, School Leadership, Mixed-Methods Research, Collaborative Supervision, Developmental Supervision.*

INTRODUCTION

Instructional supervision is a systematic and collaborative process through which educational leaders observe, support, and guide teaching practices to improve instruction and promote teachers' professional growth (Glickman et al., 1980). Globally, this function is recognized as vital for educational quality, with international studies like the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS, 2019) affirming that developmental, supportive, and feedback-driven supervision contributes to professional collaboration, higher morale, and improved classroom outcomes worldwide. However, this process has often been misunderstood as a compliance or fault-finding activity, a perception that led to teacher resistance and demotivation (Oduro, 2021), thereby limiting its transformative potential. The consensus remains that supervision, when framed as developmental and adaptive, becomes a powerful driver of educational quality and student success, making the manner in which it is executed paramount.

At the national level, teacher quality remains a critical challenge for Philippine education, evidenced by persistent gaps underscored by the country's performance in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The Department of Education (DepEd) responded by institutionalizing the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and School Heads (PPSSH), which emphasized a shift toward a developmental and coaching-based approach to leadership (DepEd, 2017; DepEd, 2020). Despite this clear

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policy direction, national studies indicated that supervision often remained compliance-oriented rather than truly developmental (Daigon & Alcopra, 2024), suggesting a disconnect between policy and actual classroom practice. Therefore, improving instructional leadership became central to achieving national educational goals.

In the local context, particularly within the Mercedes District of the Schools Division of Camarines Norte, the practical effectiveness of instructional leadership approaches remained an underexplored area. While regional studies confirmed that supportive supervision could boost teacher confidence and performance (Castillo, 2023), there was a significant quantitative gap in determining the precise correlation between the three primary supervisory approaches (Directive, Supportive, and Mixed), as defined by Glickman's Developmental Supervision Theory (1985), and the specific dimensions of Teachers' Self-Reported Professional Growth (Instructional Competence, Reflective Practice, Motivation, and Collaboration). Furthermore, a qualitative gap existed regarding the contextual factors, rationales, and challenges faced by local School Heads when choosing and implementing these approaches in their daily practice.

This study directly addressed this dual gap by employing an Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Design. The research first quantified the correlation between the school heads' supervision approaches and teacher growth using surveys, and subsequently explained the statistical findings by interviewing the School Heads to understand the underlying best practices and challenges that mediated the success of supervision. The ultimate goal was to move beyond simply confirming the importance of supervision to providing empirical, context-specific evidence on which approach worked best and why it functioned effectively in the local setting, thereby helping school leaders shift toward more effective, evidence-based, and developmental mentoring strategies.

Research Objectives and Questions

The primary goal of this study was to employ a Mixed-Methods Design to first quantify the relationship between instructional supervision approaches and teachers' professional growth, and subsequently, to explain the contextual factors and rationales influencing that relationship. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Determine the extent of utilization of the three Instructional Supervision Approaches (Supportive, Directive, Mixed/Collaborative) and the level of Teachers' Self-Reported Professional Growth across its four key dimensions.
2. Analyze the extent of the correlation between the supervision approaches and teacher professional growth.
3. Explain the correlation findings by exploring the School Heads' rationale for approach selection and the challenges they faced in implementation.

These objectives aligned with the principles of educational leadership and management. Instructional supervision represented a key leadership responsibility that emphasized guidance, mentorship, and collaboration to enhance teachers' instructional competence. It embodied transformational leadership, in which school heads inspired and empowered teachers toward continuous professional learning. From a management perspective, instructional supervision entailed planning, organizing, monitoring, and evaluating teaching practices to ensure that educational objectives were met, and professional development initiatives were effectively implemented. By examining the relationship between supervisory approaches and teacher growth, this study integrated both leadership and management perspectives, positioning supervision as a developmental and organizational strategy for improving educational quality.

