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Research Paper

School Head Literacy Leadership Functions and the School Reading Level of Key Stage 2: An Input to Retooling Program for Literacy Instructional Leadership

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Abstract

Since several studies have associated learners' reading performance with school head functions, this study aimed to determine the implications of school head literacy instructional leadership functions on the reading levels of Key Stage 2 students in selected public elementary schools within Cabuyao City. A quantitative descriptive method was employed, using a questionnaire survey to gather data from 142 Key Stage 2 teachers and six school heads. The statistical tools used included frequency and percentage for respondents' profiles, weighted mean for literacy leadership practices, t-test for significant differences in perceptions between teachers and school heads, and Pearson R for the relationship between school heads' literacy instructional leadership functions and Key Stage 2 reading levels. The findings revealed a minimal overall mean difference of 0.12 and a computed t-value of 0.0671 between the two sets of perceptions, indicating that the null hypothesis remained valid. However, the importance of the monitoring and assessment strand was highlighted. The test for a significant relationship between school heads' literacy leadership functions and the school reading profile yielded a computed r- value of 0.050, suggesting a very weak association, and a computed p-value of 0.925, providing no evidence against the null hypothesis. Therefore, no significant relationship was found between literacy leadership functions and the school reading profile, which implies that the learners' reading profile is not directly dependent on the school heads' literacy instructional supervisory functions; thus, school administrators may continuously seek ways to identify other factors contributing to the learners' reading level.

Keywords *Instructional Leadership; Key Stage 2 Reading Profile; Literacy Leadership*

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education's reading initiatives, including the Brigada Pagbasa Program, Sa Aklat Sisikat Reading Program, Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative), Synergeia Reading Proficiency Program, Basa Pilipinas, and various locally initiated programs, aim to enhance Filipino literacy levels. Following the implementation of the programs, the department has identified several factors contributing to their lack of success. These include unclear benchmarks for measuring and tracking students' annual reading performance, laborious Phil-IRI assessments, insufficient reports analysis to provide interventions, a lack of region- or division-wide interventions with outside partners, and the absence of national benchmarks for progress and targets. Additionally, no national reading program outlines clear expectations, monitoring, and evaluation procedures.

While every reading project and program has focused on preparing teachers to work directly with students, school administrators have provided capacity development for how they will conduct each program to the fullest extent possible. However, instructional literacy leadership training for school heads or their role as literacy leaders has not been addressed in any of the trainings conducted by the City Schools Division of Cabuyao, Philippines.

Given these challenges, it is crucial that every student learns to read, and the school administrator plays a vital role in this endeavor as a literacy leader. School heads must be proficient in various reading assessments, possess pedagogical expertise in the different components of

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reading, and recognize that reading interventions should be tailored to the unique needs of the school rather than merely adhering to the national programme to offer technical assistance to teachers.

While research indicates that teacher performance plays a crucial role in student learning outcomes, other studies have highlighted both direct and indirect relationships between student performance and the instructional leadership provided by school heads. Despite the implementation of various reading programs over the past eight years since the establishment of the City Schools Division of Cabuyao, these initiatives have not led to any significant improvements in the reading levels of Key Stage 2 learners. This situation mirrors the findings of Plaatjies (2019), who observed that, although various reading initiatives have been implemented, there remains a significant research gap in understanding how school heads in the City Schools Division of Cabuyao practice literacy leadership and its direct impact on the reading levels of Key Stage 2 learners. This study aims to fill this gap by assessing whether school heads are practicing literacy leadership and guiding their teachers, school personnel and external stakeholders through literacy goals and missions. Genuine literacy skills and attitudes are signals of literacy leadership from school system leaders at all levels, including literacy coaches, assistant principals, curriculum supervisors, directors, and teacher educators. They were also aware of the importance of developing soft skills related to literacy communication (Bates, et al., 2018).

Further, as literacy leaders, school heads must comprehend, appreciate, and honor the language and cultural background of their schools and collaborate with teachers to establish a welcoming and supportive learning environment where the curriculum reflects students' identities, languages, and cultures. Moreover, they also need to recognize the importance of collaborating with specialist literacy professionals to improve literacy instruction and learning, given their wide range of duties (Bean et. Al 2018).

School heads play a pivotal role in enhancing learners' literacy levels through various functions. According to Leithwood et al (2004), educational leaders emerge as architects of change by demonstrating strategic resource allocation. One significant aspect of effective leadership in this context is the commitment to ensuring dedicated funding and materials specifically earmarked for comprehensive literacy programmes. This strategic allocation reflects a proactive stance toward addressing the multifaceted needs of literacy interventions, encompassing curriculum development, teacher training, and the provision of necessary educational resources. Additionally, the strategic allocation of resources, both financial and conceptual, is key to the success of literacy initiatives. Whereas Fuentes and Jimerson (2020) emphasized that the role of an instructional leader requires acknowledgment of the leaders' responsibility to purposefully and intentionally develop Leadership Content Knowledge across content areas.

