

Research Article

Cite this article: Baldera, P. R. (2025). Instructional Leadership in Practice: A Qualitative Exploration of Public Elementary Master Teachers' Identity Formation and Influence in the Philippines. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 18, e2025482. <https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.18.482>

Received July 6, 2025

Accepted August 31, 2025

Keywords: Master Teachers, instructional leadership, teacher identity, teacher leadership, micro-coaching model, micro-coaching log sheet, Philippine education, qualitative research, distributed leadership, reflective practice, SDG 4 Quality Education

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Instructional Leadership in Practice: A Qualitative Exploration of Public Elementary Master Teachers' Identity Formation and Influence in the Philippines

Philip R. Baldera 

Abstract

Background/purpose. Master Teachers (MTs) in the Philippines are positioned at the Highly Proficient level of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), expected to model exemplary practice, mentor peers, and drive school improvement. Their role is reinforced by Relational Development Learning (RDL), which emphasizes coaching, mentoring, peer feedback, and reflective dialogue as a means of ongoing professional development. However, little is known about how MTs enact instructional leadership in practice, how their identities evolve in response to policy shifts and challenges, and how they perceive their influence on colleagues and the school culture. This study explores their lived experiences as classroom teachers and leaders in public elementary schools.

Materials/methods. Using transcendental phenomenology, the study engaged twelve purposively selected MTs from six public schools through interviews, observations, and artifact sharing. Data were analyzed via a modified van Kaam method, with AI-assisted coding validated by the researcher. Triangulation, reflective analysis, and bracketing enhanced trustworthiness.

Results. MTs lead through mentoring, collaboration, and classroom modeling, acting as relational rather than authoritative leaders. Their identities shift with reflective practice, PPST expectations, and contextual constraints. They see their influence extending to professional learning communities and school-wide quality.

Conclusion. MTs' leadership is rooted in relational influence, distributed leadership, and mentoring. Insights informed a micro-coaching model and log sheet aligned with SDG 4, Target 4.c.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Despite ongoing reforms in the Philippine Education System, the role of Master Teachers (MTs) has evolved significantly over the years. MTs' leadership capacities have been enhanced through various policies and professional standards that aim to strengthen instructional guidance and mentoring practices (Reyna & Baguio, 2025). Indeed, the role of MTs is crucial in this rapidly evolving educational landscape, where managing instructional quality, peer mentoring, and curriculum innovation requires both expertise and adaptability (Soriano, 2025). In order to meet the demands and overcome the obstacles of contemporary education, MTs must develop leadership competencies alongside their teaching skills to function effectively as both educators and leaders. These competencies, broadly recognized as professional leadership skills, include mentoring, collaboration, pedagogical innovation, and relational influence (Cansoy & Bellibaş, 2021; Pan, Wiens, & Moyal, 2022). Therefore, these competencies should be nurtured through professional development opportunities and supportive institutional environments. In the context of MTs' work, mentoring and instructional leadership are often the most emphasized areas, as MTs directly influence colleagues' practices and student learning outcomes more than other leadership dimensions.

Moreover, most policies and frameworks in teacher leadership emphasize relational and distributed leadership approaches. This is particularly true of the ways that MTs exert influence within schools through collaboration, peer guidance, and modeling exemplary teaching practices (Syafaruddin, Salim, & Hamdan, 2020). According to these approaches, leadership should be enacted within daily classroom interactions and professional communities rather than relying solely on formal authority or administrative positions. Aside from relational practice, instructional expertise is a crucial variable in teacher leadership (Harris & Jones, 2019; Hallinger & Kulophas, 2019). However, despite this recognition, there is a need to understand more deeply how MTs navigate shifting policies, digital demands, and contextual constraints such as resource shortages, teacher turnover, and evolving accountability systems (Reyna & Baguio, 2025).

In the Philippines, initiatives such as the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and programs of the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) have formalized the expectations for MTs, particularly in mentoring, curriculum leadership, and pedagogical innovation. These initiatives highlight that while MTs consistently achieve strong performance ratings, their leadership is contextually bound and enacted primarily through peer relationships rather than formal positional authority (Cansoy & Bellibaş, 2021; Pan et al., 2022). Moreover, as noted by Gümüş, Hallinger, Harris, and Jones (2019), distributed leadership practices further affirm that influence is enacted collaboratively across professional communities, rather than being concentrated in one role, reinforcing the idea that MTs operate as both teachers and leaders simultaneously.

Globally, research on teacher leadership identifies the importance of relational, distributed, and context-sensitive practices (Lovett, 2023; Cruz-González et al., 2020). While the international literature is extensive, fewer studies focus specifically on the Philippine MT experience, particularly regarding the interplay between leadership practices and professional identity development (Reyna & Baguio, 2025; Soriano, 2025). Existing studies emphasize the need for models of teacher leadership that are adaptable, scalable, and responsive to local school environments, supporting MTs in leading effectively while balancing classroom responsibilities with instructional leadership tasks.

Furthermore, one emerging perspective in teacher leadership is the concept of relational and distributed leadership, which emphasizes the enactment of influence through everyday professional interactions, mentoring, and collaboration rather than formal authority (Hallinger & Kulophas, 2019). This perspective acknowledges that MTs' leadership is embedded in peer relationships, modeling best practices, and motivating colleagues toward instructional improvement. Certainly, relational and

distributed leadership approaches differ from conventional administrative-centered models in that they recognize the everyday, context-specific ways teachers exert influence and support their peers' professional growth (Syafaruddin et al., 2020).

Indeed, there is growing interest in examining MTs' practices through the lens of relational leadership, as these practices provide insight into how teacher leadership manifests within Philippine schools. This study is, therefore, grounded in the idea that MTs' instructional leadership is enacted through mentoring, peer collaboration, and relational influence (Harris & Jones, 2019; Pan et al., 2022). Both forms of leadership require flexible, context-responsive strategies that support effective teaching and learning within schools. Although studies are scarce on Philippine MTs specifically, research highlights the benefits of fostering relational leadership and distributed practices to enhance professional development and instructional outcomes (Reyna & Baguio, 2025).

In this regard, the present study focuses on Master Teachers in the Philippines and their enactment of instructional leadership. It is essential to assess their perceptions and experiences in navigating leadership responsibilities while mentoring colleagues, leading curriculum implementation, and fostering pedagogical innovation. In this case, this study will examine how MTs balance teaching and leadership roles, the strategies they use to influence peers, and their views on the benefits and challenges of teacher leadership. Although many studies have explored teacher leadership internationally (Pan et al., 2022; Cruz-González et al., 2020; Lovett, 2023), there is no single study that thoroughly examines the specific experiences of Master Teachers in the Philippine context, particularly in integrating relational, distributed, and context-sensitive leadership practices into their daily work.

Thus, this study aims to investigate how Master Teachers in public elementary schools in the Philippines enact instructional leadership within the context of their professional identities. It seeks to examine how Master Teachers demonstrate instructional leadership in their daily teaching practice, explore how their professional identities evolve in response to shifting roles and expectations, and identify the contextual, policy, and interpersonal factors that enable or constrain the interplay between leadership and identity. Furthermore, the study aims to understand how Master Teachers perceive their influence on colleagues, learners, and the broader school culture, as well as the strategies they employ to navigate the tensions between teaching responsibilities and leadership roles. By addressing these aims, the study intends to co-construct a recursive conceptual model of teacher leadership grounded in lived experience and to propose a micro-coaching model that is relational, sustainable, and adaptable to the realities of classroom and school contexts.

1.2. Literature Review

In this section, various literature and studies are presented, anchored in the focus of the study. These scholarly works have been woven together to support the study's rationale and established gaps.

1.2.1. Global Perspectives on Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership has been widely recognized as a lever for educational improvement across diverse contexts. International studies consistently highlight that leadership enacted by teachers often transcends administrative authority and is exercised through relational influence, mentoring, and classroom-based modeling (Cansoy & Bellibaş, 2021; Pan et al., 2022). These findings emphasize that leadership among teachers derives credibility not merely from professional titles but from their ability to demonstrate effective practice inside and outside the classroom, strengthen peer trust, and build collaborative professional communities. For instance, research has shown that teachers in leadership roles build professional communities where collaboration drives instructional improvement, which is especially essential in schools navigating reforms or systemic pressures.

Syafaruddin et al. (2020) further emphasized that effective leadership is anchored in strong communication, consistent modeling of best practices, and the ability to inspire colleagues. Such qualities situate teacher leadership as inherently relational, reinforcing the idea that influence emerges from shared professional work rather than hierarchical authority. Complementary to this, the literature on distributed leadership reinforces that instructional improvement is more sustainable when enacted collectively across professional communities (Harris & Jones, 2019; Hallinger & Kulophas, 2019; Gümüş et al., 2019). Building on these global insights, this study examines how Philippine MTs enact leadership relationally within their schools, providing a lens to understand leadership as both collaborative and contextually grounded.

This suggests that teacher leadership primarily operates as a relational and collaborative practice, rather than through formal administrative authority. Effective teacher leaders derive credibility from demonstrated instructional competence, the ability to cultivate trust among colleagues, and the capacity to foster professional learning communities that support continuous improvement. Empirical evidence further suggests that such leadership is enacted through mentoring, modeling of best practices, and effective communication, thereby reinforcing a collective approach to instructional enhancement. These global insights provide a conceptual foundation for investigating how Master Teachers in the Philippine context negotiate policy expectations, contextual constraints, and professional responsibilities, emphasizing the centrality of relational practices in shaping both leadership enactment and educational outcomes.

1.2.2. The Philippine Context and Master Teachers' Role

In the Philippines, Master Teachers (MTs) function as formally designated instructional leaders aligned with the frameworks such as the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and the programs of the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP). Their responsibilities extend beyond teaching based on the curriculum but also to include mentoring peers, leading curriculum initiatives, and serving as models of pedagogical excellence (Reyna & Baguio, 2025; Soriano, 2025). Despite these clear policy expectations, studies suggest that MTs often operate within a resource-limited context characterized by insufficient teaching materials, high teacher turnover, and shifting accountability requirements.

Reyna and Baguio (2025) highlighted that, despite gaps in role identification, MTs often achieve strong performance ratings, demonstrating their capacity to adapt and sustain high standards despite these challenges. Soriano (2025) further noted that MTs must balance formal policy expectations with the realities of daily teaching, navigating tensions between instructional leadership, peer mentoring, and classroom responsibilities.

