

## **Behavioral competencies and core teaching skills of secondary school teachers and their influence on students' academic performance**

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**Abstract:** This study examined whether or not there is any correlation between behavioral competencies and core teaching skills of teachers and their influence on student's academic performance. It used quantitative and qualitative methods of research, and descriptive-correlational approach. There were two instruments used in this research namely: (1) the students' grading sheet to measure the students' class academic aptitude, (2) Individual Performance Commitment and Review form (IPCRF) Part IV to determine the competency level of teachers – both the behavioral competencies and core teaching skills, as the teacher perceived themselves in performing their jobs in school. The tools that were used, were analyzed on the following: (a) weighted mean in getting the competency level of the teachers in terms of behavioral competencies and core teaching skills, (b) mean in getting the extent of class academic performance of students, (c) spearman rank correlation coefficient to identify the degree of relationship between the teacher's competency level and students' performance. Results showed that the all p-values are greater than the level of significance (0.05). This finding would not warrant rejection of the null hypothesis. This means that there is no significant relationship between the teachers' competencies (behavioral competencies and core teaching skills) and their students' performance. This imply that the behavioral and core teaching competencies cannot be considered as a determinant of the overall performance of the students.

**Keywords:** Behavioral Competencies and Core Teaching Skills, descriptive-correlational approach, Quantitative and Qualitative research, and Spearman rank correlation coefficient

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### INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education aims to develop Filipinos with values and skills that help them reach their full potential and contribute to nation-building. The researcher believes teaching goes beyond knowledge transfer; it shapes individuals' attitudes and overall well-being to prepare them as future leaders. As Acero (2000) noted, meaningful learning arises from experiences that ensure understanding.

Teachers, as key agents of change, are vital to the success of the educational system. Despite advances in technology and methodology, without skilled teachers, progress is limited. To enhance student performance, continuous training and workshops have been introduced. However, Umil and Viray (2012) and ACT's France Castro noted that these trainings are often rushed and insufficient. Lina (2014) emphasized that evolving global demands require teachers to have world-class competencies to meet the challenges in education. Yet, issues like inadequate infrastructure and instructional tools persist (UNESCO, 2006).

A teacher's personal and professional growth directly influences student success. Teachers must embody the competencies required by their profession to fulfill expectations, especially in improving academic outcomes measured through various assessments.

Luistro (2010) highlighted that issues in Philippine education stem from the quality of inputs, processes, and outcomes—primarily the teachers' skills and attitudes. Student performance reflects teaching effectiveness.

Given consistently low results in DepEd exams, the researcher aims to assess the competency levels of teachers in Mabinay District III High Schools and examine their impact on student performance.

### *Problem Statement*

This study aimed to determine the competency level (both behavioral competencies and core teaching skills) of teachers and its influence on students' performance in Mabinay National High School, Mabinay Science High School and Manlingay Provincial Community High School in the School Year 2017 - 2018.

Specifically, this study would answer the following problems:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1. age;
  - 1.2. sex;
  - 1.3. civil status;
  - 1.4. educational qualifications;
  - 1.5. position; and
  - 1.6. length of service?
2. What is the competency level of the secondary school teachers in terms of:
  - 2.1. behavioral Competencies; and
  - 2.2. core teaching skills?
3. What is the academic performance of the students under study?
4. What is the degree of the relationship between the teachers' competency level and students' performance?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' competency level and students' performance?
6. What professional development plan can be designed based on the results of the study?

## METHODOLOGY

### *Research design*

This study adopted the quantitative and qualitative methods of research in assessing the behavioral and core teaching skills competency level of teachers. It made use of the descriptive-correlational approach to determine the relationship between variables. To shed more light on the issue being investigated, interview with the teachers was conducted which later form basis in the drafting of the students' development plan. Interviews as a qualitative form of research involve collecting and analyzing non-numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences (Bhandari, 2020).

In addition, this research utilized the quantitative involves measures that are quantified in number and qualitative because of description on its degree. Likewise, descriptive correlational approach for the reason that it involves relationship which are described in figures and words. Although, this study includes inferential questions that need to be quantified and also descriptive questions that need qualitative answers,

which according to McCombes (2020) descriptive data analysis, both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics can be used. McCombes also said that correlational research design measures a relationship between two variables without the researcher controlling either of them. Thus, in the particular context, both student's final grades and teacher's perceived rating on behavioral and core teaching skills are not control group.

### *Locale of Study*

This study was conducted in three public secondary schools under Mabinay District III, Division of Negros Oriental: Mabinay National High School (MNHS), Mabinay Science High School (MSHS), and Manlingay Provincial Community High School (MPCHS). These schools represent diverse educational settings within the municipality, ranging from centrally located institutions to those in more rural barangays, thereby providing a broad context for examining the relationship between teacher competencies and student academic performance.

