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Competence of proficient teachers in public elementary schools at the Lemery sub-office as the basis for the development of localized professional guidelines

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Abstract: Project STAGE (Setting Targets, Achieving Goals Effectively) emerged as a response to the imperative need to enhance teacher competence within the educational landscape. Rooted in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and aligned with the Basic Education Development Plan 2030 (BEDP 2030), Project STAGE served as a comprehensive guide for teachers in their pursuit of excellence. This thesis investigated the impact of Project STAGE on teacher competence in the Lemery Sub Office during the academic year 2024-2025. Employing a quantitative descriptive research design, the study delved into the demographic profiles, performance in PPST key result areas, challenges experienced, and proposed professional guidelines for enhancing teacher performance. Findings revealed a diverse population of proficient teachers with varying educational backgrounds and experience levels. While proficient teachers demonstrated very satisfactory performance across PPST key result areas, areas for improvement were identified, particularly in differentiated learning experiences for diverse learners. The study underscored the importance of targeted interventions to address specific challenges and enhance teaching effectiveness. It recommended fostering diversity among proficient teachers, developing interventions, recognizing and supporting the professional development of the teachers, and establishing comprehensive support systems to address challenges faced by teachers. Ultimately, Project STAGE emerged as a transformative initiative, offering actionable insights and practical strategies to elevate teacher competence and foster a culture of continuous improvement within the educational community.

Keywords: Competence, Proficiency, Elementary schools, Professional guidelines

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INTRODUCTION

In education, the school is like a grand stage where everyone involved has to excel and perform effectively. To deliver outstanding performances, everyone should clearly understand the goals to be achieved. To ensure high performance, it was imperative that everyone was well-informed about their roles and clearly understood the objectives to be met.

At the core of a thriving society lies education, with teachers assuming the role of custodians who mold learners' minds. Their competence was multifaceted, encompassing cognitive, functional, personal, and ethical dimensions, as highlighted by Révai (2017). This competence held immense importance, shaping every aspect of a learner's journey and directly impacting the quality of education and the development of students' skills. To achieve educational excellence, it was paramount that our educators were equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge, and tools to provide learners with the highest quality of education.

Teacher competence held critical importance as it influenced every aspect of a learner's journey. It was a critical factor in shaping the future, as it directly influenced the quality of education and, consequently, the development of students' skills and abilities. Education News and Research posted an article about 12 Powerful Statistics That Prove Why Teachers Matter and said that 88% stated a teacher had a significant, positive impact on their lives. On the other hand, a review of the literature suggested that one of the factors contributing to poor learner outcomes was the deteriorating quality of instruction.

In a focused group discussion conducted with some teachers in the Lemery Sub Office, they expressed varying sentiments regarding the matter. Some teachers mentioned that they found difficulties in meeting the indicators in IPCRF, and the preparation of MOVs appeared challenging as they lacked tangible and attainable targets to guide them. They also found it daunting when their documents were validated by the assessors, fearing that what they presented might not meet the required standards. This outcome underscored the need for enhancing teachers' competence, which, in turn, led to the emergence of target settings.

Consequently, in response to these findings, the proponent initiated research aimed at enhancing the overall competence of teachers. This was precisely the Project STAGE (Setting Targets, Achieving Goals Effectively) for proficient teachers) was developed. This Project STAGE is a set of localized professional guidelines for proficient teachers, serving as a guide for overcoming challenges they encountered as they performed their roles and responsibilities in teaching, enhanced their capabilities, and collectively strived toward their desired goals. Data gathered through surveys and interviews was used in the development of this project.

Significantly, Project STAGE is rooted in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and aligned with the Basic Education Development Plan 2030 (BEDP 2030).

While it might beg the question of why such a project was necessary when the Department of Education already provided a framework through the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), collective data emphasized that it was still equally crucial to provide teachers with specific and intuitive targets. These targets acted as guidelines, aiding teachers in aligning themselves with these standards and, in turn, fostering their continuous professional and personal development. Project STAGE would serve as a comprehensive guide for teaching professionals looking to excel in their careers.

Project STAGE encompassed attainable targets across various pillars of Basic Education, including Access, Quality, and Governance, and was firmly anchored in PPST indicators. Moreover, it was complemented by a comprehensive plan of action, highlighting the necessary MOVs. It was mainly about target setting and consisted of objectives the teachers should meet and means of verification to achieve the target.

In this study, the proponent aimed to provide elementary teachers at the Lemery Sub Office with more detailed and specific targets and objectives through Project STAGE, which was anchored in the PPST Framework. Furthermore, the study would inform teachers on the verification methods they needed to prepare to achieve the set targets and meet objectives in various key result areas.

The proponent, serving as a school leader, firmly believed that one of the pivotal roles of a school leader was to enhance the overall performance of the school through evidence-based strategies. This entailed a focus on improving teachers' competence, as they played a crucial role in realizing institutional goals, with a steadfast commitment to elevating education standards in the Lemery Sub Office.The study tried to explore the potential impact of Project STAGE on education in Lemery, Batangas, during the academic year 2024-2025. Additionally, it sought to unravel the nuances and complexities of Project STAGE, examining its alignment with educational standards and its potential to serve as a blueprint for enhancing teacher competence not only in Lemery but also in the broader educational community.

Statement of the problem

The study aimed to enhance the competence of teachers in public elementary schools within the Lemery Sub Office during the school year 2024-2025

Specifically, it answered the following research questions:

1) What is the profile of teachers in terms of: age; sex; length of service; teaching position and; educational attainment.

2) What is the performance of teachers in PPST's key result areas in terms of: content knowledge and pedagogy; diversity of learners and learning environment; curriculum and planning and; assessment and reprting.

3) Is there a significant difference in the performance of teachers when respondents were grouped according to their profiles?

4) What challenges are experienced by teachers in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as prescribed by the (PPST?

5) What localized professional guidelines can be proposed to enhance and standardize teacher performance and competence, specifically within the context of the Lemery Sub Office?

RELATED LITERATURE

Personal and professional characteristics

Age plays a significant role in shaping a teacher's experience. Junior teachers, typically younger and newer to the profession, may have less experience compared to their senior counterparts. Having spent more time in the profession, senior teachers often possess a wealth of experience. This experience can contribute to their maturity, stability, and a more qualified perspective. As a result, senior teachers may be better equipped to handle the challenges of the job and may not be as vulnerable to mental pressure at work (Almutahar, Wardhani & Rafie 2015).

The finding is not much different from the later study of Nyagah and Gathumbi (2017) in their cross-sectional survey in Kenya, who found that older teachers were more likely to increase students' learning compared to their middle-aged and younger teachers.

However, the study conducted by Kraft and Papay (2014) examined student achievement data from New York City and found no consistent evidence that teacher age significantly influenced student outcomes.

Some studies have even suggested a decline in teaching quality after the initial three years of teaching. The existing literature underscores a substantial disparity. Consequently, this study aims to address this gap by examining teaching performance relative to educators' experience levels and ages.

While it is crucial to acknowledge the existence of gender stereotypes, certain competencies are conventionally associated with specific genders. For instance, qualities like caring and success in personal relationships are often attributed more to women, while competencies like strong leadership skills or success in the sciences are commonly associated with men. In the realm of teaching, effectiveness requires a blend of characteristics traditionally considered feminine (e.g., tolerance and sociability) and masculine (e.g., self-advocacy and firmness), irrespective of the teacher's gender.

