

# Guided or Guarded: Teachers' Experiences on Instructional Supervision

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10200427>

Received: 28 February 2026; Accepted: 05 March 2026; Published: 14 March 2026

## ABSTRACT

Instructional supervision is an activity done by the school heads, supervisors, and master teachers to help teachers improve their teaching skills and practices, as well as to enhance their ability and capacity in classroom delivery of lessons. When it comes to technical assistance and support from school heads, supervisors and master teachers, teachers have different experiences with it. Teachers meet different experiences regarding instructional supervision which affect their performance especially during classroom observation. This study explores what teachers think and feel about instructional supervision. Through the use of Google Forms, the researchers gathered data from 28 Teachers II and III of the different schools in Danglas District, Division of Abra, and used thematic analysis to identify common patterns and themes. After analyzing and identifying common patterns and themes, five main themes emerged namely: support and mentorship, constructive feedback and reflection, professional growth and development, instructional improvement and learner outcomes, and collaboration and partnership. Instructional Supervision plays a very important and significant role on the enhancement of teachers' teaching skills and practices as well as on the performance of learners. Instructional Supervision is an important part of the teaching and learning process. To sustain quality education and for learners to achieve better learning outcomes, instructional supervision is a powerful tool to achieve it most especially when it is done to give support, it is done through constructive feedback, help teachers to grow, to improve instruction and learner outcomes, and if there is collaboration between the supervisors, school heads, master teachers, and teachers.

**Keywords:** Instructional Supervision, technical assistance, classroom observation, instructional leaders

## INTRODUCTION

Instructional supervision is a procedure that helps teachers to upgrade their teaching strategies as well as to enhance their teaching skills and capabilities. This process guides and helps them to prepare their lessons better, which leads to attainment of learning goals. Instructional supervisions' major goal is to help and guide teachers, not to stress them and make them disappointed.

More teachers feel nervous about being watched when they are teaching. Big part of the process during observation involves observing learners which makes them uncomfortable. Teachers may feel like they are being judged most especially when there are observers inside. Because of this feeling of nerve, discomfort, and stress, their performance becomes unsatisfactory. After the observation, feedback coming from the observer is

supposed to help, but there are instances that teachers feel uneasy especially when these feedback focuses on flaws. Through this, they become less confident and worry about how they will perform on future classroom observations. According to a study by Humanit (2025), teachers become less confident and less effective due to stress, anxiety, time pressure, and diverse standards for evaluation. Teachers often say that when they are being observed, they feel exhausted and uneasy affecting their performance. These make them doubt themselves and lower their confidence and self-esteem.

Usually, instructional supervision includes checking of lesson plans, paperwork, and submission. It requires teachers to prepare their lessons well, submit paperwork, and follow rules. These make sure that teachers are doing well their responsibilities. But many teachers also say that this is too much work. As the discovery of the study of Hundani et al. (2021) that the stress level of teachers is increased when there is too much paperwork. Doing this pile of paperwork takes away the time of designing and preparing fun and engaging activities for learners. Also, teachers can't be creative or come up with fresh ideas when they must obey stringent rules. Pantoja et al. (2025) say that teachers feel a lot of different things during observations, like nervousness, enthusiasm, and satisfaction. Time constraints, pressure, uncooperativeness, partiality of observer, and surprising classroom disturbances are the key challenges. What makes things even more stressful is that these observations are often tied to performance ratings, promotions, or career growth. The possibility of receiving a low evaluation makes the whole process feel high-stakes and nerve-wracking.

Some of the teachers feel hesitant and uncomfortable when being observed in class. This may be because they worry that the observers will focus and look only into their weaknesses rather than their strengths. There are also teachers that feel nervous that may lead to less self-confidence; thus, performance cannot be well demonstrated. Some teachers think that classroom observers may not understand the teaching strategy which may lead to bias assessment or feedback during the post conference. Another probable reason why teachers hate to be observed is that there are observers that keep on comparing teachers to one another which may cause a feeling of embarrassment.

Instructional supervisors play a vital role in classroom observations. Their function is to check what the teachers are doing wherein they guide and support them by enhancing their teaching skills and ensure that the curriculum standards and instructional goals are being met. As stated in the study of Zaini (2023), examining plans, doing mentoring, and capacity-building for teachers and school leaders are seen as the role of supervisors. It is to supervise, that is the main responsibility of supervisors.

