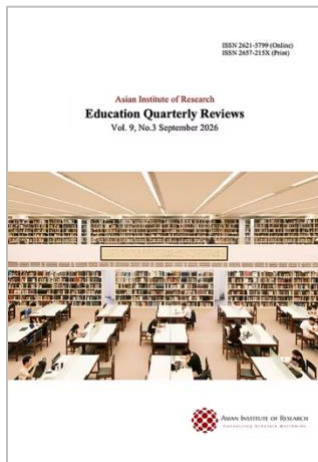




Education Quarterly Reviews

Chea, S., Hum, C., Rany, S., & Kravitz, M. (2026). Assessing Instructional Leadership Practices on Enhancing Pre-Service Teachers' Teaching Competency at Battambang Teacher Education College, Cambodia. *Education Quarterly Reviews*, 9(3), 78-85.

ISSN 2621-5799

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1993.09.03.726

The online version of this article can be found at:

<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:
The Asian Institute of Research

The *Education Quarterly Reviews* is an Open Access publication. It may be read, copied, and distributed free of charge according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

The Asian Institute of Research *Education Quarterly Reviews* is a peer-reviewed International Journal. The journal covers scholarly articles in the fields of education, linguistics, literature, educational theory, research and methodologies, curriculum, elementary and secondary education, higher education, foreign language education, teaching and learning, teacher education, education of special groups, and other fields of study related to education. As the journal is Open Access, it ensures high visibility and increases citations for all research articles published. The *Education Quarterly Reviews* aims to facilitate scholarly work on recent theoretical and practical aspects of education.



ASIAN INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH
Connecting Scholars Worldwide

Assessing Instructional Leadership Practices on Enhancing Pre-Service Teachers' Teaching Competency at Battambang Teacher Education College, Cambodia

Sopheaktra Chea¹, Chan Hum², Sam Rany³, Merryl Kravitz⁴

¹ Graduate School, National University of Battambang, Cambodia. Email: cheasopheaktra5678@gmail.com

² Graduate School, National University of Battambang, Cambodia. Email: hum.chan@nubb.edu.kh

³ Graduate School, National University of Battambang, Cambodia. Email: sam.rany@nubb.edu.kh

⁴ Professor of Secondary Education at New Mexico Highlands University, linkedin.com/in/merryl-kravitz-581913123

Correspondence: Merryl Kravitz, New Mexico Highlands University

Abstract

This study analyzes the relationship between instructional leadership practices and the development of teaching competency among pre-service teachers at the Battambang Teacher Education College (BTEC) in Cambodia. Although instructional leadership is recognized as a primary factor in teacher effectiveness worldwide, empirical evidence of its practice in the Cambodian teacher education context remains scarce. The study used a mixed-methods approach and collected data from 365 participants, including 303 pre-service teachers, 21 instructors, 31 student-teachers, and 10 management committee members. The findings revealed a substantial link between leader training and teachers' skills. The research also revealed that guidance from experienced instructors truly helped new teachers improve their instructional skills. Providing feedback and training for new teachers is also crucial. However, the study had an issue. The schools new teachers go to for trial teaching don't always have what they need. Those responsible need to ensure they support the instructors. The report states that strong leadership is required to ensure that pre-service teachers are well equipped. So, this study's results should be used to improve teacher training programs by the people running them." Teacher education institutes should use this information to learn from how they train instructors, helping teachers do their jobs better.

Keywords: Teaching Competency, Instructional Leadership, Pre-Service Teachers, Battambang Teacher Education College

1. Introduction

In Cambodia, pre-service teachers need to receive the same quality of education as students in other countries. Battambang Teacher Education College supports this by helping pre-service teachers train and build the skills they need to teach effectively. Battambang Teacher Education College helps ensure teachers are prepared. Teaching skills are essential for teachers. In this way, teachers can help Cambodian students learn. Cambodian students need

quality teachers. Battambang Teacher Education College is helping to make this happen. This study examines the impact of instructional leadership on pre-service teachers' professional development and assesses how these leadership practices facilitate growth and pedagogical competence in a BTEC environment. The quality of an education system depends largely on the quality of its teachers. This puts a responsibility on teacher training institutions. They need to ensure pre-service teachers gain the knowledge and skills to do their job well.