The preceding principles have prompted the researcher to fill the knowledge gap in literacy leadership by conducting a study on the instructional literacy leadership functions of school heads and their implications for the reading level of Key Stage 2 learners of Grades 4-6 of the six public elementary schools in the City Schools Division of Cabuyao. The researcher conducted this study to develop a research-based retooling program on instructional literacy leadership for school heads and to assist all public elementary schools in improving the literacy skills of Key Stage 2 learners in the division.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review provided the researcher with a thorough understanding of literacy instructional leadership functions. The activities of school principals as literacy leaders fall within the broader category of leadership. Northhouse (2025) shared a common philosophy of leadership centered on motivating others to work toward common goals. In contrast, other studies, such as those by Rost

(1991), highlight the diverse interpretations of leadership. Influenced by global trends and generational differences, researchers will continue to conceptualize leadership in varying ways. Various definitions of leadership reflect leaders' diverse responsibilities, as outlined in RA 9155, which designates instructional leadership as a key function of school heads. Scholars such as Bush (2015) or Hallinger and Heck (1996, 1998) concur that instructional leadership is inherently technical, as it primarily concerns the actions of educators that directly influence student development

Building on this perspective, Mestry (2017) directly connected low student achievement to ineffective instructional leadership, underscoring the critical role of school leaders in developing strong instructional supervisory skills. This view aligns with the argument of Bates and Morgan (1986), who emphasized that enhancing these competencies is essential for improving educational outcomes.

As instructional leaders, school principals play a crucial role in fostering teacher learning opportunities, as Kraft and Gilmour (2016) emphasised. Their leadership directly influences literacy instruction, making it essential for them to actively support educators in delivering high-quality literacy education. According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2007), the impact of school principals on literacy instruction is significant. Yet, many school heads struggle to provide adequate support due to limited experience supervising literacy education. This challenge is further compounded by a lack of understanding in decision-making processes and data-driven analysis, which are critical for effective instructional leadership.

Literacy leadership, as a specialized branch of instructional leadership, requires principals to serve as both instructional and literacy leaders. In this capacity, they must possess both content expertise and pedagogical knowledge to guide teachers in literacy instruction effectively. Additionally, principals should engage in professional dialogues with educators to cultivate a collaborative learning environment that enhances instructional practices and strengthens teaching effectiveness.

Moreover, the International Literacy Association (n.d.) highlights the pivotal role of school principals in shaping curriculum, instructional strategies, and continuous professional development for literacy education. To support student achievement, literacy leadership frameworks emphasize essential elements necessary for providing technical assistance to teachers. These elements are instrumental in enhancing educators' capacity to improve students' literacy skills, particularly in reading proficiency, thereby fostering a more effective and data-driven approach to literacy leadership.

As instructional literacy leaders, principals must understand the diversity of learners and how differentiated instruction works. Tiered reading instruction, a form of differentiated instruction that involves splitting a class into groups based on the level of instruction students can handle, has proven helpful after extensive research. In addition to their instructional leadership responsibilities, principals also serve as mentors, coaches, and resource providers, offering both technical assistance and strategic guidance to educators. Their multifaceted role necessitates thoughtful decision-making considering their school communities' unique needs and challenges. By actively supporting teachers and fostering a collaborative learning environment, principals can strengthen instructional practices and improve student literacy outcomes. According to Bates and Morgan (2018), school system leaders at all levels who are crucial in providing literacy leadership should exhibit genuine literacy understanding and attitude. These leaders include curriculum supervisors, directors, superintendents at all levels, literacy coaches, assistant principals, and principals. The need for literacy leaders to possess soft skills related to literacy communication was also addressed. Similar to Fuentes and Jimerson (2020), who focused on the strands of literacy leadership, the role of an instructional leader requires that the leader establish Leadership

Curriculum Knowledge (LCK) across curriculum areas in a deliberate and purposeful manner. They contend that leaders will be better equipped to support instructional change if they can deliberately develop LCK so they can understand what they see in classrooms in more complex ways. Gaining LCK over time allows leaders to take on a broader range of supervisory responsibilities and transition between them to offer teachers feedback that is specifically targeted at Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). Their study emphasized the importance of school heads' content knowledge in the performance of their functions as literacy leaders.

Teachers must see the principal as a knowledgeable individual in literacy and as an example of reflective, lifelong learning if they want the principal to be an effective literacy leader. It is not expected that the school head must be an expert in literacy; rather, the head of the school must know what behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate in the classroom. When a school head can articulate the benefits of successful literacy activities in detail, teachers are more likely to implement those practices. Furthermore, school heads' familiarity with effective literacy instruction directly correlates with their capacity to promote improved literacy outcomes (Overstreet, 2023).

Fuentes and Jimerson (2020) argued that the establishment and reinforcement of instructional leadership initiatives heavily depend on leadership content knowledge (LCK). They contend that in the absence of foundational knowledge of what constitutes good practice in a given subject area and/or grade level, school administrators may be unable to identify the existence or severity of instructional issues or may be ill-prepared to assist in the ongoing professional development of outstanding educators. LCK gaps prevent leaders from carrying out the kinds of supervisory actions that foster teacher development.