It is important to realize, though, that most teachers are not against improving. The hesitation to change and growth is affected by how supervision is given to them. Teachers refuse to change and improve when the supervision is done in a harsh, strict, and judgmental way, where the focus is on mistakes and weaknesses. But when observers deliver their feedback in a supportive, nice, fair and respectful feedback, teachers become more unhesitant to grow. Instructional supervision becomes very effective when it is built on trust. A way where teachers feel that they are supported and guided, not controlled and judged.

Improvements in teacher performance are closely linked to improved academic supervision practices that include classroom teaching observation, checking reports, and regulating of academic goals. (Catherine et al 2024). School heads, such as principals or head teachers, have the responsibility to give or provide instructional supervision to the teachers. Aside from the school head, the people who are in higher positions such as the Public Schools District Supervisors, Education Program Supervisors in the different learning areas, and Master Teachers may also provide instructional supervision and technical assistance to the teachers.

Respect for authority, collegial relationships, and collaborative community within schools are cultural values that have an influence on the instructional supervision practice in the Philippines. Instructional leaders are often seen as figures of authority by teachers, that affects how they respond during instructional supervision activities. Filipino educational culture also emphasized mentorship, teamwork, and shared responsibility for the success of learners. Considering this cultural context will help in explaining the reasons why teachers perceive instructional supervision as a supportive process, rather than being evaluative.

This study is significant because it provides important insights on how instructional supervision is conducted by instructional leaders to fully give the support that teachers need. With the findings of the study, teachers are educated strongly about the purpose of instructional supervision. With the results of the study, teachers may become more willing and responsive to technical assistance and may see it as an opportunity to grow.

Through this study, teachers may be empowered by giving voice to their experiences and challenges that may increase motivation, improve instructional strategies and strengthen commitment in delivering quality education. This will also help find appropriate supervisory methods that lead to better teamwork, more trust, and more professional respect.

This study centered on the experiences and challenges faced by 28 Teacher II and Teacher III educators from various elementary schools in the Danglas District, selected for their frequent involvement in district and school level instructional supervision processes. The study looked at what teachers thought, felt, and worried about monitoring. It looked at how supervision affects their professional growth, feedback, support systems, and supervisory techniques, based on what they learned in the 2025-2026 school year. Making instructional supervision across the district better is the main goal of the findings.

Understanding and using these results becomes hard due to a few restrictions. One reason is that the study targets only Teacher II and III teacher respondents and rejecting the viewpoint of the instructional leaders. The results of the study may not be applicable and true for other places because it only focuses on selected schools in Danglas District. Since the data is self-disclosed, honest response could be affected by submitting their own thoughts and views. Also, by focusing on a one-year time span, it may not allow us to see the change in how supervision is given. Even with these limitations, the study gives us useful information about the problems instructors face and helps set the stage for better control of instruction in the district.

The study deals with the views especially the experiences and challenges encountered by teachers about instructional supervision. These experiences and challenges affect their performance particularly during classroom observations. These need to be addressed to assist and direct teachers to perform their tasks and responsibilities in school.

### **Statement Of The Problem**

The study deals with the views especially the experiences and challenges encountered by teachers about instructional supervision. These experiences and challenges affect their performance particularly during classroom observations. These need to be addressed to support and guide teachers to perform their duties and responsibilities in school. The study sought answers to the question:

1. What are the experiences and challenges of the teachers in instructional supervision?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The researchers utilized the qualitative descriptive research design for this study to discover the experiences and views of teachers when it comes to instructional supervision. Qualitative research is appropriate in this study because it allows an innate understanding of the viewpoints, feelings, and experiences of teachers in their own context. By utilizing qualitative inquiry, the researchers were able to study how these teachers understand instructional supervision and its influences on their professional practices and experiences on managing classrooms.

### **Population and Locale**

In this study, twenty-eight (28) public school teachers were involved, with the positions of Teacher II and Teacher III from selected elementary schools in Danglas District, Division of Abra, Philippines. A purposive sampling technique was utilized by the researchers to choose participants who had sufficient experience

regarding instructional supervision activities such as classroom observation, mentoring, and post-conference feedback. Because these teachers have regular participation in these activities, they were able to provide meaningful insights regarding instructional supervision.

To contextualize the responses of the teachers, their demographic characteristics were considered. Of all the 28 respondents, almost all of them had five to fifteen years of teaching experience, while others had more than fifteen years of service. The teachers involved in this study represent different grade levels and really have experience in instructional supervision. Different views needed on this study are provided due to the professional background and experience in teaching of the teachers.