This tension underscores the importance of examining how MTs interpret and enact their leadership role beyond policy prescriptions, which serve as alternative pathways for leadership where formal authority is limited. By situating MTs' experiences within these constraints, the study directly addresses the research questions regarding the interplay between leadership practices, professional identity, and contextual factors.

1.2.3. Instructional Leadership and Policy Expectations

Instructional leadership has been consistently associated with both learners' achievement and teacher professional development across diverse educational contexts. Teacher leaders who provide direct support to instruction—through mentoring, observation, feedback, and guidance—play a critical role in fostering school advancement and enhancing teaching quality (Syafaruddin et al., 2020). Indeed, effective instructional leadership is not only about managerial tasks but also about shaping the instructional environment among various academic stakeholders, modeling best learning

and leadership practices, and building the capacity of colleagues to implement curriculum and pedagogical innovations.

In the Philippine context, the Department of Education reforms and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) delineate clear expectations for Master Teachers (MTs) as instructional leaders, including responsibilities such as mentoring peers, overseeing curriculum implementation, engaging in action research, and contributing to professional development programs (Reyna & Baguio, 2025; Soriano, 2025). These offices clearly delineate the roles of MTs within the current education system. However, evidence suggests that the actual enactment of instructional leadership frequently diverges from policy prescriptions. Various aspects, such as large class sizes, multiple teaching workloads, limited instructional resources, high teacher turnover, and evolving accountability systems, often constrain the ability of MTs to fully implement their designated responsibilities, creating a persistent gap between expectations and practice.

Global research further highlights that while international models of teacher leadership offer valuable insights, their applicability is context-dependent. Local enactment is shaped by institutional structures, cultural norms, and school-specific dynamics (Pan et al., 2022; Cruz-González et al., 2020). In the Philippine educational system, the hierarchical nature of school governance often places MTs in ambiguous positions: they are formally expected to lead and influence instructional practice but lack the administrative authority typically associated with leadership roles. This creates a scenario in which MTs must rely on relational influence, peer mentoring, and personal credibility to effectively enact leadership.

Consequently, understanding MTs' instructional leadership requires examining not only the formal policies and frameworks but also the ways in which they navigate, interpret, and adapt these expectations within their daily practice. Such inquiry illuminates how MTs reconcile policy mandates with practical constraints, exercise professional judgment, and construct their leadership identities in ways that sustain instructional quality. By situating MTs' experiences within these organizational and cultural contexts, researchers can better appreciate the nuanced processes through which instructional leadership is enacted and the factors that enable or constrain its effectiveness.

1.2.4. Capacity Building and Professional Standards

Professional development constitutes a central dimension of teacher leadership, serving both to enhance instructional competence and to strengthen teachers' capacity to enact leadership roles effectively. International scholarship emphasizes that leadership capacity among teachers is strengthened through structured mentoring, adherence to professional standards, and ongoing opportunities for continuous learning (Richmond et al., 2019; Lovett, 2023). Richmond et al. (2019) emphasized that mentoring is not a unidirectional process; it simultaneously supports the development of novice teachers and reshapes the professional identity of mentors themselves, demonstrating that leadership and professional growth are co-constructed through practice, reflection, and relational engagement. In parallel, Lovett (2023) highlighted that formal recognition and professional affirmation serve as powerful motivators for teacher leaders, reinforcing their commitment to instructional improvement, collegial collaboration, and the cultivation of professional learning communities.

Within the Philippine context, Reyna and Baguio (2025) observed that MTs benefit significantly from structured training programs and professional recognition designed to prepare them for leadership responsibilities. These programs facilitate the development of competencies in mentoring, curriculum implementation, instructional supervision, and action research. However, access to these capacity-building opportunities is unevenly distributed, with rural and under-resourced schools often facing systemic barriers that limit participation. Soriano (2025) further noted that competing instructional and administrative responsibilities can impede sustained engagement

with professional development, thereby restricting MTs' ability to translate learning into leadership practice effectively.

Taken together, these findings suggest that while professional frameworks such as the PPST provide clear standards and expectations for teacher leadership, the enactment of these standards is contingent upon contextual, institutional, and resource-related factors. Capacity-building initiatives are most effective when they not only deliver knowledge and skills but also reinforce professional identity, promote reflective practice, and support relational leadership within peer networks. Consequently, a deeper understanding of how MTs experience professional development, navigate contextual constraints, and integrate leadership learning into daily practice is essential to inform models of sustainable, context-responsive instructional leadership.

1.3. Research Questions

Aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 4, particularly Target 4.c, which focuses on strengthening teacher capacity, this study examines how Master Teachers in public elementary schools enact instructional leadership shaped by their professional identities. Specifically, it addresses the following research questions:

1. How do Master Teachers demonstrate instructional leadership in their daily practice?
2. How do their professional identities evolve in response to shifting roles and expectations?
3. What contextual, policy, and interpersonal factors enable or constrain the leadership–identity interplay?
4. In what ways do Master Teachers perceive their influence on colleagues, learners, and school culture?
5. How do they navigate the tensions between their teaching responsibilities and leadership roles?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to co-construct a recursive conceptual model of teacher leadership grounded in lived experience and to propose a micro-coaching framework that is relational, sustainable, and adaptable to real classroom realities.

1.4. Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on a conceptual framework that illustrates how Master Teachers (MTs) enact instructional leadership within Philippine public elementary schools. The framework integrates global perspectives on teacher leadership with the specific policy and institutional context of the Philippines, emphasizing the interplay among policy expectations, professional identity, contextual factors, and relational practices. It seeks to explain how these elements collectively influence the enactment of leadership.

Master Teachers operate within a landscape shaped by formal policy expectations, notably the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and programs provided by the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP). The PPST delineates MTs' leadership roles, which include mentoring colleagues, overseeing curriculum implementation, engaging in action research, and participating in professional development activities. NEAP programs provide structured capacity-building opportunities and formal recognition of leadership competencies. These policy mandates define the formal responsibilities and expected competencies of MTs; however, discrepancies often arise between what policies prescribe and the realities encountered in classroom and school settings.

Closely linked to policy expectations is the professional identity of MTs, which encompasses their self-perception as educators and instructional leaders. Professional identity is not static but evolves in response to shifting roles, policy reforms, and experiential learning. This evolving identity mediates

how MTs interpret formal mandates, reconcile multiple responsibilities, and make decisions regarding mentoring and instructional leadership. MTs' sense of identity influences their capacity to engage peers, model effective pedagogy, and implement innovative practices.

Contextual and institutional factors further shape the enactment of leadership. Schools often face resource limitations, high teacher workloads, large class sizes, and staff turnover, all of which can constrain MTs' ability to lead effectively. The prevailing school culture and governance structures also affect leadership enactment, as hierarchical systems may limit formal authority, requiring MTs to rely on relational influence. Additionally, digital integration, accountability systems, and evolving educational reforms introduce new demands and opportunities, further shaping the leadership practices of MTs.

Within this context, relational and distributed leadership practices serve as the primary mechanism through which MTs exert influence. Through peer mentoring, instructional modeling, collaboration, participation in professional learning communities, and effective communication, MTs foster professional growth among colleagues and promote shared ownership of instructional improvement. Distributed leadership ensures that responsibilities and expertise are shared across the school, sustaining reforms and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

The culmination of these processes is observed in several outcomes. These include enhanced instructional competence, motivation, and collaboration among peers; improved learner engagement and achievement; and the development of a school culture characterized by collegiality, innovation, and ongoing professional growth. Notably, the outcomes of leadership practices feed back into MTs' professional identity and inform their interpretation of policy, creating a cyclical relationship where experience and reflection refine leadership practices and identity over time.

In summary, this conceptual framework highlights that MTs primarily enact leadership through relational influence rather than formal authority, and that both professional identity and contextual realities mediate their effectiveness. It highlights the importance of distributed leadership for sustaining instructional improvements. It provides a foundation for designing micro-coaching programs, policy refinements, and further research on the intersection of teacher leadership, identity, and context within Philippine schools.

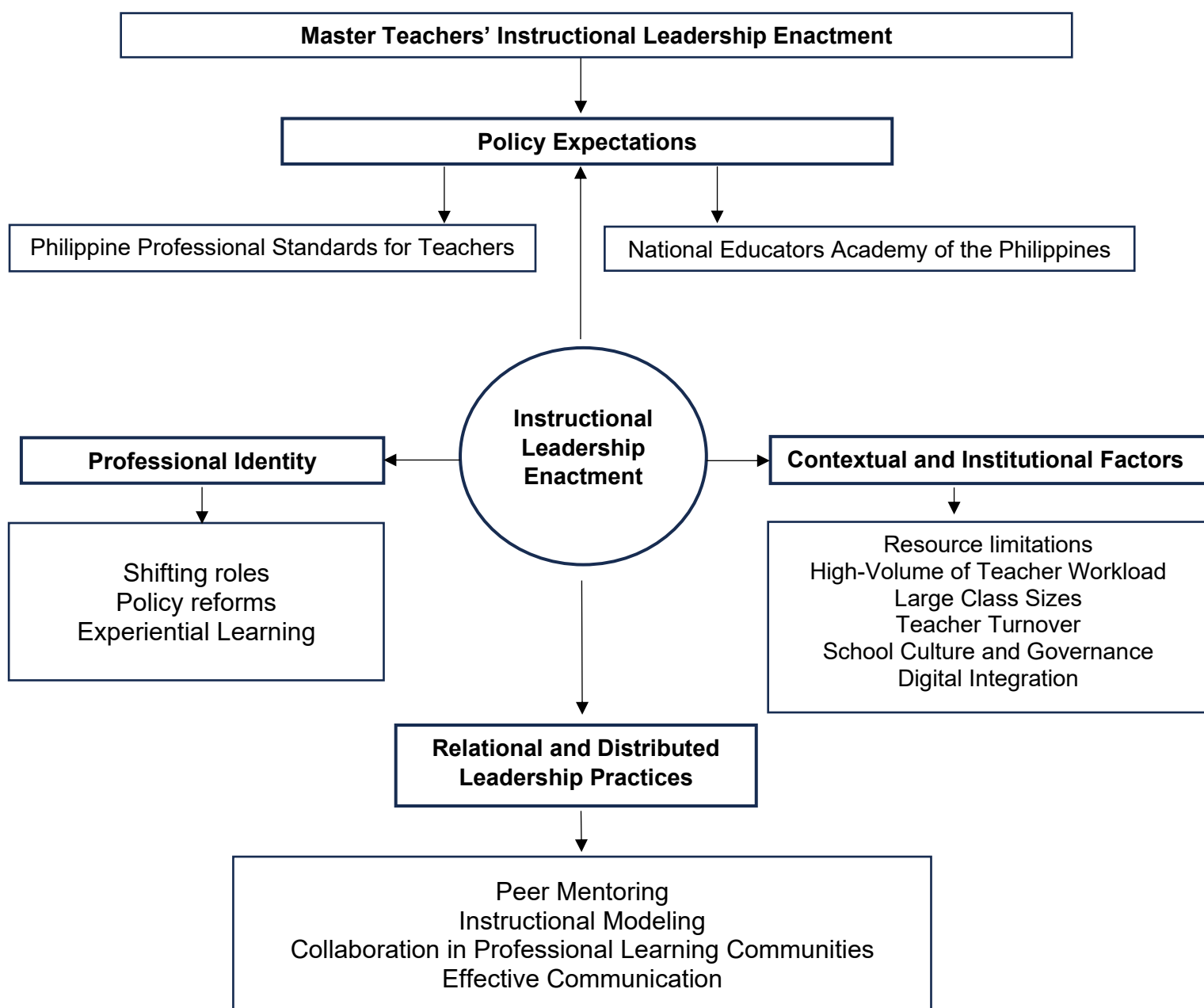


Figure 1. Master Teachers' Instructional Leadership Enactment Framework

2. Methodology

In this section, the study explains the methods used, specifically the research design, corpus, in-depth interviews, and mode of analysis.

