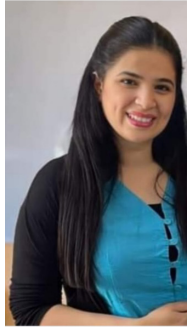


1 – The Relationship between Instructional Leadership and Teacher Self-Efficacy: A Mixed-Methods Study in Lebanese Schools

العلاقة بين القيادة التعليمية والكفاءة الذاتية للمعلمين: دراسة باستخدام المنهج المختلط في المدارس اللبنانية



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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between principals' instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy within the Lebanese educational context. Given the critical role of school heads in driving institutional effectiveness and teacher performance, this research investigates whether instructional leadership serves as a significant predictor of teacher confidence. Utilizing an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, data were collected

from a convenience sample of 130 PreK–12 teachers across Lebanon. Quantitative data were gathered via the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) and the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES), analyzed through IBM SPSS utilizing descriptive statistics, Pearson r correlation, and simple linear regression. Findings indicate that Lebanese principals demonstrate a moderate level of instructional leadership ($M=3.11, SD=0.95$), whereas teachers report high levels of self-efficacy ($M=4.01, SD=0.72$). A statistically significant, moderate positive correlation was identified between the two constructs ($r=0.318, p<0.05$). Regression analysis confirmed that instructional leadership significantly predicts teacher efficacy ($\beta=0.241, p=0.000$), accounting for approximately 10.1% of the variance. Qualitative thematic analysis validated these findings, revealing that while teachers are predominantly self-motivated, their efficacy is further bolstered by targeted pedagogical support and professional guidance. This study underscores the urgent need for formalized leadership training and criteria-driven hiring to enhance educational outcomes in Lebanon.

Keywords: Instructional Leadership, PIMRS, Teacher Self-Efficacy, TSES.

المستخلص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في العلاقة بين القيادة التعليمية للمديرين والكفاءة الذاتية للمعلمين في السياق التربوي اللبناني. وبالنظر إلى الدور الحيوي للمديرين في تعزيز فعالية المدرسة وأداء المعلمين، يهدف هذا البحث إلى استقصاء ما إذا كانت القيادة التعليمية تعمل كمتنبئ لثقة المعلمين بأنفسهم. اعتمدت الدراسة منهج البحث المختلط التفسيري التتابعي (Mixed-Methods)، حيث جُمعت البيانات من عينة ميسرة مكونة من 130 معلماً ومعلمة من مختلف المراحل الدراسية في لبنان. شملت المقاييس الكمية «مقياس تقييم الإدارة التعليمية للمديرين» (SRMIP) و«مقياس الكفاءة الذاتية للمعلمين» (SEST)، وتم تحليلها باستخدام برنامج SPSS MBI عبر الإحصاء الوصفي، ومعامل ارتباط بيرسون، والانحدار الخطي البسيط. أظهرت النتائج أن المديرين في لبنان يمارسون القيادة التعليمية بمستوى متوسط ($M=3.11, SD=0.95$)، بينما أظهر المعلمون مستوى عالٍ من الكفاءة الذاتية ($M=4.01, SD=0.72$). كما تم تحديد ارتباط إيجابي متوسط وهام إحصائياً بين المتغيرين ($r=0.318, p<0.05$) وأكد تحليل الانحدار أن القيادة التعليمية تتنبأ بشكل كبير بكفاءة المعلم ($\beta=0.241, p=0.000$)، مفسرةً ما يقرب من 10.1% من التباين في مستوى كفاءة

المعلمين. وقد عزز التحليل النوعي هذه النتائج، كاشفاً أنه بينما يتمتع المعلمون بدوافع ذاتية عالية، فإن كفاءتهم تتعزز بشكل أكبر من خلال الدعم التعليمي الموجه والإرشاد المهني من قبل الإدارة. تبرز هذه الدراسة الحاجة الماسة لبرامج تدريب قيادية رسمية واعتماد معايير مهنية في توظيف المديرين لتعزيز المخرجات التربوية في لبنان.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القيادة التعليمية، مقياس SRMIP، الكفاءة الذاتية للمعلمين، مقياس SEST

الكلمات المفتاحية: القيادة التعليمية، مقياس PIMRS، الكفاءة الذاتية للمعلمين، مقياس TSES

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Since the late twentieth century, leadership has remained the most extensively scrutinized facet of educational administration. While the conceptual boundaries of leadership continue to be debated (Evers & Lakomski, 1996), its role in attaining organizational goals and influencing stakeholders is indisputable (Ozdemir et al., 2020). In a rapidly evolving global educational landscape, administrators are increasingly held accountable for school effectiveness and student outcomes (Özdemir et al., 2020). Consequently, researchers have identified the principal's leadership caliber as the primary constituent of institutional success (Hallinger & Wang, 2015).

