The Effect of Educational Leaders' Competencies on Teachers' Professional Growth

Deanne Bryan Bucal[1], Jemma O. Lipit[2]

[1]Assistant Professor I, College of Arts and Sciences, Union College of Laguna
[2]Head Teacher I, Gov. Felicisimo T. San Luis Memorial National High School, Department of Education

Abstract

In the Philippine basic education system, particularly in Integrated Junior and Senior High Schools, effective school leadership plays a critical role in promoting teacher development and driving school improvement. This study investigated the impact of educational leaders' competencies on the professional growth of teachers in Integrated Schools within the Schools Division of Laguna, focusing on three key domains: instructional leadership, human resource management (HRM), and school leadership, management, and operations (SLMO). Employing a quantitative causal-correlational descriptive design, data were collected from 295 teachers and 21 school heads using validated survey instruments, with statistical analyses including t-tests, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression. Results indicated that while both groups rated leadership competencies as "Very High," teachers consistently provided lower ratings than school heads, revealing a perceptual gap. Among the domains, SLMO received the highest ratings from school heads, while teachers reported lower scores across all areas. Despite these differences, teachers rated their professional growth as "High." T-test results showed significant differences in perceptions; correlation analysis revealed strong, positive relationships between leadership competencies and teacher development, with SLMO exerting the most substantial influence. Regression analysis identified SLMO and HRM as strong predictors of capacity building and SLAC participation, while instructional leadership had minimal impact. The study recommends implementing a leadership training program aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) to address perceptual disparities and enhance domain-specific leadership competencies.

Keywords: educational leadership, human resource management, instructional leadership, professional growth, school leadership and operations

Introduction

The effectiveness and overall success of an educational institution are inextricably linked to the foundational elements of school leadership, management, and operational execution. Leadership within a school context is not merely a function of administrative oversight but a dynamic process that involves strategic decision-making, the cultivation of a positive school culture, and the creation of an environment that promotes both student and staff development. Simultaneously, management entails the judicious allocation of critical resources—personnel, budgets, facilities, and time to ensure the seamless and efficient operation of the institution on a daily basis. Given the significance of leadership in the broader context of educational organizations, it becomes clear that an effective leadership style is essential for

unlocking the full potential of the academic community. Central to this leadership role is the application of supervisory competencies that directly influence the professional growth of teachers and, by extension, the quality of educational outcomes.

Ocampo (2018) highlights that in the Philippine context, principals are tasked with a dual responsibility: they must serve as both instructional leaders and administrative managers. The Governance of Basic Education Act (Republic Act 9155) delineates several key responsibilities for principals, particularly in their capacity as instructional leaders. This includes creating an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning, ensuring the implementation of the curriculum, being accountable for achieving higher learning outcomes, introducing innovative and research-based teaching methodologies, and fostering ongoing professional development among staff. Such duties underscore the necessity for school leaders to possess a nuanced understanding of educational leadership and the ability to apply a range of supervisory skills to promote teacher development.

Effective school leadership is predicated upon the application of diverse supervisory competencies that are essential to the efficient functioning of the educational system. Competent administrators utilize transformational leadership principles to motivate and inspire both administrative and instructional staff, encouraging them to exceed expectations and achieve institutional goals. These leaders actively engage in curriculum development, refinement of instructional practices, and the creation of a supportive and collaborative learning environment. Such comprehensive commitment to instructional leadership is foundational to the professional development of teachers, with the broader goal of enhancing student learning outcomes.

Zulueta (2020) reinforces the notion that school leadership and management when effectively executed, are indispensable to the realization of school goals. A narrow focus on teaching methods within the supervisory domain is insufficient to drive meaningful improvements in the quality of instruction or student achievement. Effective supervision must transcend the mechanics of teaching techniques and instead focus on the holistic development of a unified school program that fosters an enriching environment for teachers. This environment is one in which teachers feel valued, supported, and empowered to grow professionally. In such a context, supervisory practices foster an atmosphere of trust and collaboration, in which teachers are encouraged to engage in collective professional development and participate in meaningful self-reflection. Ultimately, this collaborative approach to supervision enables teachers to evolve their pedagogical approaches and create more impactful learning experiences for students.

Despite a growing body of literature on the relationship between school leadership and educational outcomes, a significant gap remains in the research regarding the specific influence of school heads' supervisory competencies on the development of teaching competencies among educators. Existing studies tend to focus broadly on leadership styles and their general impact on school effectiveness, yet there is a dearth of in-depth exploration into the specific supervisory practices employed by school leaders and how these practices contribute to or detract from teacher development. Key supervisory practices such as instructional coaching, feedback mechanisms, and professional development initiatives remain underexplored despite their potential to significantly influence teachers' instructional practices. Addressing this gap is critical for the development of evidence-based policies and strategies that can inform the design of effective leadership interventions aimed at enhancing teacher professional growth, with the ultimate goal of improving educational outcomes.

As a practitioner who has witnessed firsthand the challenges and potential of teacher development within the context of school leadership, this dissertation seeks to contribute to the understanding of how principals' supervisory competencies affect teacher professional growth. Specifically, this study aims to examine the perspectives of both principals and teachers regarding the methods used by school heads and assess the approaches and methodologies they employ to fulfill their supervisory responsibilities. By focusing on the relationship between school leadership and teacher development, this research aims to generate insights that will inform the implementation of targeted leadership practices that can effectively support the professional advancement of teachers, ultimately leading to improvements in teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

The role of the educational leader, often referred to as the principal or school head, has undergone significant transformation over time. Traditionally, this role was largely focused on administrative duties, concentrating primarily on operational management and ensuring compliance with educational policies. However, as education continues to evolve and the diverse needs of both teachers and students grow, the responsibilities of educational leaders have expanded. Today, educational leaders are expected to provide instructional leadership, manage human resources, and support the professional development of teachers, all while maintaining effective school management. This shift underscores the increasing importance of educational leadership in fostering an environment that encourages continuous professional growth, which directly impacts the quality of teaching and learning.

As the educational landscape in the Philippines, particularly in the Schools Division of the Province of Laguna, strives to align with the global demands of the 21st century, educational leaders are now expected to adopt a more dynamic and multifaceted role. The focus has shifted from simply managing the day-to-day operations of schools to creating an environment where teachers are supported, guided, and encouraged to grow professionally. This transformation is in line with national educational reforms aimed at improving the quality of education, where educational leaders in Laguna are recognized not just for their management skills but as key drivers of change. They are responsible for ensuring that teachers are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the evolving demands of their profession. This evolution is consistent with Leithwood et al. (2020), who argue that effective educational leadership is crucial in advancing educational systems globally and in ensuring the development of human capital. Education is thus considered fundamental to societal progress, with educational leadership playing a central role in this process.

The success of schools is increasingly attributed to the quality of leadership demonstrated by educational leaders, who are expected to collaborate with teachers, students, parents, and the community to foster a culture of excellence. As Pont, Nusche, and Moorman (2008) assert, the primary role of educational leadership is to enhance and support teacher effectiveness. Educational leaders are responsible for creating conditions that allow teachers to continuously improve their pedagogical skills, engage in reflective practice, and remain motivated and committed to their profession. In the Schools Division of Laguna, the role of educational leaders is viewed as essential in fostering collaboration, guiding professional growth, and providing access to resources and networks that enhance teacher development.

To perform these roles effectively, educational leaders must possess a broad range of leadership competencies. Fields et al. (2019) identify five key functions that are essential for effective educational leadership: planning, which involves setting clear goals and priorities for the school; staffing, which ensures that qualified and skilled teachers are recruited and retained; organizing, which focuses on creating an environment that supports teaching and learning; controlling, which involves monitoring performance

and ensuring that established goals are met; and directing, which entails providing ongoing support to teachers to strengthen their professional capacity. These functions are critical for creating a thriving school environment, directly influencing the development of teachers and, in turn, the educational outcomes of students.

This study aims to explore the relationship between educational leaders' competencies and the professional growth of teachers in the Schools Division of the Province of Laguna. The research included integrated schools within the division, examining how the leadership practices of educational leaders contribute to the professional development of teachers. The study hypothesizes that the quality of the relationship between educational leaders and their teachers, the structure of tasks within the school, and the position and authority of educational leaders all significantly contribute to fostering teacher growth.

By investigating these factors, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into how educational leadership can be leveraged to enhance teacher development and, ultimately, improve the quality of education in the province. The findings will offer important implications for policy and practice, contributing to the ongoing efforts to strengthen educational leadership in the Schools Division of Laguna and across the country. This research aims to inform future strategies and initiatives that support the professional growth of teachers, leading to enhanced student outcomes in the region.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory, as developed by Bass (1985) and others, which focuses on the profound impact leaders can have on both individuals and organizations. It aims to inspire lasting, positive change by fostering the development of followers into leaders themselves. Transformational leaders enhance motivation, morale, and performance by aligning followers' personal values with the mission and vision of the organization. Through role modeling, inspiring action, and providing opportunities for growth, transformational leaders challenge followers to take ownership of their work, thus optimizing performance. This approach is particularly relevant in educational contexts, where leaders can inspire faculty, staff, and students to achieve their full potential, contributing to the overall effectiveness of the institution.

By integrating transformational Leadership Theory, this study provides a robust framework for understanding the various factors that contribute to effective leadership in academic settings. The transformative power of leaders which rely on their competencies as leaders contribute to inspire and empower their followers. instructional leadership. In this study, the importance of leaders' competencies are considered which include the following: instructional leadership, human resources management and lastly, school leadership management and operations.

In the Leadership Competency Framework, Ruben (2019) identified the five major competency themes that leaders may possess. This competency framework was developed in an effort to help leaders evaluate what they can and should do, to structure the review into the form of an inventory of elements considered important for being effective as a leader across varying settings, and to organize elements that would be valuable for understanding, improving leadership practices. Through this theoretical lens, the study explores how the educational leaders' competencies influence teachers' professional growth and development.

Figure 1. Teacher Professional Growth

Figure 1 shows the Teacher Professional Growth Framework by Anon (2017), which depicts the importance of working with other colleagues, collaboration, planning and inquiry, focused observations, and reflection on the impact of teaching on students' learning. The illustration only shows that teachers' involvement in dialogue, discussions, and sharing of experiences with colleagues are basic when it comes to the professional growth of teachers, and these are reflected in the research instrument used in this study. In order to find the factors that may contribute to teachers' professional development, the researcher focused on the following teacher variables: capacity building, school learning action cell, and faculty learning and engagement development.
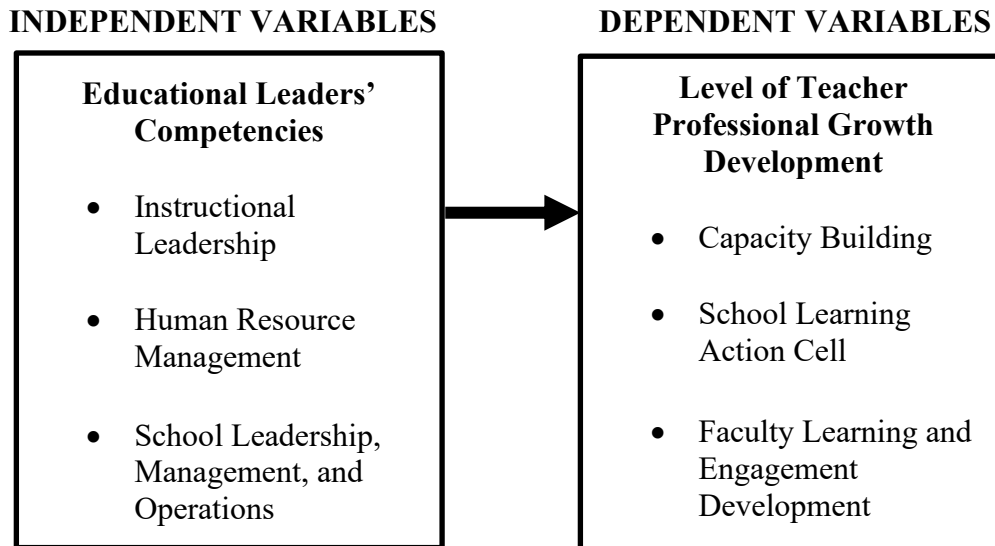
Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the relationship between educational leaders' competencies and the professional growth and development of teachers. Educational leadership is integral in fostering an environment conducive to continuous learning, collaboration, and skill enhancement among educators. In this framework, the competencies of educational leaders, comprising instructional leadership, human resource management, school leadership, management, and operations, are identified as the independent variables, while the level of teacher professional growth and development serves as the dependent variable.

As illustrated below in Figure 2, the conceptual framework depicts the dynamic relationship between the competencies of educational leaders and the professional growth and development of teachers. It highlights the essential role of school leaders in creating an environment that promotes continuous learning and skill enhancement among educators. Educational leaders' competencies, comprising instructional leadership, human resource management, and school leadership, management, and operations, serve as the independent variables influencing teacher development.

Instructional leadership plays a critical role in enhancing teaching quality by aligning curriculum goals with effective teaching methods and student learning outcomes. Leaders in this domain actively facilitate

professional development, provide constructive feedback, and model exemplary instructional practices, thereby fostering a culture of excellence.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES   DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Educational Leaders' Competencies	Level of Teacher Professional Growth Development
• Instructional Leadership	• Capacity Building
• Human Resource Management	• School Learning Action Cell
• School Leadership, Management, and Operations	• Faculty Learning and Engagement Development

Figure 2.   The Research Paradigm of the Study

Similarly, human resource management focuses on recruiting competent educators, conducting meaningful evaluations, and implementing professional development initiatives, all of which contribute to a supportive work environment. This support enhances teachers' morale and commitment, motivating them to engage actively in professional growth. Additionally, effective school leadership and management streamline operations, foster strategic planning, and cultivate a cohesive school culture. By reducing administrative burdens on teachers, leaders enable educators to concentrate on instructional tasks and personal development.

On the other hand, the dependent variables in the framework reflect the level of teacher professional growth and development, encompassing capacity building, the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and faculty learning and engagement development. Capacity building focuses on structured programs designed to enhance teachers' skills, knowledge, and classroom practices, enabling them to meet diverse student needs effectively. SLAC, as a collaborative professional learning platform, addresses instructional challenges through collective discussions and shared best practices, encouraging teachers to implement innovative solutions. Faculty learning and engagement initiatives foster a sense of collaboration and continuous professional development, motivating teachers to participate actively in school improvement efforts and leadership roles.

The framework suggests a direct causal relationship, where the competencies of educational leaders significantly affect the professional development of teachers. Leaders' proficiency in instructional guidance, personnel management, and operational efficiency sets the foundation for successful teacher growth initiatives. This relationship underscores the practical implications for various stakeholders. Educational leaders must prioritize their development to enhance their influence on teacher growth, while policymakers should support leadership training and teacher development programs. For teachers, a well-structured leadership environment not only nurtures their professional skills but also fosters a sense of engagement and motivation to contribute to a positive school culture.

Statement of the Problem:

The study dealt with the educational leaders' competencies and their relationship to teachers' professional growth and development.

It also sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of educational leaders' competencies as assessed by the two groups of respondents in terms of:
1.1. instructional leadership;
1.2. human resource management, and
1.3. school leadership, management, and operations?
2. What is the level of teachers' professional growth as assessed by the two groups of respondents with respect to:
2.1. capacity building;
2.2. school learning action cell; and,
2.3. faculty learning and engagement development?
3. Is there a significant difference in the educational leaders' competencies as assessed by two groups of respondents?
4. Is there a significant difference in the level of teachers' professional growth as assessed by two groups of respondents?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the educational leaders' competencies and teachers' professional growth and development?
6. Do the competencies of educational leaders significantly affect the teacher's professional growth?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what leadership training may be proposed?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study examined the effect of educational leaders' competencies on the level of professional growth of teachers with a focus on the key dimensions of instructional leadership, human resource management, and school leadership, management, and operations. This research also investigated the level of professional growth and development of teachers from Integrated Junior and Senior High Schools in Laguna. This research also adopted a comprehensive approach, analyzing how the educational leaders' competencies align with established frameworks for school leadership and influence the level of teachers' professional growth.

The respondents of the study were composed of 295 public secondary school teachers from various integrated schools within the Schools Division of Laguna and 21 school heads. This research aimed to provide valuable insights into the impact of educational leaders' competencies on teacher development, contributing to the body of knowledge on educational leadership and policy in the context of the Philippine educational system.

A valid ang reliable researcher-made questionnaire was used in this study focusing on the variables being investigated. The data obtained using the said instrument provided the answers to the questions posed in the study.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform educational leaders and policymakers about the competencies that directly impact teachers' professional growth. By identifying which leadership practices contribute most effectively to teacher development, the study provides a valuable basis for enhancing leadership training programs, improving school leadership strategies, and fostering a culture of continuous

professional advancement. In doing so, it supports broader educational reforms aimed at improving teaching quality and student outcomes in the Philippine context.

This research is limited only to the school heads and teachers of Integrated Junior and Senior High Schools in the Division of Laguna and did not consider those who are not employed in the said schools. Moreover, this study is confined only to one (1) categorical variable which refers to the educational leaders' competencies and one (1) categorical dependent variable pertaining to teachers' level of professional growth and development and did not include other variables aside from those already mentioned.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach, specifically utilizing a causal-correlational and descriptive design to examine the influence of educational leaders' competencies on teachers' professional growth and development within the Schools Division of Laguna.

A causal research design, also referred to as explanatory research or causal-comparative research, was used to explore potential cause-and-effect relationships between variables without manipulating the independent variable. This method is appropriate for investigating how one variable (educational leaders' competencies) may affect another (teachers' professional growth and development) based on naturally occurring groups. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2019), causal research helps establish probable causal links through comparison and statistical analysis, even in the absence of true experimental control.

The correlational component of the study aimed to determine the strength and direction of relationships among variables. Correlational research is widely used in education to explore associations without implying direct causation. As noted by Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2016), this approach is appropriate when researchers seek to identify patterns or trends in data related to two or more measurable variables.