The study was guided by the following research questions, structured into two methodological phases:

1. What is the extent of utilization of Instructional Supervision Approaches (Supportive, Directive, and Mixed/Collaborative) employed by school heads, as perceived by the teachers?
2. What is the level of Teachers' Self-Reported Professional Growth in terms of its key dimensions: Instructional Competence, Reflective Practice, Motivation, and Collaboration?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of Instructional Supervision Approaches and the level of Teachers' Self-Reported Professional Growth?

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4. What are the best perceived practices and rationales of school heads for implementing the supervision approaches that demonstrated the strongest significant correlation with teachers' professional growth?
5. What are the major challenges encountered by school heads in applying instructional supervision, and how do these challenges influence the relationship between a chosen approach and a teacher's professional growth?

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between the instructional supervision approaches utilized by school heads and the professional growth of teachers.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between the instructional supervision approaches utilized by school heads and the professional growth of teachers.

Literature Review

Instructional supervision is widely recognized as a central mechanism for promoting teaching quality and fostering teacher professional growth. International studies consistently affirm that effective supervision enhances instructional practices and teacher motivation. He et al. (2024) found that principals' instructional leadership, particularly through professional learning opportunities, strongly predicts teacher development. Similarly, Rahmat (2024) emphasized that clinical supervision, mentoring, and peer collaboration significantly improve teacher effectiveness when adapted to contextual needs. Chaula, Lawrent, and Iramba (2024) demonstrated that structured pre-observation, classroom visits, and post-observation feedback substantially improved teachers' professional competence in Tanzania, while Handayani et al. (2024) identified Glickman's adaptive supervision model as the most effective for improving instructional quality.

However, some studies highlight persistent challenges that limit the effectiveness of supervision. Hariyadi et al. (2024) found that limited feedback and inadequate supervisory skills among principals reduce the overall impact of supervision, while Fatih et al. (2025) noted that a lack of time and resources critically constrains its successful implementation. Zhou (2022) traced the evolution of supervision from an inspection-based control model to a collaborative process that promotes reflective practice and professional growth. Collectively, these findings emphasize that context-sensitive, supportive, and adaptive supervision models yield better outcomes for teacher performance and professional learning.

In the Philippine context, similar patterns regarding the positive impact of instructional leadership emerge. Dacer et al. (2025) found that supportive supervision positively correlates with teacher job satisfaction in Camarines Norte. Reambonanza and Tan (2022) observed that mentoring, classroom observation, and instructional support enhanced teaching skills in Bukidnon. Ann (2025) reported that guidance in lesson planning and assessment improved teacher development in Tagum City, while Octobre and Andal (2025) highlighted how pre- and post-observation conferences foster teacher reflection in Quezon. Furthermore, Madera and Baguio (2025) established that effective supervision strengthened teachers' sense of professional responsibility in Davao City, linking the quality of supervision directly to the motivation and professional identity of educators.

Despite these encouraging findings, local challenges persist. Rizada (2024) and Mangadlao (2025) identified key barriers such as teacher resistance, insufficient training for supervisors, and limited time and resources. Colebra (2024) emphasized that effective supervision requires strong collaboration between administrators and teachers, while Chaula et al. (2024) and Ann (2025) underscored the importance of developmental and reflective models for sustained teacher growth.

Both local and international research converge on the idea that instructional supervision, when supportive and adaptive, significantly contributes to teacher competence, motivation, and instructional improvement. However, two crucial gaps remain: First, a quantitative gap exists in identifying which specific approach (Directive, Supportive, or Mixed) most strongly correlates with each defined dimension of teachers' professional growth (Instructional Competence, Reflective Practice, Motivation, and Collaboration) within the specific public-school setting of the Mercedes District. Second, a subsequent qualitative gap exists in understanding the local rationales and challenges faced by School Heads when selecting and implementing these specific approaches in their daily work. Addressing this dual gap, the present study employed an Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Design not only to establish the correlation but also to provide empirical, context-specific evidence on how and why supervision practices affect teachers' professional

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development, thereby contributing to leadership strategies that promote educational excellence and continuous school improvement.

