

Linking principal leadership to teacher efficacy: Basis for school improvement planning

Mary Connie D. Basadre*

Cebu Technological University-Main Campus, Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the teachers' perceptions of principal leadership and their own efficacy beliefs as a basis for crafting a school improvement action plan at Mohon Elementary School during School Year 2025-2026. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved 47 teacher-respondents via purposive sampling. Validated questionnaires were used to measure principal leadership across five domains and teacher efficacy across six domains. Pearson's r was employed to test the significant relationship between principal leadership and teacher efficacy. Results revealed a predominantly female, early-career teaching workforce with high educational attainment. Teachers perceived the principal's leadership practices as highly effective across all domains, rating them at the "Strongly Agree" level. Similarly, teachers reported "Very Strong" beliefs in their own efficacy across all instructional domains. Statistical analysis established a significant positive correlation between principal leadership and teacher efficacy, indicating that effective leadership is strongly associated with higher teacher confidence. While overall perceptions were extremely positive, the comparatively lower mean scores of indicators were identified, including providing targeted resources, involving teachers in decision-making, encouraging reflective supervision, and effectively teaching students with special needs. These areas form the targeted foundation for intervention. The study concludes that the synergistic relationship between supportive leadership and strong teacher efficacy provides a robust platform for sustainable improvement. It recommends the implementation of a data-driven action plan, "Enhancing Leadership and Efficacy for School Improvement at Mohon Elementary School," to address the identified areas for enhancement, thereby strengthening instructional quality and student learning outcomes.

Keywords: Administration and supervision, principal leadership, teacher efficacy beliefs, descriptive-correlation, school improvement action plan, Talisay City, Cebu, Philippines.

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INTRODUCTION

Principal leadership plays a vital role in shaping the educational environment and is widely recognized as a key factor in promoting school effectiveness and teacher performance. Effective principals guide their schools through clear vision articulation, strategic

*Corresponding author/ Email: basadremaryconnie18@gmail.com

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decision-making, and fostering collaborative and supportive climates. These leadership actions directly influence not only administrative functions but also instructional practices, thus indirectly impacting student achievement (Leithwood & Sun, 2020). Furthermore, teacher efficacy beliefs, teachers' confidence in their ability to affect student engagement and learning significantly determine instructional quality and persistence in overcoming challenges (Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2022). Both principal leadership and teacher efficacy are intertwined, as supportive leadership can enhance teachers' efficacy by providing motivation, resources, and professional development opportunities (Wang et al., 2023).

Teachers' perceptions of principal leadership, especially regarding communication, motivation, decision-making, and instructional supervision, influence their efficacy beliefs, classroom management, and willingness to innovate (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2021). The synergy between these two dimensions is crucial when crafting school improvement plans that are responsive to teacher needs and conducive to continuous growth. An assessment focusing on principal leadership and teacher efficacy offers valuable insights into areas that require reinforcement and strategic intervention to achieve sustained school improvement (Silva et al., 2024). This forms the foundation for designing a school improvement action plan that aligns leadership practices with teachers' professional capacities in multi-dimensional ways.

Internationally, research identifies gaps in how principal leadership affects teacher efficacy across different educational contexts. For example, studies in Australia revealed a lack of in-depth understanding of how instructional leadership specifically relates to teachers' efficacy in diverse school environments amid changing educational demands (Kesuma et al., 2021).

Similarly, in Canada, Rahman et al. (2023) highlighted the inconsistent impact of principals' participative decision-making on teacher self-efficacy, calling attention to contextual factors like school size and community attributes. Despite abundant evidence on leadership styles, there remains a gap in linking these styles to actionable school improvement plans that address local teacher efficacy needs concretely (Kim & Lee, 2021). Moreover, much of the research still relies on cross-sectional data, limiting insights into how principal leadership and teacher efficacy evolve and interact longitudinally.

In the United States, studies reiterated these gaps, noting principal leadership is often generalized without focusing on differentiated leadership traits that support teacher efficacy in various cultural and socio-economic settings (Jones & Patel, 2024). The variability of teacher efficacy development and its responsiveness to leadership support remains understudied in urban versus rural schools. Additionally, there is a need for more mixed-method research exploring how teachers interpret and enact efficacy beliefs under different leadership frameworks, to better understand causal mechanisms (Martinez & Hall, 2020). These gaps illustrate the global challenge to create localized leadership interventions aligned with teacher efficacy dynamics that can drive tailored school improvement plans.

In the Philippine context, research on principal leadership and teacher efficacy is growing but still limited. Recent studies emphasize principal instructional leadership as instrumental in fostering teacher competence and job satisfaction (De Guzman & Alzona, 2023). However, these studies primarily focus on general administrative functions without delving deeply into the nuanced relationship between principal leadership dimensions and specific teacher efficacy components. There is a lack of empirical data linking these to actionable school improvement frameworks that consider diverse school contexts across the archipelago, especially in public elementary schools (Santos & Reyes, 2022). Additionally, many Philippine studies use small sample sizes, limiting generalizability and practitioners' ability to develop informed leadership interventions that enhance teacher efficacy comprehensively.

