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Instructional Leadership and Its Influence on Teacher Efficacy in K-12 Adventist Schools in Thailand

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Abstract

Aim/Purpose: This study examined the influence of instructional leadership on teacher efficacy in Adventist schools. Although instructional leadership has been widely studied, differences in educational philosophy and evolving leadership frameworks suggest that its expression in Adventist contexts may be distinct. By quantitatively analyzing the relationship between specific instructional leadership functions and teacher efficacy, this study addresses a gap in the literature within this understudied setting.

Introduction/Background: In the global educational landscape, instructional leadership is widely recognized as a critical factor in shaping school effectiveness and improving student outcomes. However, its manifestation and impact are deeply contextual, varying across cultural and institutional settings. This study investigated its role within the unique setting of K–12 Adventist schools in Thailand, where leadership integrates academic and spiritual dimensions. The research examined how teachers' perceptions of this dual-purpose leadership influence their self-efficacy to perform their professional tasks.

Methodology: A quantitative, correlational research design was employed in this study. A total of 78 teachers from four K-12 Adventist schools across Thailand participated in this study. Data collection occurred between December 2024 and March 2025 utilizing two standardized instruments administered digitally. The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) was used to measure teachers' perceptions of their leaders' instructional practices across eleven subscales under three dimensions: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program and Developing School Learning Climate. The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) was used to measure teacher self-efficacy across three subscales: Efficacy in Instructional Strategies, Classroom Management, and Student Engagement. Two supplementary items were added to the first questionnaire, assessing the importance of spiritual factors on instructional leadership in faith-based schools. The items demonstrated good reliability.

Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics to summarize perceptions and regression analysis to identify which specific instructional leadership subscales served as significant predictors of the three dimensions of teacher efficacy.

Findings: Descriptive analysis of the data revealed generally high perceptions of instructional leadership effectiveness across the participating schools, suggesting that school leaders were largely viewed positively in their roles. A particularly salient finding was the exceptionally high rating accorded to the importance of the spiritual component of leadership (M = 4.46, SD = .66; skewness = -.988). This strong negative skew indicated a consensus among respondents, underscoring the central and non-negotiable significance of spiritual mentorship and the fostering of a faith-based environment within this specific educational model.

The stepwise regression analysis provided more focused insights. With the three TSES subscales as dependent variables and the eleven PIMRS subscales as predictors, only one leadership function—

Communicating School Goals—consistently emerged as a statistically significant predictor across all dimensions of teacher efficacy. This finding suggested that leaders' clarity and consistency in articulating academic and mission-driven goals play a central role in strengthening teachers' instructional confidence, classroom management, and student engagement. Other leadership functions, although positively perceived, did not show significant predictive effects in this model.

***Contribution/Impact on Society**:* This research makes two key contributions. It first provides empirical quantification of the spiritual dimension as a central component of effective leadership within a faith-based educational context. Second, and more critically, it identifies a leader's effectiveness in Communicating School Goals as the sole significant predictor of teacher self-efficacy across instructional, managerial, and engagement domains. This finding delineates between generally positive leadership perceptions and the specific practice that directly enhances teacher efficacy, offering a strategic priority for leadership development.

***Recommendations**:* Therefore, the primary practical recommendation for school administrators is to prioritize transparent communication strategies intentionally and systematically. This can be achieved through mechanisms such as structured regular meetings that connect daily activities to broader objectives, instituting formal and informal feedback loops where teachers can voice concerns and suggestions, and involving faculty in strategic planning cycles. Given that teachers highly value the spiritual component on instructional leadership, Adventist school leaders are recommended to strategically invest in spiritual mentorship and professional development rooted in faith-based principles.

***Research Limitation**:* The generalizability of this study's findings is limited by its methodological scope. Data were collected from four Adventist schools in Thailand, and the final quantitative analysis relied on 78 usable responses, which may have affected the robustness of results. Furthermore, the study focused solely on Adventist primary and secondary schools, excluding universities, other religious schools, and non-religious institutions since their different operational methods and educational philosophies may result in disparities in how school leadership exerts influence. The omission of student perspectives also narrowed the insights into the broader impact of instructional leadership. This study did not account for other influential variables such as trust in leadership, professional development, and community influences. Finally, the restriction of the sample to Adventist schools in Thailand limits the geographic and cultural applicability of the findings.