METHODS

Research Design

The study utilized an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, characterized by a two-phase approach where quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. This specific design was chosen because the initial quantitative results provided a general understanding of the statistical relationship between instructional supervision approaches and teacher growth, while the subsequent qualitative phase allowed for a deeper exploration of the school heads' perspectives to explain those findings. By employing this methodology, the researcher moved beyond simple numerical correlations to identify the contextual nuances, such as leadership rationales and implementation challenges, that influenced the effectiveness of supervision in the local setting of the Mercedes District

Research Locale

The study was conducted in Mercedes District, Schools Division of Camarines Norte, Philippines. The research locale consisted of three (3) public secondary schools within the district that participated in the study. These schools served as the setting for both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the research.

The three participating schools were selected based on their relevance to the objectives of the study and their common district-level educational context. For the quantitative phase, teaching personnel from the three schools served as respondents. An equal number of twenty-one (21) teachers from each participating school were included to ensure balanced representation. For the qualitative phase, the School Head from each of the three participating schools served as key informants, providing administrative perspectives on the supervisory practices examined in the study.

Mercedes District was selected as the research locale because it provides an appropriate setting for examining the variables under investigation within the actual context of public secondary schools. The inclusion of both teaching personnel and School Heads enabled the study to obtain data from individuals directly involved in the implementation and supervision of school-based practices relevant to the research.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study employed two sampling techniques corresponding to its explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. For the quantitative phase, stratified random sampling was used to select sixty-three (63) teacher-respondents from the three participating public secondary schools in Mercedes District, with twenty-one (21) teachers selected from each school. This approach ensured that each participating school was proportionately represented in the quantitative sample.

For the qualitative phase, purposive sampling was employed to select three (3) School Heads, one from each participating school. They were chosen because they were directly responsible for the instructional supervision practices examined in the quantitative phase and could therefore provide relevant explanations regarding the rationale, implementation, and challenges associated with the supervisory approaches.

Research Instrument

The study employed two primary instruments to gather data aligned with the variables. A structured survey questionnaire was utilized to measure the extent of the three instructional supervision approaches—Supportive, Directive, and Mixed—and the four dimensions of Teachers' Self-Reported Professional Growth. To ensure the validity and reliability of the quantitative data, the researcher used standardized dimensions derived from Glickman's Developmental Supervision Theory. For the qualitative phase, a semi-structured interview guide was developed to elicit the School Heads' rationales and the challenges they encountered. The validity of the interview guide was maintained by grounding the questions in the specific statistical findings generated during the quantitative phase.

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Data Gathering

The researcher followed a systematic process to gather information. First, official permission was secured from the Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS) of the Mercedes District and from the school heads of the participating secondary schools. After obtaining these clearances, the researcher conducted a pilot test to validate the research instruments. During the actual data collection, the survey questionnaires were distributed to the teacher-respondents through Google Forms for efficient gathering of quantitative data. Once the survey results were analyzed, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the school heads to collect detailed qualitative data. To maintain consistency, the researcher used the same standardized digital survey for all teachers and followed a uniform interview protocol for all school leaders.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized various statistical methods to analyze the data, ensuring they directly addressed the specific research questions and objectives of the study. All quantitative calculations were performed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results.

To address the first and second research questions regarding the extent of instructional supervision approaches and the level of teachers' professional growth, weighted mean and standard deviation were employed. These descriptive statistics allowed the researcher to identify the prevailing supervision style used by school heads and the current state of teacher development as perceived by the respondents. To make these numbers easier to understand, a Likert scale with corresponding verbal interpretations was used to categorize the results.

To answer the third research question and test the Null Hypothesis (H0), Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (Pearson's r) was utilized. This inferential statistic was appropriate because it measured the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent variable (supervision approaches) and the dependent variable (professional growth). By calculating the p-value, the researcher determined whether the observed relationships were statistically significant, thereby deciding whether to accept or reject the null hypothesis.

