



Instructional Leadership-Based Framework for Teacher-Administrator Collaboration at Kiattisack International School

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Abstract

This study investigates how instructional leadership practices influence teacher-administrator collaboration at Kiattisack International School (KIS), a multicultural international school in Vientiane, Laos. Guided by Distributed Leadership Theory, the research employs a qualitative single-case study design to explore how leadership is enacted, shared, and experienced within the school's secondary department. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with administrators and foreign teachers, supported by document analysis. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns related to leadership practices, collaboration, and organizational context.

Findings reveal that KIS demonstrates a strong commitment to student-centered learning, supported by collaborative planning, data-driven instruction, and emerging professional learning communities. Teachers are actively involved in curriculum discussions and instructional activities; however, the depth and consistency of collaboration vary across departments. Instructional leadership remains partially distributed, with administrators retaining control over major decisions while teachers participate primarily in advisory and operational roles. Challenges identified include limited role clarity, inconsistent feedback practices, time constraints, and varying levels of teacher influence in decision-making.

Based on these findings, the study proposes the C.A.R.E. Instructional Leadership Framework, which emphasizes Communication, Alignment, Roles, and Empowerment as key dimensions for strengthening collaborative leadership. The framework promotes inclusive, participatory practices that enhance teacher engagement, improve instructional coherence, and support sustainable school improvement.

The study contributes to the limited body of qualitative research on instructional leadership in international school contexts and offers practical insights for educators and policymakers seeking to foster collaborative, context-responsive leadership in diverse educational settings.

Keywords: *instructional leadership, teacher-administrator collaboration, distributed leadership, international schools, professional learning community, teacher voice, educational leadership framework*

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

International schools have expanded significantly over the past two decades, especially in Asia, due to growing demand from both expatriate and local families seeking high-quality, English-medium education and globally recognized qualifications (Lee & Walker, 2018). These schools often implement standardized curricula—such as the Cambridge International Curriculum—valued for their academic rigor, structured design, and international credibility. In Southeast Asia, including countries like Laos and Thailand, adoption of the Cambridge curriculum has become increasingly common, as it provides a reliable academic framework that can be adapted to local needs (Cambridge International Examinations, n.d.).

Despite the advantages, implementing international curricula in diverse school settings presents complex challenges. Teachers often come from varied cultural and professional backgrounds, making collaboration and communication difficult. In such environments, instructional leadership becomes essential—not only in guiding curriculum implementation but also in managing diverse staff and fostering inclusive, collaborative practices (Zhao, 2024; Sleiman, 2020).

Instructional leadership centers on ensuring high-quality teaching and learning as the core function of the school. Effective instructional leaders actively support teacher development, conduct classroom observations, lead curriculum discussions, and ensure alignment between school goals and instructional practices (Chabalala & Naidoo, 2021; Nolasco & Dimarucot, 2024). However, in international schools, the work of instructional leadership is complicated by differing pedagogical norms, limited shared cultural context, and the centralized governance structures often present in such institutions.

Given this complexity, the role of instructional leadership in promoting genuine collaboration is particularly crucial. While leadership teams may prioritize student learning, effective implementation depends heavily on how collaboration is enacted between administrators and teachers. The dynamics of this collaboration—especially in schools with multicultural faculty and centralized decision-making—are insufficiently explored in current educational research. This study aims to investigate these dynamics within the specific context of Kiettisack International School (KIS) in Laos.

Background of the Study

Kiettisack International School (KIS) is a private institution located in Vientiane, Laos. Established in 1992 by Dr. David Marian and Dr. Chansanga Pholsena, the school began as Daystar School with just 25 students. In 2005, it was formally recognized by the Lao Ministry of Education as an international school and renamed Kiettisack International School—“Kiettisack” translating to “Honour” in English (Kiettisack International School, 2023).



Today, KIS operates as a multi-campus institution offering education from Nursery through College. The main campus in Vientiane serves over 1,200 students, while its Luang Prabang campus extends its reach to northern Laos. This study focuses on the Secondary Campus in Vientiane, which follows the Cambridge International Curriculum, including the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and AS/A Level qualifications—standard benchmarks for international university admissions.

KIS is licensed by both the Lao Ministry of Education and Cambridge International Examinations (Centre Code: LA008), and functions as an authorized exam center. The curriculum is delivered by a multicultural faculty comprising approximately 93 foreign and 35 local teachers. This diverse staff composition reflects the global nature of the institution but also introduces challenges in coordination, professional alignment, and communication.

The school's academic governance structure includes a School Director, Deputy Directors, Headmasters, and Deputy Headmasters. However, teachers—particularly local faculty—hold limited formal authority in decision-making, and instructional planning tends to be top-down. While the leadership model seeks to uphold Cambridge standards, it often limits teacher agency, which may hinder instructional coherence and collaborative planning.

As an institution that blends international academic standards with localized implementation, KIS exemplifies the organizational and cultural complexities faced by many international schools across Southeast Asia. With its adoption of the Cambridge curriculum, diverse teaching workforce, and centralized leadership, KIS provides a relevant case for investigating how instructional leadership is enacted and how collaborative practices are experienced by both administrators and teachers.

This study is therefore situated within a broader effort to understand leadership in cross-cultural educational settings. It aims not only to describe the leadership structures and practices at KIS but to explore how collaboration, inclusivity, and shared instructional goals are pursued (or constrained) within the school's unique institutional framework. By examining the perspectives and experiences of those within the organization, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how instructional leadership can evolve in multicultural international schools.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Instructional leadership has evolved from a principal-centered practice to a more collective model that emphasizes shared responsibility among members of the school community. Lee examined this evolution by investigating the influence of collective instructional leadership on teacher efficacy within the context of secondary education (Lee, 2015). The study positioned instructional leadership not as the sole domain of school heads but as a function distributed across various instructional leaders, including department heads, lead teachers, and instructional coordinators. Drawing on data from a sample of secondary schools, Lee found that when leadership is exercised collaboratively, particularly through shared vision-setting, co-planning of instruction, and mutual accountability, teachers report significantly higher levels of confidence in their instructional roles (Lee, 2015).



The research highlighted that collective instructional leadership promotes a professional culture characterized by trust, open communication, and a shared commitment to student achievement. These findings are especially relevant in international education contexts, where leadership structures often encompass multicultural faculty and decentralized governance. Lee emphasized that this approach supports alignment across diverse teaching teams, reduces professional isolation, and encourages peer learning. In settings where teachers come from diverse pedagogical backgrounds and national systems, such as international schools, the intentional development of collective leadership can help mitigate fragmentation and support more coherent instructional practices (Lee, 2015).

Importantly, Lee's work contributes to a growing understanding that instructional leadership is most effective when it is context-sensitive and inclusive. Rather than relying solely on top-down directives, effective leaders cultivate systems that empower educators to take ownership of curriculum implementation and instructional improvement (Lee, 2015). This model aligns with contemporary approaches to professional learning communities and teacher leadership, making it highly relevant to schools like KIS that aim to balance international standards with local responsiveness in a diverse institutional environment.

Lambrecht explored how both instructional and transformational leadership contribute to the effective implementation of inclusive education, particularly in mainstream secondary schools. The study emphasized that for inclusive teaching to succeed, school leaders must be more than administrators; they must also serve as instructional guides who support teachers in adapting lessons to meet the diverse needs of students. Instructional leadership, in this sense, includes providing feedback, promoting teacher collaboration, and offering guidance in curriculum planning. When school leaders assume this role, they create an environment that fosters personalized teaching and student-centered learning (Lambrecht et al., 2022).

A major finding from Lambrecht's research is that leadership practices have a direct effect on how confident teachers feel in using inclusive strategies. Teachers who receive regular guidance and feel supported by their leaders are more likely to implement differentiated instruction. This is especially important in schools with multicultural and academically diverse learners, a characteristic shared by many international schools. The study also found that leaders who built strong professional relationships with staff and maintained clear communication had a greater impact on improving classroom practice (Lambrecht et al., 2022).

Although this study was not situated in Southeast Asia, it offers insights applicable to international education contexts where faculty diversity and inclusive expectations are present. In schools such as KIS, where international curricula are implemented by a multicultural teaching staff, Lambrecht's findings highlight the importance of leadership practices that encourage shared pedagogical direction and instructional alignment. These themes provide a useful lens through which to examine leadership dynamics in similar settings.

Lani investigated the challenges that school principals encounter in their role as instructional leaders, particularly in relation to enhancing student academic performance (Lani & Pauzi, 2024). The study focused on the perspectives of secondary school principals, highlighting



the growing expectations placed on them to improve learning outcomes while simultaneously handling numerous administrative responsibilities. Instructional leadership in this context involves setting clear academic goals, guiding teaching practices, supporting teacher development, and ensuring that instructional activities are aligned with school objectives (Lani & Pauzi, 2024).

The findings revealed that many principals struggled to maintain a consistent instructional presence due to the volume of non-instructional tasks they were required to complete (Lani & Pauzi, 2024). Activities such as paperwork, regulatory compliance, and day-to-day school management often took precedence, reducing opportunities to observe classes, offer feedback, or facilitate professional learning. Participants in the study emphasized the importance of instructional leadership but expressed concern that these responsibilities were often overshadowed by managerial duties (Lani & Pauzi, 2024).

Lani also noted that effective instructional leadership depends not only on a principal's expertise in curriculum and pedagogy but also on their ability to foster strong relationships with teachers (Lani & Pauzi, 2024). Trust, communication, and collaboration were all identified as essential components of successful leadership. Principals who built supportive environments were more likely to encourage innovation in teaching and strengthen teacher commitment to school goals (Lani & Pauzi, 2024).

Although Lani's study was based in a public school system, its insights are relevant to international education environments such as KIS. The challenges of balancing academic leadership with organizational duties are common in schools with high performance expectations and diverse teaching staff. Lani's findings provide a valuable perspective on how leadership practices can be adapted to better support instructional quality and teacher collaboration in similarly complex institutional contexts.

Othman and Busari conducted a ten-year bibliometric analysis of research on instructional leadership, aiming to understand how this field has developed globally from 2014 to 2024 (Othman & Busari, 2024). By reviewing over two thousand academic articles indexed in the Scopus database, the study identified key authors, publication trends, research areas, and emerging themes. The findings showed a steady increase in the number of publications over the decade, with the highest number recorded in 2023. Although there was a slight drop in 2024, the authors clarified that this was due to incomplete data for the year, not a decline in scholarly interest (Othman & Busari, 2024).

The study highlighted that the most influential contributions came from scholars such as Hallinger and Shaked, whose work has shaped the understanding of instructional leadership in various educational settings (Othman & Busari, 2024). Most of the research originated from countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and China, with growing contributions from developing countries, including Malaysia and Turkey. This trend reflects the growing global focus on leadership in schools, particularly in relation to teaching quality and student achievement (Othman & Busari, 2024).



