



Research Article

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Teachers' Perspectives on Public School Principals' Instructional Leadership Practices: An Assessment Using the Hallinger Scale

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Abstract

Using the Hallinger scale, this study explored the instructional leadership methods of Jordanian public school principals as viewed by teachers. A descriptive survey was administered to 336 teachers to collect the data. The study evaluated instructional leadership in six domains: school goals, educational program administration, teaching and evaluation supervision, student achievement monitoring, incentives for teachers and students, and teacher professional growth encouragement. The findings indicate a modest perceived level of instructional leadership practice. However, one domain "providing incentives for teachers and students" was notably strong. In addition, male teachers with postgraduate qualifications and at least ten years of experience exhibited increased competency in distinguishing instructional leadership practices in Jordanian public schools. Recommendations include developing targeted training programs for school principals focusing on Hallinger scale domains, and establishing ongoing evaluation systems to enhance educational leadership practices and collaboration.

Keywords: Instructional leadership, School management, Hallinger scale, Jordan

1. Introduction

Excellent leadership is critical to enhancing student achievement and fostering a positive school climate in every educational setting. Principals play an important role in creating a vision for their schools and setting high standards for teachers and students. However, the significance of school leadership extends beyond routine administrative tasks; it is intertwined with fulfilling the educational and social objectives of the organization (Suwanaruji, 2018; Kamel, 2019; Qaralleh & Jibril, 2020; Bordia, 2023). Additionally, a pivotal aspect of the principal's role is instructional leadership

(IL)—the capacity to assist and guide teachers in their pedagogical methods. This encompasses establishing clear goals and expectations, offering professional development opportunities, and cultivating a collaborative learning and educational environment (Lachlan-Hatch, 2017; Le Fevre, 2021).

Current research underscores the profound impact of IL, which prioritizes teaching and learning improvement in education. This approach, characterized by knowledge, collaboration, and leading by example (Mora-Ruano et al., 2021; Shaked, 2023) not only positively influences student achievement, but also motivates teachers and fosters overall school improvement (Waters & Marzano, 2006). Furthermore, Robinson et al. (2008), Brolund (2016), Sultan et al. (2022), Noor and Nawab (2022), Hvidston et al. (2019), Honig and Rainey (2019), Wahab (2020) and Al-Harbi (2021) all provide evidential support for the profound impact of effective IL on teaching, learning, and ultimately student achievement which confirms its great importance in teaching and learning

In this study, we seek to assess the extent to which school principals apply IL with the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), which has proven to be an effective tool for assessing school principal efficacy (Hallinger et al., 2013; Bada et al., 2020). Philip Hallinger designed and released this scale in the early 1980s, evaluating three aspects of IL, namely defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning climate. These dimensions are further subdivided into ten distinct IL responsibilities (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985) (see Figure 1):

1. (Defining the School's Mission), which serves two functions: framing and outlining the school's goals
2. (Managing the Instructional Program), which comprises three leadership functions: supervising and evaluating instruction, curriculum coordination, and student progress monitoring
3. (Developing the School Learning Climate Program), which has five components, safeguarding instructional time, fostering professional development, maintaining high visibility, giving rewards to instructors, and providing incentives for learning.

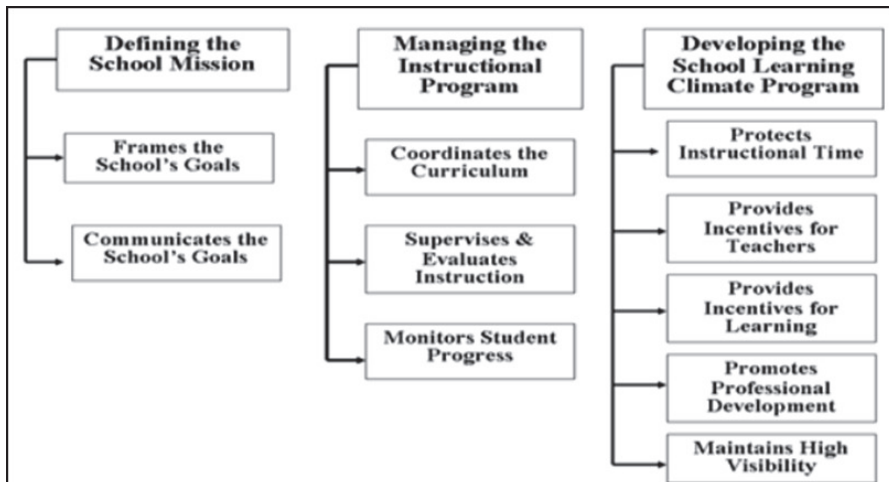


Figure 1: PIMRS Conceptual Framework (Halinger, 2008)

With its complete assessment methodology, the PIMRS is critical for capturing school principals' multiple roles in providing successful IL within educational institutions.

2. Theoretical Framework

This literature review presents a comprehensive overview of IL practices among principals over the past decade.

2.1 Leadership and Professional Development Approach

Although some studies report no correlation between theoretical understanding and the actual application of IL, Range et al. (2014) highlight its potential impact on schools and teachers. Moreover, Brolund (2016) emphasizes the necessity of instructional leaders developing clear visions for high achievement and quality instruction, which are consistent with research, indicating that Malaysian principals understand their roles in altering teaching methods (Harris et al., 2017).

