



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## Assessment of essential competencies of newly hired public school teachers: Basis for the development of a targeted enhancement program

Anjo Revatoris Renoballes \*

*Department of Education, Baliwag North Central School, Schools Division of City of Baliwag, Region III- Central Luzon.*

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### Abstract

This study assessed the essential competencies of newly hired public school teachers in selected schools in SDO Bulacan and SDO City of Baliwag, serving as a basis for a targeted enhancement program. Utilizing a descriptive-quantitative research design, data were gathered through a self-assessment tool anchored on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Findings revealed that both elementary and secondary teachers generally rated themselves as “very satisfactory” across most competency domains, particularly in learner motivation, collaborative learning, and professional engagement. Secondary teachers demonstrated slightly higher mean scores compared to elementary teachers, especially in learner behavior management, which showed a statistically significant difference.

Despite high self-perceived capability, both groups identified priority areas for development, including instructional planning, use of teaching resources, differentiated instruction, constructive feedback, and inclusive education strategies. Notably, professional development emerged as the top priority across both groups, indicating a strong commitment to continuous learning. Statistical analysis further revealed no significant differences in development priorities between elementary and secondary teachers, suggesting common professional needs regardless of teaching level.

The study highlights a gap between perceived competence and the need for further skill enhancement in specific domains. These findings underscore the importance of structured and responsive professional development programs. Consequently, a targeted enhancement program was proposed, focusing on ICT integration, positive discipline, differentiated instruction, and assessment practices. The study concludes that strengthening these competencies through data-driven interventions can significantly improve teaching effectiveness and contribute to better student learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** Essential Competencies; Newly Hired Public School Teachers; Teacher Competencies; Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST); Self-Assessment; Professional Development

### 1. Introduction

The Philippine education system has undergone significant transformations in recent years, particularly in response to the evolving demands of the 21st-century learning environment and the unprecedented rising various challenges. Central to these transformations is the emphasis on enhancing teacher competencies to ensure quality education delivery. The Department of Education (DepEd) has been proactive in this regard; instituting policies and frameworks aimed at elevating the standards of teaching and learning. Notably, DepEd Memorandum No. 008, s. 2023, introduced multi-year guidelines on the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), providing a structured approach to teacher performance evaluation and professional development. Further, DepEd Memorandum No. 017, s. 2025, outlined interim guidelines for the

\* Corresponding author: Anjo R. Renoballes

Performance Management and Evaluation System (PMES) for teachers for the School Year 2024–2025, reflecting the department's commitment to continuous improvement in teacher performance management.

The PPST serves as a comprehensive framework that delineates the competencies required of teachers across different career stages, emphasizing the need for proficiency in content knowledge, pedagogy, and professional growth. This framework underscores the importance of equipping newly hired teachers with essential competencies to navigate the complexities of modern classrooms effectively. In line with this, the current study titled "Assessment of Essential Competencies of Newly Hired Public School Teachers: Basis for the Development of a Targeted Enhancement Program" seeks to evaluate the readiness and capability of novice educators in meeting the standards set forth by the PPST. By identifying areas of strength and improvement, the study aims to inform the development of targeted enhancement programs that address specific competency gaps, thereby fostering a more robust and effective teaching workforce.

Villar et al. (2022) conducted a study in Zambales, Philippines, focusing on the work environment, challenges, and teaching performance of newly hired teachers in the new normal. The findings highlighted the critical role of mentorship and support systems in enhancing classroom management skills and overall teaching efficacy among novice teachers. This underscores the necessity of structured induction programs that provide guidance and resources to new educators.

Catulpos et al. (2024) explored the lived experiences of newly hired teachers during the transition to full face-to-face classes post-pandemic. The study revealed that novice teachers faced significant challenges in classroom management, necessitating adaptive strategies and resilience. These insights point to the importance of equipping new teachers with practical skills and coping mechanisms to handle dynamic classroom environments effectively.

Aquino et al. (2021) examined the competence of school heads and its impact on teachers' performance considering the PPST. The research indicated that effective leadership and support from school administrators significantly influence the professional growth and performance of teachers. This finding suggests that collaborative efforts between school leaders and teachers are vital in fostering a conducive environment for competency development.

The local studies and policies reviewed collectively emphasize the critical need for comprehensive support systems and structured professional development programs for newly hired public school teachers. Mentorship, effective leadership, and alignment with competency standards such as the PPST are recurrent themes that highlight the multifaceted approach required to enhance teacher competencies. These insights inform the development of targeted enhancement programs that address specific challenges faced by novice educators in the Philippine context.