The descriptive aspect of the research focused on portraying the current state of educational leadership practices and professional development outcomes based on respondents' responses. Descriptive research is valuable in educational settings for summarizing data and understanding trends, and it is commonly employed to provide a clear profile of the sample population (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

This integrated design allowed the researcher to (1) assess the degree of influence that educational leaders' competencies may have on teachers' professional development (causal), (2) examine the strength and direction of relationships between these constructs (correlational), and (3) describe prevailing practices and perceptions within the Schools Division of Laguna (descriptive).

Population and Sampling Techniques

The population for this study consisted of teachers and school heads from 21 selected Integrated Junior High Schools and Senior High Schools within the Schools Division of Laguna. Specifically, the teacher-respondents were drawn from a total population of 1,251 teachers employed in public secondary integrated schools during the 2024–2025 school year. The Schools Division of Laguna was purposefully selected as the research locale due to the researcher's current role as a faculty member within the division. This affiliation provided practical advantages, including direct access to school administrators and faculty, as well as logistical support for the distribution and retrieval of questionnaires. The researcher's role also helped ensure a smooth data collection process while maintaining professional and ethical standards.

To determine the appropriate sample size for the teacher population, the researcher applied Cochran's formula, which is a statistically robust method for estimating sample size in finite populations. With a

95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the calculated sample size was 295 teacher respondents out of a total of 1,251 teachers.

For the sampling procedure, the researcher employed a stratified proportional random sampling technique. This method involves dividing the population into distinct subgroups, or strata, and then randomly selecting respondents from each stratum in proportion to its size. In this study, the 21 Integrated Junior High Schools and Senior High Schools served as the strata. This approach ensured that each participating school contributed a number of respondents proportional to its actual teacher population, allowing for balanced representation across large and small schools alike. The use of stratification by the school provided a mechanism for capturing school-specific variations while maintaining a representative and statistically sound sample. The distribution of teacher-respondents across the participating schools is detailed below:

School Name	Total Teachers	Sampled Teachers
1. Ibayiw Integrated National High School	32	8
2. Nicolas L. Galvez Memorial Integrated National High School	79	18
3. Masaya Integrated National High School	46	11
4. Dayap National Integrated High School	61	14
5. Sto. Tomas Integrated High School	38	9
6. Cavinti Integrated National High School	36	8
7. Famy Integrated National High School	82	19
8. Los Baños Integrated School	40	9
9. Magdalena Integrated National High School	52	12
10. Buenavista Integrated National High School	31	7
11. Sta. Catalina Integrated National High School	66	16
12. Plaridel Integrated National High School	90	21
13. Talangan Integrated National High School	46	11
14. Pagsanjan Integrated National High School	75	18
15. Kabulusan Integrated National High School	38	9
16. Balian Integrated National High School	75	18
17. Cristobal S. Conducto Memorial Integrated National High School	63	15
18. Gov. Felicisimo T. San Luis Integrated Senior High School	77	18
19. Sta. Maria Integrated High School	77	18
20. Siniloan Integrated National High School	117	28
21. Gov. F.T. San Luis National Agro-Industrial Integrated High School	30	7
Total	**1,251**	**295**

In contrast, a total enumeration technique was applied for the school head-respondents. All school heads from the 21 participating schools were included in the study. Given their relatively small number and their direct relevance to the independent variable—educational leadership competencies—including all school heads ensured a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of leadership practices across the division.

This combination of stratified proportional random sampling for teachers and total enumeration for school heads ensured a methodologically sound and inclusive approach to respondent selection, reflecting the diversity and organizational structure of the Schools Division of Laguna.

Research Instruments

The primary instrument used to gather the necessary data in this study was a self-constructed questionnaire. The researcher designed eight (8) items for each Educational Leader' competencies' descriptors. The items were organized, and a draft questionnaire was created. This draft was submitted to the adviser for feedback, and after incorporating the suggestions, the questionnaire was presented to experts for validation purposes.

The questionnaire was divided into two (2) sections. The first part reflects the respondents' evaluation of the Educational Leaders' Competencies. This assessment was based on four key areas: instructional leadership, human resource management, and school leadership, management and operations. The second section reveals the measures included by the researcher concerning the level of teachers' professional growth and development, and these are categorized into three (3), namely capacity building, school learning action cell (SLAC), and faculty learning and engagement development (FLED).

Scoring of Responses: After the questionnaires were collected, the data were organized and tabulated. The scale below was used to assess the level of Educational Leaders' Supervisory Competency:

Weight Symbol	Measures of Scale	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.26 - 4.00	Very High
3	2.51 - 3.25	High
2	1.76 - 2.50	Low
1	1.00 - 1.75	Very Low

The third section included item statements regarding the methods and techniques utilized by the Educational Leaders in fulfilling their supervisory roles.

Indicators for Teachers' Professional Growth: The scale shown below was employed to determine the level of teachers' professional growth based on the respondents' perceptions.

Weight Symbol	Scale	Description	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.26 - 4.00	Great Extent	High
3	2.51 - 3.25	Moderate Extent	Moderate

Weight Symbol	Scale	Description	Verbal Interpretation
2	1.76 - 2.50	Slight Extent	Low
1	1.00 - 1.75	Low Extent	Very low

The questionnaire employed a fixed alternative format, where respondents were asked to select from a predefined set of responses. Respondents marked the appropriate column corresponding to their answer. To assess the level of educational leaders' competencies and teachers' professional growth, the weighted mean of responses for each item in every category was calculated. This represented the perceived level of each group for each specific component of the questionnaire. Composite means for each category were then calculated to reflect the respondents' overall assessment of their perceptions in relation to the components or domains. A final composite mean was derived to summarize the respondents' perceptions of the levels of competencies of educational leaders and professional growth of teachers in selected integrated junior and senior high schools within the Schools Division of Laguna.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

A self-designed questionnaire was meticulously developed in consultation with the research adviser, incorporating expert feedback and suggestions to ensure alignment with the study's objectives. The instrument was refined to accurately capture the data relevant to the research questions. After revisions were made based on this initial consultation, the finalized version of the questionnaire was prepared for distribution.

The instrument was then submitted to a panel of experts in the field of education for further validation. These experts critically evaluated the questionnaire and provided valuable feedback concerning its relevance, structure, and clarity. They assessed various aspects of the instrument, including its alignment with the study's purpose, the appropriateness of the language used, content accuracy, and item clarity. The validity of the questionnaire was established based on their approval and recommendations, ensuring that the tool was both comprehensive and suitable for data collection.

Following the validation process, the internal consistency of the research instrument was assessed through a pilot test involving 26 teachers. This number meets the minimum required sample size to detect a Cronbach's alpha of 0.80 against a null hypothesis of 0.70, with 80% statistical power and a significance level of 0.05, based on a 39-item questionnaire. The sample size determination was guided by the formula developed by Bonett and Wright (2015), which ensures adequate precision in reliability estimates for instruments using multiple Likert-scale items.

To evaluate the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha (α) was used. This statistical measure is widely recognized for assessing the internal consistency of a scale, indicating the extent to which the items in a given construct are interrelated and measure the same underlying concept. According to George and Mallery (2003), an alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher is generally acceptable, while values of 0.90 and above signify excellent reliability.

The results of the reliability analysis are presented in detail in Table 1. All subscales of the instrument demonstrated strong internal consistency, supporting the reliability of the various constructs being measured.

Table 1: Reliability of the Instrument

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	No. of Items	Internal Consistency
Educational Leaders' Competencies			
Instructional Leadership	.915	8	Excellent
Human Resource Management and Development	.901	8	Excellent
School Leadership, Management and Operations	.942	8	Excellent
Teachers' Professional Growth			
Capacity Building	.877	5	Good
School Learning Action Cell (SLAC)	.943	5	Excellent
Faculty Learning and Engagement Development (FLED)	.902	5	Excellent
Research Instrument	.959	39	Excellent

The subscales under educational leaders' competencies showed excellent reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .901 to .942. This indicates that items within the domains of instructional leadership, human resource management, and school leadership and operations are cohesive and consistently measure the intended constructs.

In the domain of teachers' professional growth, the capacity building subscale recorded good reliability with an alpha of .877, while both the school learning action cell (SLAC) and the faculty learning and engagement development (FLED) subscales demonstrated excellent reliability, with alpha values of .943 and .902, respectively. These values reflect strong coherence among the items designed to assess teachers' development activities and collaborative learning experiences.

The complete 39-item instrument as a whole achieved a Cronbach's alpha of .959, signifying excellent internal consistency. This very high alpha value suggests that the instrument as a whole is highly reliable and effectively captures the intended constructs across its multiple subscales.

These results of the reliability analysis affirm that the questionnaire is both statistically robust and psychometrically sound. Its strong internal consistency supports its use as a valid and reliable tool for assessing the perceptions of school heads and teachers regarding educational leadership competencies and professional growth practices in the school setting.

Based on expert feedback and the results of the reliability testing, several refinements were made to the questionnaire. These included rewording specific items to improve clarity, precision, and alignment with the constructions being measured. All adjustments were made in close consultation with the expert panel to ensure appropriateness and preserve content validity. This iterative and collaborative process resulted

in a final instrument that is both psychometrically sound and contextually relevant, thereby enhancing the overall integrity and credibility of the study's findings.

Data Gathering Procedures

Formal permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Schools Division Office of Laguna. Upon securing approval, the researcher coordinated with the Public Schools District Supervisors of each Sub-office included in the study and the school heads under their supervision to facilitate the research process. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to ensure comprehensive understanding, providing clarification on any ambiguities and ensuring that all respondents fully comprehended the questions. This proactive engagement was intended to guarantee that the questionnaires were completed accurately and returned in a timely manner.

The researcher undertook the responsibility of collecting the completed questionnaires directly from each participating school, ensuring that all responses were retrieved. The collected data was then systematically tabulated and subjected to the appropriate statistical analyses. These data were used as a foundation for deriving meaningful interpretations and drawing inferences, contributing to the robust understanding of the study's research questions.

Statistical Treatment of Data

To analyze and interpret the data collected from the respondents and to address the specific research questions of the study, a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods was employed using appropriate statistical software.

For sub-problems 1 and 2, the **weighted mean** was computed to determine the perceived levels of **educational leaders' competencies** and **teachers' professional growth and development**. This measure summarized the central tendencies of responses across the dimensions of instructional leadership, human resource management and development, and school leadership, management, and operations, as well as capacity building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) participation, and faculty learning and engagement development (FLED). The weighted mean allowed the researcher to identify overall trends in participant responses.

For sub-problems 3 and 4, the **independent samples t-test** was applied to assess whether significant differences existed between the perceptions of **teachers and school heads** regarding leadership competencies and professional growth. This inferential technique compares the means of two independent groups to determine if any observed differences are statistically significant. A p-value of less than 0.05 ($p < .05$) was considered significant, providing sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that differences between the groups were not due to chance.

To address sub-problem 5, the **Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r)** was utilized to measure the **strength and direction of the linear relationship** between educational leaders' competencies and teachers' professional growth. Values of r range from -1.00 to $+1.00$, where a positive coefficient indicates a direct relationship and a negative coefficient indicates an inverse relationship. A p-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant, indicating a meaningful correlation between the two variables.

Finally, for sub-problem 6, **multiple linear regression analysis** was employed to determine the **extent to which educational leaders' competencies predict teachers' professional growth and development**. This technique assessed both the combined and individual contributions of each leadership domain to the dependent variable. Each predictor was evaluated using a t-value and associated p-value, with $p < .05$ used

to determine statistical significance. The **adjusted R²** value was also reported to show the proportion of variance in teacher professional growth explained by the regression model.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher maintained the highest quality of output by protecting the rights of the respondents regarding disclosure of information, participation in and withdrawal from the conduct of study, and responding to the questions of their free will.

Before the data gathering, the researcher explained the purpose of the study including the benefits, requirements, and needed data to maintain the integrity and solemnity of the research process. This is also a way for the researcher to gain the trust of the participants.

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the analyzed data collected from school heads and teachers, focusing on the assessment of educational leaders' competencies and the levels of teachers' professional growth and development, as well as the relationships and differences in perceptions between the two groups.

Problem 1: What is the level of educational leaders' competencies as assessed by the two groups of respondents in terms of instructional leadership, human resource management, and school leadership, management and operations?

This section provides a comparison of the competency levels of educational leaders (school heads) based on self-assessments and teacher assessments. The competencies are examined across three key domains: instructional leadership; human resource management; and school leadership, management, and operations. The data aims to highlight both perceived strengths and potential gaps in leadership performance from multiple perspectives.

Table 2 presents the mean competency levels of educational leaders in instructional leadership, as perceived by both the school heads and their teachers. The table provides insights into the various dimensions of instructional leadership and how both parties evaluate the competencies of the educational leaders in these areas.

Table 2: Mean competency levels of educational leaders in instructional leadership as assessed by themselves and their teachers

Indicators	School Heads' Rating		Teachers' Rating	
	$\bar{x}$	VI	$\bar{x}$	VI
The educational leaders/school heads…				
1. observe classes to ensure that all teachers have mastery of teaching competencies in the basic learning areas	4.00	Very High	3.64	Very High
2. prepare an operational supervisory plan with varied and innovative supervisory strategies	4.00	Very High	3.63	Very High
3. encourage teachers and students to perform to the best of their abilities	4.00	Very High	3.76	Very High

4. monitor both the curricular and co-curricular activities and programs	4.00	Very High	3.63	Very High
5. implement innovative strategies, programs, and projects to respond to current and future needs of the teachers	4.00	Very High	3.60	Very High
6. match professional development programs to school priorities and personal needs of the teachers	3.86	Very High	3.59	Very High
7. encourage the use of uniform procedures in classroom observation	4.00	Very High	3.75	Very High
8. inspire teachers to contribute to developing and articulating a shared educational vision focused on the achievement of optimal learning outcomes	4.00	Very High	3.68	Very High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.98	Very High	3.66	Very High

Legend: $\bar{x}$ = weighted mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; 3.26 - 4.00 = Very High; 2.51 - 3.25 = High; 1.76 - 2.50 = Low; 1.00 - 1.75 = Very Low

As presented in Table 2, the competency levels of educational leaders in the area of instructional leadership are generally rated as "Very High" by both school heads and teachers across all indicators. The mean scores range from 3.59 to 4.00, indicating a consistent perception of strong proficiency. These results suggest that school heads are widely regarded as highly competent in implementing effective instructional leadership practices.

Among the competencies assessed, school heads consistently rated themselves with the highest possible score of 4.00 across nearly all indicators. This suggests a strong sense of confidence in their capacity to fulfill instructional leadership responsibilities and reflects their self-perception not just as administrative managers but as active instructional leaders who guide and support teaching and learning processes. While teachers provided slightly more conservative ratings, all indicators still fell within the "Very High" range, demonstrating a broad endorsement of their leaders' performance. Notably, the highest teacher rating (3.76) was given to the indicator related to encouraging both teachers and students to perform at their best. This reflects positively on the motivational capacity of educational leaders and their ability to foster a high-performing learning environment.

Uniformity in classroom observation procedures also emerged as a key area of strength, receiving a rating of 4.00 from school heads and 3.75 from teachers. These scores suggest a strong commitment from school leaders to implementing consistent and standardized observation practices, which are essential for ensuring fairness, objectivity, and instructional quality in teacher evaluations. While teachers rated this slightly lower, the "Very High" score indicates general satisfaction with how observation processes are managed, though it may also reflect a desire for more transparency or involvement in how criteria are applied.

Another area worth noting is the indicator of inspiring teachers to contribute to a shared educational vision focused on student outcomes, which was rated 4.00 by school heads and 3.68 by teachers. These results

indicate that school leaders are seen as highly effective in articulating and promoting a unified vision that prioritizes student learning. The slightly lower teacher rating, while still very positive, may suggest opportunities for deeper engagement and more collaborative efforts in shaping and sustaining this shared vision.

Additionally, the competency related to classroom observation procedures was rated 4.00 by school heads and 3.64 by teachers. While this suggests that observation processes are established and functioning, the lower rating from teachers points to potential gaps in consistency, transparency, or the communication of these procedures. This disparity highlights the need for more collaborative and clearly articulated observation practices to ensure mutual understanding and trust in the evaluation process.

In the area of preparing operational supervisory plans with varied and innovative strategies, school heads gave themselves a 4.00 and teachers a 3.63, showing that the school heads are perceived as effectively planning and using strategies that align with the needs of both the school and the teachers. A slight variation between self-rating and teachers' ratings is expected in such assessments and it highlights the subjectivity of perception between leaders and their subordinates.

Monitoring curricular and co-curricular activities was likewise highly rated, with school heads again scoring 4.00 and teachers 3.63, confirming that this leadership responsibility is being actively fulfilled. This suggests that educational leaders are actively engaged in overseeing the broad spectrum of school activities, contributing to the holistic development of the school community.

Likewise, the competency of implementing innovative strategies, programs, and projects to meet the current and future needs of teachers was also rated 4.00 by school heads and 3.60 by teachers. While there is a slight difference in perception, the ratings still indicate that school leaders are highly effective in introducing and managing innovative solutions to address evolving challenges within the school system.

The lowest rating from both groups pertained to the alignment of professional development programs with school priorities and teachers' personal growth needs (school heads: 3.86; teachers: 3.59). While still within the "Very High" category, teachers provided marginally lower scores. This suggests a potential area for further attention. School heads may need to engage in more deliberate and responsive planning when designing or choosing professional development activities to ensure they address the specific needs and aspirations of their teaching staff.

Despite these minor differences in perception, the consistently high ratings from both parties, teachers and school heads, indicate a strong and effective presence of instructional leadership within schools. This widespread agreement suggests that educational leaders are not only fulfilling their supervisory responsibilities but are also playing a pivotal role in shaping a positive and forward-thinking school climate. They are actively guiding teaching and learning processes, ensuring that instructional practices align with educational goals, and providing meaningful feedback to support professional growth.

The overall weighted mean of 3.98 from the school heads and 3.66 from the teachers, both falling under the "Very High" interpretation, indicates a strong and consistent perception of instructional leadership competence. These scores reflect positively on the leadership practices being implemented in schools, affirming that school heads are actively engaged in instructional supervision, professional development planning, and strategic visioning. The school heads' self-assessment, which is just 0.02 points shy of the maximum possible rating, suggests a high level of confidence in their performance across all key dimensions of instructional leadership. This can be interpreted as a manifestation of their strong self-efficacy, professional commitment, and awareness of their leadership responsibilities. It implies that school leaders

believe they are effectively guiding teaching and learning, providing sufficient instructional support, and fostering a culture of academic excellence.

