

School Head's Coaching and Monitoring Practices

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Educational leadership remains central to improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools (Li et al., 2026; White et al., 2025; Edwards-Groves et al., 2026), particularly through the role of school heads or principals, who serve as both administrators and instructional leaders. School heads can influence instructional practices when they engage deliberately in mentoring, model effective teaching, and foster a reflective and responsive school culture (Toh et al., 2022; Nuis et al., 2023). Ahmad and Hamid (2021) emphasized that school heads' professional expectations and instructional leadership practices help align classroom instruction with student learning goals. Similarly, Gading (2024) highlighted that trust-based relationships between school heads and teachers promote a culture of continuous improvement, while Patrick (2022) noted that positive interactions between school heads and teachers contribute to a supportive school climate where teachers feel empowered, respected, and committed to professional growth.

One way school heads can strengthen instructional leadership is through coaching, monitoring, and other forms of professional support. Cox and Mullen (2023) identified coaching and monitoring as potential mechanisms for enhancing professional development. However, there remains

limited evidence of how these structured instructional strategies are implemented in practice. This challenge is particularly evident among novice school leaders. Arrieta and Ancho (2020) observed that novice school leaders in rural or underserved settings often struggle to develop an instructional leadership identity and establish meaningful professional relationships, which may limit their effectiveness. In the same vein, Meyer and Patuawa (2022) called for further research to support emerging school leaders, particularly in isolated contexts where leadership demands adaptability, creativity, and purposeful action.

School Head Coaching and Monitoring Diverse Teachers

As educational practices evolve, educational leaders must also adapt, particularly when managing a multigenerational teaching workforce. School heads must consider diverse perspectives shaped by generational differences in values, work commitment, and professional purpose. Day (2023) highlighted both the advantages and challenges of such diversity, including enhanced collaboration and stability (Li et al., 2021), as well as issues related to values and health (Ali & French, 2019). Generational differences may also create challenges such as miscommunication, value conflicts, and stereotyping (Garg et al., 2022; Sobrino-De Toro et al., 2019). In response, school heads must adopt inclusive leadership approaches that promote collaboration rather than authoritarian decision-making (Ashoro et al., 2012) to enable teachers from different generations to work effectively toward shared educational goals.

Within this context, mentorship serves as a critical component of educational leadership that supports both novice and experienced teachers in their professional growth (Liu et al., 2020). Johnson (2018) defined mentoring as a two-way professional learning process that encompasses both professional

and personal dimensions. In mentorship, there is intergenerational knowledge exchange (Çelik & Polat, 2022) where inclusive workplace practices foster healthier interpersonal relationships and more cohesive teams (Fiolleau et al., 2023). These benefits contribute to sustainable, collaborative, and productive school environments (Leithwood et al., 2017). Effective mentoring, however, must be intentional, reciprocal, and supported by structured interactions to maximize its impact (Hoque et al., 2020).

To sustain the positive outcomes, schools require integrated cultures that encourage collaborative mentoring and community building (Khan et al., 2020). Encouraging reflective practice enables teachers to develop professional agency and strengthen their connection to the institution (Alegado, 2018). Through reflective mentoring practices, teachers learn from experience, develop practical theories (Rahmatulla, 2016), and enhance their capacity to contribute to school improvement and student achievement. Inclusive leadership, structured mentoring, and reflective practice are essential strategies for addressing generational diversity while fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional growth.

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Coaching and mentoring are widely recognized as essential components of teacher development and instructional quality (Vikaraman et al., 2017; Luong, 2025; Thipatdee et al., 2019). Effective leadership support enables teachers to develop key competencies, including 21st-century skills (Reimers, 2020). Structured coaching is necessary for achieving high-performance standards (Lazenby, 2019), whereas insufficient support can hinder instructional effectiveness (Dobbelaer, 2019). Modern coaching frameworks differ from traditional supervision by emphasizing teacher

engagement, collaboration, and professional growth rather than evaluation alone (Magson-Niepes, 2016).

