Experiences of Program Heads in Supervising Teachers: A Phenomenological Study

Elton John B. Embodo[1], Haydee D. Villanueva[2]

[1]EdD, Teacher, Pangabuan Integrated School, Department of Education
[2]PhD, Professor, College of Arts and Sciences, Misamis University

Abstract

The supervision of teachers is essential for ensuring effective teaching methods, ongoing professional growth, and student success. This study explored the experiences of program heads in supervising teachers. It was conducted in a local college in Tangub City, Misamis Occidental. The phenomenological design was used in the study. Eleven program heads served as the participants selected through the purposive sampling technique. The Interview Guide was used as the research instrument. Moustakas' transcendental phenomenology of data analysis was utilized to analyze the data gathered. Results revealed the following main themes: the critical role of supervision in advancing teacher development and educational excellence, mutual learning and growth, the role of program heads in teacher supervision, overcoming challenges in teacher supervision, and effective communication strategies. Supervision improves teaching and learning quality, which supports professional development. The complex nature of supervisory roles requires adaptive strategies and strong support networks. It is recommended for program heads and teachers to establish open communication to help address the challenges encountered during supervision.

Keywords: challenges, coping strategies, experiences, supervision, teachers

1. Introduction

Supervision is using expert knowledge and experience to monitor, appraise, and direct instruction improvement in schools (Amough & Odeh, 2018). One aspect of general supervision that a program head within a school expects is the supervision of instruction. Good supervision has been recognized worldwide as helping improve the educational process, and in this regard, supervision in schools is essential (Wahyu, 2020). Since quality education remains the top priority of the education process, teachers are deemed to have a crucial role in it. They are often seen as one of the most trusted sources to indicate the effectiveness of the education process in schools (Stronge, 2018).

Adequate supervision, especially for prime instruction providers, should be implemented to ensure the proper education quality by the school (Wakutile, 2019). Teachers should provide well-educated learners, and in a bid to achieve that, they actively take each opportunity for professional development to enhance their teaching techniques and advance the quality of education they provide (Schachter et al., 2019). They sometimes fail to achieve that because of an overwhelming workload to complete daily and low self-efficacy. Hence, the teachers must be closely supervised by their immediate heads to ensure effective management of daily workloads and adequate instruction quality to the learners. Teachers must be closely supervised by their immediate heads to ensure effective management of daily workloads and

that the quality of instruction provided to the learners meets quality standards (Owan & Agunwa, 2019). In USA, instructional supervisors have developed numerous experiences in instructional leadership and supervision. These include pressure and visibility within the rural community, developing relationships and rapport, resource and financial constraints, and the different roles they play (Wieczorek & Manard, 2018). To meet the specific needs of educational leaders, training in leadership, mentoring, and professional development, programs should be complemented, and they should be able to understand the expectations of public-school systems. In Canada, educational leaders have shared different experiences in teacher supervision and evaluation. Sound teacher supervision and evaluation constitute an essential part of a career-long practice continuum that helps develop the teacher while ensuring quality instruction. Contextualization with the policy that situates these practices within a more extensive understanding of overall instructional leadership is desirable (Brandon et al., 2018).

The teachers reported that program heads in South Africa had a variety of experiences in providing supervision and curriculum support. These experiences included a lack of operating resources, heavy workloads, lack of knowledge and skills, and lack of time (Rammbuda, 2023). Due to the above reasons, a framework for school leadership had to be developed to address the issues since they are aspects related to teaching and learning in the classroom (Mthembu & Chummun, 2022). They also have experienced poor performance, parental involvement, negative attitudes, poor discipline, and poor-quality learning (Ndebele, 2018).

In Nigeria, it was recommended that for effective use of supervisory practices, educational leaders should be specially trained in practices of supervision, have built-in lifelong learning within school-based instructional supervision, should have regular on-job training sessions, good supply of teaching and learning facilities in schools, good supply and motivation of teachers, and complete transition from traditional supervision procedures to modern, democratic supervision (Bwoi, 2022). Teachers' perception of formal observation conferences comprises factors such as the value of time, structure, and procedure, the influence and significance of feedback conferences, and the lack of experience with formal observation procedures. These results imply a change in teacher observation and supervision protocols educational leaders use (Jefferis, 2022). They need various skills to supervise teachers in terms of instruction and professional development efficiently. These skills include accountability, effective communication, good interpersonal skills, subject-matter expertise, administrative expertise, digital proficiency, and listening skills (So-Oabeb & Du Plessis, 2023).

A study conducted in higher education institutions in Nueva Ecija, Philippines, disclosed that instructional leaders' interpersonal, leadership, and supervisory skills were evident as observed by both the school administrators and their teachers. The interrelation of supervisory capacities, interpersonal skills, and leadership qualities demonstrated massive correlations between the decision-making of educational administrators and their managerial skills in planning and organizing, which leads to the conclusion that their leadership was evident (Villanueva et al., 2021). When performed by educational leaders, instructional supervision generally seeks to support teachers' reflective thinking and leads school improvement by fostering professional development (Chen, 2018).

The limited research on the experiences of program heads in higher education institutions, especially in Misamis Occidental, also exposed a need to explore these issues to ensure quality teaching and learning through supervision. Through the exploration of the experiences of program heads in their supervisory roles, educational excellence may be ensured. The research might lead to the creation of targeted training programs, policy reforms, and best practices to help program heads effectively supervise

teachers and promote professional development, enhancing educational quality in higher institutions. It could also contribute to the broader discourse on educational leadership and teacher supervision, with insights applicable internationally.

Conceptual Framework

This phenomenological study was able to identify the following themes: facilitating teacher guidance, maintaining academic standards, optimizing student learning outcomes, learning through teacher supervision, feeling a sense of fulfillment, managing time constraints, navigating hurdles in evaluating teachers' performance, seizing hesitations in supervising experienced teachers, managing challenges with teachers' report submissions, nurturing open communication, providing objective and constructive feedback, embracing flexibility, and seeking support.

Facilitating teacher guidance. Good teacher supervision often includes mentorship and support. Seasoned teachers or instructional coaches can mentor new educators, offering insights, strategies, and emotional support in dealing with the rigors of teaching (Leng, 2023). The supervisor ensures that new faculty members receive enough orientation and support to enable them to perform their duties effectively and confidently and carry on the school's educational mission, policies, and procedures (NAIS, 2024). Supervision tremendously influences the improvement of teachers' instructional skills and fosters their motivation, contributing significantly to their continuous professional development (Antonio, 2019).

Maintaining academic standards. The primary purpose of teacher supervision is to help improve the quality of instruction. Supervisors observe teachers' performance and provide valuable feedback regarding teaching techniques, content delivery, and classroom management (Leng, 2023). The supervisor assesses and works to improve teaching through classroom visits, discussions with teachers, and other methods that are fair and consistent with the practice of the individual school (NAIS, 2024). Supervision encourages teachers to motivate them to work hard with high expectations, which can be a basis for success. When supervision is weak, it hampers the teacher's effectiveness, and the quality of teaching and learning is compromised, which affects students' academic attainment (Antonio, 2019).

Optimizing students' learning outcomes. Teacher supervision is essential in ensuring students' holistic development, a positive learning environment, and furthering the professional improvement of educators. Supervision could allow teachers to note their students' needs and learning styles. Teachers are then able to develop a tailored way of instruction to meet the different needs of each one of the learners (Leng, 2023). Supervision is essential in fine-tuning teaching methodologies to encompass the emerging educational landscape, further ensuring improved student learning experiences and outcomes (Mulyanti, 2023). Supervision forms the keystone for creating an atmosphere that is both collaborative and supportive, where teaching thrives for the eventual purpose of propelling student-driven learning experiences (Gordon, 2023).