Instructional leadership has been found to be most commonly studied within the field of education, although related research also appears in the social sciences, business, and psychology (Othman & Busari, 2024). The authors noted that school improvement, student outcomes, teacher development, and leadership models were among the most frequently used keywords. These terms indicate that instructional leadership is widely regarded as a crucial factor in enhancing classroom instruction and facilitating school reform (Othman & Busari, 2024).

Othman and Busari also examined how scholars collaborate across countries. They found that international partnerships were strong, particularly among English-speaking countries. Such collaboration helps build a broader understanding of how instructional leadership is applied across different school systems. The researchers emphasized that more recent studies are moving beyond general definitions (Othman & Busari, 2024). They are now focusing on how leadership practices must be adapted to fit the culture, needs, and structure of each school.

For international schools like KIS, these findings offer helpful insights. The research suggests that instructional leadership cannot be applied uniformly in every school. Instead, it must consider the school's local context, including its cultural background, governance structure, and curriculum standards. The study by Othman and Busari supports the need for school leaders to design leadership approaches that are evidence-informed, globally aware, and sensitive to their institution's unique environment.

Ralebese examined how school principals understand and apply instructional leadership while implementing curriculum reform. The study, based on the experiences of principals in South African secondary schools, aimed to identify how leadership influences the success or failure of curriculum change at the school level (Ralebese et al., 2025). The research found that instructional leadership plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between policy and classroom practice. However, principals often face challenges in fulfilling this role due to time constraints, unclear policy guidance, and competing administrative responsibilities (Ralebese et al., 2025).

One of the major findings in the study was that principals who maintained regular communication with teachers and involved them in the planning and decision-making process were more effective in implementing curriculum changes (Ralebese et al., 2025). These principals did not view instructional leadership as a top-down process. Instead, they emphasized building trust with teachers, supporting collaborative learning environments, and offering guidance that focused on instructional quality rather than compliance (Ralebese et al., 2025).

The study also showed that some principals felt underprepared for the instructional demands of curriculum reform. In these cases, leadership efforts were often reactive and focused more on managing operational issues than on guiding teaching and learning (Ralebese et al., 2025). Principals who succeeded in leading reform, according to the study, were those who made time to observe classes, provided constructive feedback, and offered professional development opportunities that aligned with the goals of the new curriculum (Ralebese et al., 2025).

Although the research was conducted within a national education system, its insights are applicable to international schools, such as KIS. In such settings, school leaders also need to



interpret and implement curriculum frameworks, such as those from Cambridge, while working with a diverse teaching staff. Ralebese's findings highlight the importance of leadership that is participatory, instructionally focused, and responsive to the professional needs of teachers during times of curriculum transition.

Volante explored how expert teacher teams support the development of instructional leadership within schools and how their practices can be extended to broader teaching improvement networks (Volante et al., 2023). The study was conducted in a European school system, focusing on how collaboration among experienced educators can be leveraged to strengthen teaching practices, enhance student learning, and foster leadership within the school setting (Volante et al., 2023).

In the study, expert teams comprised senior or high-performing teachers who were assigned roles that involved guiding their peers, sharing effective teaching methods, and assisting in the implementation of school-wide goals (Volante et al., 2023). These teams served as a bridge between the leadership team and classroom teachers. Rather than relying only on top-down instructions, schools that empowered expert teams created an environment where teaching quality could be improved through shared expertise and regular communication among teachers (Volante et al., 2023).

One of the important findings was that expert teams helped create a stronger connection between leadership goals and classroom practices. The study showed that when teachers are given opportunities to lead in their areas of strength, they feel more motivated and professionally respected. It also helped reduce the gap between administrators and teaching staff by making leadership a more collaborative process (Volante et al., 2023).

Volante also studied how this leadership model was expanded into teaching improvement networks, where practices were shared across multiple schools. Success in these networks depended on more than just adopting tools or strategies; it also required effective implementation (Volante et al., 2023). It also required trust, open communication, and the ability to adapt ideas to each school's context. This finding is particularly relevant for international schools, where staff often come from different backgrounds and may have different teaching approaches (Volante et al., 2023).

In schools like KIS, where leadership involves coordination between local and foreign teachers, the insights from Volante highlight the importance of creating structured collaboration among experienced faculty. These expert teams can support a shared understanding of instructional goals and make leadership more participatory and responsive to classroom realities.

Mora-Ruano, Heine, and Gebhardt investigated how instructional leadership contributes to teacher collaboration and, ultimately, to student academic outcomes (Mora-Ruano et al., 2021). The study used large-scale data from the German sample of the 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), with a specific focus on science achievement. The researchers aimed to determine whether principals' leadership behaviors affected the level of



collaboration among teachers and whether this collaboration contributed to improved student performance (Mora-Ruano et al., 2021).

The findings revealed that school principals who engaged in strong instructional leadership were more likely to cultivate an environment where teachers worked together consistently and meaningfully (Mora-Ruano et al., 2021). This leadership involved setting clear academic goals, supporting teacher professional development, and encouraging reflective dialogue among teaching staff. These practices helped establish a school culture that valued cooperation, planning, and peer engagement (Mora-Ruano et al., 2021).

Teacher collaboration, as defined in the study, included shared lesson planning, structured conversations about instructional strategies, and coordinated approaches to student learning. The researchers found that this type of collaboration did not occur automatically. It required a supportive leadership structure that provided both the time and the institutional encouragement for teachers to work together in focused and purposeful ways (Mora-Ruano et al., 2021).

A key conclusion of the study was that teacher collaboration served as a significant mediator between leadership and student achievement. In schools where principals actively promoted collaborative teaching practices, students tended to perform better, particularly in science (Mora-Ruano et al., 2021). The data supported the idea that while instructional leadership may not directly impact test scores, it sets the conditions that enable improved teaching and learning.

Although this study was conducted within a national context in Germany, its findings offer practical insights for international schools such as KIS. In culturally diverse environments where teachers may come from different educational traditions, establishing consistent collaboration becomes more complex. The research suggests that when school leaders make teacher cooperation a structured and supported part of school life, instructional alignment and student outcomes can both improve (Mora-Ruano et al., 2021).

Hsieh conducted a quantitative study in Taiwan to examine how school leadership influences the level and quality of teacher collaboration. The study involved 618 teachers from junior high schools and focused on two leadership dimensions: instructional leadership and transformational leadership (Hsieh et al., 2023). The aim was to determine how these leadership styles impact collaborative behaviors such as co-planning, sharing of teaching strategies, and mutual reflection.

The results showed that instructional leadership had a significant and positive effect on teacher collaboration. Principals who provided clear instructional goals, observed classroom teaching, and gave regular feedback were more likely to foster an environment where teachers worked together consistently (Hsieh et al., 2023). These collaborative practices included joint lesson planning, peer coaching, and shared approaches to addressing student learning challenges. Teachers in schools where instructional leadership was visible reported a greater sense of cohesion and professional support (Hsieh et al., 2023).



In contrast, schools where leadership was seen as passive or disconnected from instructional matters experienced lower levels of collaboration. Teachers in those settings tended to work independently and had fewer opportunities for structured interaction with colleagues (Hsieh et al., 2023). Hsieh argued that while both instructional and transformational leadership are important, instructional leadership is the one that most directly shapes the conditions for professional collaboration (Hsieh et al., 2023).

This study offers valuable insights for international schools, such as KIS, where the teaching staff often represent diverse cultural and pedagogical backgrounds. The findings support the view that collaborative teaching does not develop automatically in diverse school settings. Instead, it requires leaders who are actively engaged in the instructional core of the school and who model practices that promote collective professional work. By providing clear direction, encouraging shared responsibility, and supporting communication among teachers, instructional leaders can help establish a culture of meaningful collaboration.

Abukhalaf conducted a mixed-methods study in an American curriculum school in Dubai to investigate the impact of instructional and distributed leadership on teacher self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and school improvement. The research was conducted in a multicultural school environment, which provided a valuable perspective on how leadership styles operate within international educational settings (Abukhalaf, 2025). By combining quantitative survey results with qualitative interviews, the study offered a deeper understanding of the relationship between leadership practices and teacher experiences.

The findings indicated that instructional leadership, particularly when principals are actively engaged in guiding classroom practices, significantly improves teachers' belief in their professional competence (Abukhalaf, 2025). Teachers reported higher levels of confidence when their leaders provided clear academic goals, observed lessons regularly, and gave constructive feedback. This increased sense of self-efficacy also translated into greater job satisfaction, as teachers felt more valued and supported in their instructional roles (Abukhalaf, 2025).

The study also emphasized the benefits of distributed leadership. When leadership responsibilities were shared among staff members and not limited to administrators, teachers felt more involved in school-wide decisions and took greater responsibility for student outcomes (Abukhalaf, 2025). However, the research stressed that distributed leadership should be grounded in a clear instructional vision. Without consistent guidance, shared leadership could lead to confusion or inconsistency in teaching practices.

Although the study took place outside Southeast Asia, its findings are relevant for schools such as KIS. In a context where both local and international faculty work under a global curriculum, leadership strategies must support professional confidence and collaboration among faculty members. Abukhalaf's research shows that combining clear instructional leadership with opportunities for teacher participation in leadership can help strengthen motivation and promote improvement across the school.



Synthesis of Literature Review

The reviewed literature, both foreign and local, presents a strong foundation for understanding how instructional leadership practices influence teacher-administrator collaboration within the setting of international education. Across diverse contexts, research consistently highlights the importance of instructional leadership in fostering school environments that encourage, guide, and sustain collaboration.

Foreign studies such as those by Lee (2015), Hsieh (2023), and Mora-Ruano et al. (2021) emphasize that collaboration among teachers improves when leaders are actively involved in instructional matters. These forms of leadership include setting clear academic goals, observing classroom teaching, providing feedback, and promoting teacher dialogue. Instructional leadership is shown to positively influence both teacher self-efficacy and student performance when supported by a culture of professional cooperation. Mora-Ruano et al. (2021) demonstrated that teacher collaboration acts as a mediator between leadership and student achievement, highlighting how leadership indirectly contributes to learning outcomes by shaping how teachers work together.

The research also highlights the importance of distributed leadership when implemented with clarity and structure. Volante (2023) and Abukhalaf (2025) present evidence that when leadership responsibilities are shared and guided by a common instructional purpose, teachers report higher levels of involvement, motivation, and satisfaction. However, both authors caution that leadership distribution without instructional focus may lead to fragmented initiatives and a lack of coherence. This implies that school improvement efforts should be coordinated through leadership that strikes a balance between guidance and participation.

In addition to instructional coherence, the literature shows that schools benefit when leaders adapt their approach to the unique dynamics of international or multicultural staff. Studies such as Lambrecht (2022), Lani (2024), and Ralebese (2025) provide examples of schools where leadership contributed to inclusive education, curriculum reform, and teacher engagement by respecting cultural differences while promoting unified professional practices. These studies are especially relevant to schools like KIS, where diverse teaching personnel implement an international curriculum within a Southeast Asian context.