On the other hand, the teachers' overall mean rating of 3.66, while also categorized as "Very High," presents a slightly more tempered view. Teachers appear to affirm that their school heads are performing well in their instructional roles, but their evaluations indicate a more grounded and experience-based perspective. The 0.32-point difference between the two groups, although both within the same qualitative range, highlights a subtle but meaningful perception gap. This discrepancy may suggest that while school heads believe their efforts are highly effective, some aspects of their leadership may not be fully experienced or valued by teachers in the same way. For instance, indicators related to professional development planning and classroom supervision may be implemented from the leaders' perspective but not always seen as relevant, impactful, or collaborative from the viewpoint of the teaching staff.

Such a gap, though not wide, should not be overlooked. It raises important questions about the visibility and inclusivity of leadership practices. Leadership efforts, even when well-intentioned and diligently executed, must be clearly communicated, consistently applied, and experienced as supportive by the stakeholders they are meant to serve. Teachers may desire a greater voice in decision-making, more personalized professional learning opportunities, or more transparent and constructive feedback during classroom observations. If not addressed, even minor perception gaps can affect teacher morale, engagement, and trust in leadership over time.

Nevertheless, the high overall ratings from both groups provide a strong foundation for school improvement. They suggest that instructional leadership is present, respected, and generally effective. To further enhance leadership practice, school heads may benefit from adopting more collaborative and reflective approaches, such as inviting regular feedback from teachers, involving staff in planning and evaluation processes, and aligning leadership initiatives more closely with classroom realities. By doing so, the instructional leadership landscape can shift from being not only high performing in design but also deeply resonant in practice, ensuring that leadership actions translate into meaningful instructional support and improved student learning outcomes.

The findings of this study are supported by a growing body of research. Detalla (2024) identified a strong positive relationship between instructional leadership capacity and teacher leadership in public elementary schools in Davao del Norte, reinforcing the idea that effective leadership fosters professional growth among teachers. Caingcoy (2021) found that management competencies, particularly in leading people, significantly predicted improved school performance in Surigao del Sur, aligning with this study's conclusion that leadership directly influences school outcomes. Battad (2024) observed a strong link between school heads' instructional leadership and teachers' self-efficacy in Zambales, suggesting that effective leaders build teacher confidence and competence.

Additionally, Caingcoy (2020) highlighted the practical challenges of implementing instructional leadership in El Salvador City, along with strategies school leaders use to navigate those challenges—providing valuable context for interpreting this study's results. Lastly, Fernandez and Tagadiad (2024) used Structural Equation Modeling to show that instructional leadership and work engagement significantly contribute to school effectiveness in the Davao Region, even when self-efficacy was not a direct predictor.

Table 2 presents a comparison of the perceived competencies of educational leaders (school heads) in human resource management and development. Both school heads and teachers rated the competencies as "Very High", indicating that leadership practices in this area are generally viewed as effective. The ratings

from school heads and teachers across all indicators reveal key strengths and highlight areas where there are slight discrepancies in perception.

Table 3: Mean competency levels of educational leaders in human resource management and development as perceived by themselves and their teachers

Indicators	School Heads' Rating		Teachers' Rating	
	$\bar{x}$	VI	$\bar{x}$	VI
The educational leaders/school heads…				
1. identify highly qualified teacher-applicants to facilitate learning in a productive and academically enriching classroom environment	4.00	Very High	3.59	Very High
2. stress accountability as a prominent conceptual lens that can be used to consider teacher quality	4.00	Very High	3.38	Very High
3. administer different types of qualifying tests for teacher positions	3.90	Very High	3.55	Very High
4. conduct structured interviews to determine the applicants most qualified for the position applied	4.00	Very High	3.67	Very High
5. organize committees assigned to eliminate or at least minimize prejudice or biases in selecting applicants	4.00	Very High	3.64	Very High
6. set hiring standards/criteria for the school used as a basis for evaluating applicants' qualifications	4.00	Very High	3.60	Very High
7. utilize a systematic evaluation procedure that considers all areas as knowledge, skills, attitude, and experience in the job	4.00	Very High	3.49	Very High
8. orient the successful appointee/s to the responsibilities specified in the designated position	4.00	Very High	3.49	Very High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.99	Very High	3.55	Very High

Legend: $\bar{x}$ = weighted mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; 3.26 - 4.00 = Very High; 2.51 - 3.25 = High; 1.76 - 2.50 = Low; 1.00 - 1.75 = Very Low

As shown in Table 3, the highest-rated competencies by both school heads and teachers were related to the recruitment and hiring process, particularly the ability to identify highly qualified teacher applicants

and the conducting of structured interviews. Both school heads and teachers rated the school heads' performance in identifying qualified applicants very highly, with school heads scoring 4.00 and teachers rating them at 3.59. This finding highlights the perception that school leaders are diligent in selecting teachers who are well-equipped to create productive and academically enriching classroom environments. The close ratings between the two groups indicate mutual acknowledgment of the effectiveness of recruitment processes, which are crucial to ensuring a highly competent teaching workforce. The ability to conduct structured interviews received a 4.00 rating from school heads and 3.67 from teachers, further confirming that both groups recognized the importance of a fair, systematic approach in selecting the best candidates for teaching positions.

Moreover, school heads' consistent self-ratings of 4.00 across various indicators, such as setting hiring standards/criteria, organizing committees to minimize bias, and orienting new appointees, pointed to a strong sense of leadership and responsibility in managing these processes.

For example, the ability to organize committees aimed at eliminating or reducing bias in applicant selection received a 4.00 rating from school heads and 3.64 from teachers. This suggests that school leaders were perceived to be actively fostering an equitable and unbiased recruitment environment. It is worth noting that the orientation of new appointees also received a rating of 3.49 from teachers, indicating that while teachers acknowledged the efforts to familiarize new staff with their roles and responsibilities, there may be some perceived need for improvements in the depth or consistency of orientation programs.

Another important area in HR management evaluated in this table was the use of a systematic evaluation procedure to assess applicants based on various factors such as knowledge, skills, attitude, and experience. This indicator received a 4.00 rating from school heads and 3.49 from teachers. While school heads were confident in the effectiveness of the evaluation process, teachers' slightly lower ratings may reflect the desire for a more comprehensive or transparent approach to performance evaluations. The emphasis on accountability as a lens for assessing teacher quality was also noted as a strong point, with a perfect self-rating of 4.00 by school heads and a 3.38 rating by teachers. This indicates that school leaders were perceived to value accountability in maintaining high teaching standards, although teachers' perceptions may suggest they felt some aspects of this principle could be better implemented or communicated.

The competency of school heads in setting hiring standards or criteria for evaluating applicants' qualifications also received Very High ratings: 4.00 from school heads and 3.60 from teachers. The perfect self-rating implies that school leaders strongly believed they had established clear, objective, and relevant criteria for hiring decisions. These standards likely included qualifications such as educational background, teaching experience, professional demeanor, and demonstrated instructional competence. Teachers' slightly lower rating, while still within the "Very High" range, may suggest a perceived need for greater transparency, consistency, or teacher involvement in the formulation or application of these criteria. Nevertheless, the high scores indicate that the hiring process was generally seen as well-structured and aligned with school goals.

The ability of school heads to administer different types of qualifying tests for teacher positions received the lowest ratings among the assessed indicators, 3.90 from school heads and 3.55 from teachers. These scores suggest that educational leaders perceived themselves as highly competent in implementing objective and varied testing methods as part of the teacher selection process. From the teachers' perspective, the "Very High" rating also indicated confidence in the fairness and rigor of these assessments, though the slightly lower score compared to the school heads' self-rating may reflect some variability in how consistently these assessments were applied or communicated across different school contexts. This

competency is crucial in ensuring that only qualified and competent candidates are hired, which directly impacts the overall quality of instruction in schools.

Despite the overall very high ratings, there were slight differences between the school heads' self-assessments and the teachers' evaluations across various indicators. This is expected in any evaluative process, as school heads tend to evaluate their own actions with greater confidence compared to external assessments. These minor discrepancies could reflect differences in perspective, where school heads may have a broader understanding of the complexity and challenges in human resource management, while teachers, who are on the receiving end of such policies, might emphasize the practical execution or the need for improvement in certain areas.

The overall weighted mean for the school heads' competency in human resource management was 3.99, which fell within the "Very High" range, as indicated by the scale. This rating reflects a high level of competency in handling various aspects of human resource management, such as recruitment, evaluation, and professional development processes. The school heads' self-ratings were consistently strong across the various indicators, which collectively contributed to this overall high score. School heads demonstrated a strong belief in their capacity to manage HR functions effectively, from the identification of qualified teacher-applicants to the orientation of newly appointed staff members.

On the other hand, the teachers' ratings, with an overall weighted mean of 3.55, also fell within the "Very High" range but were slightly lower than the school heads' self-ratings. This minor difference indicates that while teachers recognized the strong efforts of school heads in human resource management, there was a subtle divergence in how both groups viewed these competencies. The teachers' slightly lower rating suggests that, although they perceived their school leaders as generally effective in HR management, there may have been areas where they felt there was room for improvement or greater consistency in practices, particularly in areas such as the orientation process for new hires or the thoroughness of the evaluation procedures.

The 0.44 difference between the two ratings, though not large, suggests that teachers, while acknowledging the competencies of school leaders in HR management, may have been somewhat more critical or cautious in their evaluations. This modest discrepancy could be attributed to several factors, including the different perspectives each group holds regarding HR management practices.

For instance, school heads, who are directly responsible for overseeing the recruitment and evaluation processes, may have a broader and more strategic understanding of the HR functions, which could lead them to rate their performance higher. They are likely more aware of the intricate details involved in the hiring process, the formulation of standards, and the establishment of committees. On the other hand, teachers, who are the recipients of these processes, might rate them more critically, focusing on the practical outcomes of HR decisions, such as the quality of hired staff, the fairness of evaluations, and the clarity of communication regarding their professional development.

Another potential factor contributing to the mean difference is the teachers' perception of the implementation of HR processes. While school heads might feel confident in their ability to execute these tasks, teachers might perceive occasional gaps in execution, such as the thoroughness of new teacher orientation, the clarity of professional development alignment, or the transparency of performance evaluations. In particular, teachers rated the orientation of new appointees and the use of systematic evaluation procedures with slightly lower scores (3.49), indicating that these were areas where they felt there could be further improvement. Teachers may have felt that although these processes were in place, there was room for more clarity, consistency, or depth in their application.

Overall, the results revealed that educational leaders were generally perceived to be highly competent in human resource management, particularly in the recruitment, selection, and orientation of teachers. Both school heads and teachers rated the effectiveness of school leadership in managing these critical functions as very high, with a slight tendency for school heads to self-rate more positively. The findings underscore the importance of maintaining effective recruitment and evaluation systems, as well as ensuring the transparent and equitable treatment of teachers throughout the hiring and professional development processes. While the ratings suggest overall satisfaction with HR management practices, the areas with slightly lower ratings, such as teacher orientation and systematic evaluation, may provide opportunities for further improvement.

These findings are consistent with the study of Madamba, Julian, and Borja (2021), who emphasized the centrality of recruitment and selection in their development of a Capability Enhancement Plan (CEP) for school leaders. Their research advocated for continuous training to strengthen school heads' competencies in identifying candidates aligned with institutional goals. Similarly, Rivera (2023) highlighted the role of school leaders in fostering accountability, noting that while school heads often perceived themselves as effective in this regard, teachers desired clearer and more consistent performance expectations and career progression guidelines. This aligns with DepEd Order No. 007, s. 2022, which encourages the use of standardized tools and objective assessment in teacher hiring processes.

Further reinforcing the present study's findings, Aquino (2020) emphasized the necessity for fair, structured assessment procedures to ensure the recruitment of competent teaching personnel. The slight variations in ratings between school heads and teachers may reflect inconsistencies in the application of these procedures across different schools. Additionally, Tan and Gamboa (2024) found that structured interview techniques aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) contribute to greater transparency and fairness in selection practices. Bautista and De Guzman (2022) also noted that transformational leadership practices, such as collaborative hiring and inclusive decision-making, help foster trust and enhance perceptions of fairness in school environments.

Table 4 presents the mean competency levels of educational leaders in school leadership, management, and operations based on the perceptions of both school heads and their teachers. Notably, school heads rated themselves with a perfect mean of 4.00 across all eight indicators, indicating very high self-perceived competence in performing a broad range of administrative and leadership tasks. On the other hand, teachers gave slightly lower ratings, ranging from 3.47 to 3.65, though all still fall within the "Very High" range.

Table 4: Mean competency levels of educational leaders in school leadership, management and operations as perceived by themselves and their teachers

Indicators	School Heads' Rating		Teachers' Rating	
	$\bar{x}$	VI	$\bar{x}$	VI
The educational leaders/school heads…				
1. manifests transparency in every record and transaction to avoid conflict	4.00	Very High	3.52	Very High
2. cope with current innovations in education despite the foreseen limited resources	4.00	Very High	3.59	Very High

3. use conflict resolution processes to evaluate the best course of action from among a set of alternatives	4.00	Very High	3.57	Very High
4. implement moderation processes to help disparate groups align with school priorities	4.00	Very High	3.65	Very High
5. criticize teachers in a constructive manner	4.00	Very High	3.48	Very High
6. manage anger with calm composure	4.00	Very High	3.61	Very High
7. exercise sound judgment when faced with complex issues and problems	4.00	Very High	3.47	Very High
8. establish problem-solving processes which take into account the effectiveness of various alternatives	4.00	Very High	3.54	Very High
Overall Weighted Mean	4.00	Very High	3.56	Very High

Legend: $\bar{x}$ = weighted mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; 3.26 - 4.00 = Very High; 2.51 - 3.25 = High; 1.76 - 2.50 = Low; 1.00 - 1.75 = Very Low

As shown in Table 4, among the competencies assessed, teachers gave the highest rating (3.65) to the indicator of the school head's ability to implement moderation processes to align different groups with school priorities. This signifies a strong appreciation for the school leader's role in fostering collaboration and unity across different stakeholders. This includes managing divergent views and ensuring that various groups work together toward common school goals.

Similarly, high ratings were given to competencies such as coping with educational innovations despite limited resources (3.59) and employing conflict resolution processes (3.57). These scores reflect teachers' recognition of school heads as adaptive, resourceful leaders who can effectively navigate challenges and manage organizational or interpersonal tensions. Such qualities are especially vital in today's dynamic educational landscape, where innovation often must occur under resource constraints. While the ratings remain within the "Very High" range, the slightly lower scores compared to other competencies may indicate varying degrees of teacher involvement or awareness regarding how innovations are implemented and how conflicts are managed.

Moreover, competencies such as manifesting transparency in every record and transaction to avoid conflict were rated 4.00 by school heads and 3.52 by teachers, highlighting a shared commitment to ethical school governance. However, the gap in scores suggests a need for more inclusive and transparent communication to further build stakeholder trust. Complementing this, the competency of managing anger with calm composure also received a perfect score from school heads and a 3.61 from teachers, indicating that leaders are largely viewed as emotionally intelligent and capable of maintaining composure in high-stress situations, an essential trait for navigating the complexities of school leadership. Furthermore, establishes problem-solving processes that consider the effectiveness of various alternatives received ratings of 4.00 and 3.54, respectively. While school leaders believe they are implementing effective and well-considered solutions, teachers may be looking for more participatory or collaborative approaches to solving recurring school-level issues.

Despite these positive perceptions, the indicators that received relatively lower ratings, though still in the "Very High" category, point to areas where teacher perceptions were more reserved. Specifically, teachers rated exercising sound judgment when faced with complex issues (3.47) and criticizing teachers in a constructive manner (3.48) as the lowest. This may reflect concerns about the quality and tone of feedback or uncertainty about whether leaders consistently make decisions that consider all relevant factors or perspectives. Additionally, the gap between the school heads' perfect ratings and the slightly lower ratings from teachers may indicate a perception disconnect, where leaders view their actions more favorably than the people they serve.

The consistent 4.00 mean rating from school heads suggests strong confidence in their management capabilities and emotional intelligence, particularly in areas like anger management, problem-solving, and transparency. From their perspective, they are leading with integrity, composure, and rational judgment. However, the teachers' more nuanced responses suggest that while these qualities are evident, there may be occasional lapses or inconsistencies in how they are applied in daily operations. The overall teacher mean of 3.56, while still high, underscores that teachers may desire more openness in decision-making, more constructive communication, or greater inclusivity when complex issues arise.

These findings highlight that school heads are generally perceived as competent and effective leaders, particularly in navigating operational challenges and maintaining organizational integrity. However, they also point to specific developmental areas such as communication style, feedback delivery, and decision-making transparency, which may benefit from targeted leadership training or reflective practice. Enhancing these areas can help bridge the perception gap between school leaders and teachers, thereby fostering stronger trust, collaboration, and alignment toward shared school goals.

The overall weighted mean of 4.00 from the school heads indicates a very high self-perception of their competencies in school leadership, management, and operations. This perfect score reflects strong confidence in their ability to lead with integrity, resolve conflicts, innovate within limited resources, and make well-reasoned decisions. The uniformity of the 4.00 rating across all indicators suggests that school leaders believe they are performing at an optimal level in both the technical and interpersonal dimensions of their roles. It also implies that they view their leadership as both strategic and ethical, particularly in fostering transparency, collaboration, and sound decision-making processes.

In contrast, the teachers' overall weighted mean of 3.56, although still categorized as "Very High" based on the interpretation scale, is notably lower than the school heads' perfect self-rating of 4.00. This discrepancy, while not drastic, is meaningful and suggests that teachers may assess leadership effectiveness with more caution or critical discernment.

The 0.44-point gap between the two groups' ratings points to a perception divide, where school leaders may view their leadership practices as fully effective and aligned with best practices, while teachers perceive areas that could benefit from further development.

This divide may stem from differences in day-to-day experiences and expectations. While school heads operate at a strategic and administrative level, teachers interact more directly with the outcomes of leadership decisions in the classroom and staffroom. As a result, teachers may be more attuned to gaps in implementation, communication, or support. Specifically, the lower teacher ratings may reflect concerns about how consistently leadership practices, such as decision-making transparency, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution strategies, are applied and how inclusive those processes feel from the teachers' perspective.

