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Master Teachers' Academic Leadership and Teachers' Performance

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Abstract:

This study aimed to assess the academic leadership of Master Teachers in relation to teachers' performance in public schools within a medium-sized division in Eastern Visayas during the School Year 2023–2024. Quantitative data were gathered from 329 public school teachers using a validated researcher-made questionnaire. The study focused on academic leadership skills in pedagogical strategies, curriculum implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Profile variables included age, sex, highest educational attainment, and length of service. Most respondents were younger, female, less tenured, and without postgraduate degrees. Findings revealed that the academic leadership of Master Teachers were at a high level across all profile groupings. Teachers' performance for the school year was rated very satisfactory. No significant differences were found in academic leadership skills when grouped by the profile variables. Teachers' performance showed significant differences when grouped by age, length of service, and educational attainment but not by sex. Moreover, there was no significant relationship between the Master Teachers' academic leadership and teachers' performance. These findings suggest that while Master Teachers demonstrate strong leadership competencies, these do not directly correlate with variations in teachers' performance based on the variables studied.

Keywords: Academic Leadership, Master Teachers, Teachers' Performance, Pedagogical Strategies, Curriculum Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

The implementation of Republic Act 4670, known as the "Magna Carta for Public School Teachers," and Executive Order No. 500, s. 1978, laid the foundation for career advancement among public school teachers in the Philippines. These policies recognize the importance of the Master Teacher (MT) position as a means to enhance classroom instruction and support national educational goals. Central to this role is the expectation that Master Teachers serve not just as experienced educators, but also as academic leaders who help raise the quality of teaching and learning in their schools.

Academic leadership, as defined by De Lima (2018), refers to the ability of educators to collaborate with colleagues in fostering professional growth. Master Teachers are expected to know the strengths and areas for improvement of the teachers they mentor. They are tasked with designing and implementing professional development programs tailored to these needs. Their leadership is pivotal in ensuring that teaching practices are continuously improved and aligned with curriculum goals.

Classroom observations, coaching, and mentoring are among the specific duties Master Teachers perform to support instructional quality. These tasks are meant to directly impact teacher performance by refining instructional strategies and ensuring effective teaching practices. However, in actual school settings, some Master Teachers struggle to fulfill these responsibilities effectively due to inadequate training or limited skills in leadership and mentoring.

The researcher, being a Master Teacher, has personally observed these challenges. Some colleagues are unable to conduct Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions or facilitate mentoring discussions. These gaps raise concerns about the competence of some MTs in delivering their leadership role. This study, therefore, was conducted to assess the academic leadership skills of Master Teachers and examine their relationship with teacher performance. Findings aim to inform strategies for improving the instructional leadership capacity of Master Teachers in public schools.

Current State of Knowledge

Ibrahim's (2020) study explored the roles and functions of English language Master Teachers in secondary schools in Malaysia. The Ministry of Education selected these master instructors based on their ICT literacy, professional credentials, and teaching experience. The study questioned what sets Master Teachers apart from regular instructors and how these distinctions are reflected in classroom discourse. Employing a combination of

ethnographic and discourse analysis approaches, three Master Teachers were observed in and out of classrooms, supported by interviews with students, school officials, and the teachers themselves.

Findings revealed that although all three Master Teachers were considered experts, their instructional practices varied significantly. These variations stemmed from their individual beliefs about learning and their personalized classroom methodologies. This suggests that being labeled a Master Teacher does not imply a uniform approach to teaching. Each educator's professional identity and pedagogical philosophy significantly influenced how they enacted their leadership roles.

Supporting this, Aziz (2017) emphasized that the role of Master Teachers goes beyond classroom teaching. Their responsibilities extend to curriculum development, providing professional support, mentoring, and organizing training sessions. These leadership functions highlight how Master Teachers serve as critical instructional leaders, shaping the practices and development of other educators in their schools.

Clariño (2020) examined the levels of organizational support provided to Master Teachers in Toledo City Division. While the study found Master Teachers to be highly competent, it also revealed challenges in mentoring and instructional support due to workload and limited resources. These limitations, if not addressed, could hinder their effectiveness and ability to enhance teacher performance and student learning environments.