Learning through teacher supervision. Program heads are developing themselves as they lead and support educators and educational supervisors during professional growth. In their manifold role, curriculum development, instructional leadership, and teacher evaluation make the supervisor the main driving force to actively engage teachers toward better instructional techniques, innovations, and adaptation to changing educational trends (Vezy, 2023). Supervisors involved in educational supervision also get the opportunity to improve their professionalism and competence from their role in guiding and supporting teachers. In facilitating better teaching quality and professionalism, educational supervisors

contribute to enhancing the learning results and standards in educational institutions (Nurulita et al., 2021). Supervisors, therefore, increase their knowledge and expertise through their involvement in instructional supervision while offering professional support necessary to teachers. However, findings have shown that some problems need more support from educational authorities regarding resources and supervisor training (Ashun & Acquah, 2021).

Feeling a sense of fulfillment. Supervisors immersed in their jobs are satisfied with leading teachers to improve instructional performance that aligns with professional standards. They detect instructional challenges quickly through careful observation and appraisal, enabling timely interventions that cultivate teacher competencies and foster professional growth (Abubakr, 2018). Supervisors who find fulfillment in their role know that directive supervision pays off both in enhancing teacher performance and attitude. Recognizing the effectiveness of directive supervision is vital in improving teaching performance and positive attitudes among teachers (Hoque et al., 2020). Supervisors who find fulfillment in their work emphasize direct supervision of teachers' lesson planning and delivery since this dramatically influences teacher role performance. This underscores the importance of allocating adequate time and resources for effective instructional supervision, contributing to better teaching outcomes in public senior high schools (Ampofo et al., 2019).

Managing time constraints. Some challenges supervisors may encounter in managing time include employee procrastination, minimizing distractions in the workplace, prioritizing tasks by employees, taking breaks for optimal performance, maintaining high levels of employee motivation, and applying appropriate technology to leverage processes to gain efficiency (Symonds, 2024). Time management challenges that a program head faces include how to handle procrastination among the faculty, how to reduce the adverse effects of multitasking, how to minimize work environment distractions, how to enhance prioritizing skills, and how to ensure that the most important work gets done (Connolly, 2023).

Navigating hurdles in evaluating teachers' performance. Program heads face challenges in effectively assessing teachers' performance based on poor execution, poor approaches, delayed feedback, and disparities in evaluation processes, impacting the evaluation of teachers' performances (Rafiq et al., 2022). Among the severe difficulties program heads face regarding teachers' performance evaluation are questions on the validity of observation-based assessment, lack of meaningful feedback, privacy problems over evaluation data, equity in differences among subjects and levels, and the time-consuming nature of evaluation amidst competing demands. Difficulties in accurately assessing teachers' capabilities and practical support for professional development are but a few of the challenges in evaluating teachers' performance (Robinson, 2022). The program heads find it hard to assess the teachers' performance in digital settings since very few teachers can master all tasks related to digital teaching (Claro et al., 2018).

Seizing hesitations in supervising experienced teachers. The study has also shown that sometimes supervisors are reluctant to provide negative but honest feedback to teachers. Teachers viewed supervision as a fault-finding process, which made them feel anxious and bitter about the observation process, contributing to a negative attitude toward supervision (Hoque et al., 2020). Some of them are also reluctant to give objective yet somewhat negative feedback to the teachers for fear that it may be perceived as something negative and not applicable or for fear that the one receiving it will not take it well, which can create a culture of avoidance rather than constructive growth (Vollebregt, 2021). One of the reasons why supervisors might be hesitant to provide negative yet honest feedback to teachers is the

concern about teachers' receptivity to the input and their ability to discern the truth within it (Fulham et al., 2022).

Managing challenges with teachers' report submissions. The problems supervisors face in submitting academic reports are complex, involving quality, efficiency, and timeliness. Some of the implications emanating from the findings are improved communication, strong partnerships, smooth processes, building a committed culture, quality service, and empowering the supervisors (Bargo, 2022). One of the problems and challenges of the 21st-century meaning of supervision is that the valued time of the supervisors is tired of bookkeeping and form-filling. This leaves the supervisors with insufficient time to do the real supervisory work (Suleiman et al., 2020). The challenges that instructional leaders encountered in supervising in the news every day included issues in monitoring teachers' submission of reports and utilizing creative methods of instruction (Magno, 2023).

Nurturing open communication. Communication between supervisors and teachers is effective since this will ensure that reports are clearly articulated about areas of accomplishments and areas needing improvement, thus minimizing inaccuracies and incompleteness of data (Bargo, 2022). Opening communication between teachers and supervisors may help improve teacher performance and enhance work motivation. Good academic supervision with interpersonal communication positively affects teacher performance, indicating that detailed attention paid to teachers' needs with regular coaching will improve skills in teaching and eventually enhance educational quality (Wardani et al., 2021). It is underscored that the supervisors' communication skills are essential for open communication with teachers, constructive feedback, solving problems, and establishing positive relationships (Chron, 2021).

Providing objective and constructive feedback. For heads of programs, giving objective feedback to teachers is a challenge since they must navigate a delicate balance between constructive criticism and personal feelings filled with uncertainty and apprehension (Vollebregt, 2021). However, teachers who receive constructive feedback through supervision are better equipped to engage their students (Leng, 2023). Program heads often face the problem of providing objective feedback to their teachers since concerns related to probable emotional reactions, ambiguity, time constraints, and personal stress can hinder effective communication and behavior change (Grossman, 2022).

Embracing flexibility. The coping mechanisms employed by the instructional leaders included versatility and flexibility in leadership. This indicates adapting their style and leadership approach to suit the new regular's demands (Magno, 2023). Employing flexibility as a coping strategy, program heads can change their behavior sensitively to the environmental cues when supervising teachers, which ensures adaptive functioning in challenging circumstances. (Basińska et al., 2021). Flexibility is an essential coping strategy for program heads supervising teachers, influencing the coping methods used amidst increased psychological distress (Tindle et al., 2022).

Seeking support. Program heads can also solicit support from colleagues and supervisors to cope with issues related to dealing with teachers and improving productivity, problem-solving skills, and teamwork relationships in the workplace (Lodwick, 2024). An excellent way for supervisors to cope with behavior management problems is to seek help from experienced colleagues called positive deviants (Rogers, 2019).
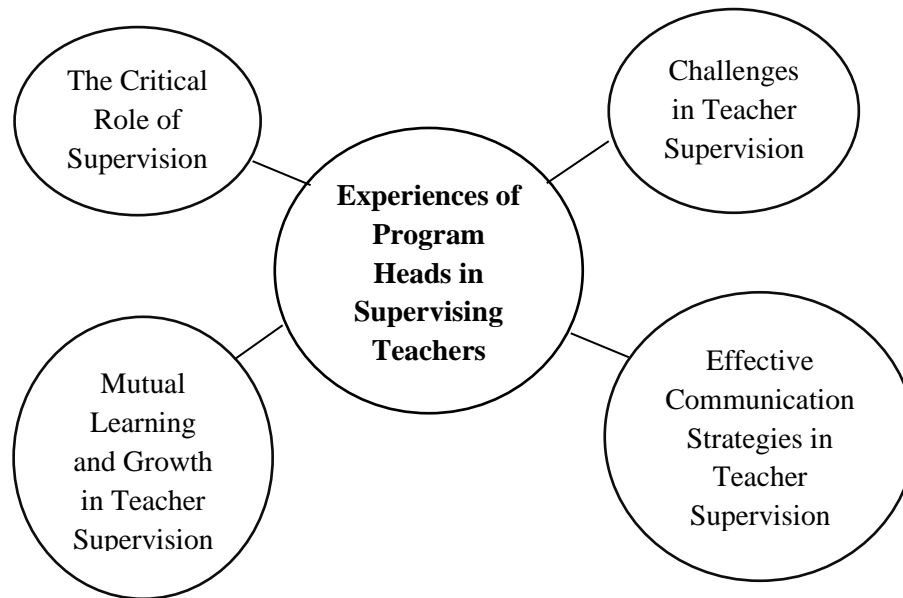
Objectives of the Study

This study explored the experiences of program heads in supervising teachers in a local community college in Tangub City, Misamis Occidental. Specifically, this sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the program heads' perceptions of the importance of supervising teachers?
2. What are the participants' experiences in supervising teachers?
3. What challenges have the participants encountered in supervising teachers?
4. How do program heads cope with the challenges of supervising teachers?

2. Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a phenomenological design. Phenomenology is a qualitative non-dualistic research approach. It identifies and retains the discourse of research participants (Barnard et al., 1999). Phenomenological research focuses on exploring and understanding human experiences as they are lived and perceived by people (Larsen & Adu, 2021). This design was considered appropriate in studying the lived experiences of program heads in supervising teachers.

Research Setting

The research was conducted in a community college in Tangub City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines. This institution offers fifteen programs, and each program head supervises faculty members. There were 233 faculty members, 99 of whom were part-timers from six institutes. As of the First Semester of School Year 2023-2034, there were 5, 959 students enrolled. The institution has undergone a Level 2 accreditation for BSED-Math, BEED, BSED Social Studies, BSED English, and AB Political Science in December 2022. A year later, other programs that undertook a level 2 accreditation are BSOA, BSED Filipino, BSBA HRM, AB Communication, AB English, BS Criminology, BS Computer Science, and Diploma in Midwifery in December 2023.

Research Participants

The participants of this study were the program heads from the different institutes in the college. The 11 participants were identified through purposive sampling. The actual number of participants was based on data saturation. The program heads were selected based on the following criteria: 1) current program heads who have served the program for one complete semester in the institution, and 2) gave consent to participate in the study. Moreover, program heads who were just installed during the Second Semester of 2023-2024 were not included as participants of the study.

Data-Gathering Procedure

Before conducting the study, the researcher sought permission from the Dean of the Graduate School of Misamis University in Ozamiz City. Permission was also obtained from the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the institution where the study was conducted. Upon the approval of the letter request, a researcher-made structured Interview Guide was used to obtain data from the participants' experiences in supervising teachers. In addition, the researcher interviewed the participants based on schedules identified and agreed upon.

The participants were informed that the information collected would be kept confidential. The participants were told they could withdraw from the study at any time. They were required to fill in an Informed Consent form. After identifying the final set of participants, the interviews were scheduled and recorded digitally, followed by transcriptions. The interviews were conducted face-to-face to ask further questions. The interviews took from forty-five minutes to one hour each. The interviews began by identifying the participants and reviewing the purpose of the research. Then, the participants were required to review the drafts of the study's written report to obtain additional feedback and establish accuracy.

Research Instrument

The Interview Guide was used to conduct in-depth interviews. The participants were interviewed about their experiences in supervising teachers or instructors. They were also asked about their challenges, coping strategies, learning, and suggestions for the supervision of teachers. In this study, the researcher developed the Interview Guide. Experts in qualitative research were asked to do the content validity test to validate the interview guide questions. Interview questions underwent pilot interviews before conducting the study to check for clarity and ensure they solicited information in response to the research questions.

Data Analysis

This study utilized the Moustakas' transcendental phenomenology of data analysis using NViVO software, where codes and categories were extracted. The following are the steps in the phenomenological reduction which served as a guide in analyzing the data gathered: (1) Bracketing, (2) Horizonalization, (3) Clustering into Themes, (4) Textural Description, (5) Structural Description, and (6) Textural-Structural Synthesis.

Bracketing is an approach used to mitigate the effects of preconceived notions and perceptions to be held before the study starts. It is a process of suspending judgments and biases, or 'epoche.' The step helps reach a deep level of inquiry from topic and population selection, interview design, collection and interpretation, and dissemination of research findings. This step was followed during the selection of the participants, as to how the data were collected and interpreted in identifying the experiences of the program heads in supervising teachers as the study participants.

Horizonalization technically refers to listing all the verbatim expressions that have a bearing on the study. In the study, every statement was analyzed with equal value. Then, statements deemed irrelevant, repetitive, overlapping, and outside the scope of the survey were dismissed. Horizons, the remaining sections after the data have been polished, are considered the constituent and meaningful parts of the phenomenon. This step was followed during the transcriptions of the program heads' responses during the interviews.

Clustering is the third step in obtaining inferences from the study. It involves the reduction of experiences to invariant horizons, the creation of core themes, and the validation of the invariant horizons using multiple data sources. The invariant horizons obtained from the study were validated by reviewing the findings of other research studies that used methods other than the data-gathering methods being used in the study, such as observation, field note-taking, and related literature. Validation of the invariant horizons is essential for the accuracy and clarity of the representations. The themes of the study were identified at this stage.

Textural description, or 'what occurred,' refers to an account that describes the perception of the phenomenon. In obtaining the textural description of the participants' experience, verbatim excerpts were used in the interview, and a narration of the meaning units derived from the themes was provided. Based on the themes identified it was supported by the verbatim statements of the participants of the interview questions. After placing the themes formulated based on the research data, the researcher supported them with participants' answers according to how they were stated.

Structural description, or how it occurred, integrates imaginative variation, an ingenious outlook, and insights into the textural description. An imaginative variation is a mental experiment that analyzes the details and structures of the participants' experiences by taking them out of their natural inclination through epochs. It is appended to each paragraph of textual descriptions to give a structural description. This step in the study provided insights into the participants' experiences.

In the *textural-structural synthesis* process, the meaning units of each of the participants were collated, and a composite of textural and structural descriptions that were common to them was developed. A narrative or synthesis represents all the participants written in a third-person perspective. The primary goal of this final step of Moustakas' method is to obtain the essence of the experience of the phenomenon. In this study, the researcher gave conclusive points on the themes identified as to the experiences of the program heads in supervising teachers in a higher education institution.

3. Results and Discussion

The Critical Role of Supervision in Advancing Teacher Development and Upholding Educational Excellence

Supervision plays a significant role in advancing the development and upholding educational excellence among teachers. Supervision acts as a guideline in providing constructive criticism and support, including resources, which enhance teacher development. Through regular observation, thoughtful assessment, and precisely placed professional development opportunities, program heads empower teachers to refine their instructional practices, adjust to emerging trends in education, and tailor methods to fit the diverse needs of students. Sub-themes were formulated based on the responses of the participants.

Facilitating teacher guidance. One of the program heads' roles as supervisors is to guide their teachers in performing their instruction, research, and community extension responsibilities. They ensure teachers

receive personalized support and mentorship to accomplish their tasks efficiently. Two of the participants gave the following statements:

"As a program head, it is important to provide guidance/supervision to the teachers of the program." (P1)

"As a program head, I believe that providing supervision to teachers within the community college context is very important. For instance, we have new faculty members each year in need guidance on what and how to do things related to instruction, research, and extension." (P9)

Participant 1 highlighted the importance of this role by pointing out that a program head needs to guide and supervise the teachers. The program heads' responsibilities include leading and developing the faculty members in their program. Through guidance and supervision, program heads help ensure that instructions are of good quality and in line with educational standards.

