

Original Article

Administrative Support and Professional Compliance in Reading Instruction among Public Elementary School Teachers

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Abstract

This study examined the association between administrative support and professional compliance in reading instruction among public elementary school teachers in Davao Oriental. Grounded in social cognitive and organizational support theories, the research utilized a quantitative descriptive-correlational design involving full-time teachers with extensive experience in literacy instruction. Data collected through high-reliability Likert-scale instruments revealed that both administrative support and professional compliance were rated as very extensive by participants. Correlation analysis indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between the two variables, suggesting that stronger administrative backing is associated with higher levels of instructional compliance. Furthermore, regression analysis identified relational trust, mentorship, and public support as significant predictors of teacher compliance, with mentorship emerging as the most influential factor. These findings underscore that successful literacy implementation depends not only on teacher competence but also on leadership conditions that prioritize mentorship and supportive professional environments to sustain consistent instructional practices.

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1. Introduction

Reading instruction in the elementary grades depends on far more than the technical knowledge of individual teachers. It is also shaped by the organizational conditions within which teachers plan lessons, interpret policy, respond to learner variation, and sustain the routines required for early literacy development. In public elementary schools, teachers are expected to deliver instruction that is developmentally appropriate, curriculum-aligned, and sufficiently explicit to support oral language, print awareness, alphabet knowledge, and phonics-based word recognition. These expectations require consistency, professional judgment, and institutional support. When schools provide clear direction, responsive supervision, and credible instructional leadership, compliance with reading expectations becomes more likely and more sustainable.

The present study addresses this intersection between leadership support and teacher action. Professional compliance in reading instruction refers in this inquiry to teachers' adherence to expected literacy practices across four foundational domains: oral language, book and print knowledge, alphabet knowledge, and phonics and word recognition. These domains are central to early reading development because they establish the language, code, and print foundations on which later comprehension depends. Recent evidence continues to affirm that emergent literacy and beginning reading benefit from systematic attention to language, print, and alphabetic code, particularly when instructional practices are coherent and sustained across classrooms (Bailey et al., 2023; Cusiter et al., 2025; Goldfeld et al., 2022; O'Brien et al., 2022).

At the same time, the quality of reading instruction is inseparable from school leadership. Instructional leadership shapes what teachers prioritize, how they interpret reform, and the extent to which they feel supported in implementing demanding pedagogical routines. Empirical work has shown that leadership practices influence teacher learning, classroom practice, and school improvement through mechanisms such as professional trust, agency, and structured professional learning (Alazmi & Hammad, 2023; Bellibaş et al., 2022; Rodrigues & Ávila de Lima, 2024). When leadership support is visible and credible, teachers are more willing to engage in instructional refinement, accept feedback, and align practice with collective goals.

Trust is particularly important in school settings where teachers must carry out literacy expectations under substantial workload pressure. Hong et al. (2020) showed that trust during school leadership transition influences teacher capacity, while Alazmi and Hammad (2023) demonstrated that trust mediates the relationship between principal leadership and teacher professional learning. In literacy work, trust matters because reading instruction often requires repeated observation, feedback, lesson adjustment, and open discussion of classroom challenges. When teachers perceive relational trust, they are less likely to treat supervision as surveillance and more likely to regard it as support for instructional improvement.

Mentorship represents another critical pathway through which school leaders can strengthen compliance in reading instruction. High-quality professional learning

is most effective when it moves beyond one-shot orientation and offers sustained coaching, reflection, and opportunities to refine practice. A systematic review by Ventista and Brown (2023) concluded that training combined with ongoing coaching and collaborative professional learning is more likely to produce positive student outcomes than isolated workshops. In the literacy field, Magnusson et al. (2023) further showed that video-based coaching can strengthen teachers' scaffolding practices, particularly in areas such as modeling, feedback, and strategy instruction. These findings suggest that mentoring structures can directly influence the consistency and quality of classroom literacy practices.

Public support also matters in reading instruction, although it is less often examined as a leadership variable within school-based literacy research. Reading development improves when schools communicate literacy goals clearly, strengthen home-school links, and position teachers' instructional work as a shared institutional priority. Reading motivation and engagement are shaped by broader school and policy conditions, not only by classroom technique (Barber & Kluda, 2020). A leadership climate that publicly affirms reading initiatives, mobilizes stakeholder backing, and communicates the value of literacy work can therefore reinforce teachers' commitment to instructional expectations.

