



## SCHOOL HEADS' INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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### Abstract

This study determined the level of instructional leadership skills of school heads in a large Schools Division in Western Visayas during the School Year 2023–2024 as a basis for a leadership development plan. A descriptive research design was employed, utilizing a researcher-developed survey questionnaire to gather data from 105 teachers. The instrument was validated using the evaluation criteria of Carter V. Good and Douglas E. Scates, while reliability testing was conducted with 30 teachers from another district using Cronbach's Alpha. Data were analyzed using descriptive and comparative statistical techniques, including frequency, percentage, and mean, as well as the Mann–Whitney U test to determine significant differences across groups. Findings revealed that the respondents perceived school heads to possess a very high level of instructional leadership skills, particularly in guiding teaching and learning processes, setting academic goals, supporting teacher development, and monitoring student progress. However, variations were observed in leadership and conflict resolution skills when school heads were grouped according to educational qualifications and plantilla positions. School heads with higher educational attainment and senior plantilla posts demonstrated significantly stronger leadership and conflict management competencies than those with lower qualifications and junior posts. The study concludes that while instructional leadership among school heads is generally strong, targeted professional development remains essential, particularly in areas such as decision-making, communication, and conflict resolution. Strengthening these areas is expected to enhance school leadership effectiveness, foster positive school climates, and improve overall educational outcomes.

**Keywords:** Instructional leadership skills, school heads, leadership development plan, conflict resolution, decision-making, philippines

### Bio-notes:

Angelie N. Dela Cruz is a highly dedicated and accomplished School Principal II with extensive experience in teaching and educational leadership within the Department of Education, Negros Island Region. A graduate of Bachelor of Elementary Education from Philippine Normal University–Visayas, she has progressed through key academic and administrative roles, serving as Teacher I, Master Teacher I, Principal I, and currently as Principal II at Isabela West Elementary School. Her professional expertise encompasses holistic school management, including curriculum supervision, budget planning, and personnel development. Known for her efficiency, resilience, adaptability, and strong collaborative skills, she is committed to fostering an inclusive, safe, and positive school environment that promotes both academic excellence and the socio-emotional well-being of learners.





## Introduction

### Rationale

School heads play a pivotal role in improving teaching and learning outcomes through strong instructional leadership, particularly in decentralized systems such as the Philippines where Republic Act No. 9155 institutionalizes school-based management and empowers school leaders to make decisions that directly influence instructional quality (Republic Act No. 9155, 2001). The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) further underscores their responsibility in leading curriculum implementation, supervising instruction, fostering professional development, and ensuring continuous school improvement (Department of Education [DepEd], 2020). However, empirical studies indicate that variations in leadership competence—often associated with demographic and professional factors such as age, educational attainment, and position—can significantly influence school effectiveness, teacher performance, and student achievement (Hallinger, 2016; Liu & Hallinger, 2018). In large and administratively complex school divisions, these disparities may affect decision-making efficiency, organizational climate, and conflict management, thereby highlighting the need for systematic assessment of instructional leadership skills. Anchored on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (United Nations, 2015), this study seeks to determine the current level of instructional leadership skills among school heads and identify areas for enhancement as a basis for a responsive and sustainable leadership development plan that supports improved educational outcomes.

### Literature Review

Existing empirical and policy-based literature strongly supports the critical role of instructional leadership in enhancing school effectiveness, teacher performance, and student achievement. Hallinger (2016) emphasized that instructional leadership remains one of the most influential leadership models directly linked to improved academic outcomes, particularly when school heads actively supervise instruction and monitor curriculum implementation. Similarly, Liu and Hallinger (2018) found that principals' instructional leadership significantly influences teacher professional learning and self-efficacy, which in turn improves classroom practices and student performance. In the Philippine context, the Department of Education (2020), through DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020 or the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), identifies instructional leadership as a core domain requiring school heads to lead curriculum implementation, strengthen assessment systems, and promote professional growth. Complementing this, OECD (2016) highlighted that school leaders with higher levels of professional preparation and authority demonstrate stronger decision-making and governance capacity. Studies also show that leadership competencies such as conflict management and collaborative decision-making are essential for maintaining positive school climate and organizational effectiveness (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2020). National reform documents, including the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 (National Economic and Development Authority [NEDA], 2023), stress the need for continuous professional development to strengthen leadership quality in support of education reform and institutional resilience. Despite these frameworks, recent scholarship notes uneven development of leadership competencies across schools, particularly in large and complex divisions where administrative demands are greater (Day, Gu, & Sammons, 2016). These studies collectively justify the need to assess instructional leadership skills among school heads to provide localized empirical evidence and inform targeted leadership development initiatives aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education (United Nations, 2015).



## Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is anchored on the Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory emphasizes leaders' capacity to inspire, motivate, and empower followers toward shared goals, with a foundational commitment to democratic principles, where leadership effectiveness is tied to responsiveness and accountability to the constituents (Burns, 1978). Eaton et al. (2024) revisit this original conception and highlight that transformational leadership is not only about vision and motivation but also about advancing democratic engagement and participatory decision-making. In the context of educational leadership, this perspective aligns with school heads' instructional leadership roles, where effective leaders foster collaboration, consider teachers' input in decision-making, and encourage shared ownership of teaching and learning outcomes. Integrating this democratic dimension underscores the importance of inclusive leadership in schools, where transformational school heads inspire and guide teachers while respecting their perspectives and promoting collective responsibility for student success.

## Objectives

This paper aimed to determine the level of instructional leadership skills among school heads in a large division, Western Visayas, during the 2023-2024 school year. Specifically, it sought to determine (1) the level of school heads' instructional leadership skills according to the decision-making skills, leadership skills, and conflict resolution skills; (2) the level of school heads' instructional leadership skills when grouped according to the aforementioned variables; (3) whether a significant difference exists in the level of school heads' instructional leadership skills when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

## Methodology

The study's methodology-related components, such as the research design, respondents, research instrument, data collection process, and ethical issues, are described in this section.

## Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design to identify the school heads' instructional leadership skills in a large division in Western Visayas during the School Year 2023-2024, as the basis for a development plan. Descriptive research involves gathering data describing events and organizing, tabulating, depicting, and representing the data (Shuttleworth, 2014).

## Respondents

The respondents for this study comprise 105 teachers from the District of Western Visayas, selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation from each of the seven schools within the district.

## Data-gathering Instrument

The instrument underwent rigorous face and content validation by five experts in research and education to ensure its accuracy in measuring the intended demographics. The validation process yielded



a final validity score of 4.55, interpreted as excellent. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and its internal consistency. This study's reliability index is 0.962, interpreted as “Excellent”, meaning the questionnaire is highly reliable.

### Procedures for Data Collection

The researcher sought permission from the concerned authorities and secured the necessary endorsements before distributing questionnaires to gather the needed data. The research title was approved by the Thesis Committee headed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. After the approval, the researcher got permission through a letter addressed to the district supervisor and the school heads to allow her to conduct this study and distribute the questionnaire to the target respondents. The researcher personally retrieved the needed data for subsequent data analysis.

### Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objective 1 used the descriptive analytical scheme and mean as a statistical tool to determine the level of school heads' instructional leadership skills in decision-making, leadership, and conflict resolution skills. Objective 2 used the same analytical scheme and statistical tool to determine school heads' instructional leadership skills level when grouped according to the aforementioned variables. Objectives 3 used the comparative analytical schemes and Mann-Whitney U tests as statistical tools to determine whether significant differences exist in the level of school heads' instructional leadership skills when grouped and compared according to the previously mentioned variables.

### Ethical Considerations

This research paper strived to minimize the risk of harm to its target respondents by assuring them of the confidentiality of their responses and ensuring their anonymity throughout the entire research process. At the onset, this researcher secured their free, prior informed consent and assured them of their right to withdraw from their research participation if deemed necessary. No personal data compromising the respondents' identity was collected in adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, specifically on accessing the data both by the researcher and the analyst. The respondents were assured that no information that discloses their identity will be released or published without their consent, except when extremely necessary. All collected materials were appropriately disposed of by machine shredding or dissolved in water after the submission of the study. At the same time, soft copies of the data were deleted, leaving no chance of future retrieval.

## Results and Discussion

### Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to the Areas of Decision-Making Skills, Leadership Skills, and Conflict Resolution Skills

**Table 1**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to the Area Decision-Making Skills*

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>		
1. Describe a situation where you had to make a tough decision.	4.74	Very High Level
2. Provide an example of a recent decision you had to make.	4.71	Very High Level



3. Handle situations where there are conflicting opinions among team members in the decision-making process.	4.75	Very High Level
4. Describe a time when you had to make a quick decision.	4.70	Very High Level
5. Tend to rely more on data and analysis when making decisions.	4.63	Very High Level
6. Handle the pressure of making decisions within tight deadlines.	4.75	Very High Level
7. Ensure that everyone's input is considered before making a decision.	4.79	Very High Level
8. Prioritize when faced with multiple decisions that need attention simultaneously.	4.76	Very High Level
9. Evaluate the potential risks and benefits associated with a decision.	4.79	Very High Level
10. Recall a time when you had to make a decision that went against popular opinion.	4.71	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.73</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 1 presents the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of decision-making skills. The respondents obtained an overall mean score of 4.73, which was interpreted as very high. This shows that most school heads exhibit very good decision-making abilities. The result implies that the school heads do not merely rely on the available data; they also seek the teachers' opinions and weigh potential risks and benefits before deciding. Making decisions is never easy, especially if it involves the welfare of the teachers, learners, and the school.