Prince (2022) revealed that while principals may not possess content knowledge relevant to every subject area, they can still provide teachers with content-specific feedback and extra resources to enhance their teaching methods. As a result, school heads, regardless of their area of expertise, are still required to perform their roles as instructional supervisors. Attending training sessions and pursuing graduate studies can improve content knowledge. The research findings of Aquino et al. (2021) stated that school heads' levels of leadership practices differed greatly depending on their level of education. The findings suggest that when school heads' greatest achievements are considered, their leadership practices are incomparable. This suggests that school heads who pursued doctorates have higher levels of leadership practice than those who obtained master's degrees.

Hallisey (2021) emphasized that many school principals lack specialized expertise and training in early childhood education, resulting in a limited understanding of its principles, which may hinder their ability to provide effective instructional support to educators. Therefore, principals of elementary schools often adopt strategies that work at higher grade levels, such as pushing students to sit for longer periods of time or eliminating play and recess. Children in this age group are therefore under pressure to perform better academically, which frequently results in an excessive focus on skill mastering and, occasionally, overuse of previously mastered skills.

Monitoring and evaluation must constantly be considered when conducting programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) to assess their effectiveness. Monitoring is inextricably linked to assessment and evaluation. These are critical for monitoring PPA implementation and assessing its efficacy, sustainability, efficiency, impact, and relevance. By examining data on literacy outcomes, school leaders can identify areas for improvement, adjust teaching tactics, and align and enhance learning materials. Furthermore, it provides evidence of whether literacy initiatives are meeting their objectives and generates insights about what works and what does not. It also assists school administrators in allocating resources to components of the literacy program that produce the best results.

In summary, monitoring and evaluation are not merely administrative tasks; they are crucial activities that support equity, improve literacy outcomes, and promote lifelong learning. Gray (2018) observed that while numerous studies establish a direct link between a principal's instructional leadership and student performance, there is not always a correlation between high growth scores on state assessments and principals' perceived advanced instructional management skills, emphasizing that collaboration among all stakeholders is the most critical factor in creating a successful school. Even with outstanding teachers, a school is ineffective without leadership. Without a great leader, a school cannot prosper, and educators cannot fully address the needs of every student. For success, all these essential elements must come together to create synergy.

This literature review encapsulates how school heads' functions based on instructional literacy leadership may have affected learners' literacy performance. This has prompted the proponent to assess the instructional literacy functions of public elementary school heads in the City Schools Division of Cabuyao.

Conceptual Framework

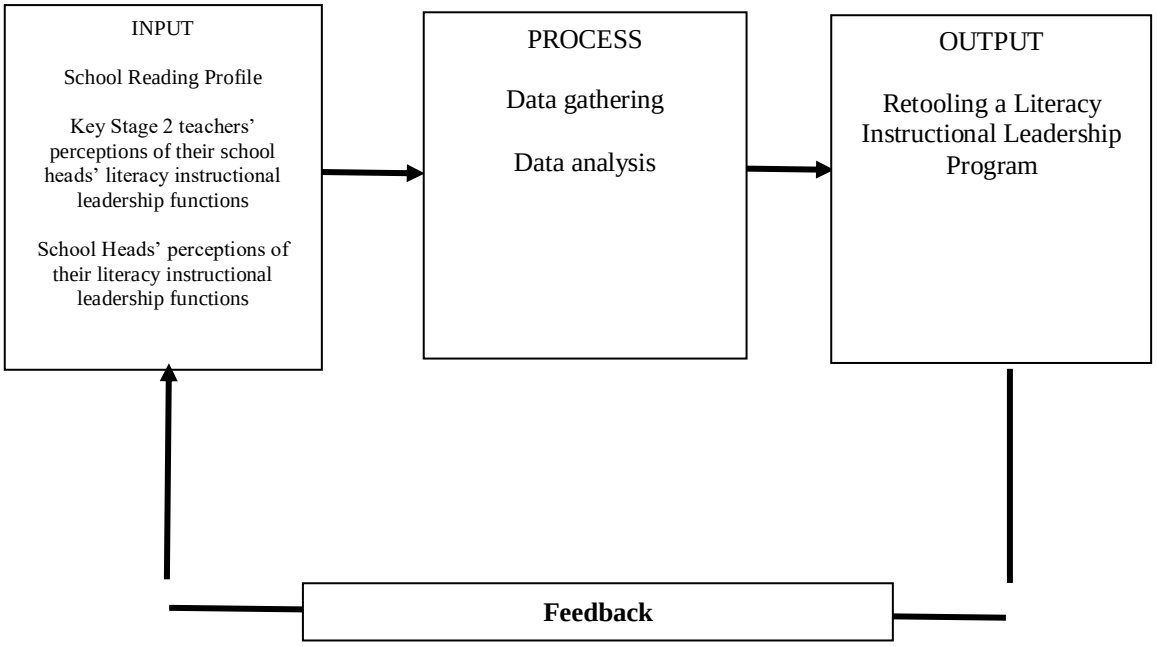

Figure 1. "Research Paradigm" (IPO Framework)

Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the literature review presented in this section, the following hypotheses were tested at a significance level of 0.05, as outlined below.