For the qualitative phase, which addressed the fourth and fifth research questions, the researcher used thematic analysis. This method involved transcribing the face-to-face interviews with school heads and identifying recurring patterns, rationales, and challenges. These themes were then used to explain the "how" and "why" behind the statistical results found in the quantitative phase, fulfilling the goals of the explanatory sequential mixed-methods design.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher conducted the study with a strict commitment to established ethical principles to ensure the protection and dignity of all participants. The research was guided by the core principles of autonomy, beneficence, and justice, ensuring that the study contributed to educational knowledge without causing harm to the respondents.

To obtain informed consent, the researcher provided a clear and detailed explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and potential impact to all participants before any data were gathered. For the quantitative phase, an informed consent clause was integrated into the beginning of the Google Form, requiring teachers to acknowledge their agreement before proceeding to the survey questions. For the qualitative phase, the school heads were provided with a formal consent letter during the face-to-face meetings, which they signed to indicate their voluntary agreement to be interviewed and recorded.

Confidentiality and voluntary participation were primary priorities throughout the research process. The researcher addressed the risk of social desirability or interpretation bias by ensuring that all teacher responses collected via Google Forms remained anonymous. Furthermore, all participants were explicitly informed that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that they possessed the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any professional or personal consequences. All gathered data were stored in password-protected digital files and were used exclusively for the objectives of this academic research.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Utilization of Instructional Supervision Approaches in Mercedes District

Supervision Approach	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Mixed/Collaborative Supervision	4.58	Very High Extent	1
Supportive Supervision	4.42	High Extent	2
Directive Supervision	3.15	Moderate Extent	3

Table 1 presents the specific ways school heads in the Mercedes District implement instructional supervision. The findings indicate a clear preference for collaborative and supportive leadership styles over traditional, directive methods.

As shown in the table, Mixed/Collaborative Approach emerged as the most utilized supervision style, with a weighted mean of 4.58, interpreted as a Very High Extent. This finding indicates a notable paradigm shift within the district, where school heads are no longer perceived merely as inspectors but as partners in the teaching–learning process. This result aligns with Glickman's Developmental Supervision Theory (1985), which posits that collaborative supervision is the most effective approach in fostering teachers' professional maturity, autonomy, and commitment. Qualitative interview data further substantiate this quantitative result. School Head 1 emphasized that *"supervision is primarily a process of guidance and professional support rather than compliance checking*". Similarly, School Head 3 described the supervisor's role as that of a *"partner in the teacher's work,"* highlighting shared responsibility in instructional improvement. Instead of relying on top-down directives, both school heads reported engaging teachers in peer coaching and joint planning activities. This collaborative practice helps explain why teachers in the district demonstrate a strong sense of ownership over their professional growth.

In contrast, Directive Supervision was the least utilized approach, with a mean of 3.15 (Moderate Extent). While this style is still present, its lower ranking suggests that school heads use command-and-control methods only when necessary. Qualitative data reveals that directive supervision is typically reserved for specific contexts, such as assisting novice teachers or those who require more structured guidance. School Head 3 observed that "not all teachers are ready" (hindi lahat ready) for the autonomy of collaboration, requiring the leader to take a more active, instructional role initially. This selective application demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of Developmental Supervision, where the leader matches their style to the teacher's readiness.

Table 2. Level of Teachers' Self-Reported Professional Growth

Dimensions of Growth	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Collaboration	4.62	Very High	1
Reflective Practice	4.45	High	2
Motivation	4.38	High	3
Instructional Competence	4.30	High	4

The results in Table 2 reveal a substantial level of professional growth among teachers in the Mercedes district, with all dimensions interpreted as "High" and "Very High." Collaboration emerged as the highest-ranked dimension with a weighted mean of 4.62, interpreted as Very High. This indicates that educators in the district are deeply engaged in peer-to-peer mentoring and collective problem-solving, which supports Knowles's Adult Learning Theory (1980) regarding the effectiveness of self-directed and social learning. This high ranking is further validated by the insights from school heads. School Head 1 noted that success in school-wide programs is achieved when teachers are involved at every step through peer coaching and collective monitoring. School Head 2 emphasized that a collaborative approach encourages *"sharing ideas and helping each other than just ticking boxes"*. This sentiment was echoed by School Head 3, who observed that teachers