In a study conducted by Turan, Filan, and Yildiran (2019) about critical thinking as a decision-making tool, the researchers found that critical thinking is an essential prerequisite for effective decisions by individuals and significantly affects the quality of the decisions one makes. While Quinal & Dupa (2024). found that most principals applied decision-making skills in the administration of their respective schools, this indicates that principals recognized the centrality of decisions and applied decision-making skills in making decisions.

**Table 2**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to the Area Leadership Skills*

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>		
1. Ensure effective communication within the team.	4.87	Very High Level
2. Describe a situation where you had to convey a challenging message to the team.	4.73	Very High Level
3. Involve the team in a decision-making process.	4.83	Very High Level
4. Use to motivate the members to be more active in all school activities.	4.82	Very High Level
5. Determine which tasks to delegate and to whom.	4.81	Very High Level
6. Describe a situation where there was conflict within the team.	4.76	Very High Level
7. Foster a sense of teamwork among team members.	4.82	Very High Level
8. Provide an instance where to adapt the leadership style to meet evolving circumstances.	4.81	Very High Level
9. Demonstrate empathy towards the team members.	4.83	Very High Level
10. Establish a clear vision for the team members.	4.86	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.81</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 2 discloses the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of leadership skills. The respondents obtained an overall mean score of 4.81, which is interpreted as a very high level. This indicates that school heads displayed the skills of a good leader by regularly communicating with their subordinates. The result suggests that while the level of performance is very high, a few school heads may have opportunities to further strengthen how they communicate challenging expectations to teachers. However, leaders must communicate with



the teachers regardless of the message's difficulty. They need to provide clear instructions so that tasks and duties assigned to teachers are carried out effectively. The result is supported by the study of Ahlaine et al. (2021). The researchers found that interpersonal communication can help the school principal carry out their duties by communicating with others. Therefore, the principal is expected to communicate interpersonally to create relationships, openness, and trust within the organization's scope.

**Table 3**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to the Area Conflict Resolution Skills*

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>		
1. Provide an example of a time when you successfully considered someone else's	4.78	Very High Level
2. Describe your approach to active listening during a conflict.	4.78	Very High Level
3. ensure that you understand the other person's feelings and concerns.	4.82	Very High Level
4. express my thoughts and feelings in a way that is constructive during a conflict?	4.74	Very High Level
5. Provide an example of a situation where I communicated effectively to resolve a conflict.	4.76	Very High Level
6. Go about identifying the root cause of a conflict?	4.83	Very High Level
7. identify the underlying issues that helped in resolving a dispute.	4.78	Very High Level
8. Describe your process for brainstorming solutions in a conflict.	4.77	Very High Level
9. Can you provide an example of a situation where you successfully came up with mutually agreeable solutions?	4.80	Very High Level
10. Ensure that the resolution reached is maintained over time.	4.80	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.79</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 3 divulges the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of conflict resolution skills. The respondents obtained an overall mean score of 4.79, which was interpreted as very high. It is presumed that school heads can handle school conflicts among school personnel. The result suggests that although the overall level is very high, there may be opportunities for some school heads to further enhance their sensitivity to teachers' thoughts and feelings during conflict situations. They gave importance to identifying the root cause of a conflict. Most school heads want a win-win solution when conflict arises in the school. They give and suggest solutions that will benefit both parties. The result relates to that of Mejia (2021), who concluded that the collaborating style widely used by school heads in dealing with their teachers is the conflict resolution/management style widely used by school heads in dealing with their teachers.

**Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Decision Making Skills, Leadership Skills, and Conflict Resolution Skills when grouped by Age, Highest Educational Attainment, and Plantilla Position**