Participant 9 emphasized that every year comes with its problems and opportunities since new faculty can be on board. Supervision can be instrumental since new faculty must be guided in various instruction, research, and extension aspects. Program heads serve as mentors and facilitators through whom new faculty can be given support, resources, and expertise to settle into their roles and responsibilities effectively.

Program heads guide and mentor teachers in their instructional practices to ensure that they align with the educational standards and enable quality learning. Also, the number of new faculty members who join the program each year is quite dynamic. The program head must innovate guidance and support depending on the incoming faculty to offer them the necessary resources and expertise for better induction. Therefore, this suggests that the head of the program plays a critical role in mentorship and facilitation to provide an enabling and nurturing environment that enable faculty members to effectively perform their instructional, research, and community engagement duties. After all, the effective leadership and mentorship of program heads significantly contribute to the success and development of the faculty members in the program for the general enhancement of quality education and improved student learning outcomes.

Maintaining academic standards. Ensuring excellence in education and fostering a culture of continuous improvement in teaching effectiveness are the most critical objectives in the college's educational framework. Teacher supervision is an indispensable means of doing so, as it carries a multifaceted role in maintaining standards, fostering professional development, and nurturing a culture of excellence. Through constant supervision, educators receive valuable feedback on teaching techniques, which they need to refine their practices to enhance student learning outcomes. The following were the responses of the participants:

"Supervising teachers is vital for maintaining educational standards, fostering teacher development, and creating a culture of excellence." (P2)

"The importance of providing supervision to teachers within the context of the community college in Tangub City is to enhance teaching effectiveness as supervision offers valuable feedback on teaching techniques." (P3)

"Teacher supervision helps improve the teaching and learning environment since faculty performance is constantly monitored. I constantly assess the teachers' performance under the program I am handling. This helped the teachers to monitor and improve our technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge." (P4)

"Supervision is essential to investigate faculty who are not giving what is due to students. It ensures that quality education is given and at the same time promotes academic freedom." (P5)

"I consider providing supervision to teachers as crucial in my role as a program head because I am the person who shall provide them with necessary actions and feedback to improve their overall teaching." (P7)

"Supervision of teachers is vital for fostering a supportive learning environment and the overall quality of instruction and academic services for the students." (P8)

"Providing supervision . . . enhances the teaching and learning environment by fostering a supportive and collaborative atmosphere." (P10)

Participants 1 and 5 described supervision as vital in sustaining educational standards through promoting the development of teachers. By promoting the professional development of teachers through supervision, they can improve the quality of education they provide to the students, thus creating a culture of excellence among them. Participants 3 and 7 added that the teachers can enhance their teaching quality through supervision, wherein they can be informed about their strengths and weaknesses. These teachers may be given honest and objective feedback regarding how they deliver the lessons and perform other instructional workloads. They empower their strengths and work on their weaknesses to provide quality learning to their students.

In addition, Participants 4, 8, and 10 mentioned that supervision enhances the teaching and learning environment, which is crucial to improving the overall teaching quality. The claim emphasizes how necessary teacher supervision is for strengthening the teaching and learning environment in the college. Participant 4 showed that when one is being continually monitored over faculty performance, it leads to improving TPACK. Teachers must be assessed for their performance regularly, and feedback is given to them to enhance professional growth and development, significantly improving instruction quality. In this way, it fosters continuous improvement and keeps educators updated on the most appropriate practices in teaching.

Participant 8 emphasized the importance of teacher supervision for a good and supportive learning environment. By guiding, giving feedback, and providing teachers with resources, the supervisors give quality instructions and other academic services to the students. It includes a supportive learning environment, which enriches student engagement and motivation, facilitates good teacher-student relationships, and yields better learning outcomes. Participant 10 reiterated the same idea, emphasizing how supervision facilitates a supportive and collaborative atmosphere. A culture whereby teachers feel supported in their professional growth and development is created through fostering open communication, collaboration, and teamwork among teachers. This is, in turn, beneficial not only to the teachers but to the students.

The teacher supervision plays a critical role in sustaining and improving educational standards and the professional growth of educators in the college. In this respect, promoting teachers' professional growth through supervision by program heads contributes to the enhancement of quality education given to the students and the development of a culture of excellence in the institution. Through supervision, teachers can upgrade the quality of teaching since honest and objective feedback about their instruction practices enables them to address their weaknesses and capitalize on their strengths to produce quality learning experiences for their students. Furthermore, supervision enhances the teaching and learning environment by fostering a supportive atmosphere, enriching student engagement and motivation, and facilitating

solid teacher-student relationships. Therefore, the implication is that adequate teacher supervision is indispensable for sustaining high educational standards and promoting a culture of excellence in the college.

Optimizing student learning outcomes. Supervision entails ensuring that the best practices of instruction, curriculum, and learning strategies are aligned to maximize student achievement and growth. Therefore, through identifying the needs for improvement, availing professional development opportunities, and providing a culture of continuous improvement, supervision helps create an enabling environment in which students can have the best chance to develop academically and socially. Supervision ensures that every student receives a quality education and can achieve the desired learning outcomes. The following statements were given by the participants:

> *"But I also guide and provide suggestions whenever it is necessary to help meet the objectives and help the students learn the best." (P5)*
>
> *"I can identify areas of improvement, ensure that they meet necessary standards, and guarantee students receive quality education." (P7)*
>
> *"If I supervise my teachers very well, I believe that they will be able to give the best quality of learning to the students." (P8)*
>
> *"For me, providing supervision to the teachers is crucial to maintaining the best quality of learning the students deserve. As a program head, I must oversee how my teachers teach their students. It can be done when I regularly conduct informed and pop-in classroom observations." (P11)*

Participants 5 and 7 recognized the importance of support for teachers to ensure that students receive the best learning experience. Program heads can identify the weak areas among the teachers and the former can give feedback to ensure that the latter demonstrate the standards in teaching, leading to quality education for students. This is a dedication to the objective of developing and sustaining excellent standards of teaching and learning. Moreover, Participants 8 and 11 felt claimed that proper supervision of teachers may result in the best quality learning experience for students. By supporting and mentoring teachers, they want to ensure that students receive high-quality education relevant to their needs and promote academic excellence. They believed that the quality of education that students deserve is through supervision. They said that as program heads, they emphasized regular classroom observation to monitor the teaching practices and ensured that these practices aligned with the educational goals. Thus, the program heads needed to be proactive to creating a conducive learning environment to benefit the students.

The commitment of the program heads to securing the best education for the students is through adequate teacher supervision. Through the collective emphasis on the need for support, guidance, and mentorship for teachers to advance the learning experience for students, the participants underscored their critical role in ensuring excellent standards in the teaching-learning process. They identified areas of concern in education delivery and ensured that teachers upheld the required standards. Thus, the dedication to quality education is indicated by proactive classroom observation to monitor teaching practices and see whether they align with education goals. Proper supervision and support of teachers by the program heads are crucial to developing a learning environment that promotes academic excellence and secures successful outcomes for students in the college.

Supervisory skills are essential in increasing teacher capacity using instructional supervision. There is a positive relationship between supervisory skills and teacher capacity, which means much for improving

supervision practices toward strengthening instructional practice and learning outcomes (Makin et al., 2018). Adequate academic supervision plays a critical role in improving the quality of education. Such challenges like low support, inspection-focused supervision, and lack of dedication hamper the improvement of teaching-learning processes; hence, addressing these issues can ensure that educational leaders play their supervisory roles effectively to advance quality education (Alam et al., 2021). Lastly, educational leaders' supervision significantly affects teachers' high-quality performance and academic work environment. It shows that a positive relationship with school leaders and workgroup encouragement would help develop a learning environment and overcome teaching challenges in dealing with unruly and aggressive student behavior (Kilag et al., 2023).