### **Data Gathering Instrument**

The researchers developed a semi-structured interview guide used as instrument to gather data. The interview guide consists of questions that aimed to collect the experiences, insights, challenges, and understandings of the teachers regarding instructional supervision. This interview guide was validated by five Master Teachers from different districts in the Division of Abra to assure that it is clear, relevant, and the questions are correct. The questions allowed the respondents to express their thoughts and experiences freely pertaining to the conduct of instructional supervision in their respective schools.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

To gather the data needed, the researchers distributed the interview guide to the respondents using Google Forms. This was done after the approval of the school heads. The researchers made use of this online platform so that it would be easier for them to collect the data, making sure that it is well-organized, and of course, to allow the respondents to answer at their convenience.

The researchers discussed the purpose of the study with the respondents, and privacy of their answers was guaranteed. Voluntary participation was also observed, and the respondents were encouraged to provide honest responses based on their true experiences.

### **Statistical Treatment of Data**

In analyzing the responses collected, the researchers used thematic analysis. Reading and reviewing the answers several times were done to recognize surely the recurring themes, patterns, and meanings. With significant responses, codes were developed and grouped into broader categories. Emerging themes were then identified that represent the overall experiences of the teachers about instructional supervision.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the responses of the respondents in their experiences on instructional supervision, the following are the recurring themes:

### **1. Support and Mentorship**

One of the themes that emerged is support and mentorship, the respondents answered that instructional supervision is a way for supervisors, school heads, and master teachers to give support and guidance on how to deliver their objectives well so that learners can better understand the lessons. As one teacher said, "I see instructional supervision not as fault-finding but as a developmental partnership, supportive ecosystem that nurtures growth and success" while another teacher said, "Helps teachers improve instructional functions in achieving better learning outcomes". The statement of the teachers shows that they see instructional supervision as something that is positive and helpful. The first teacher views it as not a fault-finding activity, but a supportive partnership that encourages growth, which suggests a supporting and collaborative school environment. Supervision helps improve teaching practices that leads to better learning outcomes of learners is what the second teacher focuses on. These statements are expressed differently, but both of them reflect that instructional supervision supports teacher growth and enhances learning achievement of learners.

This is similar to the findings of the study of Caspillo, M. S. (2025) which states that to enhance the instructional competence of the teacher, mentorship and professional development are very important. It is emphasized on the findings the need for mentoring programs that are formal and available, relevant learning experiences to support instructional development. In addition, on the study "School Heads' Intentional Mentoring Strategy (SHIMS), of Galabo, N. R. (2025), based on the results, it was revealed that through the implemented strategies that teachers manifested, such as self-reflection with their teaching strategies and skills in solving problems, enhanced behavior management capacities, improved planning and delivery of lessons, and strengthened support system between the school head and teachers. According to Zain, A. Met. al (2021), coaching and mentoring will raise the dedication, pleasure, and professional growth of teachers resulting in better performance.

This study supports this claim, as participants responded that Instructional supervision nurtures growth and success.

## 2. Constructive Feedback and Reflection

It was also revealed that teachers benefit from constructive feedback and reflective practice. After classroom observation, post conferences are duly implemented by the observer and the teacher for them to discuss the actual teaching delivery of the observed teacher.

According to one of the respondents, "One of my instructional experiences was when my school head came to observe me in my teaching. After their observations, she gave her constructive feedback, such as the good points and some areas to improve. With this, it helped me reflect on my teaching practices. It made me realize that giving feedback is a guide for becoming a more effective teacher.", this statement strongly suggests that supervisory feedback identify strengths and weaknesses of teaching practices. Supporting this are the findings from the study of Wlodarsky (2020), which states that reflection is a method for sighting of strengths and success, to verify and plan for persistence and dedication in that same track. Exhibited in the step-by-step process leads to positive change and helps teachers improve the way they manage classroom and delivering lessons. Post-conferences serve as moments for reflection, allowing teachers to carefully consider their instructional approaches, evaluation techniques, and ways to involve students.