Research findings indicate that women in the teaching profession prioritize the use of diverse teaching methods, staying abreast of pedagogical innovations, and engaging in high-quality professional development. Conversely, male teachers tend to place more importance on knowledge transfer and pursuing a scientific career. This dichotomy reflects a traditional division between masculine and feminine qualities: a focus on academic knowledge and the development of theoretical understanding is more pronounced among men, while women emphasize aspects like understanding students' challenges and advocating for equal opportunities. In essence, the dichotomy manifests as a tension between knowledge-centeredness and personality-centeredness within the teaching profession.

Sansone (2017) cited that teacher gender may affect students in a variety of ways: by acting as role models, reinforcing stereotype threats, and through teacher biases that are correlated with gender. First, if students may perform better when assigned to a same-sex teacher if they identify themselves with such a role model. In other words, assigning female teachers exposes female students to successful women in STEM, potentially inspiring them to pursue these fields. Second, students may react to a teacher's gender by internalizing an expected negative stereotype about their own gender. The resulting anxiety may reduce their academic performance. Third, teacher gender may affect teacher behavior. Female teachers could impact student performance because they may have higher anxiety, especially in primary schools, which may negatively affect students (Antecol et al., 2015). Moreover, female teachers may structure their classroom, select topics, and provide examples differently than their male colleagues.

Dalgic (2014), on the other hand, investigated the correlation between gender and teachers' organizational commitment. The study explored this relationship both overall and across the sub-dimensions of organizational commitment, including affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The analysis incorporated data from 33 studies conducted between 2000 and 2014, utilizing the Allen Meyer organizational commitment scale. The sample encompassed 11,690 teachers, with 6,232 identified as female and 5,458 as male. While the mean effect sizes indicated a slight advantage for females in terms of overall organizational commitment, as well as affective, continuance, and normative commitment, the findings underscored that gender did not emerge as a significant determinant of teachers' organizational commitment levels.

In addition to competence, educators' teaching experiences and the potential impact of their age on career opportunities influence their teaching performance. Recognizing that teaching is a multifaceted endeavor, these factors collectively shape the effectiveness of teachers in facilitating meaningful and impactful learning experiences for students.

Teaching experience pertains to the duration of a teacher's professional tenure (Burroughs, 2019). Teaching experiences intricately link to the success of the educational process, subsequently influencing the effectiveness of teaching activities. Whitebook (2014) It is emphasized that it is crucial to emphasize the significance of teaching performance. This aspect plays a pivotal role in shaping overall learning effectiveness and quality while also influencing students' motivation, attitudes, behaviors, and developmental progress. Teachers' experiences emerge as a crucial determinant impacting their performance. The effectiveness of teaching performance is intricately tied to teachers' internal motivation, which drives their adept management of knowledge mastery and the application of suitable pedagogical competence to guide their students (OECD, 2018).

When teachers are well-trained, they can adeptly navigate the learning process by acknowledging and addressing the individual characteristics and needs of their students, ultimately contributing to optimal teaching performance. In the context of political and public discourse, there is a common assumption of a direct, linear relationship between a teacher's years of experience and their teaching quality (Brandenburg et al., 2016). The prevailing notion suggests that their teaching quality improves as teachers gain more experience. However, this assumption overlooks the complexities and variations within the teaching profession. Typically, junior educators possess fewer years of experience than their senior counterparts.

Furthermore, senior instructors are often regarded as more seasoned and emotionally stable, thus less susceptible to workplace stressors (Pranoto, 2021). However, numerous studies have highlighted diverse factors influencing teaching efficacy, indicating that teaching performance is not solely determined by years of service (Kanto et al., 2020; Kini and Podolsky, 2016; Nuraini et al., 2019). Notably, observable teacher attributes, including

education and post-initial training experiences, do not consistently correlate with enhanced productivity.

Between 2013 and 2015, researchers from the Education Research and Development Institute in Hungary examined in-service teachers' perspectives on professional competencies and the overall career model.

The study involved a comparative analysis based on the self-evaluation of professional competencies among career entrants and teachers with longer working experience. Across various competence domains, such as supporting, organizing, and managing learning, career entrants tended to assign lower values to themselves, a trend likely influenced by the varying lengths of their professional practice. However, notable findings emerged in two specific areas: (a) pedagogical development and innovation, and (b) the field of analysis and research. In these domains, both career entrants and more experienced teachers expressed a shared perception of not being sufficiently advanced in their competencies (SGI, 2018). This suggests that irrespective of experience levels, there were common challenges and areas for improvement identified by teachers in the realms of pedagogical innovation and analytical research within the Hungarian education system.

Moreover, it is crucial to recognize that less experienced teachers are not uniformly ineffective, and the reverse is also true at every stage of a teaching career. There is a broad base of literature demonstrating that teachers continue to develop their effectiveness throughout their careers. The finer-grained analysis in these studies has generally found that while teachers improve at greater rates during the first few years of their careers, instructors continue to improve, albeit at lesser rates, throughout their careers (Podolsky, June 2016).

Teaching position

While teaching positions may bring different responsibilities, it is crucial to view competence holistically, considering both the unique aspects of a teacher's role and the foundational skills essential to effective teaching. Acknowledging the diversity of roles within the teaching profession should not overshadow the common goal of fostering positive learning experiences for students. Evaluating competence based on performance, continuous improvement, and student outcomes allows for a more comprehensive understanding of a teacher's effectiveness across.

Delineating the roles of teachers across different career stages ((Stage 1:1: Beginning Teacher, Stage 2, Proficient Teacher, Stage 3:3: Highly Proficient Teacher,Teacher, and Stage 4:: Distinguished Teacher)Teacher), elucidating the components of high-quality teaching for the 21st century. These statements encompass descriptors informed by teachers' insights into the requisites at each of the four careercareer stages. stages. Serving as a developmental continuum within the profession, these descriptors offer a foundation for the attraction, preparation, development, and support of teachers.

At career stage 1, or the beginning teacher's level, educators possess the recognized qualifications for entry into the teaching profession. They demonstrate a robust grasp of the subjects and areas of their profession. They demonstrate a robust grasp of the subjects and areas they are trained in, encompassing content knowledge and pedagogy (PPST).

According to the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (2017), when transitioning to career stage 2, or proficient teachers (Teachers 1-3), educators attain professional independence in applying skills essential to the teaching and learning process. They design focused teaching programs aligning with curriculum and assessment requirements, exhibiting prowess in planning, implementing, and managing learning programs. Actively participating in collaborative learning with the professional community

and stakeholders, they serve as reflective practitioners who continually integrate the knowledge, skills, and practices gained from career stage 1.

Career Stage 3, or highly proficient teachers (Master Teachers), witness educators consistently showcasing a high level of performance in their teaching practice. They demonstrate a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the teaching and learning process, coupled with heightened cognition in education-focused situations as outlined in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers.

Finally, at career stage 4, or Distinguished Teachers, educators embody the pinnacle of teaching standards grounded in global best practices. Exhibiting an exceptional capacity to enhance their teaching practice and that of others, they are acknowledged as leaders in education, contributors to the profession, and initiators of collaborations and partnerships. With a commitment to inspiring the education community and stakeholders, Distinguished teachers consistently seek professional advancement, contributing to the enhancement of education provision in the Philippines as stipulated in DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017).

Educational attainment

There is growing interest in the professional development of educators as the demands, expectations, and requirements of teachers Yusuf et al. (2016) discovered a positive correlation between educators who pursued advanced degrees during their tenure and their middle school students' performance in mathematics. However, their research did not uncover any significant associations between advanced degrees and student achievement in other subject areas. Using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS-K) in the United States,.