***Future Research**:* The modest effect size (R^2 = .12) indicates that other significant factors may be at play. Future research may employ qualitative and mixed-method approaches to further explore the role of spirituality in instructional leadership and teacher efficacy within faith-based schools. Methods such as interviews, focus groups, and observations could illuminate how spiritual values are enacted in leadership practices and how teachers perceive their influence on professional confidence and motivation. Mixed-methods designs would also help explain how and why spiritual leadership practices shape teacher efficacy, offering deeper contextual insight into faith-based educational settings.

Keywords: *Instructional leadership, teacher efficacy, faith-based schools, Thailand*

Introduction

The long-standing debate on whether student backgrounds determine their academic success was notably stirred by Coleman et al. (1966), who emphasized the dominant role of family background in shaping student performance. In contrast, the effective school movement argued that quality education—particularly effective instructional leadership—can significantly influence student outcomes regardless of socioeconomic factors (Hallinger, 2009; Lezotte, 2001). This realization has led to increased attention on the role of instructional leadership in driving school effectiveness.

Since the 1980s, researchers have explored instructional leadership as a critical component of successful schools, with numerous studies reaffirming its impact (Hallinger, 2009; Johnson et al., 2018). However, leadership effectiveness varies across educational contexts. While some schools emphasize academics or technical training, others—such as faith-based institutions—integrate religious principles into education, shaping unique expectations for instructional leadership.

This study focused on Christian education, specifically within the Adventist school system—one of the largest Protestant educational networks globally. As of 2024, the system included 9,489 institutions, 111,360 teachers, and over two million students worldwide (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2026).

The purpose of this study was to investigate how instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy in Adventist schools. By doing this, the study aimed to answer following three questions:

1. What are teacher perceptions of instructional leadership in selected K-12 Adventist schools in Thailand?
2. What is the relationship between instructional leadership practices and teacher self-efficacy?
3. To what extent do teachers consider spiritual factors as an important component of instructional leadership?

The findings from this research can support participating schools by highlighting how teachers perceive instructional leadership within their schools. Such data may guide leaders in refining their leadership strategies to enhance teacher support and school culture. More broadly, the study adds to the growing body of literature on instructional leadership in Christian schools—a relatively underexplored area.

Literature Review

Dimensions of Instructional Leadership

Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) foundational model of instructional leadership identified three core dimensions: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Fostering a Positive Learning Climate. These functions have been widely adopted in educational leadership discourse due to their demonstrated impact on teaching quality. Building on this, Weber (1987) expanded the model to include observing instruction and evaluating the instructional program, while Whitaker (1997) emphasized the leader's visibility, communication, and role as a resource provider.

Instructional Leadership and Teacher Efficacy

Teacher efficacy is the belief in one's ability to influence student learning, which has long been recognized as central to teacher performance and student outcomes (Guskey & Passaro, 1994). Originating from RAND Corporation studies (Armor et al., 1976; Berman et al., 1977), teacher efficacy has since been linked to persistence in instructional innovation, teacher satisfaction, and sustained project implementation. Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997) posits that school leadership can shape these beliefs by fostering environments where teachers feel supported and effective.

A study conducted in China identified a strong association between principals' instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy. The findings revealed significant positive correlations between instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy, with correlation coefficients ranging from $r = .75$ to $.84$ ($p < .01$) (Zhang et al., 2025). Empirical studies have also affirmed this connection. Blase and Blase (1999) found that instructional leaders who engage teachers meaningfully enhance their self-efficacy. Alanoglu's (2021) meta-analysis of 24 studies involving over 9,000 teachers concluded that instructional leadership significantly predicted teacher self-efficacy, with implications for both student achievement and professional development. Similarly, a study conducted by Kanchai et al. (2024) in Songkhla and Satun, Thailand, found a positive and statistically significant relationship between school administrators' instructional leadership and teachers' 21st-century teaching behaviors at the .01 level.

Supportive leadership also contributes to teacher well-being and satisfaction. Ertürk (2021) found that both emotional and informational support from principals was correlated with higher job satisfaction and subjective well-being. Similarly, Türkoğlu et al. (2017) observed that teacher self-efficacy strongly predicted job satisfaction. Studies by Kapa and Gimbert (2017) and Grissom (2011) have further confirmed that consistent rule enforcement and leadership support reduce teacher attrition, particularly in high-needs schools.