Mendoza's (2022) research in Laguna assessed Master Teachers' leadership practices and their influence on Senior High School teachers' instructional competence. The results indicated a significant relationship between strong instructional leadership by Master Teachers and high levels of teacher competence. However, it also noted that existing performance ratings did not necessarily reflect this competence, pointing to the need for more relevant and supportive evaluation tools.

Guanzon (2023) evaluated Master Teachers' professionalism and technical support in relation to teacher performance. Assessments from both Master Teachers and school heads showed consistently high ratings for professionalism and technical support. However, differences in perception emerged based on teacher demographics, such as age and length of service. Despite these differences, the study concluded that teacher performance remained very good across the board, reinforcing the value of consistent support and professionalism from Master Teachers.

In contrast, Catolos' (2017) study focused on non-education graduates teaching in public secondary schools. While not centered on Master Teachers, it offered relevant insights into performance indicators. The study found that teaching performance was more strongly associated with age, experience, and degree specialization than with educational attainment alone. This implies that leadership and mentoring from Master Teachers could be vital in supporting such teachers, helping them navigate the challenges of instructional roles without a formal education background.

Lastly, Roberto and Madrigal (2019) examined teaching competence using the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Their study found a significant correlation between teaching standards competence and performance, though no significant differences were found across demographic variables. These findings align with previous studies showing that competence is a strong predictor of performance, reinforcing the importance of effective instructional leadership—especially from Master Teachers—to drive educational quality and teacher development.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is anchored on two foundational theories that support the link between the academic leadership of master teachers and teachers' performance: Robert J. House's Path-Goal Theory of Leadership (1974) and Richard Schechner's Theory of Performance (1985).

House's Path-Goal Theory emphasizes the leader's responsibility in guiding subordinates by setting clear goals, removing obstacles, and offering support. In the context of education, master teachers are expected to lead by identifying effective teaching strategies, aligning classroom practices with school goals, and providing mentorship to fellow teachers. By doing so, they enhance motivation, satisfaction, and ultimately, performance among teachers.

Schechner's Theory of Performance focuses on how individuals improve through preparation, execution, and reflection. Master teachers, as instructional leaders, must exemplify high standards of teaching and continuously refine their practices. Their leadership not only sets the tone for instructional excellence but also influences how their colleagues approach their own teaching practices.

Together, these theories provide a strong conceptual basis for understanding how the academic leadership of master teachers contributes to improved teacher performance. By motivating, guiding, and modeling effective instructional practices, master teachers play a critical role in the professional development and success of their peers within the educational setting.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the level of academic leadership of master teachers in relation to the performance of teachers in public schools within a medium-sized division in Eastern Visayas during the School Year 2023–2024. Specifically, it sought to answer several key questions. First, it examined the profile of the respondents based on age, sex, highest educational attainment, and length of service. Second, it assessed the level of master teachers' academic leadership skills in the areas of pedagogical strategies, curriculum implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Third, it measured the level of teachers' performance for the school year when grouped according to the aforementioned profile variables.

Furthermore, the study investigated whether there were significant differences in the level of master teachers' academic leadership skills when compared across different respondent profiles. It also explored whether there were significant differences in teachers' performance when grouped according to the same variables. Lastly, the study sought to determine if a significant relationship existed between the level of master teachers' academic leadership skills and the performance of teachers. Through this inquiry, the study aimed to contribute valuable insights into how master teachers' leadership impacts teacher effectiveness and educational outcomes.

Research Methodology:

This section presents the research design, data gathering procedure, other instrumentations, and statistical tools. It also discusses the parameters, especially the statistical tools, the respondents, and the study's locality.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design to assess the academic leadership and management skills of Master Teachers in relation to teachers' performance in a medium-sized division in Eastern Visayas, Philippines, for the School Year 2023–2024. Descriptive research, as defined by Calmorin (2016), focuses on the current situation and seeks to uncover new truths, whether in the form of knowledge, generalizations, or insights. This design was deemed appropriate as it allowed the researcher to observe and describe existing conditions, relationships, opinions, and trends without manipulating the variables involved.

Study Respondents

The study involved 329 public school teachers selected from a total population of 2,265 using stratified random sampling and the Cochran formula to determine the sample size. This sampling method, which divides the population into subgroups or strata based on shared characteristics, ensures proportional representation and enhances the reliability and validity of the research findings (Parsons, 2017). This method also allows for flexibility and ensures that respondents are knowledgeable and experienced in the phenomenon being studied.