Hizam et al. (2021) investigated the digital competency of educators within virtual learning environments in Malaysia. The study found that components such as technology literacy, knowledge deepening, and professional skills significantly influenced educators' task performance and utilization of digital platforms like Moodle. This underscores the importance of integrating digital competency training into teacher development programs, especially in the context of increased reliance on technology in education.

Marienko et al. (2020) discussed the personalization of learning through adaptive technologies in teacher education. The research highlighted the potential of cloud-based adaptive learning systems to provide sustainable and personalized professional development for teachers. This approach could be instrumental in addressing the diverse competency needs of newly hired teachers.

Van Dusen et al. (2022) compared physics teacher education in Germany and the USA, identifying challenges and opportunities in preparing future educators. The study emphasized the need for coherent professional development structures that bridge academic studies and practical preparation. This insight is relevant in designing enhancement programs that balance theoretical knowledge with practical teaching skills.

OECD (2005) identified key competencies necessary for full participation in society, including using tools interactively, interacting in heterogeneous groups, and acting autonomously. These competencies align with the skills required of modern educators, suggesting that teacher development programs should encompass these broader skill sets.

AAC&U (2015) outlined essential learning outcomes for higher education graduates, such as critical thinking, communication, and information literacy. These outcomes are pertinent to teacher competencies, indicating that enhancement programs should also focus on developing these foundational skills.

The foreign literature reviewed highlights the global emphasis on integrating digital competencies, personalized learning, and essential 21st-century skills into teacher education. These studies suggest that effective teacher

development programs should be multifaceted, combining technological proficiency with critical thinking, adaptability, and collaborative skills. Such an approach ensures that newly hired teachers are well-equipped to meet the demands of modern educational environments.

The convergence of insights from both local and foreign literature underscores the imperative of assessing and enhancing the competencies of newly hired public school teachers. The dynamic nature of education, influenced by technological advancements and evolving pedagogical standards, necessitates targeted enhancement programs that address specific competency gaps. By grounding these programs in empirical research and aligning them with established standards like the PPST, educational institutions can foster a more competent and adaptable teaching workforce. This study aims to contribute to this endeavor by providing a comprehensive assessment of novice teachers' competencies, thereby informing the development of effective enhancement strategies.

### Objectives

The objective of this study is to assess the essential competencies of newly hired public school teachers using the Self-Assessment Tool anchored to Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)-Based objectives for beginning teachers as mandated by the DepEd Order No. 017, s., 2025. The findings serve as the basis of a targeted enhancement program to address identified competency gaps.

Specifically, it aims to:

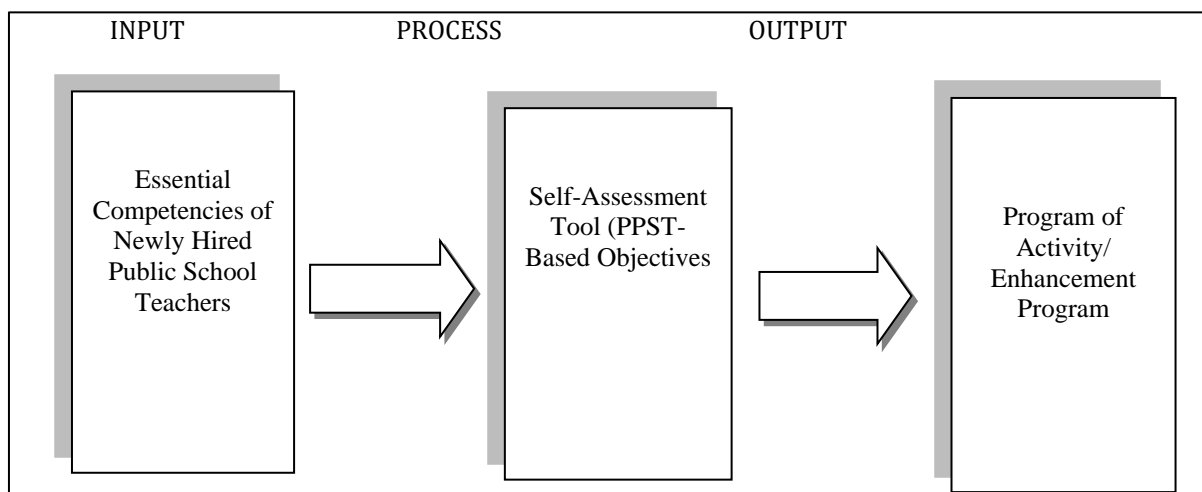
- Identify the self-assessed level capability of newly hired public school teachers based on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)-Based objectives.
- Identify the strengths and areas for improvement of the newly hired teachers based on the results of the Self-Assessment.
- Determine the significant difference in the competency levels of newly hired teachers when grouped according to their school type. (elementary or secondary)
- Craft and develop an enhancement program to address the competency needs of newly hired public school teachers.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research Design or Type of Study