Teacher Efficacy and Student Learning

The positive impact of teacher efficacy extends to student outcomes. In their meta-analysis, Zee and Koomen (2016) found that teacher efficacy correlated positively with classroom quality, student academic adjustment, and teacher psychological well-being. Kim and Seo (2018) reinforced this link through their analysis of 16 studies, demonstrating a robust relationship between teacher efficacy and student academic progress. Besides these, the findings from a review of 683 articles published between January 1, 2020, and May 31, 2024, indicated that teacher self-efficacy plays a vital role in teachers' professional development and has a direct impact on the quality of educational environments, influencing both teacher well-being and student performance (Izquierdo et al., 2025).

Drawing on Bandura's self-efficacy theory, numerous studies have underscored how confident teachers are more likely to use effective instructional strategies, foster student engagement, and exhibit resilience (Klassen & Tze, 2014; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). However, not all findings are uniform. Jerrim et al. (2023), using TIMSS 2015 data, reported no causal relationship between teacher efficacy and student achievement, suggesting a more complex and nuanced dynamic that warrants further investigation.

Faith-Based Instructional Leadership Concepts

In the context of faith-based education, instructional leadership encompasses not only the pursuit of academic excellence, but also the fulfillment of spiritual and redemptive aims. Christian instructional leadership is distinct in that it integrates theological purpose with pedagogical practice. Principals in Christian schools are expected to uphold a dual mandate: fostering academic achievement while nurturing spiritual growth (Banke et al., 2012).

Christian education is rooted in the belief that students are created in God's image but have been affected by the fall of mankind, necessitating a restorative educational process. Bode (1995) described Christian education as a journey of "re-creation," in which teachers, empowered by the Holy Spirit, facilitate students' moral and intellectual development. This framework posits the teacher as both an instructional guide and a spiritual mentor—modeling Christian values and guiding students toward restoration of the divine image.

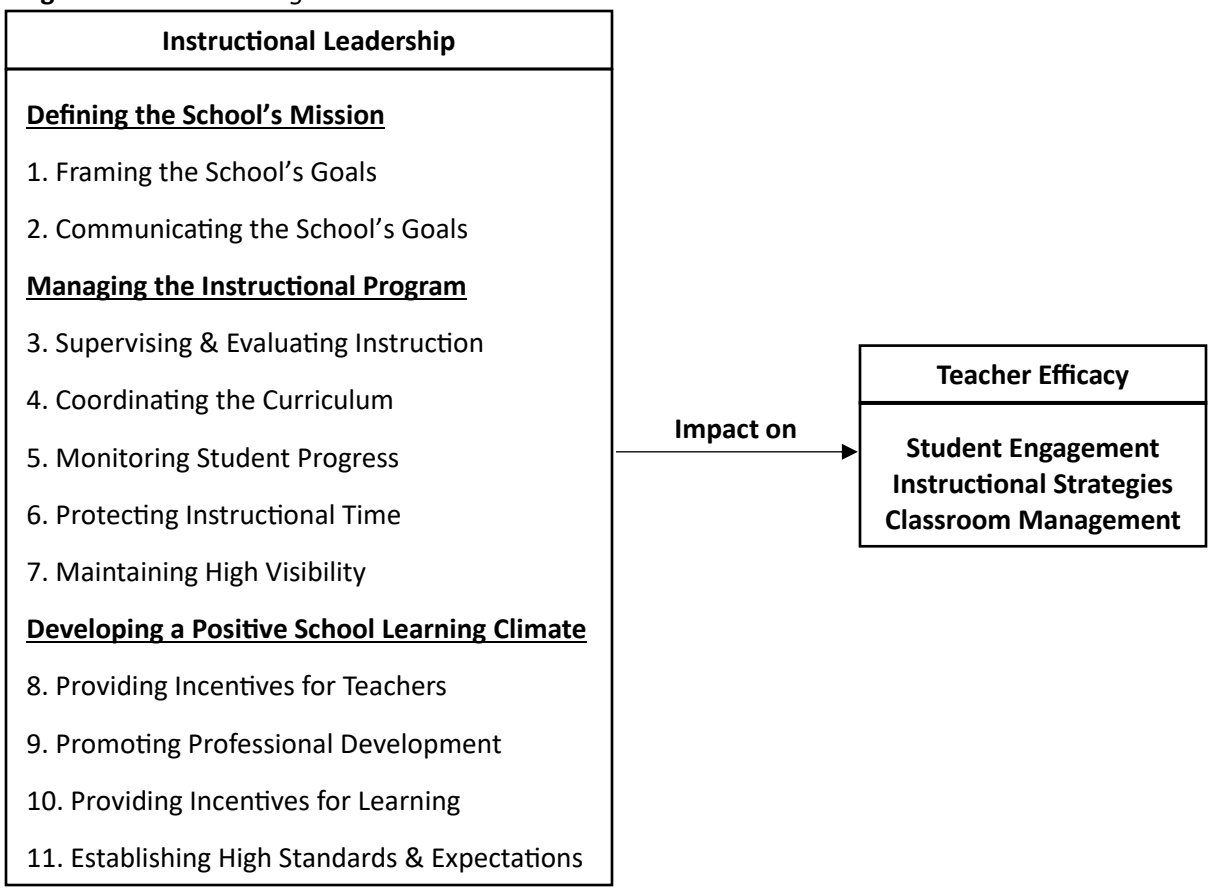
Christian instructional leaders, therefore, are not only expected to lead professionally, but also to embody and promote spiritual maturity within school communities. They serve as spiritual role models, guiding staff and students toward a deeper relationship with God while also maintaining high standards of educational quality (Banke et al., 2012). According to Yu (2007), such leaders often draw upon personal faith, biblical principles, and spiritual discernment in shaping their leadership styles, frequently mirroring Christ-like qualities such as compassion, humility, and servant leadership.