Furthermore, gaps exist in examining how socio-cultural factors influence teacher perceptions of leadership effectiveness and efficacy beliefs (Lumbreras et al., 2021). The majority of literature has yet to integrate teacher demographic profiles, such as educational attainment and teaching experience, into analyses that could provide customized leadership development plans. These insufficiencies constrain policy-makers and school leaders from crafting evidence-based school improvement actions that respond to teachers' diverse needs, competencies, and beliefs in Philippine public schools (Ortega & Delos Reyes, 2024).

At Mohon Elementary School, specific local gaps persist in understanding how the principal's leadership style directly influences teacher efficacy beliefs in daily instructional practices. Preliminary observations indicate inconsistent teacher motivation and variations in instructional supervision effectiveness. However, systematic assessment data on these variables is lacking. Teachers' self-perception of their efficacy in handling classroom management, motivating students, and accommodating individual differences remains undocumented, creating a challenge to identify precise professional development needs. Additionally, prior school improvement plans have focused more on infrastructure and curriculum updates with minimal attention given to leadership efficacy and its impact on teacher outcomes.

Moreover, there is an absence of a comprehensive, empirical study that integrates principal leadership and teacher efficacy measurements as a basis for developing a targeted school improvement action plan tailored to the specific context of Mohon Elementary School. This local gap underscores the need to not only survey but also analyze the relationships between leadership practices and teacher beliefs that affect classroom efficacy, instructional quality, and ultimately student learning outcomes.

Given these gaps at the international, national, and local levels, conducting this study is essential. It will provide valid and reliable data on teacher perceptions of principal leadership and their efficacy beliefs at Mohon Elementary School, offering a grounded basis for crafting a school improvement action plan. This plan will aim to empower both the principal and teachers by addressing identified weaknesses and strengthening leadership-instructional linkages for enhanced teaching effectiveness and student learning. Such a study aligns with current academic calls for integrated leadership and teacher efficacy research to inform practical and context-sensitive school development strategies.

The main problem addressed in this study is the lack of understanding of how principal leadership and teacher efficacy beliefs interact at Mohon Elementary School and to what extent these perceptions influence the formulation of a responsive school improvement action plan during the School Year 2025–2026. The study sought to assess teachers' perceptions comprehensively to inform leadership enhancement initiatives that promote a more effective, motivating, and supportive educational environment.

Statement of the problem

This study assessed the teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership practices and their own efficacy belief system at Mohon Elementary School during the School Year 2025–2026 as a basis for the development of a school improvement action plan.

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, position or rank, highest educational attainment, and years of teaching experience?
2. As perceived by the respondents, what is the extent of the principal's leadership practices in terms of leadership vision and communication, support and accessibility,

motivation and recognition, decision making and problem solving, and supervision and instructional leadership?

3. To what extent do teachers perceive their efficacy belief system in terms of communication, classroom management, accommodating individual differences, motivation of students, managing learning routines, and promoting higher order thinking skills?
4. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of principal leadership practices and their efficacy belief system?
5. Based on the findings, what school improvement action plan can be developed?

METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of leadership practices and their efficacy belief system. The descriptive component of the design was used to describe the demographic profile of the teacher-respondents and to quantify their perceptions of principal leadership and their level of self-efficacy. Through the use of standardized questionnaires, the study gathered data that reflected the existing conditions, practices, and beliefs within the school setting. The correlational component was utilized to examine whether a significant relationship existed between the teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership practices and their efficacy belief system. This approach was appropriate because it allowed the identification of associations between variables without manipulating or altering any conditions within the school environment.

Respondents and locale of the study

This study was conducted at Mohon Elementary School in Barangay Mohon, Talisay City, Cebu, which serves 1,892 students and employs 55 teachers during the 2025–2026 school year. The respondents were 47 teachers selected through purposive sampling, chosen for their direct experience with the principal's leadership and their ability to assess their own teaching efficacy. With 49 classrooms supporting diverse academic activities, the school provides an appropriate setting to examine teachers' perceptions of leadership practices and efficacy beliefs.

Research instrument

The research instrument comprised three parts: a demographic profile section, the Teacher Perception of Principal Leadership Questionnaire (TPPAQ) adapted from Ontai-Machado (2016) measuring five leadership domains, and the Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System-Self (TEBS-Self) based on Dellinger et al. (2008) evaluating six efficacy areas using Likert scales—all validated and reliable instruments that together assess teachers' perceptions of principal leadership and their own efficacy beliefs at Mohon Elementary School.