1. There was no significant difference between school heads and key stage 2 teachers in the role of literacy instructional leadership.
2. There is no significant relationship between school heads' literacy instructional leadership functions and the key stage 2 reading level.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative descriptive research design aimed at gathering numerical results from a survey. This method is most appropriate for this study because it focuses on the perceptions of school heads and Key Stage 2 teachers regarding literacy instructional leadership

strategies and their implications for school reading levels.

The researcher employed a questionnaire survey to gather primary data on school leaders' literacy leadership practices. Participants were given sufficient time to complete the survey, ensuring thoughtful and comprehensive responses. The data collected were derived directly from the participants' answers, providing valuable insights relevant to the study's objectives.

Respondents of the Study.

The City Schools Division of Cabuyao, located in Cabuyao City, Laguna, Philippines, served as the study site. It is among the industrialized cities of Laguna Province and has 19 public elementary schools spread throughout the 19 barangay. Six (6) elementary school heads and 145 elementary school teachers in Grades 4 to 6 of the six (6) public elementary schools in the City Schools Division of Cabuyao for the School Year 2023-2024 were the study respondents. The selected schools based on their categories were Mamatid Elementary School and Pulo Elementary School for large schools in District 1; Banay-Banay Elementary School and Banlic Elementary School for medium schools in District 1; and Casile Elementary School and Guinting Elementary School for small schools in District 5.

Sampling Technique

The researcher used a purposive sampling technique because the subject schools were categorized according to their size as a mediating variable. A typical case sampling method was used. Schools were selected based on location and size. The large and medium schools are from District 1 and are located in urban areas. A small school is in District 5 and situated in a rural area. Stratified Sampling was used to avoid selection bias and ensure that all relevant subgroups were represented proportionally in the sample.

Research Instrument

To assess school heads' instructional literacy leadership practices, the researcher employed a self-developed survey questionnaire to collect the necessary quantitative data from both school heads and teachers. This instrument was designed to gather relevant information essential for the study's objectives. The school head's questionnaire has two parts, where the first part comprise respondents' demographic information. It provides essential demographic information about the respondents, including their age, gender, duration of service, specialization, educational attainment, and seminars attended related to literacy leadership. Then, the second part discusses the strands of literacy leadership practices. Meanwhile, the Key Stage 2 teacher's questionnaire only contains one section that addresses their school head's roles as instructional leaders in relation to literacy instructional leadership strands. Both questionnaires used the Likert Scale to gauge the degree of awareness of the two groups of respondents, teachers, and school heads. Although the literacy strands were adopted from Dowel et al. (2012), the indicators in each strand were created based on the strands' descriptions. These indicators were framed carefully using the researcher's background as a Reading Specialist.

To ensure the questionnaire's validity and reliability, it was validated by five curriculum experts at SDO Cabuyao. These were three (3) supervisors who are English and Filipino supervisors and a district supervisor in charge in Reading, one (1) school head, who is a principal 4, and one (1) education program specialist who is in charge as the division research focal person. The questionnaire also underwent pilot testing for reliability with 15 school heads within and outside the city division of Cabuyao. Based on Reliability Coefficient Results using Cronbach's alpha, the six (6) strands of literacy instructional leadership, namely, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, support structure, literacy environment and management system, literacy mission, and

monitoring and evaluation obtained an overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.976, which Indicates an excellent reliability level.

Research Procedure

This study addressed the recurring literacy problem in SDO Cabuyao. To gain an overview of current knowledge on the chosen issue, the researcher explored the internet from local and foreign-related research and went to various libraries to look for magazines, books, journals, theses, and dissertations which served as references to gather the necessary material, and related literature and studies in providing background information for the study.

To collect the necessary data, the researcher personally visited the schools under study and requested the assistance of the school reading coordinators in distributing the questionnaire. First, she obtained consent from the division superintendent to conduct the study. After receiving approval from the division office, the student requested authorization from the school heads to distribute the questionnaires. The researcher gave the school heads and key stage 2 teacher-respondents a whole week to complete the surveys. The statistical analysis and interpretation aided the tabulation of the responses.

Another source of data was the results of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) for three consecutive school years. This study was limited to the screening test that gauged the reading grade level of the Key Stage 2 learners. To ensure its veracity, the researcher requested the necessary data from the SDO Cabuyao education program supervisor in English.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data were analyzed and interpreted using the following statistical tools:

1. Frequency and percentage were used to determine respondents' demographic profiles.
2. The percentage was used to obtain the reading profile of the schools, which were categorized as small, medium, and large.
3. Model Summary, ANOVA, and coefficients were used to determine the correlation between reading level and school size.
4. The weighted mean was used to determine the school heads' literacy instructional leadership practices.
5. The t-test was used to determine the substantial difference between school heads' and teachers' perceptions of literacy instructional leadership functions. Meanwhile, the Pearson R test was used to determine the strength of the relationship is between the schools' reading level in Key Stage 2 and the school heads' literacy leadership practices.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the reading profiles of the six (6) public elementary schools in the City Schools Division of Cabuyao over the three years. The data presents the profile of learners who failed the Group Screening Test (GST) and underwent individual reading assessment because they were identified as not grade-level ready (Phil-IRI).

