

## EXPLORING THE LEADERSHIP CAPACITY OF MASTER TEACHERS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS: BASIS FOR A MENTORING PROGRAM

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### ABSTRACT

### RESEARCH ARTICLE

*In 21st-century schools, the concept of quality education has changed significantly. Although still based on effective pedagogy, classroom management, assessment, and subject expertise, modern education places a higher priority on equipping students with the skills necessary for the global and digital world in addition to academic knowledge. To fulfill this, the educational community must have top-tier teachers who can carry out their responsibilities to the highest standards. The study investigated the instructional competence and instructional leadership skills of master teachers as assessed by teachers and principals. The findings served as the foundation for developing a focused mentoring program. The outcomes established that both teachers and principals strongly agree on the high competency of master teachers across both instructional and leadership aspects. This highlighted the master teachers' dual role as highly effective practitioners in the classroom and influential leaders among their peers. They are uniquely stationed to drive school-wide improvement by modeling superior instruction while vigorously guiding the professional growth of their contemporaries. Although principals have consistently provided higher ratings compared to teachers, this is primarily based on the role. Principals require the master teachers to evaluate strategic impact and formal leadership while the teachers assess daily operational effectiveness and collaboration. Statistical analysis further confirmed that these two skill sets possess a highly significant and strong positive correlation, underscoring their inherent interconnectedness. The proposed program will equip master teachers to expand their influence and leadership effectiveness, leveraging their skills to inspire colleagues and drive continuous improvement across the entire educational system.*

**KEYWORDS:** Master Teachers; Instructional Leadership; Instructional Competence; Mentoring Program; Teacher Leadership; School Leadership; Professional Development

### INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of quality education remains a central goal of schools, as it equips learners with the competencies needed to thrive in a rapidly changing and globally competitive society. At the international level, this priority is reinforced by Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which emphasizes the need to ensure inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education for all learners and to promote lifelong learning opportunities. This global commitment

highlights the vital role of educational institutions in improving student outcomes and strengthening national development.

Achieving quality education depends not only on curriculum and resources but also on the leadership capacity within schools. School leadership has become increasingly complex, involving strategic planning, organizational management, interpersonal relationships, and instructional improvement (Netolicky, 2020). In this context, educational leaders are expected to perform not only administrative tasks but also pedagogical and instructional responsibilities, such as curriculum implementation, teacher evaluation, scheduling, and monitoring of student learning (Pont, 2020). These responsibilities position school leaders as key drivers of school effectiveness and instructional improvement.

Among the different leadership approaches in education, instructional leadership is widely recognized as one of the most influential in improving teaching and learning. It focuses on guiding teachers, strengthening classroom instruction, and aligning school practices with academic goals. Kim et al. (2019) identified several core practices of instructional leadership, including providing strong leadership, creating opportunities for teacher development, encouraging professional dialogue, maintaining coherence in instructional programs, and holding teachers accountable for instructional improvement. Similarly, Deniz and Erdener (2020) emphasized that instructional leadership contributes significantly to enhancing teaching practices and learner achievement by keeping the improvement of instruction at the center of school leadership.

Within the school setting, master teachers occupy a critical position in advancing instructional quality and supporting teacher growth. As experienced and highly competent educators, they are expected not only to demonstrate excellence in teaching but also to mentor colleagues, model effective classroom practices, and contribute to the professional learning culture of the school. Tatla et al. (2019) noted that the concept of a “master teacher” is often associated with professional excellence and instructional effectiveness, although expectations of the role may vary across contexts. In practice, however, master teachers are increasingly expected to assume leadership functions that extend beyond classroom instruction.

Teacher leadership literature further supports the expanded role of master teachers in school improvement. Green (2021) highlighted that teacher leaders contribute meaningfully to schools by supporting professional development, participating in school governance, and improving learner outcomes. In the Philippine educational context, this expectation is reinforced by the Department of Education’s emphasis on the role of master teachers as instructional guides, mentors, and exemplars of best teaching practices. Acera (2024) stressed that teachers look to master teachers not only for pedagogical support but also for technical guidance and leadership in improving classroom instruction.

Despite these expectations, the extent to which master teachers demonstrate strong instructional competence and instructional leadership skills remains an important area for inquiry, particularly at the school level where their influence is most directly felt. Understanding how master teachers are perceived by both teachers and school heads can provide valuable insights into their leadership capacity and identify areas where structured support may be needed.