Data analyses procedure

The data collection followed three systematic stages: preliminary (securing school head approval and reproducing questionnaires), gathering (personally distributing questionnaires to teacher-respondents with explanations of study objectives, anonymity, confidentiality, and

voluntary consent per the Data Privacy Act of 2012, followed by personal retrieval), and post-gathering (checking, tallying, encoding, and statistically analyzing the data). Statistical treatments included frequency and percentage for demographic profiles, weighted mean and standard deviation for perceptions and efficacy beliefs, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine significant relationships between principal leadership and teacher efficacy, all computed using appropriate software to inform an action plan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile of the respondents

Table 1
Age

Age	f	%
26-30	16	34.04
31-35	10	21.28
36-40	8	17.02
41-45	7	14.89
46-50	3	6.38
51 and above	3	6.38
Total	47	100.00

Table 1 revealed that most teacher-respondents (34.04%) were aged 26–30, followed by 31–35 (21.28%), 36–40 (17.02%), 41–45 (14.89%), and 46–50 and 51 above (each 6.38%), indicating a predominantly young workforce below 40 years old. This age distribution implies that the school’s teaching force is in early career stages, characterized by high openness to leadership influence, professional development, and instructional innovation, necessitating strong principal support, mentoring, and capacity-building leadership practices—findings supported by Özalp et al. (2025), Mthanti and Msiza (2023), and Morgan (2024), who emphasized that younger teachers benefit greatly from supportive leadership that fosters collaboration, instructional confidence, and professional identity.

Table 2
Sex

Sex	f	%
Female	44	93.62
Male	3	6.38
Total	47	100.00

Table 2 shows that the vast majority of teacher-respondents were female (44 teachers, 93.62%), with only 3 males (6.38%), reflecting the female-dominated nature of elementary education. This gender distribution implies that school leadership practices must be inclusive and responsive to female educators' professional needs, while professional development can further empower them and enhance their efficacy—findings supported by Boadu and Asiama (2025), Lie et al. (2021), and Akman (2021), who noted that teaching remains female-dominated globally, female teachers exhibit strong collaborative practices and responsiveness

to instructional leadership, and supportive leadership significantly enhances self-efficacy in such contexts.

Table 3
Position/Rank

Position/Rank	f	%
Master Teacher	4	8.51
Teacher 3	20	42.55
Teacher 2	2	4.26
Teacher 1	21	44.68
Total	47	100.00

Table 3 indicates that the largest groups of respondents were Teacher 1 (21 teachers, 44.68%) and Teacher 3 (20 teachers, 42.55%), followed by Master Teachers (4 teachers, 8.51%) and Teacher 2 (2 teachers, 4.26%), showing that the teaching staff predominantly consists of entry to mid-level ranks. This distribution implies that the school relies heavily on early- and intermediate-career teachers who are still developing instructional expertise, making the principal's role in instructional guidance, supervision, and professional development critically important—supported by Aketch et al. (2025), Booth et al. (2021), and Thien and Yeap (2025), who found that schools with fewer senior teachers require strong principal-led supervision, distributed leadership and mentoring, and structured professional learning opportunities to enhance teacher self-efficacy and instructional competence.

Table 4
Highest Educational Attainment

Highest Educational Attainment	f	%
Doctoral Degree	1	2.13
Master's Degree	12	25.53
With Masters Units	24	51.06
Bachelor's Degree	10	21.28
Total	47	100.00

Table 4 shows that most teacher-respondents had ongoing or completed graduate-level education: 51.06% had master's units, 25.53% held a master's degree, 21.28% had only a bachelor's degree, and 2.13% attained a doctoral degree, indicating strong commitment to professional growth. This educational profile implies that the teaching staff is receptive to instructional leadership, innovative strategies, and evidence-based practices—supported by Rezaull Karim et al. (2021), Fernandes et al. (2023), and Goddard et al. (2021), who found that higher academic qualifications correlate with stronger self-efficacy, instructional effectiveness, professional confidence, and greater responsiveness to leadership and innovative practices.

Table 5
Years of Teaching Experience

Years of Teaching Experience	f	%
21 and above	5	10.64
16-20	5	10.64
11-15	9	19.15
6-10	9	19.15

1-5	19	40.43
Total	47	100.00

Table 5 reveals that the largest group of respondents had 1–5 years of teaching experience (19 teachers, 40.43%), followed by 6–10 years and 11–15 years (9 teachers each, 19.15%), while 16–20 years and 21+ years were least represented (5 teachers each, 10.64%), indicating a predominantly early-career teaching workforce still developing instructional mastery and professional confidence. This distribution implies that strong instructional leadership, mentoring, consistent supervision, coaching, and peer support are essential—supported by Pikić Jugović et al. (2025), Abdallah (2023), and Gümüş et al. (2022), who found that early-career teachers exhibit lower self-efficacy but improve significantly with strong leadership and mentoring, structured induction programs enhance professional confidence, and school leadership plays a crucial role in sustaining efficacy among less experienced teachers.