This difference also reflects a broader trend observed in leadership evaluations: those in leadership positions often rate themselves more positively than the individuals they manage. The teachers' slightly lower ratings imply a call for greater responsiveness, more inclusive decision-making, and perhaps a more empathetic approach to staff relations. While the overall teacher rating remains very positive, it serves as an important reminder that effective leadership is not only about performing technical tasks well but also about how these actions are perceived and experienced by the wider school community.

Overall, the strong overall ratings from both groups affirm that educational leaders are largely seen as effective in managing school operations. However, the subtle gap in perception highlights an opportunity for reflective leadership practice, where school heads can engage more deeply with feedback from teachers to further strengthen mutual trust, communication, and shared vision within the school environment.

The findings are supported by Anub (2020) found that principals' instructional leadership significantly influences teacher satisfaction and overall school performance. This supports the high ratings in school leadership, management, and operations, particularly in areas such as decision-making and conflict resolution, which contribute to a positive work environment. Similarly, Ancho and Villadiego (2022) emphasized that effective Filipino school heads exhibit strong ethical leadership characterized by transparency, fairness, and open communication, qualities directly reflected in the top-rated indicators such as transparency in records and transactions and sound judgment.

In addition, Adto-Morallos (2022) explored the relationship between leadership qualities and school performance in Northern Samar. While the study did not find a statistically significant relationship, it highlighted that the presence of strong leadership traits can still influence the school environment in meaningful ways. Further supporting this, Tanucan et al. (2022) examined school heads' digital leadership during the pandemic and found that effective leadership in digital contexts positively impacted teacher job satisfaction. This aligns with the finding related to adaptability and innovation despite resource limitations, suggesting that the ability to manage evolving challenges is a valued leadership trait among teachers.

Finally, Dellomas and Deri (2022) assessed leadership practices among public school heads in Sorsogon and reported that effective leadership involves not only administrative efficiency but also emotional intelligence, particularly in handling conflict and criticism constructively. This reinforces the slightly lower ratings given by teachers on competencies such as providing constructive criticism and managing complex issues, indicating that while school heads generally perform well, there is room for growth in the interpersonal aspects of leadership.

Table 5 presents the composite table of the competency levels of educational leaders as assessed by themselves and by their teachers across three key domains: **Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management and Development**, and **School Leadership, Management, and Operations**. The purpose of this summary is to capture a primary view of leadership competency, as perceived from both leadership and instructional staff perspectives.

Table 5: Composite table of the competency levels of educational leaders

Competency Domains	School Heads' Rating		Teachers' Rating	
	$\bar{x}$	VI	$\bar{x}$	VI
1. Instructional Leadership	3.98	Very High	3.66	Very High
2. Human Resource Management and Development	3.99	Very High	3.55	Very High
3. School Leadership, Management and Operations	4.00	Very High	3.56	Very High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.99	Very High	3.59	Very High

Legend: $\bar{x}$ = weighted mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; 3.26 - 4.00 = Very High; 2.51 - 3.25 = High; 1.76 - 2.50 = Low; 1.00 - 1.75 = Very Low

The table revealed that school heads consistently rated themselves within the "Very High" range across all domains, with an overall weighted mean of 3.99. The teacher's assessment, while also falling within the "Very High" category, exhibits slightly more variation and consistently lower mean scores. The overall weighted mean from the teachers' perspective is 3.59, indicating a more moderate—though still favorable—view of leadership performance.

These findings illustrate that school heads perceive themselves as highly effective and consistent in their leadership responsibilities. Their self-assessments across all three domains are nearly uniform, with marginal variation: 3.98 for instructional leadership, 3.99 for human resource management, and a perfect 4.00 for school leadership and operations. This pattern may reflect a strong sense of self-efficacy, commitment, and confidence in their leadership responsibilities. It may also reflect their belief in maintaining a balanced approach to the multifaceted demands of school leadership, including administrative management, people development, and instructional supervision. However, the consistently lower teacher ratings across all areas reveal a perceptual gap—a divergence between how school leaders see their own performance and how it is experienced by those they lead.

This perceptual gap aligns with the findings of Valdez and Bautista (2024), who noted similar trends in their study on leadership perception in the Visayas. Their research revealed that while school heads often rate themselves highly, teachers tend to moderate their evaluations, particularly in areas involving decision-making transparency and participatory governance. The presence of this discrepancy does not necessarily imply poor performance but rather signals the importance of reflective practice and continuous feedback loops to ensure alignment between leadership intentions and staff perceptions.

Among the three domains, teachers rated instructional leadership the highest ($\bar{x}$ = 3.66), suggesting that leadership practices directly connected to teaching and learning—such as classroom supervision, pedagogical support, and performance motivation—are most apparent and impactful to faculty members. The elevated teacher rating in this domain may also reflect a greater visibility of leadership activities related to teaching and learning compared to more administrative functions. This is consistent with Delos Reyes and de Guzman (2021), who found that public school teachers in Luzon valued visible instructional support and noted improved teaching performance when leadership was proactive in academic matters. The prioritization of instructional leadership also aligns with the Department of Education's (2021)

Competency Framework for School Heads, which places instructional leadership at the forefront of school effectiveness.

On the other hand, the lowest teacher rating was observed in the domain of human resource management and development ($\bar{x}$ = 3.55). Although still categorized as "Very High," this suggests relative areas for improvement, particularly in practices such as staff recruitment, professional development, and performance appraisal, which are enacted and experienced. According to Garcia et al. (2023), teachers in public schools often desire greater transparency and participation in HR processes, especially in relation to hiring criteria, promotion, and capacity-building opportunities. The slightly lower ratings may reflect limited consultation or communication in these areas, signaling the need for more inclusive and systematized HR management strategies.

Interestingly, school heads rated themselves highest in school leadership, management, and operations ($\bar{x}$ = 4.00), indicating full confidence in their ability to manage resources, resolve conflicts, and maintain a well-functioning school environment. However, teachers' ratings in this domain ($\bar{x}$ = 3.56) suggest that while operational leadership is strong, its visibility and effectiveness from a teacher's standpoint may not be as uniformly perceived. As Reyes and Tolentino (2022) note, leadership effectiveness in operational management depends heavily on how school heads communicate decisions, involve stakeholders, and manage interpersonal dynamics within the school environment.

The consistent discrepancy between school heads' self-ratings and teachers' evaluations across all domains suggests a perceptual gap that, although not alarming in magnitude, warrants thoughtful attention. This gap may stem from several factors, such as differences in access to information, varying levels of engagement in decision-making processes, or contrasting expectations between leadership and staff. The lowest teacher rating in Human Resource Management and Development may reflect concerns regarding the transparency and inclusivity of personnel practices, such as recruitment, performance evaluation, and professional development alignment. Conversely, the relatively higher rating in Instructional Leadership implies that teachers may feel more directly impacted by leadership practices in this area, especially through classroom supervision and support.

Moreover, the consistently higher self-rates among school heads could also point to a potential self-assessment bias or a limited feedback loop within the leadership structure. Leaders may not be fully aware of how their behaviors, decisions, and systems are experienced on the ground by teaching staff. This reinforces the importance of promoting 360-degree feedback mechanisms, reflective practices, and participatory leadership models that allow leaders to receive constructive input and calibrate their self-perceptions with organizational realities.

In sum, the composite results affirm that educational leaders in the studied context generally meet or exceed the expectations of their roles across all measured domains, as both school heads and teachers rated these competencies "Very High." However, the slightly lower teacher ratings across each domain emphasize the need for leaders to be more attuned to the experiences and perceptions of their staff. They must not only possess technical and managerial competence but must also cultivate relational trust and open communication with their staff to ensure that leadership practices are not only implemented effectively but also perceived as fair, inclusive, and responsive. By embracing inclusive leadership practices and maintaining open channels for feedback and dialogue, educational leaders can further strengthen institutional coherence, teacher morale, and, ultimately, student learning outcomes.

These findings reinforce the relevance of the Department of Education's (2021) call for continuous professional development among school heads, particularly in areas such as participatory decision-making,

strategic communication, and ethical leadership. As Philippine schools continue to face complex demands, ranging from curriculum reforms to post-pandemic recovery, it is imperative that school leaders not only maintain strong core competencies but also remain open to feedback and adaptive in their leadership approach.

Problem 2: What is the level of teachers' professional growth as assessed by two groups of respondents with respect to capacity building, school learning action cell and faculty learning and engagement development?

This section presents the levels of teachers' professional growth as assessed by both school heads and teachers in three key dimensions: Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development. These dimensions highlight the extent of teachers' ongoing development and engagement in professional learning activities.

Table 6 presents the mean levels of teachers' professional growth in the domain of capacity building, as assessed by both school heads and teachers. The indicators reflect the opportunities for professional development and the impact these have on teaching practices, teacher collaboration, and self-reflection.

Table 6: Mean levels of teachers' professional growth in the domain of capacity building as assessed by themselves and their school heads

Indicators	School Heads' Rating		Teachers' Rating	
	$\bar{x}$	VI	$\bar{x}$	VI
1. The school administration provides opportunities for capacity building.	4.00	High	3.60	High
2. Teachers engage themselves in collaborative activities with your colleagues for professional growth.	3.95	High	3.70	High
3. The professional development activities and capacity-building opportunities positively influenced your teaching practices.	4.00	High	3.70	High
4. Involve reflective discussions on teaching methods and student outcomes, encouraging teachers to critically evaluate their practices.	4.00	High	3.70	High
5. Engage in self-assessment and self-reflection, leading to a deeper understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement.	3.95	High	3.66	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.98	High	3.67	High

Legend: $\bar{x}$ = weighted mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; 3.26 - 4.00 = High; 2.51 - 3.25 = Moderate; 1.76 - 2.50 = Low; 1.00 - 1.75 = Very Low

As shown in Table 6, all indicators fall under the "High" category (3.26 - 4.00) based on the verbal interpretation scale, with school heads giving slightly higher ratings than teachers. This slight difference in ratings across the indicators presents opportunities for a deeper analysis of the perceptions of school leaders and teachers.

Firstly, in terms of the provision of opportunities for capacity building, both school heads (4.00) and teachers (3.60) gave high ratings. This suggests that the school administration is perceived to offer ample opportunities for professional development. However, the slight discrepancy in ratings points to a potential gap in how school heads and teachers perceive the accessibility or participation in these opportunities, with teachers perhaps feeling that these opportunities could be more effectively communicated or implemented.

Regarding teachers' engagement in collaborative activities for professional growth, both school heads and teachers rated this highly, with school heads giving it 3.95 and teachers rating it at 3.70. These ratings suggest that professional growth through collaboration with colleagues is valued, and teachers are actively engaged in such activities. The slightly higher rating from teachers indicates that they may feel more involved in collaboration than school heads perceive, suggesting that school leaders may not always be fully aware of the depth of teacher engagement in these activities.

Regarding the impact of professional development on teaching practices, school heads and teachers rated this indicator highly, with school heads rating it at 4.00 and teachers at 3.70. The slight difference in ratings suggests that school heads might perceive professional development as having a stronger influence on teaching practices than teachers do. This could indicate that teachers may require more targeted or tailored professional development opportunities that more directly align with their classroom challenges.

Both school heads and teachers rated the involvement in reflective discussions on teaching methods and student outcomes highly, with school heads giving it 4.00 and teachers rating it 3.70. This reflects an encouragement of reflective practices, although the slight gap in ratings suggests that teachers may feel there are fewer or less structured opportunities for such discussions compared to school heads' perceptions. This indicates that while the initiative is present, its execution might need further refinement to ensure more inclusive and regular reflective sessions for teachers.

For self-assessment and self-reflection, both school heads and teachers rated this indicator highly as well, with school heads rating it 3.95 and teachers 3.66. This suggests that teachers and school heads both recognize the importance of reflection in fostering professional growth. However, the small difference between their ratings may suggest that teachers perceive fewer opportunities or more informal approaches to self-reflection compared to the structured processes school heads envision.

The overall weighted mean for the school heads' assessment of teachers' professional growth in the area of capacity building was 3.98, while the teachers' self-assessment yielded an overall mean of 3.67. Both values fall under the "High" category, indicating that, from both perspectives, there is a strong and consistent engagement in activities that promote teacher development. However, the noticeable difference of 0.31 between the two ratings is worth highlighting. This gap suggests a divergence in perception between what school leaders believe is being provided or achieved and what teachers actually experience in terms of professional growth.

From the perspective of school heads, the near-perfect score implies a high level of confidence in their efforts to implement and sustain capacity-building initiatives. This includes the provision of professional development programs, opportunities for reflective practice, and the encouragement of collaboration

among teachers. Their rating reflects the belief that existing systems and activities are sufficient to support ongoing teacher growth.

On the other hand, the teachers' slightly lower rating, though still high, may reflect a more nuanced experience. Teachers may recognize the availability of professional development opportunities but feel that these are either not always well-aligned with their actual needs or that access is inconsistent across staff. Some teachers may also perceive gaps in follow-through or support after professional development sessions, particularly in areas such as mentoring, peer learning, or feedback integration. Furthermore, the lower teacher rating might indicate that while they value capacity-building activities, they desire more active involvement in planning or tailoring these activities to address classroom realities more effectively. This difference of ratings between the two groups highlights a crucial insight: while school heads view the overall capacity-building efforts as highly successful, teachers' perceptions of the same activities are slightly more reserved. This could be due to several factors. First, there may be mismatches in expectations, where school heads might expect professional development activities to have a more immediate and wide-reaching impact, while teachers may feel that the activities do not always meet their personal teaching needs or those of their students. Teachers may also feel that the professional development programs could be more personalized or contextualized, ensuring that the training aligns with their specific teaching areas, grade levels, or subject matters.

Furthermore, teachers may perceive that follow-up support or guidance after professional development sessions is not always sufficient, which could hinder the full implementation of newly learned practices. The gap in the overall ratings could also reflect that teachers experience more barriers to participation or have less direct access to capacity-building opportunities compared to school heads. For example, teachers might face challenges like time constraints, lack of resources, or overburdened teaching schedules, which may prevent them from fully engaging in these professional growth activities.

These findings indicate that the school environment supports high levels of capacity building and professional development. However, the slight differences in perception highlight areas that could benefit from better communication, more inclusive collaboration, and more structured opportunities for reflection.

These results are supported by Madamba, Julian, and Borja (2021), who emphasized that well-structured and needs-based capacity-building programs significantly enhance teacher effectiveness. Similarly, Padolina-Alcantara (2023) and Valdez and Espiritu (2021) found that while professional development opportunities are often available, their impact is limited when they lack relevance to teachers' daily practice or fail to encourage active participation.

The importance of collaboration is reinforced by Dizon and Cortez (2020), whose study showed that peer collaboration improves teaching practices. In the current study, while teachers rated collaboration highly, the small gap in perception suggests it may not be sufficiently structured or actively promoted by school leadership.

Additionally, Reyes and Tan (2021) found that professional development tailored to individual needs has a stronger influence on teaching practices—echoing the teachers' desire for more personalized programs in this study. Hernandez and Molina (2022) highlighted the value of reflective practice, which aligns with current findings indicating support for reflection, though teachers seek more structured opportunities. Lastly, Santiago and Torres (2020) emphasized the role of guided self-assessment, pointing to the need for feedback and support—an area where teachers in this study indicated room for improvement.

Table 7 presents the mean levels of teachers' professional growth in the domain of School Learning Action Cells (SLACs), as assessed by both school heads and teachers. The SLAC serves as a structured in-service

training mechanism that fosters continuous professional development, collaboration, and reflective practice among teachers. The ratings provided by both groups fall within the "High" category, indicating strong recognition of the value of SLACs in fostering professional growth. However, there are slight differences in the ratings between school heads and teachers, suggesting varying perceptions of the impact of SLACs.

Table 7: Mean levels of teachers' professional growth in the domain of school learning action cell as assessed by themselves and their school heads

Indicators	School Heads' Rating		Teachers' Rating	
	$\bar{x}$	VI	$\bar{x}$	VI
The educational leaders/school heads…				
1. observed positive impact on student learning outcomes as a result of engagement in SLACs.	4.00	High	3.64	High
2. involvement in SLACs influenced teaching practices.	4.00	High	3.61	High
3. feel that participation in SLACs has contributed on professional growth.	4.00	High	3.66	High
4. provide a platform for teachers to collaborate with peers, sharing insights, strategies, and best practices.	3.95	High	3.66	High
5. facilitate the creation of professional networks, allowing teachers to connect with colleagues, mentors, and experts in the education field.	4.00	High	3.68	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.99	High	3.65	High

Legend: $\bar{x}$ = weighted mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; 3.26 - 4.00 = High; 2.51 - 3.25 = Moderate; 1.76 - 2.50 = Low; 1.00 - 1.75 = Very Low

As shown in Table 7, school heads rated all five indicators at either 4.00 or 3.95, signifying a very consistent perception of SLACs as a meaningful and effective component of teacher growth. In particular, school heads rated the impact of SLAC participation on teaching practices and student learning outcomes as **4.00**, suggesting their belief in the significant value of SLACs in driving educational improvements. Teachers provided slightly lower, yet still high, ratings ranging from **3.61 to 3.68**, indicating that they recognize the benefits of SLACs but may not experience them as uniformly as their school leaders perceive.

Specifically, both groups acknowledged the **positive impact of SLAC participation on teaching practices**, with school heads rating this at 4.00 and teachers at **3.64**. These ratings confirm that SLACs are more than just formal requirements, they are valued platforms for applying learned strategies to classroom instruction. While school heads gave a perfect score, indicating strong belief in the positive effects of

SLACs on student outcomes, teachers gave a slightly lower rating, possibly indicating that they perceive the impact as less immediate or less directly noticeable in their classrooms.

Additionally, both school heads (4.00) and teachers (3.61) agreed that SLACs influence teaching practices, though the slight difference in ratings suggests that teachers may feel the influence could be more pronounced or applicable to their daily teaching strategies. Supporting this, teachers rated their involvement in SLACs as contributing to their professional growth at 3.66, closely aligning with the school heads' perfect score of 4.00. This gap in enthusiasm may point to variability in the quality of SLAC implementation, the relevance of topics discussed, or the effectiveness of facilitation across different school contexts.

