

Enhancing Teachers' Mental Health and Work Well-Being Through the Instructional Leadership Styles of School Heads: Basis for a Capacity-Building Program

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' mental health and work well-being have become critical concerns in educational leadership, particularly amid increasing professional demands and organizational challenges. This study examined the relationship between school heads' instructional leadership styles and teachers' mental health and work well-being in the Schools Division of Alaminos City. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 337 teachers and school heads via a validated, researcher-developed questionnaire. Statistical tools employed included frequency and percentage, weighted mean, Spearman's Rank Correlation, Kendall's Tau-b, and Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). Findings revealed that teachers generally demonstrated high levels of mental health ($M = 3.69$) and highly satisfactory work well-being ($M = 4.04$). School heads manifested a high level of instructional leadership ($M = 4.30$), with digital/technology leadership, servant leadership, and collaborative leadership obtaining the highest ratings. Significant positive relationships were found between instructional leadership styles and both teachers' mental health and work well-being. Transformational leadership emerged as the strongest predictor of emotional well-being, coping mechanisms, organizational support, and work engagement. Moreover, educational attainment and participation in mental health-related training significantly influenced the manifestation of leadership. The study concludes that instructional leadership serves as a critical organizational resource that promotes teacher wellness and professional functioning. A capacity-building program focused on leadership development and teacher wellness is proposed to strengthen supportive, healthy school environments.

Keywords: instructional leadership, teacher mental health, work well-being, transformational leadership, school heads, capacity-building program

INTRODUCTION

The success of educational institutions largely depends on the quality, commitment, and well-being of teachers. As the primary agents of instruction, teachers influence learners' academic achievement, socio-emotional development, and lifelong learning outcomes. However, contemporary educational environments are increasingly characterized by heightened accountability, curriculum reforms, technological demands, administrative workloads, and diverse learner needs. These challenges place considerable pressure on teachers and may adversely affect their mental health and work well-being.

Mental health is an essential component of teachers' professional effectiveness. Teachers who maintain positive mental health are better equipped to manage stress, establish meaningful relationships, adapt to workplace changes, and sustain professional commitment. Conversely, poor mental health may result in burnout, absenteeism, emotional exhaustion, and reduced instructional performance. Similarly, work well-being encompasses job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational support, and work-life balance, all of which contribute to teachers' productivity and retention.

Educational leadership has increasingly been recognized as a significant determinant of teacher well-being. School heads shape school culture, influence organizational climate, and provide the support systems necessary for teachers to thrive professionally and psychologically. Effective instructional leaders foster collaboration, provide meaningful feedback, encourage professional development, and establish supportive learning environments. Through these practices, school leaders can directly and indirectly influence teachers' mental health and workplace experiences.

The present study is anchored in Transformational Leadership Theory, the Instructional Leadership Framework, the Job Demands–Resources Model, and Seligman's Well-Being Theory (PERMA), which collectively explain how leadership practices function as organizational resources that promote teacher resilience, engagement, and well-being. The study sought to determine the relationship between instructional leadership styles of school heads and the mental health and work well-being of teachers in the Schools Division of Alaminos City and to provide an empirical basis for a capacity-building program.

Statement of the Problems

This study aimed to examine the instructional leadership of school heads in implementing mental health and well-being programs for teachers as a basis for a Capacity-Building Program. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of public-school heads in Alaminos City, in terms of:
 1. age;
 2. sex;
 3. position;
 4. length of service;
 5. highest educational attainment;
 6. number of relevant seminars or training attended related to mental health;
 7. number of relevant seminars or training attended related to well-being?
2. What is the level of mental health of teachers, in terms of:
 - a. emotional well-being;
 - b. stress management and coping ability;
 - c. work-related anxiety and psychological distress;
 - d. job satisfaction and sense of professional fulfillment;
 - e. work-life balance; and
 - f. burnout and emotional exhaustion?
3. What is the level of work well-being of teachers, in terms of:
 - a. job satisfaction and professional satisfaction;
 - b. work engagement;
 - c. work-life balance; and
 - d. organizational support and collegial relationships?
4. What is the level of manifestation of the instructional leadership styles of school heads, along:
 - a. Transformational;
 - b. Instructional;
 - c. Distributed;
 - d. Servant;
 - e. Digital/Technology; and
 - f. Collaborative?