Research conducted by Rashed and Mushtaq (2021) reveals that the areas in which the performance of middle-school principals is evaluated are ranked as follows: professional development, planning, leadership, improvement and development, and human relations all ranked moderately, while the evaluation area ranked last, and with a low score.

However, delving more deeply, Ma and Marion (2021) discovered that in Western China, a principal's IL, particularly in establishing a positive learning environment, has a direct impact on teacher performance. Notably, some leadership styles can promote teachers' trust, indirectly improving teacher efficacy. This demonstrates that policymakers and practitioners should prioritize trust-building in developing effective IL strategies. Pashmforush et al. (2023) reported that collaborative and reflective activities could improve IL. Their findings suggest that virtual professional learning communities can empower school leaders by stimulating collaboration and self-reflection, enhancing leadership qualities.

2.2 Instructional Leadership and Educational Outcomes

While some studies present an unflattering picture of school leadership styles, others emphasize the possibility of improvement through IL. For instance, Salameh (2016) discovered that Emirati teachers thrive on setting school goals, but suffer from constant monitoring. Bellibas and Liu (2017) noted a link between the IL of school principals and teacher self-efficacy in areas such as classroom management and student engagement. Ismail et al. (2018) identified a remarkably substantial relationship between IL and teachers' functional ability, adding to the body of data supporting the importance of IL. Their findings also revealed a relatively strong correlation between IL and teachers' knowledge, as well as a lesser, but still significant link with instructors' talents. This suggests that excellent IL could help instructors enhance their overall capabilities.

Moreover, McBrayer et al. (2020) found that some leadership practices might be more effective than others. Although student achievement assessment significantly enhanced leadership self-efficacy, the organization of the curriculum had no effect, highlighting the need for a greater focus on IL practices.

Rodrigues and De Lima's research (2021) revealed a disturbing trend in that many school principals emphasize school management and organization over student development. This is supported by a sense of ownership, as respondents stated that they should not take the initiative in many crucial areas of education. Even more concerning is the finding that the IL techniques of most school principals have little effect on student performance. Additionally, Noor and Nawab (2022) and Pietsch et al. (2023) underscore the dangers of ignoring this aspect of leadership, revealing that when principals prioritize administrative tasks over educational practices, this may negatively affect student learning.

2.3 Policy, Training, and Challenges for Instructional Leadership

The influence of principals on teaching and learning practices in schools through IL is becoming a central focus of educational research and policy.

For instance, research conducted in Vietnam by Nguyen et al. (2018) revealed that primary school principals view IL as being paramount. Furthermore, focusing on the obligations of principals, their findings highlight the formation of IL roles within Vietnam's policy framework. A study conducted by Ghaveker (2019) revealed principals' tasks such as developing Malaysian schoolwork and managing educational programs were afforded moderate importance. However, promoting a positive school climate received a lower rating, indicating potential for improvement.

Jamalullail et al. (2020) provided evidence of educational leadership by identifying a significant correlation between key school leadership styles and teacher performance in Malaysian primary schools. This demonstrates the commitment of the Malaysian Ministry of Education to providing all school principals with regular leadership training, having recognized the potential to increase teacher effectiveness and student learning. Conversely, Hafsat et al. (2020) emphasized the substantive impact of IL in Nigerian schools on improving teacher effectiveness.

2.4 Demographical Variables and Instructional Leadership

Through our review of the literature, we noted the different results of studies examining the impact of gender on IL and the lack of studies addressing educational qualification and experience. The key findings of these studies were as follows.

In research conducted by Kis and Konan (2014) and Salameh (2016), significant differences in IL practices were revealed in favor of males. By contrast, studies by Al-Mahdy and Al-Harthia (2021), as well as by Al-Mahdy and Al-Kiyumi (2015) revealed moderate scoring of IL in all domains, favoring female teachers. Moreover, Bada et al. (2020) found that female teachers viewed their principals as strongly implementing IL practices in their schools. Al-Dahamsheh (2021) who conducted research in the Giza district found significant differences (0.05) in favor of females, bachelor's degree holders, and those with 22 to 28 years of experience. Furthermore, Alzawahrh (2021) revealed the presence of significant differences in IL due to experience, with no significant differences attributed to gender. Surprisingly, Ahmad et al. (2020) reported non-significant moderating roles of gender and experience in distinguishing IL practices by teachers.

Based on the above, we conclude that the results have far-reaching implications for critical areas such as the formulation of school assignments, the implementation of educational programs, and the generation of positive learning environments. Notable findings include a positive relationship between perceived IL and teacher self-efficacy, the significance of clear visions and goals for high achievement, and the importance of ongoing participation in virtual professional learning communities to support instructional leaders. However, various issues emerged such as a weak link between IL and student achievement, limited roles for principals in rural settings, and a perceived minor impact on student progress. The review focused on the multifaceted nature of IL, which affects teacher effectiveness, school performance, and the overall learning environment. Consequently, assessing the effectiveness of school leaders is both critical and difficult as it provides districts with another avenue for maintaining accountability for results and emphasizing the importance of good leadership practices (Condon & Clifford, 2012).

3. Study Goal, Problem, Significance, and Research Questions

The goal of the current study was to evaluate the effectiveness of IL strategies among Jordanian public school administrators from the perspective of teachers. This inquiry was especially important given that Jordan's Ministry of Education has emphasized efforts to improve school leadership standards, while also affording schools more autonomy in their internal operations. This educational

framework places a dual demand on school principals. Firstly, they must possess theoretical insights into good leadership, and secondly have the capacity to effectively employ hands-on knowledge.