"One of the most formative experiences I had was during Class Observation, facilitated by our Master Teacher and School Head. They observed my class and later invited me to reflect on my strategies for differentiated instruction. Their feedback was both affirming and constructive; they highlighted how my use of visual aids supported diverse learners and then suggested ways to enhance engagement through questioning techniques", as responded by one of the teachers strongly suggests that mentorship experienced by teachers helps them improve their practice and let them discover new strategies. This is consistent with the findings of the study by Krasniqi, D., & Ismajli, H. (2025), that there is a strong connection between how many times teachers receive feedback and how they value and accept it. Feedback is seen as helpful when teachers receive it more frequently, which helps them improve their teaching techniques and make them more confident about their capabilities in teaching. In short, regular feedback seems to assist teachers recognize its worth and feel more confident in their teaching.

The way the supervisors, school heads, and master teachers deliver their assistance to the teachers has a great impact for them to accept and apply this technical supervision given by them.

## 3. Professional Growth and Development

Another theme that emerged was Professional Growth and Development. Many of the respondents viewed instructional supervision as a way for them to grow and develop the skills they lack or improve the skills they already have.

A respondent mentioned, "I view instructional supervision as a helpful and essential process for professional growth". Another one stated, "I view instructional supervision... as a valuable opportunity for professional growth and continuous improvement". These statements coming from the respondents prove that instructional

supervision given to them is an opportunity for them to grow more and be more. Teachers' professional growth and development is greatly affected and influenced by the instructional supervision given to them.

Supporting these statements is the finding from the study of Mwakajitu, M., & Lekule, C. (2022), which indicate that instructional supervision has a big contribution in improving the ability of teachers in using varied instructional strategies, preparing good instructional materials, and improving teaching capacity.

#### **4. Instructional Improvement and Learner Outcomes**

Instructional supervision is given to teachers for instructional improvement and learning outcomes. As answered by one of the respondents, "During one of my classroom observations, my school head gave constructive feedback on how to make my lesson more engaging. I applied his suggestions, and my students became more active during discussions. That experience made me appreciate the value of instructional supervision in improving my teaching performance. Another one also stated that "I see instructional supervision as a tool to help me reflect on and improve my teaching practices". Based on the responses, instructional supervision is very important not only to improve the instructional competence of the teachers but also to improve the learning outcomes as well.

Supporting these statements is the study of San Roque, J. O., & Valle, A. M. (2025) which states that, instructional supervision, identifies the competence of a teacher. Continuous supervision can improve competence of teachers and enhance learning attainment of learners.

Instructional supervision serves as a necessary procedure to achieve instructional improvement and enhance learner outcomes. Teachers cannot only enhance their instructional competence if they apply these suggested improvements, but also, they can be able to create a more active and effective learning environment for their learners.

#### **5. Collaboration and Partnership**

Based on the responses of the respondents, collaboration and partnership emerged. "My master teachers, school heads, and supervisors conduct supervision in a professional, supportive, and encouraging manner... focus on collaboration rather than criticism... provide clear and practical suggestions", as responded by one of the teachers. Another teacher answered, "My school head and supervisor conduct supervision in a supportive and professional manner... provide clear, constructive feedback... emphasize collaboration and mentoring". Collaboration and partnership are important features of instructional supervision because through collaborative effort and good partnership, the attainment of goals is possible.

Involved during the process of instructional supervision is the power relationships between the teachers and instructional leaders. The teacher's way of reacting and sharing their experiences may be affected by these hierarchical relationships. The teachers may have the feeling of hesitation in sharing due to professional respect, fear of the consequences, or due to the fear of losing a positive working relationship.

Supporting these statements is the study of Basilio, M. B., & Bueno, D. C. (2021), which stated that supervision should be collaborative and trust based. Supervision should be continuous, quality, and regular, comes with a supply of enough funding and capacity building.

As to the saying that "It takes a village to raise a child", collaboration and partnership is very much important to make learning happen. There should be a strong force coming from the teachers, school heads, supervisors, as well as stakeholders to succeed from the challenges that hinder the delivery of quality education in schools.

In addition, Suwardi, S., Suyatno, S., & Arikunto, S. (2020) found that the collaborative efforts of principals and senior teachers in providing instructional supervision helps the junior teachers to enhance their capacities. This implies that collaboration, especially in the teaching and learning process, is a much-needed recipe for all the teachers to grow and develop all the necessary skills needed to educate all their learners.