While teacher quality is the most direct influence on student achievement, the effectiveness of the principal is the second most impactful factor (Clifford et al., 2012). Over the past three decades, the principal's role has transitioned from purely administrative management to "instructional leadership"—acting as the primary architect of the learning process (Boyce & Bowers, 2017). Instructional leaders influence every dimension of the school, from culture and working conditions to pedagogical quality and student attainment (Stronge et al., 2021).

Concurrently, teacher self-efficacy—the conviction in one's ability to influence student learning—is a potent predictor of pedagogical success (Bandura, 1997). Highly efficacious teachers are more likely to exert extra

effort, embrace constructive feedback, and persist through challenges (Midgley et al., 1989). Despite the clear theoretical link between a principal's instructional guidance and a teacher's confidence, research in "emergent nations" remains sparse and results elsewhere are often inconsistent (Hallinger et al., 2017; Lentz, 2019). This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining the Lebanese educational context.

1.2 Background of the Study

The global movement toward school reform has repositioned the principal as an instructional administrator (Bush, 2013). Principals are now tasked with fostering exceptional instructional environments to drive academic success (Hallinger, 2010). According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1997), principals can bolster teacher confidence through instructional support and a positive school climate (Blase & Blase, 1999).

However, a "theory-practice" gap persists. While instructional leadership is praised by policymakers, many principals lack the time, confidence, or training to enact these behaviors (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013; OECD, 2019). In Lebanon, this challenge is acute. Principals are often viewed as mere administrators and frequently lack formal leadership preparation (Baroudi & Hojeij, 2018). Hiring is often influenced by seniority or social connections rather than specialized criteria (Mattar, 2012), and performance evaluations are rare (Akkary, 2013). Consequently, instructional leadership is often delegated to subject coordinators rather than being led from the top (Ghamrawi & Al-Jammal, 2013).

While research on instructional leadership in Lebanon has matured significantly over the past decade, mirroring global trends toward school reform, the field still lacks a focused examination of the principal-teacher attitudinal link. Existing studies have successfully mapped the influence of leadership on student achievement and school culture (Mattar, 2012; Akkary, 2013), but have largely overlooked how a principal's specific instructional dispositions correlate with teacher efficacy. This study seeks

to bridge this remaining gap, contributing to the rich Lebanese scholarly tradition by investigating this essential yet under-explored psychological intersection

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The shift in global educational paradigms has transformed the role of the school principal from a clerical administrator to a vital instructional leader responsible for the quality of classroom pedagogy (Hallinger et al., 2020). However, in the Lebanese context, a profound “theory–practice” gap persists. Despite the recognized importance of instructional leadership, most Lebanese principals remain entrenched in a traditional managerial model characterized by bureaucratic oversight and administrative maintenance (Mahfouz & Akkary, 2023). This systemic focus on administrative survival—often exacerbated by Lebanon’s ongoing economic instability and governmental negligence—leaves a significant void in pedagogical direction at the top level of school management (Jibai & Freiha, 2025).

A critical component of this problem is the structural delegation of instructional oversight. In many Lebanese schools, the “pedagogical core” is effectively offloaded to subject coordinators or middle managers, creating a disconnect where the principal lacks direct engagement with teacher development and classroom practices (Ghamrawi & Al-Jammal, 2013). This distance between leadership and instruction is problematic because teacher self-efficacy—the belief in one’s ability to influence student learning—is not developed in isolation; it requires the active modeling, verbal persuasion, and instructional support that only a visible instructional leader can provide (Bandura, 1997; Hall, 2021).