In summary, Christian instructional leadership is characterized by a fusion of academic leadership and spiritual stewardship. Grounded in a theology of restoration and service, faith-based leaders are called to cultivate both minds and hearts—guiding school communities toward academic success and spiritual transformation.

Research Design

The research design, summarized in Table 1, outlines the study's key variables and instruments.

Figure 1 *Research Design*



Methodology

A quantitative, correlational research design was employed to explore the relationship between instructional leadership practices and teacher efficacy in four K–12 Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) schools in Thailand. A correlational approach was chosen for its suitability in examining naturally occurring relationships without experimental manipulation—particularly relevant in faith-based educational settings, where leadership continuity and core values are vital. This design also offered practical benefits, including cost-efficiency and time-effectiveness, by enabling data collection through structured surveys.

The target population included all faculty members across ten K–12 Adventist schools in Thailand, encompassing approximately 454 teachers, as identified by the Thailand Adventist Mission. The final sample consisted of 78 faculty members. A cluster sampling strategy was employed, selecting whole schools (as naturally occurring clusters) based on geographic diversity, size, and feasibility of access. Within each school, convenience sampling was used to recruit participants, targeting full-time teachers available during the data collection period. While non-probability sampling limits generalizability, it enabled efficient access to diverse participants within constrained logistical conditions.

Research Instruments and Measures

In this study, two validated instruments were employed to measure the key constructs: instructional leadership and teacher efficacy. Instructional leadership was assessed using a shortened version of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), originally developed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and revised by Hallinger and Wang (2015). The PIMRS is one of the most widely used tools for measuring principal instructional leadership behavior and is structured around three core dimensions: Defining the School Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Developing the School Learning

Climate. The revised version of PIMRS consists of 71 items across 11 subscales. For this study, a condensed 22-item form was used, encompassing all 11 subscales across the three primary dimensions.

The PIMRS demonstrates strong content and criterion validity, having been widely used in diverse educational contexts. Previous studies (e.g., Davis & Wilson, 2000; Ismail et al., 2018) have confirmed its effectiveness in linking principal behaviors to school climate, teacher motivation, and instructional outcomes.

To evaluate the importance of spiritual factors on instructional leadership in faith-based schools, two supplementary items were added. These items, while measured on the same 5-point Likert scale, were excluded from statistical analysis related to instructional leadership correlations and regression.