Instrument

The study utilized a self-made questionnaire to assess the academic leadership of Master Teachers, based on the Induction Program for Beginning Teachers (IPBT) by the NEAP and DepEd Region VIII's Regional Order No. 29, s. 2021 on the Learning Achievement via Mentoring Program (LAMP). The instrument had two parts: Part 1 collected demographic data (age, sex, highest educational attainment, and length of service), while Part 2 focused on academic leadership skills with 21 items—seven each for Pedagogical Strategies, Curriculum Implementation, and Monitoring and Evaluation—rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (Always) to 1 (Almost Never).

Data Gathering and Procedure

After ensuring the validity and reliability of the instrument, the researcher secured permission from the Schools Division Superintendent and school heads to conduct the study. Hard copies of the approved questionnaire were distributed to the respondents within three days of obtaining the necessary permits, scheduled during lunch breaks (12 noon to 1 pm) to avoid disrupting school activities. After three days, the completed questionnaires were collected for encoding and statistical analysis by a statistician, allowing for computer processing and tabular presentation. Teachers' performance data were based on the standardized IPCRF ratings from SY 2022–2023.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objectives 1 to 3 utilized a descriptive-analytical approach: frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze the respondents' profiles, the mean was applied to assess the level of master teachers' academic leadership skills across the three areas, and to determine the level of teachers' performance. Objectives 4 and 5 employed a comparative-analytical approach using the Mann-Whitney U test to identify significant differences in the academic leadership skills of master teachers and in teachers' performance when grouped according to their profile variables. Lastly, Objective 6 used Spearman's rho to examine the relationship between master teachers' academic leadership skills and teachers' performance.

Ethical Consideration

Participation in the study was voluntary, with teachers joining based on their own free will. They were fully informed in advance about the study's purpose and procedures. The researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity of responses, safeguarding participants from any harm. After analysis, raw data was properly destroyed, and all information was used solely for this study.

Results and Discussion:

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered to carry out the pre-determined objectives of this study.

Profile of Respondents

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	Younger (below 39 years old)	187	56.80
	Older (39 years old and above)	142	43.20
Sex	Male	90	27.40
	Female	239	72.60
Length of Service	Shorter (below 10 years)	189	57.40
	Longer (10 years and above)	140	42.60
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower (Bachelor's degree)	241	73.30
	Higher (Master's/Doctorate degrees)	88	26.70
	Total	**329**	**100.0**

Table 1 presents a detailed profile of the teacher-respondents, breaking down their characteristics by age, sex, length of service, and highest educational attainment. Most were aged below 35 years (60.90%) and female (68.80%). This points toward an age-advancing and predominantly female teaching population. With regard to civil status, 59.40% were married, while 40.60% were single. On the question of teaching experience, 57.80% had less than 10 years in service, meaning that this might be a fairly young workforce in terms of professional experience. Such characteristics suggest that the respondents are made more or less up of young and early career teachers; hence in their perceptions of academic leadership and professional performance, their adaptability, motivation, and responsiveness to mentoring and leadership schemes may be affected.

Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership

Table 2
Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership Skills in the Area of Pedagogical Strategies

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The Master Teacher…		
1. promotes contextualization and indigenization of instructional materials.	4.17	High Level
2. conducts classroom observation and provides feedback on time.	4.33	High Level
3. helps newly hired teachers in effectively delivering lesson content.	4.23	High Level
4. leads the creation of the school's instructional plan.	4.18	High Level
5. addresses issues on proper classroom management.	4.09	High Level
6. shares best teaching practices with all teachers.	4.21	High Level
7. supports teachers in creating a conducive learning environment.	3.84	High Level
Overall Mean	4.15	High Level

Table 2 reveals the academic leadership skills of master teachers in the area of pedagogical strategies with a high level and a mean score of 4.15.

The level of MT academic leadership skills in terms of pedagogical strategies was highest in Item No. 2, which states, "The MT conducts classroom observation and provides feedback on time," with a means score of 4.33, interpreted as "high level." While Item No. 3, which states that "MT supports teachers in creating a conducive learning environment," got the lowest mean score of 3.84, interpreted as "high level."