When principals fail to prioritize instructional behaviors, teachers may feel isolated and unsupported, leading to a stagnation in professional growth and a decline in instructional quality (Voras, 2022). While international literature confirms that instructional leadership is a primary driver of teacher efficacy, there is a scarcity of empirical evidence in Lebanon that explicitly

links specific principal behaviors to the confidence levels of the teaching body. Consequently, it remains unclear which instructional leadership dimensions—such as framing goals, providing feedback, or promoting professional development—are most effective in the unique, resource-constrained Lebanese environment. Without addressing this gap, Lebanese schools risk maintaining a leadership model that manages daily operations but fails to empower the very educators responsible for driving academic success.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What level of instructional leadership do teachers perceive in their principals?
2. What level of self-efficacy do Lebanese teachers report?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between perceived instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between perceived instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy within the Lebanese educational context. Specifically, the research aims to assess the levels of instructional leadership behaviors practiced by principals as perceived by their teaching staff and to evaluate the current state of self-efficacy beliefs among Lebanese teachers. Furthermore, the study seeks to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between these two variables, thereby exploring the extent to which instructional leadership acts as a predictor of teacher confidence. By addressing these objectives, the study intends to provide empirical insights that can guide school reform, leadership preparation, and teacher support mechanisms in Lebanon.

1.6 Significance of the study

The motivation for this study is rooted in the significant “paucity of research” regarding instructional leadership within the Arab world, particularly concerning the empirical link between administrative behaviors and teacher psychological constructs (Oplatka & Arar, 2017). Addressing this gap offers critical contributions across three dimensions: policy, practice, and student outcomes. Systemically, this research provides the necessary evidence for the Lebanese Ministry of Education to transition from traditional seniority-based appointments to the establishment of formal preparation programs and specialized hiring criteria for principals. At the school level, by utilizing the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), the study identifies specific, actionable behaviors that principals can adopt to bolster the efficacy of struggling faculty members through targeted professional development. Ultimately, by strengthening the pedagogical nexus between leaders and teachers, this study offers a strategic roadmap for indirectly enhancing student academic achievement through the cultivation of a more confident and instructional-focused teaching body.

1.7 Definitions of Key Terms

Instructional Leadership: Instructional leadership is defined as the set of behaviors and actions taken by a school principal to prioritize, manage, and sustain the professional learning of teachers and the improvement of the school’s instructional program (Hallinger, 2013; Liu et al., 2018). Hallinger’s model conceptualizes this through three primary dimensions: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning climate (Hallinger et al., 2025).

Teacher Self-Efficacy: Teacher self-efficacy refers to a teacher’s individual belief in their personal capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to successfully accomplish specific teaching tasks within a given context (Bandura, 1997). This includes their confidence in managing classroom environments and fostering student engagement

(Zhang et al., 2025).

Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS): The PIMRS is a standardized, research-validated instrument designed by Hallinger to collect data on the frequency of specific instructional leadership behaviors performed by principals (Hallinger, 1985). It allows researchers to quantify leadership practices across ten functional domains, providing a reliable measure for correlating leadership with teacher outcomes like efficacy and job satisfaction (Hallinger et al., 2025).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the literature surrounding the intersection of school principals' instructional leadership and teachers' self-efficacy. To establish a robust conceptual foundation, this review explores five core themes: (1) the evolution and definition of Instructional Leadership; (2) Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) Instructional Leadership Theory; (3) the construct of Teacher Self-Efficacy; (4) the theoretical link between leadership and efficacy; and (5) a critical synthesis of related empirical studies. This section identifies the gaps in current knowledge, particularly within the Middle Eastern context, justifying the need for the present study.

2.2 The Evolution of Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership emerged as a central paradigm in educational research nearly forty years ago, paralleling the global "school effectiveness" movement (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012). Despite its prominence, the term lacks a singular, universally accepted definition, leading to varied interpretations among practitioners (Stronge et al., 2021).

Early definitions focused on the principal as a "manager" of academic programs. However, contemporary scholars view instructional leadership more broadly as a set of behaviors designed to facilitate learning by setting

school-wide goals, monitoring instruction, and fostering professional collaboration. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) argue that instructional leadership is not merely administrative; it is the strategic coordination of a school's mission and resources to optimize the educational experience for both teachers and students.

The lack of a concise definition has historically been a weakness in the field, often leading to "role ambiguity" for principals. When the expectations of an instructional leader are not clearly defined, evaluations of their effectiveness become inaccurate (Avila, 1990). Therefore, this study adopts the Hallinger and Murphy model to provide a standardized, theoretically grounded definition for the Lebanese context.

2.3 Theoretical Framework: Hallinger and Murphy (1985)

One of the most enduring and influential frameworks in educational administration is the instructional leadership model developed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985), which organizes leadership into three primary dimensions further divided into ten specific job functions.