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design grounded in transcendental phenomenology, following the framework articulated by Moustakas (1994). Phenomenology was selected because the central aim of the research was to uncover the essence of Master Teachers' lived experiences as instructional leaders within Philippine public elementary schools. Unlike descriptive approaches that emphasize surface-level patterns, transcendental phenomenology focuses on meaning-making as expressed by participants, enabling a deeper understanding of how professional identity and leadership practices are constructed and experienced.

Philosophically, this approach is rooted in the works of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Jean-Paul Sartre, who advanced phenomenology as a method for exploring human consciousness and the structures of experience. In educational research, phenomenology is especially valuable for capturing the nuanced realities of teachers and leaders, whose practices are shaped by policy, context, and relationships (Farrell, 2020; Dangal & Joshi, 2020). This study thus adopts a phenomenological lens to prioritize teachers' first-person accounts while systematically bracketing researcher bias.

In applying Moustakas' transcendental phenomenology, the researcher undertook a structured sequence of steps. First, epoché was employed to bracket personal assumptions, ensuring that participants' voices were privileged over preconceived notions. Second, through horizontalization, all significant statements from interviews, observations, and artifacts were identified and treated with equal value to prevent premature prioritization. These statements were then clustered into meaning units, which captured recurring experiential elements related to leadership enactment and professional identity. Third, the researcher applied imaginative variation, examining the underlying structural conditions—such as policy expectations, institutional constraints, and relational dynamics—that shaped these experiences. Finally, the synthesis process integrated textural descriptions (what participants experienced) and structural descriptions (how they experienced it), resulting in a coherent account of the essence of Master Teachers' instructional leadership.

This research design was particularly suited to the study because it not only generated rich, descriptive data but also illuminated the deeper meanings underlying the leadership practices of Master Teachers. By systematically moving from individual statements to shared essences, the design ensured that findings were firmly grounded in participants' lived realities while advancing theoretical insights into instructional leadership and professional identity.

2.2. Research Context and Participants

Purposive sampling was employed to select twelve Master Teachers who met specific inclusion criteria: holding the rank of Master Teacher I or II, having at least three years of experience in the position, and maintaining an active teaching load in the classroom. This number of participants was not arbitrary but was guided by both methodological and practical considerations. In phenomenological research, sample sizes are typically small to allow for in-depth exploration of participants' lived experiences. Creswell (2018) recommends a range of 5 to 25 participants for phenomenological studies, while Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) argue that thematic saturation is often achieved within the first 12 interviews, with variability depending on the diversity of the participant pool.

In this study, thematic saturation was achieved by the twelfth participant, as no substantially new insights were emerging. Moreover, the participant group reflected variation across grade levels, subject specializations, years of service, and school contexts (small, medium, large, and mega schools), which ensured both depth and breadth of perspectives. The chosen sample size, therefore, aligns with established standards for phenomenological adequacy while also providing sufficient diversity to capture the nuanced ways Master Teachers enact instructional leadership within different institutional environments.

Table 1. Research Context and Participant Profile

Participant ID	Grade Focus	Years as Master Teacher	Subject Specialization	Formal Leadership Training	School Context
MT-01	Grade 5	4 years	Mathematics	Yes	Medium
MT-02	Grade 6	7 years	English	No	Mega
MT-03	Grade 4	3 years	Science	Yes	Small
MT-04	Grade 5	6 years	Filipino	Yes	Medium
MT-05	Grade 6	5 years	Mathematics	Yes	Large
MT-06	Grade 3	8 years	English	No	Small
MT-07	Grade 4	4 years	Science	Yes	Medium
MT-08	Grade 5	3 years	Social Studies	No	Large
MT-09	Grade 6	9 years	Mathematics	Yes	Mega
MT-10	Grade 4	6 years	Filipino	Yes	Medium
MT-11	Grade 5	5 years	English	No	Medium
MT-12	Grade 6	4 years	Science	Yes	Small

The study participants were asked to participate voluntarily, as they had the right to refuse to join and to withdraw their consent at any time, as stated in the provided consent form. No harm was intended for the participants. All participants received an invitation letter, consent information, the survey, and an interview schedule. After all, participants who had agreed to participate in the study had the option to decline to have their responses used by the researcher. Their identities were hidden to protect their privacy, and they could establish their codes when answering interview questions, ensuring that their responses remained anonymous.

2.3. Data Collection and Triangulation

To ensure depth, credibility, and interpretive validity, the study employed methodological triangulation using three interconnected data sources: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations with shadowing, and documentary artifacts. Twelve Master Teachers participated in in-depth interviews, each lasting approximately 70 minutes, offering reflective insights into their leadership practices, identity formation, and context-responsive strategies. To complement these narratives, real-time classroom observations and informal shadowing captured leadership behaviors during instruction and peer interactions. Field notes were promptly expanded to retain contextual richness. Additionally, 37 documentary artifacts—such as annotated lesson plans, coaching logs, and reflective journals—provided tangible evidence of how instructional leadership was embedded in everyday practice. This triangulated approach enabled a layered understanding of teacher leadership by aligning what participants said, what they did, and what they documented, thereby enhancing the validity and richness of the findings.

Table 2. Summary of Data Sources and Contributions to Triangulation

Data Source	Volume/ Frequency	Purpose	Contribution to Triangulation
Semi-Structured Interviews	12 transcripts (~70 minutes each)	To explore lived experiences, leadership interpretations, and identity shifts	Provided rich, first-person narratives forming the core phenomenological data
Observations & Shadowing	12 expanded field notes (1 per MT)	To observe leadership enactment during teaching and mentoring routines	Verified and contextualized interview data with real-time behavioral insights
Documentary Artefacts	37 documents (~9,000 words total)	To examine written evidence of planning, coaching, and reflection	Added textual depth and substantiated patterns found across interviews and observations

2.4. Data Analysis

The study employed a hybrid human–AI assisted workflow. AI tools were used as technical aids to help flag potential meaning units and manage large volumes of qualitative data efficiently. However, all interpretive decisions—theme construction, refinement of clusters, and integration of minority perspectives—remained under the researcher’s control. Thus, while coding assistance supported efficiency, the analysis was firmly rooted in phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and researcher reflexivity, ensuring authenticity and rigor.

2.5. Thematic Content Analysis

This study utilized an obtrusive research design, making content analysis an effective approach for examining information presented in texts, images, and sounds (Romani, 2021). Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) was employed to analyze the dataset, as it is well-suited for exploring experiences, attitudes, and perspectives within a body of data (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). TCA allows for the systematic identification of themes through careful and repeated examination of the data, enabling recurring topics, concepts, and patterns of meaning to emerge (Caulfield, 2022; Dawadi, 2020; Luo, 2022).

A transcendental phenomenology approach was applied in this study to capture the lived experiences of the participants, which would highlight the enactment of instructional leadership shaped by their professional identities. These experiences formed the basis for the patterns and themes identified in the analysis. While thematic content analysis has previously been used to study behaviors and attitudes (Walsh et al., 2019), this study represents a pioneering effort to use TCA to achieve the goals of this study.

In addition, in-depth interviews with participants generated significant statements, which were also analyzed using TCA. The analytical procedure followed in this study involved three distinct steps: identifying response codes, developing thematic categories, and applying scale coding to create thematic variables.

As said above, the procedure comprises analyzing the in-depth interviews with the participants, which will be coded to find underlying themes that represent the dynamics, issues, and concerns that the study participants commonly experience. Lastly, the quality-checking procedure was administered to guarantee the credibility of the findings in this qualitative study.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical standards to ensure voluntary and informed participation. Each participant received an invitation letter and a consent form outlining the study's objectives, procedures, and assurances of anonymity and confidentiality. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. To protect privacy, personal identifiers were replaced with codes (MT-01 to MT-12), and no identifying information was included in transcripts, artifacts, or reporting of results. Interview transcripts were returned to participants for verification, thereby enhancing the accuracy and integrity of their accounts. All recordings and raw data will be stored securely and deleted in accordance with the data management plan.

2.7. Researcher Reflexivity

The role of the researcher is central in qualitative inquiry, particularly in phenomenological studies where meaning is co-constructed through interpretation. In this study, the researcher's professional background as an educator, teacher trainer, and academic administrator inevitably shaped perspectives on instructional leadership and professional identity. While this positionality provided insider knowledge of the Philippine educational system, it also carried the risk of bias—particularly in assuming how Master Teachers enact leadership or negotiate their professional roles.

To address these potential influences, the researcher engaged in bracketing (*epoché*) throughout the research process. A reflexive journal was maintained before and during data collection to document assumptions, reactions, and expectations. This practice allowed the researcher to surface and consciously set aside preconceived notions, thereby privileging participants' voices. During data analysis, reflexive notes were revisited to ensure that thematic development was grounded in participants' accounts rather than filtered through prior professional judgments.

Through continuous reflexivity and bracketing, the study upheld the integrity of the phenomenological approach, ensuring that findings authentically reflected the lived experiences of Master Teachers. This reflexive stance also enhanced the study's credibility and trustworthiness, as it demonstrated a deliberate effort to remain open to perspectives that differed from the researcher's own professional standpoint.