Several inquiries have suggested that while higher levels of education may correlate with specific aspects of teacher competency, they may not necessarily predict overall teaching effectiveness or classroom performance. These investigations highlight the importance of factors such as pedagogical skill, instructional approaches, classroom management techniques, and the ability to cultivate positive student relationships as equally—if not more—significant indicators of teacher proficiency. Research on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs mirrors broader studies on teacher efficacy. Notably, educational research into teacher effectiveness has focused on effective teaching, defined as observable classroom processes primarily influenced by teacher behavior, leading to expected student learning outcomes (Kyriakides et al., 2013).

Furthermore, an article in Educational Researcher examined the interaction between teacher credentials, including educational attainment, and student achievements. The results indicated that while teacher qualifications do correlate with student performance to some extent, instructional approaches emerge as a crucial factor in teaching effectiveness, suggesting a nuanced approach to understanding teacher competence (Kyriakides et al., 2013).

Teaching performance concerning key result areas of PPST

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) uses the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) to assess the competencies of basic education teachers. The RPMS provides a system of continuous and consistent work improvement and individual growth for teachers. The RPMS aligns to the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), establishing performance assessment tools with Key Result Areas (KRAs) for teachers to meet. The PPST outlines the required skills and competencies of quality teachers, thus enabling them to cope with the emerging global frameworks. The study considers the

Key Result Areas (KRAs) as the competencies of basic education teachers, as they contain the domains of the PPST, which define teacher quality in the Philippines.

These areas include content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment and diversity of learners, curriculum and planning, assessment and reporting, and a plus factor. Content knowledge and pedagogy (KRA1) measures how teachers apply the knowledge of the content and how they use a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement and higher-order thinking skills. The learning environment and diversity of learners (KRA2) look into how teachers manage learners' behavior positively with a classroom structure that engages learners. It includes the use of differentiated, developmentally appropriate learning experiences to address learners' gender, needs, strengths, interests, and experiences. In terms of curriculum and planning (KRA3), teachers are expected to have well-planned, well-managed, and efficiently implemented developmentally sequenced teaching and learning processes that meet curriculum requirements in varied teaching contexts. This also includes the selection, development, organization, and use of appropriate teaching and learning resources.

Assessment and reporting (KRA 4) considers whether or not teachers' assessment strategies are consistent with curriculum requirements. It includes monitoring and evaluation of learner progress by establishing communication with stakeholders. The plus factor (KRA 5) includes various activities performed by teachers that contribute to the teaching and learning process (Department of Education, 2015). In the last quarter of 2014, the Department of Education, along with experts at the Philippine Normal University and their partner university in Australia, conducted a nationally representative survey of government institutions and public schools in the country to determine the quality of elementary and high school teachers. Results revealed that knowledge of subject matter among elementary and high school teachers was low in most subjects. Most teachers lack the skills to teach the different subject areas (World Bank, 2016).

Content knowledge and pedagogy

The Department of Education recognizes the importance of gaining a deep understanding of content knowledge and its interconnections within and across various curriculum domains. This entails possessing a sound and critical comprehension of the application of teaching and learning theories and principles. Educators are expected to employ developmentally appropriate and meaningful pedagogy firmly rooted in content knowledge and contemporary research. Proficiency in the mother tongue, Filipino, and English is crucial for facilitating the teaching and learning process. Additionally, educators are required to demonstrate adeptness in communication strategies, teaching methodologies and technology utilization to foster high-quality learning outcomes, as outlined in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers.

Undoubtedly, the teaching process plays a pivotal role in students' success, with teachers serving as the primary facilitators. Educators must ensure the provision of high-quality teaching and learning experiences in the classroom. However, orchestrating effective teaching is a complex task that demands substantial competence in the intricacies of the teaching and learning process. Teacher competence, a reflection of teacher quality, significantly impacts the quality of learning outcomes.

In recent decades, research has focused on knowledge as a fundamental aspect of the cognitive dimension of competence. Teacher knowledge, recognized as a critical component of teacher competence (Kleickmann et al., 2013; Depaepe et al., Baumert et al., 2013), has been the subject of extensive investigation. To be an effective mathematics teacher, educators

must possess a broad spectrum of knowledge, addressing two essential types: knowledge of mathematical content (content

knowledge) and knowledge of teaching strategies that prove most effective in delivering content comprehensibly to students (pedagogical knowledge). The union of these two types of knowledge is termed pedagogical content knowledge.

For teachers to maximize their instructional effectiveness within the unique contexts of their classrooms, teachers must possess a comprehensive understanding of pedagogical knowledge. This encompasses a range of skills, attitudes, and competencies essential for navigating diverse teaching and learning scenarios (Berry et al., 2016; Deng, 2018). Mastery of pedagogical knowledge extends beyond subject expertise, encompassing various facets of effective teaching practice.

Mastery of pedagogical knowledge extends beyond expertise in one's subject area; it encompasses various aspects of pedagogy. PCK serves as a theoretical framework that facilitates the understanding of teachers' pedagogical skills relevant to their teaching practice, thus providing a model for researching the development of teachers' knowledge.

Diversity of learners and learning environment

The Department of Education has established learning environments that are responsive to learner diversity. They respect learners' diverse characteristics and experiences as inputs to the planning and design of learning opportunities. They promote the celebration of diversity in the classroom and emphasize the need for differentiated teaching practices to empower all learners to become successful citizens in a dynamic local and global environment (PPST 2017).

In today's classroom settings, particularly in Western countries, students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds come together, bringing with them a rich array of individual traits and experiences. These

Students carry their unique socio-cultural legacies and personal learning backgrounds, which significantly influence their academic success, motivation, and engagement in learning activities (Anyichie, 2023, February). However, students from traditionally underrepresented groups often face challenges staying engaged and motivated, particularly when classroom activities do not align with their cultural identities and prior experiences.

The increasing diversity in student populations highlights the need for educators to create inclusive learning environments that cater to the varied educational needs of all students, especially those from marginalized backgrounds. Many educators, particularly those lacking training in culturally responsive teaching, struggle to foster motivation and engagement among students of color. Thus, there is a pressing need for research into strategies that support the learning processes of culturally diverse students. These strategies should focus on designing culturally relevant learning activities, promoting active learning, and empowering students to take ownership of their education (Anyichie, 2023). This approach is essential for advancing the educational success and well-being of all students.

On the other hand, the Department of Education provides learning environments that are safe, secure, fair, and supportive to promote learner responsibility and achievement. Teachers create a learning-focused environment, and they efficiently manage learner behavior in a physical and virtual space. They utilize a range of resources and provide intellectually challenging and stimulating activities to encourage constructive classroom interactions geared towards the attainment of high standards of learning (Philippine Professional standard for Teachers, 2017).

Creating safe and supportive environments in schools includes emphasizing aspects of the school environment that encourage students to be more engaged in their school life and

feel connected to important adults at school and home. Schools should create learning environments that prioritize safety, security, fairness, and support to foster learner responsibility and achievement. These environments center on a learning-focused approach and adeptly manage student behavior, both in physical and virtual spaces. They leverage a variety of resources and implement intellectually challenging and stimulating activities to promote constructive interactions among students, ultimately aiming for the achievement of high learning standards (PPST, 2017).

The literature on learning environment research introduces varied concepts, understandings, and dimensions, drawing from diverse epistemological and ontological perspectives. The learning environment is conceptualized as encompassing the "social, physical, psychological, and pedagogical contexts in which learning occurs and which impact student achievement and attitudes" (Learning Environments Research, 2019).