The first dimension, defining the school mission, requires principals to frame and communicate specific, measurable, and time-bound goals to ensure a shared sense of purpose among all stakeholders (Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Stronge et al., 2021).

The second dimension focuses on managing the instructional program through direct involvement at the classroom level; this includes coordinating the curriculum to ensure alignment, providing constructive feedback through the supervision of instruction, and utilizing standardized data to monitor student progress and reform teaching strategies.

Finally, the third dimension involves promoting a positive school learning climate by shaping the internal norms and attitudes of the institution. Principals accomplish this by protecting instructional time from interruptions,

providing incentives for both teachers and students, maintaining high visibility, and fostering continuous professional development for the faculty (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Wang, 2021).

To operationalize this theory, Hallinger (1985) developed the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS). Validated in over 30 countries and 250 studies, the PIMRS is the “gold standard” for assessing instructional leadership (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). Many studies utilize the shortened PIMRS Teacher Form, allowing educators to rate their principals’ behaviors on a 5-point Likert scale. This tool provides an objective, reliable measure of the frequency of instructional actions within the school.

2.4 Teacher Self-Efficacy: Definitions and Traits

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual’s conviction in their capacity to execute the specific behaviors required to produce desired performance attainments (Bandura, 1997). Within the educational domain, Teacher Self-Efficacy (TSE) represents an educator’s professional judgment regarding their competence to foster student engagement and learning, particularly when working with difficult or unmotivated students (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

According to Bandura (1997), a teacher’s sense of efficacy is a dynamic construct developed through four primary sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological arousal. Mastery experiences—the most potent source—are derived from successful past performances, while vicarious experiences involve observing colleagues succeed in similar tasks. Social persuasion encompasses the encouragement or feedback received from credible figures, such as principals, and physiological or emotional arousal involves interpreting internal states like stress or excitement as indicators of professional competence (Bandura, 1977, 1997). To operationalize these constructs, the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) is frequently employed, evaluating efficacy across three intersecting domains: Efficacy

in Student Engagement, Efficacy in Instructional Strategies, and Efficacy in Classroom Management (Tschannen–Moran & Hoy, 2001). Educators with high scores in these domains demonstrate distinct professional traits, including increased resilience in the face of failure and a greater willingness to experiment with novel pedagogical strategies. Furthermore, recent research (2020–2026) emphasizes that high teacher self–efficacy serves as a critical protective factor against emotional exhaustion, directly contributing to higher job satisfaction and better mental health outcomes (Ozdemir et al., 2020). Conversely, teachers with low self–efficacy are more susceptible to the negative impacts of systemic stressors and report higher levels of professional dissatisfaction.

2.5 How Leadership Influences Efficacy

The theoretical intersection of this study is grounded in the premise that a principal’s instructional leadership actions serve as critical “catalysts” for the four sources of self–efficacy defined by Bandura (1997). When principals engage in managing the instructional program—such as coordinating the curriculum and supervising instruction—they directly facilitate mastery experiences by ensuring teachers have the requisite resources and pedagogical support to achieve classroom success (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Furthermore, the function of monitoring student progress allows principals to provide targeted social persuasion; when a leader offers data–driven “verbal praise” and constructive feedback during evaluations, they validate the teacher’s competence and encourage persistence (Ghamrawi, 2011).

The dimension of promoting a positive learning climate also plays a vital role in efficacy development. By maintaining high visibility and fostering continuous professional development, principals create structured opportunities for vicarious experiences, where teachers can observe and model the successful practices of their peers (Bandura, 1997; Wang, 2021). Finally, by defining a clear school mission and protecting instructional

time from administrative interruptions, principals effectively manage the physiological and emotional arousal of the faculty. This reduction in systemic stress and “noise” creates a stable environment where educators can interpret their professional challenges as manageable tasks rather than overwhelming threats, thereby sustaining a high sense of instructional efficacy (Tschannen–Moran & Hoy, 2001; Hallinger et al., 2020).

