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THE RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS (PDPs) WITH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' COMPETENCE IN SIBULAN DISTRICT-I, DIVISION OF NEGROS ORIENTAL

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship of teaching experience and professional development programs (PDPs) with instructional competence of Senior High School (SHS) teachers in Sibulan District-I, Division of Negros Oriental. A total of 32 or 86.5% out of 37 SHS teachers participated in the survey. Teachers' competence was assessed using an adapted questionnaire based on the IPCRF, a standardized evaluation tool utilized by the Department of Education. Correlational analyses using Pearson *r* coefficient revealed highly significant, positive relationships between the evaluated variables and teacher's competence. Specifically, teaching experience exhibited a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.729$, $p < 0.001$) and participation in PDPs demonstrated a very strong positive correlation ($r = 0.7945$, $p < 0.001$) with teacher's instructional competence. The study concludes that both teaching experience and active engagement in PDPs are significant drivers that enable the SHS teachers of Sibulan District-I to achieve a highly proficient level of teaching competence.

Keywords: *Teacher Competence, Professional Development Programs, Teaching Experience, Correlational Analyses, Senior High School Teachers*

INTRODUCTION

In the present education system, the quality of teaching is increasingly recognized as vital to student success. Teaching experience and continuing Professional Development Programs (PDPs) provide teachers not only with subject-matter knowledge but also with pedagogical skills, updated instructional strategies, and greater confidence in handling diverse learners. Professional development enables educators to keep pace with evolving curricula, technologies, and pedagogical innovations necessary in the age of the 21st-century learner.

In the context of the Philippines, the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), institutionalized through DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, formally defines what teacher quality should be: a combination of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management, diversity awareness, curriculum planning, assessment, community engagement, and ongoing professional growth. Accordingly, PDPs under PPST aim to build and consolidate teachers' competencies across these domains, making teaching experience and PDP critical cornerstones in ensuring effective teaching in Senior High School (DO 42, s. 2017).

Anchored on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which posits that individuals acquire new skills and behaviors through observation, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1977), PDPs create opportunities for teachers to observe expert practice, collaborate with peers, and model effective instructional strategies, thereby strengthening their competence and shaping their professional behaviors. Complementing this theory is Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which explains that learning occurs most effectively when individuals are guided by more knowledgeable others who provide the necessary support for growth until mastery is achieved (Vygotsky, 1978). PDPs function as structured scaffolding that enables teachers to extend their existing skills, bridge competency gaps, and move toward higher levels of professional performance. Social Learning Theory and the ZPD offer a strong theoretical foundation for this study by highlighting how collaborative learning, expert modeling, and guided professional support contribute to improved teacher competence and teaching performance.

In this sense, teaching experience provides the contextual, real-world exposure where habits are formed, while PDPs supply the formal scaffolding of knowledge and pedagogical frameworks. Together, they build teacher competence, a necessary precondition for high-quality teacher performance (Herrero & Despi, 2025). Empirical literature supports the positive relationship between PDP and teacher performance. For an instance, a recent correlational study found that levels of teachers' professional development (through trainings, seminars, coaching, mentoring) had a significant association with their teaching practices, including classroom management, instructional strategies, and overall effectiveness (Sacote -Labanan & Tantiado, 2025). Another study focusing on inclusive education contexts revealed that professional development enhanced pedagogical practices among secondary teachers, enabling them to better address learner diversity and improve classroom outcomes (Sayman et al., 2025).