Table 1. Reading profiles of the six public elementary schools in the City Schools Division of Cabuyao, Philippines

	2021-2022			2022-2023			2023-2024			Total		
Grade 4	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**
Casile	29	27	93.10%	60	17	28.33%	53	39	73.58%	142	83	58.45%
Glinting	30	28	93.33%	17	5	29.41%	19	8	42.11%	66	41	62.12%
Banay	247	203	82.19%	221	53	23.98%	137	36	26.28%	605	292	48.26%
Banlic	110	9	8.18%	156	14	8.97%	147	24	16.33%	413	47	11.38%
Mamatid	851	261	30.67%	683	168	24.60%	756	223	29.50%	2290	652	28.47%
Pulo	198	22	11.11%	373	80	21.45%	260	19	7.31%	831	121	14.56%
Grade 5	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**
Casile	44	14	31.82%	51	5	9.80%	60	11	18.33%	155	30	19.35%
Glinting	16	4	25.00%	29	4	13.79%	14	8	57.14%	59	16	27.12%
Banay	175	122	69.71%	230	109	47.39%	116	68	58.62%	521	299	57.39%
Banlic	57	2	3.51%	122	13	10.66%	114	33	28.95%	293	48	16.38%
Mamatid	692	378	54.62%	475	113	23.79%	803	223	27.77%	1970	714	36.24%
Pulo	528	98	18.56%	244	142	58.20%	222	81	36.49%	994	321	32.29%
Grade 6	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**
Casile	30	8	26.67%	40	14	35.00%	57	17	29.82%	127	39	30.71%
Glinting	14	13	92.86%	17	15	88.24%	31	28	90.32%	62	56	90.32%
Banay	208	181	87.02%	165	71	43.03%	158	57	36.08%	531	309	58.19%
Banlic	52	4	7.69%	85	9	10.59%	197	35	17.77%	334	48	14.37%
Mamatid	818	346	42.30%	575	178	30.96%	852	260	30.52%	2245	784	34.92%
Pulo	217	68	31.34%	433	184	42.49%	280	152	54.29%	930	404	43.44%
Total	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**	**Tested**	**Ind**	**%**
Casile	103	49	47.57%	151	36	23.84%	170	67	39.41%	424	152	35.85%
Glinting	60	45	75.00%	63	24	38.10%	64	44	68.75%	187	113	60.43%
Banay	630	506	80.32%	616	233	37.82%	411	161	39.17%	1657	900	54.32%
Banlic	219	15	6.85%	363	36	9.92%	458	92	20.09%	1040	143	13.75%
Mamatid	2361	985	41.72%	1733	459	26.49%	2411	706	29.28%	6505	2150	33.05%
Pulo	943	188	19.94%	1050	406	38.67%	762	252	33.07%	2755	846	30.71%

Table 1 displays the reading profiles of schools in Key Stage 2 over the three years. The data represent learners who failed the Group Screening Test in the Philippine Reading Inventory and who underwent individual reading assessments to determine their reading level. Among the six schools, Guinting Elementary School, which is classified as a small school, had the highest percentage of independent readers at 60.43%. The closest followed is Banay-Banay Elementary School, which is a medium school with 54.32% independent readers, and Casile Elementary School, another small school with 35.85% independent readers.

The table reveals that two of the six schools, which are both small schools, have the highest percentage of independent readers. Conversely, Mamatid Elementary School and Pulo Elementary School, both large schools, rank 4th and 5th, respectively, in the number of independent readers at 33.05% and 30.71%. Banlic Elementary School, classified as a medium school, ranks 6th, with the lowest percentage of independent readers at 13.75%.

The data also suggest other factors that influence students' reading levels. One of the identified factors is school size. It was found that small and medium schools have the highest percentage of learners reading at their grade level. Meanwhile, large schools are found to have the lowest percentage of independent readers. These findings are consistent with several research findings conducted primarily in developed nations, which show that smaller schools improve student learning. The data imply that students' reading levels are influenced by school size, which is consistent with studies by Kuziemko (2006) and Beuchert et al (2018), conducted primarily in developed nations, which showed that smaller schools improve student learning.

Similarly, Maloney (2020) reported that academic achievement increases with class size. Studies have also suggested that reduced class sizes enhance students' non-cognitive abilities and benefit academically struggling students. On the other hand, Koussihouèdé (2020) found that school size has no initial impact on student performance in Grade 2. By grade 4 (the beginning of Key Stage 2), attending a large school negatively affects students' performance in math and French in the medium and long term. Another factor identified based on the data was the school location. The schools with the highest percentage of independent readers were situated in rural locations and distant from households and highways. Moreover, Koussihouèdé (2020) identified that various factors, such as class size, student gender, urban versus rural locations, and parents' socioeconomic status, can affect the impact of school size differently on learners' performance. The Table 2 below presents the correlation coefficient between school size and the reading profiles of selected public elementary schools in Cabuyao City.