Mentoring and coaching support teachers by providing timely pedagogical guidance and continuous feedback that help refine instructional practices. Mentoring, in particular, offers ongoing support through reflective assessment and feedback, which strengthens teachers' instructional approaches (Toropova et al., 2020). Reflective assessment and teacher commitment are likewise crucial in sustaining instructional quality (Malunes & Dioso, 2020). In the Philippine context, teachers have reported that post-observation feedback significantly improves instruction, especially when delivered in a non-threatening and supportive environment (Congcong & Caingcoy, 2020; Lopez, 2016). Research further indicates that individualized coaching cycles enhance instructional capacity (Kraft et al., 2018), while trust, goal alignment, and non-evaluative feedback are critical factors for successful coaching outcomes (Irawan et al., 2018).

The effectiveness of coaching and mentoring is also influenced by the broader professional environment in which teachers work. Supportive workplaces characterized by manageable workloads, professional incentives, and opportunities for collaboration contribute significantly to teacher growth and development (Maritasari et al., 2020). Through mentoring and collaborative practices, teachers can strengthen competencies across emotional, social, technological, and pedagogical dimensions (Selvi, 2016; Roberto & Madrigal, 2018).

Despite the recognized benefits of coaching and mentoring, further research is needed to better understand the coaching process and its impact on teacher development. Peila (2020) asserts the multifaceted nature of instructional practice; hence, Kumar and Dawson (2018) recommended the use of mixed method approaches to capture the complexity of teaching.

Effective coaching characterized by reflective dialogue and goal setting has been shown to promote sustained professional learning and reduce teacher isolation (Weston & Clay, 2018; Jones, 2018). Nevertheless, gaps remain in lesson planning support and in-service training opportunities (Ampofo et al., 2019). These gaps suggest the importance of further investigating how coaching and mentoring practices can be optimized to support teacher competence and instructional excellence.

School Head Coaching and Monitoring Intervention Program

Coaching and mentoring are central to improving teaching quality and institutional development. Coaching is a collaborative process in which school heads act as both colleagues and evaluators to enhance school performance (Dina & Yusoff, 2019). Similarly, it promotes teacher reflection and improves instructional delivery (Knight, 2017) and enhances teachers' knowledge, motivation, and instructional practices (Gibson & Dambo, 2018). Coaching also contributes to leadership development and teacher efficacy, which refers to teachers' confidence in their ability to teach effectively (Nurahimah & Rafisah, 2017; Norita, 2019). Research further suggests that teaching experience is moderately to significantly related to teacher efficacy (Knobloch & Whittington, 2018; Johari et al., 2019). In particular, cognitive coaching has been shown to improve teaching performance, engagement, and classroom management.

The successful implementation of coaching and mentoring largely depends on the role of school heads as instructional leaders. School heads play a crucial role in designing, facilitating, and sustaining effective coaching and mentoring practices. When these practices are clearly defined and systematically applied, they enhance teacher supervision, instructional quality, and student outcomes (Wong & Nur, 2018; Goddard, 2015). Beyond coaching

initiatives, leadership efforts such as literacy programs and the creation of responsive learning environments further contribute to student achievement and school improvement (Day-Heggie, 2021).

Mentoring, in particular, serves as a valuable support mechanism for teachers, especially those who are new to the profession. It provides practical assistance, emotional support, and opportunities for cognitive development that help novice teachers navigate the complexities of teaching (Brannan & Bleistein, 2018; Villani, 2017). The effectiveness of mentoring programs depends on key factors such as accessibility, consistency, and structured implementation (Martinot et al., 2015; Farrell, 2016). Furthermore, sustaining effective teaching practices requires ongoing professional learning opportunities, adequate training, and strong institutional support systems (Brooks, 2019).