To improve teaching and learning, educational administrators use various methods. They create plans for their schools. They design curricula that cover everything students need to learn. They provide mentorship and guidance to help pre-service teachers improve. They work to create a positive learning environment. Teachers trained at BTEC will go on to teach students for years. This makes BTEC very important for the country's education system. BTEC supports the education of many generations of students. The government and the college are working together to elevate educational standards; therefore, BTEC's effectiveness is vital to improving the Cambodian education system. Instructional leadership is recognized as a key determinant of pre-service teacher effectiveness.

This research aims to do the following: analyze the teaching leadership practices used by current BTEC teachers and administrators. Assess how well pre-service teachers learn to teach during their training. We want to see whether the way teachers are guided helps them become effective teachers. Good leaders can affect how well teachers teach and how many students learn. This study aims to identify what makes pre-service teachers effective and how to better engage students. We are exploring how leaders can help pre-service teachers improve. It helps us better understand teacher education in Cambodia than previous studies have. The study provides us with real-life examples of how instructional leadership works in Cambodian schools. This is useful for teacher education institutions because it gives them a blueprint for improving how teachers teach and how students learn. They can use the study's findings to inform decisions about improving pre-service teacher training in Cambodia. The study's findings can help those working on the 2024-2028 Education Strategic Plan for Cambodia make decisions about education in Cambodia. It examines the challenges and needs of Cambodian schools and provides practical solutions. The study's results can help teacher education institutions and policymakers work together to improve education in Cambodia. The primary focus is measuring pedagogical efficacy, specifically pre-service teachers' ability to plan lessons and implement instruction effectively in the classroom. Teaching skills are essential for teachers. In this way, teachers can help Cambodian students learn. Cambodian students need quality teachers. Battambang Teacher Education College is helping to make this happen. This study examines the impact of instructional leadership on pre-service teachers' professional development and assesses how these leadership practices facilitate growth and pedagogical competence in a BTEC environment. The quality of an education system depends largely on the quality of its teachers. This puts a responsibility on teacher training institutions. They need to ensure pre-service teachers gain the knowledge and skills to do their job well. To improve teaching and learning, educational administrators use various methods. They create plans for their schools. They design curricula that cover everything students need to learn. They provide mentorship and guidance to help pre-service teachers improve. They work to create a positive learning environment. Teachers trained at BTEC will go on to teach students for years. This makes BTEC very important for the country's education system. BTEC supports the education of many generations of students. The government and the college are working together to elevate educational standards; therefore, BTEC's effectiveness is vital to improving the Cambodian education system. Instructional leadership is recognized as a key determinant of pre-service teacher effectiveness.

This research aims to do the following: analyze the teaching leadership practices used by current BTEC teachers and administrators. Assess how well pre-service teachers learn to teach during their training. Determine whether the way teachers are guided helps them become effective teachers. Good leaders can make a difference in how well teachers teach and how many students learn. This study examines what makes pre-service teachers effective and how to engage students more. It explores how leaders can help pre-service teachers improve. It helps us better understand teacher education in Cambodia than previous studies have. The study provides us with real-life examples of how instructional leadership works in Cambodian schools. This is useful for teacher education institutions because it gives them a blueprint for improving how teachers teach and how students learn. The findings can inform decisions about how to improve pre-service teacher preparation in Cambodia. This study's conclusions can help those involved in the 2024-2028 Education Strategic Plan for Cambodia make decisions about education in Cambodia. It addresses schools' problems and needs in Cambodia and proposes practical solutions. Teacher education institutes and policymakers can use the findings of this study to work together to

improve education in Cambodia. The major concern is the measurement of pedagogical effectiveness, that is, the pre-service teachers' competence in lesson design and successful implementation of instruction in the classroom.