The provision of a platform for collaboration was also rated highly by both groups, with school heads giving it a 3.95 and teachers rating it 3.66. This shows that SLACs are seen as a useful opportunity for teachers to collaborate with peers and share strategies. However, the gap in ratings may indicate that teachers believe more structured or frequent collaboration opportunities could further enhance the collaborative aspect of SLACs.

The SLACs' role in fostering professional networking was also recognized, with school heads rating network facilitation at 4.00, while teachers rated at 3.68. These results highlight that SLACs offer important venues for teachers to exchange best practices, consult with peers, and build professional relationships. The slight differences in perception again suggest that while the structure is in place, teachers may desire even more active or targeted engagement within these sessions.

The overall weighted mean of 3.99 for school heads falls within the "High" category, indicating a strong belief that School Learning Action Cells (SLACs) significantly contribute to teachers' professional development. This rating reflects school heads' confidence in SLACs as effective tools for enhancing teaching practices, building professional networks, and ultimately improving student learning outcomes. It also suggests a clear alignment between school leaders' instructional goals and the activities conducted during SLAC sessions.

In comparison, the teachers' overall weighted mean of 3.65, while also categorized as "High," is slightly lower. This positive yet more reserved rating suggests that teachers recognize the value of SLACs but may feel the impact is less direct or consistent in their own classrooms. Teachers might perceive that SLAC outcomes are not always immediately applicable to their instructional challenges, or that session content could be more tailored to their specific professional needs.

The 0.34-point gap between the two groups reflects a consistent trend seen across professional development domains—school heads generally rate the effectiveness of such initiatives higher than teachers do. While this gap is not large enough to signal dissatisfaction, it highlights the importance of ensuring SLACs are not only well-structured but also contextually relevant, practical, and responsive to the evolving needs of classroom teachers.

Despite these differences, the high ratings from both groups affirm a shared recognition of the value of SLACs in fostering collaboration, improving instructional practice, supporting professional growth, and improving student learning outcomes. At the same time, the slight discrepancy presents an opportunity for school leaders to refine SLAC implementation, ensuring sessions are more teacher-driven, reflective of classroom realities, and designed to produce sustainable, long-term benefits.

These findings are consistent with studies by Moises and Maguate (2023) and Aquino et al. (2023), who emphasized that SLACs foster instructional improvement, peer mentoring, and collaborative problem-solving, but their effectiveness depends on facilitation quality, topic relevance, and active participation.

Similarly, Cangco (2021) highlighted SLACs as valuable platforms for sharing best practices and addressing teaching challenges, aligning with the high ratings given by both school heads and teachers in the present study. De Jesus (2020) also supported the role of SLACs in enhancing reflective teaching practices and improving classroom management and student outcomes.

Further, Santos (2022) found that SLACs help build professional communities and networks among teachers, though their success hinges on teacher engagement and topic relevance—echoing the slightly lower ratings from teachers. Finally, Garcia (2023) reported that active SLAC participation improves instructional practices and student outcomes but noted that sustained support and follow-up are needed to translate SLAC insights into classroom impact—paralleling the present study's call for continuous improvement.

Table 8: Mean levels of teachers' professional growth in the domain of faculty learning and engagement development as assessed by themselves and their school heads

Indicators	School Heads' Rating		Teachers' Rating	
	$\bar{x}$	VI	$\bar{x}$	VI
The educational leaders/school heads…				
1. inspire teachers to experiment with innovative instructional methods in their classrooms	3.95	High	3.60	High
2. gain access to educational resources, research findings, and materials that support ongoing learning	3.95	High	3.65	High
3. offer opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles within the group, developing their leadership skills	4.00	High	3.54	High
4. enhance teachers' facilitation skills as lead discussions, presentations, or collaborative activities	4.00	High	3.60	High
5. provide a supportive environment where teachers can share challenges, seek advice, and receive emotional support from colleagues facing similar issues	3.95	High	3.50	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.97	High	3.58	High

Legend: $\bar{x}$ = weighted mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; 3.26 - 4.00 = High; 2.51 - 3.25 = Moderate; 1.76 - 2.50 = Low; 1.00 - 1.75 = Very Low

Table 8 presents the mean levels of teachers' professional growth in the domain of Faculty Learning and Engagement Development, as assessed by both school heads and teachers. This domain reflects the extent

to which schools foster an environment that promotes continuous learning, instructional experimentation, collaboration, and leadership among faculty members.

As revealed in Table 8, both school heads and teachers rated this domain within the "High" category, with school heads assigning scores between 3.95 and 4.00, and teachers rating it slightly lower, between 3.50 and 3.65. These results indicate strong recognition of the importance of faculty learning and engagement in promoting professional growth.

In terms of encouraging teachers to experiment with innovative instructional methods, school heads gave a rating of 3.95, while teachers rated it at 3.60. This indicates that innovation in teaching is being promoted, though teachers may seek more support, resources, or structured opportunities to implement and evaluate such innovations effectively. The data may also imply that while the encouragement exists, not all teachers feel fully equipped or confident to take pedagogical risks.

Access to educational resources and research findings was also rated high by both groups, with school heads assigning a mean of 3.95 and teachers 3.65. This suggests that schools make an effort to provide access to relevant learning materials, though teachers may perceive inconsistencies in availability or accessibility. The slightly lower rating from teachers may also reflect the need for better orientation or training on how to utilize these resources for instructional improvement.

Regarding opportunities for leadership development among teachers, school heads gave the highest possible score (4.00), indicating strong confidence in their efforts to develop leadership within the teaching faculty. However, teachers rated this slightly lower at 3.54, implying that although leadership opportunities may be provided, these are either not reaching all teachers equally or not always recognized as meaningful developmental experiences. This difference in perception suggests a need for clearer pathways and recognition mechanisms for teacher leadership roles.

The development of facilitation skills through participation in presentations and collaborative activities was also well-rated, with school heads again assigning a perfect 4.00 and teachers rating it at 3.60. Teachers' responses indicate appreciation for these opportunities but also suggest that not all may feel equally confident or supported in taking on facilitative roles, pointing to a potential area for additional mentoring or structured practice.

Finally, both groups acknowledged the importance of a supportive, collegial environment. School heads rated this aspect at 3.95, while teachers gave the lowest rating in the set at 3.50. This gap may reflect a disconnect between what school leaders intend to provide and what teachers actually experience in terms of emotional and peer support. It suggests that while efforts are made to cultivate a supportive culture, teachers may still encounter barriers to open communication or feel hesitant to share personal and professional challenges.

The overall weighted mean for school heads is 3.97, and for teachers, it is 3.58, both of which fall in the "High" category. These results suggest that both school heads and teachers perceive the faculty learning and engagement development opportunities positively, with school heads slightly rating these activities higher than teachers. The higher rating from school heads suggests that they perceive the efforts and structures for faculty learning and engagement as more successful or impactful than teachers do. School heads might feel confident in their leadership and the opportunities they provide for professional development. This could include organizing events, offering resources, or encouraging a collaborative school culture.

On the other hand, teachers, while still providing a "high" rating, may view these efforts as beneficial but could feel that certain areas could be improved. The slight difference indicates that teachers may perceive some gaps in the support or opportunities offered. For example, they might feel that the resources provided

for professional growth are not as tailored to their specific needs, or they may want more consistent and structured opportunities for leadership roles within the school.

Additionally, teachers might feel that emotional support or the chance to openly discuss challenges within a safe environment is not always adequately facilitated. While school heads rate the supportive environment highly, teachers might desire more frequent, direct engagement or formalized systems for feedback and emotional support, which would further enrich their learning and engagement opportunities.

The mean difference of 0.39 between school heads and teachers continues the trend seen in earlier domains: school leaders generally hold more favorable views of their support systems than teachers themselves do. This difference underscores the importance of regularly engaging teachers in dialogue to validate their experiences and co-create improvements in professional learning environments.

In sum, the high ratings from both school heads and teachers indicate that faculty learning and engagement activities are largely seen as beneficial, but the difference between the two groups' perceptions suggests that there is room for growth. The gap in ratings offers valuable insights for school leaders to consider, particularly in providing more targeted, accessible resources and strengthening opportunities for teacher leadership and emotional support.

These findings are consistent with Torrato et al. (2023), who emphasized the importance of teacher agency and leadership in sustaining professional development programs. Similarly, Pineda Jr. et al. (2023) found that empowerment and engagement flourish in schools that foster collaboration and provide structured support and recognition—elements that may need strengthening in the schools assessed.

Kim and Kim (2020) noted that access to resources and opportunities to explore innovative teaching practices significantly enhance teacher development. This is echoed in the current study, where both groups rated such opportunities highly, confirming their relevance to instructional improvement.

Leadership opportunities were also recognized as important. Garcia (2021) highlighted the benefits of teacher leadership for skill-building and ownership. While school heads rated this aspect at the highest level (4.00), teachers' lower score (3.54) suggests that these opportunities might not be as diverse or accessible as intended.

Collaborative practices emerged as another strong theme. Delgado and Rabago (2022) emphasized that collaboration drives professional growth and student achievement. The high ratings for indicators related to networking and teacher collaboration support this finding.

Lastly, Reyes and Tan (2023) stressed the role of emotional support and peer mentoring. Although both groups rated the supportive environment positively (3.95 from school heads, 3.50 from teachers), the data suggest that more consistent and structured emotional support could enhance teachers' well-being and instructional confidence.

Table 9 exhibits the composite table of the levels of teachers' professional growth across three core domains: Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development. The data reflects both school heads' and teachers' assessments, offering a two-fold perspective on how schools implement and experience professional development programs.

Table 9: Composite table of teachers' professional growth

Professional Growth Dimensions	School Heads' Rating		Teachers' Rating	
	$\bar{x}$	VI	$\bar{x}$	VI
1. Capacity Building	3.98	High	3.67	High
2. School Learning Action Cell	3.99	High	3.65	High
3. Faculty Learning and Engagement Development	3.97	High	3.58	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.98	High	3.63	High

Legend: $\bar{x}$ = weighted mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; 3.26 - 4.00 = High; 2.51 - 3.25 = Moderate; 1.76 - 2.50 = Low; 1.00 - 1.75 = Very Low

As presented in Table 9, all three dimensions received mean scores within the "High" category from both groups, indicating a consistent and institutionally supported culture of professional growth. The overall weighted mean was 3.98 from school heads and 3.63 from teachers. This convergence in perception validates the presence of systematic and ongoing efforts to strengthen teacher competence, encourage collaboration, and promote reflective teaching practices. However, the consistent pattern of higher ratings from school heads across all areas indicates perceptual differences in how professional development efforts are designed versus how they are experienced and internalized by teachers.

In the area of Capacity Building, school heads gave a mean rating of 3.98, while teachers provided a slightly lower rating of 3.67. This dimension received a weighted mean of 3.98 from school heads and 3.67 from teachers. The high ratings from both groups reflect the prevalence of in-service training, workshops, seminars, and mentoring programs that are designed to address both individual teacher needs and school-wide goals. However, the modest difference in perception suggests that while opportunities are being provided, some teachers may feel that these do not always align with their specific instructional challenges, content areas, or career development goals. According to Delos Reyes and Dizon (2022), professional development must be grounded in teachers' actual classroom realities, with activities differentiated by subject expertise, grade level, and learner diversity.

Moreover, teachers may face barriers to full participation in capacity-building activities, such as time constraints, competing workload demands, or lack of post-training support. These factors can affect how teachers internalize and apply new knowledge and skills. As such, schools should not only provide opportunities but also monitor the relevance, accessibility, and application of these learning experiences.

For the domain of School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), school heads assigned the highest mean rating of 3.99, while teachers rated it at 3.65. This highlights the value attributed to SLACs as a mechanism for collaborative learning and professional discourse are being implemented and appreciated. They foster a participatory culture where teachers discuss instructional strategies, solve problems collectively, and share best practices.

However, the difference in perception highlights a potential area for refinement. Teachers may experience SLACs as being overly administrative, lacking in depth, or disconnected from real instructional issues if sessions are not well-planned or sustained. Research by Flores and Mendoza (2021) shows that SLACs are more effective when they are teacher-driven, flexible, and focused on solving context-specific

challenges. Therefore, empowering teachers to co-lead and co-design SLAC sessions may enhance ownership and engagement.

Additionally, the impact of SLACs on classroom practices and student outcomes should be systematically monitored. Without such mechanisms, SLACs risk becoming routine compliance activities rather than transformative learning opportunities.

The domain of Faculty Learning and Engagement Development received a mean of 3.97 from school heads and 3.58 from teachers. This sub-variable includes support for innovation, leadership development, and the creation of emotionally supportive professional spaces. While still categorized as "High," this domain had the largest perceptual gap between the two groups. School heads may perceive the faculty environment as nurturing and participatory, but teachers might experience limitations in support structures, autonomy, or genuine recognition of their leadership capacities.

This is supported by Tolentino and De Vera (2021), who emphasize the need for structured opportunities for teachers to lead, innovate, and collaborate in ways that go beyond tokenistic involvement. Teachers thrive when they are encouraged to experiment with instructional strategies without fear of judgment, when their mental and emotional well-being is supported, and when professional conversations are framed within trust-based relationships. The somewhat lower rating from teachers may indicate that while systems are in place, their depth and consistency need to be enhanced.

The overall weighted mean of 3.98 from school heads and 3.63 from teachers signifies a strong institutional emphasis on teacher professional development. The uniformly high ratings across all dimensions demonstrate that schools are implementing well-structured initiatives aimed at enhancing teacher competence, collaboration, and engagement. However, the consistent pattern of higher self-ratings from school heads compared to those of teachers suggests the presence of perceptual gaps in the actual experience and impact of these programs.

These findings align with those of Garcia et al. (2023), who observed that while school leaders often believe their professional development systems are well-functioning, the impact felt by teachers may vary depending on factors such as time constraints, relevance of content, and degree of teacher involvement in planning. Bridging this perception gap requires greater dialogue, feedback mechanisms, and teacher voice in decision-making related to professional learning programs.

Problem 3: Is there a significant difference on the educational leaders' competencies as assessed by two groups of respondents?

This section presents a comparative analysis of the perceived competency levels of educational leaders, as evaluated by school heads themselves and by their teachers. The primary aim was to determine whether there were significant differences in how school heads assess their own leadership competencies compared to how these competencies are perceived by their teaching staff. Table 10 displays the results of an independent samples t-test conducted to assess differences in perception across three key leadership domains: Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations.

Table 10: Differences between school heads' and teachers' assessments of educational leaders' competency levels

Variables	Mean Rating		t value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
	School Heads	Teachers				
Instructional Leadership	3.98	3.66	3.333	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant
Human Resource Management	3.99	3.55	4.840	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
School Leadership, Management and Operations	4.00	3.56	4.288	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: $p < 0.05$

As shown in Table 10, in the area of Instructional Leadership, school heads rated their own competency at 3.98, which falls in the "Very High" range, while teachers rated them lower at 3.66, which still falls within the "Very High" range but is slightly lower. The t-value of 3.333 and the p-value of 0.001 indicate a significant difference between the two groups. This finding suggests that school heads generally perceive themselves to be more competent in instructional leadership than their teachers perceive them to be.

This disparity may reflect differing experiences or expectations regarding how instructional leadership is enacted. School heads may feel confident in their strategies for classroom monitoring, feedback, and instructional support. However, teachers might perceive these strategies as less personalized, less consistent, or not fully addressing their specific needs in practice.

The competency ratings for Human Resource Management show a similar trend. School heads rated themselves at 3.99, a very high score, while teachers rated them at 3.55, which is still considered high but lower than the self-assessment. The t-value of 4.840 and the p-value of 0.000 confirm that the difference is statistically significant. This suggests that while school heads perceive themselves as highly effective in areas such as recruitment, selection, performance evaluation, and teacher support, teachers view these efforts with more reservation.

School heads may see their human resource practices as formalized, equitable, and well-structured. However, teachers might feel left out of decision-making processes or may perceive favoritism, lack of transparency, or inadequate support for career development. Some may feel excluded from key HR decisions or believe that support for career advancement is uneven or insufficient. Furthermore, teachers may find that professional development initiatives, while available, do not always align with their specific needs or challenges.

In the domain of School Leadership, Management, and Operations, school heads gave themselves a perfect rating of 4.00, indicating a strong sense of confidence in their ability to manage school operations, lead the school community, and make sound decisions. In contrast, teachers rated this domain at 3.56—still within the "Very High" category, but significantly lower. The t-value of 4.288 and p-value of 0.000 confirm that the difference is statistically significant.

This domain includes key functions such as transparency, conflict resolution, decision-making, and overall organizational management. The perceptual gap may reflect differences in how leadership is enacted

versus how it is experienced. School heads may feel assured in their administrative strategies and decision-making processes, believing they ensure smooth operations and address challenges effectively. However, teachers may experience these same decisions as top-down, with limited opportunities for input or collaboration.

Teachers' slightly lower ratings could also signal concerns about transparency, inclusiveness, and communication in leadership practices. They may feel that decisions affecting the school community are not always clearly communicated or that their roles in school operations are underutilized. This suggests a need for more participatory leadership approaches that actively involve teachers in planning, decision-making, and problem-solving processes. Moreover, teachers may be less aware of behind-the-scenes processes, or they may experience leadership decisions as top-down rather than participative.

To sum up, the findings demonstrate a consistent pattern: school heads tend to overestimate their leadership effectiveness compared to the assessments of their teaching staff. These findings have important implications. Perception gaps can hinder collaboration, lower trust, and reduce the overall impact of school leadership initiatives. A feedback-rich culture is necessary to realign self-perceptions with those of the broader school community. Encouraging open dialogue, peer review, and 360-degree feedback mechanisms can help bridge this divide and promote mutual understanding and growth.

Moreover, the significant differences underscore the need for reflective leadership, where school heads regularly seek feedback, evaluate their own practices against teacher experiences, and adjust leadership strategies accordingly. Doing so will not only enhance their credibility but also strengthen professional relationships and foster a more inclusive and responsive school climate.