Though still interpreted as a "high level," the lowest mean score suggests room for improvement in how MTs support teachers in creating a conducive learning environment. This may indicate that some teachers require more guidance or resources to foster a supportive and effective learning atmosphere. Also, some MTs believe that creating a conducive learning space for students is a personal approach and is up to the discretion of the teachers.

These findings support the study of Clariño (2020), which focused on the levels of organizational support received by Master Teachers. This study revealed that while they generally perceived high levels of support, there were notable gaps in instructional supervision and professional development. The findings indicated that MTs often felt

overwhelmed by their responsibilities, which limited their capacity to provide adequate support to other teachers.

Table 3
Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership Skills in the Area of Curriculum Implementation

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The Master Teacher…		
1. works with teachers in promoting the implementation of the curriculum.	4.21	High Level
2. creates activities for teachers to enhance the delivery of curriculum.	4.17	High Level
3. conducts FGD to discuss on how to achieve curriculum goals.	4.29	High Level
4. takes the lead in identifying major areas of the curriculum that needs improvement.	4.01	High Level
5. consults with the school head and the teachers to get their consensus on how to ensure that the curriculum guide is being followed.	4.05	High Level
6. trains teachers to interpret, implement and follow the curriculum.	3.71	High Level
7. sets curriculum goals to have a baseline target.	4.19	High Level
Overall Mean	**4.09**	**High Level**

Table 3 shows that MTs have higher skills in helping teachers' assistance in terms of curriculum implementation, with a mean score of 4.09, interpreted as "high level."

Item No. 3, which states that "MT conducts FGD to discuss how to achieve curriculum goals," with a mean score of 4.29, interpreted as 'high level," got the highest mean; meanwhile, Item No. 6 which states that "MT trains teachers on how to interpret, implement and follow the curriculum" got the lowest mean score of 3.71, interpreted as "high level."

The lowest mean score indicated the need for MTs to spend a little more time providing newly hired teachers with guidance on how to properly implement and follow the curriculum. With the changing academic landscape due to factors like the rise of IT and the pandemic in 2020, teachers faced many challenges in how to ensure that the present curriculum is contextualized to answer the needs of the times.

This result is aligned with the research of Hadisaputra (2023) on MTs role in curriculum development and implementation in Indonesia. The findings showed that MTs are beset with challenges in the implementation of curriculum management, which includes understanding complex curricula, adapting to the individual needs and interests of students, comprehensive assessment, continuing professional development, and adequate resources. The concluding part of the study indicated that the role of MTs in curriculum management implementation faces serious challenges. Additionally, best practices in curriculum management implementation encompass numerous aspects that need to be addressed.

Table 4
Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership Skills in the Area of Monitoring and Evaluation

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The Master Teacher…		
1. holds meetings to discuss classroom issues regularly.	4.31	High Level
2. evaluates the performance of teachers and provides feedback as needed.	4.24	High Level
3. discusses results of IPCRF with teachers	4.47	High Level
4. helps in the preparation of the school's SIP.	3.95	High Level
5. monitors critical school issues and discuss them with the school head and teachers.	4.18	High Level
6. checks compliance metrics for teachers and monitor its submission regularly.	3.69	High Level
7. train other teachers to take part in planning for school development.	4.01	High Level
Overall Mean	**4.12**	**High Level**

Table 4 shows that MT's skills in Monitoring and Evaluation are at a high level, with a mean score of 4.12.

Item No. 2, which states that "MT discusses results of IPCRF with teachers," got the highest mean score of 4.47, interpreted as "high level'; whereas Item No. 6, which states that "MT checks compliance metrics for teachers and monitor its submission regularly" got the lowest mean scores of 3.69, interpreted as "high level."

This implies the need for more collaborative efforts between teachers and MTs to ensure that teachers comply with required reports and other deliverables like liquidations and student's report cards, among others. In cases where compliance of individual teachers is really low, there is a need for MTs to provide a list of deliverables with corresponding due dates to keep teachers abreast of the deadlines.

These results of the study confirm the research conducted by Laureano (2023). The study concluded that the success of any mentoring relationship is dependent on establishing trust and rapport. Previous research has identified supportive relationships as the most important aspect of mentoring programs, with deliberate skill

development having secondary importance. Some mentoring programs prioritize matching mentor pairs according to a similar philosophy, school level, and the type of challenges facing the school.