**Table 4**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Decision-Making Skills According to Age*

Items	Younger		Older	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				



1. Describe a situation where you had to make a tough decision.	4.73	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
2. Provide an example of a recent decision you had to make.	4.75	Very High Level	4.68	Very High Level
3. Handle situations where there are conflicting opinions among team members in the decision-making process.	4.77	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
4. Describe a time when you had to make a quick decision.	4.67	Very High Level	4.72	Very High Level
5. Tend to rely more on data and analysis when making decisions.	4.65	Very High Level	4.61	Very High Level
6. Handle the pressure of making decisions within tight deadlines.	4.77	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
7. Ensure that everyone's input is considered before making a decision.	4.83	Very High Level	4.75	Very High Level
8. Prioritize when faced with multiple decisions that need attention simultaneously.	4.81	Very High Level	4.72	Very High Level
9. Evaluate the potential risks and benefits associated with a decision.	4.83	Very High Level	4.75	Very High Level
10. Recall a time when you had to make a decision that went against popular opinion.	4.71	Very High Level	4.72	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.75</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.72</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 4 presents the data on school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of decision-making, grouped by age. Younger respondents assessed an overall mean of 4.75, interpreted as a very high level, while older respondents assessed an overall mean of 4.72, interpreted as a very high level. The result implies that regardless of respondents' age, they observed that their school heads tend not to rely more on data when making decisions. Still, they give importance to everyone's opinions and input and weigh the risks and benefits before making decisions. The school heads believe that they have to look for the criteria and views of everyone in the group to base their decisions on to avoid bias and subjectivity in making reasonable judgments or decisions about an issue or a problem.

The result relates to that of Sunda, Yambo, and Odera (2018), who pointed out that the greater involvement of teachers in school decision-making improves teacher motivation and commitment, hence improving school performance. He argued that school heads should work to maintain an environment supporting teachers' efforts in the classroom and minimize outside factors that can disrupt the learning process. Management involves employees in decision-making but retains the power to implement decisions.

**Table 5**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Leadership Skills and Age Groupings*

Items	Younger		Older	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				
1. Ensure effective communication within the team.	4.96	Very High Level	4.79	Very High Level
2. Describe a situation where you had to convey a challenging message to the team.	4.78	Very High Level	4.68	Very High Level
3. Involve the team in a decision-making process.	4.92	Very High Level	4.75	Very High Level
4. Use to motivate the members to be more active in all school activities.	4.92	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
5. Determine which tasks to delegate and to whom.	4.81	Very High Level	4.81	Very High Level
6. Describe a situation where there was conflict within the team.	4.79	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
7. Foster a sense of teamwork among team members.	4.90	Very High Level	4.75	Very High Level
8. Provide an instance where to adapt the leadership style to meet evolving circumstances.	4.90	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
9. Demonstrate empathy towards the team members.	4.90	Very High Level	4.77	Very High Level



10. Establish a clear vision for the team members.	4.92	Very High Level	4.81	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.88</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.76</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 5 presents the data on the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of leadership skills when grouped according to age. Younger respondents assessed an overall mean of 4.88, interpreted as a very high level, while older respondents assessed an overall mean of 4.76, interpreted as a very high level. The result implies that both younger and older respondents perceived that there were times when the school heads had difficulty conveying challenging messages to the teachers. Some school heads were inefficient in giving clear instructions to their teachers. To achieve the school's goal, it is the school head's primary responsibility not just to communicate but to communicate so that his people will easily understand them to achieve the organization's goals. According to Ahlainei et al. (2021), communication is 98% of the most effective and significant running function of management and aspects of leadership. Communication plays a vital role in implementing organizational activities and is supported by the rapid development of communication as organizational needs change. Managers' skills and effective leaders can be seen in human relationships; they can develop other people and networks; they can understand each other in receiving and providing information; they exhibit positive non-verbal behavior; they encourage communication up and down; they listen effectively; and they develop strong symbolic messages. In carrying out his duties and responsibilities with management functions, the leader relies primarily on communication that can effectively streamline his leadership.

**Table 6**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Conflict Resolution Skills and Groupings by Age*

Items	Younger		Older	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				
1. Provide an example of a time when you successfully considered someone else's	4.85	Very High Level	4.72	Very High Level
2. Describe your approach to active listening during a conflict.	4.88	Very High Level	4.70	Very High Level
3. Ensure that you understand the other person's feelings and concerns.	4.90	Very High Level	4.75	Very High Level
4. express my thoughts and feelings in a way that is constructive during a conflict?	4.85	Very High Level	4.65	Very High Level
5. Provide an example of a situation where I communicated effectively to resolve a conflict.	4.85	Very High Level	4.68	Very High Level
6. Go about identifying the root cause of a conflict?	4.88	Very High Level	4.79	Very High Level
7. Identify the underlying issues that helped in resolving a dispute.	4.81	Very High Level	4.75	Very High Level
8. Describe your process for brainstorming solutions in a conflict.	4.79	Very High Level	4.75	Very High Level
9. Can you provide an example of a situation where you successfully came up with mutually agreeable solutions?	4.90	Very High Level	4.72	Very High Level
10. Ensure that the resolution reached is maintained over time.	4.88	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.86</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.73</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 6 shows the data on the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of conflict resolution skills when grouped according to age. Younger respondents assessed an overall mean of 4.86, interpreted as a very high level, while older respondents assessed an overall mean of 4.73, interpreted as a very high level. The result implies that younger respondents perceived that some school heads rarely