### *Respondents of the study*

A total of 1,944 student-respondents were involved in the study, all officially enrolled during the School Year 2017–2018. The majority were from Mabinay National High School, which had 38 sections composed of 11 Grade 7, 10 Grade 8, 9 Grade 9, and 8 Grade 10 classes, each with approximately 55 to 60 students. Additionally, 23 Grade 10 students from Mabinay Science High School and 21 Grade 10 students from Manlingay Provincial Community High School were included. Grade 10 students were specifically chosen from MSHS and MPCHS due to the one-section-per-grade structure, which made it easier to align the student respondents with their respective teachers.

### *Selection and Description of Respondents*

Stratified proportional random sampling was employed in the selection of the participants where everyone in the population was given an equal chance of being selected as a sample. They were selected at random from their respective school district using the lottery technique. All the names of the MAPEH Teachers in each participating school district was written in a slip of paper, rolled and placed in a box designated for each school. The desired sample size was determined using Slovin's formula. The required number of sample-participants was drawn from each box, those whose names were drawn and included in the sample.

### *Data Gathering Instruments*

In the qualitative side, an interview guide was drafted and was later attested by the adviser. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions which allowed the researcher to delve deeply on the issue being investigated. The data collected in the interviews with the teachers, was the basis in the construction of a student development plan. On the other hand, in the quantitative part, the researcher hinged on the four major types of information in quantitative research as suggested by Creswell (2012) namely; performance measures, attitudinal measures, behavioral measure and factual information.

In this research the type of data used was performance measure because this type means a data to assess class academic performance of students handled by the teacher-respondents. In addition, this study also utilized the attitudinal measure, behavioral measures and factual measure since the type of data means a data to evaluate the teacher's competency level - refers to the behavioral competencies and core teaching skills where the rating is being perceived by the teachers themselves found in the IPCRF Part II of the School Year 2017-2018.

To determine the achievement of the respondents of this study, there are two instruments used in this research namely: a) the students' grading sheets (SGS) School Year 2017 – 2018; and b) Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) Part II School Year 2017 – 2018.

Students' Grading Sheet (SGS) is gathered to measure students' class academic aptitude of the students reflected in the grading sheet of every teacher-respondents. SGS in this study is collected to measure students' class level of academic performance by averaging the final grades of each subjects per class. To measure the class academic performance, mean is used in getting the extent of performance of the student. The grade was then computed for interpretation purposes. As to the proficiency level or academic performance at which students were performing was based on the following criteria (DepEd Order No. 8, S. 2015) Rating and verbal equivalent 90% & above Outstanding; 85% - 89% Very Satisfactory; 80% - 84% Satisfactory; 75% - 79% Fairly Satisfactory and 74% down Did Not Meet Expectations.

Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) is the form that shall reflect the individual commitment and performance, which shall be accomplished by individual employees (DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015). In addition, DO No.2, s. 2015 is the guidelines on the establishment and implementation of the Result-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) in the Department of Education (DepEd) to provide comprehensive guideline for the adoption of the Civil Service Commission's (SCS) Strategies Performance Management System (SPMS) under on its Memorandum Circular (MC) No.06, s. 2012. Furthermore, DO No.2, s. 2015 sets the guidelines that stipulate the specific mechanism, criteria and process for the performance target setting, monitoring, evaluation, and development planning for school-based holding regular plantilla positions.

In this study IPCRF Part II was gathered to measure the teachers' knowledge, skill and behaviors that an individual can demonstrate in performing tasks. IPCRF Part II was examined to determine the competency level of teachers – both the behavioral competencies and core teaching skills, as the teacher perceived themselves in performing their jobs in school. The item in IPCRF Part II was according to the criteria of narrative competencies align the performance targets and accomplishment with DepEd mandate, vision, mission, and strategic goals. Likewise, the score of participants was according to the actual accomplishments and results of numerical rating scales adapted from the Department of Education (DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015). Weighted mean was used in getting the competency level of the teachers in terms of behavioral competencies and core teaching skills. Teachers were rated from 5 (highest) to 1 (lowest) based on their competency levels. A score of 5 meant "Very High" or Role Model, 4 was "High" or Consistently Demonstrate, 3 indicated "Moderate" or Most of the Times Demonstrate, 2 meant "Low" or Sometimes Demonstrate, and 1 was "Very Low" or Rarely Demonstrate.

In this study, the researcher utilized Spearman rank correlation coefficient to identify the degree of relationship between the teachers' competency level and student's academic performance (Statistical Correlation 2009). This test was selected since the data were in ordinal scale.

To identify the degree of relationship between two variables, the researcher used the following descriptions from Statistical Correlation (2009): a correlation coefficient (rs) between  $\pm 0.50$  and  $\pm 1.00$  indicates a strong relationship; between  $\pm 0.30$  and  $\pm 0.49$ , a moderate relationship; between  $\pm 0.10$  and  $\pm 0.29$ , a weak relationship; and between  $\pm 0.01$  and  $\pm 0.09$ , a very weak relationship.