Given the above, the recognized importance of teaching experience and PDPs, the theoretical grounding that connects competence to performance, and empirical evidence supporting their correlation, the researchers are compelled to conduct this study. By focusing specifically with the Senior High School teachers in Sibulan District-I, Division of Negros Oriental. The study aimed to fill a gap in localized, current research on teacher quality. It sought to provide evidence on whether experience and structured PDPs indeed serve as determinants of teacher performance in this locale. Ultimately, findings from this study could inform policy and practice, guiding local school administrations and education stakeholders on how to support teacher development and improve educational quality in the district.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the relationships of teaching experience and Professional Development Programs (PDPs) with Senior High School teachers' competence in Sibulan District-I, Division of Negros Oriental.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the Senior High School teachers in Sibulan District 1 in terms of the following variables:
    1.1 age;
    1.2 sex;
    1.3 highest educational attainment;
    1.4 years in teaching; and
    1.5 attendance in related professional development programs (PDPs)?
2. What is the level of teaching competence of Senior High School teachers in terms of:
    2.1 pedagogical knowledge and practice;
    2.2 assessment and feedback competence;
    2.3 classroom management and learning environment; and
    2.4 technological and innovative teaching integration?
3. Is there a significant relationship between years in teaching and teaching competence of Senior High School teachers in Sibulan District-I?
4. Is there a significant relationship between attendance in related professional development programs (PDP) and teaching competence of Senior High School teachers in Sibulan District-I?
5. Based on the findings of the study, what strategic actions can be proposed to enhance teaching competence of teachers in Sibulan District-I?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between the independent variables, teaching experience and attendance in relevant Professional Development Programs (PDPs), with the dependent variable, teachers' competence. This design allowed for a systematic description of the existing teaching conditions while determining the degree of association between the variables.

The descriptive component focused on profiling the demographic characteristics and assessing the level of teaching competence among Senior High School teachers in Sibulan District-I. The correlational aspect was applied to determine whether significant relationships exist between teaching experience and PDP attendance with teachers' competence.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in Sibulan District-I which operate under the Schools Division of Negros Oriental, Philippines. This district is responsible for supervising public elementary and secondary schools within the municipality of Sibulan, Negros Oriental, ensuring that all basic education programs, policies, and services are effectively implemented. Its primary mandate is to uphold quality basic education, promote a culture of continuous learning, and support the holistic development of all learners in their respective jurisdictions. The district office is located at Poblacion, Sibulan, Negros Oriental, and maintain close coordination with the local government and community stakeholders.

Sibulan District-I is headed by Dr. Macrina K. Villaluz, EdD, Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS). The district supervises six (6) public secondary schools, namely: Bolocboloc High School, Dr. Benjamin T. Locsin High School, San Antonio National High School, Sibulan National High School, Sibulan Night High School, and Tubigon High School. It also oversees nine (9) elementary schools distributed across various barangays within the district.

Research Respondents

Out of the total population, 32 Senior High School teachers successfully completed the survey questionnaire and were considered as the study's respondents. These participants voluntarily provided data within the allotted time frame and were deemed suitable sources of information for examining the connection between teaching experience, PDP attendance, and teaching competence.

The respondents represented diverse specializations under the Academic and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) tracks, including Languages, Humanities, Social Sciences, STEM, Science, Mathematics, and TVL skills subjects. They varied in age, length of service, employment status, and professional background, offering a broad perspective on competence levels based on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) indicators reflected in the IPCRF

Statistical Tools

After the data were gathered, the following statistical treatments were utilized in the study:

Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents, such as age, sex, educational attainment, length of service, and relevant professional development programs attended.

Mean was used to determine the level of teaching competence among the respondents.

Pearson *r* Correlation Coefficient was used to test the significance and strength of the relationship between the independent variables (years of teaching experience and relevant PDPs and the dependent variable (teaching competence).

Research Instruments

The study utilized a two-part survey questionnaire. Part 1 comprised the demographic details of the teacher-respondents such as age, sex, highest educational

attainment, number of years in teaching, and number of relevant trainings attended for the last five years.

Part II comprised the five-point Likert Scale of Level of Teaching Performance of the senior high school teachers. All the statements from this part are adopted from the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) for Teachers, an official DepEd tool that is used to evaluate teachers' professional competence. Only the format is modified for the convenience of the teacher-respondents.

Data Gathering Procedures and Analysis

The data were gathered strategically, considering the limited time available for the study. Questionnaires were administered during the off-hours of the Senior High School teachers. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents after they were briefed on the study's purpose, procedures, and ethical considerations. The questionnaires were then personally distributed to the teacher-respondents, and sufficient time was provided for them to complete the survey. After completion, the researchers collected the questionnaires for processing. The collected data were tallied, encoded, and organized for statistical analysis. The results were then interpreted, analyzed, and presented in tables to address the research questions. Finally, the findings were summarized and incorporated into a research report.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study encompasses all Senior High School teachers from the six (6) public high schools within Sibulan District-I under the Negros Oriental Division for the school year 2025–2026. The scope is intentionally confined to these respondents to ensure focused and context-specific analysis.