RESEARCH FOCUS: School Head's Coaching and Monitoring Practices Through the Lens of Teachers

This study is anchored in Transformational Leadership Theory, originally proposed by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1985). The theory explains how leaders inspire and motivate individuals to achieve higher levels of performance through vision, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation. In educational settings, transformational leadership is reflected in the role of school heads as mentors and facilitators who build trust, encourage collaboration, and support professional growth (Bashori et al., 2022). It is particularly important in strengthening professional relationships and improving school performance (Mafe, 2023), which supports the development of internal capacity, fosters collective professional learning, and promotes a shared commitment to excellence in teaching and learning (Morales, 2022; Anthony et al., 2019).

This study investigates school heads' coaching and monitoring practices in three rural elementary schools in the CAMACA Batan District in the Philippines. Guided by Lindsey et al.'s (2019) framework on coaching and monitoring, the study focuses on key elements such as trust-building, the development of collective professional norms, and the enhancement of instructional awareness and growth. It aims to inform school leaders, particularly those in the early stages of their careers, by clarifying effective coaching and monitoring practices, identifying contextual challenges, and supporting efforts toward educational equity and improved instructional quality.

The study employed a narrative inquiry approach to examine the coaching and mentoring practices of novice school heads. Grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985), the methodology conceptualized leadership as a relational and developmental process that fosters collegiality, trust, and responsiveness to professional needs (Zainal & Mohd-Matore, 2021). Narrative inquiry was particularly appropriate for uncovering the multidimensional realities of novice leaders, as it allows for the exploration of lived experiences and meaning-making processes (Blose et al., 2022). This perspective aligns with the view that leadership is inherently relational and instructional, shaped through interactions and reflective practices (Shillingstad & McGlamery, 2019).

The study involved eight purposively selected teachers from Camaligan, Talangban, Magubahay, and Caiyang who had direct mentoring and coaching interactions with novice school heads. Participants met specific inclusion criteria, including at least one year of teaching experience, engagement in professional development, and willingness to share reflective insights. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide designed to elicit in-depth narratives aligned with the study's conceptual framework.

The instrument underwent expert validation and pilot testing to ensure clarity, relevance, and trustworthiness. Interviews were conducted in familiar settings to encourage openness, incorporating both verbal responses and non-verbal cues, supported by reflective notes and audio recordings (Horsfall et al., 2021). Follow-up discussions were also conducted to clarify key points and deepen understanding of participants' experiences.

Data analysis followed a hybrid narrative and thematic approach, enabling both in-depth individual story analysis and cross-case pattern identification. Narrative analysis focused on the sequencing of experiences, emotional shifts, and reflective insights to understand the impact of coaching and mentoring on teachers' professional growth (Bamberg, 2020; Parks, 2023). Concurrently, thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns and shared meanings across narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This dual approach facilitated the integration of micro-level lived experiences into broader thematic interpretations, highlighting motivation, challenges, and professional development outcomes. The findings were further interpreted in relation to transformational leadership principles, reinforcing their relevance to teacher learning and practice improvement (Abdulaziz et al., 2021; Del Giacco et al., 2019).

Theme 1: Impact on Professional Growth

The first theme captures how the coaching and monitoring practices of school heads profoundly shaped teachers' effectiveness, confidence, and professional identity. Teachers' narratives reveal not merely improvement but transformation, an evolution nurtured through guidance, trust, and intentional support. Six interconnected sub-themes emerged from their reflections: development of professional skills, supportive leadership and mentorship,

reflective practice and self-assessment, professional confidence, ongoing learning and personal support, and leadership and modeling behaviors.

Development of professional skills. The school heads strengthened instructional practices through professional development opportunities and individualized support (Kilag & Sasan, 2020). One teacher (T1) shared with optimism, “*Coaching and monitoring practices I have benefited from have helped me and other teachers develop effective teaching practices that hopefully make us better teachers.*” This support extended to lesson planning and classroom management that reinforces continuous pedagogical growth and professional competence.

Supportive leadership and mentorship. This reflects the culture of collegiality and encouragement fostered by school heads (Squires, 2019). As one participant (T5) expressed, “*Our school head steps into a guiding and mentor role...she provides constructive feedback and practical strategies.*” Similarly, another teacher (T3) reflected, “*She pushes us to think through what we are doing, and help pushes us into transformative behavior.*” These experiences of guidance and support empowered teachers to take instructional risks, embrace innovation, and pursue continuous growth.