These findings suggest that school leaders must engage in more open communication and seek regular feedback from teachers to understand their experiences and perceptions better. There is a need for greater collaboration between school heads and teachers, where teachers are involved in decision-making and feel that their voices are heard. Additionally, professional development programs should be tailored to meet the specific needs of teachers, and there should be more focus on supporting teachers both emotionally and professionally. By addressing these areas, school leaders can work towards improving their leadership effectiveness, fostering a more positive school climate, and ultimately enhancing student outcomes.

Several studies provide valuable context for the discrepancies observed between school heads' self-assessments and teachers' perceptions of leadership competencies. Sebuyana (2024) emphasized that school heads often overestimate their abilities, particularly in Instructional Leadership and Human Resource Management—areas where this study also found significant perception gaps. Similarly, Padolina-Alcantara (2023) noted that while school leaders rate themselves highly in digital integration, teachers report lower satisfaction, mirroring the differences seen in the School Leadership, Management, and Operations domain.

Volante et al. (2025) further highlighted that although school heads express confidence in resource and technology management, teachers often feel disconnected from these efforts, reinforcing the gap seen in Table 7. Galero (2024) also found that school leaders tend to overrate their supervisory and tech-integration skills, while teachers find support lacking—again aligning with the current findings. Finally, Reyes et al. (2023) stressed the importance of 21st-century leadership skills such as collaboration and adaptability, yet the perception gap between school leaders and teachers suggests that these competencies may not be fully realized in practice.

Problem 4: Is there a significant difference in the level of teachers' professional growth as assessed by the two groups of respondents?

This section presents a comparative analysis of school heads' and teachers' assessments of teachers' professional growth levels across the domains of Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development, as shown in Table 11. The analysis aims to determine whether there are significant differences in their perceptions, highlighting both points of convergence and notable areas of disparity. The results that follow provide a detailed look at how each group evaluated these domains, identifying where perceptions align and where statistically significant gaps suggest differing experiences or expectations regarding professional development.

Table 11: Differences between school heads' and teachers' assessments of teachers' professional growth levels

Variables	Mean Rating		t value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
	School Heads	Teachers				
Capacity Building	3.98	3.67	3.692	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
School Learning Action Cell	3.99	3.65	3.171	0.002	Reject Ho	Significant
Faculty Learning and Engagement Development	3.97	3.58	3.548	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: $p < 0.05$

As presented in Table 11, there is a significant difference between school heads' and teachers' ratings on capacity building, with school heads giving a mean of 3.98, indicating a high level of perceived implementation and impact. In contrast, teachers gave a mean score of 3.67, reflecting a more modest perception of how well capacity-building activities met their needs. The resulting t-value of 3.692 and a p-value of 0.000 indicate a statistically significant difference. This suggests that while school heads believe they are providing sufficient capacity-building opportunities, teachers may feel these opportunities are not as impactful or sufficiently aligned with their professional needs. This gap may reflect differences in expectations or in how these opportunities are experienced, highlighting a need to reassess how professional development activities are planned, delivered, and evaluated from the teachers' perspective.

In School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) activities, school heads reported a mean score of 3.99, reflecting strong confidence in the effectiveness and implementation of these sessions. Teachers, however, rated this area lower at 3.65, indicating a more cautious assessment. The t-value of 3.171 and p-value of 0.002 confirm that the difference is statistically significant. While SLACs are intended to promote collaborative professional learning and are mandated under DepEd's continuous improvement framework, this gap suggests that teachers may not be fully experiencing their intended benefits. Factors such as the relevance of content, quality of facilitation, and lack of sustained follow-up may hinder the effectiveness of SLACs from the teachers' perspective. This highlights the need to better align SLAC agendas with the real instructional challenges faced in classrooms and to foster greater teacher involvement in the planning and delivery of these sessions.

Similarly, school heads rated faculty learning and engagement at 3.97, while teachers rated it lower at 3.58, showing the largest perceptual gap among the three domains. The t-value of 3.548 and p-value of 0.000 confirm this difference as statistically significant. This significant difference may indicate that while leadership believes sufficient opportunities exist for teacher engagement and innovation, teachers may not feel adequately supported or recognized in these roles. This reinforces the need to improve support systems and to more clearly define and communicate pathways for professional learning and leadership within the school.

In sum, the significant discrepancies across all three domains—capacity building, school learning action cell (SLAC), and faculty learning and engagement development—highlight a consistent trend: school heads perceive that ample, high-quality professional development opportunities are being provided, while teachers, the intended beneficiaries, rate these efforts more modestly. This perception gap has important implications for leadership practices, teacher morale, and the overall effectiveness of professional development programs in schools.

One possible explanation for this gap is the difference in vantage points. School heads may focus on the implementation of programs, activities, and compliance with DepEd policies, while teachers assess these programs based on their practical relevance, personal impact, and long-term benefits to their instructional practices. For instance, a school leader may view the conduct of a seminar or workshop as a success based on attendance and content delivery, while teachers may judge its success on how applicable and sustained the learnings are in their day-to-day teaching.

Another critical implication is the need for stronger feedback loops between teachers and school heads. The disconnect in ratings suggests that teachers may not feel heard or may not have adequate opportunities to evaluate the initiatives that directly affect their professional growth. Embedding systematic feedback mechanisms and involving teachers in planning and decision-making about professional development could significantly enhance both participation and perceived effectiveness.

Moreover, the difference in the assessment of faculty learning and engagement development—the domain with the widest gap (mean difference of 0.39)—may suggest that opportunities for leadership roles, innovation, and collegial support are not consistently communicated or fairly distributed. This could hinder motivation and innovation, particularly among early-career or less vocal teachers who might feel overlooked.

From a policy and leadership development perspective, these findings reinforce the importance of adaptive leadership and transformational practices. School heads must go beyond procedural execution and begin to personalize and contextualize professional development to ensure that all teachers—regardless of experience or subject area—feel that their growth is genuinely supported and recognized.

The significant differences in school heads' and teachers' assessments of professional growth reflect broader trends identified in existing research. Chin et al. (2022) found that while administrators often believe professional development is adequate, teachers face barriers such as time constraints, heavy workloads, and limited support, mirroring the disparity seen in the Capacity Building domain.

Similarly, Laguna et al. (2022) reported that teacher resistance often stems from lack of consultation and relevance, which may explain the lower teacher ratings for SLACs. Although designed to be collaborative, SLACs may not always align with teachers' actual needs. Finally, Olarte and Tagadiad (2025) emphasized the role of leadership styles in shaping teacher engagement; their findings support the gap observed in Faculty Learning and Engagement Development, where teachers may feel under-supported due to limited individualized mentorship or recognition.

Problem 5: Is there a significant relationship between the educational leaders' competencies and teachers' professional growth and development?

This study investigated the correlation between the competencies of educational leaders in key areas—specifically instructional leadership, human resource management, and school leadership, management, and operations—and various aspects of teachers' professional growth and development. These areas of teachers' development included capacity building, participation in School Learning Action Cells (SLAC), and faculty learning and engagement initiatives. To assess the strength and significance of the relationships between these variables, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used as the primary statistical tool. This approach aimed to provide insights into how the effectiveness of educational leadership practices influenced the professional growth of teachers, which was critical for fostering an environment of continuous learning and improvement in schools.

Table 11 presents the results of the correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between educational leaders' competency in instructional leadership and various aspects of teachers' professional growth and development. Specifically, the analysis focused on three key areas of teachers' professional development: capacity building, participation in the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and faculty learning and engagement development.

Table 12: Correlation analysis between the educational leaders' competency in instructional leadership and teachers' professional growth and development.

Teachers' Professional Growth and Development	Pearson r	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Capacity Building	0.692	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
School Learning Action Cell	0.727	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Faculty Learning and Engagement Development	0.760	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: $p < 0.05$

The results presented in Table 12 indicate significant positive correlations between school heads' competencies in instructional leadership and teachers' professional growth in the areas of Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development. The correlation coefficients range from moderate to strong, suggesting that the more competent school heads are in instructional leadership, the more likely they are to positively influence teachers' professional development in these domains.

The correlation coefficient for Capacity Building is 0.692, which is considered a moderately strong positive relationship. This suggests that school heads who exhibit high levels of competency in instructional leadership are more successful in creating opportunities for teachers to engage in professional development. This includes organizing workshops, seminars, and other initiatives that focus on enhancing teachers' skills and knowledge. The p-value of 0.000 confirms the statistical significance of this relationship, indicating that the positive correlation is not due to random chance, but instead reflects a meaningful pattern in the data. School heads who demonstrate instructional leadership can align professional

development programs with both school priorities and teachers' individual needs, ultimately contributing to their capacity building.

In the domain of School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), the correlation coefficient rises slightly to 0.727, indicating a stronger positive relationship. This finding reveals that instructional leadership is integral to facilitating teacher collaboration and engagement in professional learning communities. School leaders who are effective in instructional leadership create the right conditions for teachers to work together, share best practices, discuss challenges, and learn from one another. This is particularly significant because SLACs provide a platform for collaborative learning, which has been shown to improve teaching practices and, consequently, student outcomes. The p-value of 0.000 again supports the significance of this correlation, reinforcing the idea that school leaders who are skilled in instructional leadership actively encourage and support teacher collaboration.

The strongest correlation (0.760) is observed in the domain of Faculty Learning and Engagement Development, where school heads' instructional leadership competencies appear to have the most pronounced impact on teachers' professional growth. This high correlation suggests that effective school leaders not only facilitate the development of teachers' technical skills but also inspire teachers to innovate, take on leadership roles, and engage in reflective practices. Teachers in schools led by strong instructional leaders feel more supported and empowered to experiment with new teaching strategies, take on leadership responsibilities within the school, and contribute to school-wide educational goals. The p-value of 0.000 further substantiates the robustness of this relationship, highlighting the pivotal role of instructional leadership in creating an environment conducive to ongoing professional growth for teachers.

Simply put, the results consistently highlight instructional leadership as a significant and positive contributor to teachers' professional growth across all three domains: Capacity Building, SLAC, and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development. These findings underscore the pivotal role of school heads in areas such as instructional planning, supervision, curriculum management, and teacher support. Instructional leaders do more than oversee daily operations—they actively shape and enhance the professional learning experiences of their teaching staff.

The statistically significant correlations observed suggest that school leaders with strong instructional leadership competencies are instrumental in fostering environments that support continuous professional development. This aligns with the broader theoretical perspective that effective instructional leadership not only strengthens teaching practices but also positively impacts student learning outcomes.

These findings align with previous studies that emphasize the critical role of instructional leadership in fostering teacher development. For instance, Tayag and Ayuyao (2020) noted that school heads who are effective in instructional leadership significantly influence teachers' professional growth by facilitating structured opportunities for learning. Similarly, Kilag and Sasan (2023) found that school leaders who prioritize teacher collaboration and reflective practices contribute to the professional development of their teaching staff.

Furthermore, Ytem (2023) observed that when school leaders set shared goals for instructional improvement, teachers are more likely to invest in their own professional growth, which aligns with the positive correlations observed in this study. Lastly, Anub (2020) reinforced that instructional leadership directly impacts teacher satisfaction and engagement in professional development activities, echoing the findings of this study.

Table 13 presents the correlation analysis results that examine the relationship between educational leaders' competency in Human Resource Management (HRM) and three key areas of teachers' professional

growth and development: capacity building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) participation, and faculty learning and engagement development. The analysis used Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) to assess the strength and direction of these relationships, while the p-value indicates the statistical significance of the correlations.

Table 13: Correlation analysis between the educational leaders' competency in human resource management and teachers' professional growth and development

Teachers' Professional Growth and Development	Pearson r	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Capacity Building	0.820	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
School Learning Action Cell	0.711	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Faculty Learning and Engagement Development	0.733	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: $p < 0.05$

As shown in Table 13, all three indicators of teachers' professional growth and development, Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development, showed strong and statistically significant positive correlations with educational leaders' competency in HRM. The results affirm that effective human resource management by school leaders plays a vital role in promoting the professional development of teachers.

The strongest correlation was found between HRM competency and Capacity Building, with a Pearson r value of 0.820, indicating a very strong positive relationship. This suggests that when school leaders exhibit strong HRM skills—such as talent identification, staff development planning, mentoring, and constructive performance evaluation—teachers benefit significantly in terms of developing their professional competencies. Capacity building refers to efforts aimed at enhancing teachers' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and readiness to improve instructional practice. Effective HRM ensures that teachers are provided with appropriate development opportunities, resources, and support systems, ultimately contributing to a more skilled and confident teaching workforce.

A strong positive correlation was also observed between HRM competency and the effectiveness of School Learning Action Cells (SLACs), with a Pearson r value of 0.711. SLACs are essential platforms in the Philippine educational system for continuous professional development, collaborative learning, and reflective practice among teachers. The data suggests that leaders who are skilled in HRM are more likely to facilitate well-organized and impactful SLAC sessions. These leaders demonstrate the ability to manage people, time, and resources effectively—creating conditions in which SLACs are not just routine requirements but meaningful opportunities for professional dialogue and growth. Through effective HR planning and time allocation, leaders ensure that SLACs are prioritized and integrated into the school's professional development agenda.

The correlation between HRM competency and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development was also found to be strong, with a Pearson r value of 0.733. This indicates that leaders who manage human resources well also tend to cultivate a culture of professional engagement among teachers. They are more likely to support participation in external training, workshops, graduate studies, action research, and other

development initiatives. These leaders provide not only logistical and financial support but also emotional and motivational encouragement, ensuring that teachers remain committed to lifelong learning. The ability of school leaders to engage teachers and motivate them to actively participate in their own growth underscores the transformational nature of HRM in education.

All three correlations are statistically significant at the 0.05 level (p = 0.000), which means the observed relationships are highly unlikely to be due to chance. These findings validate the central premise that human resource management is not just an administrative task but a strategic leadership function with direct implications for teacher development.

To sum up, the correlation analysis revealed that Human Resource Management (HRM) practices implemented by educational leaders have a significant and positive influence on key aspects of teachers' professional growth and development. Specifically, HRM emerged as a critical driver in enhancing capacity building, facilitating teacher collaboration through School Learning Action Cells (SLACs), and promoting faculty learning and engagement. These results underscore the pivotal role of effective HRM in cultivating a supportive, growth-oriented school environment that ultimately contributes to improved educational outcomes.

The findings support the principles of human capital theory, which asserts that investment in the development of individuals—in this case, teachers—leads to increased institutional effectiveness. When educational leaders strategically manage human resources, they are, in effect, building the school's human capital, resulting in improved instructional quality and student performance. Additionally, the results are aligned with distributed leadership theory, which emphasizes the collective responsibility of leadership in managing and developing people across the organization.

From a practical standpoint, the findings highlight the urgent need for school leaders to strengthen their HRM competencies. Areas such as strategic planning for professional development, fostering teacher collaboration, and ensuring continuous, relevant learning opportunities should be prioritized. Leadership development programs should place greater emphasis on core HRM functions, including teacher recruitment, performance management, and the establishment of a school culture that values professional learning and growth.

These findings align with the research of Acuña and Ancho (2020), who emphasized that robust human resource management (HRM) practices—such as offering meaningful professional development and aligning individual teacher goals with broader school objectives, play a crucial role in supporting teacher growth.

Similarly, Sta. Catalina (2023) highlighted the importance of HRM in fostering professional learning communities and promoting collaboration among teachers, further reinforcing the connection between effective HRM and sustained professional development. In the same vein, Kilag and Sasan (2021) stressed that well-structured HRM systems not only motivate educators but also provide the necessary tools, resources, and support structures to enhance both instructional effectiveness and ongoing professional growth.

Table 14 presents the correlation analysis results that assess the relationship between educational leaders' competency in School Leadership, Management, and Operations (SLMO) and various aspects of teachers' Professional Growth and Development: capacity building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) participation, and faculty learning and engagement development. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the strength and direction of these relationships, while the p-value was used to assess statistical significance.

Table 14: Correlation analysis between the educational leaders' competency in school leadership, management and operations and teachers' professional growth and development.

Teachers' Professional Growth and Development	Pearson r	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Capacity Building	0.807	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
School Learning Action Cell	0.775	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Faculty Learning and Engagement Development	0.871	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: $p < 0.05$

As shown in Table 14, there are strong and statistically significant positive correlations between school leadership competencies and all dimensions of teachers' professional growth and development. The Pearson r values range from 0.775 to 0.871, and all p-values are at 0.000, confirming that the relationships are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The correlation between school leadership and capacity building yielded a Pearson r of 0.807, indicating a very strong positive relationship. This implies that educational leaders who exhibit strong competencies in school leadership, management, and operations significantly contribute to the improvement of teachers' capabilities. Effective leaders who plan strategically, manage resources efficiently, and implement policies consistently are more likely to foster professional growth among their teachers. Capacity building includes enhancing teachers' instructional strategies, leadership skills, and collaborative abilities. When school leaders prioritize systematic planning and the implementation of teacher development programs, teachers are better equipped to meet instructional goals and adapt to evolving educational demands.

Similarly, a Pearson r value of 0.775 between leadership competencies and SLAC participation also reflects a strong positive correlation. This result demonstrates that school heads who are effective managers and instructional leaders are more capable of establishing well-functioning SLACs. These leaders provide structure, purpose, and continuity to SLACs, ensuring they go beyond compliance and become dynamic venues for collaborative learning and reflective practice. Competent leadership helps maintain the relevance and focus of SLAC activities, ensuring alignment with school improvement goals and teachers' developmental needs.

The highest correlation in this analysis is between leadership competency and faculty learning and engagement development, with a Pearson r of 0.871, indicating a very strong positive relationship. This suggests that when school leaders are highly competent in operational and strategic management, teachers are more likely to actively engage in learning activities such as seminars, training, graduate studies, and professional research. These leaders typically demonstrate strong communication, motivation, and resource mobilization skills, enabling them to inspire teachers to pursue continuous learning. Moreover, operationally skilled school leaders often secure and allocate resources (e.g., time, funding, materials) that support professional development, creating an enabling environment for sustained engagement.

In sum, the results strongly indicate that educational leaders' proficiency in school leadership, management, and operations is a critical driver of teacher professional growth. All three areas of teacher development examined in the study, capacity building, SLAC implementation, and faculty engagement, were found to be significantly influenced by the effectiveness of school leadership. Notably, the particularly

high correlation with faculty engagement (r = 0.871) highlights the powerful role that school leaders play in cultivating a professional culture where continuous learning is embedded and actively supported.