The local literature aligns with these findings. Kilag (2023) and Garduque (2025) both show how school heads in the Philippines face challenges in promoting collaboration due to centralized decision-making and limited professional autonomy among teachers. However, their studies also affirm that even in hierarchical systems, school leaders can support collaboration by engaging teachers in curriculum planning and continuous development. Andaya (2025) further illustrates how teacher leadership behaviors contribute to collaborative practices when supported by institutional openness and encouragement from administrators.

Taken together, the reviewed literature highlights three recurring insights. First, instructional leadership plays a central role in enabling collaboration, especially when it is visible, consistent, and connected to teaching goals. Second, collaboration must be supported through



shared structures and professional trust, rather than relying on informal arrangements. Third, context matters. The diversity of school settings, cultural expectations, and organizational structures influences how leadership and collaboration are experienced by both administrators and teachers.

For KIS, which operates in a multicultural environment using the Cambridge curriculum, these findings offer a relevant framework. The literature supports the need to understand how instructional leadership is practiced and how teacher-administrator collaboration can be strengthened through responsive, context-aware leadership strategies.

This synthesis confirms the need for an in-depth qualitative study that explores these themes directly through the voices of educators within the school. It provides both justification and direction for the development of a leadership-based framework that is suited to the specific realities of KIS and potentially informative for other international schools in similar contexts.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Distributed Leadership Theory as its guiding framework. Developed by Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond, this theory provides a practical framework for understanding how leadership operates within schools (Spillane et al., 2001). Rather than viewing leadership as the responsibility of a single person, such as the principal, distributed leadership sees it as a set of activities that are shared across multiple individuals in the organization (Spillane et al., 2001).

According to this theory, leadership is best understood as a collective practice that involves interactions among leaders, followers, and the situation in which they operate (Spillane et al., 2001). These interactions are not random. They happen through everyday tasks such as instructional planning, teacher mentoring, and curriculum review (Spillane et al., 2001). Leadership is exercised not only by those in formal positions of authority but also by teachers and other staff who contribute to decision-making and problem-solving within the school (Spillane et al., 2001).

In a school like KIS, where teachers come from different cultural and professional backgrounds, the distributed approach is especially useful. It allows for a closer examination of how leadership responsibilities are shared among both local and foreign educators, and how these responsibilities are influenced by the school's systems, tools, and routines. For example, when leadership is distributed, a teacher who leads a curriculum team or mentors colleagues is also participating in leadership, even if they do not hold an official administrative title.

One important feature of the theory is its focus on the role of context (Spillane et al., 2001). Distributed leadership does not happen in a vacuum. It is influenced by things such as schedules, communication platforms, classroom structures, and even policies. These elements play a crucial role in the leadership process. They can either support or limit how leadership is practiced.



For this study, distributed leadership provides a useful lens for examining how instructional leadership is experienced and shared at KIS. It helps explain how collaboration happens between administrators and teachers, and how leadership practices emerge from the interaction between people and institutional settings. This framework will support the exploration of teacher-administrator collaboration as something that is built collectively through everyday school work rather than being directed only from the top.

By using this theory, the study will be able to describe and analyze the leadership patterns at KIS in a way that reflects the complexity of real school environments. It will also help identify areas where collaboration can be improved by understanding how leadership is actually lived and practiced across roles.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is anchored in Distributed Leadership Theory, which provides a strong foundation for understanding how instructional leadership responsibilities are shared among administrators and teachers at Kiettisack International School (KIS). According to Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001), leadership is not the sole responsibility of a single individual but is instead a collective, interactive process distributed across multiple actors within the school community. Through this lens, instructional leadership emerges from the dynamic interplay between leaders, followers, and the organizational context, with each influencing how leadership is enacted and how decisions are made.

In the multicultural and collaborative environment of KIS, distributed leadership becomes particularly meaningful. The school employs both local and international educators, many of whom engage in leadership-related tasks even without formal administrative titles. Teachers participate in curriculum planning, lead subject-area teams, mentor colleagues, and contribute to school-wide improvement initiatives. These informal leadership roles are essential to KIS's organizational functioning and reflect the distributed nature of instructional leadership emphasized by the theory.

Guided by this framework, the study examines three primary components connected to instructional leadership:

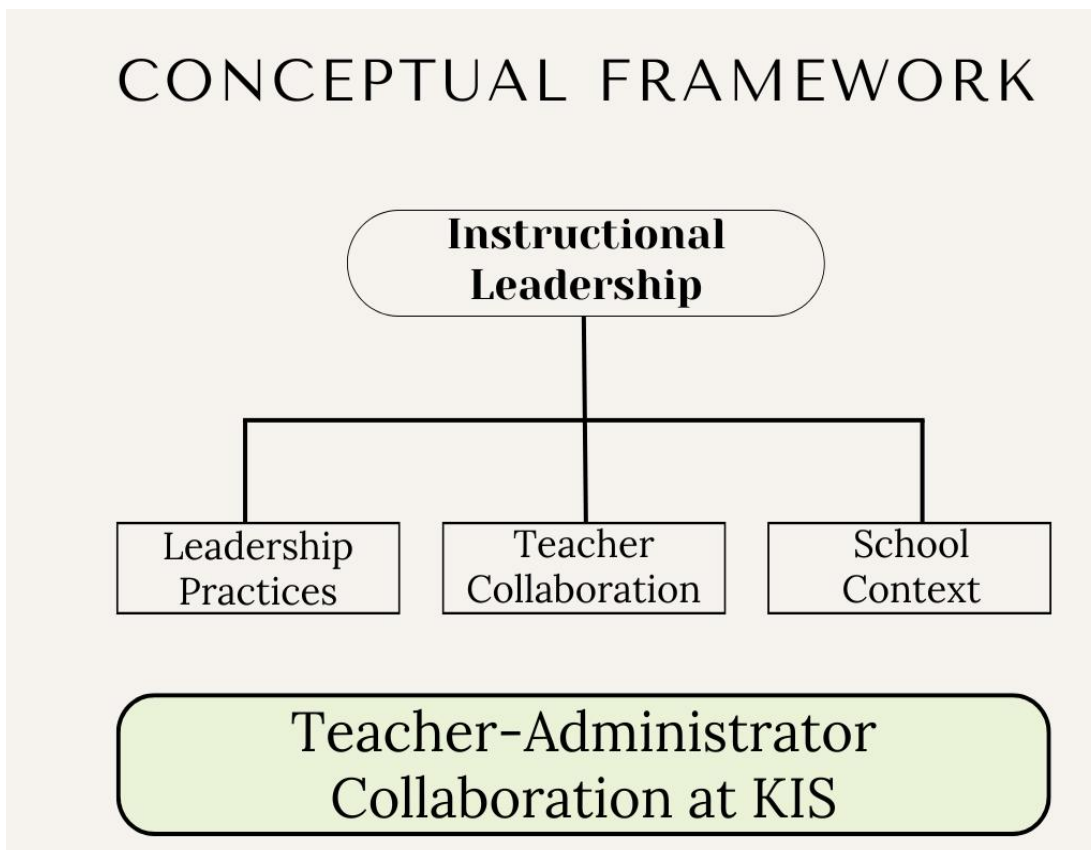
Leadership Practices. These include actions taken by administrators and teacher-leaders that directly support instruction—such as aligning teaching with student learning goals, facilitating teamwork, mentoring, and providing formative feedback. These practices highlight how leadership is enacted collaboratively rather than hierarchically.

Teacher Collaboration. Collaboration serves as a pathway through which leadership is shared among educators. Teachers and administrators jointly develop instructional objectives, participate in curriculum reviews, and take part in ongoing professional learning communities. This shared work reinforces collective responsibility for student outcomes.

School Context. Distributed leadership operates within a specific organizational environment shaped by school systems, communication channels, routines, and cultural dynamics. At KIS, these contextual factors influence how leadership is distributed, how decisions are negotiated, and how teachers engage in shared leadership practices across diverse cultural backgrounds.

By analyzing the interaction of these components, the study seeks to illuminate how teacher-administrator collaboration at KIS is formed, sustained, and strengthened through everyday instructional tasks and shared decision-making. Instead of viewing leadership as top-down, this framework demonstrates that instructional leadership at KIS emerges from shared participation, collaborative processes, and context-responsive practices.

Ultimately, the insights from this conceptual framework will guide the development of an Instructional Leadership-Based Framework for Teacher-Administrator Collaboration, designed to promote inclusive, contextually attuned, and strategically aligned leadership practices that support the school's educational mission.



Statement of the Problem

Kiettisack International School (KIS) in Vientiane, Laos, delivers the Cambridge curriculum through a diverse teaching workforce of local and international educators. As the school evolves, there is a growing need to examine how instructional leadership shapes teacher



engagement and collaboration, particularly in curriculum planning and school governance. This study seeks to explore these dynamics through a qualitative single-case approach to inform a more inclusive and responsive leadership framework. This research intends to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are the following instructional leadership practices implemented through teacher-administrator collaboration at KIS?

- 1.1. A strong and sustained focus on student learning;
- 1.2. Collaborative development of teaching and learning objectives;
- 1.3. Ongoing monitoring and feedback on teaching practices;
- 1.4. Promotion of a professional learning community among staff;
- 1.5. Inclusion of teacher voice in curriculum planning and school improvement initiatives.

2. To what extent are instructional leadership responsibilities distributed among teachers and administrators to support collaborative practices?

3. Based on the findings, what Instructional Leadership-Based Framework for Teacher-Administrator Collaboration at Kiettisack International School may be proposed to strengthen inclusive leadership and support collaborative instructional planning?

Significance of the Study

This study is important to the continuing efforts of KIS to improve collaboration between administrators and teaching staff. As the school navigates the complexities of implementing an international curriculum within a culturally diverse environment, the findings may offer practical insights for strengthening leadership strategies that support shared decision-making and teacher engagement.

Other international schools with similar contexts, particularly those implementing the Cambridge curriculum in Southeast Asia, may also benefit from the results of this research. The study explores leadership and collaboration not from a theoretical distance, but from the actual working experiences of educators. This makes the findings relevant to institutions that face comparable challenges in balancing curriculum standards, cultural expectations, and internal communication.

On a broader scale, the study may contribute to ongoing conversations among curriculum authorities, school accreditation bodies, and educational leaders working with international programs. While the research is centered on one school, its insights can support reflection on how leadership frameworks might be adapted to fit schools with diverse teaching communities and localized governance needs.



For scholars and researchers, the study responds to the limited number of qualitative, practitioner-based investigations focused on instructional leadership in international school settings. It aims to contribute to the growing body of work that examines leadership through a culturally situated, practice-oriented lens.

Scope and Limitations

This study was conducted within the context of Kiettisack International School's secondary (high school) campus in Vientiane, Laos. It focused on exploring how instructional leadership is practiced and its influence on collaboration between school administrators and teaching staff. The study focused on leadership behaviors, communication practices, and collaborative dynamics related to curriculum planning and school governance.