Perceived extent of the principal's leadership practices

Table 6
Leadership Vision and Communication

Leadership Vision and Communication	Mean	Sd	VD
The principal clearly articulates the school's mission and vision.	4.70	0.55	Strongly Agree
The principal effectively communicates school goals to teachers.	4.70	0.55	Strongly Agree
The principal ensures that teachers understand the expectations for student outcomes.	4.72	0.50	Strongly Agree
The principal regularly updates staff about school policies and developments.	4.66	0.64	Strongly Agree
The principal encourages open communication among teachers and staff.	4.79	0.41	Strongly Agree
Aggregate Mean	4.71	0.53	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 1.00-1.80=Strongly Disagree

Table 6 shows that all indicators under leadership vision and communication were rated Strongly Agree (mean range 4.66–4.79), with the highest item being the principal's encouragement of open communication among teachers and staff ($M=4.79$, $SD=0.41$) and an aggregate mean of 4.71 ($SD=0.53$), indicating very high perceived effectiveness. This finding implies that the principal successfully articulates the school's mission, fosters shared understanding and alignment, and strengthens teachers' sense of purpose and commitment—supported by Salloum (2022), Ozeren et al. (2020), and Meyee et al. (2022), who found that clear communication of goals fosters teacher commitment and instructional coherence, positively influences motivation and self-efficacy, and enhances trust, professional confidence, and collective efficacy for sustained school improvement.

Table 7
Support and Accessibility

Support and Accessibility	Mean	Sd	VD
The principal is approachable when teachers seek guidance or help.	4.72	0.50	Strongly Agree
The principal provides necessary resources to support effective teaching.	4.53	0.58	Strongly Agree
The principal listens to teachers' concerns and takes them seriously.	4.55	0.69	Strongly Agree
The principal creates an environment where teachers feel supported.	4.64	0.61	Strongly Agree
The principal facilitates collaboration among teachers.	4.81	0.50	Strongly Agree
Aggregate Mean	4.65	0.57	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 1.00-1.80=Strongly Disagree

Table 7 shows that all indicators under support and accessibility were rated Strongly Agree (mean range 4.53–4.81), with the highest item being facilitation of collaboration among teachers (M=4.81, SD=0.50) and an aggregate mean of 4.65 (SD=0.57), reflecting very high perceived support. This finding indicates that teachers view the principal as highly accessible, responsive, and supportive, fostering a collaborative environment and trust—supported by Lijun and Te (2024), Setyaningsih and Sunaryo (2021), and Shalah et al. (2024), who found that approachable and responsive principals enhance teacher satisfaction and instructional confidence, supportive leadership strengthens efficacy and professional commitment, and active promotion of collaboration contributes to positive school climate and sustained instructional improvement.

Table 8
Motivation and Recognition

Motivation and Recognition	Mean	Sd	VD
The principal inspires teachers to strive for excellence.	4.83	0.38	Strongly Agree
The principal acknowledges and appreciates teacher achievements.	4.77	0.48	Strongly Agree
The principal encourages teachers to take initiative in school activities.	4.77	0.56	Strongly Agree
The principal fosters a positive and motivating school culture.	4.70	0.55	Strongly Agree
The principal supports teacher professional growth and development.	4.77	0.52	Strongly Agree
Aggregate Mean	4.77	0.50	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 1.00-1.80=Strongly Disagree

Table 8 shows that all indicators under motivation and recognition were rated Strongly Agree (mean range 4.70–4.83), with the highest item being inspiring teachers to strive for

excellence ($M=4.83$, $SD=0.38$) and an aggregate mean of 4.77 ($SD=0.50$), indicating that teachers strongly agreed the principal actively motivates and recognizes their contributions. This finding suggests that leadership practices effectively foster a positive school culture through personal recognition, encouragement, and support for development—supported by Magdaraog (2025), Zainal and Mohd Matore (2021), and Wang’ombe (2023), who found that acknowledging teacher achievements increases instructional motivation and engagement, motivational leadership positively influences self-efficacy and innovation, and a supportive, motivating school culture promotes professional growth, collaborative engagement, and higher teacher performance.

Table 9
Decision-Making and Problem-Solving

Decision-Making and Problem-Solving	Mean	Sd	VD
The principal involves teachers in important decision-making processes.	4.47	0.69	Strongly Agree
The principal addresses problems and conflicts in a fair manner.	4.60	0.68	Strongly Agree
The principal makes timely decisions that benefit the school community.	4.68	0.56	Strongly Agree
The principal encourages teacher input when solving school issues.	4.68	0.56	Strongly Agree
The principal implements policies that reflect teachers’ concerns.	4.68	0.59	Strongly Agree
Aggregate Mean	4.62	0.61	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 1.00-1.80=Strongly Disagree

Table 9 shows that all indicators under decision-making and problem-solving were rated Strongly Agree (mean range 4.47–4.68), with the highest items including timely decision-making, encouraging teacher input, and implementing policies reflecting teachers' concerns (each $M=4.68$), and an aggregate mean of 4.62 ($SD=0.61$), reflecting very high perceived effectiveness. This finding indicates that teachers view the principal as fair, collaborative, proactive, and participative, valuing their input and fostering trust and collective responsibility—supported by Cai et al. (2022), Owhor (2025), and Pañares (2025), who found that participative leadership positively influences teacher engagement and self-efficacy, encouraging input and fair policies strengthens trust and professional commitment, and collaborative decision-making contributes to positive school climate, teacher satisfaction, and improved student outcomes.