The generalizability of the findings is therefore limited to Senior High School public teachers in Sibulan District-I, as they constitute the sole participants in the research. Consequently, the results may not be directly applicable to other districts, private schools, or different educational settings. However, the insights gained can serve as a valuable reference for similar contexts or as a basis for comparative studies in future research.

RESULTS

Table 1. *Age of Teacher-Respondents.*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25 to 30 years old	3	9.38 %
31 to 35 years old	5	15.63 %
36 to 40 years old	10	31.25 %
41 to 45 years old	8	25.00 %
46 to 50 years old	6	18.75 %
Total	32	100.00 %

Table 1 illustrates a diverse and seasoned workforce among the 32 teacher-respondents. The majority are in their mid-career stage, falling between 36 and 45 years old, with the largest specific subgroup aged 36 to 40 (n=10, 31.25%). Furthermore, 18.75% (n=6) are aged 46 to 50. This concentration of mid-to-late career professionals indicates a highly stable faculty characterized by substantial classroom experience, professional maturity, and institutional memory.

Table 2. *Sex of Teacher-Respondents*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	10	31.25 %
Female	22	68.75 %
Total	32	100.00 %

Table 2 presents that among the 32 respondents, the teaching workforce is predominantly female (n=22, 68.75%), with males accounting for the remaining 31.25% (n=10). This distribution aligns with broader national and global trends characterizing basic education as a female-dominated profession. Consequently, the relative underrepresentation of male teachers highlights potential implications for diverse gender representation and role modeling within the school environment.

Table 3. *Educational Attainment of Teacher-Respondents*

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree	9	28.13 %
With Units in Masters	13	40.63 %
Master’s Degree	5	15.63 %
With Units in Doctorate	3	9.38 %
Doctorate Degree	2	6.25 %
Total	32	100.00 %

Table 3 shows that the educational attainment of the 32 respondents reflects a strong commitment to continuous professional development. While 28.13% (n=9) hold only a bachelor’s degree, the vast majority (71.87%) are pursuing or have completed graduate studies. The largest segment has earned master’s level units (n=13, 40.63%), followed by those with completed master's degrees (n=5, 15.63%). Furthermore, 15.63% of the faculty possess highly advanced expertise, holding either doctoral units (n=3, 9.38%) or completed doctorates (n=2, 6.25%). This distribution indicates an institutional culture that actively encourages advanced academic qualifications.

Table 4. *Teaching Experience of Teacher-Respondents*

Length of Service	Frequency	Percentage
0-5 years	11	22.92 %
6-10 years	24	50.00 %
11-15 years	9	18.75 %
15 years and over	4	8.33 %
Total	48	100.00 %

Table 4 details the teaching experience of the 48 senior high respondents in Sibulan District-I, revealing a predominantly early-to-mid-career workforce. Exactly half of the faculty (n=24, 50.00%) possess 6 to 10 years of experience, forming a stable foundation of professionally competent educators. Nearly a quarter (n=11, 22.92%) are newer entrants with 0 to 5 years of experience, likely reflecting recent institutional expansion or natural turnover. Meanwhile, the remaining 27.08% comprise veteran educators with 11 to 15 years (n=9, 18.75%) and over 15 years (n=4, 8.33%) of service. Though a smaller demographic, these senior teachers are essential for providing pedagogical leadership, mentorship, and institutional continuity.

Table 5. *Number of PDPs Attended for the last five years*

Number of PDPs attended	Frequency	Percentage
0 to 1	1	3.13 %
2 to 3	2	6.25 %
4 to 5	3	9.38 %
6 to 7	16	50.00 %
8 or more	10	31.25 %
Total	32	100.00 %

Table 5 details the professional development engagement of the 32 respondents over the past five years, revealing a strong overall commitment to capacity building. An overwhelming majority (81.25%) actively participated in six or more trainings, with exactly half of the faculty (n=16, 50.00%) attending 6 to 7 programs, and nearly a third (n=10, 31.25%) completing 8 or more. This high level of participation highlights robust institutional support and a drive for advanced pedagogical enhancement. Conversely, the remaining 18.75% exhibited moderate to minimal engagement, attending 4 to 5 (n=3, 9.38%), 2 to 3 (n=2, 6.25%), or 0 to 1 (n=1, 3.13%) seminars, suggesting potential access limitations or personal constraints for a small minority of the workforce.