Curriculum and planning

Curriculum development, encompassing design, implementation, and assessment, is fundamental to effective teaching and learning within classrooms. Alsubaei (2016) stresses the necessity for ongoing review, revision, and involvement of all stakeholders, particularly teachers, who play a direct role at the grassroots level. Without a doubt, the most important person in the curriculum implementation process is the teacher. With their knowledge, experiences, and competencies, teachers are central to any curriculum development effort. Better teachers support better learning because they are most knowledgeable about the practice of teaching and are responsible for introducing the curriculum in the classroom. Therefore, teachers must have sufficient knowledge and engagement in the curriculum development process, covering design, implementation, and evaluation.

On the other hand, Mohana Sundaram (2018) defines curriculum. design as the structuring of curriculum components, aiming to address four key questions: why instruction is initiated (aims), what should be taught to achieve these aims, how to connect learning experiences, and what outcomes have been achieved and what actions are needed in response.

Reporting and assessment

Teachers use a variety of assessment tools and strategies in monitoring, evaluating, documenting, and reporting learners' needs, progress, and achievement. They use assessment data in a variety of ways to inform and enhance the teaching and learning process and programs. They provide learners with the necessary feedback about learning outcomes that informs the reporting cycle and enables teachers to select, organize, and use sound assessment processes. (PPST 2017)

Challenges experienced by teachers in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities

Various studies have noted the widely recognized issue of public school teachers in the Philippines facing excessive workloads. Beyond their teaching duties, these educators shoulder a range of non-teaching activities. Consequently, the primary role of teaching often becomes secondary to these additional obligations.

Teacher stress and burnout encompass the emotional strain experienced, characterized by feelings of anger, anxiety, tension, frustration, or depression arising from their work environment. This phenomenon, described as stress contagion, has the potential to spread and impact other individuals, including students (Carroll et al., 2021). Current data reveals that the burnout rate among K–12 teachers surpasses that of other industries by 14%, with nearly

44% of teachers reporting chronic stress, compared to just 30% in other professions (Peck, 2023). A significant contributing factor is the poor work-life balance experienced by teachers, with up to 85% finding their workload unsustainable, often resorting to working nights and weekends to keep up (Peck, 2023).

Additionally, findings from the Voices from the Classroom organization's annual teacher survey indicate that 87% of teachers feel burdened by excessive non-teaching responsibilities, hindering their effectiveness as educators (Tadros & Faulker, 2023). Alarmingly, a National Education Association (NEA) survey conducted in February 2022 found that 55% of educators are contemplating an early departure from the teaching profession (Walker, 2022).

In the context of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, educators encounter challenges in translating its goals into practice. These objectives encompass aiding teachers in implementing changes to curricula and teaching practices, supporting schools in adopting and executing new instructional strategies, and fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange among educators.

Marcelo (2019) asserts that regular classroom observations and updated teaching portfolios play pivotal roles in teachers' professional development, constituting both individual and collective efforts within their workplace. These practices significantly impact how educators cultivate their professional competencies through a spectrum of experiences, both formal and informal. Professional development is a dynamic process shaped by personal commitment, receptiveness to learning, pedagogical beliefs, subject expertise, past experiences, and professional growth potential, influenced by institutional contexts, political reforms, and educational settings.

In response to these dynamics, teachers must engage in relevant training programs aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers. Every teacher should receive comprehensive guidance and mentorship during classroom observations and portfolio creation to elevate standards in both student learning and the educational landscape (Gomez, 2020).

As Sebullen (2017) emphasizes, today's educators must continuously advance their pedagogical prowess to meet evolving student needs and learning environments. The efficacy of teaching has a direct influence on student learning outcomes, necessitating close assessment through classroom observation tools and results-based management performance systems. However, challenges persist, such as subjective observations and deficiencies in lesson preparation, contextualization, assessment creation, and utilization (Carcamo, 2019; Coe, 2019; Gomez et al., 2020).

Additionally, the World Bank (2015) identifies shortcomings in current professional development offerings for teachers, citing inadequacies in meeting educators' needs and quality standards, as echoed in classroom observations and portfolio assessments. Furthermore, Handler (2019) highlights various obstacles to effective professional development, including time constraints, inadequate training in curriculum changes, and disparities in teachers' competitiveness during classroom evaluations, all of which hinder the teaching and learning process. Lastly, Borga et al. (2018) cited that teachers' behavior-attitude, pedagogic skills and diversity of learning activities were identified as constraints of being professional teachers.

Localized professional guidelines to enhance and standardize teacher performance and competence

The PPST, in which Project STAGE, a localized performance guideline, is anchored, is a framework that aims to enhance and standardize teacher performance and competence in the

Philippines. The standards are built on the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS) and provide measures of professional learning, competent practice, and effective engagement. The document outlines the domains, strands, and indicators that define teacher quality in the K–12 reform.

PPST is a framework developed by DepED in the Philippines. The PPST serves as a guide for teacher development, assessment, and career progression. The framework is designed to ensure that teachers in the Philippines possess the necessary competencies and skills to provide quality education. Teaching in the 21st century focuses on teaching standards, or standards of teaching practice (CEPPE, 2013), which define what teachers and school leaders should be able to do.

To enhance and standardize teacher performance and competence, localized performance guidelines were developed. This guide offers a comprehensive step-by-step process for developing localized performance standards for teachers, drawing insights from diverse school divisions across the Philippines. It outlines the rationale, objectives, and principles behind localization, along with practical stages, activities, and tools necessary for the implementation. Additionally, it provides valuable tips and examples to facilitate effective localization efforts.

Project STAGE is a comprehensive initiative that spans multiple pillars of Basic Education Development Goal 2030, encompassing access, quality, and governance, all firmly grounded in the indicators outlined in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Complemented by a detailed plan of action, Project STAGE primarily focuses on setting achievable targets for teachers and provides clear objectives they are expected to meet, along with the means of verification necessary to ensure these targets are achieved.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The researcher employed a quantitative research method, specifically adopting the descriptive design of research, at the recommendation of Shonna McCombes (2019). The purpose of this approach was to provide accurate results. The systematic depiction of a population, situation, or phenomenon involves the thorough description, comparison, contrast, and interpretation of existing conditions.

Locale of the study and respondents

The researcher identified 178 proficient teachers from 12 large schools in the Lemery Sub Office as shown in the table. Using Slovin’s formula, 123 respondents were identified as the total sample population. Fishbowl and lottery techniques were then used to choose the study's respondents.

Instrument

The primary data-gathering instrument for the teachers' profiles was a self-made survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part was about the profile of the teacher. The second part of the questionnaire assessed the performance level of the teachers, and the third part analyzed the issues and challenges encountered by the teachers in performing their roles and responsibilities as prescribed by the PPST.

Data analyses procedure

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if there was a significant relationship between respondents’ demographic profiles (such as age, gender, years of teaching experience) and their performance. Separate ANOVAs were performed for different

demographic variables to examine their impact on performance. The statistical formulas used included calculating percentages, weighted means, and the ANOVA test statistic, with degrees of freedom considered for both between-group and within-group variations. This comprehensive data analysis procedure ensured a thorough examination of the competence of proficient teachers in public elementary schools at the Lemery Sub Office, providing valuable insights for the development of localized professional guidelines.

DISCUSSION

Profile of the respondents

Profile of the respondents in terms of age

The respondents' ages are categorized into four groups: 50 yearsold and above, 40–49 years old, 30-39 years old, and 20–29 years old.