In this light, the present study seeks to examine the instructional competence and instructional leadership skills of master teachers as assessed by teachers and principals in Doña Manuela Elementary School and Vergonville Elementary School. The findings of the

study will serve as the basis for the development of a Mentoring Program designed to strengthen master teachers' leadership roles and enhance instructional support within the school setting.

## Research Objectives

This study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- To determine the assessment of teachers and principals on the instructional competence of master teachers in terms of:
  - mastery of the subject matter,
  - teaching strategy skills,
  - classroom management skills, and
  - evaluation skills;
- To determine the assessment of teachers and principals on the instructional leadership skills of master teachers in terms of:
  - mentoring skills,
    - curriculum content and pedagogy,
    - planning, assessing, and reporting learners' outcomes, and
    - personal growth and professional development;
- To determine whether there is a significant difference between the assessments of teachers and principals on the instructional competence and instructional leadership of master teachers;
- To determine whether there is a significant relationship between instructional competence and instructional leadership skills of master teachers; and
- To develop a mentoring program based on the findings of the study

## Research Gap

Instructional and teacher leadership have been widely recognized as essential to school effectiveness, teacher development, and instructional improvement. Studies by Adams (2018) and Alsaleh (2018) emphasize that instructional leadership enhances teaching and learning through curriculum alignment, instructional support, and teacher growth. Likewise, Deniz and Erdener (2020), Netolicky (2020), and Pont (2020) highlight the increasingly complex and distributed nature of school leadership. In this context, Green (2021), Tatla et al. (2019), and Cerina (2024) underscore the important role of master teachers not only as highly competent classroom practitioners but also as mentors and instructional leaders. Similarly, Acera (2024), Arombo (2023), and Laude, Ralar, and Arcenal (2018) affirm that instructional competence and leadership are closely interconnected and both crucial to effective school-based instructional practice.

Despite these contributions, the literature reveals that many studies examine instructional competence and instructional leadership as separate dimensions rather than exploring how these two constructs are interrelated in the actual leadership practice of master teachers. Furthermore, much of the existing literature on instructional leadership continues to focus primarily on principals and school heads, with limited empirical attention given to master teachers as instructional leaders, particularly within the Philippine public elementary school context. There is also a scarcity of school-based studies that compare the perceptions of

teachers and principals regarding the leadership capacity of master teachers. This gap points to the need for a more context-specific investigation into the instructional competence and instructional leadership skills of master teachers in order to generate evidence-based insights that can inform mentoring initiatives, leadership development programs, and school improvement efforts.

## **Literature Review**

Master teachers occupy a unique place in the school system as experienced educators who are expected to perform not only as highly competent classroom practitioners but also as leaders of instruction. According to Cerina (2024), master teachers are characterized by professional competence, initiative, and the ability to contribute meaningfully to the teaching-learning process. Their work extends beyond content delivery and increasingly includes mentoring, instructional supervision, and school-based support for fellow teachers.

Similarly, Tatla et al. (2019) describe master teachers as exemplary professionals whose expertise and instructional effectiveness make them valuable sources of support and guidance within schools. The role is not merely honorary; rather, it reflects a professional expectation to contribute to instructional improvement and teacher development.

Instructional leadership has long been recognized as a powerful factor in school effectiveness. Adams (2018) argues that educational leadership is fundamentally concerned with improving teaching and learning by shaping instructional conditions, supporting teachers, and ensuring alignment between curriculum and pedagogy.

For Deniz and Erdener (2020), instructional leadership is best understood as leadership that directly influences the quality of teaching and learner achievement. It emphasizes guidance, supervision, curriculum alignment, and a clear instructional vision. This perspective is particularly relevant to master teachers, whose influence is often exerted through pedagogical leadership rather than formal administrative authority.

The complexity of educational leadership has expanded in recent years. Netolicky (2020) contends that school leadership involves multiple dimensions, including strategy, relationships, culture, management, and decision-making. This complexity suggests that leadership in schools cannot be reduced to formal authority alone; rather, it is increasingly distributed among individuals who shape instructional practice.

Likewise, Pont (2020) explains that educational leaders perform intertwined organizational, pedagogical, and instructional functions, including curriculum implementation, teacher evaluation, and the monitoring of school programs. These responsibilities reinforce the need for competent instructional leaders at multiple levels of the school organization, including among master teachers.

Teacher leadership provides a useful conceptual lens for understanding the expanded role of master teachers. Green (2021) emphasizes that teacher leaders contribute to school effectiveness by supporting professional development, participating in governance, and helping improve student outcomes. This framing aligns closely with the leadership expectations placed upon master teachers in Philippine schools.