Even though the findings of the study showed a constructive experience of teachers regarding instructional supervision, it is vital to consider that these teachers may also encounter challenges during supervision activities. Respondents stated being nervous, pressured, and uneasy during classroom observations as part of instructional supervision. Concerns about performance evaluation, time constraints about preparing lessons, or the perceived authority of the observers may be the reasons for these experiences. While these answers were not dominant enough to form a separate theme, they highlighted that supervisors should maintain a supportive, kind, and developmental method to supervision.

### **Limitations of the Study**

When interpreting the findings, there are several limitations that should be considered. First, the generalizability of the results to other contexts may be inadequate because the participants were only limited to Teacher II and Teacher III from a single district. Second, the responses were collected by self-reported responses, and it may be influenced by social desirability bias, because teachers may have given answers that present instructional supervision in a more favorable behavior. In addition, the viewpoints of instructional leader were not included, because the study focused only on perspectives of teachers. Including multiple stakeholders and expanding the research to other districts may be considered by future studies to provide a more thorough understanding about instructional supervision.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Instructional Supervision plays a very important and significant role on the enhancement of teachers' teaching practices and improvement of learner outcomes. Based on the responses, there are five major themes that emerged: support and mentorship, constructive feedback and reflection, professional growth and development, instructional improvement and learner outcomes, and collaboration and partnership. Teachers perceive instructional supervision not as a way of finding fault but as a supportive process of development and growth for teachers.

When delivered through mentoring, constructive feedback, and reflective dialogue, supervision is valued by teachers. Through post-observation conferences and positive feedback, it helps teachers to identify strengths and areas for improvement, and to apply new techniques in their respective classrooms, as shared by the respondents through their experiences. Through these, the teachers become more confident, reflective, and effective in the delivery of their lessons. Consistent and well-organized and implemented supervision strengthens self-efficacy of teachers, their instructional capability, and teaching performance which was highlighted by the study.

Moreover, instructional supervision also has a positive impact on learner outcomes. Learners become more active and participative in the learning process when teachers improve in planning their lesson, delivery of subject matter, classroom management, and motivational strategies, using guided supervision. This is a proof that there is a close connection between instructional improvement and learner achievement. The study emphasizes instructional supervision is a process that is collaborative, reflective and growth oriented. Instructional supervision becomes a powerful tool to sustain quality education and achieve better academic outcomes for learners, especially when supervisors, school heads, master teachers, and teachers work altogether in a supportive and trust-based environment.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Instructional supervision framework that is well-structured, supportive, and growth-oriented should be institutionalized in schools, based on the findings and conclusions of the study. Mentorship, collaboration, and reflective practice should be emphasized on this framework, rather than an evaluation approach that is fault-finding.

Mentorship programs should be strengthened by the instructional leaders composed of school heads, supervisors, and master teachers through the provision of structured mentoring sessions, allowing the teachers to request assistance on lesson preparation and planning, classroom management, and the utilization of

instructional approaches that are effective. Teachers may receive continuous support that contributes to their professional growth and improved teaching practices through consistent mentoring.

Providing a constructive and balanced feedback are also encouraged from these instructional leaders especially during post-observation discussions. Both strengths and areas for improvements of teachers should be recognized on the feedback, and suggestions that are clear, practical and attainable, that teachers can apply in their respective classrooms should be included. By doing this, it will become a growth-oriented process that gives more confidence and constant improvement to the teachers.

Reflective teaching practices should also be encouraged to teachers. During post-observation discussions, teachers were given chances for reflective dialogue that make them analyze their teaching approaches, techniques for classroom management, and how they encourage learner engagement. Teachers to identify areas for improvement and develop more effective teaching techniques were enabled through reflective practice.

Collaborative supervision practices should also be promoted in schools by promoting a culture of trust, good communication, and shared responsibility between teachers and instructional leaders. It should be perceived that instructional supervision as a collaborative effort to improve instructional quality and to enhance the learner outcomes rather than purely assessing the performance of the teachers.

Furthermore, there should be a systematic alignment with professional development programs of teachers between and the findings from instructional supervision. Learning Action Cell (LAC), peer mentoring, demonstration teaching, and other professional development programs may be done based on the results of classroom observations and supervision activities, to address identified instructional needs and gaps.

Finally, proper scheduling and sufficient time allocation for supervision activities should be ensured in schools, for full engagement of both teachers and instructional leaders in meaningful classroom observation, mentoring, and reflective discussions. Through the establishment of a supportive supervisory practices, it will help sustain confidence of teachers, improve their instructional capability, and enhance participation of learners and academic achievement ultimately.

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