The research was limited to participants within the school's secondary department, including both teaching personnel and administrative leaders. It did not extend to the primary or college departments of the institution. The perspectives shared in the study reflect the experiences of selected individuals and are not intended to represent the views of the entire teaching force or management.

As a single-site case study, the findings are not intended to be generalized to all international schools or institutions that implement the Cambridge curriculum. However, the study offers context-specific insights that may be relevant to schools operating under similar conditions, particularly those located in Southeast Asia.

The researcher's position as an insider-practitioner may also introduce certain biases in interpretation or analysis. To manage this, the study employed measures such as validation through participant feedback and adherence to ethical research practices. Despite these limitations, the study seeks to provide a focused and meaningful contribution to the understanding of leadership and collaboration in a real institutional setting.

Definition of Terms

Administrator. In this study, administrator refers to any school leader at KIS who holds formal authority in decision-making and instructional oversight. This includes roles such as Director, Deputy Director, Headmaster, or Deputy Headmaster, as identified within the school's organizational structure.

Cambridge Curriculum. The Cambridge Curriculum refers to the academic program implemented at KIS, encompassing the IGCSE, Cambridge A Levels, and Cambridge AS Levels. It is a globally standardized framework used for assessing student performance and structuring academic content at the secondary level.

Collaboration. Collaboration is defined as the active and meaningful engagement between teachers and administrators in discussions, planning, or decisions related to curriculum,



instruction, and school improvement. This study examines teacher experiences of being consulted, involved, or excluded in institutional processes.

Distributed Leadership. Distributed leadership refers to the way leadership is practiced collectively among individuals across various roles within an organization, such as a school. In this study, the shared responsibilities between administrators and teachers are explored, particularly in matters affecting instruction and school governance.

Instructional Leadership. Instructional leadership in this study refers to the set of actions and strategies employed by school leaders to influence teaching and learning. This includes goal setting, curriculum planning, classroom observations, and support for teacher development. It is assessed in terms of its presence, quality, and impact on teacher engagement.

International School. In the context of this study, an international school is defined as an institution that offers an internationally recognized curriculum, employs a multicultural teaching staff, and serves a diverse student body. Kiettisack International School represents this type of educational setting within the Lao national context.

Kiettisack International School (KIS). KIS refers to the research site for this study. It is a private international school in Vientiane, Laos, authorized by the Lao Ministry of Education and Cambridge Assessment International Education. The study focuses specifically on its secondary campus.

Teacher. A teacher, for purposes of this study, refers to any member of the academic staff involved in classroom instruction at the secondary level of Kiettisack International School. This includes both foreign and local faculty members who implement the Cambridge Curriculum.

Teacher Engagement. Teacher engagement refers to the degree to which teachers feel involved, heard, and valued in the decision-making and instructional processes of the school. It is interpreted based on reported experiences and perceptions during data collection.

Collaboration Framework. The collaboration framework refers to the proposed set of leadership practices or strategies that may be developed through this study to enhance teacher-administrator collaboration in similar international school settings.



CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, utilizing a single-case study approach. This design enabled the researcher to examine in depth how instructional leadership influenced teacher-administrator collaboration within the institutional setting of Kiettisack International School (KIS). The selection of a qualitative design aligned with the research objective of exploring the perspectives, experiences, and contextual factors that shaped professional interactions within a multicultural school environment.

The case study approach was particularly suited to the bounded nature of the inquiry. The research focused specifically on the teachers and administrators involved in secondary education at KIS in Vientiane, Laos, where the Cambridge International Curriculum is implemented and both local and international teachers are employed. This bounded system served as the primary unit of analysis, providing a defined scope for examining leadership behaviors, communication patterns, and institutional structures that impacted collaboration.

The study was guided by principles of constructivist inquiry, wherein knowledge was constructed through the interaction between the researcher and participants. Data were collected through interviews, document analysis, and contextual observation, allowing for the development of rich, detailed descriptions grounded in the real-life experiences of participants. This design did not aim for statistical generalization but instead sought analytic insights that could inform leadership practices in similar international school contexts.

Employing a qualitative case study framework, the research uncovered emerging patterns and institutional dynamics related to instructional leadership and teacher engagement. It supported the generation of context-sensitive findings that reflected the unique professional culture of KIS. Ultimately, the design enabled a thorough examination of how collaboration was facilitated, constrained, or shaped by leadership within an international school setting.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The target population of this study comprised academic and administrative personnel affiliated with the secondary education program at Kiettisack International School (KIS) in Vientiane, Laos. This included individuals who held formal leadership roles or teaching positions and who regularly participated in curriculum development, instructional planning, or school governance activities.

The participants were grouped into two primary categories. The first group included school administrators such as the School Director, Deputy Directors, Headmasters, and Deputy Headmasters. These individuals possessed institutional responsibility for instructional oversight



and played key roles in setting academic direction, enforcing policies, and facilitating teacher coordination.

The second group consisted of teaching personnel assigned to the secondary level, with the study focusing specifically on foreign teachers, thereby excluding local Lao educators regardless of their country of origin. These foreign teachers were responsible for delivering instruction under the Cambridge International Curriculum and brought diverse cultural and pedagogical backgrounds to the school setting. Teachers who were involved in subject coordination or curriculum-related tasks were prioritized in the selection process to ensure that participants had direct exposure to instructional leadership and collaboration practices.

Given that there were 48 foreign secondary teachers at KIS, the study drew from this group using purposive sampling. This method was deemed appropriate for a qualitative case study, as it allowed the researcher to intentionally select participants who were most likely to provide rich, relevant, and detailed insights. Inclusion criteria required participants to have at least one academic year of teaching experience at KIS, current involvement in instructional or leadership-related functions, and voluntary consent to participate in interviews or other data collection activities.

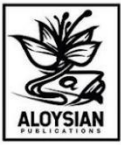
Based on established qualitative research guidelines, the optimal number of interview participants from the teacher group was set at approximately 20 individuals. This size was considered sufficient for achieving data saturation—defined as the point at which additional interviews no longer yield new or significant information. A smaller number was used for the administrative group, depending on the total number of eligible personnel available and willing to participate.

The purposive and bounded nature of the sample ensured alignment with the case study design. By focusing on a select group of foreign teachers and school leaders who were actively engaged in the academic life of the institution, the study was positioned to explore how instructional leadership influenced collaboration and how educators experienced their roles within the broader decision-making structure of the school.

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument employed in this qualitative case study was a semi-structured interview guide. This tool facilitated the collection of in-depth and context-specific information related to the core themes of the study—namely, instructional leadership and teacher-administrator collaboration within Kiettisack International School (KIS) in Vientiane, Laos.

The interview guide contained open-ended questions designed to encourage participants to reflect on and describe their experiences in relation to the following themes: leadership behaviors in instructional planning, mechanisms of teacher participation in decision-making, communication patterns across administrative levels, and enabling or constraining conditions for collaboration within the school's structure. The guide included core questions as well as optional



follow-up prompts, allowing for consistency across interviews while maintaining flexibility to explore emergent ideas.

The design of the interview instrument was informed by the study's conceptual framework, which drew on the principles of Distributed Leadership Theory. It also reflected gaps and insights identified in the review of related literature on instructional leadership in international school settings. Questions were developed with careful attention to relevance, clarity, and appropriateness for both school leaders and foreign secondary teachers.

Interviews were conducted in English, the primary language of instruction and communication at KIS. Participants included members of the administrative leadership and foreign teachers currently assigned to the secondary campus. All selected participants were invited to engage in one-on-one interviews, which were scheduled at their convenience. Informed consent was obtained prior to the interviews, and ethical safeguards—such as confidentiality and voluntary participation—were strictly observed.

With participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded for accuracy. However, full verbatim transcription was not required. Instead, the study adopted a thematic coding approach, in which recorded responses were reviewed and coded according to emerging categories. Main ideas and significant statements were extracted to represent the core content of each response. This approach aligned with the qualitative objective of identifying patterns in perception and practice rather than quantifying responses.

Supplementary institutional documents, such as teacher handbooks, organizational charts, and instructional policies, were also reviewed. These materials served as background resources to support the interpretation of interview data but were not used as primary sources for conclusions.

The use of a semi-structured interview guide enabled the study to remain focused on its research objectives while providing flexibility to capture the richness and variability of lived experiences among KIS personnel. This instrument was central to exploring how leadership practices were enacted and how collaboration was facilitated or hindered within the school's institutional structure.

Validity Test

Establishing the validity of the research instrument was essential to ensure the integrity and quality of this qualitative study. The semi-structured interview guide underwent a structured content validation process aimed at evaluating whether the questions effectively captured the intended dimensions of instructional leadership and teacher-administrator collaboration within the context of an international school.

Content validity was established through expert review. A panel of academic validators was formed, consisting of faculty members, research advisers, and practitioners with recognized expertise in educational leadership and qualitative methodology. Preference was given to those



with experience in international school settings or distributed leadership studies. These validators assessed the instrument's clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study's conceptual framework and research objectives.

Each item in the interview guide was reviewed using a validation form that asked validators to rate questions based on specific criteria, including relevance to the study goals, clarity of wording, and potential to elicit meaningful responses. Suggestions for improving question structure or terminology were encouraged. The feedback from this panel was synthesized by the researcher and used to revise the interview guide accordingly.

To further ensure the instrument's functionality, a pilot interview was conducted with an individual who met the inclusion criteria but was not part of the actual sample. This step helped identify any ambiguities in question phrasing or sequencing and tested the effectiveness of the follow-up prompts. The pilot session was excluded from the final data set but served to strengthen the interview guide's readiness for full implementation.

Engaging expert validators and piloting the instrument prior to data collection, the study ensured that the interview guide was well-designed, context-appropriate, and capable of generating authentic and insightful qualitative data. This validation process contributed to the overall trustworthiness of the research and provided a strong foundation for analysis and interpretation.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering process for this qualitative case study followed a structured sequence to ensure methodological rigor and ethical compliance. All activities were conducted in accordance with institutional research protocols and upheld the principles of voluntary participation, confidentiality, and academic integrity.

Prior to initiating data collection, the researcher sought formal approval from the appropriate research ethics review body. A letter of request was submitted to the administration of Kiettisack International School (KIS), outlining the study's objectives, proposed methodology, and the intended involvement of selected teaching and administrative personnel. This step ensured that the study was conducted with full institutional awareness and cooperation.

Once approvals were secured, the participant recruitment process began. Individuals, including foreign teaching staff and school administrators involved in secondary education at KIS, were selected based on the purposive sampling strategy described earlier. Participants were provided with an informed consent form detailing the purpose of the research, the nature of their involvement, data usage, and their right to decline or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Data were collected primarily through individual, semi-structured interviews. These interviews followed a standardized guide to maintain consistency across sessions while allowing flexibility for participants to elaborate on their experiences. Interviews were scheduled at



mutually convenient times and conducted in private and comfortable settings. Where in-person interviews were not feasible, secure online communication platforms were used as alternatives.