Similarly, Acera (2024) found that teachers expect master teachers to provide instructional guidance, model effective practices, and support colleagues in improving classroom instruction. This reinforces the idea that master teachers are not only technical experts but also practical leaders in the school's instructional core.

The notion of leadership capacity is closely tied to the instructional competence of master teachers. Competence in subject matter, pedagogy, classroom management, and assessment enables master teachers to gain credibility and influence among peers. Arombo (2023) reported that the instructional competencies of master teachers are closely associated with their leadership practices and their ability to support school improvement.

Likewise, Laude, Ralar, and Arcenal (2018)—whose work also served as the basis for the instrument used in the present study—demonstrated that master teachers’ instructional competence and leadership are mutually reinforcing dimensions of professional effectiveness. This supports the assumption that highly competent teachers are more likely to be perceived as effective instructional leaders.

The leadership role of master teachers also depends on continuous professional growth. Basilio and Bueno (2019) highlighted the importance of research skills, professional attitude, and sustained capability development among master teachers. These attributes allow master teachers to remain relevant, innovative, and responsive to the changing needs of schools and learners.

Meanwhile, Podador (2023) argued that master teacher leadership often remains underdeveloped due to the persistence of principal-centered leadership structures and the lack of formal leadership development opportunities. This observation is especially important because it suggests that even highly competent master teachers may need structured support in order to maximize their leadership influence.

Taken together, the literature suggests that master teachers are central to school improvement because they combine instructional expertise with professional influence. Their leadership capacity is shaped by both instructional competence and instructional leadership skills, and these dimensions are likely interconnected. However, there remains a need for more school-based empirical evidence that examines these constructs together and translates findings into actionable development programs. The present study contributes to this need by assessing the leadership capacity of master teachers from the perspectives of both teachers and principals and by proposing a mentoring intervention grounded in actual school data.

## **Research Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative descriptive–correlational design to examine the leadership capacity of master teachers as instructional leaders. It was conducted in Doña Manuela Elementary School and Vergonville Elementary School in Las Piñas City and involved 129 teachers and 2 principals selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using an adapted questionnaire from Laude, Ralar, and Arcenal (2018) that measured instructional competence and instructional leadership using a 4-point Likert scale. The instrument demonstrated excellent reliability, with Cronbach’s alpha values of 0.982 for instructional competence and 0.975 for instructional leadership. Ethical procedures, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, were strictly observed. The data were analyzed using mean, Independent Samples t-Test, and Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson  $r$ ) to determine the levels, differences, and relationship between the two variables.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1**  
**Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Competence of Master Teachers in Terms of Mastery of the Subject Matter Skills**

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Has a complete understanding of the subject topic.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
2. Connects the topic to various disciplines of expertise.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
3. Possesses the ability to motivate others in both the scientific and artistic field.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
4. Offers a wide range of educational opportunities to foster intellectual growth.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
5. Establishes connections between the topic's content and preceding topics and fields of focus.	3.40	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
6. Exhibits self-assurance and a definite stand about each and every piece of information that is presented in the classroom.	3.41	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
7. Provides an explanation of the lesson by giving pertinent instances and scenarios.	3.39	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
8. Provides a clear definition of major concepts covered in the class.	3.42	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
9. Provides a clear explanation of complex ideas.	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
10. Demonstrates expertise of all the topics that he or she teaches.	3.37	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>

The assessment of teachers and principals on the mastery of subject matter skills indicates that master teachers consistently demonstrate a high level of content knowledge. Teachers rated the master teachers with a grand mean of 3.38, while principals gave a perfect mean of 4.00, both interpreted as "Very Competent." These findings reflect the teachers' strong understanding of subject topics, ability to connect concepts across disciplines, provide clear explanations, and foster intellectual growth among students.

**Table 2**  
**Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Competence of Master teachers in Terms of Teaching Strategy Skills**

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Organizes and presents the subject matter in a way that is both clear and very consistent.	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
2. Capable of efficiently communicating ideas in both English very and Filipino fluently.	3.28	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
3. Presents the educational material in a way that is easily understood by the very students.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
4. Through the use of effective questioning, stimulates mental activity of the pupils.	3.33	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
5. Adapts instructional strategies to the requirements, interests, and capabilities students.	3.37	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
6. Employs a wide range of instructional methods, approaches, and strategies in order to make the lesson engaging and significant for the and clarifies learning.	3.35	Very Competent		Very Competent

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
7. Instructs pupils using information and communication technology (ICT) in order to deliver the lesson to them.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
8. Inspires students to take initiative and ask questions, as well as to articulate their own perspectives.	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
9. Offers difficult tasks, homework, and assignments to do.	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
10. Chooses, develops, and makes appropriate use of instructional resources in order to accomplish the specific goals of the teaching process.	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>

In terms of teaching strategy skills, master teachers were rated as “Very Competent” by teachers (grand mean = 3.36) and “Very Competent” by principals (grand mean = 4.00). The results indicate that master teachers effectively organize and present lessons, adapt instructional strategies to students’ needs, employ a variety of teaching methods, and utilize ICT tools to enhance learning, thereby ensuring that students understand and engage with the material.