Teachers in the field are responsible for educating individuals who will later take mature roles as members of society. Thus, these educators must ensure they can deliver quality instruction so that the students become well-equipped with the needed knowledge and skills to discharge their responsibilities later in life. In this regard, program heads must ensure that they give supervision to teachers under their department so that the latter can consistently provide the students with meaningful and adequate learning experiences toward the achievement of excellence in their studies and embody the quality of education that schools are mandated to uphold.

Mutual Learning and Growth: The Role of Program Heads in Teacher Supervision

The theme that emerged from the participants' positive experiences in supervising teachers is mutual learning and growth, emphasizing the role of the program heads in teacher supervision. It reveals the dynamic exchange of knowledge, support, and guidance between program heads and teachers, leading to collective professional development and improvement of teaching effectiveness. With combined efforts and proactive contributions, program heads help make the environment conducive to continuous learning, entrenching a culture of excellence and innovation within educational settings. Participants' experiences revealed the valuable insight on adequate teacher supervision has on educators and students. The subthemes are learning through teacher supervision and feeling a sense of fulfillment.

Learning through teacher supervision. There is a dynamic sharing of ideas, best practices, and innovative strategies by teachers with program heads, which contributes to the latter's professional growth. Working with teachers, the head of the program can learn what is effective in delivering instruction, how to manage students inside the classrooms, and new trends in education. In this way, there can be continuous improvement and a spirit of mutual support, enhancing teacher supervision effectiveness and the quality of education given to the students. The following were the participants' statements:

> *"I was able to enhance my learning and improve myself in the supervision of instruction. Through constructive feedback to teachers and monitoring their professional development fostered their growth as educators, I also found myself developing professionally." (P3)*
> *"Supervising teachers helps me reflect on my performance as well. It reminds me of what I must and must not do in teaching-learning process. I also get to have a chance to learn new strategies used by the teachers I supervised." (P4)*

These participants collectively conveyed the relationship between learning and growth that teacher supervision offers. They claimed that supervising teachers enhances the teachers' professional development and improves the program heads. Participants 3 and 4 emphasized that providing constructive feedback and monitoring teachers' progress lead the program heads' personal and

professional growth. Supervising makes one reflect within and learns new strategies from the teachers being supervised.

> *"Majority of our faculty have been in the academe longer than I have, so by sitting in or observing their classes and occasions where they share their thoughts, I learn from them. I also grow through interaction with my faculty and observing them." (P5)*

> *"Through supervising teachers, like sitting in their classes and doing one-on-one conferences, I also learn many things from them. It is like a win-win situation since I help them perform better in teaching the students, and they also help me perform better in supervising them." (P6)*

> *"For me, supervision is not one-way since both the program head and the teachers get to learn from each other during formal observations and feedbacking. I have learned from the teachers as well." (P10)*

Likewise, Participants 5, 6 and 10 described supervision as a mutual learning opportunity where both parties could benefit. As supervisors, program heads learned from the teachers' experiences and insights through the guidance they gave to improve the teaching practices. They emphasized that during supervision, the program heads and teachers learned from each other during formal observations and feedback.

> *"I have learned from the teachers' ideas during conferences, which help me improve my supervision practice." (P8)*

> *"... becoming the program head has widened my horizons and added to my professional experience. I have learned how to deal with people effectively, monitor programs, and resolve conflicts, which greatly help me grow." (P11)*

Finally, Participants 8 and 11 said that through interactions with teachers during conferences, they learned and thus developed professionally, showing the two-way direction of learning in supervision. They emphasized that the role of program head broadened their horizons because they had precious experiences in dealing with people, monitoring programs, and resolving conflicts, contributing to the program heads' development.

Collectively, the participants highlighted that supervision contributes to professional development in teaching and the program heads themselves. The latter facilitate the teachers grow through constructive feedback, monitoring, and reflection, which also help the latter develop professionally. This dynamic of mutual learning is further underscored by the recognition that supervision offers a platform where program heads and teachers share insights, experiences, and innovative strategies. The role played by program heads in gaining broader horizons through diverse experiences in handling teachers, monitoring programs, and conflict resolution generally shows the multifaceted nature of growth opportunities within the supervision process. This implies that teacher supervision acts as a spur for educators and supervisors in continuous learning and development toward better teaching practices and improved quality of education.

Feeling a sense of fulfillment. This theme epitomizes the intense satisfaction and fulfillment of the program heads as they monitor teachers. It shows a robust and rewarding emotion brought about by seeing the improvement, growth, and success of the educators they mentor. The programs instituted by these heads reflect a delicate interaction between personal values and professional undertakings in which these program heads derive happiness and fulfillment by empowering and supporting their teachers to realize their goals and contribute effectively to the educational field. This feeling reflects the concrete

results of adequate supervision and the intrinsic rewards of creating a supportive and enriching environment that promotes professional growth and excellence. The participants cited that:

"I am just thankful that my faculty members are receptive to feedback and comments. . … I remain motivated and resilient despite the struggles since the teachers are willing to work cooperatively." (P1)

"I have had positive experiences like seeing teachers grow, students succeed, fostering collaboration, encouraging innovation, and building strong relationships with teachers." (P2)

"I find it most rewarding for me, as their program head, when my teachers willingly accept my suggestions and feedback for improving their teaching or engagements such as community extension and research. Moreover, when I see them applying my comments and suggestions by making noticeable changes to their teaching strategies and methods, I could say that I can supervise them well." (P7)

"The sense of fulfillment knowing that I was able to extend help to my colleagues is very special to me, something that I will forever treasure." (P9)

The participants all underscored the rewarding sides of supervising teachers and fostering a collaborative, supportive environment in the educational setting. Participant 1 was grateful that the faculty members' receptive attitude toward feedback and comments made him stay resilient during difficult times. Similarly, Participant 2 pointed out the positive experiences of watching teachers grow, student success, and building collaboration and innovation, indicating the supportive and enriching environment. For Participants 7 and 9, they stressed that the willingness of teachers to accept suggestions and ideas and record improvements in teaching strategies and methods encouraged them toward their supervisory role. These responses, therefore, raise the importance of mutual respect, cooperation, and supportive relationships in the supervision process, fostering a setting that is supportive and conducive to continuous improvement and success for both teachers and students.

The participants expressed fulfillment and satisfaction in observing teacher and student growth and success, building cooperation, stimulating innovation, and building solid and cordial relationships within the educational community. The responses highlight the positive impacts of adequate teacher supervision in collaboration, growth, and success within the educational setting. Moreover, the rewarding nature of observing teachers apply feedback and seeing noticeable changes in the strategy they adopt for teaching underlines the changing power of good supervision for the practices of teaching and student outcomes. Generally, positive experiences from adequate teacher supervision contribute to a supportive, thriving educational environment that benefits the educators and the students.

Education leaders also gain positive experiences from supervising teachers. It helps them identify and deal with gaps in their leadership by empowering teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to contribute meaningfully toward school improvement efforts (Barnett, 2024). Systematic teacher supervision allows educational leaders to gain insight into teaching practices and student learning outcomes (DiPaola & Wagner, 2018). Supervision by teachers helps school leaders in performance, competencies, and professional development for making informed decisions and targeting support strategies (Reambonanza & Tan, 2022).

Supervisors are given the tasks of monitoring and supervising the teachers in their department to ensure that the quality of education is upheld. Nevertheless, while giving supervision, the heads of the program are provided with venues to reflect on their teaching practices, wherein there can also be room for

improvement. Though the program heads take more responsibility for the quality of work that other teachers render, the supervisory work allows them to widen their perspectives on teaching. It enables them to identify the areas they need to upgrade to become more effective educators.