Level of Teachers' Performance

Table 5
Level of Teachers' Performance When Grouped According to Variables

Variables	Category	Mean	Interpretation
Age	Younger	4.26	Very Satisfactory
	Older	4.37	Very Satisfactory
Sex	Male	4.29	Very Satisfactory
	Female	4.31	Very Satisfactory
Length of Service	Shorter	4.26	Very Satisfactory
	Longer	4.37	Very Satisfactory
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	4.27	Very Satisfactory
	Higher	4.40	Very Satisfactory
Overall Mean		**4.31**	**Very Satisfactory**

Table 5 shows that the average IPCRF rating was only "very satisfactory" across all factors and categories. This indicates that everyone still has a great chance to improve and earn the "outstanding" designation. Furthermore, this implies that in order to help people realize their full potential, efforts should be concentrated on pinpointing areas that require improvement, offering tailored assistance, and strengthening professional development programs. The performance of average teachers may rapidly increase even more with the correct direction and assistance from MTs and school administration. Additionally, attaining "outstanding" status would improve individual performance as well as the success and efficacy of the business as a whole.

One of the few elements influencing school efficacy and learning outcomes in every educational system is teacher performance. According to Mohanty (2015), teacher performance is the most important factor in education. Perhaps the most important element of any educational system is its teachers. Teachers need to be viewed as contributing to the solution rather than the issue. Poor performance and corrupt practices in the public sector are largely caused by low status, low pay, and low morale. Teaching is a noble but difficult profession.

Comparative Analyses in the Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership Skills

Table 6
Differences in the Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership in the Area of Pedagogical Strategies When Grouped and Compared According to Variables

Variables	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U - test	Sig. Level	*p*-value	Interpretation
Age	Younger	187	168.72	12581.0	0.05	0.412	Not Significant
	Older	142	160.10				
Sex	Male	90	172.94	10040.5		0.349	Not Significant
	Female	239	162.01				
Length of Service	Shorter	189	171.96	11914.5		0.120	Not Significant
	Longer	140	155.60				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	241	164.56	10497.0		0.888	Not Significant
	Higher	88	166.22				

Table 6 summarizes the comparative analysis for the level of MTs' academic leadership skills in pedagogical strategies when respondents are grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

From across the four (4) variables, the p-value was greater than the 0.05 significant level, meaning there were no significant differences. Thus, the hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the level of MT's academic leadership skills in the area of pedagogical strategies when grouped and compared according to aforementioned variables" is hereby accepted.

The result above shows the uniformity of teachers' experiences when receiving assistance from MTs in various teaching strategies. The "no significant difference" indicates that regardless of their groupings, they all commonly agree that MT's skills in assisting them with pedagogical strategies are high.

These results corroborate the research of Mendoza (2022), which sought to ascertain the performance of senior high school teachers in the five city divisions of Laguna, Philippines, as well as the leadership practices and

instructional competency of master teachers. Similar to the current study, Mendoza discovered that when respondents were grouped based on profile variables, there was no discernible difference in the pedagogical strategies used. This finding supports the notion that instructional effectiveness and leadership are constant across demographic groups.

Table 7
Differences in the Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership in the Area of Curriculum Implementation When Grouped and Compared According to Variables

Variables	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U - test	Sig. Level	*p*-value	Interpretation
Age	Younger	187	164.41	13167.0	0.05	0.897	Not Significant
	Older	142	165.77				
Sex	Male	90	167.70	10512.0		0.750	Not Significant
	Female	239	163.98				
Length of Service	Shorter	189	163.02	12855.5		0.658	Not Significant
	Longer	140	167.68				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	241	163.21	10173.0		0.569	Not Significant
	Higher	88	169.90				

Table 7 shows that there is no significant difference in the level of MTs' academic leadership skills in terms of the area curriculum implementation. Across all variables, the p-values were all higher than the 0.05 significant level. Therefore, there is no significant difference. The hypothesis that states "there is no significant difference in the level of MTs' academic leadership skills in the area of curriculum implementation when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables" is hereby accepted.

This implies that almost all teachers have positively benefitted from the high-level skills of MTs in all their efforts to share curriculum implementation strategies. The respondents, regardless of their groupings, have the same opinion or level of appreciation for MT's skills in curriculum implementation.

