



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## Instructional leadership dynamics in the transformation of Jawi script lesson planning: strategies for literacy acceleration in Southern Thailand

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### Abstract

Low Jawi script literacy poses a significant challenge at Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School in Southern Thailand, where 70% of 137 students lack proficiency in reading and writing. This deficiency stems from suboptimal instructional planning. This qualitative study examines the efficacy of the principal's instructional leadership in improving Jawi script lesson plans (RPP) through the integration of the 18-Week Curriculum. Data were gathered via in-depth interviews, observations of 15 learning sessions, and documentary analysis, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. Findings reveal that effective instructional leadership is pivotal in guiding teachers to develop systematic and applicable lesson plans. Managerial support for the 18-Week Curriculum provides a measurable instructional framework that enhances student literacy focus. The synergy between instructional leadership and robust planning constitutes a fundamental strategy for preserving Jawi script as a cultural identity and elevating literacy competence in Muslim minority schools in Southern Thailand.

**Keywords:** Instructional Leadership; Jawi Script Lesson Plans; Student Literacy; Southern Thailand

### 1. Introduction

The Malay language, written in the Jawi script, serves as an epistemic manifestation and a fundamental pillar that shapes the socio-cultural and religious identity of the Muslim community in Patani, Southern Thailand. Historically, Jawi is not merely a writing system but a pivotal instrument of "cultural resistance" and the primary medium for Islamic intellectual transmission and the codification of Malay history since the 14th century [1]. Within the context of the minority community in Southern Thailand, proficiency in Jawi literacy represents cultural resilience amidst the pressures of modernisation and national linguistic assimilation policies[8,23]. Consequently, a failure to transmit this literacy to the younger generation signifies a rupture in the historical chain and the loss of access to the classical intellectual heritage preserved within kitab turats (traditional Islamic texts[2,20]).

However, contemporary realities within the formal education sector reveal a profound discrepancy between the idealism of cultural preservation and the actual competencies of students in practice. The Jawi literacy crisis has reached a concerning nadir. Based on empirical observations conducted at Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School, a systematic phenomenon of "literacy amnesia" was identified; out of a total population of 137 students, approximately 70% have yet to achieve functional proficiency in reading and writing the Jawi script [5, 6]. These data are not merely statistical figures but serve as an alarm regarding the future identity of the Patani community. This issue is frequently viewed through a simplistic lens as a technical pedagogical problem, whereas the root cause lies deeply embedded within the managerial aspects and the quality of the school's instructional design.

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Within the discipline of Educational Administration, the Lesson Plan (RPP) is regarded as a strategic document and the "soul" of knowledge transformation within the classroom. A high-quality lesson plan serves as a sophisticated pedagogical scenario, encompassing everything from micro-level student needs analysis to authentic evaluation design. However, the stark reality indicates that teachers are frequently ensnared in the routine of drafting lesson plans that are generic, superficial, and merely serve the purpose of administrative "paperwork compliance". Consequently, the instructional process loses direction and fails to respond to the specific difficulties students encounter in mastering the 36 complex characters of the Jawi script.

This underscores the critical importance of the principal's instructional leadership. The school principal is not merely an administrative manager, but rather a pedagogical leader who bears full responsibility for intervening in the quality of curriculum design through clinical supervision and the provision of relevant instructional resources [3]. At Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School, the efficacy of instructional leadership is evaluated by its capacity to encourage teachers to integrate an innovative model, namely the "18-Week Curriculum". This model represents a systematic curriculum acceleration strategy designed to map student literacy outcomes within a short-term timeframe, while simultaneously delivering a fundamental long-term impact.

Given this urgent background, the present study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the efficacy of instructional leadership in enhancing the quality of Jawi script lesson planning as a strategy for student literacy acceleration. The novelty of this research lies in its endeavour to synergise educational leadership theory with the implementation of a minority language curriculum within a region characterised by significant socio-political challenges. The findings of this study are intended not merely to fulfil formal academic requirements, but to serve as a "best practice" model for schools across Southern Thailand in managing instructional planning. Ultimately, this approach seeks to preserve the dignity and ensure the future continuity of the Jawi script's intellectual heritage.