**Table 3**  
**Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Competence of Master Teachers in Terms of Classroom Management Skills**

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Encourages students to act in a manner that is consistent with the expectations placed upon them.	3.35	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
2. Makes sufficient preparations for one's educational activities for the day.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
3. Makes certain that the classroom is tidy and well-organized.	3.37	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
4. Is keen on providing pupils with education that is both healthy and balanced.	3.40	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
5. Makes effective use of the assigned class time.	3.42	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
6. Arouses and sustains the students' interest in the lesson and ensuing classroom discussion.	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
7. Effectively administers tests and swiftly returns corrected papers as well as the work of other students.	3.34	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
8. Accomplishes the achievement of teaching objectives to the greatest extent possible for the specific topic, activity, or lesson within a time limit.	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
9. Handles disciplinary issues well.	3.40	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
10. Facilitates a friendly and collaborative environment in the classroom, which in turn improves the learning process.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>

The evaluation of classroom management skills revealed that master teachers maintain highly effective and structured learning environments. Teachers’ assessments resulted in a grand mean of 3.38, while principals rated them at 4.00, both classified as “Very Competent.” Master teachers encourage student responsibility, manage time efficiently, handle disciplinary issues adeptly, and foster a collaborative and conducive classroom atmosphere.

**Table 4**  
**Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Competence of Master Teachers**  
**in Terms of Evaluation Skills**

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Conducts a fair evaluation of students' performance and makes use of standards that are acceptable and accurate in their evaluation practices.	3.35	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
2. Selects and makes use of tests that are based on selected criteria.	3.37	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
3. Performs an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the evaluation, enhancing the teaching process.	3.33	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
4. Makes use of the results of evaluations as a foundation for students' capabilities, areas of interest, and requirements.	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
5. Assesses the success of students by evaluating their performance in relation to course objectives through major examinations, quizzes, and debates.	3.37	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
6. Assigns grades to students based on their accomplishments in the course.	3.35	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
7. Makes available evaluative activities that are suitable for students' outcomes.	3.34	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
8. Makes use of a variety of approaches to evaluate learning achievements in accordance with objectives, including oral performance, projects, etc.	3.39	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
9. Uses elements in examinations based on lesson objectives, including classroom activities and discussions.	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
10. Gives students the opportunity to evaluate their own performance in selected classroom activities.	3.37	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>

Master teachers' evaluation skills were also highly rated, with teachers assigning a grand mean of 3.36 and principals assigning 4.00, both interpreted as "Very Competent." The findings suggest that master teachers conduct fair and accurate assessments, analyze student performance effectively, utilize evaluation results to guide instruction, and offer diverse assessment methods that support student learning and development.

**Table 5**  
**Summary Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Competence**  
**of Master Teachers**

Instructional Competence Domain	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
Mastery of the Subject Matter Skills	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
Teaching Strategy Skills	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
Classroom Management Skills	3.38	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
Evaluation Skills	3.36	Very Competent	4.00	Very Competent
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.37</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very Competent</b>

The summary assessment of instructional competence across all domains shows that master teachers are consistently rated as "Very Competent" by both teachers (overall mean = 3.37) and principals (overall mean = 4.00). This underscores their proficiency in subject mastery, teaching strategies, classroom management, and evaluation skills, demonstrating their overall effectiveness in facilitating high-quality instruction.

**Table 6**  
**Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Leadership of Master Teachers in terms of Mentoring Skills**

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Mentor co-teachers in content and skills difficulties.	3.33	very high	4.00	very high
2. Assists in designing capacity development programs for teachers.	3.30	Very High	4.00	Very High
3. Helps in the proper and accurate dissemination/implementation of school policies.	3.34	Very High	4.00	Very High
4. Uses active listening skills as a means to improve communication.	3.36	Very High	4.00	Very High
5. Conducts in-depth studies or action researches on instructional problems.	3.36	Very High	4.00	Very High
6. Provide guidance and assistance as the novice teacher assumes new roles and responsibilities.	3.41	Very High	4.00	Very High
7. Provides a variety of growth experiences for the beginning teacher.	3.36	Very High	4.00	Very High
8. Assists beginning teachers in using the curriculum guide as aid for teaching.	3.36	Very High	4.00	Very High
9. Assists principal in instructional monitoring of teachers.	3.38	Very High	4.00	Very High
10. Discusses the importance of observation and evaluation.	3.43	Very High	4.00	Very High
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very High</b>