These results support Wanjiku's (2018) study, which emphasized how important Master Teachers are to implementing curriculum management in education, especially in Indonesia. This is corroborated by the current study's finding that when respondents were grouped based on profile variables, there was no discernible difference in curriculum implementation. This suggests that systemic or structural problems, rather than demographic factors, may be the cause of curriculum leadership challenges.

Table 8
Differences in the Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership in the Area of Monitoring and Evaluation When Grouped and Compared According to Variables

Variables	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U - test	Sig. Level	*p*-value	Interpretation
Age	Younger	187	166.53	12991.0	0.05	0.735	Not Significant
	Older	142	162.99				
Sex	Male	90	168.59	10432.0		0.670	Not Significant
	Female	239	163.65				
Length of Service	Shorter	189	165.79	13080.5		0.859	Not Significant
	Longer	140	163.93				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	241	162.12	9910.5		0.358	Not Significant
	Higher	88	172.88				

Table 8 reveals the differences in the MTs' academic leadership levels in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Across all variables, the p-values were all greater than that 0.05 significant level, which means that there is indeed no significant difference in the level of this specific skill. Therefore, the hypothesis, which states that "there is no significant difference in the level of MTs' academic leadership skills in the area of monitoring and evaluation when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables," is hereby "accepted."

The result implies that all respondents share the same high belief that MTs can fully deliver or share their expertise with teachers on improving school actions involving monitoring and evaluation. That same level of positive experiences is validated by the "no significant difference," which means that the respondents have almost the same level of opinion. The role of MTs may include organizational, pedagogical, and educational responsibilities. Depending on the circumstances, school leaders are called upon to organize schedules, implement curriculum, conduct extracurricular activities, conduct testing, and conduct teacher evaluations. It can be assumed, that schools differ in how they implement individualized education planning and that those differences between schools are linked to the school's leadership.

These results are consistent with the research of McBrayer et al. (2018), which highlighted that leadership practice is an essential element of school improvement since the educational leader's choices and actions are closely related to the school's advancement. Similarly, when respondents were categorized based on profile variables, the current study did not find any significant differences in leadership and management skills, indicating that good leadership practices help schools improve regardless of demographic features.

Comparative Analysis in the Level of Teachers' Performance

Table 9
Differences in the Level of Teachers' Performance When Grouped and Compared According to Variables

Variables	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U - test	Sig. Level	*p*-value	Interpretation
Age	Younger	187	140.43	8681.5	0.05	0.000	Significant
	Older	142	197.36				
Sex	Male	90	156.05	9949.5		0.295	Not Significant
	Female	239	168.37				
Length of Service	Shorter	189	139.11	8337.0		0.000	Significant
	Longer	140	199.95				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	241	146.80	6217.0		0.000	Significant
	Higher	88	214.85				

Table 9 presents the differences in the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

Firstly, age showed a significant difference in performance. With a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 significance level, the hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to sex" is rejected. Younger teachers (mean rank = 140.43) were outperformed by older teachers (mean rank = 197.36), suggesting that older teachers, with their greater experience, tend to have higher performance levels. This could be attributed to accumulated experience, better classroom management skills, and more refined teaching strategies developed over the years. This result implies that age and experience play a vital role in teacher effectiveness, and schools should consider leveraging the expertise of older teachers in mentoring or leadership roles to improve performance across the teaching staff.

In contrast, sex did not show a significant difference in performance. The p-value of 0.295, which is greater than 0.05, indicates that male and female teachers performed similarly, with mean ranks of 156.05 for male teachers and 168.37 for female teachers. Therefore, the hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to sex" is accepted. This finding highlights that gender does not significantly influence performance, suggesting that both male and female teachers have equal potential to excel in their roles.

As for the length of service, it revealed a significant difference in performance, with a p-value of 0.000. Teachers with longer service (mean rank = 199.95) performed significantly better than those with shorter service (mean rank = 139.11). Therefore, the hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to length of service" is rejected. This suggests that experience in the classroom contributes to better performance, likely due to more developed teaching techniques, a deeper understanding of the curriculum, and a stronger rapport with students.