Table 10
Supervision and Instructional Leadership

Supervision and Instructional Leadership	Mean	Sd	VD
The principal provides constructive feedback during classroom supervision.	4.66	0.52	Strongly Agree
The principal’s supervision helps improve teaching practices.	4.72	0.45	Strongly Agree

The principal encourages reflective practice by teachers through supervision.	4.53	0.55	Strongly Agree
The principal supports professional development based on supervision outcomes.	4.57	0.58	Strongly Agree
The principal ensures supervision is fair, consistent, and respectful.	4.72	0.45	Strongly Agree
The principal promotes a learning-focused school environment through supervision.	4.70	0.55	Strongly Agree
The principal monitors student progress and supports teachers accordingly.	4.74	0.49	Strongly Agree
The principal models effective instructional leadership.	4.72	0.54	Strongly Agree
The principal addresses instructional challenges collaboratively.	4.74	0.49	Strongly Agree
The principal provides resources following supervisory recommendations.	4.62	0.64	Strongly Agree
The principal fosters an atmosphere conducive to instructional innovation.	4.70	0.51	Strongly Agree
The principal advocates for teacher needs in instructional matters.	4.70	0.46	Strongly Agree
The principal maintains open communication about supervision goals.	4.66	0.52	Strongly Agree
The principal sets clear expectations for instructional quality.	4.60	0.58	Strongly Agree
The principal encourages peer support through collaborative supervision.	4.81	0.40	Strongly Agree
The principal tracks the impact of supervisory feedback on teaching outcomes.	4.64	0.53	Strongly Agree
The principal balances administrative duties with instructional leadership.	4.57	0.54	Strongly Agree
The principal utilizes data to guide supervision and leadership.	4.62	0.53	Strongly Agree
The principal promotes continuous improvement through leadership actions.	4.70	0.46	Strongly Agree
The principal addresses teacher concerns promptly during supervisory activities.	4.66	0.48	Strongly Agree
The principal effectively manages classroom supervision to enhance learning.	4.72	0.45	Strongly Agree
Aggregate Mean	4.67	0.51	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 1.00-1.80=Strongly Disagree

Table 10 shows that all indicators of supervision and instructional leadership were rated Strongly Agree (mean range 4.53–4.81), with the highest item being encouragement of peer support through collaborative supervision ($M=4.81$, $SD=0.40$) and an aggregate mean of 4.67 ($SD=0.51$), reflecting very high perceived effectiveness. This finding indicates that teachers view the principal as highly effective in providing constructive feedback, supporting professional development, fostering reflective teaching, and promoting collaborative problem-solving—supported by Bellibaş (2023), Kilag and Sasan (2023), and Perry (2022), who found

that principals combining classroom observation with constructive feedback enhance teacher effectiveness and student learning, instructional leadership practices positively impact teacher development, and collaborative, data-driven supervision strengthens teacher efficacy and professional engagement.

Extent of teachers perception on their efficacy belief system

Table 11
Communication

Communication	Mean	Sd	VD
Communicating effectively with parents or guardians.	3.77	0.43	Very Strong
Encouraging students to think critically and solve problems.	3.74	0.44	Very Strong
Providing feedback that helps students improve.	3.77	0.43	Very Strong
Using different teaching methods to engage students.	3.77	0.43	Very Strong
Communicating effectively with parents or guardians.	3.74	0.44	Very Strong
Aggregate Mean	3.76	0.43	Very Strong

Legend: 4.32-4.00=Very Strong; 3.51-3.25=Strong; 3.00-2.50=Moderate Strong; 2.00-1.75=Weak

Table 12 shows that all indicators of communication and clarification were rated Very Strong (mean range 3.74–3.77), with the highest items being providing feedback that helps students improve and using different teaching methods to engage students ($M=3.77$, $SD=0.43$), and an aggregate mean of 3.76 ($SD=0.43$), reflecting very strong teacher efficacy. This finding indicates that teachers feel highly confident in communicating with students and parents, providing meaningful feedback, and employing diverse teaching strategies—supported by Peibin et al. (2023), Gan et al. (2021), and Amale and Gebretsadik (2024), who found that teachers' perceived communication efficacy positively influences classroom management and student engagement, strong efficacy in feedback and varied instructional strategies is linked to higher student motivation and achievement, and high self-efficacy in communication enhances clarifying expectations, fostering understanding, and promoting critical thinking.