Notably, the largest segment, comprising 31.7 percent of the total population, falls within the 20–29 age bracket, indicating a significant representation of the youngest individuals among the surveyed population. This may reflect current demographic trends within the proficient teacher community in the Lemery Sub-Office.

The second-largest age bracket is 30-39 years old, accounting for 28.5 percent of the total population. This age group represents the younger cohort, suggesting that 28.5 percent of proficient teachers within the Lemery Sub-Office belong to this age group.

Following this, the 40-49-year-old group accounts for 22.8 percent of the total population, indicating that 22.8 percent of proficient teachers fall within this age range, which is considered the middle-aged group.

Lastly, the 50-year-old and above category encompasses 17.10 percent of the total population, consisting of respondents nearing the retirement age of 60. This group represents 17.10 percent of proficient teachers among the surveyed population, indicating a smaller proportion within the older demographic.

The data demonstrates a varied distribution of respondents across these age brackets, indicating a trend toward young individuals. Considering these points, it is plausible that a significant portion of the proficient teachers in the young age groups are beginning or in-service teachers who are possibly staying in the field of education.

When examining the factors influencing teacher effectiveness and student outcomes, it is critical to consider the role of teacher age, which has been a subject of scholarly inquiry. Pranoto (2021) asserts that age influences teachers' competence, highlighting the potential impact of age on teaching proficiency. This assertion aligns with our findings, demonstrating a varied distribution of proficient teachers across age brackets. By noting the prevalence of young individuals among proficient teachers, the researcher acknowledges the nuanced relationship between age and teaching proficiency.

Furthermore, the common assumption discussed by Brandenburg et al. (2016) regarding the linear relationship between years of experience and teaching quality. While Brandenburg et al. suggest that senior teachers are perceived as more mature and stable, the current study suggests that younger teachers may still demonstrate competence despite their lesser experience. This indicates that factors beyond mere expertise, such as enthusiasm or adaptability, may contribute to teaching effectiveness among younger educators.

Profile of the respondents in terms of gender

The data indicates that the respondents consist predominantly of females, with 104 respondents accounting for 84.60 percent of the total population. In contrast, male respondents are fewer in number, with 18 individuals representing 14.60 percent of the total.

This suggests a significant gender disparity among the respondents, with females comprising the overwhelming majority.

Sansone (2017) cited that teacher gender may affect students in a variety of ways: by acting as role models, reinforcing stereotype threats, and through teacher biases that are correlated with gender.

The dominance of female respondents in the current study echoes broader trends observed in the teaching profession, where women tend to outnumber men significantly. This gender disparity is consistent with research findings that highlight distinct preferences and tendencies among male and female teachers. For instance, the study's data aligns with previous research indicating that women constitute a substantial majority in the teaching profession, reflecting the prevalent gender distribution within educational settings.

Profile of the respondents in terms of length of service

The data reveals a diverse distribution of respondents across different length of service. Most respondents have served in their current position for 1–5 years, comprising 32.50 percent of the total population. This suggests a significant proportion of relatively new entrants into the teaching profession or those who have recently joined the surveyed institution.

Following this, the next largest group consists of respondents with 6–10 years of service, accounting for 22.00 percent of the total. This indicates a substantial representation of individuals who have gained some experience in their roles but are still relatively early in their careers. The third rank of years in service are those considered to have stayed in the service for 16–20 years. These respondents comprised a joint percentage of 16.30 percent. This implies that the respondents remained in the teaching profession for almost two decades and that they plan to serve until their retirement period.

Additionally, there are smaller but notable percentages of respondents in the 11–15 years, 21–25 years, and 26–30 years categories, reflecting varying levels of experience and tenure among the surveyed population. The distribution across different lengths of service provides insights into the workforce composition within the surveyed institution, highlighting the presence of both newer entrants and more experienced educators. However, this diversity in teaching experience levels may have implications for professional development initiatives within the educational institution. In the study of Brandenburg et al. (2016), there is a common assumption of a direct, linear relationship between a teacher's years of experience and their teaching quality.

Integrating the current findings with the previous study underscores the importance of recognizing the diverse experiences and trajectories present within the teaching profession. While newer entrants may benefit from targeted support and professional development initiatives to facilitate their growth and efficacy, more experienced educators contribute valuable insights and institutional knowledge garnered over years of service.

Profile of the respondents in terms of teaching position

Integrating the current findings with the previous study underscores the importance of recognizing the diverse experiences and trajectories present within the teaching profession. While new entrants may benefit from targeted support and professional development initiatives to facilitate their growth and efficacy, more experienced educators contribute valuable insights and institutional knowledge gained over years of service.

Teacher I represents 30.08 percent of the total population, indicating a substantial but relatively smaller proportion of proficient teachers in this position. Although, Teacher II is the smallest group it still represents a significant percentage of the total population, with 9.76 percent of respondents holding this position.

Although Teacher II is the smallest group, it still represents a significant percentage of the total population, with 9.76 percent of respondents holding this position.

Overall, the data highlights the representation of proficient teachers across different teaching positions within the surveyed institution. This distribution across different teaching positions reflects varying levels of experience and expertise.

Integrating these findings with the previous study underscores the importance of viewing teaching competence holistically, regardless of the specific teaching position held by educators. While different positions may entail varying levels of responsibility and specialization, the common goal of fostering positive learning experiences for students remains paramount. Evaluating competence based on performance, continuous improvement, and student outcomes allows for a comprehensive understanding of a teacher's effectiveness across different career stages and teaching positions.

Profile of the respondents in terms of educational attainment

The data indicates that all respondents are proficient teachers, with varying levels of educational attainment.

Most respondents, constituting 55.30 percent of the total population, have units in a Master of Arts in Education (MAED) degree. This suggests a significant proportion of proficient teachers have pursued or are currently pursuing advanced education in education-related fields.

Second in rank in educational attainments, comprising 24.40 percent of respondents, are Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) graduates, indicating a substantial representation of teachers with undergraduate degrees specific to elementary education.

On the other hand, 17.10 percent of the total respondents earned their master's degree. This shows that 17.10 percent are MAED graduates. A smaller percentage of respondents have achieved higher levels of education, with 2.40 percent identified as doctorate graduates and 0.80 percent as having units in the doctoral degree. It is worth noting that there are no respondents listed under the category of bachelor's degree with professional units.

This distribution across different levels of educational attainment provides insights into the qualifications and expertise of proficient teachers within the surveyed population. It suggests a diverse range of educational backgrounds among teachers, with many having pursued advanced degrees or specializations in education-related fields.

Dr. Hanna Onyi Yusuf and Dr. Abdullahi Aliyu Dad (2016) discovered a positive correlation between educators who pursued advanced degrees during their tenure and their middle school students' performance in mathematics. However, their research did not uncover any significant associations between advanced degrees and student achievement in other subject areas.

Several inquiries have suggested that while higher levels of education may correlate with specific aspects of teacher competency, they may not necessarily predict overall teaching effectiveness or classroom performance. These investigations highlight the importance of factors such as pedagogical skill, instructional approaches, classroom management techniques, and the ability to cultivate positive student relationships as equally—if not more—significant indicators of teacher proficiency.

Performance of teachers in PPST key result areas

Content knowledge and pedagogy

The data reveals that teachers representing the Lemery Sub Office exhibit commendable proficiency in content knowledge and pedagogy, as per the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

Notably, Objective 1: Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas, secured the highest rank with an exceptional mean score of 4.45, categorically interpreted as very satisfactory.