With participants' consent, all interviews were audio-recorded. During each session, the researcher also took field notes to document non-verbal cues and contextual observations that could enrich data interpretation. In alignment with the reliability protocols, the study did not produce full verbatim transcripts. Instead, the researcher engaged in a thematic coding process, extracting relevant content and categorizing it into conceptually meaningful themes. This approach prioritized content relevance over linguistic repetition and supported the study's interpretive framework.

To ensure data security, all recordings and notes were stored in password-protected digital files accessible only to the researcher. Participants' identities were protected through coded references, and no identifiable information was disclosed in the final report.

Following this systematic and ethically grounded process, the study generated context-rich data to support the investigation of instructional leadership and teacher-administrator collaboration at KIS.

Data Analysis

The analysis of data in this study followed a thematic approach, which is appropriate for qualitative research as it helps identify patterns and recurring themes in participants' responses. The objective was to explore how leadership and collaboration were experienced by teachers and administrators within the school context.

Following the completion of all interviews, the researcher listened to the audio recordings and carefully reviewed the field notes to identify meaningful insights related to the research questions. These insights were grouped and coded, with each code representing a specific concept or idea articulated by the participants.

Initial codes were derived from the main topics of the study—leadership practices, teacher involvement, communication, and collaboration. As analysis progressed, additional codes were developed to capture emerging ideas that were relevant but not originally anticipated. These codes served to organize the data and facilitated the identification of patterns across participant responses.

Once coding was completed, related codes were clustered into broader thematic categories. These themes reflected connections between participant experiences and helped illustrate how instructional leadership and collaboration manifested at KIS. The researcher reviewed and refined the themes to ensure clarity, coherence, and alignment with the study's objectives.

To enhance analytical rigor, the researcher maintained written notes documenting the coding and theme development process. Where feasible, a second reader reviewed a portion of

the data to validate the consistency of the coding. In addition, member checking was conducted with selected participants, who were asked to review summary findings to confirm the accuracy of the researcher's interpretation of their views.

This thematic analysis process enabled the researcher to draw well-supported conclusions about the nature of instructional leadership and collaboration at KIS. It also provided a robust foundation for interpreting the results and formulating actionable recommendations.

CHAPTER 3

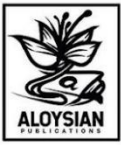
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter highlights the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research data that were gathered to provide systematic, valid, and reliable answers to the problems identified for this study. It is divided into the following areas of concern in this inquiry:

1. To what extent are the following instructional leadership practices implemented through teacher-administrator collaboration at KIS?
 - 1.1. A strong and sustained focus on student learning;
 - 1.2. Collaborative development of teaching and learning objectives;
 - 1.3. Ongoing monitoring and feedback on teaching practices;
 - 1.4. Promotion of a professional learning community among staff;
 - 1.5. Inclusion of teacher voice in curriculum planning and school improvement initiatives.
2. To what extent are instructional leadership responsibilities distributed among teachers and administrators to support collaborative practices?
3. Based on the findings, what Instructional Leadership-Based Framework for Teacher-Administrator Collaboration at Kiettisack International School may be proposed to strengthen inclusive leadership and support collaborative instructional planning?

Table 1. A Strong and Sustained Focus on Student Learning

Theme	Participants (n=20)	Representative Statement	Interpretation
Student-Centered Planning	17	"Every decision we make during meetings is framed by one question: how will this help our students learn?"	Leadership maintains a consistent focus on learning as the school's central mission.
Data-Driven Instructional Decisions	15	"We analyze MAP and IGCSE data to adjust how we teach or support students with interventions."	Data is used as a strategic tool to improve outcomes and guide practices.



Shared Accountability for Outcomes	13	“Success is not just about our individual classes—it’s a shared goal among departments.”	Teachers and administrators share a collective responsibility for student achievement.
Misalignment During Transitions	5	“When there’s leadership turnover or new staff, we sometimes lose momentum on long-term student goals.”	Sustainability of focus may weaken with staff changes or lack of leadership continuity.
Resource Constraints Affect Focus	6	“Sometimes, the lack of resources limits how much we can prioritize students’ deeper learning needs.”	Material and logistical limitations can dilute ideal student-centered practices.

The findings of this study indicate that Kiettisack International School (KIS) upholds a strong and sustained focus on student learning, as reflected in the perspectives of 20 teachers and administrators. Dominant themes that emerged from thematic coding—student-centered planning, data-driven instructional decisions, and shared accountability—demonstrate alignment with widely accepted principles of effective instructional leadership. However, the data also reveal challenges in maintaining focus during leadership transitions and when faced with resource limitations.

The most prominent theme, student-centered planning, was emphasized by 17 participants, who noted that nearly all decisions—whether instructional or administrative—are framed around the central question: “*How will this support student learning?*” This reflects a deeply embedded culture of instructional alignment, consistent with Hallinger and Wang’s (2020) assertion that effective leadership hinges on clarity of vision and purpose. At KIS, this clarity strengthens teaching practices and ensures students remain the focal point of school improvement initiatives.

Similarly, 15 participants cited data-driven decision-making as a key instructional practice. Teachers and leaders utilize standardized assessment data (e.g., MAP and IGCSE) to guide differentiation, target interventions, and adjust curriculum delivery. This practice resonates with Datnow and Park’s (2021) findings that meaningful use of data fosters instructional responsiveness and equity. For a diverse and multicultural learning environment like KIS, this data-informed approach is critical in tailoring education to student needs.

Shared accountability for student outcomes, reported by 13 participants, further reinforces the school’s culture of collective ownership. Teachers described student success as a cross-departmental responsibility, not confined to individual classrooms. This finding supports the principles of distributed leadership (Nguyen et al., 2022), where shared goals and collaborative action foster collective efficacy—an essential driver of improved learning outcomes in international settings.



Despite these strengths, challenges remain. Five participants raised concerns about misalignment during transitions in leadership or staffing. These disruptions reportedly stall long-term instructional goals and affect momentum. Such instability is common in international schools, where administrative turnover is more frequent. Literature by McConnell and Forde (2023) affirms that leadership transitions, if unmanaged, can compromise vision continuity and staff cohesion. The findings suggest KIS would benefit from institutional strategies like succession planning, leadership development pipelines, and stronger documentation of long-term goals to preserve instructional consistency.

Resource constraints, cited by six participants, also emerged as a barrier to deepening student-centered practices. While the aspiration for personalized and enriching learning is evident, limitations in staffing, technology, or instructional time hinder full implementation. This mirrors reports by UNESCO (2021) and OECD (2022), which note that even schools with strong instructional leadership can fall short without sufficient material and structural support.

The study's insights have broad implications. For school leaders, the findings identify which leadership behaviors—particularly those that emphasize data use, collaborative planning, and sustained student focus—are both visible and valued. Leaders are encouraged to deepen these practices while developing mitigation strategies for challenges related to transitions and resourcing.

For teachers, the results affirm their pivotal role in maintaining instructional quality and shaping a culture centered on student learning. However, it also highlights the need for greater support during periods of institutional change.

For students, the findings suggest that they benefit most when learning environments are cohesive, mission-driven, and responsive. However, consistent learning experiences are at risk without leadership stability and adequate resources.

Importantly, these findings also resonate with post-pandemic leadership literature. According to Harris and Jones (2020), schools that maintained a strong learning focus during COVID-19 disruptions were better positioned for recovery and innovation. KIS's emphasis on shared accountability and student-centered planning aligns well with this global best practice.

Instructional leadership at KIS is characterized by a solid commitment to student learning, supported by collaborative planning, data-driven instruction, and shared responsibility. Nonetheless, the school faces persistent challenges associated with leadership continuity and material limitations. Addressing these through institutional continuity planning, targeted resourcing, and leadership capacity building will help ensure that the school's focus on learning remains sustainable, adaptive, and impactful for all stakeholders.

Table 2: Collaborative Development of Teaching and Learning Objectives

Theme	Participants (n=20)	Representative Statement	Interpretation
Structured Collaboration Processes	16	“We meet every term for cross-departmental planning. Goals are developed together based on standards.”	KIS implements regular, structured planning processes aligned with curriculum standards.
Inclusion of Teacher Voice	14	“We can propose new assessment methods or reframe lesson objectives, and our ideas are often implemented.”	Teacher input is encouraged, providing agency in shaping instructional goals.
Leadership-Driven Collaboration	9	“If the academic coordinator pushes for teamwork, we collaborate more. Otherwise, it becomes fragmented.”	Collaboration often hinges on the leadership style and priorities of coordinators.
Varying Role Clarity	7	“Some teachers aren’t sure how much say they really have when it comes to instructional objectives.”	Role ambiguity limits participation in collaborative planning.
Time Limitations	6	“There’s not always enough time to do this well. Planning often feels rushed between deadlines.”	Time constraints hinder thoughtful and sustained collaborative planning.

The data underscores that while collaborative curriculum development is a recognized and practiced approach at Kiettisack International School (KIS), its implementation varies in depth and consistency. Thematic analysis of 20 participant responses identified five key themes: structured collaboration processes, inclusion of teacher voice, leadership-driven collaboration, role clarity, and time limitations.

The dominant theme—structured collaboration processes, cited by 16 participants—indicates that curriculum planning is systematically integrated into school operations. Teachers reported participating in regular term-based and cross-departmental planning meetings, where instructional objectives are aligned with curricular standards. This aligns with DuFour et al. (2020), who emphasized that intentional and scheduled collaboration supports coherence and reduces fragmentation in instructional planning—especially vital in diverse international school contexts like KIS.

Closely following, teacher voice was recognized by 14 participants as integral to the development process. Teachers shared that they are empowered to contribute ideas on



assessments, instructional strategies, and learning outcomes. This practice reflects Wenner and Campbell's (2020) framework on teacher leadership, where distributed decision-making strengthens teacher engagement, professional agency, and curricular relevance.

However, leadership-driven collaboration, noted by 9 participants, reveals inconsistency. Teachers expressed that collaboration often thrives when driven by proactive academic coordinators but diminishes in the absence of such leadership. This finding echoes Bush (2021), who emphasized that leadership behavior—especially at the middle management level—profoundly shapes collaborative culture and instructional alignment.

Role clarity, highlighted by 7 respondents, emerged as a significant challenge. Despite formal structures, some teachers reported uncertainty regarding their influence in curriculum decisions, particularly in high-stakes areas such as scope and sequencing. This ambiguity, as Leithwood et al. (2020) argue, can hinder participation and reduce collaborative effectiveness if not addressed through clear role communication and expectations.

Finally, time limitations, reported by 6 participants, serve as a practical barrier. While systems for collaboration exist, teachers indicated that time pressures often force rushed, superficial planning. Fullan and Gallagher (2020) similarly noted that post-pandemic academic compression has intensified this issue, leaving limited room for deep, reflective collaboration that is essential for effective pedagogy.