conduct brainstorming activities to find the best solutions to the conflict. While older respondents perceived that some school heads disregard the thoughts and feelings of the teachers during conflict, focusing more on identifying the root cause of the conflict, conflicts are bound to occur in all human interactions, especially in organizations. Thus, like in other organizations, conflicts are bound to arise in schools due to the collection of people with different personalities. Mishandled conflicts create tension and result in poor organizational performance. The result relates to that of Gomez et al. (2022), wherein the school heads usually use a collaborative style as a resolution skill. This indicates that the school head still wants a win-win solution when conflict arises. The school head tries to suggest solutions that will benefit both parties.

**Table 7**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Decision-Making Skills and Groupings by Educational Attainment*

Items	Lower		Higher	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				
1. Describe a situation where you had to make a tough decision.	4.83	Very High Level	4.67	Very High Level
2. Provide an example of a recent decision you had to make.	4.72	Very High Level	4.71	Very High Level
3. Handle situations where there are conflicting opinions among team members in the decision-making process.	4.77	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
4. Describe a time when you had to make a quick decision.	4.72	Very High Level	4.67	Very High Level
5. Tend to rely more on data and analysis when making decisions.	4.68	Very High Level	4.59	Very High Level
6. Handle the pressure of making decisions within tight deadlines.	4.79	Very High Level	4.72	Very High Level
7. Ensure that everyone's input is considered before making a decision.	4.77	Very High Level	4.81	Very High Level
8. Prioritize when faced with multiple decisions that need attention simultaneously.	4.79	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
9. Evaluate the potential risks and benefits associated with a decision.	4.83	Very High Level	4.76	Very High Level
10. Recall a time when you had to make a decision that went against popular opinion.	4.79	Very High Level	4.66	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.77</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.71</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 7 displays the data on the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of decision-making skills when grouped according to the highest educational attainment. Respondents with lower educational skills assessed an overall mean of 4.77, interpreted as a very high level. In comparison, respondents with higher educational attainment assessed an overall mean of 4.71, interpreted as a very high level. The result indicates that both parties perceived the same observations, wherein the school heads did not merely rely on data but also prioritized teachers' input and evaluated the situation by weighing the potential risks and benefits before making a final decision. This shows that the school heads exhibit skills in critical thinking, risk assessment, alternative weighing, data gathering, and processing before making decisions. The result relates to that of Ayeni (2018). Decision-making could be based on certainty, risk, and uncertainty. The school principal must have complete knowledge about the risk involved (negative or positive) and the consequences of each alternative preferred to solve a problem. However, when decisions are made, most school principals usually anticipate positive results.

**Table 8**



*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Leadership Skills and Groupings by Educational Attainment*

Items	Lower		Higher	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				
1. Ensure effective communication within the team.	4.89	Very High Level	4.84	Very High Level
2. Describe a situation where you had to convey a challenging message to the team.	4.79	Very High Level	4.69	Very High Level
3. Involve the team in a decision-making process.	4.87	Very High Level	4.79	Very High Level
4. Use to motivate the members to be more active in all school activities.	4.85	Very High Level	4.79	Very High Level
5. Determine which tasks to delegate and to whom.	4.85	Very High Level	4.78	Very High Level
6. Describe a situation where there was conflict within the team.	4.87	Very High Level	4.67	Very High Level
7. Foster a sense of teamwork among team members.	4.83	Very High Level	4.81	Very High Level
8. Provide an instance where to adapt the leadership style to meet evolving circumstances.	4.85	Very High Level	4.78	Very High Level
9. Demonstrate empathy towards the team members.	4.85	Very High Level	4.81	Very High Level
10. Establish a clear vision for the team members.	4.87	Very High Level	4.84	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.85</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.78</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 8 exposes the data on the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of leadership skills when grouped according to the highest educational attainment. Respondents with lower educational attainment assessed an overall mean of 4.85, interpreted as a very high level. In comparison, respondents with higher educational attainment assessed an overall mean of 4.78, interpreted as a very high level. The result implies that respondents with lower educational attainment perceived that some school heads were less proficient in conveying challenging messages to the teachers. In comparison, respondents with higher educational attainment perceived that school heads do not inform all teachers of a conflict within the school. This is to avoid further misunderstandings between the parties involved. It is expedient for the school heads to employ effective communication, proper timing of events, and pointing out the advantages of the preferred alternative without bias or prejudice.