5. Is there a significant relationship between the level of mental health of teachers and the level of manifestation of the instructional leadership styles of school heads?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the level of work well-being of teachers and the level of manifestation of the instructional leadership styles of school heads?
7. Is there a significant relationship between level of manifestation of the instructional leadership styles of school heads and their profile variables?
8. Based on the findings, what capacity-building program for school heads may be proposed?

Scope and Delimitations

The study was conducted in selected public schools within the Alaminos City Division and included school heads and teachers as respondents over two months. It focused on the variables of respondent profile (age, sex, length of service, position/designation, highest educational attainment, and trainings attended), mental health (emotional well-being, stress and anxiety, workload-related pressure, and coping mechanisms), overall well-being (physical, psychological, social well-being, and work-life balance), influencing factors (workload and role demands, administrative and organizational support, availability of mental health and well-being programs, school environment and resources, and family/personal responsibilities), mechanisms of implementation, and instructional leadership practices of school heads. Data collection will be conducted over two months, and the findings will be limited to the perspectives and experiences of respondents from the selected public schools. The study will not cover private schools, other divisions, or clinical **mental health interventions, and the results will be interpreted only within the context of the Alaminos City Division.**

Review of Related Literature and Studies

The literature emphasizes that instructional leadership plays a vital role in promoting teachers' mental health and work well-being. Effective school leaders create supportive environments through transformational, instructional, collaborative, servant, and digital leadership practices that enhance teacher motivation, resilience, job satisfaction, and professional growth. Studies indicate that teachers who receive strong organizational and instructional support are more likely to experience positive mental health, higher work engagement, and greater workplace satisfaction.

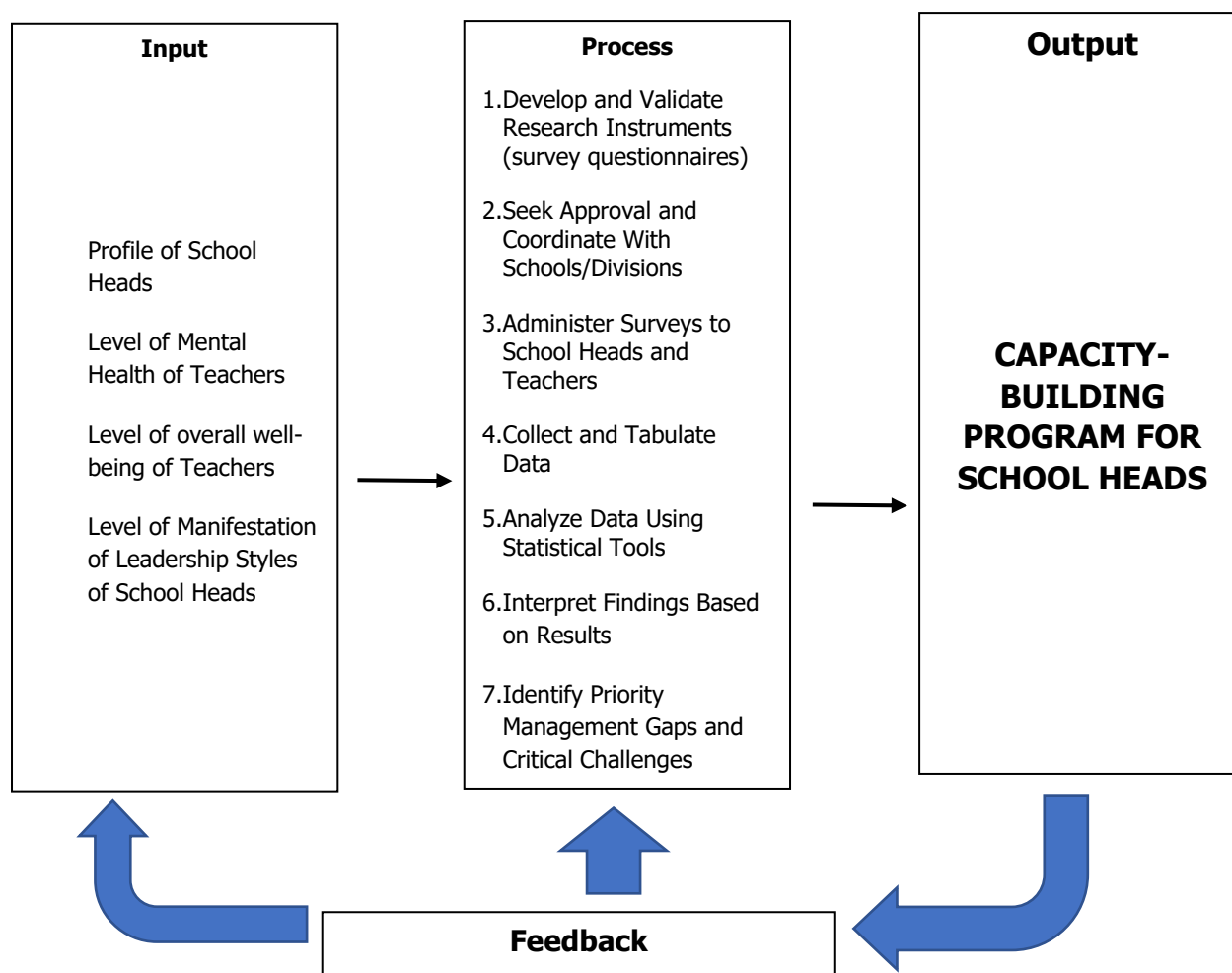
Research further reveals that teacher mental health is influenced by factors such as workload, stress, burnout, organizational support, and work-life balance. Supportive leadership practices help mitigate these challenges by fostering collaboration, empowerment, and positive school climates. Both international and local studies have consistently found significant relationships between instructional leadership and teacher well-being, highlighting the importance of leadership development programs that strengthen school heads' capacity to support teachers' psychological and professional needs.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in four major theories. **Transformational Leadership Theory** (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1990) explains how leaders inspire, motivate, and empower teachers, thereby enhancing their confidence, commitment, and well-being. **Instructional Leadership Framework** (Hallinger, 2011) emphasizes the role of school heads in improving teaching and learning through supervision, professional development, and instructional support. The study is also guided by the **Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model** (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007),

