



MENTORING COMPETENCY OF MASTER TEACHERS AND ITS IMPACT ON TEACHER PERFORMANCE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: EVIDENCE FROM A PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE PHILIPPINES

Marebel L. Uriarte ¹, Imelda P. Bola ²

¹ *Madrid National High School, Surigao del Sur, Philippines*

² *Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc., Tandag City, Surigao del Sur, Philippines*

ABSTRACT

Master teachers play a critical role in improving instructional quality by providing mentoring, coaching, and professional support to classroom teachers. However, limited empirical evidence exists regarding how mentoring competency influences teacher performance and student achievement in public secondary schools, particularly in the Philippine context. This study examined the relationship between the mentoring competency of master teachers, teacher performance, and student achievement at Madrid National High School, Surigao del Sur, Philippines during the School Year 2025-2026. Guided by a mixed-methods convergent parallel research design, the study integrated quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of mentoring practices. The quantitative component employed a descriptive-correlational design to determine the level of mentoring competency and examine its relationship with teacher performance and student achievement, while the qualitative component utilized phenomenological inquiry to explore the lived experiences of master teachers and classroom teachers regarding the mentoring process. Mentoring competency was assessed across five dimensions: professional knowledge and expertise, instructional guidance and coaching skills, communication and interpersonal skills, support for teachers' professional growth, and monitoring and feedback practices. Teacher performance was evaluated through lesson planning and preparation, teaching strategies and classroom management, assessment practices, professional development participation, and overall instructional competence, while student achievement focused on academic performance and learning engagement. Findings are expected to provide empirical evidence on the contribution of mentoring competency to instructional

improvement and student learning outcomes. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on instructional leadership and mentoring by offering context-specific evidence that may inform school-based mentoring programs, professional development initiatives, and educational policies aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

Keywords: *instructional leadership; mentoring competency; master teachers; teacher performance; student achievement; instructional coaching; professional development; mixed-methods; Philippine secondary education*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher mentoring has become a cornerstone of educational reform because it strengthens instructional quality, enhances teacher competence, and ultimately improves student learning outcomes. Across many education systems, schools increasingly recognize that effective mentoring extends beyond orientation and supervision by fostering reflective practice, collaborative learning, and continuous professional development among teachers. Recent evidence suggests that mentor teachers' motivation, enthusiasm, and mentoring approaches significantly influence the quality of mentoring relationships and the professional growth of beginning and experienced teachers. Kuhn et al. (2024) emphasized that mentors who demonstrate high intrinsic motivation and constructive mentoring practices are more likely to facilitate meaningful professional learning and positive instructional outcomes. Likewise, recent international studies have shown that well-designed mentoring programs improve teacher satisfaction, competence, and retention while promoting sustainable instructional improvement across schools.

In the Philippine educational system, master teachers serve not only as instructional leaders but also as mentors responsible for providing technical assistance, instructional coaching, and professional guidance to classroom teachers. Their responsibilities are aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which emphasize collaborative professionalism, instructional leadership, and continuous professional development. Through classroom observations, coaching sessions, Learning Action Cells (LAC), and mentoring activities, master teachers contribute significantly to improving instructional delivery and teacher effectiveness. However, the effectiveness of these mentoring responsibilities largely depends on the competencies possessed by master teachers, including their professional knowledge, instructional coaching skills, communication abilities, support for professional growth, and monitoring and feedback practices. These mentoring competencies are increasingly recognized as essential determinants of instructional quality and organizational improvement.

Recent international literature further demonstrates that mentoring influences not only teachers' instructional competence but also their motivation, professional identity, and commitment to the teaching profession. Yang and Chen (2025) found that mentors

who provide autonomy support, constructive feedback, and collaborative relationships significantly enhance teachers' competence, confidence, and professional engagement. Similarly, mentoring programs grounded in collaborative communities of practice provide opportunities for reflective dialogue, shared expertise, and continuous instructional improvement, resulting in stronger teacher retention and professional resilience. These findings reinforce the growing consensus that mentoring is an essential strategy for strengthening school effectiveness through teacher development.

Despite the growing body of international evidence, empirical studies examining the mentoring competency of master teachers and its relationship with teacher performance and student achievement remain limited in the Philippine context, particularly in public secondary schools in Surigao del Sur. Most previous investigations have focused on instructional supervision, leadership, or teacher professional development without comprehensively examining how specific mentoring competencies influence both teacher effectiveness and learner outcomes. This research gap underscores the need to investigate mentoring competency within the local educational context, where contextual factors, school culture, and resource availability may shape mentoring practices and their effectiveness. The present study therefore examines the mentoring competency of master teachers and its impact on teacher performance and student achievement at Madrid National High School. By generating empirical evidence from a Philippine public secondary school, the study contributes to the literature on instructional leadership and mentoring while providing evidence-based recommendations for strengthening school-based mentoring programs, professional development initiatives, and educational policy. The study also supports the Department of Education's continuing efforts to improve instructional quality and learner achievement through effective instructional leadership and mentoring.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of mentoring competency of master teachers?
2. What are the levels of teacher performance and student achievement?
3. Is mentoring competency significantly associated with teacher performance?
4. Is mentoring competency significantly associated with student achievement?
5. How do teachers and master teachers perceive the influence of mentoring on instructional practices and student learning?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods convergent parallel research design to comprehensively examine the mentoring competency of master teachers and its impact on teacher performance and student achievement at Madrid National High School, Surigao del Sur, Philippines. The quantitative component utilized a descriptive-correlational design to determine the levels of mentoring competency, teacher