The findings point to both strong foundations and areas for improvement in KIS's collaborative curriculum development practices. For school leaders, the challenge is to sustain structured systems while fostering a culture of distributed, consistent leadership. Building the capacity of middle leaders and setting clear collaborative expectations across departments will enhance uniformity and reduce reliance on individual initiative. For teachers, meaningful involvement in curricular processes promotes ownership and innovation. Clearer communication about their roles and consistent recognition of their contributions are essential to maintaining engagement. For students, well-executed teacher collaboration improves coherence in instruction, aligns learning goals, and supports differentiated outcomes—especially crucial in KIS's multicultural environment. Hargreaves and O'Connor (2021) affirm that collaborative goal-setting enhances instructional consistency and student-centered learning.

While KIS has established a collaborative culture with inclusive practices and structured routines, gaps remain in leadership consistency, role clarity, and time allocation. Addressing these through professional development, role alignment, and strategic scheduling will strengthen instructional leadership and improve the overall quality of teaching and learning outcomes.

Table 3: Ongoing Monitoring and Feedback on Teaching Practices

Theme	Participants (n=20)	Representative Statement	Interpretation
Formal Observations and	14	"We're observed once or twice a term, and they	Monitoring practices are regular and usually



Debriefs		schedule a feedback session afterward.”	followed by reflection sessions.
Constructive and Actionable Feedback	12	“The feedback is specific—like, how to differentiate better or improve questioning techniques.”	Feedback contributes directly to instructional improvement when tied to classroom practices.
Peer Observation Culture Emerging	8	“We’ve started doing peer observations. It feels more supportive than evaluative.”	Teachers are initiating collegial feedback systems, fostering professional trust.
Uneven Feedback Implementation	6	“Some teachers get detailed feedback, others hardly any. It depends on your coordinator.”	There’s inconsistency in how feedback is distributed across departments.
Feedback Focuses on Compliance	5	“Sometimes it feels like a checklist—more about formality than genuine improvement.”	Some feedback lacks depth and may prioritize compliance over real instructional development.

This section examines the implementation of ongoing monitoring and feedback systems at Kiattisack International School (KIS), drawing from the responses of 20 participants. Five key themes emerged: formal observations and debriefs, constructive and actionable feedback, emerging peer observation culture, uneven feedback implementation, and feedback focused on compliance. Collectively, these themes illuminate both the strengths and areas for growth in instructional supervision and support at KIS.

The most commonly reported practice, identified by 14 participants, is the systematic conduct of formal observations followed by debrief sessions. Teachers shared that they are typically observed once or twice per term, with feedback discussions scheduled shortly thereafter. This structured approach demonstrates a school-wide effort to uphold consistent instructional supervision. As Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2021) assert, scheduled observations combined with reflective dialogue serve as vital tools for aligning teaching practices with curricular goals and professional standards. At KIS, this practice reflects a commitment to maintaining instructional quality and fostering teacher development.

In support of this, 12 participants highlighted the value of constructive and actionable feedback. Rather than vague or generic comments, teachers reported receiving targeted input on instructional strategies such as differentiation and questioning techniques. This aligns with Hattie and Timperley's (2007) framework, which emphasizes the effectiveness of feedback when it is specific, timely, and directly connected to performance improvement. The presence of such feedback mechanisms at KIS suggests a maturing culture of pedagogical refinement and evidence-based instructional coaching.



Another noteworthy development is the emergence of a peer observation culture, mentioned by 8 participants. Teachers described initiating informal peer walk-throughs and observation sessions, which they found to be supportive and collegial rather than evaluative. This trend reflects the principles of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which emphasize collaboration, shared responsibility, and continuous learning (DuFour et al., 2020). The organic rise of such practices indicates a growing trust among colleagues and a shift toward distributed leadership and collaborative professionalism—an especially valuable dynamic in international school settings where faculty diversity can pose challenges to cohesion.

Despite these positive indicators, 6 participants pointed to inconsistencies in how feedback is implemented across departments. Some teachers receive detailed, helpful feedback, while others report limited or superficial engagement depending on their coordinator's leadership style. This variability undermines the overall equity of professional development opportunities and may lead to disparities in instructional quality. Leithwood et al. (2020) caution that inconsistent supervision practices can erode teacher morale and reduce school-wide instructional coherence. This finding at KIS highlights the need for clearer performance standards and stronger training for middle-level leaders to ensure consistent feedback delivery.

Furthermore, 5 participants expressed concerns that feedback sessions sometimes prioritize compliance over instructional improvement. They described experiences where feedback seemed checklist-driven, focused more on procedural formalities than meaningful pedagogical insights. This reflects the critiques of Bush and Glover (2016), who argue that compliance-based evaluation models can reduce teacher engagement and hinder innovation. When feedback becomes an administrative formality rather than a developmental tool, it risks losing its transformative potential and may be met with skepticism rather than receptivity.

For school leaders, these findings underscore the importance of creating a feedback system that is not only structured and regular but also developmentally focused, equitable, and reflective. While KIS has established strong foundations in monitoring practices, these must be supported by consistent implementation across all departments. Leadership training for coordinators on effective feedback strategies, coaching conversations, and reflective supervision can enhance the quality and fairness of instructional support.

Teachers, on their part, benefit most when feedback is contextualized, relevant, and delivered within a culture of trust and collaboration. The emerging peer observation culture represents a promising avenue for deepening professional learning and empowering teachers to take ownership of their growth. Institutionalizing and recognizing peer-led feedback structures could further encourage shared accountability and cross-pollination of best practices.

Ultimately, students stand to gain from improved feedback systems, even if indirectly. As teachers receive more meaningful and consistent support, their instructional competence increases—leading to better learning environments, stronger student engagement, and improved academic outcomes. In the diverse and dynamic context of international education, where student needs are constantly evolving, a responsive and developmental approach to teaching supervision is not just beneficial but essential.



KIS demonstrates commendable progress in building a culture of instructional monitoring and feedback. The integration of formal observations and task-specific coaching points to a solid instructional leadership infrastructure. The grassroots development of peer observation further reflects a positive shift toward collaborative professionalism. However, challenges such as inconsistent feedback practices and overly procedural supervision highlight the need for ongoing refinement. By reinforcing leadership capacity, standardizing observation protocols, and promoting a growth-centered feedback culture, KIS can continue to elevate the quality of teaching and learning across its academic community.

Table 4. Promotion of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) Among Staff

Theme	Participants (n=20)	Representative Statement	Interpretation
Collaborative Culture and Trust	15	“There’s a culture of openness—teachers are willing to share strategies and materials across subjects.”	Collegiality and trust foster shared responsibility and build the foundation for an effective PLC.
Regular Professional Development	13	“Workshops on assessment and differentiation bring staff together in meaningful ways.”	PD initiatives serve as platforms for shared learning and ongoing professional growth.
Limited Cross-Level Collaboration	7	“We collaborate within departments, but not as much across middle and high school.”	Collaboration is strong within departments but lacks across grade levels, limiting school-wide impact.
Administrator Modeling of Learning	9	“Our director sometimes joins PD sessions, which motivates us to engage more.”	Leadership participation reinforces a culture of continuous learning and teacher motivation.
Barriers: Time and Workload	6	“The idea is great, but PLC work gets pushed aside when deadlines pile up.”	Competing responsibilities and time constraints hinder deeper PLC engagement despite strong interest.

This section explores how Kiettisack International School (KIS) fosters a professional learning community (PLC) among its teaching staff. Based on feedback from 20 participants, five key themes were identified: (1) collaborative culture and trust, (2) regular professional development, (3) limited cross-level collaboration, (4) administrator modeling of learning, and (5) barriers related to time and workload. These interconnected themes offer a nuanced view of both the enabling conditions and persistent challenges in advancing PLC practices at KIS.



The most frequently cited strength, highlighted by 15 participants, was the collaborative culture and trust present among faculty. Teachers described an environment marked by openness, collegiality, and a willingness to share instructional strategies and resources across subject areas. This strong interpersonal foundation is critical to the development of a thriving PLC. As DuFour and Eaker (1998) assert, a culture built on trust, shared values, and collective responsibility is essential for deep and sustainable collaboration. At KIS, the prevailing spirit of teamwork and mutual respect lays a strong groundwork for deeper professional inquiry and joint problem-solving, ultimately enhancing teacher efficacy and student learning.

Thirteen participants underscored the value of regular professional development (PD) as a catalyst for shared learning. They described workshops on assessment practices and differentiated instruction as meaningful opportunities for reflection and skill enhancement. Importantly, these PD initiatives also served as a mechanism for building community among staff, as educators engaged with common challenges and solutions. Stoll et al. (2006) emphasize that school-based, contextually relevant professional learning strengthens the fabric of PLCs by bridging theory and practice. At KIS, the presence of well-structured and purpose-driven PD opportunities reflects a deliberate effort to nurture both individual and collective professional growth.

However, 7 participants noted a lack of cross-level collaboration—particularly between middle and high school departments—as a limitation in the current PLC structure. While intra-departmental collaboration was seen as relatively strong, participants expressed that opportunities to collaborate across grade levels were infrequent or underdeveloped. This vertical siloing may hinder curriculum alignment, the continuity of teaching strategies, and the sharing of innovative practices across levels. Fullan (2007) contends that genuine PLCs must transcend departmental and grade-level boundaries to generate holistic school improvement. Addressing this gap at KIS could involve intentional structures such as interdepartmental planning time, cross-grade teaching teams, or shared inquiry cycles that bridge divisions and promote broader pedagogical coherence.

Another positive development cited by 9 participants was administrator modeling of learning. Teachers observed that school leaders—including the director—occasionally participated in PD sessions or professional discussions. This active involvement from leadership not only legitimizes the importance of ongoing learning but also models a growth mindset. As Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) highlight, the engagement of school leaders in professional learning is among the most impactful forms of instructional leadership. At KIS, such modeling enhances staff morale and reinforces the notion that continuous improvement is a shared institutional commitment rather than a teacher-only endeavor.

Despite these strengths, 6 participants raised concerns about barriers to PLC engagement, particularly in relation to time constraints and workload. Teachers indicated that while they were eager to collaborate, the demands of administrative tasks, grading, and other responsibilities often overshadowed PLC-related activities. This reflects a widely acknowledged dilemma in educational settings—balancing the ideal of collaborative learning with the operational pressures of the school day. Bolam et al. (2005) caution that without protected time and structural supports,



PLCs can become superficial or unsustainable. To maintain momentum and deepen collaborative practices, KIS may need to explore practical solutions such as designated collaboration periods, release time for team planning, or administrative streamlining to free up capacity for meaningful engagement.

For school leadership, the findings point to a clear opportunity: to move beyond isolated collaborative efforts and build a more cohesive, school-wide PLC framework. Leaders should capitalize on the existing collaborative culture and strong PD foundation by fostering structures that support cross-level collaboration and allocating dedicated time for sustained team learning. Continued modeling of learning by administrators will be essential in reinforcing the school's commitment to professional growth.