which posits that supportive leadership serves as a resource that helps teachers manage job demands, reduce stress, and prevent burnout. Furthermore, **Seligman's Well-Being Theory (PERMA Model)** (2011) provides a framework for understanding teacher well-being through positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Collectively, these theories explain how effective instructional leadership **enhances teachers' mental health and work well-being, providing the foundation for the proposed capacity-building program.**

Conceptual framework



METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a **descriptive-correlational research design** to examine the relationship between school heads' instructional leadership styles and teachers' mental health and work well-being in the Schools Division of Alaminos City. The descriptive component was used to determine the respondents' profile and assess the levels of teachers' mental health, work well-being, and instructional leadership styles of school heads. The correlational component was used to determine significant relationships among the variables and to identify the extent to which instructional leadership practices are associated with teachers' mental health and work well-being.

Research Steps

The study was conducted through a systematic process. First, relevant literature and studies were reviewed to establish the research's theoretical and conceptual foundations. A researcher-made questionnaire was then developed and subjected to expert validation and reliability testing to ensure its validity and consistency. Upon securing the necessary approvals from the Schools Division Office and school heads, the researcher administered the survey questionnaire to the selected respondents. The data gathered were checked for completeness, organized, coded, and prepared for statistical analysis. The results were subsequently analyzed to determine relationships among the study variables and to serve as the basis for the proposed capacity-building program.

Data Collection

The study's respondents comprised **337 teachers and school heads from public schools in the Schools Division of Alaminos City**. Data were collected using a validated researcher-made survey questionnaire composed of four parts: (1) respondents' profile, (2) teachers' mental health, (3) teachers' work well-being, and (4) instructional leadership styles of school heads. The questionnaire was distributed personally and through authorized school coordinators after obtaining the necessary permissions. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. Ethical considerations, including confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent, were strictly observed throughout the data-gathering process.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical tools. **Frequency and Percentage** were used to describe the respondents' demographic and professional profiles. **Weighted Mean** was employed to determine the levels of teachers' mental health, work well-being, and instructional leadership styles of school heads. To determine the significant relationships among variables, **Pearson Product-Moment Correlation** and **Spearman Rank Correlation** were utilized depending on the nature and distribution of the data. Furthermore, **Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)** was employed to examine the predictive influence of instructional leadership styles on teachers' mental health and work well-being. All statistical analyses were conducted using an appropriate level of significance to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

Research Hypotheses and Validation

The study was guided by the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between school heads' instructional leadership styles and teachers' mental health and work well-being. Specifically, it hypothesized that the respondents' profile variables, including age, sex, position, highest educational attainment, length of service, and number of mental health and well-being training sessions attended, have no significant relationship with the instructional leadership styles of school heads. It further posited that instructional leadership styles do not significantly influence teachers' mental health and work well-being and are not significant predictors of these outcomes. To ensure that the data gathered were valid and reliable for testing these hypotheses, a researcher-made questionnaire was developed and subjected to a thorough validation process. The instrument was evaluated by experts in educational management, research, and mental health to assess its content validity, clarity, and relevance to the study's objectives. Their recommendations were incorporated to refine the questionnaire. Subsequently, the instrument was pilot-tested with respondents who had characteristics similar to those of the actual participants but were not included in the study. The pilot test data were subjected to reliability analysis, and the results confirmed that the instrument had acceptable validity and

reliability, making it suitable for assessing teachers' mental health, work well-being, and the instructional leadership styles of school heads, as well as for testing the study's hypotheses.