Level of Teacher's Competence

Table 6. *Level of Pedagogical Knowledge and Practice*

I am a teacher who…	Mean	Interpretation
Demonstrates mastery of subject matter and applies a learner-centered philosophy in teaching.	4.47	High Competence
Plans and implements developmentally sequenced lessons aligned with curriculum standards.	4.41	High Competence
Applies diverse teaching strategies that promote learner achievement and higher-order thinking skills.	4.41	High Competence
Provides differentiated and developmentally appropriate learning experiences for diverse learners.	4.41	High Competence

Participates in collegial discussions (e.g., LAC sessions) and applies feedback to improve practice.	4.53	Very High Competence
Total Mean	4.42	High Competence

Table 6 reveals that the teacher-respondents possess a "High Competence" in overall pedagogical knowledge and practice (M = 4.42). Notably, their highest rating emerged in collegial discussions and feedback application (M = 4.53, "Very High Competence"), highlighting a robust culture of collaborative learning and reflective practice. Furthermore, the faculty demonstrated consistently high competence across core instructional domains, including subject matter mastery (M = 4.47), standards-aligned lesson planning (M = 4.41), higher-order thinking strategies (M = 4.41), and differentiated instruction (M = 4.41). Collectively, these findings portray a well-prepared teaching workforce capable of delivering quality, learner-centered education while actively engaging in continuous professional growth.

Table 7. *Assessment and Feedback Competence*

I am a teacher who…	Mean	Interpretation
Designs and uses diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments aligned with learning objectives.	4.53	Very High Competence
Monitors and evaluates learner progress using data and maintains accurate records.	4.56	Very High Competence
Communicates learners' progress and achievements to parents and other stakeholders.	4.28	High Competence
Uses assessment results to adjust instruction and support learner improvement.	4.38	High Competence
Engages in reflective assessment practices and collaborates with colleagues to enhance feedback strategies.	4.19	High Competence
Total Mean	4.39	High Competence

Table 7 demonstrates that the teacher-respondents possess a "High Competence" in overall assessment and feedback practices (M = 4.39). Notably, teachers reported "Very High Competence" in monitoring learner progress through accurate record-keeping (M = 4.56) and designing comprehensive diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments (M = 4.53). This reflects strong foundational assessment literacy and effective data utilization. Furthermore, respondents maintained "High Competence" in applying assessment results to adjust instruction (M = 4.38), communicating progress to stakeholders (M = 4.28), and engaging in collaborative reflection (M = 4.19). Collectively, these findings portray a highly capable, learner-centered workforce that consistently leverages assessment data to drive instruction and continuous improvement.

Table 8. *Classroom Management and Learning Environment*

I am a teacher who…	Mean	Interpretation
Manages classroom structure to encourage active and meaningful learner engagement.	4.41	High Competence
Uses positive and non-violent discipline strategies in managing learner behavior.	4.50	Very High Competence
Creates a safe, inclusive, and supportive classroom environment responsive to learner diversity.	4.47	High Competence
Builds strong relationships with parents, guardians, and the school community to support learning.	4.47	High Competence
Establishes routines and expectations that promote respect, cooperation, and responsibility.	4.50	Very High Competence
Total Mean	4.47	High Competence

Table 8 reveals that teacher-respondents demonstrate "High Competence" in overall classroom management and fostering positive learning environments (M = 4.47). Notably, educators exhibited "Very High Competence" in utilizing positive, non-violent discipline strategies (M = 4.50) and establishing routines that promote respect and cooperation (M = 4.50). Furthermore, respondents maintained consistently "High Competence" in creating safe, inclusive spaces (M = 4.47), building strong parental and community partnerships (M = 4.47), and managing classroom structures for active engagement (M = 4.41). Collectively, these results portray a workforce that effectively prioritizes constructive behavior management, structured inclusivity, and collaborative community engagement to cultivate highly supportive and well-organized classroom climates.