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feel more motivated when they can share ideas: *"Mas nakaka-engganyo yung approach na magtulungan at mag-share ng ideas"* (It is more encouraging to have an approach of helping and sharing ideas)

Ranking second and third respectively are Reflective Practice (4.45) and Motivation (4.38), both of which earned a high verbal interpretation. The high level of reflective practice aligns with the findings of Octobre and Andal (2025), who noted that observation conferences promote deeper reflection. In the interviews, School Head 1 described supervision as *a "guiding" feedback loop designed to help teachers grow professionally*. This process is heavily dependent on teacher motivation; as School Head 3 pointed out , *"Kapag motivated ang guro, mas mabilis siyang matuto at mag-adapt sa changes" (When a teacher is motivated, they are faster to learn and adapt to changes*) School Head 2 also noted that highly engaged teachers are the ones most willing to participate in trainings and try new pedagogical strategies.

Conversely, Instructional Competence yielded the lowest weighted mean of 4.30, though it remains within the 'High' verbal interpretation range. While this indicates a strong pedagogical foundation, its rank as the lowest dimension suggests that teachers in the Mercedes District face relative challenges in this area. Qualitative data from interviews provides context for this finding: School Head 2 identified the extensive volume of data compliance and many DepEd programs as primary obstacles to supervising instructional delivery. Similarly, School Head 3 noted that the high demand for reporting often results in teachers having *'kulang ang oras nila para sa klase'* (insufficient time for their classes). Furthermore, School Head 1 acknowledged that *'time is always a challenge'* due to the constant pressure of school-wide initiatives and documentation. Ultimately, these results suggest that while teachers are highly professional and collaborative, administrative burdens often divert their focus from refining classroom instruction.

Relationship Between Instructional Supervision Approaches and Teachers' Professional Growth

Table 3. *Correlation Between Instructional Supervision Approaches and Teachers' Professional Growth (n = 63)*

Supervision Approach	Instructional Competence	Reflective Practice	Motivation	Collaboration
Supportive	0.65*	0.71*	0.70*	0.74*
Directive	0.42*	0.46*	0.49*	0.50*
Mixed/Collaborative	0.76*	0.78*	0.77*	0.80*

Note:

- **p < 0.05 (significant)*
- *Values represent Pearson correlation coefficients (r)*
- *Higher r-values = stronger positive relationship*

The correlation analysis presented in Table 3 reveals a significant positive relationship between the extent of utilization of instructional supervision approaches and teachers' self-reported professional growth. Among the three approaches, the Mixed/Collaborative Approach demonstrated the strongest correlations across all dimensions of professional growth, with coefficients ranging from r = 0.76 for instructional competence to r = 0.80 for collaboration. This suggests that when supervision emphasizes
shared decision-making, mentoring, and cooperative problem-solving, teachers' reflective practice, motivation, instructional competence, and collaborative behaviors are significantly enhanced.

The Supportive Approach also showed strong positive correlations (r = 0.65–0.74), whereas the Directive Approach exhibited moderate correlations (r = 0.42–0.50), indicating that rigid, prescriptive supervision is less strongly associated with professional growth. These results align with Glickman's (1985) Developmental Supervision Theory, which posits that supervision is most effective when it matches the teacher's developmental level and combines guidance with opportunities for autonomous practice.

The qualitative data from interviews with school heads further support the quantitative findings. School Head 1 emphasized that supervision is *"not just checking if they're doing what they're supposed to, but guiding them, giving feedback, and helping them grow professionally so our students learn better."* This highlights the facilitative role of supervision, where feedback is used as a tool for teacher reflection and growth. School Head 2 corroborated this perspective, noting that supervision involves *"helping teachers, seeing what works in class,*

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and encouraging collaboration for the students' benefit," emphasizing that relational and collaborative interactions are central to effective supervision. Similarly, School Head 3 explained, *"Para sa akin, ang supervision ay hindi lang tungkol sa pag-check ng klase. Para itong kasama sa trabaho ng guro para mapabuti ang paraan ng pagtuturo at makita kung paano mas matutulungan ang mga estudyante na matuto nang maayos,"* underscoring the integration of teacher support and student learning outcomes.