The theoretical grounding of this study supports such a view. Social cognitive theory holds that behavior develops through the reciprocal interaction of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors (Bandura, 1986). In school settings, leadership signals, feedback, and models can therefore influence teachers' instructional behavior. Organizational support theory likewise argues that employees are more likely to reciprocate when they perceive that the organization values their contribution and well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The job demands-resources model adds that supportive resources buffer the strain of work demands and sustain motivation (Demerouti et al., 2001). Taken together, these frameworks suggest that teachers' compliance with reading expectations should be stronger when administrative support is credible, sustained, and instructionally relevant.

The need for local evidence remains substantial. Much of the literature on reading instruction emphasizes student outcomes, intervention design, or broad leadership functions, but fewer studies focus on how teachers' perceptions of administrative support relate to their compliance with expected literacy practice in a specific district context. This gap is important because implementation conditions vary across schools. Resource adequacy, leader responsiveness, professional learning opportunities, and community engagement may differ substantially even within one division. Local inquiry can therefore provide decision makers with more actionable evidence than generalized national trends.

This study was undertaken in Cateel 2 District, Division of Davao Oriental, where public elementary teachers are expected to sustain foundational reading instruction while responding to routine instructional and administrative demands. By examining administrative support through relational trust, mentorship, and public support, and by linking these dimensions to professional compliance in reading

instruction, the study contributes district-level evidence that may guide leadership action, teacher support strategies, and reading program strengthening. The inquiry is particularly relevant in contexts where improved literacy outcomes depend not only on policy prescription but also on the everyday conditions that shape whether teachers can comply with what policy requires.

2. Methodology

This study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational design to determine the relationship between administrative support and professional compliance in reading instruction among public elementary school teachers. The setting was Cateel 2 District, Division of Davao Oriental. From a population of 210 teachers, a sample of 125 respondents was identified using Slovin's formula at a 0.05 margin of error and selected through simple random sampling. Eligible participants were full-time classroom teachers who were actively teaching in public elementary schools during the 2025-2026 academic year, were directly involved in reading instruction, and had at least three consecutive years of teaching experience. Teachers in non-teaching or administrative positions, those with less than three years of experience, and those on extended leave were excluded.

Data were gathered through a structured survey questionnaire composed of two adapted parts. The first part measured administrative support through three domains: relational trust, mentorship, and public support. The second part measured professional compliance in reading instruction through four domains: oral language, book and print knowledge, alphabet knowledge, and phonics and word recognition. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale and interpreted using the descriptive ranges provided in the source thesis. Prior to full administration, the instrument underwent content validation and pilot testing with 30 teachers. Reliability analysis showed high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha of .925 for the administrative support scale and .975 for the professional compliance scale.

The researcher secured the necessary institutional permissions before data collection, informed the respondents of the purpose and voluntary nature of the study, protected anonymity and confidentiality, and allowed withdrawal at any stage without penalty. After retrieval, the completed questionnaires were checked, coded, and entered into SPSS for analysis.

Mean and standard deviation were used to describe the extent of administrative support and professional compliance, Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the relationship between the two variables, and multiple linear regression was used to determine which administrative support domains significantly influenced professional compliance. All statistical tests were interpreted at the 0.05 level of significance.

3. Results

Table 1 presents the extent of administrative support in reading instruction. Public support obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.51$), followed by relational trust ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.51$) and mentorship ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.50$). The overall mean for administrative support was 4.32 with a standard deviation of 0.51, and the descriptive level for all domains was very extensive.

Table 1. Summary of administrative support domains among public elementary school teachers.

Domain	Mean	SD	Descriptive level
Relational Trust	4.32	0.51	Very Extensive
Mentorship	4.29	0.50	Very Extensive
Public Support	4.35	0.51	Very Extensive
Overall	4.32	0.51	Very Extensive

Table 2 shows the extent of professional compliance in reading instruction. Book and print knowledge obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.52$), followed by phonics and word recognition ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.47$), while oral language and alphabet knowledge both posted means of 4.37. The overall mean for professional compliance was 4.40 with a standard deviation of 0.50, and all domains were described as very extensive.

Table 2. Summary of professional compliance in reading instruction among public elementary school teachers.