2.6 Synthesis of Related Empirical Studies

The body of global research regarding the relationship between instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy presents a divergent landscape, often characterized by regional and systemic differences. In the Asian and Middle Eastern contexts, supportive evidence consistently underscores a robust positive correlation. Recent empirical studies in Nepal (Kunwor, 2023), Pakistan (Yousaf et al., 2019), and Malaysia (Isa et al., 2018) suggest that the principal’s role as an instructional driver is a primary predictor of teacher confidence. Notably, Yousaf et al. (2019) found that instructional leadership behaviors could account for as much as 74% of the variance in teacher efficacy, implying that in developing educational systems, active and direct pedagogical support from the top is essential for teacher empowerment. Conversely, research from Western contexts—specifically within the United States—reveals a more inconsistent narrative. Studies conducted by Flimban (2019) in Mississippi, Lentz (2019) in California, and Pearce (2017) in Georgia reported no statistically significant relationship between perceived leadership and teacher efficacy. These researchers posit that in more established or decentralized educational frameworks, a teacher’s sense of professional competence may be less dependent on the principal’s direct intervention and more closely tied to personal tenure, individual classroom experiences, or horizontal peer collaboration. This divergence suggests that the influence of instructional leadership is not universal but is instead mediated by the socio-technical maturity and cultural expectations of the specific educational environment.

2.7 Summary and Research Gap

The literature review confirms that while the theoretical link between instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy is sound, the empirical evidence is geographically polarized. There is a profound “paucity of research” in Lebanon and the wider Arab world. Previous Lebanese studies (Mattar, 2012; Ghamrawi & Al-Jammal, 2013) have looked at these variables in isolation but have not examined their correlation using a mixed-methods approach.

By employing the PIMRS and TSES in an explanatory sequential design, this study seeks to resolve these global inconsistencies and provide a contextualized understanding of how Lebanese principals can utilize instructional leadership to foster a more efficacious teaching force.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study is grounded in the paradigm of Critical Realism, a framework that posits that social phenomena are the result of underlying causal mechanisms. By adopting this stance, the research moves beyond mere description to explore how the “structures” (principals’ leadership behaviors) interact with “agency” (teachers’ internal efficacy beliefs).

To operationalize this, an Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Design was employed. This design prioritizes quantitative data collection first to identify broad trends and correlations, followed by a qualitative phase to explain the «why» and «how» behind those numbers.

3.2 Participants and Sampling Procedures

The study followed a sequential two-phase design, beginning with a quantitative phase that utilized a convenience sample of 130 PreK–12 teachers recruited from the private sector across various Lebanese governorates via social media. Demographic analysis of this cohort revealed that the sample was predominantly female (90.8%) and largely

based in urban areas (64.6%), with nearly half (49.2%) teaching at the elementary level. To ensure the study's specific focus on private education, the entire sample (100%) was comprised of teachers from 9 private schools in Lebanon. This was followed by a qualitative phase, where six participants were selected from the initial quantitative pool through purposive sampling. To achieve "maximum variation" and ensure internal validation, the researcher selected two teachers who assigned their principals high leadership scores, two who gave average scores, and two who gave low scores.

3.3 Instrumentation

The quantitative phase of this study utilized two primary validated instruments to assess the research variables. First, instructional leadership was measured using the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) – Short Form, a 24-item instrument that evaluates three overarching dimensions: Defining the School Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Developing a Positive Learning Climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger & Wang, 2015). Previous research has consistently demonstrated high internal consistency for this scale, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients typically exceeding 0.80 across its various subscales (Hallinger, 2015). Second, the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) – Short Form was employed to measure teacher self-efficacy. This 12-item scale assesses three specific domains: Efficacy in Student Engagement, Efficacy in Instructional Strategies, and Efficacy in Classroom Management (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The TSES is widely recognized for its robust psychometric properties, with reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) generally ranging from 0.84 to 0.96 and strong structural validity confirmed through multiple international factor-analytic studies (Erdogan, 2023; Ruan et al., 2015). Both instruments have been extensively validated in diverse educational contexts, ensuring the accuracy and dependability of the data collected in this study.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The data analysis for this study followed a rigorous mixed-methods approach designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between leadership and efficacy. In the quantitative phase, raw data were collected in 2025 and then processed using IBM SPSS version 24.0, beginning with descriptive statistics (Means and Standard Deviations) to establish a baseline profile of teacher perceptions and efficacy levels. To examine the associations between these constructs, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was utilized to determine the strength and direction of the relationship, while simple linear regression was performed to assess the predictive power of perceived instructional leadership on teacher self-efficacy (Field, 2018). This was followed by a qualitative phase consisting of semi-structured interviews conducted via WhatsApp—a modern, mobile-mediated method that facilitated access to teachers across various Lebanese governorates (Kaufmann & Peil, 2020). These 30–40-minute sessions were recorded and transcribed verbatim before being analyzed through deductive thematic analysis, which allowed the researcher to map the findings directly onto the established theoretical frameworks of Hallinger and Bandura (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This dual-layer approach facilitated the triangulation of data, a process essential for validating quantitative trends with qualitative depth, thereby ensuring the study's conclusions were both statistically significant and narratively rich (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