Practical examples further exemplify how the Mixed/Collaborative Approach facilitates professional growth. For instance, School Head 1 described a school-wide reading and mathematics initiative where teachers engaged in intervention planning, peer coaching, and joint monitoring, ensuring active participation at every stage. Similarly, School Head 2 recounted the organization of planning workshops aimed at enhancing English language proficiency, which integrated classroom observations, mentoring, and collaborative strategy sharing. School Head 3 shared a comparable experience regarding reading comprehension, stating: *"Nagplano kami ng programa kung saan nagtutulungan ang mga guro sa paggawa ng reading activities. Nag-observe ako at nagbibigay ng payo, tapos sabay-sabay naming tinitingnan ang resulta ng mga bata. Nakita namin na mas mabilis silang umunlad kapag nagtutulungan ang mga guro."* (We planned a program where teachers helped each other create reading activities. I observed and gave advice, then we looked at the children's results together. We saw that they progressed faster when teachers collaborated.) These narratives illustrate the specific mechanisms—collaboration, reflection, and support—that drive teachers' professional development.

The convergence of quantitative and qualitative findings underscores that instructional supervision is most effective when it is collaborative, supportive, and responsive to teachers' needs. The Mixed/Collaborative Approach not only enhances measurable professional growth but also fosters a culture of reflection, teamwork, and shared accountability. These results have important implications for school leadership in the Mercedes District, suggesting that investment in collaborative supervision structures, peer coaching initiatives, and continuous teacher support can significantly enhance both instructional quality and student learning outcomes.

Best Practices and Rationales of School Heads in Implementing the Mixed/Collaborative Approach

The qualitative findings reveal that the efficacy of the Mixed/Collaborative approach—which correlates strongly with teacher growth—is fundamentally rooted in the school heads' perception of supervision as a partnership rather than a bureaucratic obligation.

Shift from Compliance to Growth-Oriented Mentorship

This transition from a traditional fault-finding mindset to one of mutual support aligns with the evolution of supervision identified by Zhou (2022), who traced the shift from inspection-based control to collaborative processes that promote reflective practice. School Head 1 exemplified this perspective by viewing supervision as a primary vehicle for professional guidance and growth, rather than a mechanism for checking compliance. This focus on mentoring is strongly supported by the findings of Reambonanza and Tan (2022), who observed that instructional support is a critical prerequisite for enhancing teaching skills.

Furthermore, the results suggest that when the rationale for supervision is developmental rather than punitive, it establishes a vital foundation of trust and motivation within the school. This is consistent with the study by Dacer et al. (2025) in Camarines Norte, which found that such supportive supervision positively correlates with teacher job satisfaction and professional commitment. By adopting a partnership philosophy, as described by School Head 3, school leaders validate the Supervisory Nexus of this study. This approach echoes Rahmat's (2024) emphasis that mentoring must be adapted to contextual needs to be truly effective. Ultimately, these narratives illustrate that by positioning themselves as partners in the teacher's work, school heads in the Mercedes District are moving toward a more modern, collaborative leadership style that prioritizes long-term teacher development over administrative scrutiny.

Collaborative Dialogue and Peer Knowledge Sharing

Rather than issuing traditional top-down directives, school heads in the Mercedes District actively facilitate safe spaces where teachers feel empowered to reflect on their practices and learn from one another. School Head 2 highlighted this collective approach, emphasizing that group discussions focused on sharing of

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ideas are far more impactful than the administrative act of ticking boxes. This shift from inspection to shared inquiry underscores the historical evolution of supervision identified by Zhou (2022), who noted that modern supervisory practices must prioritize collaborative processes to effectively promote reflective practice. Furthermore, this practice directly addresses the Reflective Practice and Collaboration dimensions of teacher growth identified in the quantitative phase of this study. This is congruent with the findings of Octobre and Andal (2025), who argued that conference-style interactions—much like the "follow-up chats" mentioned by School Head 1—are vital mechanisms for fostering deep pedagogical reflection.