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## 2. Research methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design to explore, in depth, the managerial dynamics within instructional planning [4, 9, 28]. The researcher serves as the key instrument (human instrument) to capture the underlying meanings of instructional leadership practices and the drafting process of lesson plans at Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School. To ensure data trustworthiness and analytical depth, the study implements a technical triangulation strategy comprising interviews, observations, and documentary analysis [19]. three primary pillars:

### 2.1. In-depth Interviews

A semi-structured interview technique was employed to provide informants with the necessary latitude to explore their perspectives whilst maintaining a rigorous focus on the core research substance.

#### 2.1.1. Key Informants

The researcher conducted intensive interviews with the School Principal, as the primary instructional authority, and the Jawi-Malay language teacher, as the technical implementer of the curriculum.

#### 2.1.2. Data Depth

Interviews were designed not merely to gather factual information but to dissect the philosophy underpinning the "18-Week Curriculum" policy, the principal's managerial motivations, and the psychological and pedagogical constraints encountered by teachers. Furthermore, the researcher investigated how the principal's directives were translated into tangible actions during the drafting of lesson plans, and the coordination processes utilised to address the low levels of student literacy.

### 2.2. Participant Observation

Distinct from conventional observation, this technique involved the direct presence of the researcher within the school environment to capture nuanced realities that may remain latent during interviews.

#### 2.2.1. Observational Focus

The researcher conducted systematic observations across 15 instructional sessions and internal teacher working group meetings (school-level Subject Teacher Forums or MGMP).

### *2.2.2. Analytical Rigour*

Observation was directed towards the synchronicity between the written lesson plans (RPP) and their classroom implementation. The researcher monitored the execution of the 18-week instructional scenarios, teacher-student interactions when navigating Jawi script complexities, and the extent to which the school's cultural atmosphere—fostered by the principal—influenced literacy engagement. Chronological field notes were meticulously compiled to document shifts in students' literacy-related behaviours.

## **2.3. Documentary Analysis**

This technique serves as empirical evidence to corroborate findings obtained from interviews and observations. Documentary analysis was conducted to audit the quality of instructional administration.

### *2.3.1. Documentary Corpus*

The artefacts scrutinised included the school's Strategic Plan (Renstra), the syllabus, and, most importantly, the consolidated Jawi script lesson plans (RPP).

### *2.3.2. Content Analysis*

The researcher performed a rigorous analysis of the lesson plans' structure to assess the alignment between learning objectives, instructional materials (the 36 Jawi characters), selected methodologies, and evaluation instruments. Furthermore, initial diagnostic assessment data from the 137 students were examined to verify the literacy gaps that constitute the foundation of this study. Through this documentary study, the researcher was able to trace the trajectory of the principal's leadership consistency in monitoring the quality of teacher administration.

## **2.4. Data Analysis Techniques**

The collected data were processed using the interactive model proposed by [4], which comprises four simultaneous stages:

### *2.4.1. Data Condensation*

Selecting and summarising raw data from interview transcripts and field notes that are specifically relevant to the focus on lesson planning (RPP) and leadership.

### *2.4.2. Data Display*

Organising thematic narratives and comparative matrices to demonstrate the correlation between the principal's interventions and the quality of teacher planning.

### *2.4.3. Conclusion Drawing*

Formulating scientific propositions based on the identified patterns and emerging themes.

### *2.4.4. Verification/Credibility Testing*

Conducted through member checking (re-confirming findings with informants) and temporal triangulation to ensure that the data obtained are both valid and consistent.

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## **3. Results and Discussion**

The analysis of instructional leadership efficacy in enhancing the quality of Jawi script lesson plans at Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School reveals complex and systematic managerial dynamics. The findings of this study are constructed within two primary domains: the managerial portrait of instructional planning and the subsequent pedagogical implications for student literacy.