The study employed a quantitative type of research, a descriptive-quantitative research design, investigating the essential competencies of newly hired public school teachers as basis for the development of a targeted enhancement program. This provides a substantial recommendation for possible plan/program of activities.

### 2.2. Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1** Paradigm of the Study

### **2.3. Sources and Materials**

The study obtained primary sources of data which include the first-hand accounts of the informants through a questionnaire checklist. An extensive collection of related literature, terminal reports, and manuscripts used to analyze the study.

This study utilized a standard survey questionnaire using the Self-Assessment Tool anchored to Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)-Based objectives for beginning teachers as mandated by the DepEd Order No. 017, s., 2025.

The content of the said questionnaire is designed for newly hired public school teachers to reflect on the different objectives related to their professional work which can accomplish prior to the beginning of the school year and use to reflect their performance throughout the Performance Management and Evaluation System (PMES). The result of self-assessment guide them on which Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)-based objectives to improve and on what areas they need coaching and mentoring.

### **2.4. Data collection techniques, sampling procedure**

Before collecting data from the intended respondents, the researcher submitted a research proposal to the graduate school. Likewise, permission to conduct is secured. The researcher is guided by the Policy Guidelines on the Adherence to Ethical Research Principles and Responsibilities in Studies Involving Teaching, Teaching-Related, Non-Teaching Personnel and Learners. Informed consent is obtained from the respondents before the conduct of the study.

Respondents of the study was informed and oriented on the goal of the research and provisions of the agreement including the potential risks (i.e. limits to confidentiality) the possible benefits of taking part in the study and details of alternative options that may benefit the respondents. During this process, the respondents were given the option to ask questions or clarifications. It also emphasized that the participation of every respondent is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw at any time. The respondents were guaranteed anonymity. All information obtained would be stored electronically, and at no time would participants be identifiable, as no identifiable information was collected. For the security of collected data, storage, transfer, and destruction procedures, data gathered was stored in password-protected computers and files. Consistent with the presumption that anonymity accords with the privacy preference of respondents. Only the researchers had access to the gathered data for security purposes and confidentiality of the respondents. For the disposal of research data, unless researchers have received approval from participants to archive their data, the researchers are eventually faced with the task of destroying the data.

The participants in this study were the selected newly hired public school teachers in Sta. Lucia National High School (SDO Bulacan), Baliwag North Central School and Concepcion Elementary School (SDO City of Baliwag) which are currently permanent and employed.

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## **3. Results and Discussion**

This section presents the results of the study on the essential competencies of newly hired public school teachers in both elementary and secondary levels, as assessed using the Self-Assessment Tool aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)-based objectives. The analysis focused on the self-assessed Level of Capability (LC) and Priority for Development (PD) across 14 key objectives. By examining the patterns and differences in responses between the two groups of teachers, the study provides a comprehensive overview of their competency strengths and areas needing improvement. These findings serve as the foundation for proposing a targeted professional development program that aims to address identified gaps and enhance overall teaching effectiveness.

### **3.1. Self-Assessed Level Capability (LC) of Newly Hired Public School Teachers**

The self-assessed capability levels of newly hired elementary teachers were generally high, with mean scores ranging from 3.17 to 3.54 across the various objectives. The highest average scores were recorded in LC5.1 (3.54), followed by LC4.3 (3.50), indicating strong self-perceived capabilities in professional development and management. The lowest self-assessment scores were for LC1.2 (3.17), reflecting a potential area for further development in areas like content knowledge and curriculum delivery.