Table 2 Correlation Coefficient Between School Size and Reading Level Based on Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Errors in the Estimate
1	0.226 [a]	0.051	0.044	10.25883
a. Predictors: (Constant) and School Size				

Table 2 displays the linear relationship between the predictor variable (school size) and the outcome variable (reading profile). The R-value of approximately 0.226 indicates a weak positive correlation. The R-squared value (approximately 0.051) suggests that only 5.1% of the variance in the reading profile can be explained by school size. Meanwhile, the adjusted R-squared value (approximately 0.044) accounts for the model's complexity and the number of predictors. The table also indicates a slight correlation between the reading profile and school size, based on the statistical treatment. The results show that school size may be a predictor of student reading level; however, other factors might have effects on learners' literacy development. Not only the school size but also the school as a learning environment can be considered contributing factors to

students' reading levels. Classroom organization and a welcoming school environment have a significant positive impact on student performance, whereas school size and material resources have a lesser influence. Additionally, larger class sizes are associated with fewer learning opportunities, which affect students' assessment performance. Furthermore, Table 3 shows the correlation coefficient between school size and the school reading profile in the selected public elementary schools in Cabuyao City.

Table 3. Analysis of Variance of School Reading Profile and School Size

ANOVA[3]

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	828.869	1	828.869	7.879	.006[b]
Residual	15464.767	147	105.202		
Total	16293.635	148			

The table presents the analysis of variance of the schools' reading profiles and school sizes. The sum of squares due to regression (explained variance) is 828.869. Since there is only one predictor (school size), the degrees of freedom of the regression model is 1. The mean square, which is the ratio of the sum of squares to degrees of freedom, is also 828.869. The F-statistic is 7.879, and the associated p-value (sig) is approximately 0.006, indicating significance at a 0.6% level. Based on the result of the analysis of variance, the relationship between the dependent variable, which is the school's reading profile, and the predictor or the independent variable, which is the school size, is statistically significant.

The model's R-squared values suggest that school size explains only a small portion of the variability in reading profiles. The F-test indicates that the model is statistically significant, but the practical effect size is limited because of the low R-squared values. Although experts cannot agree on the exact number of students in a large class, they do agree that when class sizes rise, student-teacher interaction declines, and student learning declines (Hewitt & Brett, 2007). The field of teaching and learning has been designed by several educational systems worldwide to support the ideal class size. There is potential for improving students' academic performance when factors such as class size, government funding, and the availability of instructional resources for teachers are considered. Additionally, Abosede (2018) stated that class size is a "potent predictor of academic achievement."

Table 4. Analysis of Variance of School Reading Profile and School Size

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
(Constant)	43.934	4.031		10.899	0.000
School Size	-4.132	1.472	-0.226	-2.807	0.006
a. Dependent Variable: Reading Profile					

According to Filges et al. (2018), there is a good probability that a teacher will spend more time and attention on each student because of the small class size. Although the relationship

between class size and students' academic achievement has long been debated, current research has consistently backed this advocacy. In higher education, there is a significant correlation between students' academic achievement and class size (Owuor, 2018).

Similarly, Peter and Ligembe's (2020) research found that most teachers favored teaching in smaller classes because they are simpler to manage. Additionally, it was noted that large class sizes impacted the learning process because teachers were unable to give each student full attention. There was no differentiation because it was difficult for the teacher to follow up with each student individually. Large class sizes in public secondary schools have a negative impact on pupils' academic achievement, as revealed in this study. The instructors determined that high class sizes were the root cause of low academic achievement among their students in different institutions. Table 5 shows the summary of the perceptions of Key Stage 2 teachers on school heads' functions as literacy instructional leaders based on the strands of literacy leadership. As perceived by the teacher-respondents, the six strands of literacy leadership had a composite mean of 3.46. The teacher-respondents agree that these six strands were observed in their school heads.

Significantly, among the six strands of instructional literacy leadership, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and support structure gained the bottom three in terms of Mean percentage. Consistent with the results of school heads' profiles in terms of specialization and seminars attended relevant to literacy instructional leadership, this implies that school heads have limited content and pedagogical knowledge in literacy because the majority of them are secondary (Key Stage 3) majors and that they need trainings focusing on content and pedagogical knowledge.