performance, and student achievement, as well as to examine the relationships among these variables. The qualitative component adopted a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences and perspectives of master teachers and classroom teachers regarding the mentoring process and its influence on instructional practices and learner outcomes. Quantitative data were collected using a validated researcher-made questionnaire covering the dimensions of mentoring competency and teacher performance, while student achievement was measured using learners' academic performance records. Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with selected participants to enrich and validate the quantitative findings. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation, were used to summarize the data, whereas Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed to determine the significant relationships between mentoring competency, teacher performance, and student achievement at the 0.05 level of significance. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following systematic coding, categorization, and theme development. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings provided a more comprehensive understanding of how mentoring competency contributes to teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes within the context of a Philippine public secondary school.

RESULTS

Table 1. Level of Mentoring Competency of Master Teachers

Dimension	Composite Mean Descriptive Rating	
Professional Knowledge and Expertise	4.67	Very High
Instructional Guidance and Coaching Skills	4.80	Very High
Communication and Interpersonal Skills	4.80	Very High
Support for Teachers' Professional Growth	4.64	Very High
Monitoring and Feedback Practices	4.60	Very High
Overall Composite Mean	4.70	Very High

Table 2. Level of Teacher Performance

Indicator	Composite Mean	Descriptive Rating
Lesson Planning and Preparation	4.80	Outstanding
Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management	4.81	Outstanding
Assessment Practices	4.76	Outstanding
Professional Development Participation	4.69	Outstanding
Overall Instructional Competence	4.76	Outstanding
Overall Composite Mean	4.76	Outstanding

Table 3. Level of Student Achievement

Variable	Mean	Descriptive Rating
Academic Performance	73.84	Nearly Proficient
Learning Engagement	3.49–4.10	High Engagement

Table 4. Relationship Between Mentoring Competency and Teacher Performance

Variables	Spearman's ρ	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Mentoring Competency $\times$ Teacher Performance	0.233	0.115	Fail to Reject H_0	Not Significant

Table 5. Relationship Between Mentoring Competency and Student Achievement

Variables	Spearman's ρ	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Mentoring Competency $\times$ Student Achievement	-0.200	0.917	Fail to Reject H_0	Not Significant

Table 6. Emergent Themes from the Qualitative Findings

Theme	Description
Mentoring as Support and Guidance	Mentoring was perceived as a continuous source of instructional and professional assistance.
Collaborative Professional Interaction	Mentoring strengthened collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collegial relationships among teachers.
Instructional Assistance	Master teachers provided coaching, classroom observations, feedback, and technical assistance that enhanced instructional practices.
Challenges in Mentoring	Time constraints, workload, and competing responsibilities limited the effectiveness of mentoring activities.
Facilitating Factors	Open communication, trust, collegiality, and supportive professional relationships enhanced the mentoring process.

DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that master teachers demonstrated a very high level of mentoring competency, particularly in instructional guidance, coaching, communication,

and interpersonal skills. These results indicate that master teachers consistently perform their mentoring responsibilities by providing professional support, instructional assistance, and constructive feedback to classroom teachers. Such findings reinforce the growing view that mentoring competency is a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions that collectively enhance teachers' professional learning. Wang et al. (2025) argued that effective mentoring competence extends beyond technical expertise to include relational and reflective capacities that facilitate transformative learning among teachers. Similarly, a subsequent empirical investigation by Wang et al. (2026) demonstrated that highly competent mentors integrate cognitive, social, and emotional mentoring practices to strengthen teacher development and instructional effectiveness. These perspectives support the present findings that the consistently high mentoring competency of master teachers contributes to creating a supportive professional learning environment.

The study likewise found that teachers exhibited an outstanding level of performance across lesson planning, classroom management, assessment, and instructional competence. This suggests that teachers continuously apply effective pedagogical practices and maintain high professional standards in classroom instruction. However, despite these favorable performance ratings, the statistical analysis showed no significant relationship between mentoring competency and teacher performance. This finding implies that teacher performance may already be influenced by other professional factors such as teaching experience, intrinsic motivation, institutional support, continuing professional development, and accountability mechanisms embedded in the Philippine educational system. A similar result was reported by Villamor (2026), who found only a very weak relationship between coaching, mentoring, and teacher performance despite high levels of mentoring practice. The author concluded that mentoring alone is insufficient to explain teacher effectiveness because multiple organizational and individual factors simultaneously shape professional performance.