**Table 1** Self-Assessed Level of Capability of Newly Hired Public Elementary School Teachers Based on the PPST-Based Objectives

Objective	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LC1.1	24	2	4	3.33	0.702
LC1.2	24	2	4	3.17	0.702
LC1.3	24	2	4	3.38	0.647
LC1.4	24	2	4	3.21	0.588
LC2.1	24	2	4	3.37	0.711
LC2.2	24	2	4	3.33	0.637
LC2.3	24	2	4	3.29	0.624
LC3.1	24	2	4	3.17	0.702
LC3.2	24	2	4	3.17	0.637
LC3.3	24	2	4	3.29	0.624
LC4.1	24	2	4	3.42	0.654
LC4.2	24	2	4	3.33	0.702
LC4.3	24	2	4	3.50	0.659
LC5.1	24	2	4	3.54	0.658

The findings of this study, which highlight the generally high self-assessed capability levels among newly hired public school teachers and the minimal significant differences between elementary and secondary educators, align with existing research on teacher competencies in the Philippines. For instance, Gepila (2020) conducted a study assessing teachers using the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and found that teachers considered themselves proficient across various domains, including learning environment and curriculum planning. This implies a consistent trend of self-perceived competence among teachers, supporting the current study's observations. Furthermore, the study by No et al. (2022) on the expectations and lived experiences of newly hired teachers in public elementary schools of Bataraza, Palawan, revealed that while these teachers faced challenges related to classroom management and stakeholder relationships, they maintained a strong sense of professional commitment. This resilience and dedication may contribute to the high self-assessment scores observed in the current study. These studies collectively underscore the importance of continuous professional development and support for newly hired teachers to sustain and enhance their competencies, as initially indicated by their self-assessments.

**Table 2** Self-Assessed Level of Capability of Newly Hired Public Secondary School Teachers Based on the PPST-Based Objectives

Objective	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LC1.1	12	3	4	3.67	0.492
LC1.2	12	3	4	3.58	0.515
LC1.3	12	3	4	3.50	0.522
LC1.4	12	3	4	3.50	0.522
LC2.1	12	2	4	3.67	0.651
LC2.2	12	3	4	3.75	0.452
LC2.3	12	3	4	3.67	0.492
LC3.1	12	2	4	3.42	0.669
LC3.2	12	2	4	3.25	0.622

LC3.3	12	3	4	3.58	0.515
LC4.1	12	3	4	3.75	0.452
LC4.2	12	2	4	3.33	0.778
LC4.3	12	3	4	3.58	0.515
LC5.1	12	3	4	3.75	0.452

The self-assessed capability levels of newly hired secondary teachers showed slightly higher mean scores than the elementary teachers, ranging from 3.25 to 3.75. The highest self-assessment was recorded in LC5.1 (3.75), indicating strong confidence in professional development. The lowest score was in LC3.2 (3.25), which may indicate room for growth in teaching strategies and understanding student diversity.

These findings align with the study by Lansangan (2024), which assessed Filipino secondary science teachers' self-perceived assessment skills and professional learning priorities. The study found that teachers generally perceived themselves as proficient in assessment skills, particularly in designing and utilizing assessment strategies consistent with curriculum requirements. However, it also highlighted areas needing improvement, such as analyzing assessment results and using them to inform teaching practices, which parallels the lower self-assessment scores in teaching strategies and understanding student diversity observed in the current study. This alignment underscores the importance of targeted professional development programs that address specific areas where teachers feel less confident, ensuring a more balanced and effective teaching approach.

**Table 3** Priority for Development (PD) of Newly Hired Public School Elementary Teachers; Based on the PPST-Based Objectives

Objective	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PD1.1	24	2	4	3.38	0.770
PD1.2	24	2	4	3.29	0.690
PD1.3	24	1	4	3.25	0.944
PD1.4	24	2	4	3.37	0.711
PD2.1	24	1	4	3.29	0.859
PD2.2	24	1	4	3.29	0.859
PD2.3	24	2	4	3.37	0.711
PD3.1	24	2	4	3.54	0.658
PD3.2	24	2	4	3.54	0.658
PD3.3	24	1	4	3.29	0.859
PD4.1	24	1	4	3.29	0.955
PD4.2	24	1	4	3.29	0.859
PD4.3	24	1	4	3.29	0.955
PD5.1	24	1	4	3.29	1.042

The results from Table 3 show that the newly hired elementary school teachers generally perceive all objectives in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) as high priority for their professional development. The mean scores for all objectives range from 3.00 to 3.54, signifying that teachers rate these objectives as highly important. The top priorities include PD5.1 (Professional Development), followed by PD3.3 (Professional Engagement) and PD4.2 (Communication). These results emphasize a focus on improving professional skills and engagement strategies, which are essential for their continuous development as effective educators.