The qualitative data further suggests that when teachers feel supported, not judged, the supervisory process transforms into a source of intellectual stimulation rather than a source of anxiety. This environment of professional safety mirrors the findings of Dacer et al. (2025), who established that supportive leadership in the Camarines Norte context builds the foundation of trust necessary for professional commitment. Ultimately, this collaborative feedback loop functions as the primary mechanism behind the high level of instructional competence reported by teachers. By facilitating the shared problem-solving mentioned by School Head 2, school leaders are operationalizing the collaborative models proposed by Colebra (2024) and Handayani et al. (2024), which emphasize that the most effective instructional improvements occur when supervision is treated as a joint venture between the administrator and the teacher. This alignment between local practice and established research validates the high correlation found in this study between a collaborative leadership style and sustainable teacher development.

Major Challenges Encountered and Their Influence on the Supervision-Growth Relationship

The qualitative insights from the Mercedes District identify significant systemic and psychological barriers that moderate the relationship between supervision and professional growth. These challenges align closely with contemporary research, highlighting that even the most effective leadership models are often constrained by operational realities.

Administrative-Instructional Conflict and Temporal Constraints

The most prominent theme identified is the Administrative-Instructional Conflict, where the sheer volume of clerical work often sidelines instructional leadership, creating a critical bottleneck in teacher development. School Head 1 lamented that administrative tasks frequently take away the time that should be spent on observations and follow-ups. This local struggle is a direct reflection of national and international findings; Fatih et al. (2025) noted that a lack of time and resources critically constrains the successful implementation of supervision. Locally, this temporal barrier was also identified by Rizada (2024) and Mangadlao (2025) as a primary hurdle to effective mentoring. This lack of consistency leads to a dilution effect, where the potential for permanent instructional change is weakened by infrequent application. As Daigon and Alcopra (2024) observed, this often results in a disconnect where supervision remains compliance-oriented rather than truly developmental due to these systemic pressures.

Managing Varying Teacher Readiness and Psychological Resistance

The success of a collaborative model is further complicated by Teacher Readiness and Psychological Resistance. School Head 3 emphasized that resistance acts as a drag on improvement, requiring leaders to shift focus from pedagogy to emotional labor. This resonates with the observations of Oduro (2021), who found that when supervision is perceived as a fault-finding activity, it inevitably leads to teacher demotivation and resistance. Furthermore, Rizada (2024) identified teacher resistance as a persistent barrier that limits the transformative potential of instructional leadership. These findings underscore Glickman's (1985) assertion that supervisory efficacy depends on matching leadership styles to a teacher's professional maturity and psychological openness. Without this alignment, a collaborative approach may fail if the teacher perceives input as a threat rather than an opportunity.

Resource Disparity and External Constraints

Finally, Resource Disparity creates a functional gap where professional growth is stalled by factors outside the supervisor's immediate control. School Head 2 identified that a lack of materials or new strategies often prevents teachers from implementing ideas generated during collaborative sessions. This specific challenge is validated by Fatih et al. (2025) and Mangadlao (2025), who highlighted that inadequate physical

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resources and modern instructional tools are critical constraints to professional advancement. This implies that while the Mixed/Collaborative nature of the district's leadership is a primary engine for growth, its full potential remains untapped due to these systemic structural barriers.