Study Limitations

This study was limited to examining the relationship between school heads' instructional leadership styles and teachers' mental health and work well-being in public schools within the Schools Division of Alaminos City during School Year 2025–2026. The investigation focused on selected dimensions of mental health, namely emotional well-being, stress and anxiety, workload-related pressure, and coping mechanisms, as well as work well-being indicators such as job satisfaction, work engagement, work-life balance, and organizational support. Instructional leadership was examined through transformational, instructional, servant, collaborative, and digital/technology leadership styles. Data were obtained from 337 teachers and school heads using a researcher-made survey questionnaire; thus, the findings were based on the respondents' self-reported perceptions and experiences, which may be subject to response bias. Moreover, the descriptive-correlational design allowed the determination of relationships among variables but did not establish causal effects. The study was further confined to the selected respondents and variables included in the framework; therefore, other factors that may influence teachers' mental health and work well-being, such as organizational climate, compensation, personal circumstances, and external environmental conditions, were beyond its scope. Consequently, the findings may not generalize to other divisions or educational contexts without accounting for differences in organizational and contextual conditions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Respondents

The majority of respondents were female teachers aged 26–35 years old. Most occupied Teacher I–III positions, possessed master's units, and had attended one to three trainings related to mental health and well-being. More than half had served for eleven years or longer. These findings indicate a workforce composed of experienced educators who continue to pursue professional growth while facing the demands of teaching. The limited exposure to mental health-related training highlights the need for more systematic wellness interventions.

Teachers' Mental Health

Teachers' mental health was generally rated as highly evident ($M = 3.69$). Emotional well-being and coping mechanisms obtained the highest ratings, indicating that teachers generally maintain positive psychological functioning and resilience. However, stress, anxiety, and workload-related pressures remained moderately evident, suggesting that occupational demands continue to affect teachers despite their ability to cope effectively. These findings support Seligman's Well-Being Theory, which emphasizes positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment as essential elements of well-being. The results suggest that while teachers derive satisfaction and fulfillment from their profession, organizational support remains necessary to mitigate workplace stressors.

Teachers' Work Well-Being

Teachers reported a highly satisfactory level of work well-being ($M = 4.04$). High ratings were observed in job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational support, and work-life balance. This finding suggests that teachers generally perceive their workplace as supportive and conducive to professional growth. Positive work environments contribute to motivation, commitment, and sustained engagement in teaching responsibilities.

Instructional Leadership Styles of School Heads

School heads demonstrated a high level of instructional leadership ($M = 4.30$). Digital leadership emerged as the most highly manifested leadership dimension, followed by servant and collaborative leadership. This indicates that school leaders increasingly utilize technology, encourage teamwork, and prioritize service-oriented leadership practices. The prominence of digital leadership may be attributed to the continuing integration of technology in educational management and instruction. Meanwhile, servant and collaborative leadership reflect school heads' commitment to empowering teachers and fostering professional relationships.

Relationship Between Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Mental Health

A significant positive relationship was found between instructional leadership styles and teachers' mental health. Transformational leadership demonstrated the strongest association with emotional well-being and coping mechanisms. School heads who motivate, inspire, and provide individualized support contribute positively to teachers' psychological resilience and emotional stability.

The findings validate Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes leaders' ability to inspire followers, promote professional growth, and create meaningful workplace experiences. Effective leadership functions as an organizational resource that helps teachers cope with workplace demands and maintain psychological well-being.

Relationship Between Instructional Leadership and Work Well-Being

Instructional leadership styles were also significantly related to teachers' work well-being. Strong associations were observed between leadership practices and organizational support, collegial relationships, and work engagement. These findings suggest that teachers are more satisfied and engaged when school leaders establish supportive and collaborative environments. Consistent with the Job Demands–Resources Model, leadership behaviors provide critical resources that buffer the effects of occupational stress and enhance employee well-being.