### *Data Gathering Procedure*

The researcher utilized several statistical tools to analyze the data effectively. Percentage was used to present the socio-demographic profile of teacher respondents, clearly showing the distribution of characteristics. Weighted mean assessed the competency levels of teachers based on behavioral and core teaching skills, using a five-point scale ranging from "Very Low" to "Very High" (Role Model). Mean was employed to evaluate students' academic performance, categorized using DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015, into levels from "Did Not Meet Expectations" to "Outstanding." Finally, Spearman rank correlation coefficient was applied to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between teacher competencies and student performance, appropriate for ordinal data, with interpretations ranging from very weak to strong correlations.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### *Age profile of the teachers*

Most of the respondents are between 31 and 50 years old, with many in the 31-40 and 41-50 age groups. Fewer respondents are younger, between 21 and 30 years old, and only a small number are older, between 51 and 60 years old. This shows that most of the respondents have enough teaching experience.

### *Sex profile of the teachers*

The majority of the respondents are female, comprising approximately 66% of the total group, while male respondents make up about 34%. This finding aligns with common perceptions about the teaching profession, which is often considered a field dominated by women. Teaching is frequently associated with qualities such as caring, nurturing, and helping others, traits traditionally linked to women. This perception explains why there tend to be more female teachers than male teachers in many places. Supporting this idea, De Jager et al. (2017) noted that teaching is generally seen as a feminine profession because of these characteristics. Similarly, studies from other countries also reflect this trend. For example, in Italy, female teachers represent about 74% of the entire teaching workforce, according to research by Barni, Danioni, and Benevene (2019). This shows that the higher number of female teachers among the respondents is consistent with global patterns in the education sector.

### *Civil status profile of the teachers*

Most of the respondents are married, with 51 out of 68 teachers, or 75%, indicating their marital status as married. The remaining 17 teachers, making up 25%, are single. This suggests that the majority of the teachers have established family lives, which could influence their perspectives and experiences in the teaching profession. Supporting this, Islahi and Nasreen (2013) conducted a study examining the effectiveness of teachers based on gender and marital status. Their findings suggested that male married teachers and female unmarried teachers tended to be more effective compared to their male unmarried and female married counterparts. This insight highlights how marital status might relate to teaching effectiveness, although it can vary depending on individual circumstances and other factors.

### *Educational attainment profile of the teachers*

The data revealed that a large majority of the respondents, about 77.94%, had earned master's degree units, although only a small portion, 4.41%, had completed their master's degrees. Additionally, just 2.94% of the teachers had finished their doctorate degrees, while 14.71% held a bachelor's degree. This indicated that most teachers were actively pursuing higher education to deepen their knowledge and foster both personal and professional growth.

These findings aligned with Tundag's (2014) perspective, which highlighted that teachers sought further studies to improve their teaching skills, expand their knowledge base, and enhance their overall professional capabilities. Similarly, Charanchi's (2011) research demonstrated a significant difference in student performance between classes taught by teachers with higher qualifications, such as master's degrees, compared to those taught by teachers with only bachelor's degrees. Charanchi emphasized that ongoing training and strong subject mastery were essential for effective teaching, and that teachers should possess a deeper understanding of the content than what they were expected to teach.

Moreover, Bird (2017) studied the relationship between teacher quality and student achievement, examining factors such as teacher evaluation, experience, education, certification, and student outcomes in End-of-Course Assessments for Algebra I, Biology, and English 10. The study found that students in English 10 performed better when taught by teachers who held master's degrees or higher qualifications compared to those taught by teachers without such advanced education. Together, these studies suggested that higher educational attainment among teachers was closely linked to improved teaching effectiveness and better student performance.

#### *Position profile of the teachers*

The data showed that most of the respondents, about 60.29%, held the lower rank of Teacher I. This was followed by 22.06% who were Teacher III, and 13.24% who were Teacher II. Only a small portion, 4.41%, had achieved the rank of Master Teacher I. Since one of the key factors for promotion is educational attainment, teachers needed to continue pursuing higher education to advance to higher plantilla positions.

However, the earlier data on educational attainment revealed that very few teachers had completed their master's degrees, and even fewer had earned doctorate degrees. This finding was supported by Tundag (2018), who discovered that although 60.71% of teachers started pursuing a master's degree, many did not manage to complete it. This suggested that while many teachers aimed for higher qualifications to improve their rank, completing these advanced studies remained a challenge for most.

#### *Length of experience profile of the teachers*

The data showed that the majority of the respondents (30.88%) had only 1 to 5 years of teaching experience, making them the largest group in terms of length of service. This was followed by those who had been in the service for over 21 years (23.53%), 6 to 10 years (19.12%), 16 to 20 years (16.18%), and 11 to 15 years (10.29%). These findings indicated that while many of the respondents were relatively new to the profession, a significant number had already accumulated substantial years of teaching experience.

Interestingly, research by Fernández-García et al. (2019) emphasized that teaching experience plays a role in how teaching behavior is perceived. Contrary to the usual assumption that new teachers need the most support, their findings suggested that teachers with more experience may actually require more guidance to adapt and remain effective in the classroom. Their study revealed that less experienced teachers often scored higher in areas such as establishing a positive learning climate, managing classrooms efficiently, and applying effective teaching strategies—possibly because younger teachers are more responsive to students' emotional and academic needs.