For teachers, the current environment presents a supportive platform for ongoing development. Yet, they would benefit from more intentional structures that promote collaboration across disciplines and grade levels. Initiatives such as interdisciplinary planning, peer observation, or co-teaching models could deepen collective inquiry and diversify instructional strategies. For students, a strong PLC directly enhances educational quality. When teachers collaborate effectively across grades and subjects, students experience greater consistency in instruction, assessment practices, and academic expectations. This is especially important in international school settings like KIS, where students often face transitions due to mobility or diverse educational backgrounds.

Kiettisack International School demonstrates several critical attributes of a healthy professional learning community—most notably, a collegial atmosphere, meaningful professional development, and visible leadership support. These elements provide a solid platform for fostering instructional excellence. To further strengthen the PLC, school leaders must address the structural limitations that hinder broader collaboration, particularly across grade levels and time constraints. By refining systems and sustaining a culture of shared learning, KIS can move toward a more fully integrated and impactful PLC that benefits both educators and learners alike.

Table 5. Inclusion of Teacher Voice in Curriculum Planning and School Improvement Initiatives

Theme	Participants (n=20)	Representative Statement	Interpretation
Teacher Representation in Committees	14	“We’re part of curriculum review panels and even gave input on the new writing benchmarks.”	Teachers are given roles in formal curriculum and improvement processes.
Opportunities for Suggestion-Sharing	13	“We can propose initiatives during department meetings or town halls, and some have	Platforms for teacher input exist and are sometimes productive.

		been adopted.”	
Decision-Making Transparency	9	“Sometimes decisions are made without feedback loops—like a change just announced suddenly.”	Not all processes are transparent; teacher voice is not always integrated.
Sense of Professional Ownership	12	“I feel more motivated knowing I helped shape how writing is taught in Year 9.”	Recognizing teacher voice boosts motivation and institutional commitment.
Varying Levels of Influence	6	“Admin listens, but it’s unclear how much weight our input really has.”	Influence is perceived as limited, affecting sustained engagement.

This section explores the integration of teacher voice in curriculum planning and school improvement at Kiettisack International School (KIS), drawing on the responses of 20 participants. Five major themes emerged: teacher representation in committees, suggestion-sharing opportunities, decision-making transparency, professional ownership, and perceived influence. These themes reflect the breadth and depth of teacher involvement in shaping institutional decisions.

Teacher Representation in Committees was the most frequently cited theme (14 participants), indicating that formal mechanisms exist for including teachers in curriculum reviews and academic initiatives. As teachers reported involvement in shaping benchmarks and instructional frameworks, it reflects distributed leadership in practice (Spillane, 2006), where instructional leadership is shared to ensure decisions are grounded in pedagogical realities.

Closely linked is the theme of Opportunities for Suggestion-Sharing, acknowledged by 13 participants. Teachers described making proposals during department meetings and town halls, with some suggestions being implemented. This supports the notion of *teacher leadership* (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009), where practitioners contribute to broader school initiatives beyond classroom teaching. Such involvement promotes a participatory culture and fosters innovation from within.

Despite these positive structures, Decision-Making Transparency remains a challenge. Nine participants noted that decisions are sometimes made unilaterally, with little to no feedback or rationale provided. This lack of clarity weakens trust and limits the perceived authenticity of teacher engagement. Ingersoll (2007) cautions that exclusion from final decision processes can diminish professional agency and reduce commitment to institutional goals.

In contrast, 12 participants reported a Sense of Professional Ownership when their input was reflected in actual practice. One respondent shared how contributing to Year 9 writing instruction improved both motivation and job satisfaction. This aligns with Deci and Ryan’s



(1985) *Self-Determination Theory*, which emphasizes the role of autonomy and relevance in enhancing intrinsic motivation. When voice translates into action, teachers are more likely to feel valued and invested in the school's mission.

However, 6 respondents expressed uncertainty over the Varying Levels of Influence. While their ideas are heard, the degree to which these inputs affect final decisions is unclear. This echoes Hargreaves and Fullan's (2012) concern about *tokenism* in school reform—where surface-level consultation occurs without real power-sharing. At KIS, this signals a need for stronger communication of how input is weighed and acted upon.

For school leaders, the findings underscore the need to strengthen decision-making transparency and feedback mechanisms. Clear articulation of how teacher inputs are utilized—and ongoing communication of implementation outcomes—will reinforce shared governance and professional trust. Inviting teachers into post-implementation reviews can also deepen their investment and foster continuous improvement.

For teachers, the current system offers a meaningful platform for participation. Yet, professional agency could be further reinforced by advocating for clearer follow-through and co-leadership in implementation stages. Elevating the role of teacher voice from consultative to collaborative can transform school improvement from administrative initiatives into shared endeavors. For students, inclusive curriculum planning ensures that instructional strategies are contextually relevant and responsive. When teachers—who work most closely with students—help shape pedagogy and assessment, it leads to more engaging and effective learning environments.

Kiettisack International School demonstrates commendable practices in fostering teacher voice through committee participation and open dialogue. However, gaps in transparency and influence perception suggest areas for enhancement. Strengthening feedback loops and explicitly validating teacher input can amplify institutional responsiveness, enhance staff morale, and contribute to a more empowered and collaborative school culture. As teacher leadership becomes more embedded, KIS is well-positioned to model participatory governance and sustained instructional excellence.

Table 6. Instructional leadership responsibilities distributed among teachers and administrators to support collaborative practices at Kiettisack International School (KIS)

Theme	Participants (n=20)	Representative Statement	Interpretation
Shared Leadership Roles in Planning	16	“The headmaster and deputy headmaster allow teacher leaders to help shape instruction—it's not top-down.”	Instructional leadership is partially distributed, especially during lesson planning and curriculum alignment.
Encouragement of	13	“We're encouraged to coach	Teachers take on

Peer Coaching		each other—lesson observations are not just the job of the deputy headmaster.”	instructional mentoring roles, indicating collaborative leadership practices.
Leadership Still Primarily Administrator-Led	11	“Ultimately, big decisions—like assessment or curriculum changes—are led by the headmaster, not teachers.”	Key responsibilities still centralize around administrators, with teachers often in advisory roles.
Emergent Distributed Leadership Structures	9	“There’s a new push to give more autonomy to lead teachers under the headmaster’s supervision.”	Emerging systems aim to formalize teacher leadership, although implementation is still developing.
Barriers to Distribution: Time, Role Clarity	7	“Sometimes it’s unclear who is responsible for what. We end up duplicating efforts or missing steps.”	Lack of clear role definitions and time constraints limit consistent distribution of leadership.

The findings of this study reveal that instructional leadership at KIS is moderately distributed, reflecting a progressive but incomplete shift toward shared governance. Data gathered from 20 teacher interviews indicate that while some leadership responsibilities are delegated to teaching staff, core instructional decisions remain concentrated within the headmaster and deputy headmaster. This dual structure signals a transitional leadership model—moving toward collaboration, yet not fully embracing a distributed leadership culture.

A major theme to emerge was the active involvement of teachers in academic planning. Sixteen participants emphasized that headmasters and deputy headmasters are increasingly open to input from teachers, allowing teacher leaders to participate in lesson planning and curriculum alignment. This signals a growing culture of trust and shared academic responsibility, where teachers are seen as partners in instructional design rather than just implementers. Peer coaching and mentoring are also becoming normalized, as reported by 13 participants, indicating that teachers are gradually assuming more collaborative instructional roles.

These developments resonate with Spillane’s (2006) Distributed Leadership Theory, which asserts that leadership is not a solitary endeavor but a network of shared responsibilities across different roles within the school. Teachers assuming peer coaching roles and taking part in planning activities show the potential for leadership to be practiced more inclusively and effectively.

Despite these promising signs, 11 teachers pointed out that significant decisions—particularly those concerning assessment reform and curriculum overhaul—remain in the hands



of headmasters and deputy headmasters. Teachers are consulted, but often only in an advisory capacity, with limited influence over final decisions. This structure reflects what Bush and Glover (2014) term "pseudo-distributed leadership"—where the appearance of collaboration masks a centralized authority, leading to potential disillusionment among faculty members who seek meaningful involvement.

Nevertheless, 9 teachers reported new efforts by KIS leadership to formalize teacher-led initiatives, particularly through the designation of lead teachers and cross-functional planning teams. These developments mirror international calls by OECD (2020, 2022) and UNESCO (2021) for more agile and decentralized leadership frameworks, especially in the post-pandemic educational landscape. The COVID-19 crisis has underscored the limitations of rigid, hierarchical systems and highlighted the need for adaptive, distributed leadership based on teacher agency and professional collaboration.

However, the path toward distributed leadership is not without obstacles. Seven participants cited unclear role boundaries, overlapping responsibilities, and time limitations as barriers. These findings echo those of Leithwood, Sun, and Pollock (2021), who argue that successful distributed leadership requires not just shared intent but also structural adjustments, capacity-building efforts, and clearly articulated roles.

The implications of these findings extend well beyond KIS. Distributed instructional leadership, when implemented with strategic clarity and genuine commitment, can transform school culture by enhancing teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness. Teachers who lead initiatives and shape school direction feel more professionally fulfilled, which in turn benefits student outcomes.

For school administrators, these insights suggest the need to move beyond tokenistic consultation and build frameworks that embed teacher voice in decision-making processes. Headmasters and deputy headmasters can foster stronger partnerships with teachers by creating clear leadership pathways, offering leadership training, and institutionalizing collaborative planning structures. Students, ultimately, are the chief beneficiaries. Collaborative instructional leadership enables pedagogical alignment, innovation, and responsiveness—leading to improved learning experiences, academic consistency, and holistic student development.

From a policy perspective, these findings support broader movements advocating for inclusive governance and teacher empowerment, particularly in multicultural and international school settings. Institutions like KIS are well-positioned to lead by example, demonstrating how distributed leadership can enhance adaptability, staff retention, and educational innovation in an increasingly complex world.

Instructional leadership at KIS is partially distributed—showing signs of evolution toward a more inclusive, collaborative culture but also revealing critical areas for improvement. With strategic leadership from headmasters and deputy headmasters, supported by clear policies and professional development, the school can move beyond symbolic gestures to fully



institutionalize distributed leadership as a foundation for sustainable school improvement and student success.

C.A.R.E. Instructional Leadership-Based Framework

C.A.R.E. stands for Communication, Alignment, Roles, and Empowerment.

This framework was developed from empirical insights drawn from teacher perceptions and leadership practices at Kiettisack International School (KIS). It aims to reinforce inclusive instructional leadership and promote collaborative instructional planning across the school by advancing four strategic dimensions: Communication, Alignment, Roles, and Empowerment.

The C.A.R.E. Framework is grounded in the core belief that leadership in education is most effective when it is inclusive, distributed, and participatory. It moves beyond traditional hierarchical models by positioning teachers as co-creators of curriculum, pedagogy, and school-wide improvement efforts—thereby fostering shared ownership, mutual accountability, and a culture of continuous instructional enhancement.