2. Literature Review

The literature review combines theoretical and empirical foundations relevant to instructional leadership and pre-service teacher competency. This study draws on educational theories that describe how leadership influences teacher performance. Hallinger (2011) reported that school administrators help develop a learning environment by directing instructional programs, aligning curricula, and monitoring student and teacher development. The study also draws on Bandura's (1977) theory of "learning," in which rookie teachers learn to teach by watching and imitating experienced mentors. Leadership is critical to ensuring instructors educate well and maintain standards. The study shows that school administrators build an environment that helps teachers do their best. It is defined as a forward-looking process in which leaders align institutional efforts to support student success through curricular management and collaborative professional development. Hallinger's review of four decades of research on effective leaders highlights three core functions of effective school leaders: setting the mission, administering instructional programs, and creating positive school climate. Linda Darling-Hammond (2006) found that ongoing support and formative feedback are critical to reducing new-teacher turnover and accelerating professional growth. Building on Stronge's Teacher Competency Framework, this study assesses pre-service teachers' competencies in lesson planning, effective instruction, and classroom management. Instructional leadership provides the framework that the pre-service teachers need to acquire these fundamental competencies. The existing literature largely focuses on educational environments in industrialized nations, leaving a considerable gap regarding the implementation of instructional leadership in the Cambodian teacher education system. This study addresses these shortcomings by examining how instructional leadership can empower pre-service teachers in the specific context of resource-limited BTEC. The factors of the study are analyzed by using the 'Teacher Competency Framework' (Khan, 2018) and 'Instructional Leadership Theory' (Hallinger, 2011). These strategies include classroom observation, formative feedback, professional development seminars, peer mentoring, and curricular support.

3. Methodology

The study focused on teaching skills and leadership practices in the Battambang Teacher Education College (BTEC). The study used a mixed-methods approach to provide a complete picture. The study used a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach, collecting quantitative data followed by qualitative in-depth interviews. The study sample comprised 365 BTEC examinees. The sample comprised 303 prospective teachers. A stratified random sample was used to represent different academic specializations (e.g., Elementary Education, Science, and Khmer Literature) and years of study. The study also used purposive sampling, selecting 31 participants. The study included ten management team members and twenty-one teacher educators selected for their direct involvement in leadership and mentorship. These were the ones selected for this. Thirty-one pre-service teachers also participated in focus discussions to share their opinions on what they learned. This survey used a five-point scale, allowing respondents to indicate whether they strongly disagreed or strongly agreed. The survey was based on the Teaching Competency Scale, adapted from Stronge's Teacher Competency Framework (2018) and Darling-Hammond (2006). It also used the Instructional Leadership Scale, based on the work of Hallinger (2011). The researchers processed the statistical data using SPSS. The mean and standard deviation summarized participants' responses. The focus group transcripts were evaluated using the six-step framework developed by Braun and Clarke. The survey used the Teaching Competency Scale and the Instructional Leadership Scale. The analysis involved data familiarization, categorization, and systematic identification of recurring themes related to leadership and instructional efficacy.

4. Results

The study is based on an analysis of data received from 303 pre-service teacher respondents from the Battambang Teacher Education College (BTEC). The quantitative data were analyzed using statistical tools to identify the association between instructional leadership techniques and teacher competency. The qualitative data added

contextual explanations to the findings. The average scores of instructional leadership techniques were used to assess the effectiveness of current leadership initiatives. The statistics showed that pre-service teachers fell along a continuum of teaching skills, with some areas more developed than others. Correlation Coefficient ($r = 0.538$): This shows a strong positive relationship between instructional leadership and the teaching competency of pre-service teachers. The higher the quality of instructional leadership, the higher teaching competency tends to be. The statistical study shows a very substantial association ($p < 0.001$), meaning the correlation between instructional leadership and teaching competency is meaningful and not accidental. What is interesting is the very low p-value. So, we can be sure that the connection between these items is real and very unlikely to be a coincidence. Teachers partnered with leaders who value teaching, teamwork, and offering positive feedback are often particularly successful at preparing lessons, conducting courses, and managing the classroom. Teachers who work with these kinds of leaders are better at preparing lessons, giving instruction, and managing the classroom. This is where the Significance Level becomes important, as it shows there is a statistically significant relationship between instructors and leaders who focus on instructional modeling, team cooperation, and constructive criticism.