This achievement underscores the exemplary performance of teachers in meeting the standards outlined in Objective 1. In contrast, Objective 2: Used a range of teaching strategies to enhance learners' achievement in literacy and numeracy, achieved a still impressive mean score of 4.18, positioning it within the very satisfactory range. While not surpassing the performance of Objective 1, this result signifies a solid performance, indicative of effective pedagogical approaches employed by educators to bolster student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy.

However, it is noteworthy that Objective 3: Applied a range of teaching strategies to develop critical and creative thinking, as well as other higher-order thinking skills, ranked last among the three objectives in KRA 1. Despite obtaining a mean score of 4.16, also classified as very satisfactory, it reveals a nuanced aspect wherein some educators fell short of achieving a very satisfactory rating, thereby landing within the satisfactory level based on individual scores. They need to focus on this aspect to consistently achieve excellence in all KRA 1 objectives.

According to Berry et al. (2016), for teachers to maximize the use of their knowledge within the context of their classrooms, a mastery of pedagogical knowledge is essential. This knowledge base comprises a set of understandings, skills, and attitudes crucial for effective performance in specific teaching and learning situations Mastery of pedagogical knowledge

extends beyond expertise in one's subject area; it encompasses various aspects of pedagogy. It serves as a theoretical framework that facilitates the understanding of teachers' pedagogical skills relevant to their teaching practice.

Learning environment and diversity of learners

The data shows the evaluation of teachers' performance within the scope of the learning environment and diversity of learners, as outlined by the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

Objective 4: Managed classroom structures to engage learners in meaningful explorations, discoveries, and hands-on activities secured the top rank with a commendable mean score of 4.27, signifying a very satisfactory performance. This indicates a strong commitment among teachers to foster an environment where all learners feel supported and valued.

Similarly, Objective 5: Manage learners' behavior constructively by applying nonpositive and non-violent discipline to ensure a learning-focused environment closely followed by a mean score of 4.26, also classified as "very satisfactory." This demonstrates an adeptness among educators in leveraging various resources and technologies to enrich the learning experience for their students.

Objective 6: Used differentiated developmentally appropriate learning experiences for diverse learners, while slightly trailing behind with a mean score of 4.19, still aligning within the very satisfactory range. However, upon closer examination of individual scores, it becomes apparent that some teachers fell below the satisfactory level. This highlights a nuanced aspect wherein further improvement is warranted in tailoring instructional approaches to effectively address the diverse learning styles and needs of all learners within the Lemery Sub Office.

The weighted mean score of 4.24 further consolidates the overall very satisfactory performance across all objectives within KRA 2. This indicates a consistent commitment among teachers within the Lemery Sub Office to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive learning environment conducive to the diverse needs of their learners.

Anyichie (2023) highlighted that in today's classroom settings, particularly in Western countries, students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds come together, bringing with them a rich array of individual traits and experiences. These students carry their unique socio-cultural legacies and personal learning backgrounds, which significantly influence their academic success, motivation, and engagement in learning activities.

However, students from traditionally underrepresented groups often face challenges in staying engaged and motivated, particularly when classroom activities do not align with their cultural identities and prior experiences.

Curriculum and planning

In assessing teachers' performance in curriculum and planning, delineated by the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

Objective 7: Planned, managed, and implemented developmentally sequenced teaching and learning processes to meet curriculum requirements, secured the top rank with a notable mean score of 4.32, denoting a very satisfactory performance. This underscores educators' adeptness in orchestrating curriculum-aligned instructional processes to effectively meet the educational needs of students.

Objective 8: Participated in collegial discussions utilizing teacher and learner feedback to enhance teaching practice and achieved a commendable mean score of 4.24, positioning it within the very satisfactory range. This indicates a strong commitment among teachers to engage in collaborative dialogue to refine their pedagogical approaches based on valuable insights gleaned from teachers and learners.

Objective 9: Competence in selecting, developing, organizing, and utilizing appropriate teaching and learning resources despite inadequate resources garnered a mean score of 4.26, also categorized as very satisfactory. This underscores educators' resourcefulness in leveraging available resources to enrich the teaching and learning experience, despite inherent challenges posed by resource constraints.

The weighted mean score of 4.27 further reinforces the overall very satisfactory performance across all objectives within KRA 3. This reflects a collective dedication among teachers within the Lemery Sub Office to meticulously plan and execute curriculum-aligned instructional processes while actively engaging in collaborative endeavors to enhance teaching practice, notwithstanding challenges posed by resource limitations.

Curriculum development, encompassing design, implementation, and assessment, is fundamental to effective teaching and learning within classrooms. According to Mohana Sundaram (2018), curriculum design involves structuring curriculum components to address four key questions: why instruction is initiated (aims), what should be taught to achieve these aims, how to connect learning experiences, and what outcomes have been achieved and what actions are needed in response. Meanwhile, Alsubaei (2016) stresses the necessity for ongoing review, revision, and involvement of all stakeholders, particularly teachers, who play a direct role at the grassroots level. Therefore, educators must possess sufficient knowledge and engagement in the curriculum development process, covering design, implementation, and evaluation.

This underscores educators' adeptness in orchestrating curriculum. aligned instructional processes, engaging in collaborative dialogue to refine pedagogical approaches, and demonstrating resourcefulness in leveraging available resources to enrich the teaching and learning experience. It highlights the critical role of curriculum development in effective teaching and learning, emphasizing the importance of ongoing review, revision, and stakeholder involvement, particularly among teachers who are directly involved in the implementation of curricular initiatives.

Assessment and reporting

The data shows the performance of teachers within the scope of Assessment and Reporting, as outlined by the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

For Objective 10: Designed, collected, organized, and utilized diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies consistent with curriculum requirements, it secured the second rank with a commendable mean score of 4.29, indicating a very satisfactory performance. This underscores educators' adeptness in employing a diverse array of assessment strategies to effectively gauge student understanding and progress aligned with curriculum objectives.

Objective 11: Monitored and evaluated learners' progress and achievement, utilizing learner attainment data, achieved a mean score of 4.11, falling under the category of very satisfactory. However, the respondent's scores highlight an area that requires improvement.

Objective 12: Communicated promptly and clearly the learners' needs, progress, and achievement to key stakeholders, including parents and guardians, achieved an outstanding mean score of 5.00, and secured the top rank. This exemplary performance underscores educators' exceptional competence in designing robust assessment strategies and effectively communicating learner progress and achievement to the parents, guardians, and key stakeholders.

The weighted mean score of 4.47 further consolidates the overall satisfactory performance across all objectives within KRA 4. This reflects a collective dedication among teachers within the Lemery Sub Office to implement thorough assessment practices that effectively measure learner learning outcomes and inform instructional planning and reporting processes.

In line with this, the literature emphasizes the importance of teachers using a variety of assessment tools and strategies to monitor, evaluate, and document and report learners' needs, progress, and achievement. Assessment data inform and enhance the teaching and learning process, enabling teachers to provide necessary feedback about learning outcomes and select sound assessment processes aligned with curriculum requirements (PPST, 2017).

Comparison of the performance of teachers when respondents were grouped according to their profiles

Comparison of the performance of teachers when respondents were grouped according to their profiles in terms of age

The data reveals the comparison of teachers' performance when respondents were grouped according to their profiles in terms of age. The presented data compares the performance of teachers across different KRAs, taking into account their age profiles.

For KRA 1, the computed f value is 0.153 with a corresponding p-value of.928. The researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis since the p-value is greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This indicates that the differences in teachers' performance across age groups in KRA 1 are not statistically significant.