### **3.1. Diagnostic Analysis: The Root Causes of Jawi Literacy Issues**

Prior to the implementation of instructional leadership interventions, the researcher conducted an audit of the students' baseline data. The findings revealed a profound literacy gap at Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School.

**Table 1** Student Jawi Literacy Proficiency Profile (N=137)

Literacy Category	Number of Students	Percentage	Description / Notes
Proficient (Fluent Reading and Writing)	41	30%	Comprehends complex texts
Intermediate (Recognises Isolated Characters)	55	40%	Difficulty in word formation/synthesis
Non-proficient (Jawi Illiterate)	41	30%	Unable to recall character forms
Total	137	100%	70% Require Acceleration

These data serve as the empirical basis for the Principal's argument in mandating a comprehensive overhaul of instructional planning management (RPP).

### 3.2. Instructional Leadership as a Catalyst for Lesson Plan Quality

The research findings indicate that the quality of Jawi script lesson plans (RPP) at this institution did not emerge from mere administrative routine; rather, it resulted from precise instructional leadership intervention. The principal implemented a strategy of Transformative Clinical Supervision, whereby lesson plans are not merely subjected to formalistic scrutiny (i.e., a perfunctory signature) but are dissected substantively through professional dialogue. This approach reflects the core of instructional management, where the leader bears full responsibility for intervening in the quality of curriculum design. The Principal of Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School repositioned the function of the lesson plan (RPP) from a mere "administrative burden" to a "strategic roadmap". A key finding within this domain is the initiation of the 18-Week Curriculum. Within the newly developed lesson plans, the principal directed teachers to deconstruct the complexities of the 36 Jawi characters into measurable micro-competency units. The discussion surrounding this intervention demonstrates that effective instructional leadership is capable of mitigating the technical hurdles teachers face in organising instructional materials. Crucially, observational evidence confirms that lesson plans drafted under the principal's guidance exhibit robust alignment between learning objectives and diagnostic evaluation instruments—an element that had frequently been overlooked in conventional practices. The Principal intervened through supervisory functions and the provision of instructional resources. Based on an interview with one of the Malay language teachers:

"Previously, we developed lesson plans merely for administrative formality. However, the Principal emphasised that the RPP must serve as a solution for the 70% of students failing to achieve literacy. He guided us in designing the '18-Week Curriculum', which was then integrated into the instructional procedures component of the lesson plans[10]."

This intervention transformed the structure of the RPP from a theoretical document into a functional-strategic one. The Principal ensured that every lesson plan included a dedicated time allocation for "Character Drilling" at the commencement of each session. The principal's leadership style not only improves administrative quality but also shapes a positive school culture that supports literacy [11, 18, 25]. By fostering this environment, the school creates a shared commitment to overcoming the literacy crisis.

### 3.3. Integrating the 18-Week Curriculum: An Innovation against "Literacy Amnesia"

The discussion of these research findings delves into the efficacy of the 18-Week Curriculum as articulated within the teachers' instructional planning. This strategy serves as a direct response to the critical data indicating that 70% of the 137 students experienced Jawi literacy failure. Analysis of the lesson plan (RPP) documentation reveals a methodological transition from traditional rote-learning approaches to a Functional-Communicative approach. In this discussion, the researcher observes that these high-quality lesson plans emphasise visual and audio-lingual character recognition during the initial nine weeks, followed by the syntax of sentence construction in the subsequent nine weeks. The incisiveness of the principal's role is evident in his commitment to ensuring that every teacher incorporates "Interactive Jawi Media" [22] into each instructional module. By integrating these interactive tools, the instruction effectively addresses students' basic psychological needs for engagement and motivation in learning a minority script [12, 14, 24]. This intervention has successfully transformed the classroom atmosphere from passive to participatory. The scholarly discussion in this section confirms instructional leadership theories which posit that resource provision and curriculum management by the school principal are primary determinants in resolving literacy crises within minority education settings. The primary innovation identified is the systematic distribution of students' cognitive load within the structured lesson plans.