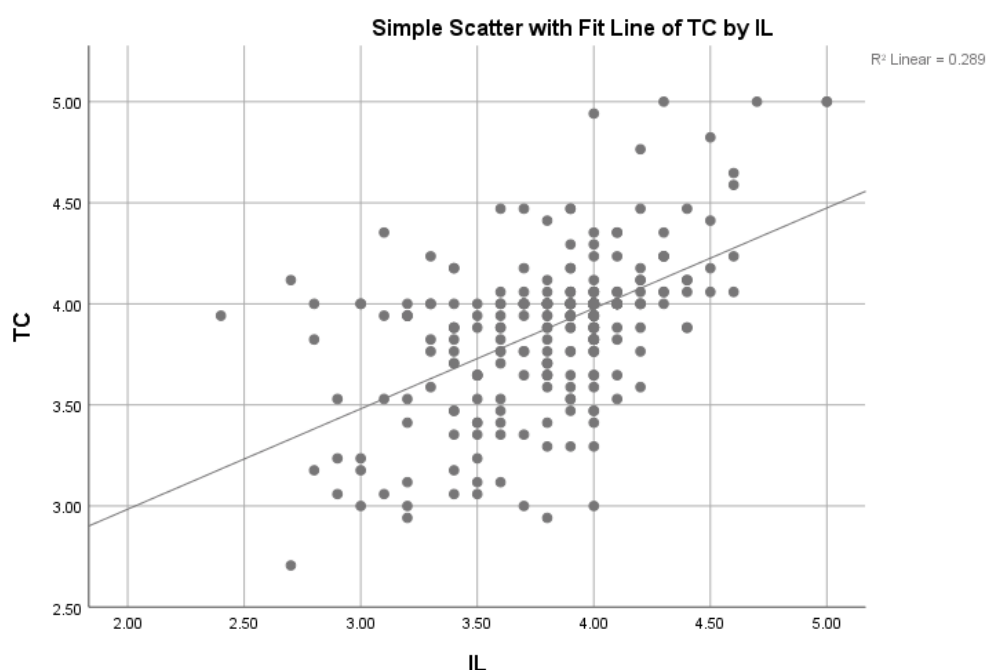


Figure 1: Scatter Plot of Instructional Leadership and Teacher Competency

IL is plotted on the x-axis and TC on the y-axis. IL increases as TC increases. This is shown by the upward-sloping line. The $R^2 = 0.289$. This means changes in IL can explain 28.9% of the changes in TC. The remaining 71.1% comes from other factors or random variation. The overall trend is upwards, but the dots are scattered along the line. This shows some variation. Also, near the top of TC, where TC equals 5.00, there is a limiting effect.

4.1. Enhancing Instructional Leadership for Student Teachers

Findings

Good leadership connects and directs people. Good leadership isn't about giving orders from an administrative position; it is about being involved and providing a collaborative direction. Good leadership fosters an environment where people work to help and learn from one another. It helps individuals feel valued and supported. It creates trust and great partnerships. The leader has to show others the way. This includes actions for the school and for the people who work there. BTEC is struggling with infrastructural issues, such as a lack of technology and budget limits. It also lacks formal leadership training. The Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) illustrates this in relation to instructional frameworks. "We can't do it alone. If we want to succeed, we need to work as a team. We should make sure the individuals in control get the training they need, everyone shares what they know, we employ

technology and teaching methods, and that the leaders have the time and power to make sure everything goes properly.

Students and leaders must develop their skills and improve their practice. They need to learn from each other.” Student instructors and leaders should ask for help when they need it. The leaders should be able to pay attention to their work. They have to ensure student teachers and leaders are doing everything right. When student instructors and leaders do this, they will do well in their roles. The tactics range from formal feedback and coaching to experience. We need these to make things happen. It should balance leadership development, resource allocation, and ongoing training. The best strategy to improve teacher effectiveness is one-on-one coaching and feedback. But it only works with help. Good leadership requires time, training, and resources to develop and support teachers and to build collaboration. Leadership is power. Good leaders lead, coach, and show teachers how to connect theory and practice. Leadership style is adaptable. Includes everyone. It gives structure and support, but also freedom for educators to flourish. They define curriculum, mentor teachers, and monitor instructional methods to meet school goals. But implementation is typically tricky. Two issues: Inadequate time, budget, resources, and infrastructure. Limitations: Training, ability, and motivation for students/faculty; faculty ability and motivation for students/faculty. We must help teachers develop and grow to improve leadership in schools. Methods for supporting teacher growth include mentoring, classroom observation with feedback, hands-on learning, and project-based collaboration. These work best when teachers also reflect on their own practice.