Teacher efficacy was measured using the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). The short form of the TSES includes 12 items distributed equally across three dimensions: Student Engagement (Items 1, 2, 4, 6); Instructional Strategies (Items 7, 9, 10, 12) and Classroom Management (Items 3, 5, 8, 11). Responses were recorded using a 9-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Nothing") to 9 ("A great deal").

Both instruments have been extensively validated. The PIMRS underwent rigorous development involving feedback from educators and administrators, with subsequent studies affirming its alignment with effective instructional leadership practices. The TSES has been shown to correlate positively with related constructs such as motivation and job satisfaction, while also reliably distinguishing between teaching contexts and predicting classroom effectiveness.

Table 2 shows that for Teacher Self-Efficacy (TSES, 12 items), the total Cronbach's α was .932, while for Instructional Leadership (PIMRS, 22 items) it was .951, both demonstrating excellent reliability. The two items for evaluating religious factors also received an α score of .932, indicating good reliability.

Table 2 *Reliability Estimates* (*n*=78)

Variables	# of items	Cronbach's alpha
Self-Efficacy (total)	12	.932
▪ Student engagement	4	.877
▪ Classroom management	4	.860
▪ Instructional strategies	4	.798
Instructional Leadership (total)	22	.951
▪ Instructional management	2	.643
▪ Communicating school goals	2	.439
▪ Supervising and evaluating instruction	2	.776
▪ Coordinating the curriculum	2	.858
▪ Monitoring student progress	2	.875
▪ Protect instructional time	2	.688
▪ Maintain high visibility	2	.774
▪ Provide incentives for teachers	2	.858
▪ Promote professional development	2	.881
▪ Develop & enforce academic standards	2	.846
▪ Provide incentives for learning	2	.838
Religious Factors	2	.822

Data analysis followed a sequential approach to accomplish the research purposes. Descriptive statistics were first computed to summarize central tendencies and variability in participants' responses. Next, regression analysis was conducted to further explore the predictive power of instructional leadership dimensions on teacher efficacy. This approach allowed for the control of potential confounding variables and provided a more nuanced understanding of how specific leadership practices influenced teacher outcomes.

Results

Description of Sampling Groups or Situations

In this study, 78 educators from four K–12 Seventh-day Adventist schools across Thailand were surveyed. Participants represented a range of teaching experience and religious affiliations. All teachers, regardless of religious background, were included to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between instructional leadership and teacher efficacy.

Data Analysis

Table 3 addresses the first research question: (1) What are teacher perceptions of instructional leadership in selected K–12 Adventist schools in Thailand?

Table 3 *Instructional Leadership Descriptive Statistics* (n=78)

Variables	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*	Skewness
● Develop/enforce academic standards	1.00	5.00	4.09	.86	-1.311
● Instructional Management	3.00	5.00	4.04	.54	.018
● Promote professional development	2.00	5.00	4.01	.89	-.719
● Coordinate the curriculum	1.50	5.00	3.97	.79	-.897
● Communicate school goals	2.42	5.00	3.84	.67	-.036
● Protect instructional time	1.50	5.00	3.79	.82	-.524
● Supervise and evaluate instruction	2.00	5.00	3.74	.81	-.345
● Provide incentives for teachers	1.00	5.00	3.62	1.07	-.792
● Maintaining high visibility	1.00	5.00	3.57	.93	-.295
● Monitoring student progress	1.00	5.00	3.51	.89	-.348
● Provide incentives for learning	1.00	5.00	3.44	1.08	-.766
Overall Instructional Leadership			3.78	.67	-.450

Descriptive analysis (n = 78) indicated that instructional leadership was generally well implemented, with a moderately high overall mean score (M = 3.78, SD = .67) on a 1–5 scale. The strongest dimensions were developing academic standards (M = 4.09, SD = .86) and instructional management (M = 4.04, SD = .54), highlighting an institutional focus on curriculum rigor and classroom oversight. In contrast, providing incentives for learning (M = 3.44, SD = 1.08) and monitoring student progress (M = 3.51, SD = .89) scored lower, indicating potential areas for targeted improvement.

Standard deviations ranged from .54 to 1.08, reflecting varied consistency across practices. Notably, low variability in instructional management suggested widespread agreement, while incentive-related practices showed greater disparity. Negative skewness in most subscales (e.g., −1.311 for academic standards) suggests responses clustered toward higher ratings, with instructional management (skewness = .018) and communicating school goals (−.036) showing near-normal distributions.