Similarly, De Jager et al. (2017) found that teachers with fewer than 15 years of experience were perceived by students as more effective in their teaching. They explained that while experienced teachers might possess deeper knowledge, they may be less inclined to adjust to new and evolving curricular demands. In fact, teachers with over 15 years of experience showed a slight decline in instructional quality, while newer teachers tended to demonstrate stronger skills in areas such as differentiated instruction and student-centered learning.

Despite many teachers having been in service for a number of years, the data also suggested limited advancement in terms of promotion. Ideally, teachers are eligible for promotion after serving for at least three years. However, as reflected in earlier findings, only a few had completed master's or doctoral degrees. Since educational attainment is a major requirement for promotion, the lack of advanced qualifications likely contributed to the slow movement of teachers into higher plantilla positions. Therefore,

while experience alone is valuable, it must be paired with continued academic advancement to open opportunities for career growth in the teaching profession.

### *Behavioral and Core Teaching skills of teachers*

#### *Behavioral competency level of teachers in terms of self-management (n = 68)*

The findings revealed that the respondents demonstrated a high level of behavioral competency in terms of self-management, with an overall mean rating of 4.16. This rating corresponds to the description "Consistently Demonstrate," suggesting that teachers regularly exhibit behaviors associated with strong self-management skills. Notably, the highest ratings were observed in areas related to emotional maturity and alignment of personal values and goals with those of the school, both of which were rated as "Very High" or "Role Model" competencies.

During interviews, many respondents emphasized the importance of self-management in their role as educators. They shared specific strategies such as using calendars, checklists, and clear planning methods to stay organized and focused on their responsibilities. All of them also claimed to possess emotional maturity and a sense of direction that aligns with the overall mission and objectives of their school.

These results are further supported by existing research. Barni, Danioni, and Benevene (2019) found that teachers' self-efficacy is strongly influenced by their personal values. For example, values centered on stability and adherence to professional norms were positively associated with higher self-efficacy. Schunk (2012) added that when teachers work in environments that support their values, such as freedom and innovation, they tend to feel more competent and less burdened by external pressures. Conversely, when teachers feel constrained or misaligned with their workplace culture, their sense of efficiency can decrease.

This observation aligns with the person-environment fit theory, which suggests that individuals perform better and feel more effective when their personal values match the culture and expectations of their workplace. In this case, teachers who find their goals and values compatible with their school environment tend to display better self-management and overall productivity.

Moreover, this is in line with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which emphasizes that teachers must take responsibility for their personal and professional growth as part of lifelong learning (DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017). High self-management, therefore, is not only a valuable trait for teacher effectiveness but also a professional expectation within the educational system.

#### *Behavioral competency level of teachers in terms of professionalism and ethics (n = 68)*

The results revealed that the respondents demonstrated a very high level of behavioral competency in terms of professional ethics, with an overall mean rating of 4.43. This rating corresponds to the highest level of competency—"Role Model"—indicating that teachers consistently exhibit professional and ethical behavior, setting a strong example for others in the school community.

When asked about their personal experiences in the classroom, the respondents expressed a strong commitment to professionalism and ethical conduct. Many described themselves as advocates of ethical teaching practices, emphasizing fairness, respect, and accountability.

However, they also admitted facing challenges, particularly in managing heavy workloads and meeting deadlines. Some shared that their dedication to work often came at the expense of family time, highlighting the sacrifices teachers make to fulfill their responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, the respondents perceived themselves as upholding the highest standards of ethical behavior in their roles as educators. This finding aligns with the study of Sehgal et al. (2017), which identified that a teacher's effectiveness is supported by self-efficacy, leadership, and collaboration within the organization—core values that are central to ethical teaching. Similarly, Shrick and Wasonga (2019) emphasized that maintaining a professional image of moral integrity contributes significantly to achieving the school's mission and vision.

The importance of professional ethics is further reinforced by the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers as outlined in Republic Act 6713. It mandates that teachers, as licensed professionals, must possess a high level of moral integrity, dignity, and reputation. Beyond academic competency, they are expected to model ethical behavior, observe professional standards, and collaborate effectively with peers to meet the educational goals of their institutions.

Moreover, this standard is echoed in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which states that quality teachers value personal and professional growth and are expected to demonstrate professional ethics, accountability, and transparency in their work (DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017). Based on the findings, the respondents exemplified these qualities, proving themselves not only as competent educators but also as ethical leaders in the classroom and school community.

#### *Behavioral competency level of teachers in terms of result focus (n = 68)*

The findings revealed that the respondents demonstrated a generally high level of behavioral competency in terms of result focus, with a composite mean of 4.02. This score indicates that the respondents consistently displayed behaviors geared toward achieving quality outcomes in their work. Notably, the highest-rated indicator under this domain was related to the teachers' expression of a strong desire for improved performance and their intolerance for inefficiency—an area where they rated themselves as "role models," the highest level on the competency scale.