The study aimed to fill a significant gap in existing knowledge of the practical deployment of IL strategies in Jordanian public schools, as well as their tangible contributions to improving educational outcomes and school performance. It sought to provide significant insights that might affect policy and practice in continuous attempts to improve IL practices. To accomplish these goals, the study addressed two major research concerns. The first focused on the quantitative assessment of IL practices using the Hellinger scale, providing a detailed picture of the current situation regarding leadership in Jordanian public schools. The second deepened the investigation by investigating possible differences in teachers' views based on three demographic variables: gender, education, and years of experience. Analyzing these disparities generated important insights into the nuances of IL in Jordan. The specific research questions were as follows:

1. What is the level of IL practiced by public school principals according to the Hallinger scale?
2. Are there statistically significant differences between teachers' responses regarding the level to which government school principals practice IL according to the Hallinger scale based on gender, education, and years of experience?

4. Methodology

4.1 Design

A descriptive survey design was utilized to conduct the research.

4.2 Study Sample

According to Jordan's Ministry of Education statistics for the academic year 2023/2024, the study population comprised all teachers in government schools in Al-Mafraq Governorate Educational District, a total of 2907 male and female teachers. To achieve the primary objective of the study, the researchers randomly selected a sample of 336 teachers from Jordanian government schools in Al-Mafraq Governorate during the first semester of the academic year 2022/2023. The sample comprised 178 males and 158 females, 224 with a bachelor's degree and 112 with postgraduate degrees, as well as 166 with 10 years or more of experience.

4.3 Study Tool

We developed a survey comprising two fundamental parts, each fulfilling a specific purpose. The first part collected important personal data to provide basic knowledge of the respondents. The second part served as the core of the instrument, with 38 precisely selected items related to the Hallinger scale. This section aimed to assess the extent to which public school principals in Jordan are involved in IL techniques.

To ensure a complete and accurate assessment, the tool classifies these elements into six distinct domains: school objectives, educational program management, supervision of teaching and evaluation, monitoring of student success, providing incentives for teachers and students, and encouraging the professional development of teachers. This structure allows for a more in-depth analysis of various aspects of IL, providing a deep and accurate insight into the practices of public school principals.

4.4 Validity of the Tool

To ensure the tool possessed sufficient content validity, it was presented to six professors in the fields of educational administration, educational foundations, evaluation, and measurement. After

collecting data from the reviewers, the tool was adjusted according to an 80% agreement. One reviewer's comment led to a reduction from 42 items in the original tool to 38 paragraphs. Using a sample of 30 respondents outside the targeted sample, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between each paragraph and the entire tool. These coefficients were based on the Hallinger scale domains. Tables 1 and 2 detail the correlations between the paragraphs of the tool and the tool as a whole.

Table 1 Internal Consistency Coefficients between Each Paragraph and the Overall Tool

	Paragraph	Correlation Coefficient
Domain 1: School Objectives	1	0.596**
	2	0.487**
	3	0.688**
	4	0.441*
	5	0.504**
	6	0.566**
Domain 2: Educational Program Management	Paragraph	Correlation Coefficient
	1	0.654**
	2	0.693**
	3	0.472**
	4	0.573**
	5	0.204*
	6	0.581**

As indicated in Table 1, all correlation coefficients between each item and the overall tool were statistically significant ($\alpha \leq 0.01$). Therefore, the tool was suitable for achieving the objectives of the current study due to its internal structure and design.

Table 2 Internal Consistency Coefficients Regarding the Construction of the Domains with the Tool as a Whole

Domain	Correlation Coefficient
Domain 1: School Objectives	0.623**
Domain 2: Educational Program Management	0.617**
Domain 3: Supervising Teaching and Evaluation	0.704**
Domain 4: Monitoring Student Achievement	0.829**
Domain 5: Providing Incentives for Teachers	0.895**
Domain 6: Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers	0.873**

Table 2 reveals that the correlation coefficients between the study domains and the overall tool were statistically significant ($\alpha \leq 0.01$). Overall, the correlations ranged from 0.61 to 0.89, indicating that they were suitable for achieving the study's objectives.

4.5 Reliability of the Tool

To validate the reliability of the tool, the internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) and retest reliability for each domain were calculated. These are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Internal Consistency Coefficients (Cronbach’s Alpha) and Retest Reliability for the Domains

Domain	Retest Reliability	Internal Consistency (Cronbach’s Alpha)
School Objectives	0.89	0.849
Educational Program Management	0.88	0.854
Supervising Teaching and Evaluation	0.92	0.827
Monitoring Student Achievement	0.91	0.791
Providing Incentives for Teachers	0.90	0.771
Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers	0.88	0.786

Table 3 displays the retest reliability and internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach’s Alpha) for each domain. The retest reliability values signify the stability of the domains over time, while Cronbach’s Alpha values indicate the internal consistency of items within each domain. The elevated values for both retest reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha affirm that the domains are reliable measures and demonstrate internal consistency in assessing the specified constructs.