According to Sapian et al. (2019), school success is closely related to leadership style and how far the principal influences and works together as a team with the entire community. The main criterion for leadership is communication. Communication is a device or medium that enables the principal-teachers, teachers-teachers, and teachers-students to transmit and convey the message. Thus, communication is an essential process in schools and the most frequently used tool by organizational leaders. Oral and written communication are crucial, and interpersonal communication is necessary to achieve school targets. Both skills will help to use communication as a medium that assists the principal in communicating openly about things related to school and solving relevant problems to create a favorable school climate.

**Table 9**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Conflict Resolution Skills and Groupings by Educational Attainment*

Items	Lower		Higher	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				
1. Provide an example of a time when you successfully considered someone else's	4.87	Very High Level	4.71	Very High Level
2. Describe your approach to active listening during a conflict.	4.89	Very High Level	4.69	Very High Level
3. Ensure that you understand the other person's feelings and concerns.	4.91	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
4. express my thoughts and feelings in a way that is constructive during a conflict?	4.85	Very High Level	4.66	Very High Level



5. Provide an example of a situation where I communicated effectively to resolve a conflict.	4.87	Very High Level	4.67	Very High Level
6. Go about identifying the root cause of a conflict?	4.91	Very High Level	4.76	Very High Level
7. identify the underlying issues helped in resolving a dispute.	4.83	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
8. Describe your process for brainstorming solutions in a conflict.	4.85	Very High Level	4.71	Very High Level
9. Can you provide an example of a situation where you successfully came up with mutually agreeable solutions?	4.89	Very High Level	4.72	Very High Level
10. Ensure that the resolution reached is maintained over time.	4.87	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.88</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.71</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 9 presents the data on the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of conflict resolution skills when grouped according to the highest educational attainment. Respondents with lower educational attainment assessed an overall mean of 4.88, interpreted as a very high level. In comparison, respondents with higher educational attainment assessed an overall mean of 4.71, interpreted as a very high level. The result implies that respondents with lower educational attainment perceived that some school heads could not identify the underlying issues necessary to resolve the dispute between the parties concerned. Respondents with higher educational attainment perceived that some school heads disregard the thoughts and feelings of both parties to avoid further dispute. Most school heads prefer to find the root cause of the dispute before solving the conflict. The school heads accommodated the suggestions of both parties to resolve the conflict. For some school heads, an accommodating style can be the best choice to resolve minor disputes and move on with more important issues.

As supported by Labrague et al. (2017), the results suggested that though school heads somehow perfectly managed to resolve the conflict between their school and their subordinates, they still had room for development, and one must always put the needs of others ahead of one's own. Although it may appear weak, accommodation can be the most effective way to overcome a minor disagreement and move on to more significant matters.

**Table 10**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Decision-Making Skills and Groupings by Plantilla Position*

Items	Lower		Higher	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				
1. Describe a situation where you had to make a tough decision.	4.74	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
2. Provide an example of a recent decision you had to make.	4.76	Very High Level	4.61	Very High Level
3. Handle situations where there are conflicting opinions among team members in the decision-making process.	4.86	Very High Level	4.48	High Level
4. Describe a time when you had to make a quick decision.	4.74	Very High Level	4.58	Very High Level
5. Tend to rely more on data and analysis when making decisions.	4.70	Very High Level	4.45	High Level
6. Handle the pressure of making decisions within tight deadlines.	4.82	Very High Level	4.58	Very High Level
7. Ensure that everyone's input is considered before making a decision.	4.88	Very High Level	4.58	Very High Level
8. Prioritize when faced with multiple decisions that need attention simultaneously.	4.85	Very High Level	4.55	Very High Level



9. Evaluate the potential risks and benefits associated with a decision.	4.86	Very High Level	4.61	Very High Level
10. Recall a time when you had to make a decision that went against popular opinion.	4.76	Very High Level	4.61	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.80</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.58</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 10 divulges the data on the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of decision-making skills when grouped according to plantilla position. Respondents with lower plantilla positions assessed an overall mean of 4.80, interpreted as a very high level. In comparison, respondents with higher plantilla positions assessed an overall mean of 4.58, interpreted as a very high level. The result implies that regardless of respondents' plantilla position, they perceived that the school heads do not just rely on data when making decisions but also give importance to everyone's input before making decisions. The school heads believe that gathering and processing data can differentiate or distinguish perception from evidence, cause effects, specify the main problems to be solved, and gather everyone's input to avoid bias and subjectivity in making reasonable decisions. The results also indicate that school heads' intuition and judgment can help produce more accurate or correct results when making a decision. Moreover, the results further strengthen the claim of Selart (2021) in his book that leaders are more likely to produce correct or partially correct judgments by using these skills. Lastly, he also stressed the importance of leaders' ability to evaluate their capacity for decision-making to yield better outcomes.