Table 9. *Technological and Innovative Teaching Integration*

I am a teacher who…	Mean	Interpretation
Selects, develops, and uses ICT-based learning resources effectively.	4.41	High Competence
Integrates technology and innovative strategies to enhance teaching and learning.	4.41	High Competence
Promotes digital literacy and responsible technology use among learners.	4.41	High Competence
Engages in professional learning communities to share best practices in technology use.	4.34	High Competence
Sets professional development goals aligned with the PPST to improve technological and instructional competence.	4.44	High Competence
Total Mean	4.40	High Competence

Table 9 indicates that the teacher-respondents possess "High Competence" in technological and innovative teaching integration (overall M = 4.40). Educators demonstrated consistently strong capabilities across core digital domains, scoring identically in selecting ICT-based learning resources (M = 4.41), integrating innovative

strategies (M = 4.41), and promoting student digital literacy (M = 4.41). Furthermore, respondents exhibited high competence in setting PPST-aligned professional development goals (M = 4.44) and sharing best practices within professional learning communities (M = 4.34). Collectively, these findings reflect a technologically responsive workforce committed to continuous, collaborative growth and capable of effectively supporting 21st-century learning environments.

Table 10. *Summary of Level of Teacher's Competence*

Dimensions	Mean	Interpretation
Pedagogical Knowledge and Practice	4.42	High Competence
Assessment and Feedback	4.47	High Competence
Classroom Management and Learning Environment	4.47	High Competence
Technological and Innovative Teaching Integration	4.40	High Competence
Total Mean	4.42	High Competence

Table 10 demonstrates consistently strong teacher competence across all four key dimensions, with overall means ranging from 4.40 to 4.47 ("High Competence"). The highest ratings emerged identically in Assessment and Feedback (M = 4.47) and Classroom Management and Learning Environment (M = 4.47). These results highlight the faculty's exceptional proficiency in monitoring student progress, delivering actionable feedback, and cultivating supportive, well-managed environments that drive learner engagement and success.

Table 11. *Test of Relationship between Teaching Experience and Teacher's Competence*

Teacher's Competence (n=32)	r	R^2	p-Value (Significance at p < .05)	Interpretation
Teaching Experience	0.729	0.5314	**0.00001***	Significant, Reject Null Hypothesis

**Significant using Pearson's correlation test at p<.05*

Table 11 reveals a strong positive correlation between teaching experience and teacher competence (r = 0.729). Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.5314) indicates that teaching experience accounts for 53.14% of the variance in teacher competence. These findings demonstrate that accumulated years in the profession play a substantial and direct role in shaping and enhancing instructional proficiency.

Table 12. *Test of Relationship between Relevant Professional Development Programs Attended and Teacher's Competence*

Teacher's Competence (n=32)	r	R^2	p-Value (Significance at p < .05)	Interpretation
Relevant Professional Development Programs Attended	0.7945	0.6312	**0 .00001***	Significant, Reject Null Hypothesis

*Significant using Pearson's correlation test at p<.05

Table 12 shows a very strong, statistically significant positive correlation between the number of professional development programs attended and teacher competence (r = 0.7945, p < 0.001). Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.6312) indicates that participation in these relevant activities accounts for a substantial 63.12% of the variance in teacher competence. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. These findings robustly demonstrate that active engagement in continuous professional training is a primary driver in enhancing instructional proficiency, with the remaining variance attributable to other mediating professional or contextual factors.

DISCUSSION

I. Overview of the Study

This study investigated the relationship between teaching experience and participation in professional development programs (PDP) with instructional performance among 32 Senior High School teachers in Sibulan District-I, Division of Negros Oriental, utilizing a quantitative survey methodology.

II. Demographic and Professional Profile of the Respondents

The faculty represents a diverse, moderately seasoned, and predominantly female (68.75%) workforce. This distribution aligns with the persistent global and national feminization of basic education. Specifically, Pablo et al. (2025) note that women in the Philippines constitute a substantial portion of the labor force, heavily dominating the K–12 educational sector. Furthermore, most respondents (56.25%) are in their mid-career phase (36–45 years old), with exactly half (50.00%) possessing 6 to 10 years of teaching experience. Bolstered by an 18.75% cohort of veteran educators (46–50 years old) who provide vital institutional memory, these demographic forms a highly stable professional core. As Ben-Amram and Davidovitch (2024) assert, a mid-career-dominant faculty optimizes school stability; having navigated the high-attrition risks of early teaching, these educators are ideally positioned to mentor novice peers.