**Table 2** The "18-Week Curriculum" Planning Structure within the Lesson Plans

Phase (Week)	Instructional Content Focus	Instructional Strategies
1 – 9	Introduction to 36 Isolated Characters and Vowels	Audio-Visual and Jawi Flashcards
10 – 15	Syllabic and Word Synthesis Techniques	Peer Tutoring
16 – 18	Sentence Construction and Textual Comprehension	Dictation Exercises and Kitab Recitation/Reading

The discussion demonstrates that effective instructional leadership is capable of reducing teachers' "administrative resistance". With the establishment of clear 18-week targets, teachers reported a greater sense of direction in their instructional delivery. Observational findings across 15 learning sessions indicate that teachers utilising lesson plans (RPP) based on the 18-Week Curriculum achieved classroom time management that was 40% more efficient than prior to the intervention.

### 3.4. Synthesis: The Synergy between Managerial Intervention and Academic

AchievementThe synergy between the principal's interventions and the quality of lesson planning (RPP) yielded a significant impact. A more profound analysis suggests that when instructional leadership permeates the technical domain of planning, there is a notable increase in teacher self-efficacy and organizational commitment [7, 21]. Consequently, teachers no longer perceive themselves as navigating the student literacy crisis in isolation. Crucially, this study finds that the efficacy of instructional leadership at Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School has successfully mitigated teachers' "administrative resistance" [18]. The lesson plan (RPP) has now been transformed into a self-evaluation instrument, enabling teachers to monitor students' daily progress effectively. Within the perspective of Educational Administration, these findings reinforce the thesis that the quality of student output (literacy) is a function of the quality of the process (instruction), while the quality of the process is a function of the quality of planning (RPP)-duly overseen by robust leadership [15, 26, 29]. The sociopolitical and linguistic challenges inherent in Southern Thailand, particularly regarding the preservation of the Jawi script as a cultural identity, have been successfully addressed through the strengthening of rigorous and measurable instructional administrative governance [1, 13, 17, 20]. This synthesis confirms that curriculum adaptability in minority education is highly dependent on the synergy between pedagogical innovation and clinical supervision [16, 27].

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion, this study concludes that the efficacy of the principal's instructional leadership serves as a primary determinant in transforming the quality of Jawi script lesson planning (RPP) at Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School. The managerial interventions implemented transcended the boundaries of formal administration; the principal successfully repositioned the RPP as a strategic instrument to address the literacy crisis. This success is evidenced by the integration of the 18-Week Curriculum into the teachers' instructional design, which enabled the systematic and measurable mapping of competency across the 36 Jawi characters.

This study crucially finds that the synergy between intensive clinical supervision and micro-curriculum development is effective in reducing student literacy failure rates, which previously reached 70%. The significant improvement in the quality of lesson planning (RPP) has had a direct impact on teacher self-efficacy and the achievement of classroom instructional targets. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the proposition that amidst the socio-political and linguistic challenges of minority regions, the governance of instructional planning oversights by robust instructional leadership is the primary key to preserving intellectual heritage and cultural identity.

As a practical implication, this study recommends that the instructional leadership model based on innovative lesson plan development be adopted as a benchmarking standard for other schools throughout Southern Thailand. The enhancement of teachers' pedagogical competencies in designing adaptive instructional scenarios must be continuously encouraged through sustained managerial support. This is essential to ensure that the Jawi script does not merely persist as a historical memory, but remains vibrant as an active literacy competence for future generations.

## Compliance with ethical standards

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### *Disclosure of Conflict of Interest*

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. No financial or non-financial interests have influenced the research process, data analysis, or the findings presented in this study.

### *Statement of ethical approval*

The author confirms that this research was conducted in accordance with ethical standards for qualitative studies involving human participants. Formal permission was obtained from the administration of Sri Patani Witthaya Secondary School prior to data collection. All participants (the principal and teachers) were informed about the purpose of the study and provided their voluntary consent to participate. To ensure confidentiality and privacy, the identities of all informants and students have been anonymized, and the data gathered were used strictly for academic purposes.

### *Statement of informed consent*

"Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study."

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