2.8. Methodological Limitations

While the AI-assisted workflow greatly expedited data handling—flagging 428 potential meaning units and reducing them by 12 percent for deeper analysis—it also posed interpretive challenges, especially the risk of automated clustering marginalizing outlier perspectives. To preserve phenomenological integrity, the researcher manually re-examined and re-integrated any minority viewpoints, ensuring that every AI-suggested highlight was verified against the original transcripts. After two analytic cycles distilled four core themes and a third pass confirmed saturation, it remained clear that, despite the efficiency gains from GPT-4, Bard, Copilot, and Julius AI, all decisions about unit inclusion, theme boundaries, and theoretical interpretation were ultimately driven by human judgment. Moreover, as with any qualitative study, these findings are contextually bound—reflecting the situated experiences of this specific group of practitioners within a defined institutional setting.

3. Results

The findings of this study are organized into seven overarching themes that elucidate the lived experiences of Master Teachers as instructional leaders within Philippine public elementary schools. These themes were derived through a systematic process of iterative coding, horizontalization, and thematic clustering, guided by van Kaam's phenomenological method. Each theme captures a critical

dimension of how Master Teachers construct their leadership identities, exert influence without formal authority, and adapt their practices to the contextual realities of their schools.

Thematic saturation was attained through a recursive analytic process that integrated data from interviews, observations, and documentary artifacts. From a total of 376 verified meaning units, 11 sub-themes were identified and subsequently synthesized into seven major thematic domains. The resulting themes illuminate the complex interrelationships among leadership practices, identity formation, peer interactions, and institutional expectations. This demonstrates that instructional leadership in this context is inherently relational, context-sensitive, and identity-forming.

To present the core findings of this study, the analysis highlights how Master Teachers in public elementary schools enact instructional leadership shaped by their professional identities. Guided by the research questions, seven emergent themes were identified that illustrate how Master Teachers lead in daily practice, adapt to shifting roles and expectations, and balance classroom teaching with broader leadership responsibilities. These themes also reveal the contextual, policy, and interpersonal factors that shape their capacity to lead, as well as how they perceive their influence on colleagues, learners, and the overall school culture. Table 3 summarizes these themes and their descriptions, offering a synthesized view of Master Teachers' instructional leadership practices.

Table 3. Emergent Themes on Master Teachers' Instructional Leadership

Themes	Description
Instructional Leadership as Visible and Embodied Practice	Master Teachers enact instructional leadership through visible, hands-on practices—modeling lessons, mentoring peers, providing real-time feedback, and collaboratively planning—integrating leadership directly into daily teaching and classroom interactions.
Evolving Professional Identity as a Dynamic Construct	Master Teachers' professional identities are dynamic and continuously reshaped through new responsibilities, challenges, feedback, and evolving practices, reflecting a shift from directive expert to facilitative leader who learns and grows alongside colleagues and students.
Strategic and Relational Approaches to Instructional Support	Master Teachers demonstrate instructional leadership by providing strategic, relational, and adaptive support to colleagues—through micro-coaching, creative problem-solving, time management, and policy-savvy advocacy—while navigating systemic constraints and fostering trust, collaboration, and resilience within their schools.
Instructional Innovation as Pedagogical Adaptation and Resourcefulness	Master Teachers exercise instructional innovation by adapting lessons, improvising resources, and fostering student-centered and contextually relevant learning, using both creative pedagogy and collaborative strategies

Themes	Description
	to respond to the constraints and opportunities of their school environments.
Reflection-Driven Leadership	Master Teachers use deliberate and continuous reflection to shape their evolving professional identities, inform instructional and mentoring practices, and navigate the balance between teaching responsibilities and leadership demands, integrating both individual journaling and collaborative reflection into their daily routines.
Professional Development and Community Building	Master Teachers enhance their instructional leadership by actively engaging in continuous professional development and fostering communities of practice, simultaneously advancing their own expertise and cultivating collaborative, supportive, and growth-oriented school cultures.
Recognition and Moral Reward	Master Teachers sustain their instructional leadership and reinforce their professional identity through recognition and moral rewards, with acknowledgment from students, peers, and school leaders serving as key motivators that validate their efforts, strengthen their influence, and maintain their commitment to the learning community.

The subsequent sections provide a comprehensive presentation of each theme, substantiated with direct participant quotations and triangulated insights from documentary and observational data. Collectively, these themes offer a nuanced understanding of how Master Teachers navigate the enactment of instructional leadership amidst systemic constraints and evolving professional standards.

Theme 1: Instructional Leadership as Visible and Embodied Practice

This theme answers the question of how Master Teachers enact instructional leadership by highlighting their use of classroom modeling, mentoring, and visible guidance practices.

Master Teachers described instructional leadership as an *on-the-ground* activity, not a remote or purely administrative role. They emphasized leading *from within* the classroom – by teaching alongside colleagues, co-planning lessons, and giving real-time feedback.

Excerpt 1:

MT1: ...“*Leading is doing—colleagues watch me teach, not just hear me talk.*”...

This visible approach positions MTs as *co-learners* rather than distant experts, building trust through shared practice. Multiple participants stressed that expertise must be demonstrated through action, not just communicated, to be *meaningful and replicable among peers*. In interviews, they

recounted modeling lessons for peers and then reflecting together, which created an *apprenticeship culture* where less-experienced teachers learn by direct observation and participation. This insistence on showing rather than telling made leadership inseparable from teaching in their view.

Documentary artifacts reinforced these accounts of embodied leadership. For instance, several coaching logs and mentoring plans showed repeated entries of “*live demonstration lessons*” conducted by MTs in colleagues’ classrooms, confirming that *lesson modelling* was a routine strategy. Annotated lesson plans provided by MTs also revealed collaborative authorship – in one plan, an MT and a novice teacher had jointly written and annotated lesson objectives, evidencing the approach described by MT2.

Excerpt 2:

MT2: ...“*we sit with teachers and rewrite objectives together*”...

Another artifact, a Master Teacher’s weekly schedule, was color-coded to include brief post-class feedback sessions (corroborating the practice of 60–90 second *micro-coaching huddles* mentioned in interviews). There was even a lesson plan outline for a community-based project (a food-processing unit) that listed a community tasting event with parents as the final activity – concrete evidence that MTs intentionally link classroom learning with community feedback, echoing MT9’s comment about ending units with community critique. These artifacts collectively illustrate that MTs document and plan for leadership-through-practice, aligning with their interview narratives.

Field observations further confirmed that MTs embody leadership in daily routines. In multiple school visits, researchers saw Master Teachers stepping into active teaching roles: for example, one MT led a reading lesson in a colleague’s class while that teacher observed, demonstrating new strategies in real time (Field Notes, School C). Observers also noted impromptu mentoring moments – an MT was seen in a hallway immediately after a lesson, offering a quick suggestion to a teacher on how to adjust an activity for the next period, exemplifying a micro-coaching huddle. During planning periods, MTs were often observed huddled with peers over lesson plans or student work, collaboratively troubleshooting challenges on the spot. Such real-time, collaborative actions were commonplace in the observations, underscoring that these teachers’ leadership is highly visible and intertwined with everyday teaching.

Theme 2: Evolving Professional Identity as a Dynamic Construct

This theme addresses the question of how Master Teachers’ professional identities evolve in response to shifting roles and expectations by showing that their identities are continually reshaped through new responsibilities, changing demands, and recognition within their schools.

Building on their visible practice, Master Teachers portrayed their professional identity as *continually evolving* rather than fixed by title or years of service. They spoke of being stretched and reshaped by new roles, tools, and challenges in their environment. One teacher described a policy change as a pivotal growth moment:

Excerpt 3:

MT7: ...“*When robotics arrived, I felt like a novice again—that pushed me to grow.*”...

Such “stretch points” – introducing unfamiliar technology or curriculum – reawakened their willingness to learn and, paradoxically, *reinstated* feelings of being a beginner. Instead of resisting these moments, MTs welcomed them as invitations to expand their skills and perspectives. Across interviews, participants also highlighted the role of affirmation in stabilizing and advancing their identity. For example, a simple act of recognition could reinforce their purpose:

Excerpt 4:

MT3: ...*"My principal, quoting my lesson in a post con, told me I was on the right path."*...

These anecdotes illustrate identity as a dynamic narrative, continually co-authored by new experiences and feedback from others.

The evolving nature of MTs' identities was mirrored in their personal and professional documents. Reflective journals kept by the teachers provided tangible evidence of this ongoing identity work. In several journal entries, MTs logged feelings of uncertainty followed by plans for growth. For instance, one MT wrote about initial confusion with a new robotics curriculum, then outlined steps she took (like enrolling in a workshop and seeking advice from a colleague) to adapt, demonstrating how the challenge led to learning. Training certificates and professional development records further showed a pattern of self-initiated learning, supporting their narrative of *"we cannot lead if we stop learning"*. Lesson study notes and mentoring logs also captured this evolution: early entries often showed MTs giving direct guidance, whereas later entries included more open-ended questions posed to colleagues. This shift in documentation – from directive to facilitative – aligns with the identity shift MTs described. One MT's coaching log, for example, documented how her meeting agendas changed over time from "instructional directives" to discussion prompts, confirming in writing the interview claim.

Excerpt 5:

MT2: ...*"I now start meetings with questions, not instructions."*...

Through these artifacts, we see MTs intentionally recording and reflecting on their changing approaches and roles. Observations provided real-time glimpses of MTs' identities in transition. In early shadowing sessions, some MTs took a more *authoritative stance* – for example, initially leading meetings or model lessons themselves. However, as the year progressed, later observations noted MTs deliberately stepping back to empower others. In one observed department meeting, the MT facilitator opened by asking the group, *"What challenges are we facing this week?"* instead of issuing her own agenda – a marked contrast to earlier observations and a living example of the more inquiry-based leadership described by MT2. Likewise, in the classroom, observers saw MTs encouraging student-led demonstrations of new concepts (Field Notes, School F). In one case, an MT who once routinely taught demo lessons herself was observed guiding a student team to lead the science experiment while she monitored from the side, truly *"setting the frame"* and letting students "do the demo" as noted by MT10. Such shifts were reported across several schools: MTs increasingly acted as facilitators and coaches rather than sole experts. These field observations corroborate the interview and artifact evidence that MTs' professional identities are not static – they continually expand and adapt in response to new challenges and feedback.

Theme 3: Strategic and Relational Approaches to Instructional Support

This theme addresses the question of how Master Teachers demonstrate instructional leadership in their daily practice and what contextual and interpersonal factors enable or constrain this leadership. It shows that they provide collegial support through strategic and relational practices while navigating systemic limitations and opportunities.