- Communication is foundational. A strong instructional culture depends on transparent, reciprocal communication between teachers and administrators. Open dialogue around instructional issues nurtures trust, psychological safety, and collective commitment to school goals.
- Alignment ensures coherence between school vision, classroom practice, curriculum priorities, and assessment systems. When alignment is established, instructional planning becomes strategic and purpose-driven.
- Roles must be clearly defined and distributed equitably to reduce ambiguity, foster ownership, and enable teacher leadership. Shared leadership responsibilities encourage deeper engagement and build organizational capacity.
- Empowerment turns schools into learning organizations. When teachers are equipped, trusted, and supported to lead innovation, they become more invested, creative, and aligned with the school's mission.

Dimension	Description	Implementation Strategies	Expected Outcomes	Supporting Literature (2020–Present)
C – Communication	Foster transparent, two-way communication between teachers and school leaders to co-construct instructional goals and promote trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular instructional planning meetings - Curriculum bulletins or updates - Anonymous teacher feedback mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased trust and transparency - Higher teacher engagement - Greater instructional 	OECD (2021); Torres & Brett (2022); Hargreaves (2020)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walkthroughs with post-observation dialogues 	consistency	
A – Alignment	Ensure vertical and horizontal coherence across curriculum, pedagogy, school vision, and evaluation tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint student performance data reviews - Shared instructional objectives across departments - Common rubrics and success criteria - Alignment workshops during INSET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved student learning outcomes - Unified instructional direction - Reduced fragmentation in practices 	Darling-Hammond et al. (2021); Fullan (2020); OECD (2022)
R – Roles	Clarify and distribute leadership responsibilities across headmaster, deputy headmaster, and teacher-leaders to enhance participation and accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define specific teacher-leader roles (e.g., Grade Level Leader, Assessment Coordinator) - Develop a leadership responsibility matrix - Rotate leadership duties to build capacity - Clarify authority and decision-making channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced role ambiguity - Broadened leadership engagement - Enhanced professional ownership 	Leithwood et al. (2020); Harris & Jones (2021); Bush & Glover (2022)
E – Empowerment	Promote a culture of empowered professionalism by investing in teachers' leadership potential and supporting their initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional development on distributed leadership - Teacher-led innovations and peer coaching - Recognition systems for leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater teacher morale and retention - Increased innovation and collaboration - Stronger alignment 	UNESCO (2021); Liu et al. (2023); Spillane (2020)



		contributions - Inclusion of leadership in performance evaluation	with school vision	
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CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study. Particularly, the researcher would like to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are the following instructional leadership practices implemented through teacher-administrator collaboration at KIS?
 - 1.1. A strong and sustained focus on student learning;
 - 1.2. Collaborative development of teaching and learning objectives;
 - 1.3. Ongoing monitoring and feedback on teaching practices;
 - 1.4. Promotion of a professional learning community among staff;
 - 1.5. Inclusion of teacher voice in curriculum planning and school improvement initiatives.
2. To what extent are instructional leadership responsibilities distributed among teachers and administrators to support collaborative practices?
3. Based on the findings, what Instructional Leadership-Based Framework for Teacher-Administrator Collaboration at Kiettisack International School may be proposed to strengthen inclusive leadership and support collaborative instructional planning?

Summary of Findings

This study investigated the extent of instructional leadership practices through teacher-administrator collaboration at KIS and examined the distribution of leadership responsibilities. Five core dimensions were explored, resulting in the formulation of the C.A.R.E. Framework (Communication, Alignment, Roles, Empowerment) to guide collaborative leadership practices.

1. Focus on Student Learning. Participants overwhelmingly affirmed a shared commitment to student learning as the primary focus of instructional leadership at KIS. Both teachers and administrators aligned on academic goals and learner-centered outcomes. Evidence from responses highlighted collaborative lesson planning and targeted performance assessments. However, implementation across departments varied, with some teams demonstrating cohesive strategies and others lacking a unified structure. These inconsistencies underscore the need for



more school-wide, standardized efforts to ensure that student learning remains the central objective in every instructional activity.

2. Collaborative Development of Objectives. Teachers reported that teaching and learning goals were often co-developed with administrators, particularly during planning sessions, year-level meetings, and academic reviews. This practice fostered shared accountability and greater alignment across instructional teams. Nevertheless, the study revealed variability in the frequency and depth of collaboration. Some teachers experienced rich, meaningful engagement in setting objectives, while others felt excluded or only marginally involved. This indicates a need to institutionalize co-development practices across all departments through formal protocols and scheduled collaborative sessions.

3. Monitoring and Feedback. Findings in this dimension revealed mixed outcomes. While formal evaluations were regularly conducted by school leaders, there was inconsistency in the provision of timely and constructive follow-up feedback. Teachers noted that informal peer observations and collaborative feedback loops were either limited or underutilized. This shortfall in feedback practices hindered opportunities for reflective practice, coaching, and sustained instructional improvement. Establishing a feedback-rich culture that promotes trust, dialogue, and peer support is vital to enhancing teacher growth and instructional quality.

4. Professional Learning Community (PLC). Many participants described positive experiences in Professional Learning Communities. These spaces enabled staff to share best practices, discuss classroom challenges, and co-design learning strategies. However, the implementation of PLCs across the school was inconsistent. While some departments had active PLCs supported by administration, others lacked structure or regular engagement. This uneven participation diminished the school-wide benefits of collaborative professional development. Sustained administrative backing, dedicated time for collaboration, and training in effective PLC facilitation are needed to strengthen this practice.

5. Inclusion of Teacher Voice. Teachers expressed partial involvement in curriculum planning and decision-making. While their input was occasionally sought in planning meetings or surveys, many felt that key decisions were made exclusively by administrators, limiting their influence and autonomy. The perception that consultation was symbolic rather than substantive emerged as a concern. This points to a need for more democratic and participatory structures that allow teachers to co-lead school improvement initiatives and have their expertise reflected in actual policies and practices.

Conclusion

This study examined the extent of instructional leadership as exercised through teacher-administrator collaboration at Kiettisack International School (KIS), the distribution of leadership responsibilities across the institution, and the viability of an Instructional Leadership-Based Framework—C.A.R.E.—to strengthen shared governance. The findings collectively illustrate that while KIS embodies several elements of collaborative leadership, these practices



remain uneven, partially institutionalized, and largely dependent on individual initiative rather than system-driven processes.

1. Extent of Instructional Leadership Through Teacher–Administrator Collaboration

1.1 Focus on Student Learning. Student learning remains the school’s central aspiration; however, its translation into coherent instructional practice varies across departments. While collaborative planning structures exist, they lack full alignment and consistent accountability. Strengthening shared expectations and systematizing learning-focused routines are necessary to ensure that student learning becomes the organizing principle of all instructional interactions.

1.2 Collaborative Development of Objectives. Teachers and administrators demonstrate a clear willingness to co-develop instructional objectives, yet the process remains informal and inconsistently practiced. Institutionalizing collaborative protocols—such as structured planning cycles, documented team agreements, and shared rubrics—would create more coherent, sustainable, and goal-aligned instructional practices.

1.3 Monitoring and Feedback. The monitoring system reflects a predominantly top-down model. Although formal observations are conducted, sustained coaching, peer feedback, and developmental dialogue are limited. A shift toward a two-way, collegial feedback culture anchored in trust, transparency, and continuous improvement would significantly enhance instructional quality and teacher efficacy.

1.4 Professional Learning Communities. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are emerging pockets of strong practice within the school. Yet their implementation is inconsistent and heavily shaped by departmental leadership. Embedding PLCs into the school’s long-term professional development agenda—supported by time allocation, facilitation structures, and evaluation mechanisms—is crucial for institutionalizing collaborative learning.

1.5 Teacher Voice in Curriculum Planning and School Improvement. Although teacher voice is acknowledged, its influence on high-level decisions remains limited. Consultation mechanisms exist, but their impact on final outcomes is modest. Moving toward governance structures that treat teachers as co-leaders of curriculum and instructional development will be essential for promoting ownership, innovation, and strategic coherence.

2. Distribution of Instructional Leadership Responsibilities. Findings show that instructional leadership remains concentrated among administrators, with teachers’ leadership roles primarily operational rather than strategic. Teachers demonstrate strong readiness and willingness to assume leadership roles, but they require explicit mandates, recognition, and decision-making authority. Transitioning toward a distributed leadership model—where expertise, rather than position, drives influence—will enhance professional agency, deepen collaboration, and foster innovation throughout the school.



3. Proposed Instructional Leadership-Based Framework: The C.A.R.E. Model. The C.A.R.E. Framework—Communication, Alignment, Roles, and Empowerment—offers a contextually relevant and theoretically grounded model for strengthening distributed instructional leadership at KIS. The framework addresses current gaps by promoting structured communication, clarifying leadership functions, aligning instructional goals across teams, and empowering teachers as active contributors to school leadership. Its design aligns with global best practices while reflecting the lived experiences and organizational realities of KIS educators.

Recommendations

1. For Teachers. Teachers should be formally recognized as integral contributors to instructional leadership. KIS should develop structured teacher-leadership roles (e.g., curriculum leads, instructional coaches, PLC facilitators) supported by targeted training in curriculum design, assessment literacy, collaborative decision-making, and data-driven instruction. Participation in cross-departmental leadership committees will reinforce collective ownership of instructional improvement.

2. For Administrators. Administrators must actively cultivate a facilitative leadership stance by institutionalizing avenues for meaningful teacher participation. This includes co-led PLCs, scheduled collaboration cycles, transparent decision-making processes, and structured two-way feedback systems. By modeling openness, shared authority, and appreciation of teacher expertise, administrators can foster a culture of trust, innovation, and collaborative professionalism.

3. For Students. Instructional decision-making should increasingly incorporate student perspectives. KIS should institutionalize mechanisms such as learner voice panels, student feedback surveys, and reflective dialogue sessions to ensure that teaching practices remain responsive, inclusive, and aligned with learner needs. Joint review of student performance data by teachers and administrators will strengthen instructional coherence and provide equitable support.

4. For Kiettisack International School (KIS). KIS should integrate the C.A.R.E. Framework into its strategic educational leadership plan. Doing so requires embedding its principles into teacher evaluation systems, annual improvement plans, professional development pathways, and curriculum review processes. A whole-school adoption of the framework will ensure systemic alignment, strengthen shared leadership culture, and promote sustainable instructional excellence.

5. For Policy makers and Leaders in International Schools. Educational policies must explicitly recognize distributed leadership as a core competency for 21st-century schooling. Standards for leadership appraisal, school accreditation, and professional development should integrate indicators of teacher collaboration, shared governance, and instructional co-leadership. These policy shifts will support the institutionalization of collaborative leadership models in international school settings.



6. For Future Researchers and Academic Institutions. Further investigation is warranted into the longitudinal effects of distributed instructional leadership on student learning, teacher retention, professional culture, and school innovation. Comparative studies across diverse international school contexts would provide nuanced insights into best practices and challenges. Higher education institutions should also embed distributed leadership, teacher collaboration, and participatory governance in their educational leadership programs to cultivate future leaders equipped for inclusive and adaptive school leadership.

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