These findings reinforce the notion that strong leadership and operational management form the foundation of sustained teacher development. School leaders who are skilled in strategic planning, resource management, and organizational oversight are better positioned to foster environments conducive to professional growth. Their ability to align institutional goals with teacher development initiatives is essential in supporting meaningful and sustained improvements in instructional practice.

The results also offer compelling evidence for placing leadership development at the center of educational quality assurance and reform efforts. Developing leadership competencies, particularly in areas such as school operations, resource allocation, and teacher engagement should be a strategic priority. Leadership training programs must include targeted modules on school governance, strategic planning, and faculty development to equip school heads with the skills necessary to drive teacher improvement.

Furthermore, education systems should regularly assess the management capacity of school heads and provide necessary support to strengthen it. Recognizing the direct link between effective school leadership and teacher motivation, performance, and retention, policies should incentivize exemplary leadership practices. By institutionalizing support for leadership development, schools can ensure a lasting impact on teacher quality and overall school performance.

The strong correlations between school leadership competencies and teachers' professional growth in this study echo the findings of several related studies. Morimoto and Baguio (2025) highlighted that school leaders in Davao City significantly contributed to teacher development through structured capacity-building efforts, consistent with the current study's strong correlation between leadership and capacity building. Similarly, Esguerra and Quinito (2025) found that effective leadership in Basud District supported the success of SLACs, aligning with this study's findings showing the importance of leadership in facilitating collaborative learning.

Esogon and Gumban (2024) reported that transformational leadership in Bacolod City promoted high faculty engagement in professional learning—mirrored in the current study's strong correlation between school leadership and faculty engagement development. Chin et al. (2022) emphasized that administrative support and effective resource management were critical in overcoming barriers to professional growth during the pandemic, reinforcing this study's findings that leadership and HRM competencies help mitigate such challenges.

Aquino et al. (2020) also noted that structured support from school leaders reduced teacher resistance to professional development, further supporting this study's conclusion that effective school operations enhance teacher engagement. Finally, the Department of Education (DepEd, 2025) has underscored the importance of leadership reform in addressing teacher competency gaps, an initiative directly aligned with the present study's call for strengthened school leadership to support sustained professional growth.

Problem 6: Do the competencies of educational leaders significantly affect the teachers professional growth?

This section presents a regression analysis examining how educational leaders' competencies affect teachers' professional growth and development. Educational leaders' competencies are assessed in terms of instructional leadership, human resource management, school leadership, and management and operations. Meanwhile, teachers' professional growth and development is measured through capacity building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and faculty learning and engagement development. This analysis

aims to determine the extent to which the competencies of educational leaders influence the professional development of teachers.

Table 15 presents the results of a regression analysis exploring the relationship between teachers' professional growth in capacity building and the independent variables representing the competencies of educational leaders—specifically Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations. The goal of this analysis was to understand how these competencies contribute to the development of teachers' professional skills and capacity within their educational environments.

Table 15: Regression of teachers professional growth in capacity building on the independent variables (educational leaders' competencies).

Independent Variables	Beta Coef.	t	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Instructional Leadership	0.005	0.095	0.924	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Human Resource Management	0.483	9.002	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
School Leadership, Management and Operations	0.408	6.947	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Adjusted R Square   =   0.725
F (ANOVA)   =   278.068
Significance (F)   =   0.000

As revealed in Table 15, the regression results showed that Instructional Leadership has a beta coefficient of 0.005, a t-value of 0.095, and a p-value of 0.924. The t-value is very low, and the p-value is much higher than the common threshold of 0.05, indicating that Instructional Leadership does not have a statistically significant impact on teachers' professional growth in the area of capacity building. This suggests that, in the context of this analysis, instructional leadership practices, such as guiding teachers in instructional strategies or curricular support, do not appear to have a meaningful effect on improving teachers' capacity building, at least when considered independently of the other leadership competencies.

This result implies that while instructional leadership is crucial for general professional development, it may not directly affect capacity building in the specific way that other leadership competencies (such as human resource management or school leadership) do. Further research could explore the specific ways in which instructional leadership might need to be adapted or integrated with other support systems to impact capacity building more effectively.

In contrast to Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management (HRM) shows a strong and statistically significant effect on teachers' professional growth in capacity building, with a beta coefficient of 0.483, a t-value of 9.002, and a p-value of 0.000. The high beta coefficient suggests that for every unit increase in HRM practices, such as better recruitment, training, and professional development opportunities, teachers' professional growth in terms of capacity building increases by 0.483 units. The t-value and p-value further confirm that this relationship is highly significant.

HRM practices are essential in shaping the professional growth of teachers. Effective HRM, such as providing access to high-quality professional development programs, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and offering opportunities for teachers to engage in skill-building activities, directly supports the enhancement of teachers' capacity to perform their roles more effectively. Core HRM functions such as recruitment, onboarding, mentoring, professional development planning, performance appraisal, and motivation contribute significantly to fostering professional growth. When educational leaders actively invest in and prioritize strategic HRM practices, teachers are more likely to receive structured opportunities for skill enhancement, career advancement, and reflective learning. The importance of HRM in this context underscores the need for systematic, institutionally supported development opportunities as a critical component in promoting sustained professional growth among educators.

Similar to HRM, School Leadership, Management, and Operations has a significant and strong impact on teachers' professional growth in capacity building. The beta coefficient of 0.408, t-value of 6.947, and p-value of 0.000 indicate that effective school leadership and management practices strongly contribute to enhancing teachers' professional capacities. A beta coefficient of 0.408 implies that improvements in leadership, management, and operations are associated with a 0.408 increase in teachers' capacity.

School leadership, management, and operations involve the ability to organize resources, create a conducive learning environment, and manage the day-to-day functioning of the school. Leaders who ensure that teachers have the resources, time, and professional support they need are directly contributing to their capacity to grow and improve. The high significance of this variable reflects the fact that well-managed schools with strong leadership foster an environment in which teachers can build their professional capacity, take on leadership roles, and become more effective in their teaching practice.

The Adjusted R Square value of 0.725 indicates that approximately 72.5% of the variance in teachers' professional growth in capacity building is explained by the competencies of educational leaders. This is a strong model fit, suggesting that the leadership competencies included in the model (Instructional Leadership, HRM, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations) have a substantial influence on capacity building. However, the remaining 27.5% of the variance is attributed to other factors not accounted for in this model, such as teacher motivation, external professional development, or personal career goals. The F-value of 278.068 and the significance value (p-value) of 0.000 indicate that the model is statistically significant as a whole. The high F-value shows that the combination of the three independent variables provides a much better fit to the data than a model without these predictors. The p-value of 0.000 indicates that the likelihood of the observed relationships being due to chance is virtually nonexistent. This confirms that the model's findings are statistically robust and that the competencies of educational leaders are indeed significant predictors of teachers' capacity building.

Simply put, the results of the study confirmed that educational leaders' competencies, particularly in Human Resource Management and School Leadership, Management, and Operations are the most significant contributors to teachers' professional growth in capacity building, while Instructional Leadership appears to have little to no direct impact in this context. These findings reinforce the idea that effective leadership extends beyond instructional supervision and includes the ability to manage people, systems, and resources effectively.

While Instructional Leadership remains a foundational competency, its impact on capacity building appears to be less direct or diminished when HRM and SLMO are present and strong. This suggests that teacher growth thrives not only through pedagogical support but more significantly through a strategic and well-managed environment.

These findings carry significant practical implications for educational policy, leadership training programs, and school improvement initiatives. Leadership development efforts should prioritize the cultivation of competencies in human resource management and organizational leadership, recognizing that the sustainability of teacher development initiatives often depends on the capacity of school leaders to strategically manage personnel and create enabling professional environments. This includes fostering teacher agency, promoting collaboration, and providing ongoing opportunities for professional learning within a coherent and supportive leadership structure.

In terms of theoretical contribution, the results support an integrated view of school leadership that extends beyond traditional instructional leadership paradigms. They call for a more holistic approach that values leadership practices which build school-wide capacity, develop human capital, and align organizational resources toward continuous improvement.

These findings align with the work of Mondejar and Asio (2021), who found that HRM practices, including recruitment, training, and career development, were strongly correlated with job satisfaction among teachers in private academic institutions in Olongapo City. Their study suggested that such HRM practices contribute to a supportive work environment, thereby fostering professional growth and retention.

Similarly, Esguerra and Quinito (2025) examined the impact of school leadership on professional development in Basud District Elementary Schools. Their study revealed that effective school leadership practices, such as developing self and others and focusing on teaching and learning, are positively associated with teachers' professional development. The study emphasizes the role of school leaders in creating an environment conducive to continuous professional growth.

In contrast, Villa and Tulod (2020) investigated the correlation between instructional leadership practices and teachers' competencies in the Philippines. Their study found no significant relationship between instructional leadership practices and teachers' performance, suggesting that while instructional leadership is important, its direct impact on teacher competencies may be limited without the support of broader leadership competencies. This aligns with the present study's finding that instructional leadership alone may have a limited effect on teacher development.

Table 16 presents the results of a regression analysis designed to examine how the competencies of educational leaders, specifically Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management (HRM), and School Leadership, Management, and Operations, affect teachers' professional growth in the context of School Learning Action Cells (SLAC). The model explored whether the leadership competencies significantly affect the growth and development of teachers involved in SLAC activities.

Table 16: Regression of teachers professional growth in school learning action cell on the independent variables (educational leaders' competencies).

Independent Variables	Beta Coef.	t	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Instructional Leadership	0.258	4.416	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Human Resource Management	-0.155	2.519	0.012	Reject Ho	Significant

School Leadership, Management and Operations	0.442	6.568	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Adjusted R Square   =   0.638
F (ANOVA)   =   185.902
Significance (F)   =   0.000

As revealed in Table 16, the regression results showed that Instructional Leadership has a positive and statistically significant impact on teachers' professional growth in SLAC, with a beta coefficient of 0.258, a t-value of 4.416, and a p-value of 0.000. The beta coefficient of 0.258 means that for each unit increase in instructional leadership, there is a 0.258 unit increase in teachers' professional growth in SLAC. This positive relationship indicates that when school leaders provide clear instructional guidance, feedback on teaching practices, and support for curriculum development, teachers are more likely to experience growth in their professional abilities through SLAC.

The t-value of 4.416 is considerably high, and the p-value of 0.000 is well below the 0.05 significance threshold, confirming that the effect of instructional leadership on teachers' professional growth in SLAC is statistically significant. This suggests that effective instructional leadership is crucial in shaping the learning experiences of teachers within SLAC. School leaders who provide instructional guidance and create opportunities for professional learning play a direct role in enhancing teachers' skills and competencies.

Human Resource Management (HRM) also demonstrates a statistically significant positive effect on teachers' professional growth in SLAC, with a beta coefficient of 0.155, a t-value of 2.519, and a p-value of 0.012. Although this effect is smaller compared to instructional leadership, it still indicates that HRM practices, such as professional development opportunities, recruitment strategies, and teacher support systems, contribute to teachers' growth in SLAC.

A beta coefficient of 0.155 suggests that for every unit increase in HRM effectiveness, teachers' growth in SLAC increases by 0.155 units. The t-value of 2.519 and the p-value of 0.012 show that this relationship is statistically significant, though not as strong as instructional leadership. HRM practices such as providing teachers with relevant professional development opportunities, recognition, and resources are essential to supporting their growth. This result underscores the importance of HRM strategies that ensure teachers have access to the support and development they need to engage fully in SLAC activities.

Among the three independent variables, School Leadership, Management, and Operations is the most significant predictor of teachers' professional growth in SLAC. The beta coefficient of 0.442, t-value of 6.568, and p-value of 0.000 highlight that effective leadership and organizational management are the strongest contributors to fostering teachers' professional development in SLAC. A beta coefficient of 0.442 indicates that for every unit increase in school leadership effectiveness, there is a 0.442 unit increase in teachers' growth in SLAC.

This variable encompasses various leadership aspects, including resource allocation, school climate, teacher empowerment, and operational decision-making. The strong significance of this variable suggests that when school leaders ensure that SLAC is well-organized, adequately supported, and aligned with broader school goals, teachers experience substantial growth in their professional capacities. The high t-value and significant p-value reinforce the crucial role of school leadership in creating the conditions that enable teachers to participate meaningfully in SLAC and enhance their skills.

The Adjusted R Square value of 0.638 suggests that approximately 63.8% of the variability in teachers' professional growth in SLAC is explained by the leadership competencies included in the model (Instructional Leadership, HRM, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations). This indicates that the model has a moderate to strong explanatory power, meaning that these leadership competencies play a substantial role in influencing teachers' growth in SLAC, but there are other factors that also contribute to this variability.

The F-value of 185.902 and p-value of 0.000 indicate that the overall regression model is highly statistically significant. The F-value tests the joint significance of all the independent variables, and the high value (185.902) suggests that the leadership competencies collectively provide a much better fit to the data than a model with no predictors. The p-value of 0.000 reinforces that the relationships observed in the model are unlikely to have occurred by chance and confirms the robustness of the regression analysis.

In sum, the regression analysis revealed that all three independent variables, Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations, are statistically significant predictors of teachers' professional growth in the context of School Learning Action Cells. Of these, School Leadership had the strongest impact, followed by Instructional Leadership and Human Resource Management. These findings emphasize the importance of leadership practices that promote collaboration, provide adequate support, and create a conducive environment for professional learning. While Instructional Leadership is important, it is clear that broader school leadership practices and effective HRM systems also play essential roles in fostering a culture of continuous professional development through SLAC activities.

These results suggest that leadership practices, particularly those grounded in transformational and participatory models are instrumental in shaping the success of school-based learning initiatives. Theoretically, the findings reinforce the multidimensional nature of leadership, where instructional, managerial, and strategic roles must be integrated to create impactful professional development structures. From a policy standpoint, this study underscores the need for targeted leadership development programs that enhance competencies not only in instructional supervision but also in human resource management and school governance. Practically, school administrators should be empowered and trained to design enabling environments that support collaborative learning, thereby institutionalizing SLACs not merely as compliance-driven mechanisms but as sustainable platforms for reflective practice and instructional improvement.

Several related studies reinforced the findings of the study. Kilag and Sasan (2023) examined the role of instructional leadership in teacher professional development within private school settings. Their study found that practices such as modeling effective teaching, providing constructive feedback, and facilitating collaboration and professional learning opportunities were critical in enhancing teacher development. Similarly, Mondejar and Asio (2021) investigated the relationship between human resource management practices and job satisfaction among teachers in private academic institutions in Olongapo City. They concluded that key HRM functions, including recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and career development, had a significant positive influence on teachers' job satisfaction and motivation. Furthermore, Ramos and Bauyot (2024) explored the impact of school leadership on professional development in the Panabo City Division. Their research identified a strong positive correlation between effective school leadership and teacher engagement in professional learning activities, emphasizing the importance of creating a supportive and collaborative school environment for sustained teacher growth.

Table 17 presents the regression analysis results examining the influence of educational leaders' competencies on teachers' professional growth in terms of Faculty Learning and Engagement Development. The

independent variables considered in the model were Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management and Operations. This analysis aimed to determine which leadership dimensions significantly contributed to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional engagement among teachers.

Table 17: Regression of teachers professional growth in faculty learning and engagement development on the independent variables (educational leaders competencies).

Independent Variables	Beta Coef.	t	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Instructional Leadership	0.179	3.821	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Human Resource Management	-0.008	0.167	0.868	Accept Ho	Not Significant
School Leadership, Management and Operations	-0.721	13.380	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Adjusted R Square = 0.768
F (ANOVA) = 348.512
Significance (F) = 0.000

As shown in Table 17, the regression analysis indicated that Instructional Leadership had a positive and statistically significant influence on teachers' professional growth, with a beta coefficient of 0.179, a t-value of 3.821, and a p-value of 0.000. This implies that a one-unit increase in instructional leadership was associated with a 0.179-unit increase in teachers' professional growth within faculty learning and engagement initiatives. Although the magnitude of the effect was moderate, the high level of statistical significance confirms the reliability of this relationship.

These results suggest that when educational leaders actively provide instructional guidance, promote high-quality teaching practices, and facilitate meaningful learning experiences, they contribute directly to teacher engagement in professional learning. Instructional leadership efforts—such as mentoring, feedback, and support for pedagogical innovation—can serve as catalysts for continuous professional development when integrated effectively into faculty development programs.

In contrast, Human Resource Management (HRM) did not emerge as a statistically significant predictor in this model. The beta coefficient was 0.008, with a t-value of 0.167 and a p-value of 0.868, indicating no meaningful relationship between HRM and professional growth in the context of faculty learning and engagement.

This finding suggests that HRM practices, while typically important in shaping teacher development, may not have had a direct or observable impact within the framework of faculty-driven learning activities. It is possible that HRM systems in the schools under study were either underutilized or disconnected from the processes that facilitate collaborative learning among faculty members. Alternatively, it may reflect a need to align HRM strategies—such as professional development planning, performance evaluation, and teacher motivation—with specific faculty engagement initiatives to make them more effective.

Among the three independent variables, School Leadership, Management, and Operations was identified as the strongest predictor of teachers' professional growth, with a beta coefficient of 0.721, a t-value of

13.380, and a p-value of 0.000. This substantial coefficient indicates that a one-unit increase in effective school leadership practices corresponded to a 0.721-unit increase in professional growth—an exceptionally large effect compared to the other variables.

This result highlights the critical importance of school leaders who are capable of managing institutional operations efficiently while fostering an inclusive and empowering environment for professional learning. Leadership practices such as strategic resource allocation, shared decision-making, creation of a positive school climate, and alignment of faculty engagement activities with school goals all contribute significantly to teacher growth. The highly significant statistical values reinforce that operational leadership competencies are foundational to the success of faculty-based development efforts.

The regression model yielded an Adjusted R Square value of 0.768, indicating that approximately 76.8% of the variance in teachers' professional growth in terms of Faculty Learning and Engagement Development was explained by the combined effect of the three leadership competencies. This represented a notably high level of explanatory power, suggesting that leadership practices, particularly school-wide leadership, were essential in creating conditions conducive to ongoing professional learning.

Furthermore, the F-value of 348.512 with a p-value of 0.000 confirms that the overall model was highly statistically significant. The F-test validates the collective contribution of the three leadership dimensions, indicating that the relationships observed were not due to random chance and that the model provides a robust framework for understanding teacher growth in this context.