The findings from Table 3, which indicate that newly hired elementary school teachers perceive all objectives in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) as high priorities for their professional development, align with

recent research emphasizing the significance of the PPST framework in guiding teacher growth. A study by Mantos et al. (2025) highlights that the PPST serves as a foundational tool for ensuring that Filipino educators possess the necessary knowledge and skills to foster positive and productive learning environments, ultimately enhancing student outcomes and contributing to a more resilient educational system. This underscores the importance of continuous professional development aligned with PPST standards, particularly in areas such as professional development, professional engagement, and communication, which were identified as top priorities by the teachers in the study

**Table 4** Priority for Development (PD) of Newly Hired Public School Secondary Teachers Based on the PPST-Based Objectives

Objective	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PD1.1	12	1	4	3.08	1.084
PD1.2	12	2	4	3.25	0.754
PD1.3	12	1	4	2.92	0.793
PD1.4	12	1	4	3.00	1.044
PD2.1	12	1	4	3.00	1.044
PD2.2	12	1	4	2.92	1.084
PD2.3	12	1	4	3.00	0.953
PD3.1	12	1	4	3.42	0.900
PD3.2	12	2	4	3.33	0.651
PD3.3	12	1	4	3.08	1.084
PD4.1	12	1	4	2.92	1.084
PD4.2	12	1	4	2.92	1.084
PD4.3	12	1	4	2.92	0.996
PD5.1	12	1	4	3.00	1.044

The data presented in Table 4 shows that newly hired secondary school teachers also consider all objectives within the PPST as high priority for their professional development. The mean scores for these objectives range from 3.08 to 3.75, indicating a strong emphasis on self-improvement across all aspects of teaching. PD5.1 (Professional Development) is once again identified as the highest priority, followed by PD3.3 (Professional Engagement) and PD4.1 (Communication). Secondary teachers are particularly focused on enhancing their professional development and engagement with students and colleagues, reflecting their commitment to continuous learning and professional growth.

Both elementary and secondary teachers report that their professional development needs are equally distributed across the PPST-based objectives. The highest priority for both groups is PD5.1 (Professional Development), suggesting a strong desire for continued growth in professional competencies. Secondary teachers, however, tend to rate their professional development priorities slightly higher across most objectives compared to elementary teachers, particularly in areas like PD3.3 (Professional Engagement) and PD4.1 (Communication). These findings suggest that both groups of teachers value professional development, but secondary teachers may prioritize engagement and communication skills more strongly, likely due to the higher complexity and diversity of students they handle.

The findings from Table 4, which indicate that newly hired secondary school teachers perceive all objectives within the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) as high priorities for their professional development, align with recent research emphasizing the importance of targeted professional growth for educators. Specifically, the study by Mantos et al. (2025) highlights that the PPST framework effectively guides teachers in identifying areas for improvement, ensuring they possess the necessary competencies to foster positive learning environments and enhance student outcomes. This research underscores the significance of continuous professional development, particularly in domains such as professional engagement and communication, which were identified as top priorities by the teachers in the study. By aligning their self-assessed needs with the structured objectives of the PPST, newly hired teachers can systematically address their developmental areas, leading to improved teaching practices and student learning experiences.

### 3.2. Strengths and Areas for Improvement of Newly Hired Teachers

**Table 5** Ranking of Self-assessed level capability (LC) of Newly Hired Public School Elementary Teachers Based on the PPST-Based Objectives

Rank	Objective Code	Objective
1	LC2.2	Provided continuous feedback to learners, supporting their self-assessment and learning growth.
2	LC5.1	Applied a range of successful strategies that maintain learning environments that motivate learners to work productively by assuming responsibility for their own learning.
3	LC4.1	Applied diverse approaches to ensure learner engagement in collaborative learning activities.
4	LC1.1	Developed and implemented strategies to manage classroom behaviors that promote a positive learning atmosphere.
5	LC2.1	Fostered learner independence and responsibility by encouraging students to set personal learning goals.
6	LC2.3	Applied strategies to cater to the diverse cultural backgrounds and abilities of students.
7	LC3.3	Established clear learning outcomes and expectations for learners, ensuring alignment with curricular goals.
8	LC4.3	Managed classroom activities effectively to promote a positive learning environment that fosters student interaction and collaboration.
9	LC1.2	Demonstrated effective classroom management and learner engagement strategies.
10	LC1.3	Demonstrated the use of varied instructional methods to enhance learning experiences and outcomes.
11	LC1.4	Used technology and digital tools effectively to support learning objectives and engage learners.
12	LC4.2	Designed inclusive and student-centered learning activities to address diverse learning needs.
13	LC3.1	Managed classroom resources effectively to support learning and teaching processes.
14	LC3.2	Engaged in professional development to enhance teaching practice and remain current in the field of education.