Table 12
Classroom Management

Classroom Management	Mean	Sd	VD
Establishing and maintaining effective classroom management.	3.74	0.44	Very Strong
Managing disruptive behavior in the classroom.	3.64	0.49	Very Strong
Maintaining students' attention during lessons.	3.66	0.56	Very Strong
Creating a positive classroom environment.	3.70	0.55	Very Strong
Handling stressful situations related to teaching demands.	3.64	0.49	Very Strong
Managing time effectively during lessons.	3.64	0.49	Very Strong
Handling challenges related to standardized testing.	3.62	0.53	Very Strong
Managing multiple tasks and responsibilities simultaneously.	3.57	0.62	Very Strong
Aggregate Mean	3.65	0.52	Very Strong

Legend: 4.32-4.00=Very Strong; 3.51-3.25=Strong; 2.76-2.50=Moderate Strong; 2.00-1.75=Weak

Table 12 shows that all indicators of classroom management and climate were rated Very Strong (mean range 3.57–3.74), with the highest items being establishing effective classroom management (M=3.74, SD=0.44) and creating a positive classroom environment (M=3.70, SD=0.55), and an aggregate mean of 3.65 (SD=0.52), reflecting very strong teacher efficacy. This finding indicates that teachers feel confident in managing classrooms, maintaining student attention, and fostering positive learning environments despite minor multitasking challenges—supported by Lanza (2020), Chen et al. (2020), and Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2020), who found that teachers with strong self-efficacy demonstrate better classroom organization, student engagement, and handling of disruptive behaviors, which positively influences instructional effectiveness and student outcomes, as well as greater professional satisfaction and reduced burnout.

Table 13
Accommodating Individual Differences

Accommodating Individual Differences	Mean	Sd	VD
Adapting lessons to meet the needs of diverse learners.	3.68	0.47	Very Strong
Teaching students with special needs appropriately.	3.40	0.68	Very Strong
Supporting English language learners.	3.62	0.57	Very Strong
Adapting instruction based on student assessment data.	3.64	0.53	Very Strong
Engaging reluctant learners.	3.53	0.62	Very Strong
Aggregate Mean	3.57	0.57	Very Strong

Legend: 4.32-4.00=Very Strong; 3.51-3.25=Strong; 2.76-2.50=Moderate Strong; 2.00-1.75=Weak

Table 13 shows that all indicators of accommodating individual differences were rated Very Strong (mean range 3.40–3.68), with the highest items being adapting lessons to meet diverse learners' needs (M=3.68, SD=0.47) and adapting instruction based on assessment data (M=3.64, SD=0.53), and an aggregate mean of 3.57 (SD=0.57), indicating high teacher efficacy in differentiation. The slightly lower rating for teaching students with special needs (M=3.40, SD=0.68) suggests perceived challenges or need for additional support—supported by Scarparolo and Subban (2021), Kianinezhad (2023), and Sharma, et al (2022), who found that teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to differentiate instruction and address learning differences, confidence in supporting English language learners positively influences engagement and achievement, and efficacy in inclusive practices contributes to equitable learning experiences and improved outcomes for diverse students.

Table 14
Motivating Students

Motivating Students	Mean	Sd	VD
Motivating students who show low interest in schoolwork.	3.74	0.44	Very Strong
Encouraging students' self-motivation and responsibility.	3.81	0.40	Very Strong
Encouraging cooperative learning among students.	3.83	0.38	Very Strong
Helping students develop social skills.	3.79	0.41	Very Strong
Aggregate Mean	3.79	0.41	Very Strong

Legend: 43.26-4.00=Very Strong; 2.51-3.25=Strong; 1.76-2.50=Moderate Strong; 1.00-1.75=Weak

Table 14 shows that all indicators of motivating students were rated Very Strong (mean range 3.74–3.83), with the highest items being encouraging cooperative learning (M=3.83, SD=0.38) and encouraging self-motivation and responsibility (M=3.81, SD=0.40), and an aggregate mean of 3.79 (SD=0.41), reflecting very strong teacher efficacy in student motivation. The slightly lower rating for motivating students with low interest (M=3.74, SD=0.44) suggests a relative challenge, yet overall teachers feel confident in inspiring engagement, promoting collaboration, and fostering intrinsic motivation—supported by Alexander (2020), Jin et al. (2022), and Erdoğan et al. (2025), who found that teachers with strong self-efficacy are more effective in motivating students and fostering responsibility, positively influencing engagement, learning outcomes, and collaborative behaviors, and that promoting intrinsic motivation and cooperative learning is crucial for student achievement and socio-emotional development.