4. Results and Findings

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Instructional Leadership and Teacher Self-Efficacy

The descriptive analysis of the quantitative data provided a critical baseline for understanding the educational landscape within the sampled Lebanese private schools. The analysis focused on the two main variables of the study: instructional leadership perceived by teachers as the

independent variable and teacher self-efficacy as the dependent variable.

Regarding the independent variable, instructional leadership, participants perceived their principals' behaviors as moderate ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.95$) on a 5-point scale. A closer examination of the individual dimensions of instructional leadership revealed that principals were perceived as most effective in "Defining the School Mission" ($M = 3.20$). This finding suggests a relative strength in goal setting and vision framing, indicating that principals are more successful in establishing school goals and communicating a clear direction for the institution.

However, principals were perceived as less effective in "Developing the School Learning Climate" ($M = 3.03$). This indicates that although the administrative vision may be clear, the tangible support systems needed to promote teaching and learning are less consistently implemented. These support systems include protecting instructional time, supporting teachers, and providing incentives for learning and professional improvement.

In contrast, the dependent variable, teacher self-efficacy, yielded a notably high mean score ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.725$). This reflects a strong sense of personal competence among Lebanese teachers, particularly in their perceived ability to manage classrooms effectively and engage students in learning activities.

However, comparing these two sets of findings reveals a significant "efficacy-leadership gap." While teachers reported high levels of internal confidence and belief in their own teaching abilities, they perceived only average instructional support from their principals. This suggests that teacher efficacy in this context may be sustained by individual resilience or external professional factors rather than being a direct outcome of the principal's pedagogical involvement.

4.2 Inferential Statistics: Correlation and Regression

The quantitative analysis reveals a statistically significant, moderate

positive relationship between overall instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.318$ and a significance level of $p < 0.05$. Among the assessed sub-dimensions, Managing the Instructional Program emerged as the strongest correlate with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.333$, followed by Defining the School Mission with $r = 0.295$ and Developing the School Learning Climate with $r = 0.268$. Regression analysis further identifies instructional leadership as a significant predictor of teacher efficacy, with $F = 14.418$ and $p < .001$, accounting for 10.1% of the total variance with $R^2 = 0.101$. The predictive model $Y = 3.259 + 0.241 [\text{Instructional Leadership}]$ suggests that for every one-unit increase in a principal's leadership score, teacher efficacy is predicted to rise by 0.241 units. Notably, Managing the Instructional Program served as the most influential specific driver with $R^2 = 0.111$, indicating that direct managerial involvement in curriculum coordination and instructional supervision provides the most substantial boost to teacher confidence.

The findings highlight a clear hierarchy in how leadership behaviors influence teacher confidence. While all three dimensions are statistically significant, the dominance of Managing the Instructional Program, the strongest link with $r = 0.333$ and $R^2 = 0.111$, suggests that teachers derive the most psychological benefit from "proximal" leadership behaviors, those that directly touch the classroom. Unlike Developing Climate or Defining the Mission, which are broader cultural or distal factors, Managing the Program involves direct supervision and curriculum coordination. This provides teachers with tangible structural support and actionable feedback, which directly bolsters their sense of mastery and instructional agency.

Regarding the 10.1% variance with $R^2 = 0.101$, this figure should be interpreted with academic nuance. In social science and educational research, accounting for over 10% of the variance in a complex human trait like self-efficacy is considered a significant and substantial finding. It confirms that leadership is not just a peripheral influence but a primary driver of staff morale. The remaining 89.9% of the variance is likely

distributed across other critical factors such as teacher experience, student demographics, personal motivation, and school-level resources. The regression coefficient of 0.241 provides a clear metric for policy, suggesting that targeted leadership development, specifically focusing on instructional supervision, is a high-return investment for improving teacher performance and retention.