Regarding mentoring skills, master teachers received a “Very High” rating from both teachers (grand mean = 3.36) and principals (grand mean = 4.00). The assessment reflects the master teachers’ capacity to mentor colleagues, provide guidance to novice teachers, assist in professional development planning, and promote instructional improvement through active listening, research, and collaborative practices.

**Table 7**  
**Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Leadership of Master Teachers in Terms of Curriculum Content and Pedagogy**

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Provides instruction that is relevant, up-to-date, and correct, utilizing proper methods and tactics.	3.40	Very High	4.00	Very High
2. Brings together the objectives of the lesson, methods of instruction, learning activities, and instructional strategies.	3.37	Very High	4.00	Very High
3. Encourages students to engage higher-order thinking skills while asking questions.	3.36	Very High	4.00	Very High
4. Increases learners' interest in the topic and maintains it by making content interesting and pertinent.	3.39	Very High	4.00	Very High
5. Establishes routines and processes to make the most efficient use of time and instructional resources.	3.41	Very High	4.00	Very High
6. Brings together the instruction of language, literacy, skills, and values.	3.43	Very High	4.00	Very High
7. Presents the lesson in a manner that is both rational and developmental.	3.43	Very High	4.00	Very High
8. Makes use of available technological tools in lesson development, design, and delivery.	3.45	Very High	4.00	Very High

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
9. Puts students in circumstances that require them to employ higher-order thinking skills and encourages them to do so.	3.46	Very High	4.00	Very High
10. Establishes class objectives in accordance with students' experiences and capacities.	3.45	Very High	4.00	Very High
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very High</b>

Assessment of curriculum content and pedagogy shows that master teachers are highly capable in instructional planning and delivery. Teachers rated them with a grand mean of 3.42, while principals gave 4.00, both interpreted as "Very High." The results highlight their ability to align lesson objectives with methods, foster higher-order thinking, maintain student engagement, and integrate technology effectively in teaching.

**Table 8**  
**Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Leadership of Master Teachers in Terms of Planning, Assessing, and Reporting Learners' Outcomes**

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Creates a daily lesson plan that includes all of the various components.	3.46	Very High	4.00	Very High
2. Performs appropriate formative and summative assessments that are in line with the curriculum.	3.46	Very High	4.00	Very High
3. Employs authentic assessment methods that are not conventional when necessary.	3.47	Very High	4.00	Very High
4. Ensures that accurate records of learners' performance levels are maintained.	3.47	Very High	4.00	Very High
5. Provides assignments to reinforce or enrich the material being taught.	3.45	Very High	4.00	Very High
6. Gives students the chance to demonstrate what they have learned throughout the course.	3.47	Very High	4.00	Very High
7. Develops formative assessments in line with the goals of the lesson.	3.44	Very High	4.00	Very High
8. Makes effective use of additional time for remediation and enrichment based on assessment findings.	3.44	Very High	4.00	Very High
9. Acknowledges unique characteristics of each learner and offers activities for remediation, reinforcement, and enrichment.	3.42	Very High	4.00	Very High
10. Offers activities that facilitate cooperative learning, group work, and interactive learning.	3.42	Very High	4.00	Very High
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very High</b>

In the domain of planning, assessing, and reporting learners' outcomes, master teachers received very high ratings, with teachers assigning a mean of 3.45 and principals a perfect 4.00. These results indicate their competence in designing lesson plans, conducting formative and summative assessments, maintaining accurate performance records, and implementing strategies for remediation and enrichment to support diverse learners.

**Table 9**  
**Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Leadership of Master Teachers in Terms of Personal Growth and Professional Development**