Reflective practice and self-assessment. It is the cornerstone of professional development. One teacher (T6) noted, “*She (school leader) gives feedback that makes me think about my practice and how I could improve.*” Such reflective opportunities enabled teachers to examine both their strengths and limitations, promoting intentional changes in practice and continuous improvement (Thompson & Thompson, 2023).

Professional confidence. It surfaced as a powerful outcome of coaching and monitoring. Teachers described a renewed belief in their abilities and professional potential (Liao et al., 2024). One participant (T1) shared, “*I have been more confident in teaching because of the encouragement from my*

school head,” while another (T3) admitted, *“Knowing that my school head has faith in what I am doing encourages me to step outside of my comfort zone.”* This trust reduced self-doubt and encouraged teachers to assume greater leadership responsibilities.

Ongoing learning and personal support. It emphasizes the value of personalized feedback and sustained professional development (Tetzlaff et al., 2021). As one teacher (T8) explained, *“My school head often gives individual attention and feedback acknowledging what is working or not working...”* Such individualized support, combined with guidance toward relevant learning opportunities, encouraged continuous growth and professional learning (Li & Li, 2024).

Leadership and modeling behaviors. It illustrates how school heads served as role models of professionalism, resilience, and commitment (Bakker et al., 2023). One teacher (T6) shared, *“My school head is a good example to follow...believing in my school head invigorates my commitment to being more confident in my practice.”* Another participant (T2) revealed the broader influence of such leadership, stating, *“When she believes in me, it pushes me to do the same for my students.”* Effective leadership practices shape teachers’ professional growth, strengthen their identities, and deepen their commitment to teaching.

Theme 2: Personal and Professional Growth

This theme reflects a deep human journey of transformation shaped by encouragement, recognition, and reflective engagement. Teachers described how the support of their school heads extended beyond instructional improvement and fundamentally reshaped how they perceived themselves as educators and leaders. Six sub-themes emerged from these narratives: professional identity and role development, recognition and motivation,

building self-confidence and resilience, reflective practice and self-discovery, self-awareness and critical reflection, and professional pride and commitment.

Professional identity and role development. Leadership opportunities transformed teachers' perceptions of their professional roles (Chamo, 2024). One participant (T6) shared, *“My school head encouraged me to take on leadership opportunities, which helped me grow... and reshape my professional identity as a teacher-leader.”* These experiences enabled teachers to view themselves not only as classroom practitioners but also as contributors to school leadership and organizational development (Noonan, 2019).

Recognition and motivation. It reveals the emotional impact of acknowledgment and appreciation (Slomp et al., 2021). One teacher (T3) expressed, *“When my school head recognized my work... it motivated me to keep working to keep improving.”* Such recognition fostered intrinsic motivation, strengthened commitment, and encouraged continued professional effort (Barksdale, 2022).

Building self-confidence and resilience. Mentoring helped teachers confront uncertainty and embrace innovation. One participant (T4) reflected, *“The support I received helped me deal with self-doubt and try new things... it allowed me to be the brave innovator I was looking to become.”* These experiences cultivated resilience and encouraged teachers to approach challenges with confidence and determination (Karagozoglu & Ozan, 2022).

Reflective practice and self-discovery. Sustained reflection deepened teachers' self-awareness and intentionality. As one participant (T6) noted, *“Reflective thinking always forced me to reconsider my teaching practices, so my plans became purposeful”.* This process aligns with the literature emphasizing reflection as a catalyst for professional growth and continuous learning (Slade et al., 2019).

Self-Awareness and critical reflection. Feedback is valuable in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. One teacher (T8) explained, “*The feedback I was given helped me be more aware of my strengths and what I need to improve on.*” Through constructive feedback, teachers gained clarity regarding their professional development needs and were able to take purposeful action toward improvement (Steinert et al., 2019).