Master Teachers described their day-to-day instructional support as *strategic in focus and relational in execution*. Rather than relying on formal authority, they recounted intentionally building trust and using creative strategies to help fellow teachers improve. A recurring idea was flexibility in mentoring: MTs often provided "micro-coaching" on the fly. One MT explained that a brief, immediate coaching moment is more effective than a lengthy, delayed session:

Excerpt 6:

MT1: ...*“Two minutes right after class beats a lost hour after school.”...*

Time management and multitasking also emerged as themes – MTs shared how they structured their schedules to protect teaching time while remaining available to colleagues. For example, an MT mentioned color-coding her calendar to juggle roles:

Excerpt 7:

MT8: ...*“I mark my class times in red on my calendar so nothing else can be scheduled over them.”...*

Participants emphasized creativity and resilience in the face of resource gaps, using phrases like “to improvise” to describe how they adapt teaching materials.

Excerpt 8:

MT4: ...*“When we are short on supplies, we just use our creativity to get the job done.”...*

They also talked about navigating bureaucracy with savvy: one MT laughed, saying that she quotes the policy so her requests get handled faster, noting, *“I quote the policy to make things move faster.”* (MT2). Throughout these interviews, MTs consistently framed their support role as a *collegial coach and problem-solver*. They also highlighted the importance of emotional support, sharing coffee and empathy with stressed colleagues.

Excerpt 9:

MT6: ...*“We sometimes need to meet with colleagues over coffee five times before a problem can be solved.”...*

These insights paint a picture of MTs who support others through adaptiveness, planning, and genuine camaraderie. The strategic and relational tactics MTs discussed were evident in various documents. Mentoring logs and weekly calendars showed deliberate scheduling of coaching touchpoints – for instance, several MTs’ logs listed short post-class feedback sessions (1–5 minutes) that occurred almost daily, aligning with the *corridor coaching* approach they described. One MT’s personal planner (reviewed as an artifact) was indeed marked with colored time blocks labeled “Teaching,” “Mentoring,” and “Admin,” validating the color-coded time management strategy (MT8) and demonstrating how they prioritize classroom time. In addition, MTs provided copies of resource adaptation plans that they had drafted when standard materials were lacking. In one such document, an MT outlined how to use locally available PVC pipes in a science experiment in place of a commercial kit – a concrete example of improvisation, confirming the motto *“creativity is the default school supply.”* Similarly, school memos written by MTs to administrators were reviewed, and many contained references to specific Department of Education policy clauses. This artifact evidence shows MTs leveraging formal guidelines to advocate for needs or cut through bureaucratic delays, just as they described in interviews (e.g., MT2’s use of policy quotes). Together, these artifacts illustrate that MTs plan and document their support strategies meticulously, blending practical fixes with relational awareness.

Field observations highlighted how MTs enact strategic support in real contexts. Observers frequently saw MTs in action, moving seamlessly from teaching their own classes to coaching roles. On several occasions, an MT was observed slipping into a colleague’s classroom during a free period to observe a lesson and offer whispered pointers, then debriefing briefly in the corridor – a direct manifestation of the “micro-coaching huddles” strategy. In one school (Field Notes, School B), an MT was noted carrying a tote of improvised supplies (bamboo sticks, local crafts) into a science class, demonstrating to teachers and students how to create learning aids from everyday items. This on-

the-spot creativity underscored the resourcefulness mentioned by participants. Observations also recorded MTs convening small informal gatherings: for example, three teachers were seen meeting with an MT during lunch to collectively adjust an upcoming lesson plan, reflecting a *collaborative support* ethos. In another instance, an MT navigated a bureaucratic hurdle in real time. When a supply request was initially denied, the MT showed the principal a prepared memo referencing a policy that justified the request, which quickly resulted in approval (Field Notes, School E). These observed behaviors confirm that MTs' support is both carefully strategized and deeply relational. By investing in trust and modeling ingenuity, they help colleagues navigate challenges immediately and effectively.

Theme 4: Instructional Innovation as Pedagogical Adaptation and Resourcefulness

This theme highlights the ways Master Teachers adapt instruction and improvise resources, showing innovation as a response to the constraints and demands of their school contexts.

When discussing innovation, MTs stressed that necessity and context drive their pedagogical creativity more than any top-down mandate. They recounted moving away from one-size-fits-all methods toward more learner-centered and locally relevant techniques. One MT described shifting her approach to let students take the lead:

Excerpt 10:

MT10: ...*"Students do the demo; I just set the frame. That way, they own the learning, and I can observe their thinking."*...

Many MTs echoed this move from teacher-as-lecturer to teacher-as-facilitator, noting improved engagement when students actively demonstrate or explore concepts. Contextual adaptation was another dominant theme – MTs gave examples of tailoring lessons to fit students' real-life experiences and available materials. For instance, an MT recounted replacing a high-tech activity with a hands-on local alternative:

Excerpt 11:

MT4: ...*"I swapped the robotics activity with a bamboo prototype. Same skill, better context. Students understood it more because it is part of their lives."* ...

Such stories illustrate how MTs maintain curricular goals but creatively modify delivery for relevance. Interviewees also highlighted collaborative innovation: rather than using off-the-shelf lesson plans, they co-developed plans with peers, often annotating and revising them together.

Excerpt 12:

MT2: ...*"We rewrite plans together—we do not just copy templates,"*...

Additionally, while technology was used, it was applied thoughtfully – for example, an MT mentioned recording her own lesson and sharing it via messaging app so colleagues could watch and learn at their convenience (MT7). These insights portray MTs as innovating from the ground up, driven by practical challenges and a spirit of experimentation.

The theme of pedagogical innovation was well-supported by artifacts from the MTs' practice. Several annotated lesson plans demonstrated how MTs adapted content: one plan showed a standard module on robotics altered to use a *bamboo car* project instead of a robot kit, complete with notes in the margin about aligning it to the same competencies (mirroring MT4's interview example). Samples of student work and project outlines attached to these plans indicated that students successfully engaged with these localized projects, highlighting the effectiveness of contextual innovation. To illustrate the shift towards student-centered learning, one MT provided a lesson plan reflection sheet where she noted that in a re-taught lesson, students performed the

demonstrations. At the same time, she facilitated – evidence of deliberate change in practice. Other artifacts, such as mentoring videos and audio messages, underscored innovation in professional sharing: a few MTs shared links to short video recordings of their model lessons and screenshots of chat conversations where they gave feedback on a colleague’s lesson plan. These digital artifacts confirm that MTs not only develop creative instructional strategies but also use innovative means (like recorded demos and online chats) to disseminate those strategies to peers. Across these documents, it is clear that MTs actively redesign both the *what* and *how* of teaching to fit their contexts better, and they capture these innovations in tangible forms.

Observations in the schools captured numerous instances of MT-led innovation in action. In classrooms, MTs were seen implementing non-traditional lesson formats. For example, in one observed science lesson, instead of lecturing, the MT organized students into small groups to experiment and then had the students teach each other their findings (Field Notes, School A). This corroborates the reported shift to student-led demonstrations (as MT10 described). Observers also noted inventive use of materials: in a resource-poor setting, an MT taught a geometry lesson using handmade cardboard shapes and community-sourced bamboo sticks, an observational detail that reinforces the resourcefulness described in interviews. During a school visit focusing on project-based learning, one MT invited a local artisan into the classroom to co-teach a craft-making activity, illustrating community-linked innovation beyond what the standard curriculum provided (Field Notes, School D). Furthermore, school records of lesson study meetings (observed by the researcher) showed MTs encouraging colleagues to experiment – one MT was observed facilitating a post-lesson discussion where teachers brainstormed how to infuse local examples into a prescribed lesson module. These field observations align closely with MTs’ accounts: they habitually experiment with pedagogy, adapt curriculum content imaginatively, and encourage peers to do the same.

Theme 5: Reflection-Driven Leadership

This theme highlights how Master Teachers rely on deliberate reflection to shape their evolving professional identities and to navigate the tensions between teaching responsibilities and leadership demands.

In their interviews, Master Teachers consistently highlighted *reflection* as a cornerstone of their leadership practice. They depicted reflection not as an occasional exercise but as an ongoing habit that guides their decisions and growth. One MT admitted how her mentoring approach transformed through reflection:

Excerpt 13:

MT2: ...*“I used to think mentoring meant giving advice. Now, after reflecting on how others respond, I ask more questions than give answers.”...*

This shift—from directive to inquiry-based mentoring—was a common narrative, with MTs noting they became more attuned to colleagues’ and students’ feedback. Many described personal journaling or debriefing at the end of the day to analyze successes and failures.

Excerpt 14:

MT5: ...*“I write things down—not just the bad stuff, but what worked too. Over time, you see patterns. You see yourself grow.”...*

One teacher shared, emphasizing how documenting experiences helped her learn from them. MTs also credited reflective dialogue with peers for sparking change. For instance, after noticing students disengaged during her lessons, one MT reflected and decided to involve students more actively:

Excerpt 15:

MT10: ...*"Now I let students present the concept to each other. I realized they engage more when I am not the center."*...

These interview insights portray MTs as *reflective practitioners* who consciously examine and adjust their leadership and teaching strategies in response to their experiences.

The role of reflection was evident in the artifacts MTs provided. Many MTs shared excerpts from their reflective journals or diaries, which offered concrete evidence of how they process their experiences. In one journal entry, an MT wrote a narrative of a difficult day, noting a mentoring session that went poorly, followed by a section titled "What I Learned," where she outlined how she might approach the teacher differently next time. Such entries demonstrate the *systematic reflection* MTs engage in, turning daily challenges into lessons. Lesson study documents and post-observation conference notes also highlighted collective reflection. For example, minutes from a lesson study meeting showed MTs and their peers discussing a classroom incident ("low student engagement during group work") and jointly brainstorming adjustments – capturing reflection-in-action among colleagues.

Additionally, coaching logs sometimes included a "Notes" column where MTs jotted questions they asked teachers or noted teacher responses; these logs illustrate how MTs embedded reflective questioning (e.g., "What did you notice about student reactions today?") into their coaching practice. The presence of these questions and follow-up notes in the logs indicates that MTs were intentionally using reflective techniques to guide others. Such artifact-based evidence reinforces that reflection was not just talk – it was documented and integral to MTs' leadership workflow.