The Power of Leaders to Transform: “Leaders develop teachers by coaching them, by modeling for them, and by involving them in professional learning.” New teachers have two challenges. One is organizational and logistical: not having time, having too many pupils, or lacking the requisite resources or infrastructure. Another is personal: feeling insecure, struggling with lesson preparations, and having trouble keeping pupils on task. The Role of Leadership: Good leadership can help build confidence and competence in new instructors. Feedback and a supportive environment can help new instructors move from simply delivering a lecture to active, reflective teaching. This readies teachers for self-directed teaching. Instructional leadership at BTEC links theory and practice. Leaders who do more than manage, but who intentionally coach, give feedback, and foster a collaborative environment where new teachers can explore, reflect, and develop, get the best results. BTEC’s current instructional leadership techniques include a distributed team leadership style that fosters close cooperation among administrators, instructors, and support staff to advance institutional goals. As administrators, educators, and staff, we work together to set teaching goals and a shared vision. We work with schools and the community to ensure our training meets real needs in our area. This helps keep our training current.

Pedagogy: We engage learners through talks, group work, and practical classes. These strategies assist pupils to learn better. We use classroom observations, grading rubrics, and feedback to monitor teaching quality and hold teachers accountable for their work. We facilitate and make administrative and teaching responsibilities more accessible through methods such as virtual classrooms and online planning. Levels of Teaching Competency of Pre-Service Teachers: BTEC Competence represents a shift from knowledge transfer to learning facilitation. It is mapped over three levels. Instructional leadership ensures teachers can transfer their learning to their work. Leaders lead by example for instructors. When leaders model instructional techniques and technology, instructors are inspired to become more creative and to employ technology in their instruction. Instructional leadership provides teachers with a setting. It develops a team of teachers that collaborate and learn from each other. When teachers collaborate to develop curricula and teach, they share responsibility for students' success. Instructional leadership helps teachers work as a team.

Strategies for Improvement

Need to do something to make BTEC a better place for teachers to learn and grow. “Going to teach teachers to be strong leaders, to use technology in the classroom, to teach in innovative and exciting ways. We'll pair teachers with experienced teachers so they may learn from them and get solid suggestions. Innovation and Research will inspire instructors to try things, attend conferences, and share ideas with others. We need to do more to make BTEC a strong place for instructors to learn. Here's how we suggest these techniques will work. BTEC is doing a good job. They have a broad strategy to support teachers from the start of their careers through to leadership. This

transforms how the institution functions; it is no longer about delivering information to people, but about working together and helping each other flourish. People who go to BTEC will be good at what they do; they will also be able to reflect on their work, adapt as new challenges arise, and solve the complex problems education faces today. BTEC uses a technique with different aspects; thus, those in charge of teaching are not only administrators but also teachers, mentors, and people who are still learning to be teachers. This generates a cycle of greatness at BTEC that will go on.”