Professional pride and commitment. It captures the emotional core of teachers’ experiences. One participant (T5) expressed, “*I started to take pride in my work because my school head believed in me.*” This belief reignited teachers’ passion for their profession and reinforced their commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of their students (Lim, 2021). Growth extends beyond technical competence and is deeply rooted in trust, recognition, self-discovery, and meaningful support.

Theme 3: Strategic Program Development

This theme explains the teachers’ collective aspirations for structured, meaningful, and sustainable approaches to coaching and mentoring. Their reflections reveal a desire for systems that not only support professional growth but also nurture collaboration, consistency, and reflective practice. Four sub-themes emerged from the data: collaborative planning and teamwork, continuous learning and capacity-building, supportive leadership and mentorship, and reflective practice and professional growth.

Collaborative planning and teamwork. Shared responsibility is important in professional learning and instructional improvement. As one participant (T3) explained, “*Collaboration is key in coaching... it opens the door to share ideas and challenges.*” Another teacher (T7) reflected, “*Working in tandem while planning lessons and discussing practice cultivated a sense of community while building stronger practices.*” These shared experiences

highlight the value of collaboration in strengthening professional relationships and improving educational outcomes (Wright, 2022).

Continuous learning and capacity-building. It highlights the need for ongoing professional development opportunities that promote sustained growth. One teacher (T8) emphasized, “*Professional learning opportunities need to occur regularly and often.... we need different opportunities to connect so we can experience new learning and growth.*” Another participant (T6) linked these opportunities to leadership readiness and long-term professional advancement. Access to professional resources, networks, and learning opportunities further strengthened teachers’ capacity to improve their practice (Fairley, 2020; Bishop & Vass, 2021).

Supportive leadership and mentorship. It reaffirms the central role of sustained guidance, encouragement, and trust in professional development. One participant (T4) noted, “*The ongoing commitment from school heads offers teachers an important motivational and professional opportunity*”. Other teachers (T2; T3) emphasized how constructive feedback and trusting relationships cultivated confidence, resilience, and professional growth. These findings reinforce the importance of leadership practices that prioritize support and mentorship (Ma & Marion, 2021).

Reflective practice and professional growth. Reflection is an essential, yet often underutilized, component of teacher development. One teacher (T7) observed, “*Teachers often do not have the time for reflection and practice development. Engaging in reflection practice allowed teachers to become more self-aware while identifying areas for growth and development.*” Another participant (T4) shared, “*It pushes me to think critically about what I do, while being active about getting better.*” Reflective practice promotes self-awareness, continuous improvement, and professional learning, making it a powerful pathway for growth (Rolfe & Freshwater, 2020).

Conclusion

Effective coaching and mentoring are transformative influences on teachers' professional growth and development. Beyond enhancing instructional skills and pedagogical practices, these leadership strategies nurture teachers' sense of purpose, confidence, and professional identity. Through sustained guidance, constructive feedback, and reflective engagement, teachers become more strategic, self-aware, and intentional in their practice, leading to meaningful and lasting improvements in teaching effectiveness. The experiences shared by participants suggest that coaching and mentoring create supportive environments where teachers feel valued, encouraged, and empowered to continuously improve their professional practice.

Consistent recognition, meaningful feedback, and genuine support enable teachers to view themselves as capable, resilient, and evolving professionals. These experiences help them overcome self-doubt, embrace challenges, and remain committed to lifelong learning. As teachers gain confidence in their abilities, they develop a stronger sense of ownership of their professional growth and a deeper commitment to improving student learning outcomes.

Effective mentoring initiatives should incorporate collaborative planning, supportive leadership, ongoing professional learning opportunities, and reflective practice. When these elements are integrated into a coherent system of teacher support, mentoring becomes a powerful mechanism for fostering a culture of trust, shared learning, and continuous improvement. Ultimately, purposeful and sustainable coaching and mentoring practices contribute not only to teacher development but also to the enhancement of instructional quality and overall school effectiveness.

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