Table 15
Managing Learning Routines

Managing Learning Routines	Mean	Sd	VD
Developing lesson plans appropriate for the curriculum.	3.62	0.53	Very Strong
Monitoring individual student progress.	3.64	0.53	Very Strong
Creating instructional materials tailored to class needs.	3.68	0.47	Very Strong
Utilizing technology to support student learning.	3.62	0.57	Very Strong
Collaborating with colleagues to improve teaching.	3.66	0.52	Very Strong
Aggregate Mean	3.64	0.53	Very Strong

Legend: 43.26-4.00=Very Strong; 2.51-3.25=Strong; 1.76-2.50=Moderate Strong; 1.00-1.75=Weak

Table 15 shows that all indicators of managing learning routines were rated Very Strong (mean range 3.62–3.68), with the highest item being creating instructional materials tailored to class needs (M=3.68, SD=0.47) and an aggregate mean of 3.64 (SD=0.53), reflecting very strong teacher efficacy in planning lessons, monitoring progress, preparing materials, integrating technology, and collaborating with colleagues. The slightly lower ratings for developing appropriate lesson plans and utilizing technology (both M=3.62) suggest areas for continued support—supported by Contreras (2024), Abubakar et al. (2024), and Haydarova (2024), who found that high efficacy in lesson planning and progress monitoring leads to more effective instructional strategies, confidence in materials development and technology integration positively influences student engagement and learning outcomes, and teacher collaboration with structured routines enhances instructional consistency and professional growth.

Table 16
Promoting Higher Order Thinking Skills

Promoting Higher Order Thinking Skills	Mean	Sd	VD
1. Encouraging students to think critically and solve problems.	3.77	0.48	Very Strong
2. Integrating cross-curricular content in teaching.	3.66	0.52	Very Strong

3. Reflecting on and improving personal teaching practices.	3.77	0.48	Very Strong
4. Advocating for student needs within the school system.	3.70	0.46	Very Strong
Aggregate Mean	3.72	0.48	Very Strong

Legend: 4.32-4.00=Very Strong; 3.51-3.25=Strong; 3.00-2.50=Moderate Strong; 2.00-1.75=Weak

Table 16 shows that all indicators of promoting higher-order thinking skills were rated Very Strong (mean range 3.66–3.77), with the highest items being encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving and reflecting on personal teaching practices (both $M=3.77$, $SD=0.48$), and an aggregate mean of 3.72 ($SD=0.48$), reflecting high teacher efficacy in fostering critical thinking and reflective practice. The slightly lower rating for integrating cross-curricular content ($M=3.66$, $SD=0.52$) suggests a relative challenge in designing multidisciplinary lessons—supported by Verawati et al. (2021), Wilson et al. (2025), and Cojorn (2024), who found that teachers with strong efficacy in critical thinking and reflection implement more effective instructional strategies, confidence in promoting problem-solving and cross-curricular integration improves student engagement and outcomes, and teachers who feel capable of fostering higher-order thinking are better equipped to design challenging and meaningful learning experiences.

Significant relationship between teachers’ perceptions of principal leadership practices and their teacher efficacy belief system

Table 17
Correlation Between Teachers’ Perceptions of Principal Leadership Practices and Teacher Efficacy Beliefs

Variables	Mean	Sd	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Principal Leadership Practices	191.89	16.40	0.626	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant
Teacher Efficacy Beliefs	114.15	11.22				

Note. $p < 0.05$ =Significant

Table 17 revealed a strong, positive, and significant correlation between teachers’ perceptions of principal leadership practices and their efficacy beliefs ($r = 0.626$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that more favorable perceptions of leadership are associated with higher teacher efficacy across domains such as classroom management, communication, instructional planning, and higher-order thinking promotion. This finding implies that effective leadership behaviors—including instructional support, recognition, open communication, and collaborative decision-making—directly enhance teachers’ psychological resources and professional confidence, with practical implications for school improvement through targeted leadership training, professional learning communities, mentoring, and trust-building. These results are supported by Li and Liu (2024), Haw and King (2023), and Coban et al. (2023), who found that transformational and supportive leadership positively influences teacher efficacy, instructional effectiveness, classroom management confidence, and collaborative practices.

Findings

The majority of teachers were female (93.6%), aged 26-30 (34.0%), held Teacher 1 or Teacher 3 ranks (87.2%), had master's units or higher (78.7%), and had 1-5 years of teaching experience (40.4%). This indicates a young, early-career workforce with limited senior mentors.

Principal leadership practices – Teachers rated all five domains at the “Strongly Agree” level (aggregate means 4.62–4.77). However, specific lower-performing indicators (despite still being “Strongly Agree”) were identified: Providing necessary resources to support effective teaching (M=4.53); Involving teachers in important decision-making processes (M=4.47); Encouraging reflective practice by teachers through supervision (M=4.53); Balancing administrative duties with instructional leadership (M=4.57). These represent actionable gaps for the school improvement plan.