Lastly, the highest educational attainment was found to be significantly related to performance, with a p-value of 0.000. Teachers with higher educational attainment (mean rank = 214.85) performed better than those with lower educational attainment (mean rank = 146.80). Therefore, the hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to highest educational attainment," is rejected. This suggests that teachers with advanced degrees or specialized training tend to have higher performance levels, potentially due to their enhanced subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, or research capabilities.

The findings of this study align with those of Bungai and Perdana (2017), particularly regarding the influence of age on teachers' performance. Both studies highlight that older teachers tend to excel in various aspects of the learning process. This suggests that as in Bungai and Perdana's research, experience and maturity significantly contribute to enhanced lesson delivery, commitment, and overall teaching effectiveness. While younger teachers may successfully engage students' curiosity and energy, the current study reinforces the notion that older teachers demonstrate greater consistency and efficiency in lesson execution.

Furthermore, these results challenge the conclusions of Pranoto et al. (2021), who reported minimal significance of age and experience on teaching performance. The current study reveals a notable difference in teacher performance based on age and length of experience, showing that older and more experienced teachers generally outperform their younger and less experienced counterparts in key teaching areas. This contrast suggests that factors like age and experience play a more substantial role in shaping teaching effectiveness than previously acknowledged.

Additionally, the current study highlights the role of the highest educational attainment as an influential factor in teachers' work performance. Higher educational achievement not only equips teachers with deeper content knowledge but also enhances their ability to implement diverse and effective teaching strategies. This underscores the multifaceted nature of teacher performance, where age, experience, and educational qualifications collectively contribute to superior outcomes in the classroom.

Relational Analysis Between the Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership Skills and the Level of Teachers' Performance

Table 10
Significant Relationship between the Level of Master Teachers' Academic Leadership and the Level of Teachers' Performance

Variables	N	rho	*p*-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Academic Leadership	329	0.052	0.346	0.05	Not Significant
Teachers' Performance	329				

Table 10 shows no significant relationship between MT's leadership skills and teachers' performance, as the *p*-value is greater than the 0.05 significant level. Therefore, the hypothesis that states "there is no significant relationship between MT's academic leadership skills and teachers' performance" is hereby "accepted."

This implies that the teachers are able to independently perform regardless of the support they receive from master teachers. With or without pedagogical support, curriculum, and monitoring and evaluation support, the teachers are bound to perform because they are mandated to deliver quality education to learners. This is a plus factor for both the school community and the learners because of teachers' independence from MT support.

The present study reveals no significant relationship between school heads' leadership and teachers' performance, contrasting sharply with the findings of Atasoy and Tufan Yalçın (2023), who identified a significant positive relationship between effective school leadership and teacher professionalism. Atasoy and Tufan Yalçın emphasize that trust in administrators plays a crucial mediating role in enhancing teacher professionalism, suggesting that strong leadership and trust-building practices directly impact teachers' effectiveness. However, the current study challenges this notion, highlighting that other factors, such as professional development, experiences, etc, might have a more direct and substantial influence on teacher performance, independent of school leadership dynamics. This discrepancy underscores the need for further exploration into the varying contexts and conditions that might shape the relationship between school leadership and teacher performance.

Additionally, these results of the investigation negate the study by Roberto and Madrigal (2019), which aimed to assess the respondents' level of teaching standards competence using the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and their performance using the school's Teacher Performance Evaluation, respectively. The findings revealed that the level of teaching standards competence and performance of basic education teachers as assessed by the principals and teachers themselves were proficient and satisfactory, respectively. However, the overall findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between the level of teaching standards competence and performance.

Conclusion:

The study established a conclusion that Master Teachers exhibited great levels of academic leadership in the areas of pedagogical strategies, curriculum implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, due probably to their teaching experience and great interest in the entire school process. Their leadership attribute was consistently high through variables like age, sex, educational attainments, and years in service, which somehow implies experience and dedication. While the teachers' performance was still rated to be high on the bracket, it just fell

a notch below outstanding, affirming the essence of continued support and guidance. Differences in teacher performance on age, experience, and educational attainment accentuate the need for professional development, whereas sex might not be worth considering. MTs' leadership and teacher performance were not significantly correlated, which means that many teachers are personally motivated and committed to providing quality education-a goal they would pursue regardless of external support. These findings emphasize the need for continuous professional development for mentoring to enhance teaching effectiveness across taught career stages.

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