These results highlighted strong leadership in academic and managerial areas, while variability in motivation and progress tracking suggested opportunities for further development.

Table 4 was generated to addresses research question (3): To what extent do teachers consider spiritual factors an important component of instructional leadership?

Table 4 *Religious Factor Descriptive Statistics* (n=78)

Variable	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*	Skewness
Provide faith-based suggestions and instruction to teachers and students when needed	3.0	5.0	4.43	.72	-.895
Act consistent with the founding spiritual beliefs of the school	3.0	5.0	4.50	.71	-1.131
Average Scores			4.46	.66	-.988

Results indicated strong agreement among participants on the significance of spiritual leadership in their school context. The item "Act consistent with the founding spiritual beliefs of the school" received the highest mean score (M = 4.50, SD = .71), followed by "Provide faith-based suggestions and instruction to teachers and students when needed" (M = 4.43, SD = .72). The overall scale mean was 4.46 (SD = .66), reflecting a shared perception of the importance of religious principles in leadership practices.

Both items showed low variability and strong negative skewness (–.895 to –1.131), indicating that most respondents rated these practices near the top of the scale. The particularly high clustering of scores for maintaining alignment with founding beliefs suggested a deeply rooted cultural and religious emphasis within the school communities.

Pearson's Correlation and Regression Analysis

Pearson's correlation and regression analysis were conducted to answer research question (2): What is the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and the dimensions of instructional leadership?

As shown in Table 5, results revealed a statistically significant, though weak-to-moderate, positive correlation between overall instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy (r = .345, p = .002). Since the p-value was below the significance threshold (α = .05), the null hypothesis was rejected, confirming a meaningful association. However, the modest strength of the correlation suggested that while instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy, other factors may also contribute significantly to teachers' self-perceptions of effectiveness.

Table 5 *Correlation of Instructional Leadership and Teacher Efficacy*

	Instructional Leadership	Teacher Efficacy
Instructional Leadership	1.000	.345
Teacher Efficacy	.345	1.000

Table 6 presents the Pearson's correlation coefficients among the three teacher self-efficacy subscales (student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies), eleven instructional leadership subscales, and the religious support variable (n = 78). These results offer insights into the interrelationships among key constructs.

Strong positive correlations were found among the self-efficacy components. Student engagement correlated highly with classroom management (r = .72) and instructional strategies (r = .75), while classroom management and instructional strategies showed the strongest association (r = .81). These results suggested that teachers who feel confident in one area of their teaching tend to feel confident across others.

Moderate positive correlations emerged between self-efficacy and several instructional leadership practices. For instance, student engagement and instructional strategies were both moderately correlated with communicating school goals (r = .45 and r = .43, respectively), indicating that effective leadership communication may enhance teacher confidence. Instructional leadership dimensions also showed substantial intercorrelations. Supervising and evaluating instruction correlated strongly with protecting instructional time (r = .73), as did monitoring student progress (r = .76), reflecting the integrated nature of school leadership behaviors.

Table 6 *Correlation Matrix*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1 StuEng	—														
2 ClassMan	.72	—													
3 InStr	.75	.81	—												
4 InsMan	.39	.23	.38	—											
5 ComGoals	.45	.36	.43	.66	—										
6 EvalInstr	.41	.29	.35	.55	.62	—									
7 CoordCur	.38	.22	.3	.54	.62	.71	—								
8 MonProg	.27	.11	.23	.54	.63	.59	.69	—							
9 ProTime	.33	.19	.22	.51	.69	.73	.67	.76	—						
10 Visib	.3	.1	.2	.37	.46	.59	.51	.64	.66	—					
11 Incent	.38	.16	.19	.45	.53	.61	.59	.62	.69	.72	—				
12 ProfDev	.27	.11	.18	.4	.46	.44	.46	.59	.67	.5	.6	—			
13 AcadStd	.29	.17	.23	.41	.62	.45	.63	.69	.71	.52	.57	.64	—		
14 IncentLearn	.31	.22	.18	.42	.46	.49	.39	.54	.48	.59	.62	.44	.47	—	
15 Rel	.24	.17	.13	.22	.46	.29	.32	.3	.38	.33	.34	.26	.28	.17	—

