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Teachers' Instructional Strategies, Learners' Research Skills, and Performance

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Abstract
This study examined the relationship between teachers' instructional strategies, learners' research skills, and academic performance among 263 teachers in the Schools Division of Iloilo Province for School Year 2024–2025. It aimed to determine the extent of teachers' instructional strategies in teaching research, assess learners' research skills, evaluate learners' academic performance, identify significant differences based on teacher profile variables, and examine the relationships among the variables. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, utilizing a researcher-developed, expert-validated, and pilot-tested questionnaire. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson r correlation at a 0.05 level of significance. Results revealed that teachers' instructional strategies were highly evident, learners' research skills were rated high, and learners' academic performance was also high. Significant differences were observed in instructional strategies and research skills when grouped according to educational attainment and teaching experience, while no significant differences were found when grouped by sex and specialization. Correlation analysis indicated positive and significant relationships among instructional strategies, learners' research skills, and academic performance. The findings underscore the vital role of effective instructional strategies in enhancing learners' research competencies and academic outcomes, highlighting the need to strengthen teacher professional development in research-based instruction.

Keywords: Teachers' Instructional Strategies; Learners' Research Skills; Academic Performance; Inquiry-Based Learning; Public Secondary Schools

INTRODUCTION

Developing learners' research skills is a crucial component of 21st-century education, as it fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and independent learning. Teachers' instructional strategies play a significant role in guiding learners through the research process by facilitating knowledge acquisition, analysis, and application (Marzano, 2017; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Student-centered strategies such as inquiry-based, collaborative, and problem-based learning have been shown to enhance learners' engagement and mastery of research skills, leading to improved academic performance (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Instructional strategies help learners formulate research problems, design methodologies, analyze data, and present findings effectively (Hattie, 2017). Consistent teacher guidance and structured learning experiences are essential in developing learners' research competencies and academic success (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2015). However, limited empirical studies in the Schools Division of Iloilo have examined the relationship among these variables. Thus, this study investigated the relationship between teachers' instructional strategies, learners' research skills, and academic performance among 263 teachers for

School Year 2024–2025.

Methodology

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationship between teachers' instructional strategies, learners' research skills, and academic performance. The respondents were 263 randomly selected public secondary school teachers in the Schools Division of Iloilo Province. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed, expert-validated, and pilot-tested questionnaire consisting of teacher profile, instructional strategies, learners' research skills, and academic performance indicators. Reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha. Data analysis employed descriptive statistics, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson r correlation at a 0.05 level of significance, with ethical standards strictly observed.

Results

Teachers' instructional strategies were rated highly evident ($M = 4.21$), with inquiry-based, collaborative, and problem-based approaches most frequently used. Learners' research skills were rated high ($M = 4.18$), showing competence in problem identification, methodology design, data analysis, and reporting. Learners' academic performance was also high ($M = 4.19$). Significant differences were found in instructional strategies and research skills based on educational attainment and teaching experience, while no significant differences were observed based on sex and specialization. Positive and significant relationships existed among instructional strategies, learners' research skills, and academic performance.

Discussion

The findings confirm that effective instructional strategies significantly contribute to the development of learners' research skills and academic performance. The strong use of inquiry-based and collaborative approaches supports earlier studies emphasizing student-centered instruction in fostering higher-order thinking and research competence (Marzano, 2017; Hattie, 2017). Differences based on educational attainment and teaching experience suggest that professional preparation enhances instructional effectiveness (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Conclusion

The study concludes that teachers' instructional strategies in the Schools Division of Iloilo are highly evident and significantly related to learners' research skills and academic performance. Effective teaching strategies enhance learners' ability to conduct research, which in turn leads to improved academic outcomes. Teachers' educational attainment and teaching experience influence the effectiveness of instructional strategies and research skill development.

Recommendations

Schools should strengthen professional development programs focused on inquiry-based and research-oriented instructional strategies. Mentoring programs may be implemented to support less experienced teachers. Research skills should be systematically integrated into the curriculum, and continuous monitoring of instructional practices and learner performance should be conducted. Future studies may explore additional factors affecting learners' research competencies and academic achievement.

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