Description	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Upholds the dignity of teaching by maintaining a stature and manner commensurate with it.	3.35	Very High	4.00	Very High
2. Exhibits personal attributes such as zeal, adaptability, and a compassionate attitude.	3.36	Very High	4.00	Very High
3. Demonstrates a personal philosophy or approach to teaching in the classroom.	3.33	Very High	4.00	Very High
4. Keeps oneself abreast of the most recent advancements in the field of teaching.	3.33	Very High	4.00	Very High
5. Exhibits ideal personal attributes of honesty, integrity, devotion, civility, and understanding of human relations.	3.35	Very High	4.00	Very High
6. Establishes leadership, tolerance for stress, fairness, justice, appropriate attire, and decent grooming.	3.34	Very High	4.00	Very High
7. Participates in DepEd-sponsored workshops, seminars, and trainings.	3.37	Very High	4.00	Very High
8. Exhibits professional conduct when interacting with students, superiors, and other stakeholders.	3.37	Very High	4.00	Very High
9. Chooses activities, content knowledge, or pedagogical abilities for skill enhancement and improvement.	3.39	Very High	4.00	Very High
10. Shows desire to upgrade skills by enrolling in postgraduate studies.	3.37	Very High	4.00	Very High
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very High</b>

Master teachers' personal growth and professional development were also rated "Very High," with a grand mean of 3.36 from teachers and 4.00 from principals. This reflects their commitment to professional conduct, continuous learning, skill enhancement, and participation in relevant workshops and postgraduate studies, emphasizing their dedication to improving both personal and instructional capacities.

**Table 10**  
**Summary Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Leadership of Master Teachers**

Instructional Leadership Domain	Teachers		Principals	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
Mentoring Skills	3.36	Very High	4.00	Very High
Curriculum Content and Pedagogy	3.42	Very High	4.00	Very High
Planning, Assessing, and Reporting Learners' Outcomes	3.45	Very High	4.00	Very High
Personal Growth and Professional Development	3.36	Very High	4.00	Very High
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very High</b>

The overall assessment of instructional leadership reveals that master teachers excel in mentoring, curriculum implementation, planning and assessment, and professional development. Teachers rated their leadership skills with a mean of 3.40, while principals gave a perfect score of 4.00, both interpreted as "Very High," demonstrating the significant impact of master teachers in guiding and improving instructional practices.

**Table 11**  
**Significant Difference in the Assessment of Teachers and Principals in the Instructional Competence of Master Teachers**

Indicator	t	df	Sig.	Decision H <sub>0</sub>	Interpretation
Mastery of Subject Matter Skills	-2.163	129	0.032	reject H <sub>0</sub>	significant
Teaching Strategy Skills	-2.298	129	0.023	reject H <sub>0</sub>	significant
Classroom Management Skills	-2.023	129	0.045	reject H <sub>0</sub>	significant
Evaluation Skills	-2.224	129	0.028	reject H <sub>0</sub>	significant
Overall Competence	-2.354	129	0.020	reject H <sub>0</sub>	significant

Analysis of differences between teacher and principal assessments of instructional competence shows statistically significant differences in all domains, including mastery of subject matter, teaching strategies, classroom management, evaluation skills, and overall competence. The t-tests indicate that principals consistently rated master teachers higher than teachers, suggesting perceptual differences between these two groups.

**Table 12**  
**Significant Difference in the Assessment of Teachers and Principals on the Instructional Leadership Skills of Master Teachers**

Instructional Leadership Domain	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision (H <sub>0</sub> )	Interpretation
Mentoring Skills	-2.067	129	0.041	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant
Curriculum Content and Pedagogy	-2.023	129	0.045	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant
Planning, Assessing, and Reporting Learners' Outcomes	-1.833	129	0.069	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Personal Growth and Professional Development	-2.197	129	0.030	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant
Overall Leadership	-2.383	129	0.019	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant

Regarding instructional leadership skills, significant differences were observed in mentoring skills, curriculum content and pedagogy, and personal growth, while planning, assessing, and reporting learners' outcomes showed no significant difference. This suggests that while both teachers and principals recognize master teachers' leadership strengths, there is some variability in how specific competencies are perceived.

**Table 13**  
**Significant Relationship between Instructional Competence and Instructional Leadership Skills of Master Teachers**

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	N	Decision (H <sub>0</sub> )	Interpretation
Instructional Competence vs. Instructional Leadership	0.827	0.000	131	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant

A strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.827$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) was found between instructional competence and instructional leadership of master teachers, indicating that higher levels of competence in teaching are associated with stronger leadership skills. This underscores the interrelated nature of instructional expertise and leadership effectiveness.