5. Results

To answer the first research question: “What is the level of IL practiced by public school principals according to the Hallinger scale?”, the means and standard deviations were calculated. These are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4: Study Sample Responses regarding the Degree of Practice of Government School Principals in Instructional Leadership Domains

Rank	#	Domain	Mean	SD	Level
1	5	Providing incentives for teachers and students	3.68	0.334	High
2	2	Managing the educational program	3.33	0.279	Moderate
3	4	Monitoring student achievement	3.29	0.272	Moderate
4	6	Encouraging professional growth for teachers	3.00	0.243	Moderate
5	3	Supervising teaching and evaluation	2.94	0.387	Moderate
6	1	School Objectives	2.83	0.280	Moderate
Total			3.18	0.113	Moderate

Table 4 reveals that government school principals generally exhibited moderate levels of IL, as indicated by an overall mean of 3.18 and a standard deviation of 0.11. The means of domains ranged from 3.68 to 2.83, reflecting both high and moderate levels. The “Providing incentives for teachers and students” domain yielded the highest mean of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.33, indicating a high level.

5.1 First Domain: School Objectives.

The means, standard deviations, and ranks for the “School Objectives” domain items were calculated and are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Study Sample Responses to the School Objectives Domain Items

Rank	#	Item	Mean	SD	Level
1	4	The school principal sets goals that seek to raise students’ academic levels.	3.60	0.875	Average
2	2	The school principal sets a timeline for implementing plans.	3.07	0.857	Average

Rank	#	Item	Mean	SD	Level
3	6	The school principal explains the school's goals through general meetings.	2.92	1.342	Average
4	1	The school principal engages in dialogue with the staff to develop the school's plans.	2.92	0.772	Average
5	5	The school principal selects a group of teachers with the ability and experience to implement future plans.	2.28	0.992	Low
6	3	The school principal informs parents of the plans that the school is striving to achieve.	2.18	0.981	Low
Total			2.83	2.80	Average

Table 5 indicates that the means ranged from 3.60 to 2.18. Item (4): "The school principal sets goals that seek to raise students' academic level" ranked first with an average of 3.60 and a standard deviation of 0.87, rating moderately. Conversely, items (3) and (5): "The school principal informs parents of the plans that the school is striving to achieve" and "The school principal selects a group of teachers with the ability and experience to implement future plans" ranked last with means of 2.18 & 2.28 and standard deviations of 0.98 & 0.992, respectively, both rating low.

5.2 Second Domain: Educational Program Management:

The means, standard deviations, and ranks were extracted for the "Educational Program Management" domain items. These are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 Study Sample Responses to the "Educational Program Management" Domain Items

Rank	#	Item	Mean	SD	Level
1	9	The school principal evaluates teachers based on implementing educational goals for the school.	3.93	0.683	High
2	11	The school principal records the strengths and weaknesses of teachers in the performance assessment record.	3.79	0.745	High
3	7	The school principal discusses school goals with teachers.	3.59	0.947	Moderate
4	8	The school principal identifies weaknesses in teachers' teaching during post-class visits.	3.47	0.617	Moderate
5	12	The school principal identifies strengths and weaknesses in teachers' performance after class visits.	2.73	1.116	Moderate
6	10	The school principal discusses the content of classroom activities with the teacher after class visits.	2.45	1.021	Moderate
Total			3.33	0.279	Moderate

Table 6 indicates that the means ranged from 3.93 to 2.45, denoting high and moderate levels, respectively. Among the items, Item (9): "The school principal evaluates teachers based on implementing educational goals for the school." and "The principal evaluates teachers based on implementing educational goals for the school" obtained the highest rank with a mean of 3.93, a standard deviation of 0.68, and a high rating. Conversely, Item (10): "The school principal discusses the content of classroom activities with the teacher after class visits" ranked the lowest among the moderately ranked items, recording an average of 2.45, a standard deviation of 1.02, and a moderate rating. The overall mean for the "Educational Program Management" domain was 3.33, with a standard deviation of (0.27) and a moderate rating.

5.3 Third Domain: Teaching Supervision and Evaluation

Means, standard deviations, and ranks were extracted for the "Teaching Supervision and Evaluation" domain's items. These are detailed in Table 7.

Table 7: Study Sample Responses to “Teaching Supervision and Evaluation” Domain Items

Rank #	Item	Mean	SD	Level
1	19 The school principal conducts regular classroom visits.	4.06	0.679	High
2	13 The principal meets with subject teachers to ensure the implementation of common goals.	4.00	0.728	High
3	17 The school principal, when evaluating teachers, refers to their performance records.	3.94	0.679	High
4	16 The school principal provides feedback to teachers after supervision visits.	2.34	0.946	Moderate
5	14 The school principal holds meetings for teachers of the same subjects to ensure alignment with outlined plans.	2.33	0.937	Low
6	18 The school principal ensures alignment between teaching objectives and school goals.	2.26	0.923	Low
7	15 The school principal reviews students’ work during teacher performance evaluations in the classroom.	2.06	0.854	Low
Total		2.94	0.387	Moderate

Table 7 reveals means ranging from 4.06 to 2.06, representing high, moderate, and low levels. The highest scoring item is Item (19): “The school principal conducts regular classroom visits” with a mean of 4.06 and a standard deviation of (0.67), rating highly. Item (16) “The school principal provides feedback to teachers after supervision visits” scored a mean of 2.34 and a standard deviation of 0.946, rating moderately. Conversely, Item (15): “The school principal reviews students’ work during teacher performance evaluation in the classroom” lags with an average of 2.06, a standard deviation of 0.85, and a low rating. The overall mean for the “Teaching Supervision and Evaluation” domain stands at 2.94, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.38, rating moderately.