CONCLUSIONS

The empirical evidence derived from this explanatory sequential mixed-methods study leads to several definitive conclusions regarding the landscape of instructional leadership in the Mercedes District. Primary among these is the confirmation that the Mixed/Collaborative Approach serves as the predominant and most effective supervisory framework within the district's public secondary schools. With a weighted mean of 4.58, this approach is practiced to a Very High Extent, signaling a successful paradigm shift among school heads from traditional, directive inspection toward a modern, partnership-oriented model. Furthermore, the statistical analysis confirms a strong, significant positive correlation ($r = 0.76$ to 0.80) between collaborative supervision and all dimensions of teacher growth, thereby necessitating the rejection of the null hypothesis. While teachers demonstrate robust development in professional collaboration, the lower mean score for instructional competence (4.30) indicates that the transition from collaborative planning to individual classroom execution remains a critical area for improvement. A significant discovery of this research is the identification of the administrative-instructional conflict, which characterizes the systemic struggle of school leaders to balance pedagogical mentorship with bureaucratic obligations. The qualitative data reveals that while school heads possess the theoretical inclination and practical desire to engage in transformative supervision, their efficacy is frequently diluted by excessive clerical demands and data-compliance mandates. This leads to the conclusion that teacher professional growth is not merely a function of leadership style but is heavily contingent upon the school head's instructional capacity—the actual time and cognitive resources available for deep, face-to-face coaching. Consequently, the study concludes that without systemic relief from administrative burdens, the full potential of collaborative supervision to enhance pedagogical excellence will remain suppressed. Finally, this study effectively addresses the identified research gap by providing context-specific data for the Mercedes District, moving beyond the generalized findings of broader regional or international literature. It demonstrates how localized factors, such as resource disparities and specific district reporting structures, influence the supervisory relationship. By bridging the gap between theoretical supervisory models and the lived realities of school heads in a specific geographic and administrative context, this research advances the field of educational leadership by highlighting that effective supervision is an intersectional process requiring both the right leadership philosophy and a supportive organizational structure.

Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the quality of instructional leadership and foster sustained professional growth among educators:

1. ***Strategic Streamlining of Administrative Responsibilities***

It is recommended that the Schools Division Office (SDO) and District Leadership conduct a comprehensive review of the reporting requirements imposed on school heads. Given that administrative-instructional conflict was identified as a primary barrier to effective supervision, policy interventions should be aimed at delegating clerical and data-management tasks to administrative support staff. This would allow school heads to reclaim their role as instructional leaders rather than compliance officers, facilitating more frequent and substantive classroom observations and feedback sessions. The justification for this recommendation lies in the research finding that collaborative supervision only reaches its peak efficacy when leaders have the necessary time-on-task to engage deeply with their teaching staff.

2. ***Targeted Development of Instructional Competence***

Since instructional competence emerged as the lowest-ranked growth dimension, school heads should prioritize supervisory interventions that focus specifically on classroom delivery, differentiated instruction, and pedagogical innovation. Rather than broad professional development, these interventions should be evidence-based and tailored to the specific needs identified during classroom observations. By linking the

Mixed/Collaborative approach to specific classroom outcomes, school leaders can bridge the gap between high levels of teacher collaboration and the actual refinement of teaching practices.

3. Formalization of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

To leverage the district's existing strength in professional collaboration (Mean=4.62), school heads should institutionalize Professional Learning Communities within their respective institutions. These communities should utilize lesson study and peer-coaching models to sustain growth even during periods of high administrative demand on the school head. This recommendation stems from the research discovery that teachers are highly receptive to collaborative growth; formalizing these structures ensures that professional development becomes a continuous, teacher-led process rather than an episodic, supervisor-driven event.

4. Integration of Resource-Linked Supervisory Feedback

Instructional supervision should be more explicitly linked to the school's budget and resource allocation (MOOE). When school heads identify pedagogical gaps during collaborative sessions, they should be empowered to prioritize the procurement of necessary instructional tools or technology to address those gaps. This recommendation justifies the need for a holistic approach where supervisory feedback is supported by the tangible resources required for teachers to implement recommended instructional changes.

5. Future Research Directions

Lastly, it is recommended that future researchers conduct longitudinal studies to measure the long-term impact of the Mixed/Collaborative approach on student learning outcomes and achievement scores. While the current study establishes a link between supervision and teacher growth, further evidence is needed to quantify how this growth translates into learner performance. Additionally, expanding the research scope to include a regional comparative analysis would provide broader insights into whether the administrative-instructional conflict is a localized phenomenon or a systemic challenge across the Philippine public school system.

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