Note: StuEng – Student Engagement; ClassMan – Classroom Management; InStr – Instructional Strategies
InsMan -Instructional Management; ComGoals – Communicate School Goals; EvalInstr – Supervise and Evaluate Instruction
CoordCur – Coordinate Curriculum; MonProg – Monitor Student Progress; ProTime – Protect Instructional Time
Visib – Maintaining Visibility; Incent – Provide Incentives for Teachers; ProDev -Promote Professional Development;
AcadStd – Develop and Enforce Academic Standards; IncentLearn – Provide Incentives for Learning; Rel – Religious Support

Clear communication of school goals emerged as a significant predictor across all three domains of teacher self-efficacy. As the result showed, this leadership practice was positively associated with teachers' instructional strategies (β = .434, t = 4.204, p < .001), classroom management (β = .359, t = 3.35, p = .001), and student engagement (β = .452, t = 4.41, p < .001). Unstandardized coefficients indicated that each one-unit increase in goal communication corresponded to increases of .719, .746, and .925 units in the respective self-efficacy domains. These findings underscore the critical role of clear, consistent goal setting by school leaders in enhancing teacher confidence and effectiveness across multiple instructional areas.

Summary of Findings

The study found that teachers reported relatively high perceptions of instructional leadership, with a mean score of 3.78 on the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale. Among all dimensions, the importance of spiritual support received the highest rating (M = 4.46, SD = .66), indicating strong agreement and minimal variability in its perceived importance.

Pearson's correlation analysis showed a statistically significant, though modest, positive relationship between instructional leadership and teacher efficacy (r = .345, p = .002). Further regression analysis revealed that only Communicating School Goals emerged as a significant individual predictor of teacher efficacy in the stepwise regression.

Discussion and Implications

To answer question (1): What are teacher perceptions of instructional leadership in selected K-12 Adventist schools in Thailand? The total scale mean of 3.78 (SD = .67) suggested that, on average, participants viewed instructional leadership practices positively, particularly in enforcing academic standards, managing instruction, and promoting professional development, although some areas may benefit from further strengthening.

The investigation of question (2): What is the relationship between instructional leadership practices and teacher self-efficacy? The results revealed a generally positive but modest link between instructional leadership and teacher efficacy. Notably, the dimension of Communication of School Goals of instructional leadership demonstrated a comparatively strong influence on teacher efficacy outcomes in this context.

Regarding the last research question (3): To what extent do teachers consider spiritual factors as an important component of instructional leadership? The 4.46 mean score (SD = .66) indicated that participants placed significant importance on the religious dimension within the school context. A standard deviation of .66 suggested that while many participants shared this view, there was moderate variability in their perceptions.

The findings indicated that instructional leadership—particularly the dimension of Communicating of School Goals—moderately influenced teacher efficacy in K–12 Adventist schools. These results aligned with Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes the role of vision-setting and intellectual stimulation in fostering teacher self-efficacy. The moderate-to-strong correlations for Communicating of School Goals (r = .36–.45) supported Bandura's (1997) notion that clarity of purpose enhances perceived competence. In contrast, the weak association between Maintaining Visibility and Classroom Management (r = .10) suggested that not all leadership behaviors equally impact teacher beliefs. This variability highlights the importance of differentiating among leadership practices when assessing their influence on teacher efficacy.

Effective communication of school goals emerged as a key predictor of teacher efficacy. School leaders should establish systematic communication strategies—such as regular staff meetings, bulletins, or one-on-one feedback sessions—to reinforce institutional vision. Involving teachers in goal development may also increase their sense of ownership and motivation. Periodic assessments of alignment between teachers' perceptions and school goals are recommended.

The emphasis placed on the spiritual dimension (*M*=4.46; *SD* = .66) underscored the necessity for faith-informed leadership practices. Leader preparation programs in faith-based institutions should integrate both administrative competencies and spiritual formation.

Lastly, qualitative responses indicated that frequent meetings disrupt teaching momentum. Streamlining meetings through pre-distributed agendas, time limits, and digital communication alternatives is advised. Institutions should also gather regular feedback on meeting efficacy to ensure alignment with teachers' time and instructional needs.