5.4 Fourth Domain: Student Achievement Monitoring

Means, standard deviations, and ranks were extracted for the “Student Achievement Monitoring” domain items. These are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Study Sample Responses to the “Student Achievement Monitoring” Domain Items

Rank #	Item	Mean	SD	Level
1	23 The school principal emphasizes not calling students to the administration during class time.	4.33	0.696	High
2	20 The principal holds regular meetings for teachers to discuss students’ results.	4.00	0.733	High
3	25 The school principal asks teachers to identify students, highlighting their need for remedial lessons.	3.80	0.657	High
4	26 The school principal utilizes test results to assess the extent to which school goals are achieved.	3.33	1.139	Moderate
5	24 The school principal develops suitable teaching programs for academically weak students.	2.66	1.005	Moderate
6	21 The school principal ensures teachers formulate exam questions that consider individual differences among students.	2.65	0.874	Moderate
7	22 The school principal praises teachers by stating their teaching abilities and commending them.	2.25	1.000	Low
Total		3.29	0.272	Moderate

Table 8 displays means ranging from 4.33 to 2.25, indicating high, moderate, and low levels. Securing the top rank is Item (23): “The school principal emphasizes not calling students to the administration

during the class time” with a mean of 4.33, a standard deviation of 0.69, and a high rating. By contrast, Item (22): “The school principal praises teachers by stating their teaching abilities and commending them” ranks lowest with a mean of 2.25, a standard deviation of 1.00, and a low rating. Item (26): “The school principal utilizes test results to assess the extent of achieving school goals” topped the moderately ranked items, scoring a mean of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 1.139. The overall average for the “Student Achievement Monitoring” domain was 3.29, with a standard deviation of 0.27 and a moderate rating.

5.5 Fifth Domain: Providing Incentives for Teachers and Students

The means, standard deviations, and ranks for the “Providing incentives for teachers and students” domain items were extracted. These are detailed in Table 9.

Table 9: Study sample responses to the “Providing incentives for teachers and students” domain Items

Rank	#	Item	Mean	SD	Level
1	28	The school principal highlights academically or behaviorally outstanding students in general meetings.	4.14	0.882	High
2	32	The school principal commends outstanding teachers in individual and group meetings.	4.14	0.718	High
3	31	The school principal values outstanding students in the school by awarding symbolic prizes.	4.00	0.814	High
4	29	The school principal nominates outstanding teachers for awards such as the Excellent Teacher Award.	3.94	0.679	High
5	27	The school principal honors outstanding teachers in official celebrations and on Teachers’ Day.	3.67	0.790	Moderate
6	30	The school principal proposes training programs and workshops to enhance the performance of outstanding teachers.	2.13	1.022	low
Total			3.68	0.334	High

Table 9 displays mean scores ranging from 4.14 to 2.13, indicating high, moderate, and low levels. Item (28): “The school principal highlights academically or behaviorally outstanding students in general meetings” leads the rankings with a mean score of 4.14, a standard deviation of 0.88, and a good ranking. By contrast, Item (30): “The school principal proposes training programs and workshops to enhance the performance of outstanding teachers” ranks last with a mean score of (2.13) and a standard deviation of (1.02), and a low ranking. Item (27): “The school principal honors outstanding teachers in official celebrations and on Teachers’ Day” ranked moderately scoring a mean of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 0.790. The mean score for the incentives field was 3.68 with a standard deviation of 0.33, indicating a high ranking.

5.6 Sixth domain: “Encouraging professional growth for teachers”

The means, standard deviations, and ranks for the “Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers” domain items were extracted. These are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Study sample responses to the “Encouraging professional growth for teachers” Domain Items

Rank	#	Item	Mean	SD	Level
1	38	The school principal ensures the impact of training programs on teachers’ skills in the classroom.	4.01	0.637	High

Rank	#	Item	Mean	SD	Level
2	34	The school principal encourages teachers to attend educational courses and workshops.	3.99	0.728	High
3	35	The school principal monitors training activities and the extent to which teachers benefit from them.	2.73	0.855	Moderate
4	37	The school principal provides teachers with newsletters to enhance their professional growth.	2.47	0.880	Moderate
5	33	The school principal oversees teachers' implementing activities aligned with the school's main goals.	2.41	0.955	Moderate
6	36	The school principal attends part of teachers' meetings to discuss the outcomes of teaching activities.	2.00	0.894	low
Total			3.00	0.243	Moderate

Table 10 displays mean scores ranging from 4.01 to 2.00, representing high, moderate, and low levels. Leading the rankings is Item (38): "The school principal ensures the impact of training programs on teachers' skills in the classroom" with a mean score of 4.01, a standard deviation of 0.63, and a high ranking. This indicates positive effects on students' achievement and the educational goals of the school. By contrast, Item (36): "The school principal attends part of teachers' meetings to discuss the outcomes of teaching activities" ranks lowest with a mean score of 2.00, a standard deviation of 0.89, and a low ranking. Item (3): "The school principal monitors training activities and the extent to which teachers benefit from them" topped the moderately ranked items by scoring a mean of 2.73 with a standard deviation of 0.855. The overall mean score for the professional growth field was 3.00 with a standard deviation of 0.243, indicating a moderate ranking.