Overcoming Challenges in Teacher Supervision: Time Management, Consistency, and Professional Dynamics

Supervising teachers is a multifaceted task that requires keen attention and skillful handling from the program heads. Within this critical role, program heads face a few problems that may challenge their commitment and competence. From time management to harmonious relationships with educators and detailed submission of reports to the protection of quality teaching, each aspect carries a problem. In addition, program heads take the arduous task of guiding the initiatives and activities toward realizing programs, ensuring they are implemented and thrive in the long run. Thus, supervising teachers emerges as a duty and a dynamic enterprise full of challenges that need proactive navigation and commitment. The sub-themes include managing time constraints, navigating hurdles in evaluating teachers' performance, seizing hesitations in supervising experienced teachers, and managing challenges with teachers' report submissions.

Managing Time Constraints. For a program head, time constraints management means the proper use of available time for various activities and duties to be carried out within a given time limit. The concern involves synchronizing schedules, prioritizing activities, and ensuring all necessary activities are handled effectively despite the time constraints. It requires strategic planning, delegation, and adapting to unforeseen circumstances without losing productivity and meeting deadlines. Below are the statements from the participants.

> *"The challenges I face in supervising teachers involve difficulty in managing time effectively, balancing administrative tasks while providing effective support and feedback to teachers within limited time frames." (P3)*

> *"Some of my challenges include limited time to conduct thorough observation and conferences. I have to remind them from time to time. Another thing is that sudden reports must be submitted, which are difficult to accomplish due to the limited time given." (P8)*

The responses by the participants suggest the multifaceted nature of time management issues for program heads in their supervision of teachers. Participant 3 pointed out how difficult it was to balance administrative duties with providing support and feedback to teachers, given the time constraints. It suggests that program heads must balance managerial responsibilities and professional development in their teaching force.

Participant 8 expressed his difficulty conducting comprehensive observations and conferences because of a lack of time, compounded by the sudden call for report submissions. Time concerns hindered him from giving effective feedback and disrupted the continuity of support and development endeavors for teachers. Therefore, there is a need for streamlined processes and better communication so that time is optimized, and administrative duties and teacher support initiatives are provided effectively.

> *"One of the difficulties/challenges that I have encountered is doing administrative tasks which are sometimes hard to accomplish because of the short period given." (P9)*

> *"Especially, time constraints and sudden accomplishments and submission of reports. They somehow consume much of my time, and I only have limited time spent attending to the concerns of my teachers." (P10)*

Besides, Participants 9 and 10 highlighted the all-prevalent time constraints on administrative functions and responsiveness to teacher concerns. P9's difficulty executing administrative functions within compressed timelines conveys the need to prioritize and even delegate some of those responsibilities to ease the burden. The time-consuming report submissions and their subsequent implication on how teacher concerns are dealt with bring to the fore the need for optimized workflow efficiencies and strategies for coping with sudden demands. In short, these responses collectively underscore the need for proactive time management strategies, streamlined processes, and effective lines of communication to navigate the intricate landscape of supervising teachers within limited time frames.

Navigating hurdles in evaluating teachers' performance. Evaluation of teachers' performance is one of the biggest challenges a program head faces when they are tasked with supervising teachers. This theme embodies the difficulties and challenges that come with effectively and accurately appraising and giving feedback on the effectiveness of teaching by teachers in the classroom. It includes making fair and comprehensive judgments, eliminating biases, dealing with different teaching styles and contexts, and ensuring that goals and institutional standards are met. The statements below were the responses given by the participants:

> *"I supervised a teacher who was too proud of herself. In other words, her actions were not aligned with her talk. After my class observation, she was disappointed with her score, so I gave her a second chance to be observed." (P1)*

> *"Another one is difficulty in addressing the varied levels of teachers' performance and instructional approaches while maintaining fairness and equity in providing feedback and support." (P3)*

> *"One of the challenges I had in supervising teachers is that I find it hard to evaluate their actual performance in classes according to how I see it during observation and how their students describe it during their regular classes. Teachers tend to perform better during class observations than the regular classes." (P4)*

These participants' responses speak of the various challenges that program heads experience in assessing teachers' performances. Participants 1 and 3 dealt with differences in performance levels and teaching styles and made judgments based on fairness and equity in giving feedback. The evaluation processes need to consider individual styles and contexts, while maintaining consistency and equity in the delivery of feedback. Hence, flexible frameworks of assessment need to be considered to accommodate a variety of teaching practices and answer to the specific needs of every teacher.

According to Participant 4, teachers performed differently during formal observations compared to their performance during regular class sessions. In this regard, program heads found it difficult to assess the actual effectiveness of teachers, as observed behaviors might not be consistently demonstrated in usual teaching-learning process. To overcome this difficulty, program heads must consider multiple assessment methods, including peer observations, student feedback mechanisms, and ongoing professional development opportunities, to understand teachers' performance comprehensively and foster continual improvement. Overall, these participants' responses could shed light on the complexity of assessing teacher performance and the need for tailored approaches to cope with the varied problems that arise in doing so.

Seizing hesitations in supervising experienced teachers. This theme focuses on how a program head might feel some form of reluctance or uneasiness because of factors such as differences in age, perceived authority, academic achievements, and feelings of inferiority. The hesitations of program heads could be caused by the teachers resenting them, questioning their authority or competence, giving offense, and

considering them co-equals or even lesser in educational attainment and status. The following statements were given by the participants:

> *"The challenges I faced in supervising teachers initially included hesitancy in addressing issues due to fear that they might resent me for correcting them. Additionally, being younger than some of the teachers added to my concerns. I am hesitant when I supervise and provide feedback because they are much older and more experienced than I am." (P2)*

> *"First, it would be that I am merely a job order employee; my workload should not have included administrative work such as being program head. Program heads' authority level in such a case could be diminished, further causing hesitation to discipline any already tenured faculty." (P5)*

The participants' responses collectively highlight program heads' complex challenges in supervising experienced teachers. Participants 2 and 5 articulated hesitations based on age-related concerns and the fear of gaining resentment from more experienced, older teachers when giving corrective feedback. The claims of the participants bring to the fore the sensitive balance that a program head must achieve in developing authority and credibility, mainly where there is an age difference with the teachers they supervise.

> *"Though I have been designated as a program head for years, I still feel like more of a subordinate. So, I struggle supervising teachers in their workload management and teaching practice since I feel uneasy. I hesitate that during the conferences with them, I might say something that upset them or hurt their ego." (P6)*

> *"First, is because of inhibition, and second, because of stagnation. Sometimes, I was reluctant to provide suggestions to my teachers because I perceived myself as on equal footing with them as we all have master's degrees and receive the same salary." (P7)*

Participants 6 and 7 simultaneously discussed their feelings of subordination despite being program heads for several years. They revealed inhibition and stagnation in providing suggestions to teachers because program heads and teachers have equal educational backgrounds and salaries, suppressing their ability to enact their leadership roles effectively.

> *"One personal challenge I had is that I feel a sense of uneasiness evaluating teachers who have higher academic achievement and experiences than I have." (P4)*

> *"And during the supervision session, sometimes I hesitated to be objective in evaluating their performance during the feedback because some of my faculty have higher educational attainment than I have." (P10)*

Moreover, Participants 4 and 10 said they were hesitant to evaluate teachers with higher academic achievements and experiences, indicating issues in perceived competence and confidence in assessment judgments. This stresses the importance of professional development opportunities for program heads to better equip them with the skills needed to objectively evaluate teacher performance and provide constructive feedback independent of the academic credentials of the teachers they supervise.