4.3 Qualitative Findings: Bridging the Data Gap

The thematic analysis of the qualitative interviews served as a critical ‘reality check’ for the quantitative findings, uncovering a pervasive tension between administrative management and instructional leadership. Participants consistently characterized Lebanese principals as disciplinary administrators rather than pedagogical guides, noting that school missions often relied on vague, verbal goals rather than strategic, documented frameworks. A distinct ‘monitoring without mentoring’ trend emerged, where classroom supervision frequently lacked constructive feedback—or worse, provided damaging critiques—which contextualizes the moderate statistical means observed in the instructional management dimensions. Furthermore, while principals were effective at protecting instructional time through discipline, the absence of tangible incentives for excellence remained a notable gap. Ultimately, while teachers attributed their high self-efficacy to personal agency and self-directed learning, they identified constructive leadership feedback and contextualized professional development as pivotal, yet underutilized, catalysts for further professional growth.

Research in Lebanon indicates that while instructional leadership is recognized as vital—especially during economic and national crises—principals often remain bogged down by heavy administrative burdens and disciplinary management.

General literature on supervision supports “monitoring without mentoring” finding, noting that when supervision lacks a developmental

or clinical focus (feedback/reflection), it fails to translate into professional growth. While direct comparisons between personal agency and leadership support are rare in the regional literature, studies confirm that supportive school cultures are essential for sustaining the commitment that stems from high teacher self-efficacy.

5. Discussion, Implications, and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this study was to examine the relationship between perceived principal instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy within the Lebanese educational context. By employing an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, this research sought to determine if—and to what extent—a principal’s pedagogical oversight acts as a catalyst for teacher confidence. This final section synthesizes the quantitative and qualitative findings, discusses their alignment with global literature, and outlines the implications for policy and practice in Lebanon.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The empirical results of this study yield a nuanced portrait of the relationship between school leadership and teacher confidence, characterized by a distinct “moderate–high” gap and a statistically significant predictive relationship. Descriptive analysis reveals that teachers perceive their principals’ instructional leadership as moderate ($M = 3.11$), while they report a high level of teacher self-efficacy ($M = 4.01$). This discrepancy suggests that although leadership positively influences teachers, they continue to maintain a strong belief in their own teaching capabilities. In other words, teachers’ self-efficacy appears to be at least partially independent of, or resilient to, the level of direct instructional support provided by their school principals.

Despite this descriptive gap, inferential statistics confirm that instructional leadership remains a vital catalyst for teacher confidence.

The study identified a statistically significant, moderate positive correlation between the two constructs (,), indicating that as leadership behaviors become more instructional in nature, teacher efficacy tends to rise. Regression analysis further substantiated this predictive power, demonstrating that leadership behaviors account for of the total variance in teacher efficacy (,). This underscores that while efficacy is multifaceted, the principal's role is a significant, non-negligible driver of a teacher's professional self-belief.

Within the specific dimensions of the PIMRS framework, "Managing the Instructional Program" emerged as the most potent specific predictor of efficacy. The findings indicate that for every one-unit increase in a principal's involvement in managing the instructional program, teacher efficacy is predicted to rise by units. This quantitative hierarchy was triangulated and explained through qualitative interviews, which revealed that Lebanese principals often operate more as administrative disciplinarians than as pedagogical mentors. The moderate leadership scores observed in the data likely reflect this focus on "monitoring without mentoring," where principals prioritize order and discipline over constructive, growth-oriented instructional feedback. Consequently, the study highlights a critical opportunity: while teachers are already self-reliant, a shift from administrative management to active instructional guidance—particularly in curriculum coordination and clinical supervision—could significantly amplify the existing levels of teacher efficacy.

5.3 Discussion of the Findings

5.3.1 The Efficacy–Leadership Paradox

The data presents a compelling paradox: Lebanese teachers feel highly efficacious despite receiving only moderate instructional support from their principals. The qualitative phase explains this phenomenon; teachers attribute their confidence to mastery experiences gained through years of service, personal professional development, and self-directed learning.

However, the study also reveals that while teachers are self-reliant, they remain «hungry» for leadership. Interviewees explicitly noted that their efficacy would reach a «more effective realm» if principals provided the constructive feedback and pedagogical resources currently missing from their professional environment.