To answer the research question: "Are there statistically significant differences between teachers' responses regarding the level to which government school principals practice IL according to the Hallinger scale based on gender, education, and years of experience?", the researchers calculated the means and standard deviations of school principals' levels of practice concerning gender, educational qualifications, and years of experience. The results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Means and standard deviations of school principals' degrees of practice by gender, educational qualifications, and years of experience.

Variable	Categories	Education al Goals	Program Managem ent	Teaching and Evaluation Supervisio n	Student Achieveme nt Monitoring	Incentive s for Teachers and Students	Encouragin g Professional Growth for Teachers	Overall Tool
Gender	Male	Mean	2.80	3.29	3.00	3.32	3.62	3.08
		Standard Deviation	0.294	0.217	0.318	0.244	0.181	0.250
	Female	Mean	2.84	3.37	3.01	3.26	3.72	2.77
		Standard Deviation	0.263	0.332	0.109	0.298	0.442	0.443
Educational Qualificatio n	Bachelor's	Mean	2.77	3.26	3.01	3.29	3.70	2.99
		Standard Deviation	0.309	0.252	0.287	0.242	0.379	0.292
	Postgraduate	Mean	2.92	3.46	2.97	3.28	3.60	2.81
		Standard Deviation	0.172	0.286	0.108	0.324	0.201	0.509

Variable	Categories	Educational Goals	Program Management	Teaching and Evaluation Supervision	Student Achievement Monitoring	Incentives for Teachers and Students	Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers	Overall Tool
Years of Experience	Less than 5 years	Mean	3.00	3.27	2.95	3.19	3.55	2.72
		Standard Deviation	0.137	0.345	0.359	0.295	0.209	0.481
	5 years to less than 10 years	Mean	2.81	3.16	2.97	3.25	3.84	2.86
		Standard Deviation	0.383	0.240	0.302	0.362	0.443	0.344
	10 years or more	Mean	2.76	3.47	3.04	3.36	3.59	3.07
		Standard Deviation	0.196	0.187	0.065	0.131	0.216	0.313

Using the Hallinger scale, Table 11 reveals apparent variations in means and standard deviations regarding the degree of practice of government school principals in IL according to the categories of gender (males, females), educational qualification (bachelor, postgraduate), and years of experience (less than 5 years, 5 to less than 10 years, 10 years or more). To determine the statistical significance of the differences between means, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, the results of which are presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Influence of educational qualifications, years of experience, and gender on principals' practices in instructional leadership

Source of Variation	Domains	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	F Value	Statistical Significance
Gender						
Hotelling's Trace = 0.909	Student Achievement Monitoring	0.439	1	0.439	6.859	0.009*
	Providing Incentives for Teachers and Students	0.844	1	0.844	15.958	0.000*
	Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers	0.139	1	0.139	2.417	0.121
	Overall	0.783	1	0.783	11.611	0.001*
Educational Qualification						
Hotelling's Trace = 0.489	Student Achievement Monitoring	2.133	1	2.133	33.298	0.000*
	Providing Incentives for Teachers and Students	2.167	1	2.167	40.985	0.000*
	Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers	0.369	1	0.369	6.432	0.012*
	Overall	0.195	1	0.195	2.899	0.090
Years of Experience						
Wilks' Lambda = 0.408	Student Achievement Monitoring	2.614	2	1.307	20.403	0.000*
	Providing Incentives for Teachers and Students	5.014	2	2.507	47.415	0.000*
	Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers	0.541	2	0.270	4.710	0.010*
	Overall	2.060	2	1.030	15.282	0.000*
student	Student Achievement Monitoring	21.200	331	0.064		

Source of Variation	Domains	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	F Value	Statistical Significance
	Providing Incentives for Teachers and Students	17.502	33 ¹	0.053		
	Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers	19.008	33 ¹	0.057		
	Overall	22.315	33 ¹	0.067		
Total	Student Achievement Monitoring	2712.444	33 ⁶			
	Providing Incentives for Teachers and Students	3755.111	33 ⁶			
	Encouraging Professional Growth for Teachers	3049.020	33 ⁶			

Table 12 indicates the following:

- Significant gender-based differences ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) exist in all aspects of government school principals' IL practices, as per the Hallinger scale, favoring males.
- Educational qualifications yield significant differences ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) in all areas of government school principals' IL practices, as per the Hallinger scale, favoring postgraduate qualifications.
- There were statistically significant differences in years of experience ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) in all areas of school principals' IL practices, favoring the experience category of 10 years.

6. Discussion

The results for the first research question reveal that while there is a moderate level of IL among Jordanian school principals, there are differences in various areas. For instance, some areas such as providing incentives to teachers and students represent a higher level of IL, while others such as managing the educational program, monitoring student achievement, encouraging professional growth of teachers, supervising teaching and evaluation and school goals denote a moderate level. There may be several reasons for this. For instance, based on their assessments of the school's needs and issues, principals may prioritize the areas they believe are critical. Disparities can also occur due to differences in training, knowledge, and resource availability, as principals focus on topics that match their skills and available resources. The emphasis on leadership is also influenced by the specific contextual characteristics of each school such as student demographics and community dynamics. External expectations such as government regulations and requirements can also change priorities, whereas the perceived impact of specific areas on overall school performance will help principals make decisions.