Managing challenges with teachers' report submissions. The program heads face one of the biggest challenges in supervising teachers—managing problems with teachers' report submissions. This theme describes frustration and disappointment when teachers failed to submit needed reports on time after many reminders and proactive communication from the program head. The result of all these incomplete submissions hampered the administrative processes' efficiency that could impede the institution's decision-making and evaluation efforts. The statements below were given by the participants:

"Some of the teachers did not submit reports on time, which was frustrating for me since I had to remind them from time to time." (P8)

"Also, some faculty, especially part-time, sometimes reported to their classes and did not submit necessary reports on time. It made me feel tired because I had to mitigate this concern through consistent updates."(P9)

"One thing that makes supervising teachers challenging is when teachers do not submit the necessary documents or reports. I always remind them in advance about what they must comply with and submit to me, but it turns out that they are so preoccupied that they take the submission of documents for granted. I cannot finalize my consolidated reports unless they all submit their reports to me." (P11)

The statements of Participants 8, 9, and 11 convey the high level of frustration and exhaustion they experienced when teachers did not submit the required reports in time. They felt unhappy about constantly needing to be reminded to get their submissions in due time. They were worried that it might be a recurring issue, disrupting workflow and administrative efficiency. They also mentioned the additional challenge of part-time faculty members whose report submissions were inconsistent and led to fatigue due to constant follow-up and updates. From these responses, the program heads needed to develop the value of clear expectations and communication channels for addressing report submission issues.

Moreover, the participants also gave more emphasis on how report submissions could hinder the program head's ability to complete consolidated reports. The participants claimed that managing preoccupied teachers who failed to remember the importance of timely document submissions. In this vein, accountability is essential for smooth administrative processes. Overall, the participants' responses demonstrate the need for proactive measures, such as constant reminders and clear communication, which promote responsibility and respect for deadlines by teachers to make an institution function efficiently.

Teacher supervision imposed various challenges on educational leaders, including program heads and principals. There were challenges in managing overlapping responsibilities in strained budgetary conditions, illustrating the complexity of their role and the need for increased support and preparation programs (Wieczorek & Manard, 2018). School leaders face difficulties in supervising teachers, including poor road networks that hinder planned supervision, delayed responses to reports from supervision activities, and a lack of logistical support (Ashun, 2022). School leaders' instructional and supervisory challenges include centralizing school supervision activities, limited involvement of external supervisors, insufficient instructional resources, and excessive administrative workload (William & Ligembe, 2022).

Giving supervision to other teachers may not be an easy task because it entails additional work responsibilities. With the classes handled as faculty and other tasks also delegated to them, program heads may also find it difficult to give priority, wherein the skills of time management can be tested. With the various teaching responsibilities and supervisory functions needed, program heads can grapple with the challenges of staying effective in the expected work.

Effective Communication Strategies in Teacher Supervision and Professional Development

Effective communication is essential to successful teacher supervision and professional development. It is the foundation on which collaboration thrives and is the ordeal in which teachers grow and students flourish. For communication strategies in teacher supervision and professional development, the subthemes include nurturing open communication, providing objective and constructive feedback, embracing flexibility, and seeking support systems. These coping mechanisms of the program heads' challenges pave the way for a culture of growth and continuous improvement for teachers. This

discussion intends to expound on communication to improve teaching practices and increase professional growth through supervision.

Nurturing open communication. Among the coping strategies used to deal with these challenges is nurturing open communication, which helps establish collaborative relationships and face challenges head-on within the teaching environment. It shows how open communication becomes the basis for the empowerment of the program heads to effectively navigate these challenges, build trust, and create an atmosphere of transparency and mutual understanding within the educational community. Nurturing open communication empowers the head of the program to build an environment that supports professional development, constructive criticism, and, ultimately, improvement in teaching approaches for the betterment of teachers and students. The following were the participants' statements:

> *"For me, it is open communication channels. Whenever I hear concerns about or complaints regarding my teachers from the students, I talk to them privately and share my concerns. I also provide suggestions on how they solve the issue. I keep my communication open even to those teachers who are not so willing for constructive feedback." (P1)*

> *"I must maintain open and honest communication channels with teachers to address concerns promptly and foster a supportive environment. Whenever there are miscommunications among my teachers, I call their attention and sit down to discuss the issue. With this, I could address my challenge in supervising teachers." (P3)*

The earlier statements underscore the importance of open communication as a coping strategy program heads use in effectively supervising teachers. Participants 1 and 3 showed that student concerns were proactively addressed and that private discussions with teachers involved sharing feedback and suggestions on how the teachers could improve. This approach emphasizes the importance of open communication in promoting a culture of accountability and continuous improvement within the educational setting. Similarly, the participants noted the need to uphold honest communication channels for addressing miscommunications at the earliest opportunity among teachers and, in so doing, help create an environment supportive of professional development.

> *"To cope with challenges while supervising teachers, I focus on open communication, seek support when needed, continuously develop my skills, stay flexible in my approach, and reflect on experiences for personal growth." (P2)*

> *"For the first challenge I faced, what I did was as the next grading started, I reminded or kept them informed that I would sit in their classes unannounced occasionally. In this way, I may obtain a more accurate and realistic evaluation of their performance in teaching. Having constant communication with them through the announcement, I will be able to challenge them to be at their best all the time." (P4)*

Furthermore, Participants 2 and 4 employed a holistic coping strategy that included open communication, seeking help, continuous skill improvement, flexibility, and personal reflection. They further emphasized the proactive nature of open communication by using surprise classroom observations to get a realistic assessment of teacher performance. It depicts a desire for accountability and improvement.

> *"I think the strategies I find the most effective is having constant communication with my teachers." (P6)*

> *"As the program head, I cope with the challenge of doing administrative tasks by asking for guidance and having good or open communication so I will be guided properly with new and*

old tasks. I can avoid having disagreements with my teachers by employing open communication. Whenever an issue arises, especially on how they instruct students, comply, or submit reports, I immediately address it by calling their attention." (P9)

"Next is to have open communication – so that only I will be able to relay reliable information regarding their performance and with that I will be able to guide them toward improvement." (10)

"I remind them all the time until they all submit the required reports. Constant communication and updates are strategies I find effective in supervising my teachers." (P11)

Participants 6, 9, 10, and 11 emphasized open communication as a coping mechanism to address their challenges in supervising teachers. The participants highlighted the essential role of open communication in advancing transparency, trust, and cooperation in educational institutions. Open dialogue allows program heads to respond to concerns, remedy conflicts, and nurture a spirit of continuous improvement among teachers. Also, the constant emergence of communication as a strategy for coping emphasizes its role in mitigating challenges and improving administrative efficiency and professional development. In conclusion, these qualitative insights reveal the transformative power of open communication in driving adequate teacher supervision and fostering a supportive environment for educational excellence.

Providing objective and constructive feedback. Providing objective and constructive feedback is a coping strategy that the program heads employ to overcome the challenges of supervising teachers. Since it is the purpose of program heads to perform their supervisory functions effectively, providing feedback offers an effective way of facilitating conversation and addressing concerns in the pursuit of teacher excellence. Program heads empower the teachers to reflect on their practices by providing objective and constructive feedback, identifying areas that need development, and eventually improving students' learning experiences. The following statements were given by the participants:

"I continue giving objective rating and constructive feedback and monitor if there are significant improvements happening to them." (P1)

"I opt to be objective and more constructive as possible so that, in a way, I can still provide valuable information on how to improve myself even though some of them have higher educational attainment and are more experienced than I am." (P4)

"… and I always try to be honest and objective in supervising them so that they will know what and how they can improve their teaching performance (P6)

"While I was evaluating one of the faculty who has higher education attainment than I do, I did try to be objective and told him my comments and suggestions in the most respectful way possible." (10)

Participant 1 emphasized continuous giving of objective ratings and constructive feedback and ensured constant monitoring to achieve improvements in teaching practices. It shows concern for improving educators' professional growth and development with targeted feedback that encourages them to reflect on improving. Moreover, Participants 4 and 6 claimed that objectivity and honesty in giving feedback are essential regardless of the teachers' educational background or level of experience. Focusing on objectivity, program heads ensure that feedback addresses clear, observable criteria rather than mere subjective judgment. In so doing, a culture of fairness and accountability is fostered, wherein all teachers have equal opportunities to improve and develop professionally.