Field observations confirmed that reflection permeated MTs' behavior on the ground. Researchers observed that MTs often paused to contemplate outcomes before reacting. In one case, after a lesson did not go as expected, an MT did not immediately critique the teacher; instead, the observer's notes describe the MT asking the teacher to discuss what they thought happened, listening carefully, and then suggesting they both try a new approach in the next lesson (Field Notes, School H). This scenario illustrates an MT using reflective questioning in a live mentoring context, consistent with the interview accounts. Observers also saw evidence of MTs reflecting on their own practice: for instance, one MT was observed revisiting her lesson plan during a break, making marginal notes and adjustments after seeing students' confused faces in the first part of the lesson – a real-time reflective adjustment to improve the second half of the class. During a teacher learning circle that the researcher attended, MTs openly discussed their recent failures and successes, effectively modeling vulnerability and self-analysis for their peers. This openness created a "safe space" for communal reflection, as noted in field notes. Across these observations, the pattern was clear: MTs approached leadership as a learning process, continually assessing and refining their approaches.

Theme 6: Professional Development and Community Building

This theme highlights how Master Teachers strengthen their instructional leadership by engaging in professional development and fostering communities of practice that shape school culture.

Master Teachers viewed ongoing professional development (PD) as *both a personal responsibility and a leadership duty*. In interviews, they expressed a strong belief that to lead effectively, they must continuously learn.

Excerpt 16:

MT3: ...*"Every workshop, every course takes me a step further—enriching my teaching and my ability to lead."*...

One teacher noted, capturing the sentiment that growth in expertise translates to credibility among colleagues. Many MTs described proactively seeking learning opportunities – enrolling in graduate programs, attending seminars or webinars beyond what was required – not for compliance, but to stay current and inspired. Equally, they talked about *sharing* this learning:

Excerpt 17:

MT6: ...*“We cannot lead teachers if we stop teaching ourselves. I join trainings and then cascade them in ways our teachers can use.”...*

Here, MT6 highlights the practice of “cascading” new knowledge, meaning she would repackage and pass on what she learned to peers through workshops or coaching. The interviews also underscored community building as inseparable from PD. MTs consistently mentioned fostering a culture where teachers support each other. They recounted forming peer learning groups, organizing team lesson-planning sessions, and encouraging open exchange of ideas. One MT explained that her school’s growth was a collective effort: *“We make time to sit together, rewrite lessons, and reflect. That is where growth happens—not in isolation, but together.”* (MT8). Overall, MTs portrayed themselves as *lead learners* who both pursue personal development and galvanize collaborative professional learning among their colleagues.

The interplay of professional development and community building emerged clearly in the artifacts. Certificates and training portfolios confirmed that many MTs had engaged in advanced studies or specialized workshops – for example, several files showed completion of courses in new curriculum strategies and educational technology. More importantly, school-based training materials created by MTs illustrated how they turned their learning outward. One MT provided the agenda and handouts from an in-service training (INSET) session she led on differentiated instruction, which she developed after attending an external seminar. These documents show the MT distilling key concepts for her peers, including a collaborative activity, evidence of the “cascade” approach (MT6) in action. Meeting minutes and group chat transcripts further demonstrated community building. In one set of department meeting minutes, an MT had added a standing item called “Learning Share,” where each teacher brought a new idea or issue to discuss – institutionalizing peer exchange as part of PD. Additionally, printed screenshots from a messaging app group of Master Teachers revealed frequent after-hours problem-solving: for instance, one thread showed a Sunday afternoon conversation where an MT posed a classroom problem and multiple colleagues responded with suggestions and resources, aligning with MT10’s remark that *“even on weekends... suggestions [are] flying in.”* These artifacts collectively highlight that MTs not only pursue knowledge but also actively create structures and resources to cultivate a learning community among teachers.

Observations in the field underscored MTs’ dual role as learners and community builders. Researchers observed MTs leading school-based professional development sessions – for example, in one school, an MT was seen facilitating a “learning action cell” (LAC) meeting, where she first shared insights from a recent training she attended, then opened the floor for colleagues to discuss their own challenges and strategies (Field Notes, District LAC Session). The atmosphere was collegial, with teachers freely exchanging ideas, which the MT moderated and synthesized on a whiteboard, embodying a culture of shared learning. In day-to-day practice, observers also noted MTs informally coaching small groups: one afternoon, an MT gathered two new teachers in her classroom to jointly plan a lesson on fractions, guiding them through the process but also inviting their input – a scene that demonstrated learning *together*, not top-down. School events provided further evidence of community ethos; at one faculty meeting, the researcher noted that an MT publicly praised a teacher who tried a new method, sparking a round of peer applause and encouraging others to take similar risks. Such observed moments reinforced that MTs deliberately build an environment where teachers feel supported to grow. Notably, when teacher morale dipped (for instance, after a particularly

challenging week of policy changes), an MT organized a casual get-together with coffee and snacks after school, which the observer's field notes described as *"equal parts group therapy and idea exchange."* This highlights how MTs attend to both the professional and emotional needs of their peers, strengthening the community. In sum, the observational data aligned with interviews and artifacts: MTs continuously develop themselves and, in parallel, cultivate a collaborative learning network in their schools.

Theme 7: Recognition and Moral Reward

This theme shows that Master Teachers perceive their influence most strongly when it is acknowledged through recognition and moral rewards, which sustain their leadership identity and contribution to the learning community.

In their reflections, Master Teachers acknowledged that *recognition – especially of the informal, moral kind – sustains their commitment* to leadership roles. They certainly appreciated formal honors like promotions or awards, but what they talked about most were the day-to-day affirmations that validated their work. One MT shared how a simple act of administrator acknowledgment lifted her spirits:

Excerpt 18:

MT3: ...*"When our principal quoted my lesson in a meeting, I felt seen. It was like, 'Okay, I am doing something right.'"*...

Another emphasized the joy of seeing students thrive as the ultimate reward:

Excerpt 19:

MT1: ...*"When my students do well, it reflects our effort. That is the reward I hold on to."*...

Peers' respect was also cited as meaningful recognition. An MT explained that being the person colleagues seek out for help is a form of professional trust:

Excerpt 20:

MT9: ...*"It means a lot when a colleague says, 'Can I sit in your class?' or asks for help. That is recognition for me."*...

These testimonials show that *moral rewards* – such as appreciation, seeing one's influence make a difference, or feeling trusted – were key drivers for MTs. Importantly, they often mentioned these rewards as what kept them going through challenges. One MT candidly admitted,

Excerpt 21:

MT5: ...*"There are times I want to quit. But then a student says thank you, or a mentee tries something new, and it reminds me why I stay."*...

In essence, the interviews painted a picture that, beyond any material incentive, it is the positive feedback from students, peers, and leaders that renews MTs' passion and affirms their identity as instructional leaders.

Evidence of recognition and its impact also surfaced in the documentation associated with MTs. While less formal, some MTs saved thank-you notes, letters, or tokens given by students and colleagues – these mementos, though not part of official data collection, were often mentioned as treasures they keep in their desks. For instance, one MT showed the researcher a handmade card from a struggling student who wrote that the MT's extra coaching helped him read better; such an artifact illustrates the personal significance of student appreciation. On the more formal side, HR files and performance evaluation documents (when accessible to the study) indicated commendations: a few MTs had written commendations or notes from principals placed in their files recognizing their

leadership in a project or school event. Also telling were entries in MTs' reflective journals where they recorded moments of recognition – one journal entry detailed how energized the MT felt after a younger teacher implemented her advice successfully and thanked her for it. In a coaching log, an MT had scribbled a side note about a mentee's progress ("J. used my strategy, and her class math scores went up!" followed by a smiley face), showing how those successes were noted and celebrated even in private records. These artifacts, while varied, all underscore the same point: acknowledgments big and small are documented and remembered by MTs, reinforcing their sense of purpose.

The influence of recognition was palpable in the school environments observed. During field visits, researchers witnessed several instances of MTs receiving and responding to recognition. In one school assembly, for example, the principal publicly praised the Master Teachers for leading a recent training workshop; the observers noted MT3 smiling and later mentioning that she felt motivated by that public thank-you (Field Notes, School Assembly). In the classroom context, observers saw evidence of student appreciation: in one case, after an interactive lesson led by an MT, a group of students spontaneously thanked her for making learning fun – a moment the MT visibly cherished. Peer recognition was also observed in action: teachers frequently sought out MTs between classes with questions or requests to observe their lessons. One field note described how, during a recess, two younger teachers hovered at the door of MT9's classroom to ask if they could watch her teach a new reading technique later that week, indicating the esteem in which colleagues held her. The MT's enthusiastic agreement and subsequent preparation for those peer observers demonstrated how such trust from colleagues encouraged her.

Furthermore, during less formal moments, like lunch in the faculty room, MTs were occasionally the center of appreciative jokes or respectful teases ("Ask the Master Teacher – she always has the answer!"), signaling collegial recognition of their expertise in a lighthearted way. Observers commented that these social affirmations often coincided with times when MTs were handling heavy workloads or stress, seemingly giving them a boost to persevere. In summary, the observational data corroborated what MTs shared in interviews: the moral rewards of their work – being valued, making a difference, feeling appreciated – are crucial to sustaining their morale and commitment.

4. Discussion

This study illuminates how Master Teachers (MTs) enact instructional leadership as a dynamic, contextually situated, and relational process rather than a static or positional role. Findings demonstrate that leadership is visible, embodied, and recursive, deeply intertwined with professional identity, reflective practice, and relational engagement with peers and students. MTs do not rely solely on formal authority; rather, they influence colleagues through demonstrated expertise, collaborative engagement, resourceful problem-solving, and moral affirmation. The results underscore that instructional leadership among MTs is both practical and performative, shaping school culture and peer learning in iterative and observable ways.

4.1. Instructional Leadership as Embodied Practice

The study confirms that instructional leadership is most effective when enacted visibly in daily school practice. MTs emphasized teaching alongside colleagues, modeling lessons, co-planning, and providing real-time feedback. MT1's comment, "Leading is doing—colleagues watch me teach, not just hear me talk," reflects the prevailing view among participants that leadership credibility is inseparable from observable action. This aligns with situated learning and embodied leadership theories (Alemdag, 2022; Castro-Alonso et al., 2024), which posit that learners internalize knowledge and skills most effectively through participatory observation and shared practice.

Artifacts supported this finding: coaching logs and mentoring plans documented repeated live demonstration lessons, while annotated lesson plans revealed co-authorship with novice teachers, exemplifying leadership-through-practice. For instance, MT2 noted, “We sit with teachers and rewrite objectives together,” reflecting deliberate collaboration. Field observations confirmed this pattern: MTs were frequently seen stepping into classrooms to model lessons, providing post-class micro-coaching, and troubleshooting teaching challenges alongside peers. Leadership, therefore, is enacted through presence, collaboration, and actionable guidance, validating Spillane’s (2006) concept of leadership-in-practice.