Relationship Between Respondents' Profile and Leadership Manifestation

Educational attainment, position, and participation in mental health and well-being trainings were significantly related to the manifestation of instructional leadership styles. Conversely, age, sex, and length of service showed no significant relationship.

These results imply that leadership competencies can be strengthened through advanced education and professional development. Exposure to specialized training appears to enhance school leaders' capacity to implement effective leadership practices that support teacher wellness.

SUMMARY

The study investigated the relationship between school heads' instructional leadership styles and teachers' mental health and work well-being in the Schools Division of Alaminos City. Findings revealed that the respondents were predominantly female teachers aged 26–35 years, occupying Teacher I–III positions, possessing master's units, having attended one to three mental health- and well-being-related trainings, and having more than eleven years of service. Teachers generally exhibited a highly evident level of mental health ($M = 3.69$), characterized by strong

emotional well-being and coping mechanisms despite moderate levels of stress, anxiety, and workload-related pressure. Similarly, teachers reported a highly satisfactory level of work well-being ($M = 4.04$), reflected in high levels of job satisfaction, work engagement, work-life balance, and organizational support. School heads demonstrated a high level of instructional leadership ($M = 4.30$), with digital/technology leadership receiving the highest rating, followed by servant and collaborative leadership. The results further showed significant positive relationships between instructional leadership styles and both teachers' mental health and work well-being, with transformational leadership exhibiting the strongest association with mental health indicators and organizational support and collegial relationships showing the highest correlations with work well-being. Moreover, position, highest educational attainment, and participation in mental health and well-being trainings were significantly related to the manifestation of instructional leadership styles, whereas age, gender, and length of service were not. Based on these findings, a capacity-building program focused on enhancing instructional leadership and teacher wellness was proposed to strengthen school heads' competencies in promoting teachers' mental health, work well-being, and overall professional functioning.

CONCLUSIONS

The study established that teachers generally experience positive mental health and work well-being despite existing challenges related to workload and occupational stress. School heads demonstrated high levels of instructional leadership, particularly in digital, servant, and collaborative leadership. Significant positive relationships were found between instructional leadership styles and both teachers' mental health and work well-being, with transformational leadership emerging as the strongest predictor of positive teacher outcomes. The findings affirm that instructional leadership extends beyond instructional supervision and serves as a critical organizational resource that influences teachers' psychological health, professional engagement, and workplace satisfaction. Leadership practices characterized by support, collaboration, empowerment, and innovation contribute substantially to the creation of healthy and productive educational environments.

Implications for Educational Leadership

The findings highlight the need for school leaders to integrate teacher wellness into instructional leadership practices. Educational leadership should focus not only on academic outcomes but also on fostering psychologically healthy workplaces. Schools should institutionalize mental health initiatives, professional support systems, and wellness programs that complement instructional improvement efforts. The significant influence of educational attainment and participation in training on the manifestation of leadership further underscores the importance of continuous professional development. Leadership preparation programs should incorporate mental health literacy, emotional intelligence, stress management, and wellness-centered leadership practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the study's findings and conclusions, it is recommended that school heads continuously strengthen transformational, instructional, servant, and collaborative leadership practices to create supportive school environments that promote teachers' mental health and work well-being. The Schools Division Office may institutionalize a division-wide capacity-building and wellness program that focuses on mental health awareness, stress management, emotional resilience, and supportive leadership practices to enhance the overall well-being of teachers and school leaders. Teachers should likewise be encouraged to actively participate in

wellness activities, mental health programs, and professional support groups to further develop their coping mechanisms, resilience, and work-life balance. Furthermore, continuous professional development initiatives on mental health, well-being, and instructional leadership should be regularly offered to both school heads and teachers to strengthen their competencies and responsiveness to emerging educational challenges. Schools may also establish and sustain stronger support systems, collegial networks, and collaborative environments that foster open communication, teamwork, and teacher welfare. Considering that position, educational attainment, and participation in mental health- and wellness-related trainings were found to be significantly associated with instructional leadership practices, school heads should be encouraged to pursue advanced studies and actively engage in relevant leadership and wellness training programs to further enhance their effectiveness in supporting teachers. Moreover, the proposed capacity-building program on instructional leadership and teacher wellness may be adopted and implemented by schools and the Schools Division Office as a sustainable intervention for promoting teachers' mental health, work well-being, and professional growth. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies using broader populations, additional variables, and mixed-method or longitudinal research designs to further validate, expand, and enrich the findings of the present study.

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AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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