Educationally, the workforce is highly qualified. While 28.13% hold a bachelor's degree, the vast majority (71.87%) are actively pursuing or have already completed graduate studies. This robust pursuit of advanced degrees reflects current systemic shifts in the Philippine educational landscape. This trend is corroborated by Vural and Başaran (2021), who found that educators are primarily driven to pursue master's degrees by a desire for self-improvement, professional development, academic career advancement, and deeper subject-matter mastery. Additionally, the faculty

demonstrates a strong commitment to continuous learning, with 81.25% attending six or more professional development trainings over the past five years. This high level of engagement aligns with the findings of Bozkurt et al. (2020), who observed that post-pandemic educational demands and rapid technological advancements have compelled educators to aggressively pursue capacity-building and upskilling opportunities to maintain their instructional efficacy in 21st-century classrooms.

III. Level of Teacher Competence Across Key Domains

Overall, the respondents demonstrated "High Competence" across all evaluated instructional dimensions. The highest rating emerged in Classroom Management and Learning Environment (M = 4.47), reflecting strong positive discipline and inclusive classroom structuring. This finding aligns with recent literature on educator social and emotional learning (SEL) as Elbertson et al. (2025) emphasize, teachers who actively develop competencies in self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and responsible decision-making are significantly more effective at fostering supportive and well-structured learning environments.

Pedagogical Knowledge and Practice (M = 4.42) followed closely, driven by peak scores in collegial collaboration (M = 4.53). The prominence of this collaborative practice is corroborated by Sürmeli et al. (2024), who observed that educators engaged in collaborative communities during the early COVID-19 pandemic received stronger leadership support, suggesting that such relationships build crucial institutional resilience against future disruptions. Furthermore, Chen and Rong (2023) demonstrate that principal instructional leadership positively influences teacher self-efficacy specifically when reinforced by high levels of teacher collegiality, underscoring its critical role in maximizing instructional effectiveness.

Additionally, teachers exhibited robust capabilities in Technological and Innovative Teaching Integration (M = 4.40) and Assessment and Feedback (M = 4.39). These scores indicate proficient digital literacy, effective PPST-aligned goal-setting, and strong data-driven monitoring of learner progress. These combined competencies resonate with the research of Zhang and Wu (2025), who assert that the effective utilization of digital tools directly enhances educational quality and student engagement while mitigating technological disparities. Complementing this, Timotheou et al. (2022) note that while ICT integration inherently improves teaching and learning, the capacity deficits exposed during the pandemic necessitate a coherent, systemic approach to digital transformation to truly elevate educational quality.

IV. Test of Significant Relationships

Correlational analyses revealed highly significant, positive relationships between the evaluated professional variables and teacher performance. Teaching experience exhibited a strong positive correlation with competence ($r = 0.729$, $p < 0.001$), accounting for 53.14% of the variance in instructional proficiency. This robust association is supported by recent literature such as a 2024 study published in the *Economics, Business and Management Science Journal* affirms that "teaching experience contributes to shaping teachers' expertise and confidence in managing the classroom." As educators accumulate years in the field, they develop more mature skills for

handling classroom dynamics and exploring effective learning methods, directly translating experiential knowledge into higher competence (Sumedi, et al. 2025).

Even more substantially, in professional development demonstrated a very strong positive correlation with teacher competence ($r = 0.7945$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 63.12% of the variance, indicating that PD is a critical predictor of teaching effectiveness. This aligns with Hermoso and Brobo's (2023) findings that higher teaching competence is significantly associated with improved teacher performance, suggesting that targeted professional development contributes to more effective instructional practices. Research synthesis on teacher professional development further highlights that continuous and collaborative professional learning approaches, such as sustained training, peer collaboration, and reflective practices are essential elements that promote meaningful growth in teachers' instructional capabilities and professional efficacy (Hermoso & Brobo, 2023). Additionally, studies focusing on inclusive education contexts reinforce that professional development enhances pedagogical practices, enabling teachers to better address diverse learner needs and improve classroom outcomes (Sayman, et.al. 2025).

Consequently, the null hypotheses were rejected, firmly establishing that both accumulated classroom experience and active, continuous professional training are primary, statistically significant drivers of teacher competence.