Teacher efficacy beliefs – Teachers reported “Very Strong” efficacy across all six domains (aggregate means 3.57–3.79). However, specific lower-performing indicators were: Teaching students with special needs appropriately (M=3.40 – the lowest of all 31 efficacy items); Managing multiple tasks and responsibilities simultaneously (M=3.57); Integrating cross-curricular content in teaching (M=3.66); Utilizing technology to support student learning (M=3.62). These areas directly contradict the otherwise high efficacy profile and require targeted intervention.

Pearson's r revealed a strong, positive, significant correlation between teachers' perceptions of principal leadership and their efficacy beliefs ($r = 0.626$, $p = 0.001$). The null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected.

The identified gaps (resource provision, decision-making involvement, reflective supervision, SPED teaching, multitasking, cross-curricular integration, technology use) formed the empirical foundation for the action plan “Enhancing Leadership and Efficacy for School Improvement at Mohon Elementary School.”

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that at Mohon Elementary School, teachers perceive their principal's leadership practices as highly effective, and they report very strong efficacy beliefs. More importantly, a significant positive relationship exists between these two variables. However, despite the overall positive ratings, specific and actionable weaknesses exist particularly in the principal's provision of instructional resources, involvement of teachers in decision-making, and encouragement of reflective supervision, as well as teachers' confidence in teaching students with special needs, managing multiple tasks, and integrating cross-curricular content. These specific gaps directly answer the main statement of the problem by providing a precise, evidence-based foundation for crafting a school improvement action plan that moves beyond general commendation to targeted intervention. The significant relationship between leadership and efficacy, assures that improvements in leadership practices will likely yield corresponding gains in teacher efficacy.

Based on the significant findings of this study, it is recommended that the developed Action Plan titled "Enhancing Leadership and Efficacy for School Improvement at Mohon Elementary School" be adopted, implemented, and monitored. This plan, which directly addresses the identified areas for enhancement from the research results, should be presented to the school administration and the Department of Education for appropriate support and execution to achieve sustained school improvement.

The following recommendations are directed to each beneficiary:

The Department of Education should utilize the empirical evidence from this study, particularly the low special education efficacy score and the resource provision gap, to revise Division training priorities by mandating inclusive education workshops and a streamlined school-based resource allocation policy. Furthermore, DepEd is encouraged to replicate this descriptive-correlational design in other districts to build a regional database linking principal leadership practices to teacher efficacy, thereby addressing the national gap noted by Ortega and Delos Reyes.

School principals should prioritize the three lowest-performing leadership indicators identified in this study. First, they should formalize a teacher advisory council to improve decision-making involvement, which currently received a relatively lower rating. Second, principals should conduct a resource needs audit and establish a transparent procurement system to raise the resource provision score. Third, they should adopt a structured reflective supervision protocol to increase the reflective practice score. Additionally, principals are encouraged to use the significant positive correlation as a persuasive tool with the School Governing Council to allocate Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) funds for the action plan's special education and cross-curricular workshops.

Teachers should actively engage in the proposed Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) focused on special education strategies and cross-curricular integration, as these directly address their self-identified weak efficacy areas. They are also encouraged to utilize the peer-support group for handling learners with special needs, which emerged as a critical need from the lowest efficacy item. Furthermore, teachers should participate in the workload management workshop to mitigate the multitasking challenge and apply the digital planning tools introduced in the action plan to enhance their classroom efficiency.

Although students are indirect beneficiaries, they will experience improved instruction through the action plan's focus on higher-order thinking skills and better-managed classrooms. The plan includes quarterly cross-curricular projects per grade level, which directly enhance student engagement and critical thinking. Moreover, the emphasis on accommodating individual differences, including special needs, will create a more inclusive learning environment that benefits all students.

The action plan mandates parent-teacher feedback mechanisms, such as digital suggestion boxes, and provides communication efficacy training for teachers. Parents and guardians should be invited to participate in School Improvement Team meetings to ensure their concerns about student progress and resource adequacy are addressed. The plan's strong emphasis on accommodating individual differences, particularly for learners with special needs, will lead to more inclusive classrooms, directly benefiting parents of children with special needs.

The researcher is encouraged to publish the validated questionnaires (Teacher Perception of Principal Leadership Questionnaire and Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System-Self) along with the action plan framework in a peer-reviewed journal to assist other graduate students conducting school-based correlational studies. Additionally, the researcher should use the study's findings to design a follow-up action research project that tests the causal direction of the leadership-efficacy relationship, since the current correlational design does not prove causation.

Future researchers should replicate this study using a longitudinal design to track how changes in specific leadership practices, such as reflective supervision, cause changes in teacher efficacy over time. They are also encouraged to include qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, to explore why teachers rated special education efficacy lowest and what specific principal behaviors they believe would most improve it. Furthermore,

comparative studies across different school types, such as rural versus urban or elementary versus secondary, should be conducted to test the generalizability of the correlation found in this study.

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