During interviews, many of the respondents shared that they always strive to produce quality outputs and meet high standards, despite the demands of their workload. They emphasized the importance of being goal-oriented and focused in order to accomplish tasks efficiently and contribute to the success of their students and schools.

These results are supported by several studies. Neugebauer, Hopkins, and Spillane (2019) emphasized that teaching self-efficacy—a teacher's belief in their own ability to influence student outcomes—is closely linked to instructional effectiveness. Their research showed that teachers who frequently engage in meaningful, classroom-focused interactions with colleagues are more likely to develop a stronger sense of teaching competence. For example, when teachers receive feedback about a specific class or discuss concrete teaching strategies and resources, they tend to report higher levels of self-efficacy over time.

Similarly, Lunenburg (2011) found that teachers who consistently follow standard procedures and maintain a clear understanding of expectations are more likely to perform effectively. Nbina (2012) also noted that high-performing teachers are often those who can deliver excellent results with minimal supervision, highlighting the role of internal motivation and self-discipline in achieving professional goals.

In the context of professional standards, the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers (Article IV) emphasizes that educators must deliver the best possible quality of education and maintain a high standard of professional practice. Teaching is regarded as a noble profession, and as such, teachers are expected to set clear goals, remain focused, and strive for excellence in everything they do.

Overall, the findings suggest that the respondents saw themselves as committed and result-oriented professionals who aim to meet or exceed expectations in their role as educators. Their ability to remain focused on goals and uphold quality standards demonstrates their dedication to the continuous improvement of both their teaching practice and student outcomes.

*Behavioral competency level of teachers in terms of teamwork (n = 68)*

The results showed that the respondents demonstrated a very high level of competency in terms of teamwork, as indicated by the composite mean of 4.34, which falls under the “Role Model” category. This suggests that the respondents strongly perceived themselves as collaborative individuals who can work harmoniously with colleagues and other school personnel. Among the various indicators, Indicator 1—which refers to their willingness to share responsibility—received the highest mean score of 4.49, reinforcing the notion that respondents are proactive and cooperative team members. On the other hand, Indicator 5, which involves applying negotiation principles to reach win-win agreements, scored slightly lower at 4.22 and was rated as only “High,” meaning teachers believe they still have room to grow in this area.

When asked about their collaboration practices, many of the respondents explained that teamwork is a key part of school success. They highlighted how working together helps them overcome challenges more easily and ensure the best outcomes for their students. They also expressed that while collaboration comes naturally in their professional culture, negotiations during decision-making can sometimes be a challenge, especially in balancing differing opinions to maintain harmony.

This finding is supported by Article VI of the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers, which mandates that teachers should faithfully support school policies and collaborate for the greater good of the students and the institution. Having a strong sense of teamwork encourages mutual respect and helps create a positive work environment, which is vital for achieving educational goals.

Additionally, 21st-century teaching frameworks emphasize the importance of teamwork as a critical skill. Teachers today are expected to collaborate respectfully and productively with diverse teams, adapt to different situations, and take shared responsibility for group success. According to the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), quality teachers demonstrate their expertise both independently and in collaboration with others, underlining the importance of professional interaction and teamwork in teaching.

Several studies further affirm the importance of collaboration in enhancing teacher performance. For instance, Neugebauer, Hopkins, and Spillane (2019) stressed that self-efficacy—a teacher’s belief in their effectiveness—is strongly influenced by meaningful interactions with peers, especially discussions centered around specific teaching practices. These collaborative exchanges strengthen not only instructional capacity but also teacher confidence.

Similarly, Schrik and Wasonga (2019) found that leaders' expectations about school outcomes had a stronger effect on actual academic performance than self-efficacy alone. This implies that working together toward shared, high expectations—an outcome-focused form of collaboration—can significantly drive school success.

Overall, the data indicate that the respondents value teamwork highly and recognize its role in achieving both personal and organizational goals. While most aspects of their teamwork skills are at an exemplary level, some areas, such as negotiation and conflict resolution, may benefit from further development. Nonetheless, their strong collaborative spirit is a key asset in delivering quality education and maintaining a supportive school culture.

*Behavioral competency level of teachers in terms of self-orientation (n = 68)*

The findings showed that the respondents' overall competency level in terms of self-orientation was rated as high, with a composite mean of 3.77. This suggests that teachers consistently demonstrate behaviors aligned with self-orientation, although they do not yet see themselves as role models in this domain. The highest-rated indicator was Indicator 1, with a mean of 4.13, which reflects the teachers' strong sense of personal responsibility in addressing and resolving issues related to customer service, such as responding to student or parent concerns. On the other hand, Indicator 5, which refers to initiating activities that promote advocacy for men and women empowerment, had the lowest mean at 3.56, indicating that while this behavior is demonstrated, it is less emphasized. Despite this, many teachers claimed during interviews that they frequently take the initiative and go beyond their assigned duties to support the school's programs, activities, and policies. This reflects a sense of personal ownership and commitment to school improvement. The results affirm the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers, particularly Article VI, which states that every teacher must make an honest effort to understand and uphold the school's policies, and Article IX, which underscores a teacher's duty to prioritize students' needs and provide assistance with their challenges. Likewise, the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) under DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, requires teachers to not only increase their levels of knowledge and engagement but also to act professionally, ethically, and with transparency in their relationships with students, colleagues, and the community.