Conclusions

This study concludes that the teaching workforce in Sibulan District-I demonstrates high professional competence across pedagogy, assessment, classroom management, and technology integration. This proficiency is heavily underpinned by a seasoned, highly qualified demographic that is actively engaged in continuous learning. Crucially, the findings establish a significant positive correlation between instructional competence and both teaching experience and professional development participation. Ultimately, while the current faculty is exceptionally well-positioned to deliver high-quality education, sustaining and scaling this efficacy necessitates institutionalizing targeted, continuous professional development frameworks that build upon their accumulated experiential knowledge.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn, the researchers propose the following recommendations:

1. **Institutionalize Targeted Professional Development.** The researchers recommend that school administrators sustain and scale PPST-aligned training, prioritizing advanced assessment literacy, differentiated instruction, and ICT integration. School leaders must actively identify and mitigate scheduling or access barriers for the minority of educators exhibiting low professional development engagement.

2. **Implement a Structured Mentorship and Retention Framework.** To preserve institutional knowledge, the researchers suggest leveraging the expertise of seasoned educators by formalizing peer-mentoring programs and offering

localized classroom management roles. This will simultaneously support the professional growth of early-career teachers and enhance the retention of highly experienced staff.

3. **Strengthen Collaborative Learning Communities.** The researchers highly encourage districts to operationalize a Teacher Competence Enhancement **Action Plan** centered on sustained collaboration. This includes utilizing localized Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), sharing evidence-based classroom management strategies, and fostering a culture of reflective practice.

Proposed Action Plan
TEACHER COMPETENCE ENHANCEMENT
ACTION PLAN

Phase	Objective	Activities/ Strategies	Persons Involved	Time Frame	Resources	Expected Output
Pre-implementation	-Identify professional development needs of Senior High School teachers through eSAT -Align PDP with DepEd priorities and school improvement plan	-Conduct needs assessment survey -Hold consultative meetings with school heads and teacher leaders. -Prepare training modules and LAC session guides.	PSDS, School Heads teachers, AOs and ADAs	June–July 2026	Survey forms, meeting venue, ICT equipment.	Consolidated PDP plan with identified training focus areas. Prepared materials and schedules for training and LAC sessions.
During Implementation	Enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge. Strengthen collaboration	-Conduct 1 Professional Development Training (e.g., "Innovative Teaching Strategies in Senior High School").	PSDS School Heads teachers, AOs and ADAs	August 2026 – March 2027	Training modules, projector, laptops, internet access, honorarium for speakers, LAC guides	Teachers are equipped with updated strategies and improved classroom practices.

	and peer mentoring through LAC sessions.	-Invite resource speakers from DepEd, universities, or industry partners. -Conduct quarterly LAC sessions focusing on classroom management, assessment strategies, and inclusive education.				Strengthened collegiality and shared solutions to classroom challenges
Post implementation	Assess effectiveness of PDP and LAC sessions. - To ensure sustainability and continuous support for inclusive education practices. Provide feedback and recommendations for continuous improvement.	-Classroom observations and post-training evaluation surveys. -Documentation of teacher outputs and reflections. -Preparation of PDP evaluation report.	PSDS School Heads, teachers, AOs, and ADAs	April–May 2027	Evaluation forms, observation tools, reports, documentation templates.	Comprehensive PDP evaluation report with recommendations for SY 2027–2028. Evidence of improved teaching performance and student learning outcomes.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

To ensure the protection of the rights and welfare of all respondents in this study on teachers' competence among Senior High School teachers in Sibulan District-I, strict adherence to ethical research standards was observed. Respondents were fully

informed about the purpose, objectives, and potential benefits of the study, and their participation was entirely voluntary. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained, guaranteeing participants the right to withdraw at any stage without any negative consequences. The researchers also ensured that no physical, psychological, or social risks were posed to the respondents throughout the study. Moreover, the research was conducted in accordance with principles of honesty and integrity, ensuring that findings were reported accurately without fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained; all responses and personal information were coded and securely stored to prevent unauthorized access. Data collected were used solely for the purposes of this study and presented in aggregate form to protect individual identities. The study complied with institutional and ethical guidelines, reinforcing transparency and respect for participants' rights

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