Table 5. Summary of the perception of Key Stage 2 teachers on school heads' functions as literacy instructional leaders based on the strands of literacy leadership

	Strands of Literacy Leadership	Mean	SD	Scaled Response	Descriptive Interpretation
1.	Content Knowledge	3.43	0.48	Agree	Average
2.	Pedagogical Knowledge	3.40	0.47	Agree	Average
3.	Support Structure	3.42	0.50	Agree	Average
4.	Literacy Environment and Management System	3.49	0.47	Agree	Average
5.	Literacy Mission	3.49	0.46	Agree	Average
6.	Monitoring and Evaluation	3.51	0.48	Strongly Agree	High
	Composite	3.46	0.43	Agree	Average

The support structure is also one of the three strands that gained the lowest mean percentage. Indicators under this strand are class size, teacher training, and the school as a literacy environment. These factors might have affected the reading levels of the learners. Table 5 further shows that among the six strands, Monitoring and Evaluation obtained the highest mean score of 3.51, which is interpreted as high. Participants strongly agreed that their school heads exhibited indicators of school monitoring and evaluation. The results further demonstrate that their school heads implement programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) related to the development of literacy. It can be observed that schools in the Cabuyao City Schools Division have put in place monitoring and evaluation systems to evaluate how well their implemented PPAs are related to the development of literacy or reading skills. Any project, program, or activity must have monitoring and evaluation in place for the organization to assess the success of the implementation of the PPAs

as well as their progress. Organizations can ascertain a project or program's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability/adaptability, cause, and alternative strategy through the M&E process. The success of implementing a monitoring system is based on autonomous monitoring groups by educational level. Although obstacles remain to overcome, the teachers involved in the study identified several mutually beneficial outcomes for both teachers and students, as well as an improvement in the caliber of educational services, as the main positive effect elements. Table 6 below summarizes the perceptions of school heads regarding their functions as literacy instructional leaders based on the six strands of literacy leadership.

Table 6. Summary of school heads' functions as literacy instructional leaders based on literacy leadership strands

	Strands of Literacy Leadership	Mean	SD	Scaled Response	Descriptive Interpretation
1.	Content Knowledge	3.28	0.28	Agree	Average
2.	Pedagogical Knowledge	3.48	0.47	Agree	Average
3.	Support Structure	3.62	0.29	Strongly Agree	High
4.	Literacy Environment and Management System	3.52	0.39	Strongly Agree	High
5.	Literacy Mission	3.60	0.28	Strongly Agree	High
6.	Monitoring and Evaluation	3.95	0.12	Strongly Agree	High
	Composite	3.58	0.14	Strongly Agree	High

As shown in Table 6, the summary of the school heads' functions as literacy leaders based on the strands of literacy leadership has a composite mean of 3.58 with an average scaled response of "Strongly Agree," and is interpreted as high. The results also show that the strand with the highest mean is Monitoring and Evaluation at 3.95, while Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Knowledge obtained the lowest two with means of 3.28 and 3.48, respectively. This implies that among the six strands of Literacy Leadership, school heads' strengths lie in monitoring and evaluation, while their areas that need enhancement are Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Knowledge.

The findings revealed that principals should have an adequate understanding of literacy curricula, instructional strategies, and assessments to oversee continual progress in literacy education. Similarly, Plaatjies (2019) stated that due to a lack of knowledge, principals often neglect teacher-focused support in all aspects of literacy education. Fuentes and Jimerson (2020) emphasized that the role of an instructional leader is to establish Leadership Curriculum Knowledge(LCK) and gaining it allows leaders to take on a broader range of supervisory responsibilities and transition between them to offer teachers feedback that is specifically targeted at Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) Moreover, there is a need for pedagogical competence to ensure that principals understand how to meet students where they are and help teachers achieve those objectives.

Table 7. Test of significant difference between perceptions of Key Stage 2 teachers and school heads on the level of practice of literacy leadership functions

Strands of Literacy Leadership	Mean (School head)	Mean (Teachers)	Mean Difference	df	t-value
1. Content Knowledge	3.28	3.43	0.15	147	0.753
2. Pedagogical Knowledge	3.48	3.40	0.08	147	0.439
3. Support Structure	3.62	3.42	0.20	147	0.955
4. Literacy Environment and Management System	3.52	3.49	0.03	147	0.133
5. Literacy Mission	3.60	3.49	0.11	147	0.602
6. Monitoring and Evaluation	3.95	3.51	0.44	147	2.227*
Overall	**3.58**	**3.46**	**0.12**	**147**	**0.671**

**Significant at p < .05 the lev*

Table 7 shows the significant difference test between the perceptions of Key Stage 2 teachers and school heads on the level of practice of literacy leadership functions based on the strands of literacy leadership. Interestingly, both groups of respondents identified content and pedagogical knowledge as two of the weakest strands from the school heads' perspective. They are two of the bottom three in the teachers' evaluations. Consistently, the data imply that among the six strands of literacy leadership, content and pedagogical knowledge need to be enhanced. The study literature emphasizes the importance of the content and pedagogical expertise of school heads. Leadership must possess a deep understanding of education to ensure that the materials they provide to teachers are appropriate for their needs and represent best practices in a specific subject area.