The findings also resonate with the theory of self-efficacy by Albert Bandura, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to manage and succeed in specific situations. Bandura emphasized that these beliefs influence how people think, behave, and feel. According to Cherry (2017), self-efficacy directly affects one's ability to achieve goals and overcome challenges, which is highly applicable to teaching, a profession that demands both competence and perseverance. In the school setting, teachers who possess high self-efficacy are more likely to stay motivated, find solutions, and adapt to changing needs. This links directly to the PPST's expectation that teachers provide intellectually stimulating activities, foster responsive and inclusive environments, and uphold professional ethics and growth. Furthermore, Republic Act 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act (K–12 Curriculum) advocates for engaging, interactive, and learner-centered classrooms—an environment that only teachers with strong self-orientation and initiative can fully support. The literature also reinforces these insights. For instance, Neugebauer, Hopkins, and Spillane (2019) emphasized the value of social interactions in enhancing teachers' self-efficacy and instructional practices, while Schrik and Wasonga (2019) found that school outcomes are significantly influenced by the moral and professional leadership of educators. Thus, teachers' belief in their personal and professional capacity, paired with a supportive environment, enhances their ability to create meaningful, effective, and equitable learning experiences for all students.

*Behavioral competency level of teachers in terms of innovation (n = 68)*

The data revealed that the teachers perceived their competency level in terms of innovation to be high, with an overall composite mean of 3.75, indicating that innovative behaviors were consistently demonstrated across the indicators. Among the five indicators assessed, Indicator 1 received the highest mean score of 3.90, which referred to the teachers' ability to examine the root causes of problems and suggest effective, cost-efficient solutions. This suggests that many of the teachers were proactive in finding better ways to improve work processes and outcomes. Meanwhile, Indicator 5 received the lowest score, with a mean of 3.63, referring to the ability to translate creative thinking into tangible changes and solutions that could enhance the performance of the school or organization. Although this was the lowest-rated item, it still fell within the "high" range, showing that teachers saw themselves as capable of applying innovation, though with room for improvement in implementing practical changes.

This result aligned with numerous studies emphasizing the importance of innovation and creativity in teaching. Lina (2014) pointed out that creativity is often viewed as both a personal trait and an intellectual ability, closely associated with genius and intelligence. According to Bird (2017), innovative teachers tend to adapt their teaching methods to address individual student needs, helping them become more successful in their academic pursuits. Furthermore, Fernández-García et al. (2019) found that vocational and training teachers were perceived by students as more innovative in their strategies, highlighting the need for further

research into how teachers develop and apply innovative practices. These findings were consistent with the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers, which identified learning and innovation skills—such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and risk-taking—as essential competencies for 21st-century educators. The ability to generate and apply new ideas, evaluate solutions, and take calculated risks was emphasized as key to fostering effective and engaging learning environments. Lastly, it was noted that empowering teachers to take part in school leadership and decision-making processes could enhance their self-efficacy and motivation, whereas overly rigid or top-down administrative structures may lead to lower morale and diminished innovation. This further supports the importance of cultivating an environment where creativity and teacher autonomy are encouraged in order to elevate both individual performance and organizational outcomes.

*Core teaching skills level of teachers in terms of achievement (n = 68)*

The data showed that, overall, the teachers' teaching skills level in terms of achievement was rated as high, with a composite mean of 4.00, described as "consistently demonstrate." Notably, the teachers gave themselves a very high rating (mean = 4.41) in the indicator related to how much they enjoy working hard, suggesting that many take pride in their dedication and effort—an attitude that is ideal in the teaching profession. Among the indicators rated "high," the second indicator had the highest score (mean = 4.16), which referred to being action-oriented and energetic in facing challenges. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator (mean = 3.76) pertained to strategic planning. These findings imply that while teachers are generally motivated and driven, there may be room for growth when it comes to long-term, goal-oriented planning. A strong work ethic and enjoyment in teaching are essential for producing quality educational outcomes and positively impacting students' academic success.

The importance of enthusiasm and responsibility in teaching is emphasized in the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers, which states that educators should demonstrate genuine passion for their work. Zhang (2014) supports this view by identifying enthusiasm as a key trait of effective teachers. Similarly, Akram's (2018) study on the School Teacher Effectiveness Questionnaire (STEQ) found a moderate, positive relationship between teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Notably, the learning environment and communication skills showed the strongest links to student performance in subjects like English and Math. This supports the idea that motivated and effective teachers play a critical role in learners' academic success. Daniel (2018) also emphasized that teacher achievement directly contributes to achieving organizational goals. However, the study noted that in today's changing classrooms, teachers must continually adapt their strategies—such as integrating technology—through proper training and professional development. In conclusion, teachers' commitment, energy, and drive are foundational to both their personal success and that of their students.