Participant 10 showed respect for how teachers with high educational attainment were given objective but constructive ratings. This approach values the teachers' expertise and experience but offers valuable ideas for enhancement. With objective and constructive feedback, program heads foster individual teacher growth and general improvement in teaching practices that lead to better student learning outcomes within the institution.

Embracing flexibility. As program heads perform their supervisory roles within dynamic circumstances, adopting flexibility allows them to respond innovatively to changing demands, take advantage of emerging opportunities, and build a resilient culture among teachers. This theme shows the impact of flexibility as a coping mechanism that would allow program heads to effectively lead and support their educational communities in times of uncertainty and change. The participants stated the following:

> *"… stay flexible in my approach and reflect on experiences for personal growth."* (P2)

> *"I also employ flexibility and adaptability to adjust my supervision approaches. In addition, I utilize problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and creativity to address the concerns among the teachers."* (P3)

> *"I had to be flexible when necessary but firm on my decision at the same time."* (P11)

Participant 2 stressed flexibility as it brings along personal growth through reflection. One had to stay open to different insights. Program heads can develop methods, find ways to improve, and develop dynamic leadership. Similarly, Participant 3 emphasized flexibility in response to the teachers' concerns, which entails problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity to manage difficulties and build teamwork and constant improvement. Participant 11 added that flexibility must be balanced with firmness—flexible decision-making that upholds standards. This nuanced approach helps program heads negotiate uncertainties, maintains accountability, and supports teacher development.

Seeking Support. Seeking support from colleagues and experts becomes a critical coping strategy program heads use to successfully face the challenges inherent in supervising teachers. As program heads work hard to perform their supervisory roles in complex and ever-emerging demands, the art of seeking support enables them to harness the knowledge and experiences of colleagues and experts to create cooperation, innovation, and lifelong learning. Seeking support as a coping strategy allows program heads to negotiate uncertainties, deal with challenges, and nurture a culture of support and collaboration within educational institutions. The following responses were given by the participants:

> *"… but with the help of my dean who trained, guided, and empowered me, I gained the skills necessary for the position."* (P2)

> *"It is basically through the help from other program heads in our institute that I was able to perform my tasks."* (P4)

> *"I also ask questions whenever there is something I do not understand. It was a struggle at first, but later I got used to the responsibilities a program head has."* (P6)

> *"Another is that I always ask our dean whenever I need to know more about something."* (P7)

The participants' responses indicate the importance of seeking support from colleagues and experts as a coping strategy program heads use to supervise teachers. Participants 2, 4, 6, and 7 all underscored the precious role of mentorship and guidance in getting equipped with the necessary competencies for the position they assume. Program heads can lead with more confidence and skill if needed by seeking advice and support from more experienced colleagues or experts. This collaborative approach encourages professional growth and establishes good working relations within the educational community for adequate supervision.

"Last is support networks – seek support from colleagues." (P3)

"I cope with these challenges by consultation and connecting with other higher education institutions, trying to benchmark their methods and consult higher-ups as to possible application in my program." (P5)

Participants 3 and 5 commented on the creation of support networks and the active consultation with peers and external institutions. By tapping into people's collective knowledge and experiences, program heads can realize diverse perspectives, share best practices, and be informed of novel educational tendencies. Actively pursuing support enables program heads to address challenges, innovate in teaching practices, and improve the quality of education within the institution. Consulting with higher education institutions through higher authority and experts can help benchmark their methods, seek insights, and explore opportunities for collaboration and improvement in service to the betterment of educational excellence.

Indeed, program heads employ various coping strategies for their challenges. One is having open communication. Good, clear, and consistent communication by the principals with their teachers establishes trust, makes them understand each other better, and strengthens their relationship, all of which contribute to the effectiveness of the school and its success (Dalton, 2024). Effective communication between supervisors, program heads, and teachers enhances teachers' professionalism and creates a strong sense of togetherness and kinship within the school community (Wijaya et al., 2020). Other coping mechanisms that instructional leaders use in the new normal include versatility and flexibility in leadership, overcoming such challenges as the lack of resources, communication barriers, and age-related issues. Their supervisory competencies emphasize interpersonal skills essential to sail through the complexity of supervising in the ever-changing educational landscape (Magno, 2023).

Amid the many challenges that program heads may be dealing with, the most crucial way that can be used to resolve concerns or issues related to the delivery of instruction and other academic-related matters is to communicate well with the people under their supervisory function. There can be lapses in the discharge of work responsibilities that can be addressed through proper and timely feedback, one that can lead other educators to become more determined and committed to the teaching profession. Educators may vary in their perspectives, but they can meet halfway toward the common goal of ensuring that students' interests and welfare are given importance and that the mandate of the educational institution is served.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Effective supervision by program heads is essential for advancing teacher development, maintaining educational standards, and enhancing student learning outcomes. It is through guidance, feedback, and support that program heads allow teachers to continue refining their pedagogical practices toward constant changes in the educational trend and meeting diversifying student needs. This supervision offers a culture of excellence, continuous professional growth, and delivery of quality education to all learners.

Supervision provided by program heads nurtures mutual growth and learning for both the teacher and supervisor. It is an interactive process wherein program heads learn from the ideas and experiences of teachers, and where teachers learn from the feedback and advice given to them. This satisfying feeling from this cycle of events grows professional bonds, builds excellence in culture, and fosters continued improvement in teaching skills that can only be passed to the learning students.

For program heads, supervising teachers is a multi-faceted challenge entailing time management, fair evaluation, overcoming hesitations with experienced educators, and managing report submissions on time. Since the activities involved in the supervision are complex in themselves, the need for strategic planning, effective communication, and flexible approaches to evaluation is mandatory. Addressing these challenges is considered crucial for promoting supportive teaching and continuous pursuit of improvement in relation to educational practices.

Effective communication is the key to overcoming such challenges in teacher supervision and professional development. Various strategies that ensure the promotion of open dialogue, giving and receiving objective feedback, flexibility, and support from colleagues will be paramount in furthering a collaborative educational environment that supports growth. Such clear and constructive communication allows program heads to lead the way in teacher performance through effectively overcoming challenges and further promoting a culture of continuous improvement within their institutions.

Recommendations

Educational institutions may create a structured supervisory framework that continuously trains and develops the capacity of program heads. These institutions may prioritize professional development for supervisors to develop further their skills in guiding teachers, maintaining high academic standards, and ensuring continuous improvement in student learning outcomes. Educational institutions may help foster mutual learning and professional growth by creating mentorship programs where experienced supervisors can share their insights to improve the complete supervisory process for new supervisors. Educational institutions may streamline administrative procedures to reduce the administrative burden on program heads, giving them more time to devote to academic supervision. Training in comprehensive performance evaluation techniques can help supervisors evaluate teachers' performance effectively, including those with higher educational attainments. Educational institutions encourage the development of strong support networks, adaptive strategies, and open communication channels to help program heads work through supervisory challenges. Future researchers may explore concepts related to program heads' job satisfaction, motivation, and overall performance.

5. Acknowledgement

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