To sum up, the findings demonstrate that School Leadership, Management, and Operations is the most influential factor in promoting teachers' professional growth in faculty learning and engagement development, followed by Instructional Leadership. Human Resource Management, however, did not exhibit a statistically significant effect in this model. These results emphasize the centrality of effective school leadership, particularly in operational and strategic domains, as a driver of sustained faculty learning and development.

These findings have important implications for school improvement efforts. Leadership development programs should be designed not only to strengthen instructional supervision but also to enhance managerial and organizational leadership skills. Additionally, HRM practices must be more strategically aligned with faculty engagement efforts to realize their potential contribution to professional development.

By fostering enabling conditions through strong school leadership and instructional support, educational institutions can transform faculty learning from a procedural requirement into a meaningful, reflective, and impactful process that elevates teaching practices and student outcomes.

These findings are consistent with the study of Magboo, Velasco, and Luis (2023), who examined the role of instructional leadership in promoting teacher work engagement in public elementary schools in Quezon Province. Their research revealed that instructional leadership behaviors—particularly providing clear instructional direction and fostering professional learning communities—significantly enhanced teachers' engagement in their work. This underscores the influence of strong instructional leadership on teacher motivation and professional development.

Similarly, Olaivar and Loayon (2022) investigated the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and teachers' school engagement and teaching performance in private elementary schools in Bohol. Their study found no significant relationship between HRM practices and the targeted outcomes, suggesting that HRM alone may not effectively contribute to teacher growth unless it is purposefully aligned with instructional goals and embedded within a collaborative and supportive school culture.

In a related context, Dawang and Genuba (2024) explored the effects of authentic leadership on teacher work engagement in public schools in the Island Garden City of Samal. Their findings revealed a strong positive association between authentic leadership and teacher engagement, emphasizing the critical role of school leaders in cultivating a supportive, trust-based environment that promotes sustained professional learning and development.

To sum up, across the three dimensions of teacher professional growth, School Leadership consistently emerged as the strongest and most statistically significant predictor. It had a direct and positive impact on capacity building, SLAC participation, and faculty engagement. Instructional Leadership also demonstrated significant influence in the contexts of SLACs and faculty learning, reinforcing its critical role in guiding instructional improvement. Meanwhile, Human Resource Management showed significant impact only on capacity building and SLAC participation but was not a significant factor in promoting faculty engagement.

These findings collectively emphasized the importance of strong, visionary, and instructional-focused leadership in nurturing a culture of professional development among teachers. The high adjusted R-squared values in all models affirmed that the selected leadership competencies were effective predictors of teacher professional growth outcomes.

Proposed Leadership Training Program

This comprehensive leadership training program is designed to address the identified gaps in leadership competencies and teachers' professional development. By focusing on key areas such as instructional leadership, human resource management, and school operations, the program aims to enhance the effectiveness of school leaders and support the professional growth of teachers. Through a blended learning approach, action learning projects, and continuous support, the program seeks to create a sustainable impact on school improvement and student outcomes.

Program Title: *Enhancing Educational Leadership for Teacher Growth: A Competency-Based Leadership Training Program*

Overview:

This training program is developed in response to the findings indicating gaps between the perceived and actual effectiveness of educational leaders in influencing teachers' professional growth. Despite school heads self-rating their competencies as "Very High," teachers consistently rated them lower. Furthermore, regression and correlation analyses confirmed that leadership competencies, especially in School Leadership, Management, and Operations, Human Resource Management, and Instructional Leadership significantly affect teacher development. Thus, this training aims to enhance key leadership competencies to better support and sustain teachers' professional growth across three domains: capacity building, SLACs, and faculty engagement.

Rooted in evidence-based practices and aligned with the **Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH)**, the program adopts a structured, responsive model to promote sustained leadership development and teacher engagement, supporting DepEd's goal of inclusive, equitable, and quality education.

Training Goals:

1. **Align Perceptions of Leadership Effectiveness**
o Bridge perception gaps between school heads and teachers regarding leadership effectiveness, through collaborative reflection and feedback mechanisms.
2. **Enhance Leadership Competencies**

o Develop core leadership skills in instructional supervision, human capital development, and operational management.

3. **Support Teachers' Professional Growth**

o Strengthen school-based professional learning structures, such as SLACs, peer mentoring, and capacity-building programs.

4. **Foster a Collaborative and Reflective School Culture**

o Build trust, collegiality, and shared accountability through transparent communication and inclusive leadership practices.

Target Participants:

● Public integrated junior and senior high school heads
● Supervisors and middle-level educational managers

Duration:

● **6 months** (modular format)
● Bi-weekly sessions (4 hours/session)
● Includes follow-up mentoring and evaluation

TRAINING MODULES

Module 1: Transformational Instructional Leadership

Description: This module equips participants with advanced instructional supervision skills to foster teacher growth. By using data-driven approaches, participants will learn to mentor effectively, enhance classroom practices, and align teaching strategies with student outcomes.

Objectives:

● Strengthen instructional supervision, coaching, and mentoring skills.
● Integrate classroom-based data into teacher support strategies.
● Align professional development with student learning outcomes.

Activities:

● Simulations and role-play on classroom observation and feedback delivery.
● Case study analysis of instructional improvement initiatives.
● Peer observation and reflection sessions.

Expected Outcomes:

● Participants will improve their capacity to supervise teaching practices, provide actionable feedback, and support teachers in meeting performance goals.

MODULE 2: Strategic Human Resource Management

Description: This module focuses on fostering equitable HR practices, designing robust mentorship programs, and cultivating an environment where teachers feel valued and motivated.

Objectives:

● Promote fairness and transparency in recruitment, evaluation, and recognition.
● Develop orientation, induction, and peer mentorship programs.
● Boost staff morale through effective support strategies.

Activities:

● Competency-based hiring simulations and panel interviews.
● Creation of induction and mentorship toolkits.
● Roundtable discussions on teacher career pathways and motivation.

Expected Outcomes:
- School leaders will implement equitable HR practices, enhance staff induction processes, and strengthen team morale and collaboration.

MODULE 3: Effective School Operations and Management

Description: Participants will explore strategies to improve school operational efficiency, foster accountability, and manage crises effectively.

Objectives:
- Enhance operational planning, decision-making, and accountability.
- Improve communication, conflict resolution, and crisis management.
- Foster ethical leadership and stakeholder engagement.

Activities:
- Problem-solving simulations based on school management cases.
- Role-plays on communication and dispute resolution.
- Development of operational policies and communication plans.

Expected Outcomes:
- Participants will enhance operational transparency, improve stakeholder relations, and establish a safe and organized school environment.

MODULE 4: Empowering Teacher Leadership and Engagement

Description: This module empowers teachers to take leadership roles, facilitating professional learning communities (PLCs), and promoting well-being initiatives.

Objectives:
- Promote distributed leadership and teacher-led initiatives.
- Strengthen SLAC facilitation, PLCs, and mentoring programs.
- Enhance teacher resilience and well-being.

Activities:
- Teacher leadership workshops and micro-projects.
- SLAC planning and facilitation exercises.
- Peer mentoring circles and wellness planning.

Expected Outcomes:
- School leaders will foster an environment of teacher empowerment, collaboration, and professional satisfaction, leading to sustained school improvement.

Training Methodology
- **Blended Learning:** Combines in-person workshops and digital modules to cater to diverse schedules.
- **Action Learning Projects (ALPs):** School-based projects to apply learned concepts.
- **Peer Coaching and Mentoring:** Coaching pairs or triads for mutual reflection and feedback.
- **Reflective Practice:** Journaling, debriefing, and review sessions to deepen learning.

Program Evaluation Framework
- **Pre- and Post-Training** Competency **Assessments:** Standardized tools to measure leadership growth.
- **Perception Surveys and Focus Groups:** Feedback from school heads and teachers.
- **Performance Metrics:** Monitoring changes in teacher performance, retention, and student outcomes.

Sustainability and Follow-up Mechanisms
1. **Leadership Communities of Practice (LCoPs):** Regional and division-level networks for sharing insights and best practices.

2. **Ongoing Professional Development:** Advanced modules, refresher courses, and certifications.
3. **Institutional Support and Policy Integration:** Advocacy for DepEd recognition and integration into leadership development frameworks.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a synthesis of the key findings of the study, the conclusions derived from the results, and the corresponding recommendations aimed at addressing the identified issues and enhancing current practices.

Summary of Findings

1. Competency Levels of Educational Leaders

Both school heads and teachers assessed the competency levels of educational leaders in the areas of Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations as very high. However, teachers consistently gave slightly lower ratings compared to how the school heads rated themselves. This trend was observed across all three domains.

2. Levels of Teachers' Professional Growth and Development

Teachers' professional growth and development were rated as high across all domains. Similar to the previous trend, school heads gave higher ratings compared to the teachers' own assessments. This pattern was evident in the areas of Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) participation, and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development.

3. Differences in Assessment of between School Heads and Teachers on Competency Levels of Educational Leaders

T-test results confirmed that there were statistically significant differences in the assessments of leadership competencies between school heads and teachers. In all three areas: Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, School Leadership, Management, and Operations. School heads rated themselves more favorably than how they were rated by teachers, indicating a clear gap in perception.

4. Differences in Assessment of between School Heads and Teachers on Teachers' Professional Growth Levels

Significant differences were also found in how school heads and teachers rated the levels of teachers' professional growth and development. Across the areas of Capacity Building, SLAC participation, and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development, teachers consistently gave lower ratings than school heads. This further highlights a perceptual disconnect between school leaders and teaching staff regarding the effectiveness or implementation of professional development support.

5. Relationship between Educational Leaders' Competencies and Teachers' Professional Growth and Development

The correlation analysis revealed strong and positive relationships between all domains of educational leaders' competencies and teachers' professional growth. Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations were all significantly associated with the key areas of professional growth: Capacity Building, SLAC participation, and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development. Among the three domains, school leadership, management, and operations showed the strongest influence, indicating that leadership competency is the most impactful in promoting teachers' professional growth and development.

6. Effect of Educational Leaders' Competencies on Teachers' Professional Growth and Development

Regression analyses confirmed that educational leaders' competencies significantly predict various aspects of teachers' professional growth and development. In the areas of Capacity Building, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations emerged as significant predictors, while Instructional Leadership had little to no impact. For SLAC participation, all three competencies were significant, with School Leadership, Management, and Operations showing the strongest influence. In Faculty Learning and Engagement Development, School Leadership, Management, and Operations again proved to be the most impactful, followed by Instructional Leadership, while Human Resource Management had no significant effect. Overall, the models demonstrated a strong explanatory power, accounting for a substantial portion of the variance in teacher development outcomes.

7. Proposed Training Program

Based on the findings of the study, a comprehensive leadership training program was proposed to bridge the perception gaps between school heads and teachers regarding leadership effectiveness. The program focuses on key areas such as instructional leadership, human resource management, and school operations, aiming to enhance the competencies of school leaders and, in turn, support the professional growth of teachers. It integrates best practices in educational leadership and professional development to ensure a sustainable impact on school improvement. Rooted in evidence-based strategies and aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), the training program promotes a structured and responsive approach to leadership development, supporting the Department of Education's commitment to inclusive, equitable, and quality education.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn to reflect the implications of the results in relation to the research objectives.

1. Educational leaders demonstrate very high levels of competency across the domains of Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations (SLMO), as recognized by both school heads and teachers. However, a consistent pattern emerged in which teachers rated their leaders slightly lower than the school heads rated themselves, revealing a perception gap. This suggests that while leadership practices are in place, their implementation and impact may not be fully visible or experienced by teaching staff, highlighting the need for improved communication and visibility of leadership efforts.

2. Teachers show high levels of professional growth in the areas of Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development, reflecting strong institutional support and structured development initiatives. Despite this, school heads consistently rate these efforts more favorably than teachers, pointing to a perception gap. This highlights the importance of ensuring that professional development programs are inclusive, responsive, and aligned with teachers' lived experiences and developmental needs.

3. There are significant differences in how school heads and teachers perceive the competencies of educational leaders. School heads consistently provided more favorable self-assessments than their teachers did across Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, and School Leadership, Management, and Operations. This discrepancy emphasizes the need for school leaders to engage more closely with teachers' perspectives, ensuring that leadership strategies are not only implemented effectively but are also experienced positively by the school community.

4. There are significant differences between school heads' and teachers' assessments of teachers' professional growth across Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development. School heads tend to rate these professional development efforts higher than teachers rated themselves, revealing a perceptual gap that may stem from differing experiences, expectations, or levels of engagement with these initiatives. This gap underscores potential disconnects in how programs are communicated, implemented, or perceived in daily teaching practice.

5. A strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship exists between educational leadership competencies and teachers' professional growth. This result means that leaders who excel in instructional practices, human resource management, and operational leadership are more likely to create environments that support and enhance teacher development. Notably, the strongest correlation emerged between School Leadership, Management, and Operations (SLMO) and faculty learning and engagement, indicating that operationally effective leadership plays a particularly vital role in sustaining teacher participation and investment in ongoing growth initiatives.

6. The educational leaders' competencies significantly affect teachers' professional growth across the domains of Capacity Building, School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and Faculty Learning and Engagement Development. Each leadership competency domain contributes uniquely to teacher development. School Leadership, Management, and Operations (SLMO) consistently emerged as the most influential factor across all areas of professional growth. Human Resource Management showed a particularly strong impact on building teacher capacity, while Instructional Leadership demonstrated moderate effects depending on the specific area of growth. These results indicate the differentiated contributions of each leadership competency and underscore the pivotal role of strategic leadership in fostering meaningful and sustained teacher development.

7. The findings of the study underscore the critical need to address perceptual gaps between school heads and teachers concerning leadership effectiveness. In response, the proposed leadership training program serves as a strategic intervention aimed at fostering a more cohesive understanding and practice of effective leadership. By targeting key areas such as instructional leadership, human resource management, and school operations, the program is designed to strengthen leadership competencies that directly affect teachers' professional growth and development. Rooted in evidence-based practices and aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), the program adopts a structured, responsive model to promote sustained leadership development and teacher engagement, supporting DepEd's goal of inclusive, equitable, and quality education.

Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusions derived from the study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance leadership effectiveness and strengthen professional development systems within schools. These recommendations are framed to support evidence-based policy making and implementation, and to guide educational leaders and stakeholders including the Department of Education (DepEd) towards more collaborative and impactful practices.

1. For School Heads, DepEd, Regional and Division Offices, and Policymakers. To bridge the perceptual divide between school heads and teachers regarding leadership competencies, it is recommended that reflective leadership practices be institutionalized. School leaders should routinely engage in self-assessment and peer reviews and proactively solicit feedback from teaching personnel through structured

mechanisms. These reflective practices must be embedded in the regular operations of schools to cultivate a culture of openness and mutual understanding.

The DepEd, in collaboration with regional and division offices, should enhance leadership development frameworks to include modules on reflective practice, transparency, and stakeholder responsiveness. Policymakers are further encouraged to develop monitoring systems that track leadership perception alignment between administrators and faculty, promoting accountability and shared vision.

2. For DepEd, Teachers, and Policymakers. Professional development initiatives must be regularly evaluated and recalibrated to ensure alignment with the actual needs of teachers. DepEd should mandate the institutionalization of feedback mechanisms including surveys, focus group discussions, and post-training evaluations as standard components of all capacity-building programs.

   Moreover, teachers should be actively involved in the planning and design phases of these initiatives to promote relevance, ownership, and professional growth. Policy guidelines may be revised to formalize teacher participation in the development and assessment of school- and division-level learning action plans.

3. For Schools and DepEd. To mitigate discrepancies in the perception of leadership competencies, schools should create structured opportunities for collaborative dialogue between school heads and teaching staff. Practices such as joint planning sessions, collaborative leadership audits, and regular reflection meetings can serve as platforms for fostering shared understanding.

   DepEd may consider issuing policy directives that support the use of standardized leadership assessment tools across schools to ensure balanced and objective evaluations. These tools should be complemented by qualitative feedback to provide a more comprehensive picture of leadership performance and perception.

4. For Schools, Teachers, and DepEd. To minimize perception gaps in professional development outcomes, schools should engage teachers more actively in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs. Encouraging teacher leadership roles within SLACs and other professional learning communities enhances relevance and accountability. Transparent communication about the goals, expectations, and outcomes of these initiatives can also help align perceptions between school leaders and teachers.

   DepEd should expand its professional development policy to explicitly require teacher representation in program design teams. Transparent communication of objectives, performance indicators, and expected outcomes must be standard practice, thereby aligning stakeholder expectations and improving perception congruence.

5. For School Leaders and DepEd Regional and Division Offices. Given the strong and significant influence of competencies of school educational leaders, particularly, School Leadership and Management Operations (SLMO) on teacher professional development, school leaders must emphasize operational efficiency. This includes creating structured schedules for professional learning, ensuring resource availability, and providing logistical support for development activities.

   DepEd regional and division offices should be directed to assess the operational capacity of schools and provide targeted support where gaps are identified. The development of school-level operational policies, grounded in national guidelines, will further contribute to a consistent and empowering environment for teacher growth.

6. For DepEd, Training Institutions, and Policymakers. To maximize the effect of leadership competencies, leadership development programs must be differentiated according to the specific functions and

expected outcomes of each leadership domain. Training for SLMO should concentrate on systems thinking, resource planning, and strategic implementation. Human Resource Management (HRM) leadership development should include modules on mentoring, teacher welfare, performance appraisal, and professional pathways. Instructional Leadership programs must focus on curriculum alignment, pedagogy enhancement, and instructional supervision.

DepEd and its training institutions should review and revise existing leadership development programs to reflect this differentiated approach. Policymakers should ensure that development content is responsive to domain-specific indicators and aligned with school performance goals, ultimately enhancing leadership influence on teacher efficacy and student learning outcomes.

7. For DepEd and Educational Institutions. The Department of Education (DepEd) and relevant educational institutions should adopt and implement the proposed leadership training program, ensuring it is contextualized to meet the unique needs of school heads across various regions and school settings. To maximize its effectiveness, all leadership training initiatives should be closely aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), thereby promoting consistency in leadership expectations and supporting the ongoing professional growth of both school leaders and teachers.

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