The results for the first domain "School Objectives" revealed a moderate rating, perhaps indicating that participants considered the communication of managers regarding the future goals of the school to be effective on average. In addition, they may appreciate a greater focus on academic improvement; for example, by setting academic goals that are compatible with improving student performance. The results also indicated that participants highlighted such strengths as entering into a dialogue with school staff to develop school plans and setting a schedule for their implementation. Therefore, there is still room for growth in other areas such as choosing a group of teachers who have the ability and experience to implement and inform parents of the plans that the school is striving to achieve. This is in line with the results reported by Brolund (2016), Ghavefker et al. (2019), and Salameh (2016).

While the second domain "Educational Program Management" had a moderate overall rating, the specific focus areas provided by the responses generated useful insights for the development of IL strategies. Addressing the focus on post-observation conversations in the lower-order element may facilitate a more complete approach to teacher development.

The third domain "Supervision and Evaluation of Teaching" also returned a moderate

assessment; nevertheless, the specific approaches mentioned in its items provide useful information. High-level items emphasize the importance of regular class visits, setting collaborative goals with subject teachers, and, integrating performance records into teacher evaluations. Conversely, lower-order elements identify potential areas for growth, which will help pedagogical leaders improve their methods to promote a more comprehensive and successful approach to educational control and teacher cooperation. This result correlates with those of Harris et al. (2017) and Rashed and Mushtaq, (2021), but does not accord with that of Range et al. (2014) who discovered that prospective principals have a strong understanding of formative supervision but are unsure how to determine teacher evaluation.

The responses of participants to the elements of the fourth domain “Monitoring Student Achievement” reveal a modest level of interest in monitoring student achievement. High-level items demonstrate a commitment to basic actions that support effective monitoring. The emphasis on maintaining a focused learning environment emphasizes the importance of providing an enabling environment for student learning. Participation in collaborative data analysis demonstrates a commitment to using data-driven insights to make informed decisions and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Proactively identifying and meeting student needs also displays a commitment to early intervention and individual support. This result is consistent with those of numerous studies (Waters & Marzano, 2007; Robinson et al., 2008; Brolund, 2016; Sultan et al., 2022; Noor & Nawab, 2022; Hvdston et al., 2019; Honig & Rainey, 2019; Wahab, 2020; Al-Harbi, 2021; Sanchez & Watson, 2021), but contradicts the findings of Rodrigues and De Lima (2021) and Pietsch et al. (2023) that school leaders prioritize administrative tasks over IL techniques, which may have a negative impact on student achievement.

It is crucial to emphasize that these findings can be the result of challenges such as insufficient resources, time, or the need for professional development in certain aspects of tracking student achievement. For example, if the emphasis on the analysis of students’ work is reduced during the teacher’s performance assessment, this may indicate the need for more effective strategies to integrate the analysis of students’ work into the assessment procedure. The ranking may also be influenced by respondents’ differing views on the value or effectiveness of various control measures. Understanding these distinctions is critical for educational leaders because it provides insight into the strengths and growth areas of current student performance monitoring systems. Leaders can reinforce and build on existing strengths by learning about high-level elements. In conjunction with this, items of a lower order highlight specific areas of targeted improvement initiatives, budget allocation, and professional growth. This sophisticated understanding will enable school administrators and educational leaders to effectively optimize their strategies, allocate resources where they are most needed, and implement interventions that address specific challenges in monitoring student success, ultimately contributing to improved overall student outcomes within the school community.

The responses of participants to the items of the fifth domain “Providing Incentives to Teachers and Students” indicate a strong commitment to providing teachers and students with incentives, particularly through public recognition at meetings, praise, and symbolic awards. While recognition is endorsed at official ceremonies and awards for outstanding teachers, the proposal of training programs for such teachers seems to be a less certain aspect. The strong commitment of the participants to providing such incentives to teachers and students demonstrates a preference for visual and emotionally touching forms of praise.

Generally, these ratings probably reflect the effectiveness and perceived feasibility of various approaches to supporting the professional growth of teachers in the context of the study community. The emphasis on certain techniques may correspond to the goals and limitations of the school leadership, indicating a preference for tactics that are believed to have a direct impact on the development of teachers. This result is consistent with that of Ismail et al. (2018), Jamalullail et al. (2020), Rashed and Mushtaq (2021), Ma and Marion (2021), and Pashmforush et al. (2023).

Finally, the results for the sixth domain “Professional Growth for Teachers” reveal areas of

strength such as the positive impact of training programs; however, other areas related to the principal's presence in teachers' meetings and monitoring of training activities need further improvement. This aligns with the findings of both Jamalullail et al. (2020) and Hafsat et al. (2020).

The results for the second study question revealed significant gender differences among teachers in noting the IL behavior of school principals, as judged by the Hallinger scale, as male teachers outperformed females in this regard. This is possible because male teachers might be more attuned to interpreting practices that could align with effective IL practices. This result accords with those of Kis and Konan (2014) and Salameh (2016) but is inconsistent with the research conducted by Al-Mahdy and Al-Kiyumi (2015) and Bada et al. (2020), both of which reported that female teachers were more aware of their principals' IL practices. The result is also inconsistent with those of Ahmad et al. (2020) and Alzawahrh (2021), neither of which identified any significant differences regarding gender.

Notably, the findings also indicate that teachers with postgraduate qualifications significantly observed IL styles among public school principals, possibly due to increased knowledge, specialized training, research orientation, and critical thinking skills. However, this result does not align with that of Al-Dahamsheh (2021), which identified significant differences attributed to holders of bachelor's degrees.