5. Discussion

The study shows that leadership style in teaching affects the teaching abilities of pre-service teachers at Battambang Teacher Education College (BTEC). The results suggest a link between a leader’s teaching style and teachers’ success in instructing their students. This connection is very strong. This means leaders are responsible for about half of how well teachers do their jobs. The Role of Instructional Leadership. The study confirms that instructional leadership is not merely an administrative function but a fundamental catalyst for teacher development. This finding aligns with Hallinger’s (2011) Instructional Leadership Theory, as it suggests that when BTEC administrators focus on managing instructional programs and providing positive feedback, pre-service teachers show higher competence in lesson planning and implementation. This confirms the premise that leadership provides a structural framework for instructional growth. Mentorship and social cognitive development: The qualitative results show the “observational professionalism” pre-service teachers experienced. In line with Bandura’s (1977) Social Cognitive Theory and Darling-Hammond’s (2006) work, this confirms that the relationship between leadership and competency is mutual. While leadership guides the pre-service teacher, active engagement in feedback cycles allows leaders to refine their supervisory practices. The problem is that what student teachers learn at BTEC differs from what they can actually do in schools. This is called the resource gap. When student teachers go to schools, they often find that the schools do not have the technology and resources that they learned about at BTEC. Therefore, school authorities should support student teachers in understanding how to teach in these scenarios. The resource gap is an issue that needs to be addressed. At BTEC, they teach student teachers how to teach, but then they go to schools that do not have the same resources. This makes it hard for the student teachers to use what they learned at BTEC. Those in charge need to develop plans to help student teachers address the resource gap. Implications for Policy and Practice: This study’s results have significant implications for Cambodia’s 2024-2028 Education Strategic Plan. To improve teacher quality, BTEC is advised to codify mentorship as a function and include Stronge’s Teacher Competency Framework in periodic supervisory assessments. Shifting leadership focus from administrative oversight to targeted instructional support better positions institutions to equip pre-service teachers to handle the challenges of the modern classroom.

6. Conclusion

This study provides an in-depth review of the influence of instructional leadership on the teaching capability of pre-service teachers at Battambang Teacher Education College (BTEC). The findings show that instructional leadership significantly affects teacher growth in Cambodia. There is a relationship between what instructional leaders do and how good teachers are at their work. This suggests that leadership quality contributes to how well teachers teach. The research determined that for teachers still learning, comments and observations of experienced teachers’ work are quite significant. This assists teachers learning the craft to see where they are headed. Teachers who are still learning need to see how experienced teachers work. The research also says that schools that train teachers need to prepare them, because many schools lack resources. Teachers who are still learning will work in schools that do not have many resources. The research says that schools that train teachers should prepare teachers for this. This way, teachers can apply what they learn at BTEC in real situations.

To summarize, the study suggests that instructional leadership is related to teacher competency. Instructional leaders provide the support teachers still need as they learn. As these teachers improve, instructional leaders become more effective in their schools. The findings benefit education decision-makers and school administrators, particularly for the Education Strategic Plan 2024-2028. They provide a basis for evidence-based adjustments in teacher training. Further studies are needed to explore these dynamics in different contexts to support the national education system.

7. Recommendation

The study's findings on the relationship between instructional leadership and teacher competency lead to the following recommendations: The BTEC administration should codify management training programs to ensure leadership principles are used consistently to support pre-service teachers. Leadership has to do with competence. Thus, leadership must ensure that pre-service teachers receive feedback they can use to grow. This feedback should happen often. The good thing about "learning" is that it really works. We can see this from what people said in the findings. So, the institution should make "learning" a big part of the teacher education curriculum. This will help teachers improve their practice. Then we can give them the help they need, rather than just giving everyone the same thing. This way, we can ensure our support makes a real difference for the teachers who need it most. Leadership and competency are important; we should focus on them.

Author Contributions: All authors contributed to this research.

Funding: This study received no funding.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent Statement/Ethics Approval: Not applicable.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted Technologies: This study has not used any generative AI tools or technologies in the preparation of this manuscript.

References

- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful Teacher Education: Lessons from Exemplary Programs*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc
- Darling-Hammond, L., Burns, D., Campbell, C., Goodwin, A. L., Hammerness, K., Low, E. L., & Zeichner, K. M. (2017). *Empowered Educators: How High-Performing Systems Shape Teaching Quality around the World*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Dismore, H., Campbell-Barr, V., Manning, R., & Warwick, P. (2024). A relational approach to knowledge exchange in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 49(12), 2534–2545. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2024.2312404>
- Hallinger, P. (2011). Leadership for Learning: Lessons from 40 Years of Empirical Research. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 49, 125-142. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231111116699>
- Khan, S. (2018). *The teacher competency framework: Elevating pedagogical standards in developing education systems* (Report No. 45). UNESCO.
- Stronge, J. H. (2018). *Qualities of Effective Teachers*. ASCD.

Index**Correlations**

		IL	TC
IL	Pearson Correlation	1	.538**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	303	303
TC	Pearson Correlation	.538**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).