5.3.2 The Administrative vs. Instructional Mindset

A critical finding of this research is the widespread misconception regarding the principal's role. Both the PIMRS scores and the interview narratives suggest that in Lebanon, the principal is primarily viewed as a managerial overseer. Teachers frequently assumed that “coordinating the curriculum” or “tracking student progress” were the duties of subject coordinators, not the principal. This “role delegation” explains the moderate scores across all three PIMRS domains. Until Lebanese principals reclaim their role as “Head Teachers” rather than “Office Managers,” their influence on teacher efficacy will remain capped at the current 10% variance level.

5.3.3 Comparison with Global Literature

The findings of the present study serve as a theoretical bridge between the divergent outcomes reported in Western and Eastern educational research, providing a complex understanding of how cultural and institutional contexts shape leadership outcomes. Specifically, the significant positive correlation identified here aligns with empirical evidence from Asian and Middle Eastern contexts, including work by Kunwor (2023) in Nepal, Yousaf et al. (2019) in Pakistan, and Isa et al. (2018) in Malaysia. These similarities reinforce the notion that in developing or reform-intensive systems, a principal's visible instructional presence and active engagement are indispensable for bolstering teacher confidence. In contrast, the results diverge significantly from Western literature, such as studies by Flimban (2019) and Lentz (2019) in the United States, which found no statistically significant link between these variables. This discrepancy suggests that the influence of leadership is moderated by the

strength of the surrounding educational infrastructure; whereas teachers in the U.S. may rely on extensive district-level coaching and standardized support systems, Lebanese teachers often function in an environment where such resources are less robust. Consequently, the individual school principal in Lebanon emerges as a more critical determinant of a teacher's professional and psychological well-being, acting as the primary source of instructional guidance and support.

5.4 Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings of this study underscore a pressing need for the Lebanese Ministry of Education to reform principal recruitment and certification processes. Current practices, which frequently prioritize seniority and social connections over pedagogical competence, may impede school improvement efforts. To address this, policymakers should establish standardized hiring criteria and formal certification programs that evaluate candidates based on the ten instructional leadership functions defined by the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS). By institutionalizing these competencies, the education system can ensure that school leaders are equipped to navigate the complexities of modern instructional demands.

For school administrators, these results necessitate a strategic pivot from “managing the building” toward a more focused approach to “managing the program.” Principals must transition beyond purely evaluative or administrative classroom visits, prioritizing the delivery of constructive, growth-oriented feedback. As demonstrated by the regression model in this study, active principal involvement in curriculum coordination and instructional supervision serves as the most direct driver of teacher self-efficacy. Consequently, shifting administrative focus toward mentorship and instructional support is essential for fostering a more confident and effective teaching force.

Finally, the study suggests that educational institutions should adopt the PIMRS and the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) as diagnostic instruments for professional development. Rather than implementing generic training models, schools can use these tools to identify specific “weak spots,” such as the lack of professional incentives revealed in this research. By tailoring professional development to address these evidence-based gaps, institutions can effectively bridge the divide between leadership behaviors and teacher efficacy, ultimately creating a more supportive and professional school environment.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study provide a foundation for several critical avenues of future inquiry, particularly within the unique educational landscape of Lebanon. First, researchers should pursue a sector-specific analysis to compare the public and private sectors, determining if varying institutional pressures and resource allocations significantly alter the relationship between leadership behaviors and teacher self-efficacy. Additionally, adopting a longitudinal research design would allow for a more dynamic understanding of these variables, tracking whether a principal’s deliberate transition into a more robust instructional role yields measurable improvements in student achievement over time. Finally, while the present study focused on teacher perceptions, future research should incorporate principal self-assessments. Such a dual-perspective approach would help identify potential “blind spots” or perceptual gaps between how leaders believe they are performing and how their staff actually experiences their leadership, ultimately leading to more targeted and effective leadership interventions.

5.6 Conclusion

This study provides strong empirical evidence that school principals in Lebanon serve as a critical, albeit underutilized, predictor of teacher self-efficacy. While Lebanese teachers are resilient and self-motivated,

the principal's instructional leadership acts as a "multiplier effect" that can elevate teacher performance from average to excellent.

The moderate leadership scores found here reflect a systemic need for leadership reform. By transitioning from a purely administrative mindset to a proactive instructional one, Lebanese principals can foster a culture of efficacy that not only empowers teachers but ultimately drives the academic success of students across the nation. This study concludes that the relationship between leadership and efficacy is not just a statistical correlation, but a vital professional bond that remains the cornerstone of school effectiveness.

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