On the other hand, the KRA 2 computed f value is 1.24, with a corresponding p-value of 0.299. Again, the researcher rejects the null since the p-value is greater than the significance level; this suggests that the differences in teachers' performance across age groups in KRA 2 are not statistically significant.

Moreover, in KRA 3, the computed f value is 0.667, with a corresponding p-value of 0.284. As with the previous KRAs, the p-value is greater than the significance level, leading the researcher to fail to reject the null hypothesis. This implies that the differences in teachers' performance across age groups in KRA 3 are not statistically significant.

Lastly, in KRA 4, the computed f value is 0.697 with a p-value of 0.555. Once again, the p-value is greater than the significance level, indicating that the differences in teachers' performance across age groups in KRA 4 are not statistically significant.

According to the analysis, there are generally no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different age groups in any of the KRAs examined. In their investigation, Kraft and Papay (2014) analyzed student achievement data collected from New York City. Their findings revealed no consistent evidence indicating that teacher age has a significant influence on student outcomes.

Comparison of the performance of teachers when respondents were grouped according to their profiles in terms of sex

The results show the data comparing teachers' performance across different KRAs based on their sexes.

In KRA 1, the computed f value is 0.490, with a corresponding p-value of 0.625. The researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis since the p-value is greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This indicates that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across sexes in KRA 1.

Subsequently, the computed f value for KRA 2 is 0.534, with a corresponding p-value of 0.594. Similarly, the p-value is greater than the significance level, leading us to fail to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across sexes in KRA 2.

On the other hand, in KRA 3, the computed t-value is 0.603 with a corresponding p-value of 0.548. Again, the p-value is greater than the significance level, indicating that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across sexes in KRA 3.

Moreover, in KRA 4, the computed f value is 0.666, with a corresponding p-value of 0.507. Once more, the p-value is greater than the significance level, suggesting that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across sexes in KRA 4.

Based on the analysis, there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different sexes in any of the Key Result Areas (KRAs) examined.

Dalgic (2014) investigated the correlation between gender and teachers' organizational commitment. The study explored this relationship both overall and across the sub-dimensions of organizational commitment, including affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The analysis incorporated data from 33 studies conducted between 2000 and 2014, utilizing the Allen Meyer organizational commitment scale. The sample encompassed 11,690 teachers, with 6,232 identified as female and 5,458 as male. While the mean effect sizes indicated a slight advantage for females in terms of overall organizational commitment as well as affective, continuance, and normative commitment, the findings underscored that gender did not emerge as a significant determinant of teachers' gender did not emerge as a significant determinant of teachers' organizational commitment levels.

Table 3.3 revealed the comparison of performance when respondents were grouped according to their profiles in terms of length of service.

Comparison of the performance of teachers when respondents were grouped according to their profiles in terms of length of service

The data provided presents a comparison of teachers' performance across different Key Result Areas based on their length of service profiles.

In KRA 1, the computed f value is 0.799 with a p-value of 0.553. The researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis since the p-value is greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This suggests that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different lengths of service in KRA 1.

KRA 2 shows that the computed f value is 1.61 with a corresponding p-value of.162. Similarly, the p-value is greater than the significance level, leading us to fail to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different lengths of service in KRA 2.

It can be gleaned from the table that the computed f value for KRA 3 is 1.27 with a corresponding p-value of 0.282. Once again, the p-value is greater than the significance level, indicating that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different lengths of service in KRA 3.

KRA 4 shows that the computed f value is 0.889 with a p-value of 0.491. Similarly, the p-value is greater than the significance level, suggesting that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different lengths of service in KRA 4.

Based on the results, there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different lengths of service in any of the Key Result Areas (KRAs) examined.

Within a political and public discourse framework, there is a tendency to presume a straightforward linear relationship between the teachers' years of experience and their teaching quality (Brandenburg et al. 2016). However, according to Kanto et al. (2020), the effectiveness of teachers is not solely determined by their level of experience. Less experienced teachers are not necessarily ineffective, and conversely, experienced teachers are not always more effective. The study suggests that observable teacher characteristics, particularly those acquired after the initial years of teaching, do not consistently correlate with productivity improvements.

This finding aligns with the previous study, which showed no significant differences in teaching effectiveness between beginning/novice and experienced teachers. However, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the relationship between teaching performance and teachers' accumulated experience. Thus, the current study aims to address this gap by investigating teachers' teaching performance and their varying levels of teaching experience.

Comparison of the performance of teachers when respondents were grouped according to their profiles in terms of teaching position

The findings outline the comparison of teachers' performance across different Key Result Areas (KRAs) based on their teaching position profiles.

KRA 1 shows that the computed f value is 0.521, with a corresponding p-value of 0.669. The researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis since the p-value is greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This indicates that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different teaching positions in KRA 1.

In KRA 2, the computed f value is 2.23 with a p-value of 0.088. Although the p-value is slightly above the significance level, it's close to the threshold. However, in hypothesis testing, we maintain the null hypothesis, if the p-value is greater than alpha. Thus, the researcher fails to reject the null null hypothesis, suggesting that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different teaching positions in KRA 2.

KRA 3 reveals that the computed f value is 1.95 with a corresponding p-value of 0.126. Similarly, the p-value is greater than the significance level, leading us to fail to reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different teaching positions in KRA 3.

In KRA 4, the computed f value is 2.36 with a p-value of 0.075. While the p-value is slightly below the traditional significance level of 0.05, it's still above 0.05. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different teaching positions in KRA 4.

Based on the analysis, there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different teaching positions in any of the Key Result Areas (KRAs) examined.

Some studies may focus on specific contexts or populations and find that teaching position does not have a significant impact on teaching performance when controlling for other variables. For example, a study might compare the performance of teachers in different positions within the same school or district and find that factors like teacher effectiveness, pedagogical strategies, and classroom management skills are more influential than the specific teaching position. while the teaching position might influence certain aspects of a teacher's role and responsibilities, the competencies and effectiveness of teachers are more closely related to professional development and the opportunities they provide for student learning. These factors contribute significantly to the quality of education and student success, regardless of the teachers' specific positions within a school.

Ultimately, while a teaching position can be a contributing factor to competence, it is just one piece of the puzzle. Effective teaching requires a combination of knowledge, skills, experience, and ongoing growth and development.

Comparison of the performance of teachers when respondents were grouped according to their profiles in terms of educational attainment

the researchers compared the performance of teachers

grouped according to their educational attainment across different Key Result Areas (KRAs). The computed f value for KRA 1 is 3.62 with a p-value of 0.008. Since the p-value is less than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), the researcher rejects the null hypothesis. This indicates that there are statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different levels of educational attainment in KRA 1. In other words, the level of education attained by teachers has a significant impact on their performance in KRA 1.

In KRA 2, the computed f value is 3.75 with a p-value of 0.007. Like KRA 1, the p-value is less than the significance level, leading the researcher to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that there are statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different levels of educational attainment in KRA 2.

Similarly, in KRA 3, the computed f value is 2.80 with a p-value of 0.029. Once again, the p-value is less than the significance level, prompting the rejection of the null hypothesis. This implies that there are statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different levels of educational attainment in KRA 3.

Finally, KRA 4 shows that the computed f value is 4.11 with a p-value of 0.004. Like the previous KRAs, the p-value is less than the value of 0.004.

Like the previous KRAs, the p-value is less than the significance level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that there are statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different levels of educational attainment in KRA 4.