*Core teaching skills level of teachers in terms of managing diversity (n = 68)*

Teachers perceived their teaching skills in managing diversity as very high across various indicators. They rated themselves highest in showing respect to all kinds and classes of people, followed closely by demonstrating cultural and gender sensitivity. They also believed they effectively engaged with individuals of diverse races, nationalities, cultures, disabilities, ages, and genders. Although supporting equal treatment and applying consistent standards to all groups scored slightly lower, teachers still considered themselves role models in fostering respect, sensitivity, and fairness for all learners. This suggested that they performed skillfully in managing classrooms with diverse students. Research highlights the importance of fostering inclusion and multicultural awareness through culturally responsive teaching, which benefits all learners. Understanding each student's background, interests, and learning style helps build trust and makes students feel valued, fostering respectful communication and acceptance in the classroom (Fives, 2009).

Studies also underscored the connection between teacher self-efficacy, collaboration, and leadership in improving teaching effectiveness. Sehgal, Nambudiri, and Mishra (2017) found positive associations between teacher self-efficacy and effectiveness in delivering content, facilitating interactions, and regulating learning, with collaboration and principal leadership enhancing self-efficacy. Their findings emphasized the need for schools to support teacher collaboration and leadership to boost instructional quality. Similarly, Stronge, Ward, and Grant (2011) revealed that student achievement alone did not explain

differences in instructional practices and classroom management between highly effective and less effective teachers, highlighting the complexity of teaching effectiveness beyond academic outcomes.

*Core teaching skills level of teachers in terms of accountability (n = 68)*

Teachers generally perceived themselves to have a high level of accountability in their teaching practice. They believed they consistently demonstrated responsibility in exceeding goals, meeting deadlines, and making optimal use of resources. Particularly, they reported very high competency in building team spirit and maintaining transparency in their transactions. These results implied that teachers viewed themselves as dependable professionals who were committed to their responsibilities, willing to lead with integrity, and dedicated to producing quality outcomes. This aligned with Kanika's (2016) description of a professionally accountable teacher as someone who is patient, optimistic, aware of their roles, and demonstrates a high level of professionalism. Effective teachers, according to Kanika, also solve problems resourcefully and remain committed to short- and long-term educational goals.

Several studies further supported the significance of teacher accountability and its impact. Zee and Koomen, through a criteria-based review of 165 articles, found that teacher self-efficacy (TSE) had strong positive associations with student academic adjustment, classroom practices, and teacher well-being, while showing negative links with burnout. Similarly, Ford (2012) revealed that urban teachers' efficacy, affected by factors such as administrative support and teaching methods, significantly influenced their ability to motivate students. However, Ackerman and Gross (2020) highlighted the complexity of student reactions to grades, suggesting that students' perceptions of their abilities influenced their academic satisfaction more than actual performance. Meanwhile, Floyd (2018) pointed out that time constraints limited many teachers from addressing individual student needs, prompting them to seek ways to reduce downtime and enhance instructional productivity. Altogether, these findings underscored that accountability in teaching not only involved task completion and integrity but also adapting effectively to the needs of learners and the demands of the profession.

*Academic performance of the students*

The data revealed that most students demonstrated only satisfactory academic performance, with a mean score of 83.70. Despite teachers possessing commendable core competencies and behavioral skills, there appeared to be no direct correlation between teacher performance and student achievement. This finding aligns with Ackerman and Gross (2020), who argued that teacher efficacy does not always translate into improved academic outcomes due to complex, external influences. In interviews, teachers cited lack of motivation, limited cognitive abilities, economic constraints, and family background as contributing factors to students' underperformance—echoing Kaptan and Timurlenk (2018), who emphasized that student motivation is a key challenge in learning. Rosario (2018) further noted how poverty, malnutrition, and lack of early cognitive development impair students' educational outcomes in the Philippines.

Similarly, Stronge, Ward, and Grant (2011) found that while teacher practices vary, student achievement alone does not fully capture these instructional differences. Schulze and Lemmer (2011) supported the view that teaching quality and student learning are not always interdependent. However, contrasting findings from Shahzad and Naureen (2017), Tai et al. (2012), and Mojavezi (2012) indicated a strong link between teacher self-efficacy and student motivation, engagement, and academic success. Akram's (2018) validated STEQ tool also showed a moderate positive relationship between teacher effectiveness and student achievement in core subjects. These studies suggest that while external factors heavily influence student outcomes, teacher efficacy and classroom strategies still play a vital role and should not be discounted, even if their effects are sometimes indirect or moderated by contextual variables.

*Degree of relationship between teacher's competency level and student's performance (n = 68)*

The study found a very weak correlation between teachers' competencies—both behavioral and core teaching skills—and students' academic performance, indicating no significant relationship. Despite teachers consistently demonstrating high or very high competency levels, student performance remained only at a satisfactory level. This mismatch supports the acceptance of the null hypothesis and aligns with

findings by Nor et al. (2019), Grebaurer et al. (2020), and Ackerman & Gross (2020), who noted that teaching ability is not the sole determinant of student achievement. Factors such as student motivation, intelligence, family background, peer influence, and socioeconomic conditions play critical roles. Teachers interviewed in the study also pointed to students' lack of focus and the distracting impact of technology. While innovation emerged as the highest behavioral competency among teachers, it did not translate into improved student outcomes, supporting the idea that teaching quality alone is not a direct predictor of academic performance.