**Table 14**  
Proposed Leadership Program for Master Teachers: C.L.A.S.S. (Curriculum Leadership and Strategic Skill Synthesis)

Areas of Concerns	Specific Competencies	Objectives (Performance Indicator)	Target Time Frame	Resources	Delivery Mode/ Strategies	Number of Participants	Budget	Success Indicator
<p>I. Assessment of teachers and principals on the instructional competence of master teachers in terms of <i>Teaching Strategy Skills</i></p> <p>(1. <i>Employs a wide range of instructional methods, approaches, and strategies in order to make the lesson engaging and significant for the students.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Through the use of effective questioning, it stimulates mental activity and clarifies learning.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Capable of efficiently communicating ideas in both English and Filipino fluently)</i></p>	Dynamic and Thought-Provoking Pedagogy	Pilot and document the impact of two new cutting-edge pedagogical models (e.g., blended learning, project-based assessment) and lead one faculty workshop on their effective implementation	4 (four) months	Research on Cognitive Load Theory & Learning Analytics, access to international education research journals, EdTech integration coaches; video case studies of model teaching; strategy templates (e.g., lesson study format); instructional technology tools (e.g., adaptive learning platforms)	Action Research Project: MTs implement models, collect pre/post-data; Faculty Training Session led by MTs on their successful strategies; "Master Class" workshops: hands-on training/ seminar in detecting learner needs and tailoring instruction using advanced pedagogies; Lesson Study Cycles for collaborative planning, observation, and refinement of lessons with new strategies	All Master Teachers concerned	P25,000 (for research subscription access and other materials and supplies)	All MTs successfully run a faculty PD session; Learner engagement metrics (from MT's classes) improve by, at least, 15%; 80-90% of MTs achieve an "outstanding" rating on the Lesson Study rubric for strategy implementations; 80-90% student proficiency on target tasks

Areas of Concerns	Specific Competencies	Objectives (Performance Indicator)	Target Time Frame	Resources	Delivery Mode/ Strategies	Number of Participants	Budget	Success Indicator
<p><i>Evaluation Skills</i></p> <p>(1. <i>Makes use of the results of evaluations as a foundation for enhancing the teaching process</i></p> <p>2. <i>Conducts a fair evaluation of the students' performance and makes use of standards that are acceptable and accurate in their evaluation practices</i></p> <p>3. <i>Assigns grades to students based on their accomplishments in the course</i></p> <p>4. <i>Makes available evaluative activities that are suitable for the students' capabilities, areas of interest, and requirements</i></p> <p>5. <i>Performs an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the evaluation outcomes)</i></p>	Data-Driven and Fair Assessment	Redesign a major assessment instrument to ensure validity, reliability, and cultural fairness and present a statistical analysis of the improvement in its performance metrics; Develop and validate performance-based assessment tasks and one criterion-referenced test, warranting alignment with learning outcomes	3 (three) to 5 (five) months	Psychometric Analysis Software, International Assessment Standards (PISA, IB guidelines), Statistical Consulting Expert; assessment and evaluation textbooks; statistical software for item analysis and national standards documents	Assessment Design Institute: Intensive training on psychometrics, alignment, and performance task development; Validation Working Groups: MTs to collaborate to pilot, analyze, and revise assessment tools	All concerned Master Teachers	P50,000 (for software/ expert consulting, other materials)	90-100% of MTs successfully developed valid and reliable revised assessment tool; inter-rater reliability for performance tasks of greater or than or equal to 0.80

Areas of Concerns	Specific Competencies	Objectives (Performance Indicator)	Target Time Frame	Resources	Delivery Mode/ Strategies	Number of Participants	Budget	Success Indicator
Assessment of teachers and principals on the instructional leadership of master teachers in terms of:  <i>Mentoring Skills</i>  <i>(1. Helps in the proper and accurate dissemination/implementation of school policies</i>  <i>2. Mentor co-teachers in content and skills difficulties</i>  <i>3. Assists in designing capacity development programs for teachers)</i>	Systemic Capacity Builder	Successfully mentor or coach two novice teachers or staff/peer members on national/global curriculum alignment and school policy, leading to their mentees achieving a "Proficient" rating in a formal mid-year review	6 (six) months (2 cycles of 3 months)	Structured Mentoring Guidebook; Leadership Coaching Modules & Protocols; School Policy Handbooks; Peer Observation Forms	Certified Mentor Training: Focus on active listening, goal setting, and reflective practice; Formal Mentoring Logs and Tripartite Meetings (MT, Mentee, Administrator); Action Research: Focus on the conduct and report on impact of their coaching/ mentoring	All concerned Master Teachers	P10,000 (for Certification Fees and other materials)	85-95% of MT's mentees achieve a "Highly Proficient" rating on the Mentoring Effectiveness; MTs successfully lead a systemic improvement initiative within their department; Mentee observation scores improve by not less than or equal to 10%