Based on the results presented, it can be inferred that there are statistically significant differences in teachers' performance across different levels of educational attainment in each of the Key Result Areas (KRAs) examined. The rejection of the null hypothesis for all KRAs indicates that educational attainment does impact teachers' performance in these areas.

Several studies have found a positive correlation between teachers' educational attainment and teaching competence. For example, teachers with higher levels of education may possess deeper subject matter knowledge, stronger pedagogical skills, and a better understanding of instructional strategies, all of which contribute to teaching competence.

However, other research exploring the relationship between teachers' educational attainment and teaching competence is extensive, but it's important to note that findings can

vary across studies. While some studies may indicate a significant impact of educational attainment on teaching competence, others may show more nuanced or complex relationships. Research on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs mirrors broader studies on teacher efficacy. Notably, educational research into teacher effectiveness has focused on effective teaching, defined as observable classroom processes primarily influenced by teacher behavior, leading to expected student learning outcomes (Kyriakides et al., 2013).

Challenges experienced by teachers in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as prescribed by the PPST

The results show summarizes the challenges experienced by the teachers in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as prescribed by the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). When examining the challenges faced by teachers in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as prescribed by the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), it becomes apparent that certain obstacles are more prevalent and pressing than others.

Foremost among these challenges is the limited knowledge of how to apply differentiated, developmentally appropriate learning experiences to diverse learners. A significant majority of teachers, accounting for 66.67% of respondents, expressed difficulties in tailoring their instructional approaches to meet the varied needs of students from diverse backgrounds and abilities. This underscores the critical need for targeted support and professional development initiatives aimed at equipping educators with the necessary skills to cater to their students' diverse learning styles and requirements.

Following closely behind is the challenge of insufficient knowledge in planning, managing, and implementing developmentally sequenced teaching and learning processes to meet curriculum requirements. This challenge, reported by 56.91% of respondents, highlights the importance of providing teachers with the necessary training and resources to align their teaching practices with curriculum standards while also addressing the individual needs of learners.

Additionally, a considerable number of teachers, representing 55.28% of respondents, reported inadequate knowledge of using teaching strategies to develop critical and creative thinking skills among students. This emphasizes the need for enhancing teachers' capacity to foster higher-order thinking skills, which are essential for promoting deeper learning and cognitive development.

Furthermore, 45.53% and 16.26% of respondents, respectively, identified challenges in effectively using a range of teaching strategies to enhance learners' achievement in literacy and numeracy, as well as difficulties in classroom management regarding learner behavior and these challenges highlight the significance of assisting teachers in implementing effective instructional strategies and fostering a positive and conducive learning environment so students can thrive academically and socially.

However, teachers also noted several other challenges that were less prevalent. These included struggles in managing classroom structures to engage learners in meaningful explorations and hands-on activities, constraints in designing and implementing assessment strategies consistent with curriculum requirements, limited training in applying content knowledge across curriculum areas, difficulties in accessing appropriate teaching and learning resources due to inadequate resources, and a lack of experience in participating in collegial discussions to enrich teaching practice. Although reported by fewer respondents, these challenges highlight additional areas where targeted support and professional development efforts are needed to enhance teacher effectiveness and promote positive student outcomes.

In the context of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, educators encounter challenges in translating its goals into practice. These objectives encompass aiding teachers in implementing changes to curricula and teaching practices, supporting schools in adopting and executing new instructional strategies, and fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange among educators.

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. The program prioritizes tailored training, ongoing support, and systemic improvements to foster continuous professional growth among educators, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes and enriching the educational landscape.

Localized performance guidelines to enhance and standardize teacher performance and competence

In today's increasingly diverse classrooms, teaching has become undeniably complex and demanding. Ongoing professional development initiatives must provide educators with the necessary support and training to navigate these challenges effectively, ensuring optimal outcomes for students (ACOL, 2019). Elmore (2021) emphasizes that the primary aim of professional development should be the enhancement of both individual educators and the broader educational systems they operate within. Joyce and Showers (2021) suggest that leaders must carefully consider the most effective methods for evaluating professional development programs to gauge their impact on teachers' ability to enhance student learning outcomes. Hirsh (2018) argues that while investing in teacher development requires both time and financial resources, it remains the most reliable approach to improving student performance.

Given this, the researcher crafted localized performance guidelines.

Based on the results of collected and interpreted data, to enhance and standardize teacher performance and competence. Drawing insights from diverse school divisions across the Philippines, this guide offers a systematic approach to developing localized performance standards for educators. It includes rationale, objectives, and principles, alongside practical stages, activities, and tools for implementation. Valuable tips and examples are also provided to support effective localization efforts.

Project STAGE, aligning with Basic Education Development Goal 2030, encompasses the Access, Quality, and Governance pillars, firmly rooted in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Supported by a detailed plan of action, Project STAGE focuses on establishing attainable targets for teachers, along with clear objectives and means of verification to ensure goal achievement.

Project STAGE's reliability lies in its ability to provide teachers with a dependable and well-structured framework for their professional development journey. Through the provision of unambiguous goals and objectives, this project serves as a compass, steering teachers along a path of continual improvement by providing unambiguous goals and objectives. The project demonstrates positive effects on teaching effectiveness, creates opportunities for career advancement, and nurtures personal growth in educators. Furthermore, the impressive outcomes in teachers' IPCRF ratings substantiate the project's efficacy, highlighting its prowess in catalyzing professional development and elevating teachers' performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that the demographic profile of proficient teachers revealed a diverse population, characterized by a notable presence of younger individuals and a significant

gender imbalance. The respondents exhibited a varied spectrum of qualifications, reflecting a broad range of educational backgrounds and experience levels within the teaching profession. The analysis of teaching performance across all Key Result Areas (KRAs) in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) showed very satisfactory results, with Objective 12 in KRA 4 achieving outstanding performance. However, some objectives in different KRAs require improvement, indicating a need for targeted interventions to enhance teaching effectiveness.

Interestingly, the findings suggested that demographic factors such as age, gender, years of service, and teaching position did not significantly influence teaching performance, implying that effective teaching is not solely determined by these variables. Conversely, higher educational attainment and continuous professional development were linked to better teaching competence. Teachers faced significant challenges, particularly in applying differentiated learning experiences for diverse learners, planning teaching processes, fostering critical thinking, enhancing literacy and numeracy, and managing classroom behavior. Addressing these challenges is essential for comprehensive teacher development and student success.

To tackle these issues, tailored professional guidelines were developed, incorporating a structured plan with Measures of Verification (MOVs) to track progress and ensure accountability. These guidelines provide practical strategies to empower educators and improve their effectiveness in the classroom. The study underscores the importance of targeted support and continuous professional growth to enhance teaching competence and foster a more effective educational environment.

Based on the findings, the study recommends enhancing the teaching environment to foster diversity and implement mentorship programs to leverage the collective wisdom of experienced and younger teachers. It suggests developing targeted interventions to address specific areas for improvement in the PPST Key Result Areas, ensuring continuous growth among educators. Recognizing and supporting educators pursuing advanced degrees is essential to creating an inclusive environment where teaching effectiveness is supported for all, regardless of demographic factors.

Furthermore, comprehensive support systems should be established to help teachers overcome challenges, particularly in applying differentiated learning experiences, by providing resources, training, and mentorship. The implementation and continuous refinement of tailored professional guidelines are crucial to addressing obstacles and fostering teacher growth, incorporating feedback from teachers and stakeholders. Additionally, future researchers should further study and evaluate the findings of this study to build on the insights provided and enhance the effectiveness of teacher development programs.

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