Domain	Mean	SD	Descriptive level
Oral Language	4.37	0.52	Very Extensive
Book and Print Knowledge	4.46	0.52	Very Extensive
Alphabet Knowledge	4.37	0.50	Very Extensive
Phonics and Word Recognition	4.38	0.47	Very Extensive
Overall	4.40	0.50	Very Extensive

Table 3 presents the correlation analysis between administrative support and professional compliance in reading instruction. The computed correlation coefficient was 0.64, with a coefficient of determination of 0.41 and a p-value of 0.000. The relationship was interpreted as moderate and statistically significant, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 3. Correlation results.

Variables	r	p-value
Administrative support and professional compliance in reading instruction	0.64	0.000

Table 4 presents the regression analysis for the domains of administrative support. All three domains significantly predicted professional compliance in reading instruction. Mentorship obtained the highest standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.38$), followed by relational trust ($\beta = 0.37$) and public support ($\beta = 0.36$). The overall model statistics were $R = 0.69$, $R^2 = 0.48$, $F = 59.23$, and $p = 0.000$.

Table 4. Regression model predicting professional compliance in reading instruction.

Domains	B	SE	Beta	t	p	Decision
Constant	1.42	0.36		3.94	0.000	Significant
Relational Trust	0.39	0.34	0.37	4.02	0.000	Significant
Mentorship	0.41	0.36	0.38	4.17	0.000	Significant
Public Support	0.37	0.33	0.36	3.88	0.000	Significant

4. Discussion

The findings show that teachers perceived administrative support in reading instruction to a very extensive degree, with public support obtaining the highest domain mean, followed by relational trust and mentorship. This pattern suggests that the teachers in the district generally view school leaders as visible supporters of literacy work, both within the school and in relation to the wider school community. Such a finding is consistent with the broader literature on instructional leadership, which shows that leadership effects often become visible through teachers’ perceptions of support, direction, and value alignment rather than through formal policy language alone (Bellibaş et al., 2022; Rodrigues & Ávila de Lima, 2024). When teachers believe that school leaders publicly affirm the importance of reading instruction, the literacy agenda becomes institutionally legitimate rather than individually optional.

The high rating for relational trust is also theoretically meaningful. Trust allows teachers to discuss instructional difficulties, accept feedback, and remain open to collaborative problem solving without fear that supervision will be punitive. This result aligns with Hong et al. (2020), who argued that trust supports teacher capacity during leadership change, and with Alazmi and Hammad (2023), who found that trust mediates the relationship between principal leadership and teacher professional learning. In the context of reading instruction, relational trust can reduce defensive practice and make it easier for teachers to refine lessons, seek assistance, and adjust instruction for struggling readers.

Mentorship likewise registered a very extensive level, although it posted the lowest mean among the administrative support domains. This does not imply weakness. Rather, it suggests that mentoring structures are present and valued, yet still represent an area where further strengthening may produce additional gains. The finding is important because sustained professional learning, especially when combined with coaching, has stronger links to instructional improvement than brief training events alone (Ventista & Brown, 2023). Literacy-specific coaching also appears to help teachers strengthen modeling, feedback, and strategy instruction in real classroom settings (Magnusson et al., 2023). In this light, the slightly lower mentorship mean may indicate an opportunity for school leaders to move from general support to more systematic instructional coaching.

Professional compliance in reading instruction was also rated very extensive overall. Among the instructional domains, book and print knowledge obtained the highest mean, while oral language and alphabet knowledge posted equal means. The pattern suggests that the teachers demonstrate strong fidelity to foundational reading practices across the language and print continuum. This result is compatible with current literacy scholarship, which continues to emphasize the importance of early and coordinated attention to oral language, print awareness, alphabetic knowledge, and code-related skills in the development of later reading competence (Bailey et al., 2023; Cusiter et al., 2025; Goldfeld et al., 2022; O'Brien et al., 2022).

The especially high score for book and print knowledge may reflect the relative procedural clarity of this domain. Teachers may find it easier to implement observable routines related to print conventions, book handling, print awareness, and text directionality because these practices are concrete, visible, and embedded in daily classroom life. By contrast, oral language and alphabet knowledge, while still highly rated, often require more sustained interactional planning, differentiation, and responsive scaffolding. Even so, the strong means across all four domains indicate that the respondents generally reported alignment with expected literacy practices.