The implication for teacher preparation is clear: training programs should emphasize not only content knowledge or policy comprehension but also practical demonstration, co-teaching strategies, and situational coaching skills.

4.2. Evolving Professional Identity as a Dynamic Construct

Master Teachers’ professional identities are fluid, relational, and responsive to contextual pressures. Interview excerpts and artifacts illustrate identity as continuously reshaped by new responsibilities, challenges, and peer or administrative affirmation. MT7 reflected, “When robotics arrived, I felt like a novice again—that pushed me to grow,” highlighting the role of “stretch points” in professional development. Similarly, MT3 observed, “My principal, quoting my lesson in a forum, told me I was on the right path,” illustrating how external recognition consolidates emerging professional identities.

Artifacts, such as reflective journals and coaching logs, provided tangible evidence of identity evolution. Journals traced MTs’ initial uncertainty through problem-solving steps, demonstrating deliberate engagement with reflection, growth, and experimentation. Training certificates and professional development records indicated ongoing self-directed learning. At the same time, mentoring logs revealed a shift from directive guidance to facilitative questioning, exemplified by MT2: “I now start meetings with questions, not instructions.” Field observations mirrored these changes, showing MTs intentionally stepping back to empower peers or students to lead classroom activities. Collectively, these data confirm that professional identity among MTs is negotiated, experiential, and continuously co-constructed through practice, reflection, and social feedback (Beijaard et al., 2004; Pérez Gracia et al., 2022).

4.3. Strategic and Relational Approaches to Instructional Support

MTs enact leadership through strategic, relational, and contextually responsive support, rather than through formal administrative authority. Daily practices included micro-coaching, resource improvisation, emotional support, and policy-savvy problem-solving. MT1 observed, “Two minutes right after class beats a lost hour after school,” emphasizing immediacy and relevance in peer support. Similarly, MT8 described time management strategies, such as color-coding calendars to protect teaching time while remaining available for colleagues.

Artifact analysis revealed deliberate planning and documentation of support strategies: mentoring logs, weekly schedules, resource adaptation plans, and memos to administrators confirmed the blend of practical and relational tactics. For instance, MTs used improvised materials (e.g., bamboo sticks for experiments) and referenced policies to expedite approvals, demonstrating both resourcefulness and organizational acumen. Field observations validated these strategies: MTs were seen offering corridor coaching, co-planning sessions, and immediate problem-solving interventions, confirming that leadership operates through trust, collaboration, and strategic action. This resonates with distributed leadership frameworks while highlighting the Philippine context, where leadership often arises from necessity rather than formalized structures (Harris & Jones, 2019; Hallinger & Kulophas, 2019).

4.4. Instructional Innovation as Pedagogical Adaptation and Resourcefulness

Innovation among MTs is primarily context-driven, adaptive, and student-centered. Interview excerpts highlighted pedagogical flexibility, such as MT10's shift: "Students do the demo; I just set the frame," reflecting a transition from teacher-centered instruction to facilitative, inquiry-based learning. Similarly, MT4 adapted a high-tech robotics lesson to a bamboo prototype, preserving learning objectives while enhancing contextual relevance. MT2 emphasized the co-development of lesson plans and the rejection of generic templates in favor of localized, collaborative design.

Artifacts corroborated these practices: lesson plans, student project outputs, mentoring videos, and digital communications revealed MTs' systematic adaptation of curriculum, technology, and teaching strategies. Field observations reinforced the innovation theme, noting small-group experiments, resourceful use of local materials, and integration of community expertise into lessons. MTs exemplify creative resilience, leveraging constraints as catalysts for pedagogical innovation, underscoring the need for policies that recognize and systematize adaptive strategies rather than imposing one-size-fits-all solutions (Konst & Kairisto-Mertanen, 2020; Mhagama, 2024).

4.5. Reflection-Driven Leadership

Findings confirm that reflection underpins both identity formation and leadership practice. MTs engaged in journaling, lesson debriefings, and peer dialogue to make sense of their experiences. This addresses how MTs navigate tensions between teaching and leadership roles, since reflection provided the space to balance competing responsibilities. This aligns with Schön's reflective practitioner model, which highlights reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action as central to professional growth, and with Farrell (2020), who stresses reflection as a means of transforming challenges into opportunities. The data here extend those insights by showing that reflection also builds leadership credibility—teachers trusted MTs who were open about their reflective process. Thus, reflection is not just personal but relational, reinforcing identity and strengthening influence.

4.6. Professional Development and Community Building

Results reveal that professional development and community building are inseparable dimensions of leadership. MTs actively sought training while also cultivating peer networks, embodying the idea that leaders are both learners and culture-builders. This responds to what factors enable leadership and how MTs perceive their influence on colleagues and school culture. The finding supports Lovett's (2023) observation that teacher leaders sustain school improvement not only through individual mentoring but by shaping cultures of collaboration. In this study, MTs facilitated LAC sessions less as "trainers" and more as co-learners, thereby flattening hierarchies and building collective ownership of learning. This suggests that leadership development programs should emphasize community facilitation skills, not just content expertise.

4.7. Recognition and Moral Reward

Findings indicate that recognition and moral reward sustain MTs' motivation and reinforce their leadership identity. Informal affirmations from students, peers, and administrators mattered more than material incentives. This addresses how MTs perceive their influence, showing that influence is often experienced through acknowledgment and affirmation. This aligns with Lovett's (2023) research on intrinsic motivators in teacher leadership, where moral rewards such as gratitude and trust reinforce identity and commitment. In the Philippine context, recognition also carried cultural weight: being called *model teachers* reinforced not only professional but also moral authority. This finding suggests that systems of recognition, even if symbolic, play a crucial role in sustaining leadership.

5. Synthesis and Implications

Taken together, these findings illustrate that Master Teachers' instructional leadership operates as a recursive identity–practice cycle: leadership practices reinforce evolving identities, and identities shape how leadership is enacted. This confirms the value of understanding leadership not as a position but as a lived, relational, and context-responsive process.

Importantly, the findings provide the empirical foundation for the study's two key outputs. The Master Teacher's Instructional Leadership Enactment Framework captures the relationship revealed in the themes, where practice relationally reshapes identity and identity informs practice. At the same time, the micro-coaching toolkit operationalizes these insights by translating embodied practice, strategic support, reflective habits, and community building into concrete, context-responsive strategies that MTs can apply in daily school life. By rooting leadership development in lived realities, these outputs extend the literature while offering scalable, low-cost models for teacher capacity building.

Theoretically, the study contributes to leadership scholarship by providing a localized model that integrates identity, reflection, and resourcefulness into leadership practice. Practically, it offers school systems an adaptable toolkit for developing instructional leaders from within, particularly in resource-constrained contexts. Both contributions directly align with Sustainable Development Goal 4, Target 4.c, which calls for enhancing teacher training and professional development to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education.

6. Conclusion

This study provides a nuanced understanding of how Master Teachers (MTs) enact instructional leadership in Philippine public elementary schools. It reveals leadership as a dynamic, relational, and contextually situated process rather than a static or hierarchical role. The findings demonstrate that effective leadership is enacted through visible practice, reflective engagement, strategic support, pedagogical innovation, and relational influence, highlighting the inseparable link between professional identity and leadership practice. MTs influence colleagues not through formal authority alone but through embodied expertise, collaborative problem-solving, and moral affirmation, thereby shaping school culture and fostering collective professional growth.

In direct response to the research questions, several key insights emerge. First, regarding how Master Teachers demonstrate instructional leadership in their daily practice, the study shows that leadership is most credible and impactful when embedded in everyday teaching—where MTs model lessons, co-plan with peers, and provide real-time feedback. Second, on how professional identities evolve in response to shifting roles and expectations, the findings reveal that MT identity is fluid and continuously co-constructed through reflection, peer interaction, and contextual challenges, underscoring leadership as both experiential and relational. Third, in relation to the contextual, policy, and interpersonal factors that enable or constrain leadership, the study highlights that MTs' approaches to support, mentoring, and innovation are strategically adaptive, emphasizing resourcefulness, immediacy, and responsiveness to both student and teacher needs. Fourth, concerning how MTs navigate the tensions between teaching responsibilities and leadership roles, the findings underscore the centrality of reflection and professional development, which serve as mechanisms for personal growth and for fostering collaborative school cultures. Finally, with regard to how MTs perceive their influence on colleagues, learners, and school culture, the study shows that recognition and moral affirmation are critical motivators, sustaining commitment and reinforcing leadership identity in culturally meaningful ways.

Collectively, these findings suggest that teacher leadership should be understood as an integrative practice that combines professional knowledge, relational skills, and ethical commitment rather than relying solely on formal positional authority. For policymakers, school administrators, and teacher education programs, the study highlights the importance of supporting embodied leadership,

facilitating reflective practice, promoting adaptive innovation, and recognizing contributions through both formal and informal means. By foregrounding relational, reflective, and context-responsive leadership, the findings provide a framework for developing sustainable teacher leadership practices that enhance instructional quality, peer learning, and overall school improvement.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the output of this study be utilized to strengthen instructional leadership and teacher development initiatives. The co-constructed recursive conceptual model, which illustrates the continuous interplay between instructional leadership and professional identity through lived experiences and reflective practice, provides a valuable model that schools and policymakers can adopt in designing leadership development programs. Alongside this, the practical micro-coaching toolkit rooted in relational leadership offers a localized, low-cost, and scalable approach to professional growth. This toolkit is especially relevant for educational systems where formal leadership pathways are limited, making it a viable strategy for enhancing in-service training and capacity building from within schools.

Educational leaders, training institutions, and policymakers are encouraged to integrate the school-based micro-coaching model and micro-coaching log sheet into school-based training programs, professional development initiatives, and leadership formation activities. Doing so would directly advance Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), particularly its emphasis on strengthening teacher training and building instructional capacity. Furthermore, schools in underserved and rural contexts could especially benefit from adopting this model as a sustainable, context-sensitive approach to leadership.

It is also recommended that future research and action-oriented studies explore the broader applicability of this model across regions and educational levels. Investigating its integration into existing policy structures and leadership development frameworks will contribute to both theoretical advancement and practical innovation in the field of educational leadership.