In terms of significant differences, five out of six strands of literacy leadership obtained a t-value that is less than 1.96; therefore, the responses of the school heads and Key Stage 2 teachers show no significant difference; thus, the null hypothesis was not rejected. However, the computed t-value for the test of significant difference between the perceptions of school heads and Key Stage 2 teachers in the level of practice of literacy leadership in monitoring and evaluation was 2.227. It is greater than 1.96; thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The findings imply that school heads must revisit the 10 indicators under monitoring and evaluation to assess whether each indicator is effectively demonstrated. Table 8 shows the significant relationship test between the school heads' literacy leadership functions and the school's reading profile. From Table 8 below, the significant relationship test between the school heads' literacy leadership functions and the schools' reading profiles. Among the six strands of school heads' literacy instructional leadership functions, content knowledge has the highest r-value, interpreted as a weak association at 0.271. All other strands except for content knowledge, for content knowledge show a weak association. The results imply that among the six strands, school heads' content knowledge has a slight relationship with the learners' reading profiles.

Table 8. Test of Significant Difference Between Perceptions of Key Stage 2 Teachers and School Heads on the Level of Practice of Literacy Leadership Functions

Variables	r- value	Strength of the Association	p-value	Remarks
1. Content Knowledge	0.271	Weak	0.603	Not Significant
2. Pedagogical Knowledge	-0.034	Feeble	0.949	Not Significant

3. Support Structure	-0.129	Feeble	0.807	Not Significant
4. Literacy Environment and Management System	-0.195	Feeble	0.711	Not Significant
5. Literacy Mission	0.191	Feeble	0.717	Not Significant
6. Monitoring and evaluation	0.190	Feeble	0.718	Not Significant
Overall	**0.050**	**Feeble**	**0.925**	**Not Significant**

The computed overall r- value is 0.050, which implies a weak association between the variables. Since the p-value is 0.925, exceeding the .05 significance level, there is no evidence against the null hypothesis; therefore, we accept the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the literacy leadership functions and the school reading profile. Results presented in this table imply that the school reading profile does not depend solely on the school heads' literacy leadership functions. The findings on the variables' relationship may not be statistically significant, significant; however, other findings in the study were found significant in affecting the learners' reading level like the school size and location. Strands of literacy leadership may be some of the factors affecting the school-reading profile. Given the complexity of the reading process, other factors might influence the reading profile of Key Stage 2 learners in the City Schools Division of Cabuyao. Moreover, several studies have found a strong association between teaching strategies and student performance; thus, learners' performance is directly dependent on teachers' performance and not directly on school heads' instructional supervisory functions. Similarly, research has revealed no conclusive links between teachers' effectiveness and the quality of leadership methods used by school administrators, indicating that administrators' leadership styles are not influenced by teachers' output.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study's findings, both school heads and teachers identified content and pedagogical knowledge as the least demonstrated aspects of literacy instructional leadership among school heads. The data analysis, including hypothesis testing, revealed no significant difference between the responses of school heads and Key Stage 2 teachers regarding their perceptions of literacy leadership practices in five of the six strands. As a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Meanwhile, the Monitoring and Evaluation strand shows a significant difference in their responses, which implies that the indicators under this strand of instructional literacy leadership need to to be revisited and reflected whether the school heads were effectively demonstrating them.

The weak association between the school heads' leadership functions and the school reading levels implies that the learners' reading profile is not directly dependent on the school heads' literacy instructional supervisory functions since the study reveals that the five strands of literacy instructional leadership, which are pedagogical knowledge, support structure, literacy environment and management system, literacy mission, and monitoring and evaluation, show very weak associations with the school reading profile, except for Content Knowledge, which shows a weak association. The results imply that among the six strands, school heads' content knowledge in literacy instructional leadership indicates a slight relationship and may have some connection with learners' reading profiles.

Considering the research findings and conclusions, the following specific recommendations are made:

1. School administrators should continuously seek ways to strengthen their literacy leadership roles and practices. This could be achieved by enrolling in graduate programs, attending

relevant training sessions, or enhancing students' capacity to improve their current skills and deepen their understanding of the various literacy-related challenges that schools encounter.

2. A retooling program for school heads in literacy instructional leadership that focuses on content and pedagogy for them to reflect on their various roles as supervisors of literacy instruction to determine how they might improve their supervisory techniques to enhance teacher performance toward the learners' improved reading level.
3. Schools may institutionalize monitoring and evaluation procedures to standardize data collection and regularly assess the progress of reading-related activities. This will enable them to identify issues early and take appropriate corrective actions.

LIMITATION OF RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size was relatively small, comprising only six schools and 145 teachers, which may not accurately represent the broader teacher population. Additionally, the study was geographically limited to Cabuyao City, Philippines, potentially failing to capture variations in literacy leadership practices across different provincial or regional contexts. These constraints limit the generalizability of the findings.

To address these limitations, future research should consider incorporating a larger and more diverse sample to improve the applicability of the results.

Additionally, refining the measurement tool by incorporating additional indicators could provide a more comprehensive evaluation of school heads' literacy leadership practices and their impact on learners' reading levels. Exploring alternative reading assessment tools may offer deeper insights into students' reading abilities. Expanding the sample of both school heads and teachers in future studies would further enhance the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

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