**Table 11**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to Leadership Skills and Groupings by Plantilla Position*

Items	Lower		Higher	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				
1. Ensure effective communication within the team.	4.96	Very High Level	4.65	Very High Level
2. Describe a situation where you had to convey a challenging message to the team.	4.82	Very High Level	4.52	Very High Level
3. Involve the team in a decision-making process.	4.91	Very High Level	4.65	Very High Level
4. Use to motivate the members to be more active in all school activities.	4.91	Very High Level	4.61	Very High Level
5. Determine which tasks to delegate and to whom.	4.86	Very High Level	4.68	Very High Level
6. Describe a situation where there was conflict within the team.	4.86	Very High Level	4.53	Very High Level
7. Foster a sense of teamwork among team members.	4.89	Very High Level	4.65	Very High Level
8. Provide an instance where to adapt the leadership style to meet evolving circumstances.	4.88	Very High Level	4.65	Very High Level
9. Demonstrate empathy towards the team members.	4.93	Very High Level	4.58	Very High Level
10. Establish a clear vision for the team members.	4.91	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.89</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.62</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 11 discloses the data on the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of leadership skills when grouped according to the plantilla position. Respondents with lower plantilla positions assessed an overall mean of 4.89, which was very high. In comparison, respondents with higher plantilla positions assessed an overall mean of 4.62, interpreted as a very high level. The result implies that both groups of respondents perceived that there are school heads with less interpersonal communication skills, as they have less ability to convey such important and challenging messages. Without effective communication among the members inside or outside the organization, the pattern of relationships will serve no one's needs. Thus, communication is also essential for the leader to plan, lead, organize, and control. According to Sapian et al. (2019), communication is the main criterion for leadership. Communication is a device or medium that enables the principal-teachers, teachers-teachers,



and teachers-students to transmit and convey the message. Thus, communication is an essential process in schools and the most frequently used tool by organizational leaders.

**Table 12**

*Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills According to the Area Conflict Resolution Skills According to Plantilla Position*

Items	Lower		Higher	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, my School Head...</i>				
1. Provide an example of a time when you successfully considered someone else's	4.85	Very High Level	4.61	Very High Level
2. Describe your approach to active listening during a conflict.	4.91	Very High Level	4.48	High Level
3. Ensure that understand the other person's feelings and concerns?	4.95	Very High Level	4.52	Very High Level
4. express my thoughts and feelings in a way that is constructive during a conflict?	4.88	Very High Level	4.42	High Level
5. Provide an example of a situation where I communicated effectively to resolve a conflict.	4.85	Very High Level	4.55	Very High Level
6. Go about identifying the root cause of a conflict?	4.86	Very High Level	4.74	Very High Level
7. identify the underlying issues helped in resolving a dispute.	4.81	Very High Level	4.71	Very High Level
8. Describe your process for brainstorming solutions in a conflict.	4.84	Very High Level	4.61	Very High Level
9. Can you provide an example of a situation where you successfully came up with mutually agreeable solutions?	4.89	Very High Level	4.58	Very High Level
10. Ensure that the resolution reached is maintained over time.	4.85	Very High Level	4.68	Very High Level
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.87</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>	<b>4.59</b>	<b>Very High Level</b>

Table 12 reveals the data on the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of conflict resolution skills when grouped according to the plantilla position. Respondents with lower plantilla positions assessed an overall mean of 4.87, interpreted as a very high level. In comparison, respondents with higher plantilla positions assessed an overall mean of 4.59, interpreted as a very high level.

The result implies that respondents with lower Plantilla positions perceived that some school heads have insufficient skills in identifying solutions to disputes in their school. While respondents in a higher plantilla position disregard the thoughts and feelings of concerned parties to avoid further misunderstanding, they instead identify the root cause of the conflict. The school heads tend to solve disputes by soliciting precise facts and evidence from subordinates to avoid complaints and solve problems in the school.

The result relates to Mejia (2021), wherein the collaborating style widely used by school heads in dealing with their teachers is the conflict management style. This implies that most school heads choose to work hand in hand with their teachers to solve issues and concerns at school, resulting in a healthier working relationship and a productive organization. It has also been noted that the conflict management styles of school heads have a significant relationship with teachers' job satisfaction and efficiency. This implies that the teachers felt contented and motivated if they were comfortable working with their school heads.