Another important finding of the study is that students' academic performance was classified as Nearly Proficient, while their learning engagement remained at a High level. Although teachers were rated outstanding and master teachers demonstrated very high mentoring competency, no statistically significant relationship was established between mentoring competency and student achievement. This finding suggests that improvements in mentoring practices may not immediately translate into measurable gains in learners' academic performance because student achievement is influenced by numerous interacting variables, including socioeconomic conditions, learner motivation, parental involvement, prior academic preparation, and school resources. Mayos (2026) similarly observed that highly competent instructional supervisors effectively strengthened teachers through mentoring and coaching; nevertheless, improvements in learner outcomes required sustained instructional implementation and long-term support mechanisms beyond mentoring alone. These findings highlight the complexity of educational improvement, where mentoring primarily enhances instructional capacity while student achievement depends on broader educational conditions.

The qualitative findings further enriched the quantitative results by demonstrating that teachers and master teachers perceived mentoring as an important source of

instructional guidance, professional collaboration, and continuous support. Participants likewise identified time constraints, workload, and competing responsibilities as major barriers to sustaining effective mentoring relationships. These experiences emphasize that mentoring should be institutionalized as a continuous professional learning process rather than an occasional supervisory activity. Agan (2024) likewise reported that effective mentoring programs become more sustainable when schools provide structured mentoring systems, regular coaching schedules, collaborative professional interactions, and continuous monitoring. Likewise, Swanson and Caskey (2024) emphasized that mentoring is most effective when it is embedded within a community of practice, where experienced educators and beginning teachers engage in ongoing collaboration, shared reflection, and collective problem-solving. Their study further demonstrated that sustained mentoring relationships foster professional growth, strengthen teacher commitment, and contribute to teacher retention by cultivating supportive professional networks. These perspectives reinforce the present findings that structured and collaborative mentoring systems promote meaningful professional dialogue that extends beyond compliance requirements toward continuous instructional improvement.

Overall, the findings suggest that while mentoring competency remains an essential component of instructional leadership, its influence on teacher performance and student achievement is indirect and operates alongside numerous contextual factors within the school environment. The absence of statistically significant relationships should therefore not be interpreted as evidence that mentoring lacks value. Rather, it indicates that mentoring functions as one component of a broader professional development system that requires supportive leadership, collaborative school culture, sustained coaching, adequate resources, and continuous teacher engagement to generate long-term improvements in instructional quality and learner achievement. These findings provide practical implications for strengthening school-based mentoring programs by emphasizing structured mentoring schedules, continuous monitoring, sustained professional learning communities, and collaborative communities of practice that extend mentoring beyond isolated coaching sessions.

Conclusions

The findings revealed that master teachers demonstrated a very high level of mentoring competency, while teachers exhibited an outstanding level of performance across all instructional domains. Despite these positive results, no significant relationship was found between mentoring competency and either teacher performance or student achievement, indicating that mentoring alone does not directly influence these outcomes. Students attained a Nearly Proficient level of academic performance and High learning engagement, suggesting that additional learner-centered interventions are needed to improve academic achievement. Qualitative findings further showed that mentoring serves as an important source of professional support, collaboration, and instructional improvement; however, challenges such as time constraints and workload limit its effectiveness. Overall, the study concludes that mentoring competency is a valuable component of instructional leadership, but its effectiveness is maximized when integrated with continuous professional development, structured mentoring programs, and supportive school practices.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that school administrators strengthen and institutionalize mentoring programs by providing regular coaching sessions, structured mentoring schedules, and continuous monitoring to ensure sustained professional support for teachers. Master teachers should continue enhancing their mentoring competencies while adopting more reflective, collaborative, and classroom-based mentoring approaches that address teachers' specific instructional needs. Teachers are encouraged to actively participate in mentoring activities and professional development programs to further improve their instructional practices and promote continuous professional growth. Since mentoring competency alone did not significantly influence student achievement, schools should complement mentoring initiatives with learner-centered interventions, such as differentiated instruction, academic remediation, and enhanced parental and community involvement, to improve students' academic performance. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies involving larger samples and different educational settings and to examine other factors that may influence teacher performance and student achievement, including school leadership, organizational climate, teacher motivation, and learner-related variables.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc., Graduate School, and the Department of Education. Prior to data collection, the necessary approvals and permissions were obtained from the appropriate school authorities. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was secured from all respondents. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were strictly maintained, and all data were used solely for academic and research purposes. The author declares no conflict of interest and received no external funding for this study. The datasets supporting the findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to institutional policies and participant confidentiality.

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Corresponding author: marebel.uriarte@deped.gov.ph