Theoretical Contributions and Implications

This study contributes to the refinement of existing instructional leadership theories by highlighting the importance of cultural and spiritual contexts within faith-based educational settings. Specifically, the findings support the expansion of Hallinger's (2011) instructional leadership framework to include spiritual and cultural dimensions as potential moderating variables—particularly relevant in Thai Adventist schools where religious leadership is highly valued.

The results also align with transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1985), affirming that leaders who articulate clear goals, manage instruction effectively, and foster supportive environments can positively influence teacher efficacy. However, the correlation matrix suggested that some commonly emphasized leadership practices—such as Maintaining Visibility (r = .10) and Progress Monitoring (r = .11)—did not significantly predict Classroom Management Efficacy. These findings challenge traditional assumptions that emphasize frequent monitoring and leader visibility as central to classroom management.

Instead, the study suggests that teacher efficacy in classroom management may be more strongly influenced by leadership behaviors that build trust, provide emotional support, and engage in meaningful relationship-building. This points to a potential "Leadership → Trust → Efficacy" pathway, which may be worth exploring in future qualitative research.

Research Limitations

The generalizability of the findings is constrained by several methodological factors. Data were obtained from four Adventist schools in Thailand, with the final analysis based on 78 valid responses, which may limit the strength of the conclusions. Additionally, the study was confined to Adventist primary and secondary schools, excluding higher education institutions, other faith-based schools, and secular settings, where differing educational philosophies and organizational practices may shape leadership influences differently. The absence of student perspectives further restricted understanding of the broader effects of instructional leadership. Moreover, the study did not incorporate other potentially influential variables, such as trust in leadership, professional development, and community context. Finally, the focus on Adventist schools within Thailand limits the cultural and geographic transferability of the results.

Future Research

Future research may employ mixed-method designs to investigate the nuanced relationship between instructional leadership and teacher efficacy, as the modest effect size (R^2 = .12) indicated the possibility of other significant factors at play. Studies could explore contextual moderators such as trust, job satisfaction, and the qualitative mechanisms through which leadership influences efficacy.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the influence of instructional leadership on teacher efficacy within the context of K–12 Adventist schools in Thailand where leadership integrated academic mission with spiritual purpose. The findings illuminated both the distinctive characteristics of leadership in this faith-based environment and the specific mechanisms through which it impacts teacher efficacy.

The research confirmed that instructional leadership was positively related with teacher efficacy in these schools. However, its most significant contribution lies in moving beyond general perceptions to identify the precise leadership behavior that predicted efficacy: Communicating School Goals. While leaders were viewed as effective across various functions, it was their clarity and consistency in articulating the school's academic and spiritual objectives that consistently enhanced teachers' self-efficacy in instruction, management, and student engagement. This delineates a critical strategic priority, suggesting that a leader's role as a clear communicator of vision is more impactful than other, more visible or supervisory functions in building teacher confidence.

A second, paramount finding was the overwhelming consensus among teachers on the indispensable importance of the spiritual dimension of leadership. The exceptionally high rating for this factor underscored that in a faith-based educational model, effective instructional leadership is inherently dual-faceted, blending pedagogical direction with spiritual mentorship. This spiritual component was not a peripheral activity, but a core, non-negotiable element of how leadership is defined and valued in this context.

Despite these important insights, the study's modest correlation and effect sizes indicated that instructional leadership was only one part of a larger puzzle. A substantial portion of teacher efficacy was influenced by other factors not captured in this model, such as trust, collegial relationships, and personal experiences.

In conclusion, this study provides empirical evidence that within Thai Adventist schools, effective instructional leadership is characterized by two pillars: strategic clarity in communicating goals and authentic integration of spiritual values. For practitioners, this underscores the need to prioritize transparent communication and intentionally nurture a faith-based learning climate. For researchers, it highlights the necessity of contextualizing leadership models and calls for future mixed-method studies to explore the nuanced relationships and untapped variables that further explain the complex dynamic of fostering teacher efficacy. Ultimately, this research affirms that in faith-based education, the most effective leaders are those who can successfully articulate a unified vision that inspires both the professional practice and spiritual identity of their teachers.

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Author Contributions
Pan, Zhen: Conceptualization, methodology, validation, formal analysis, investigation, resource, data curation, writing – original draft, writing – review & editing; ***Mark B. Vodéll:*** Conceptualization, methodology, validation, resource, writing – review & editing, supervision, project administration.

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