**Comparative Analysis of the Level of School Heads' Instructional Skills based on Decision-making Skills, Leadership Skills, and Conflict Resolution Skills when grouped by Age, Educational Attainment, and Plantilla position.**



**Table 13**

*Difference in the Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills in Decision-Making Skills According to Variables*

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	48	54.83	1280.00	0.535	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	57	51.46				Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	47	60.78	997.50	0.010	0.05	Significant
	Higher	58	46.70				
Plantilla Position	Lower	74	57.51	813.00	0.010	0.05	Significant
	Higher	31	42.23				

Table 13 shows the computed p-value for variable age is 0.535, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that states “there is no significant difference in the school heads’ instructional leadership skills in the area of decision-making skills when they are grouped and compared according to age” is accepted.

However, for variables with the highest educational attainment and Plantilla position, the computed p-values for both variables are 0.010, less than the 0.05 level, and thus interpreted as significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the school heads’ instructional leadership skills in the area of decision-making skills when grouped and compared according to highest educational attainment and plantilla position” is rejected.

The result implies that the respondents’ perceptions of school heads' instructional leadership in decision-making vary according to their highest educational attainment and Plantilla position. Respondents with higher academic qualifications and positions are more knowledgeable of leadership practices than their counterparts. The result relates to Galate (2023), wherein educational attainment, designation, and the number of years in position can influence the respondents’ decision-making. According to Ayeni (2018), decision-making is the process by which school heads choose the best or most preferred course of action among alternative sources of action to solve problems and achieve set goals effectively and efficiently. Therefore, the school heads who manage the school should have expertise in coordinating individuals or group members to specify the nature of a particular problem and select available alternatives to solve the problem and produce the desired result.

**Table 14**

*Difference in the Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills in Leadership Skills According to Variables*

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	48	57.00	1176.00	0.154	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	57	49.63				Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	47	59.88	1039.50	0.016	0.05	Significant
	Higher	58	47.42				
Plantilla Position	Lower	74	59.66	654.00	0.000	0.05	Significant
	Higher	31	37.10				

Table 14 reveals the computed p-value for variable age is 0.154, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that “there is no



significant difference in the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of leadership skills when they are grouped and compared according to age" is accepted.

However, for variables with the highest educational attainment and Plantilla position, the computed *p*-values are 0.016 and 0.000, which are less than the 0.05 level and thus interpreted as significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that states "there is no significant difference in the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of leadership skills when they are grouped and compared according to highest educational attainment and Plantilla position" is rejected.

The result implies that respondents' perceptions of school heads' instructional leadership vary according to their highest educational attainment and plantilla position. This is because the respondents with higher educational backgrounds and positions are already knowledgeable about the role of a leader. Hence, they know the leadership practices employed by their school heads.

**Table 15**

*Difference in the Level of School Heads' Instructional Leadership Skills in Conflict Resolution Skills According to Variables*

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	48	57.25	1164.00	0.124	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	57	49.42				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	47	60.56	1007.50	0.007	0.05	Significant
	Higher	58	46.87				
Plantilla Position	Lower	74	59.72	650.00	0.000	Significant	
	Higher	31	36.97				

Table 15 shows the computed *p*-value for variable age is 0.124, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that states "there is no significant difference in the school heads' instructional leadership skills in the area of conflict resolution skills when they are grouped and compared according to age" is accepted.

However, for variables with the highest educational attainment and Plantilla position, the computed *p*-values are 0.007 and 0.000, which are less than the 0.05 level and thus interpreted as significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the school heads' instructional leadership skills in conflict resolution skills when grouped and compared according to highest educational attainment and plantilla position" is rejected.

The result implies that respondents' perceptions of school heads' instructional leadership in conflict resolution differ from their highest educational attainment and plantilla position. The respondents' highest educational attainment and Plantilla position may influence their conflict management style. Therefore, they must continue aiming for higher education and constantly keep abreast of the latest trends and updates in managing the workplace and its workforce.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that school heads demonstrate a very high level of instructional leadership skills across the areas of decision-making, leadership, and conflict resolution. In decision-making, school heads exhibit strong competence in analyzing data, considering teachers' input, evaluating risks and benefits, and making timely and well-prioritized decisions, reflecting sound judgment in managing school operations. In terms of leadership skills, school heads display highly developed communication, motivation, delegation,



empathy, and vision-setting abilities, indicating their effectiveness in fostering collaboration and guiding teachers toward shared goals, with minor opportunities to further strengthen the delivery of challenging messages. Similarly, in conflict resolution, school heads show a very high capacity for active listening, identifying root causes of conflict, promoting mutually beneficial solutions, and sustaining resolutions over time, although continued enhancement in sensitivity to teachers' perspectives may further enrich school climate. The consistently very high ratings suggest that school heads are well-equipped to lead instructional improvement initiatives; however, sustained professional development remains important to maintain excellence and address subtle areas for growth to ensure continuous school improvement.

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