The correlation analysis provides the central analytic contribution of the study. Administrative support and professional compliance in reading instruction were positively and significantly related, with $r = .64$ and $p < .001$. This is a moderate relationship, and the coefficient of determination indicates that 41% of the variance in professional compliance was associated with administrative support. In substantive terms, the finding suggests that compliance with reading expectations is not merely a personal trait of the teacher; it is meaningfully associated with the support structure created by school leadership. This interpretation is highly consistent with social cognitive theory, which treats environmental conditions as active influences on behavior, and with organizational support theory, which explains why workers reciprocate when support is perceived as real and consequential (Bandura, 1986; Eisenberger et al., 1986).

The result also resonates with contemporary leadership research showing that school leadership influences teacher practice through climate, trust, and professional learning processes rather than through command alone. Bellibaş et al. (2022) found

that instructional leadership relates to teacher practices through mediating professional processes, while Rodrigues and Ávila de Lima (2024) linked instructional leadership to student achievement through leadership perspectives centered on academic improvement. The present study extends these insights into the district literacy context by showing that when teachers perceive their administrators as supportive, their reported adherence to reading instruction expectations is stronger.

The regression model deepens this interpretation. All three administrative support domains significantly predicted professional compliance, and mentorship posted the strongest standardized coefficient, followed closely by relational trust and public support. This is a notable result because it suggests that while visible advocacy and supportive climate matter, the leadership function that most strongly distinguishes higher compliance is the provision of mentoring and guidance. This aligns with evidence that professional learning has the greatest instructional payoff when it is sustained, practice-based, and supported by feedback or coaching (Magnusson et al., 2023; Ventista & Brown, 2023). In reading instruction, mentorship likely operates as the mechanism that translates expectations into teachable routines and sustained classroom action.

Relational trust also remained a significant predictor in the model, which reinforces the interpretation that compliance is more likely when teachers experience school leadership as respectful, responsive, and reliable. Without trust, mentoring may be reduced to compliance monitoring, and public support may be viewed as symbolic rather than functional. The predictive contribution of trust therefore indicates that leadership credibility is not an accessory to literacy implementation; it is part of the implementation mechanism itself. Hong et al. (2020) and Alazmi and Hammad (2023) provide a useful lens here, because both studies underscore how trust sustains teacher capacity and professional learning under demanding institutional conditions.

Public support likewise exerted a significant independent influence, even if its standardized coefficient was slightly lower than those of mentorship and relational trust. This indicates that teachers' compliance is strengthened when literacy work is affirmed beyond private supervision. Public support can legitimize reading instruction as a school-wide and community-valued priority. Such visibility may improve morale, reinforce accountability, and help teachers see reading instruction as part of a larger educational mission. Barber and Klauda (2020) argued that reading achievement is tied to broader motivational and policy conditions, and the present result suggests that public-facing administrative affirmation may be one school-level expression of those conditions.

Taken together, the findings show that compliance in reading instruction is best understood as an organizationally supported professional behavior. Teachers in this district did not simply report that they knew what to do in literacy instruction; they also reported that school leadership conditions were strongly present, and those conditions were statistically associated with compliance. The results therefore support the job demands-resources model, which holds that workplace resources can buffer strain and sustain performance under demanding conditions (Demerouti et al., 2001).

In contexts where teachers must deliver foundational literacy instruction consistently, administrative support appears to function as a practical resource that sustains instructional alignment.

The findings have direct implications for school improvement. First, leadership for reading instruction should not be reduced to monitoring lesson plans or requesting reports. It should include systematic mentoring, credible trust-building, and visible advocacy for literacy work. Second, professional development for reading instruction should include follow-through structures such as coaching conversations, demonstration lessons, and feedback cycles. Third, literacy leadership should cultivate stronger school-community legitimacy for reading instruction so that teachers experience public support for what they are asked to do. These implications are especially relevant in public elementary settings, where literacy improvement depends on the cumulative consistency of daily teaching practice rather than on isolated intervention episodes.

The study should also be interpreted with appropriate caution. The findings are based on self-report data from one district and thus reflect perceived rather than directly observed practice. The design is correlational, so causal claims cannot be made. Even so, the strength and internal coherence of the results suggest that administrative support is a consequential condition for reading instruction compliance. Future studies may extend this line of inquiry through classroom observation, mixed-method inquiry, or multi-district comparison in order to test whether similar patterns hold across varied contexts.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that compliance in foundational reading instruction is not solely a matter of teacher disposition or curriculum prescription. It is also shaped by the relational, developmental, and public forms of support that school leaders provide. Strengthening mentoring systems, sustaining trust-based supervision, and making literacy work more visibly supported across the school community may help reinforce consistent and high-quality reading instruction in public elementary schools.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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