Several related studies further validate these results. Bonney et al. (2015) emphasized that professional qualifications of teachers did not significantly reflect in student performance. Conversely, studies by Akram (2018), Mojavezi (2012), and Shahzad & Naureen (2017) reported moderate to strong positive relationships between teacher self-efficacy and student learning outcomes. Akram's STEQ tool showed that teacher effectiveness accounted for up to 32% of the variance in student achievement in English and 12% in Mathematics. Meanwhile, Neugebauer, Hopkins, and Spillane (2019) found that instructional self-efficacy was linked to meaningful social interactions and practical teaching discussions. Schrik and Wasonga (2019) revealed that principals' expectations of student outcomes, rather than their self-efficacy, more strongly predicted school performance. In sum, while teacher competencies matter, multiple contextual and individual student factors dilute their direct impact on academic achievement.

#### *Relationship between teacher's competency level and student's performance (n = 68)*

The results from Table 5 revealed that all p-values exceeded the 0.05 level of significance, indicating no significant relationship between teachers' competencies—both behavioral and core teaching—and their students' academic performance. This supports the acceptance of the null hypothesis, suggesting that teaching competencies cannot be considered as direct determinants of students' overall performance. According to Weiner's Attribution Theory, even teachers with outstanding ratings may have students with poor academic outcomes due to factors beyond their control, such as motivation, socio-economic conditions, or cognitive abilities. This perspective aligns with Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1977), which posits that success is largely influenced by an individual's belief in their ability to control their actions and achieve goals. Teachers, therefore, serve more as facilitators or external influencers rather than direct predictors of student achievement (Artino, 2012; Schunk, 2012).

Supporting literature further underscores the complex relationship between teacher self-efficacy and student outcomes. Sehgal, Nambudiri, and Mishra (2017) found that teacher self-efficacy positively impacts instructional delivery, student interaction, and learning regulation—especially when supported by collaboration and school leadership. Zee and Koomen (2016), in their review of 165 studies, also reported strong links between teacher self-efficacy and classroom quality, student adjustment, and teacher well-being, though the academic effects were often indirect. Meanwhile, Ackerman and Gross (2020) emphasized that students' perceptions of their own abilities influence their responses to grades more than instructional quality does. Papa (2015) similarly found that students' academic self-efficacy, perceptions of their instructors, and engagement levels were correlated with academic outcomes, though the exact causal relationships remain unclear. Collectively, these findings highlight that while teachers contribute to the learning environment, student success ultimately hinges on a combination of internal and external factors.

## CONCLUSION

The socio-demographic profiles of the teachers revealed that the majority were female and in the early stages of their teaching careers, specifically within their first to fifth year of service. Most were also married and held lower-ranking positions in the educational system. This slower pace of promotion may be linked to limited educational advancement, as only a few teachers have completed graduate or postgraduate degrees despite years of service. This suggests that educational attainment could be a key factor in career progression and professional development within the teaching field.

The findings also showed that the teachers demonstrated high levels of behavioral competencies and very high core teaching skills. This indicates that they were perceived as consistent in displaying professional behavior and effective in delivering instruction. However, these strong teaching competencies did not align with the students' academic performance. The results showed either a weak or no significant relationship between teacher competencies and student outcomes, suggesting that instructional excellence alone does not guarantee improved academic results among learners.

Students' academic performance was described as "satisfactory," with a mean grade indicating that while they met the minimum academic standards, they lacked distinction or excellence. Interviews with teachers suggested that various external and individual factors influenced this performance level. These included low student motivation, cognitive limitations, family dynamics, and economic hardships. These findings imply that students' academic achievements are shaped by a broader array of influences beyond the classroom and the teacher's instructional abilities.

The relationship between teachers' competencies—both behavioral and core teaching—and students' academic performance was generally found to be very weak. The study presented three primary explanations for this disconnect. First, teaching quality alone does not automatically translate into student success, as learning outcomes are also dependent on internal and external student factors. Second, several related studies also report no significant link between teacher competencies and student achievement, supporting the current findings. Third, the concept of individual responsibility becomes relevant—teachers may possess and apply effective teaching strategies, but students ultimately bear responsibility for their learning outcomes. In this context, teacher competencies act more as supportive factors rather than direct determinants of academic success.

Statistical analysis further validated the weak correlation, as all p-values exceeded the 0.05 level of significance. This led to the conclusion that there is no significant relationship between teachers' competencies and student performance, warranting acceptance of the null hypothesis. Although teaching competencies may provide inspiration or create a conducive learning environment, they are not definitive predictors of academic achievement. Other variables, such as those rooted in the students' personal, social, and economic conditions, are likely to play more decisive roles in shaping educational outcomes.

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