8. Output of the Study

The main output of this study is a proposed Micro-Coaching Model, a recursive model that strengthens the instructional leadership of Master Teachers while reflecting their evolving professional identities. Emerging from the thematic analysis, the model illustrates how Master Teachers balance teaching and leadership roles, adapt to shifting expectations, and influence colleagues, learners, and school culture. Presented in Figure 2. School-Based Micro-Coaching Model for Master Teachers, highlights the cyclical process of brief, targeted, and supportive interactions that foster reflection, growth, and collaboration. To ensure practical application, the model is operationalized into a School-Based Micro-Coaching Guide Manual (Appendix I) with step-by-step strategies, and a Micro-Coaching Log Sheet (Appendix II) for documenting sessions and monitoring progress.

School-Based Micro-coaching Model for Master Teachers

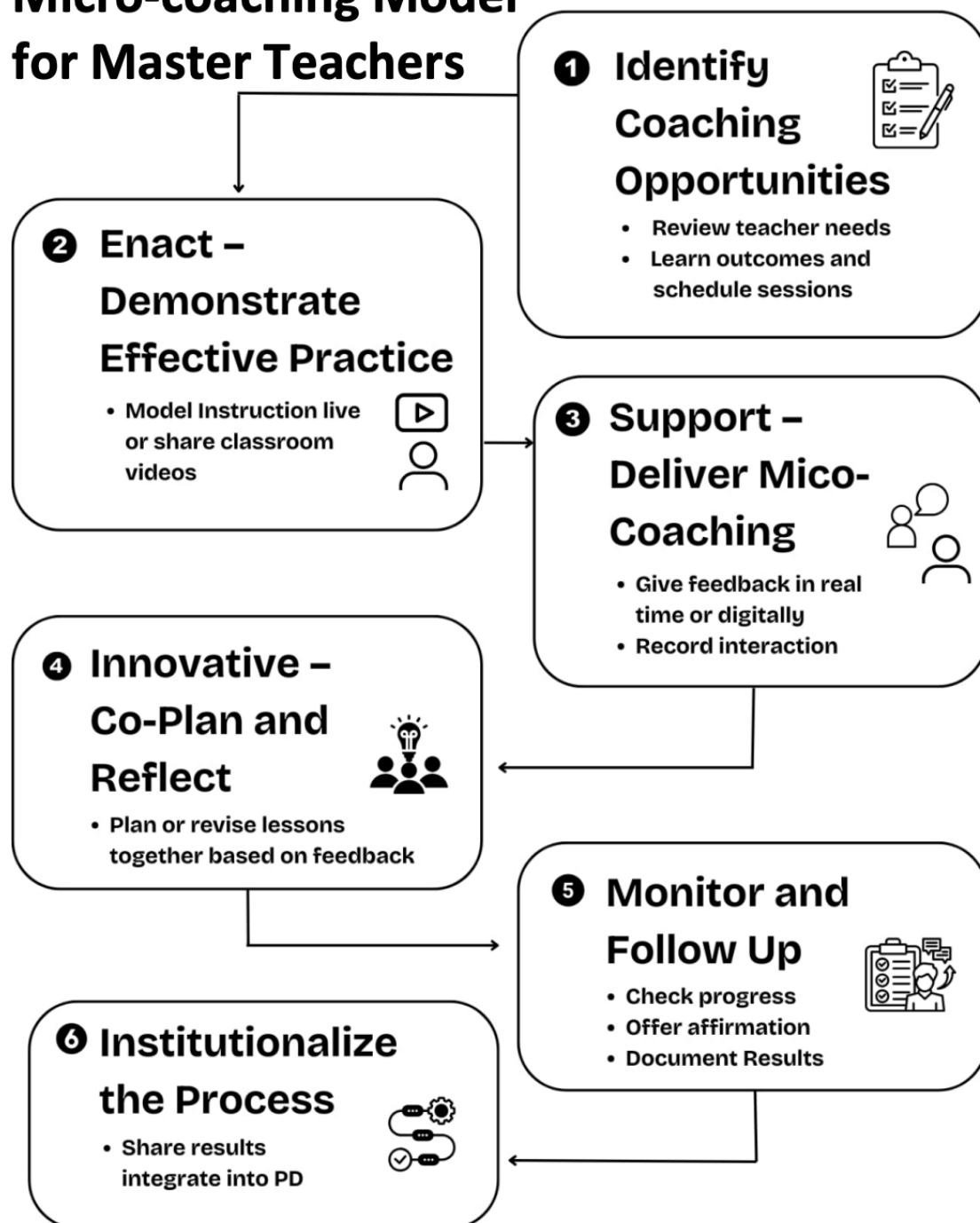


Figure 2. School-Based Micro-Coaching Model for Master Teachers

9. Limitations

While this study offers deep insights into Master Teachers' instructional leadership and professional identity formation, it is contextually bound to one school division, which may limit the transferability of findings to other educational levels or settings such as secondary schools or multigrade contexts. The use of self-reported narratives and observations, though triangulated, may still carry subjective bias. Additionally, the AI-assisted coding and analysis, while increasing efficiency, introduced a potential risk of clustering that might marginalize outlier perspectives. This was mitigated through manual re-examination and peer debriefing, but the possibility remains. Finally, as a phenomenological inquiry, the study prioritizes depth over breadth, meaning that its recursive model and proposed micro-coaching model should be considered exploratory and in need of further validation across diverse contexts.

Declarations

Author Contributions. This is a single author manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest. The author declares no conflict of interest.

Funding. This research received no external funding.

Ethical Approval. Before data collection, the researcher secured approval and obtained informed consent from each teacher, clearly explaining voluntary participation, withdrawal rights, and guaranteed anonymity. Transcripts were immediately anonymized—personal names replaced with codes (MT-01 through MT-12)—and AI interactions (prompts, outputs, and researcher edits) were fully logged to create a transparent audit trail. Emerging themes were distilled into a plain-language summary and shared with participants; ten contributors suggested wording refinements that were incorporated without shifting the thematic structure. Finally, a peer-debriefing session with an external qualitative scholar provided an additional safeguard against premature closure or undue reliance on machine-generated analyses.

Use of AI. A hybrid human–AI assisted workflow was employed in the analysis, where AI tools functioned as secondary readers to support coding and theme organization. These tools enhanced efficiency by highlighting potential meaning units, but all interpretive decisions—theme development, refinement, and integration of perspectives—were made by the researcher. In this way, AI served only as a technical aid, while human judgment, reflexivity, and phenomenological reduction guided the analysis.

Data Availability Statement. No new data were generated or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

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Appendix I.

School-Based Micro-Coaching Guide Manual for Master Teachers – A Step-by-Step Companion to Embed Reflective, Collaborative Coaching in Daily Practice

I. Proposed Toolkit

This toolkit provides Master Teachers (MTs) with a low-cost, scalable, and context-responsive approach to teacher mentoring. It operationalizes micro-coaching as a short, relational, and embedded leadership practice, aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and SDG 4, Target 4.c on teacher capacity development.

II. The Micro-Coaching Guide

Micro-Coaching Guide follows a six-step cycle that is flexible and adaptable to daily school realities.

1. Identify Coaching Opportunities

- Observe classrooms, review lesson plans, or listen to teachers' concerns.
- Focus on immediate, high-leverage areas (e.g., questioning technique, student engagement, lesson pacing).

2. Enact (Demonstrate Effective Practice)

- Model the strategy in a classroom.
- Invite the mentee to observe while you demonstrate OR co-teach together.

3. Support (Deliver Micro-Coaching)

- Conduct short post-con immediately after class.
- Provide one focused piece of feedback, framed constructively.

Example script: *"I noticed students were more engaged when you asked follow-up questions. What if next time, you try extending wait time to let them think more deeply."*

4. Reflect Together

- Encourage mentees to self-assess first: *What do you think was the best part of your lesson? If you had the chance, which part would you like to adjust or improve, and why?*
- Document reflections using a coaching log or journal prompts.

5. Follow-Up and Innovate

- Schedule a quick check-in within the week.
- Encourage mentees to adapt or innovate on the strategy (e.g., using local resources, student-led demos).

6. Institutionalize the Process

- Share success stories in LAC sessions or school meetings.
- Gradually build a culture of shared coaching and professional learning.

Appendix II.

Micro-Coaching Log Sheet

Micro-Coaching Log Sheet

Date	Teacher (Mentee)	Grade/Subject	Focus Area (Skill/Compete ncy)	Strategy Modeled / Demonstrated	Mentee’s Reflection (what did you realize after your lesson?)	Feedback from Master Teacher	Action Plan (Next Step)	Follow-Up Date

Appendix III.

Sample Micro-Coaching Log Sheet

Sample Micro-Coaching Log Sheet

Date	Teacher (Mentee)	Grade/Subject	Focus Area (Skill/Competency)	Strategy Modeled / Demonstrated	Mentee's Reflection (what did you realize after your lesson?)	Feedback from Master Teacher	Action Plan (Next Step)	Follow-Up Date
08/28/25	Mr. Cruz	Grade 6 – Math	Questioning Techniques	Extended wait-time questioning	I realized I often rush. I will try to slow down.	You did a wonderful job engaging students — they were really active! What do you think might happen if you gave them just a little more pause after a question? Do you think it will give them time to share deeper thoughts?	Add 5-second pause in every recitation. Observe engagement.	09/02/25
08/28/25	Ms. Dela Rosa	Grade 5 – English	Lesson Pacing & Time Management	Co-taught reading session	I need to plan shorter activities.	Your activities kept the students moving and interested! Maybe exploring smoother transitions could help keep that energy flowing even better. What approaches have you thought about for shifting between tasks?	Break reading into 3 shorter tasks. Time each.	09/05/25
08/29/25	Mr. Santos	Grade 4 – Science	Use of Local Materials	Demonstrated bamboo car prototype	I see the value of using community materials.	<i>That was a creative adaptation. I could see how students connected with it! How else might you bring in local examples to make learning even more meaningful for them?"</i>	Integrate 1 local material in next experiment.	09/06/25
08/30/25	Ms. Reyes	Grade 6 – Filipino	Student Engagement	Modeled group discussion strategy	I saw how students responded better when they discussed among themselves.	Your questions really got the class thinking. What if you gave students a chance to lead parts of the discussion themselves? They might surprise you with how much they have to say.	Incorporate peer-led discussions weekly.	09/07/25
08/28/25	Mr. Cruz	Grade 6 – Math	Questioning Techniques	Extended wait-time questioning	I realized I often rush. I will try to slow down.	You kept the students very engaged today! How do you feel about giving them a bit more time to think before answering? Do you think could open up even richer responses.	Add 5-second pause in every recitation. Observe engagement.	09/02/25