Areas of Concerns	Specific Competencies	Objectives (Performance Indicator)	Target Time Frame	Resources	Delivery Mode/ Strategies	Number of Participants	Budget	Success Indicator
<i>Personal Growth and Professional Development</i>  <i>(1. Upholds the dignity of teaching by maintaining a stature and manner that is commensurate with it</i>  <i>2. Exhibits the ideal personal attributes of honesty, integrity, devotion, civility, and understanding of human relations.</i>  <i>3. Establishes leadership, tolerance for stress, fairness, justice, appropriate clothes, and decent grooming</i>  <i>4. Demonstrates a personal philosophy or approach to teaching in the classroom</i>  <i>5. Keeps oneself abreast of the most recent advancements in the field of teaching</i>	Ethical and Contemporary Role Model	Attend one major international education conference (e.g., ECIS, EARCOS); Conduct a post-conference PD session focusing on ethical leadership and global best practices for the entire faculty; Design and lead one school-based training session (e.g., INSET, PLC) directly aligned with national curriculum priorities	12 months (6 months per cycle)	International conference grants, Ethical Leadership Frameworks, Dedicated Professional Development Time Slot; Professional Learning Community (PLC) materials; Access to instructional strategy databases and research journals (local and international), PD Portfolio template	Ethical Leadership Forum: Discussion on cultural sensitivity and professional integrity; Conference Attendance and School-Wide Dissemination; Critical Review Seminar/ Training Series: a quarterly session deep-diving into educational research and trends; Leadership Portfolio Development: documents MTs on PD activities, reflections, and impact of the sessions	All Master Teachers concerned	P100,000 (travel/ registration/MT)	85-95% attendance and presentation of a high-quality PD session; school-wide faculty survey confirms MTs are perceived as ethical, contemporary and effective professional models in an end-of-the-year survey; PD Portfolio reflections demonstrate sustained application of new knowledge

Based on the findings, the proposed leadership program for master teachers, C.L.A.S.S. (Curriculum Leadership and Strategic Skill Synthesis), aims to further enhance instructional and leadership capacities. The program is designed to support professional growth, mentorship, curriculum development, and strategic teaching practices, thereby strengthening the overall quality of education delivery.

### Research Future Opportunities

While this study provides valuable insights into the leadership capacity of master teachers as instructional leaders, several areas warrant further investigation:

- **Impact of Instructional Leadership on Student Outcomes:** Future research may examine the direct effect of master teachers' instructional leadership on student academic achievement, engagement, and classroom performance, providing evidence of its influence on learning outcomes.
- **Evaluation of the C.L.A.S.S. Mentoring Program:** Longitudinal or intervention-based studies could assess the effectiveness of the proposed C.L.A.S.S. mentoring program in enhancing master teachers' instructional competence and leadership skills over time.
- **Expanded School Contexts:** Further studies may explore the role of master teachers across different educational settings, such as junior high school, senior high school, or district-level leadership systems, to determine whether similar leadership patterns exist in varied contexts.
- **Qualitative Exploration of Leadership Practices:** Qualitative research may provide richer insights into how teachers experience and respond to the mentoring and instructional leadership of master teachers in everyday school practice.
- **Comparative Studies Across Divisions or Regions:** Comparative studies may identify broader trends and contextual differences in the leadership capacity of master teachers across various divisions or regions in the Philippine educational system.

## Conclusion

This study established that master teachers possess a high level of leadership capacity as instructional leaders, as evidenced by the consistently favorable assessments of both teachers and principals. Across all domains of instructional competence, including mastery of subject matter, teaching strategies, classroom management, and evaluation – master teachers were rated as very competent, reflecting strong professional expertise in core teaching functions. Similarly, in all dimensions of instructional leadership – mentoring skills, curriculum content and pedagogy, planning and assessment, and professional growth – master teachers were assessed as demonstrating very good leadership performance, indicating their substantial role in supporting instructional improvement and teacher development within the school setting.

The study further revealed that although both respondent groups held highly positive views of master teachers, principals consistently rated them significantly higher than teachers in most areas of instructional competence and instructional leadership. This finding suggests that differences in perspective may exist between administrative and peer-level evaluations of leadership practice. More importantly, the study found a very strong and statistically significant positive relationship between instructional competence and instructional leadership, indicating that master teachers' capacity to lead instruction is closely associated with their competence in teaching-related domains.

Overall, the findings affirm that master teachers are not only highly capable classroom practitioners but also effective instructional leaders whose influence extends beyond their own teaching into the professional growth of their colleagues and the broader instructional life of the school. The proposed mentoring program therefore provides a relevant and evidence-based intervention for sustaining and further strengthening the leadership capacity of master teachers in support of continuous school improvement.

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