There were also significant differences among teachers with experience spanning ten years or more in distinguishing IL techniques. This indicates a positive correlation between extensive experience and competence in assessing IL styles. This result is consistent with the studies conducted by Al-Dahamsheh (2021) and Alzawahrh (2021), but inconsistent with that obtained by Ahmad et al. (2020) who found no significant differences regarding years of experience.

We contend that the results of the second research question are the most important findings of this study because they highlight the role of three variables; namely, gender, educational qualifications, and years of experience in observing the effectiveness of IL in Jordanian schools.

7. Conclusion and Future Implications

This research revealed that the overall competency of IL was modest, with notable differences among its domains. Experienced male teachers with postgraduate qualifications exhibited increased competency in distinguishing IL practices in Jordanian public schools. However, it is important to note that the findings are based on a specific sample of Jordanian school teachers. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts or settings might be limited.

Based on the findings, it is recommended to create specialized training programs for school principals centered on the aspects highlighted in the Hallinger scale, covering various areas such as school objectives, management of educational programs, supervision of teaching and evaluation, monitoring of student achievement, and encouragement of teacher professional growth. Additionally, there is a suggestion to offer support and professional development opportunities specifically tailored for male teachers who possess postgraduate qualifications and significant experience. Furthermore, there is a recognized need to establish continuous evaluation and feedback systems to assess the effectiveness of instructional leadership practices, pinpoint areas for enhancement, and promote closer collaboration between school principals and teachers.

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Appendix:

Dear respondent:

Through this research, we are evaluating the leadership practices of Jordanian public school principals using the Hallinger scale. Please help by completing this survey; we appreciate you taking the time to complete it. Do not write your names on this questionnaire. If there are items that you are not comfortable answering, please skip them. Your responses are voluntary, confidential, and cannot be recognized by other individuals. Thank you for your cooperation. Your help is highly appreciated.

- **Part (A)**

Demographic questions:

Q1 Gender:

A) Male B) Female

Q2 Educational qualifications:

A) Bachelor's degree B) Postgraduate degree

Q3 Years of experience:

A) less than 5 years B) 5 to less than 10 years C) more than 10 years.

- **Part (B)**

Survey Items:

On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 for strong agreement, 4 for agreement, 3 for neutrality, 2 for disagreement, and 1 for strong disagreement), how would you rate each of the following statements?

#	Item	Agreement				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
First Domain: School Objectives						
1	The school principal engages in dialogue with the staff to develop the school's plans.					
2	The school principal sets a timeline for implementing future plans.					
3	The school principal informs parents of the plans that the school is striving to achieve.					
4	The school principal sets goals that seek to raise the academic level of students.					
5	The school principal selects a group of teachers with the ability and experience to implement future plans.					
6	The school principal informs parents of the plans that the school is striving to achieve.					
Second Domain: Educational Program Management						
7	The school principal discusses school goals with teachers.					
8	The school principal identifies weaknesses in teachers' performance during post-class visits.					
9	The school principal evaluates teachers based on implementing educational goals for the school.					
10	The school principal discusses the content of classroom activities with the teacher after class visits.					
11	The school principal records strengths and weaknesses of teachers in the performance assessment record.					
12	The school principal identifies strengths and weaknesses in teachers' teaching after a class visit.					
Third Domain: Teaching Supervision and Evaluation						
13	The school principal meets with teachers to ensure the implementation of common goals.					
14	The school principal holds meetings for teachers of the same subjects to ensure alignment with outlined plans.					
15	The school principal reviews students' work during teacher performance evaluations in the classroom.					
16	The school principal provides feedback to teachers after supervision visits.					
17	The school principal, when evaluating teachers, refers to their performance records.					
18	The school principal ensures alignment between teaching objectives and school goals.					
19	The school principal conducts regular classroom visits.					
Fourth Domain: Students' Achievement Monitoring						
20	The school principal holds regular meetings for teachers to discuss students' results.					

#	Item	Agreement				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21	The school principal ensures teachers formulate exam questions considering individual differences among students.					
22	The school principal praises teachers by stating their teaching abilities and commending them.					
23	The school principal emphasizes not calling students to the administration during class time.					
24	The school principal develops suitable teaching programs for academically weak students.					
25	The school principal asks teachers to identify students, highlighting their need for remedial lessons.					
26	The school principal utilizes test results to assess the extent to which school goals are achieved.					
Fifth Domain: Providing Incentives for Teachers and Students						
27	The school principal honors outstanding teachers in official celebrations and on Teachers' Day.					
28	The school principal highlights academically or behaviorally outstanding students in general meetings.					
29	The school principal nominates outstanding teachers for awards such as the Excellent Teacher Award.					
30	The school principal proposes training programs and workshops to enhance the performance of outstanding teachers.					
31	The school principal values outstanding students in the school by awarding symbolic prizes.					
32	The school principal commends outstanding teachers in individual and group meetings.					
Sixth Domain: Professional Growth for Teachers						
33	The school principal oversees teachers' implementing activities aligned with the school's main goals.					
34	The school principal encourages teachers to attend educational courses and workshops.					
35	The school principal monitors training activities and the extent to which teachers benefit from them.					
36	The school principal attends part of teachers' meetings to discuss the outcomes of teaching activities.					
37	The school principal provides teachers with newsletters to enhance their professional growth.					
38	The school principal ensures the impact of training programs on teachers' skills in the classroom.					