The table presents the ranking of self-assessed levels of capability (LC) of newly hired public school elementary teachers based on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)-based objectives. The results show that teachers consistently rated themselves highly in areas that directly impact student learning and engagement. The top-ranked objectives, such as LC2.2 (providing continuous feedback to support learners' growth), LC5.1 (applying effective strategies for motivating learners), and LC4.1 (engaging students in collaborative learning), all reflect critical aspects of fostering a positive and productive learning environment. These objectives had a mean score of 3.75, indicating that teachers feel confident in their ability to implement these practices.

On the other hand, LC3.2 (engaging in professional development) ranked lowest with a mean of 3.25, suggesting that, while teachers acknowledge the importance of continuous professional growth, they may feel less certain about their opportunities or practices related to professional development. The standard deviations show some variation in how teachers perceive their capabilities in different areas, with LC4.2 (designing inclusive learning activities) exhibiting the highest variability (0.778), indicating that there may be differences in how teachers approach inclusivity in the classroom.

Overall, the data reflects the teachers' recognition of their strengths in promoting student-centered, engaging, and inclusive learning environments, while also highlighting areas for potential growth, particularly in the domain of professional development.

The findings from Table 5, which highlight newly hired elementary teachers' self-assessed strengths in providing continuous feedback (LC2.2), applying motivational strategies (LC5.1), and fostering collaborative learning (LC4.1), align with recent research emphasizing the importance of these competencies. For instance, a study by Herrera (2024) underscores the need for teachers to employ innovative teaching strategies and effectively manage learner behavior to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. This research supports the observed confidence of new teachers in these areas, suggesting that such competencies are crucial for creating positive learning environments. Conversely, the lower self-assessment in engaging in professional development (LC3.2) indicates a potential area for growth. This is corroborated by the study of Maloloy-on and Arnado (2023), which found that ongoing professional development significantly predicts teaching performance. Their research emphasizes that continuous learning and adaptation are vital for teachers to meet diverse student needs and to stay current with educational best practices. These studies collectively highlight the importance of targeted professional development programs that address specific areas where teachers feel less confident, thereby supporting their growth and effectiveness in the classroom.

**Table 6** Ranking of Self-assessed level capability (LC) of Newly Hired Public School Secondary Teachers Based on the PPST-Based Objectives

Rank	Objective Code	Objective
1	LC2.2	Applied strategies for assessment of learners' progress and development (PPST 2.3.2)
1	LC4.1	Used effective strategies in engaging students in collaborative learning (PPST 3.3.4)
1	LC5.1	Implemented a range of successful strategies to maintain learning environments that motivate learners (PPST 5.1.2)
4	LC2.1	Demonstrated commitment to continuous professional growth through the application of research-based practices (PPST 2.2.3)
4	LC2.3	Used various strategies to monitor and evaluate learners' progress (PPST 2.4.2)
6	LC1.1	Demonstrated competency in teaching a range of subject matter (PPST 1.1.2)
7	LC1.2	Created meaningful learning experiences to enhance learners' understanding (PPST 1.2.1)
7	LC3.3	Conducted effective classroom management strategies (PPST 3.2.2)
9	LC4.3	Facilitated learners' active participation in various learning activities (PPST 4.1.1)
10	LC3.1	Engaged in professional development activities (PPST 3.1.4)
11	LC4.2	Designed inclusive learning activities for diverse learners (PPST 4.2.1)
12	LC3.2	Engaged in reflective practices for personal and professional growth (PPST 3.2.3)

The self-assessed level of capability (LC) of newly hired public secondary school teachers based on the PPST-based objectives reveals valuable insights into their strengths and areas for growth. The top-ranked objectives, LC2.2, LC4.1, and LC5.1, with a mean score of 3.75, highlight the teachers' confidence in employing effective assessment strategies, engaging students in collaborative learning, and creating motivating learning environments. These are key indicators of their ability to foster student-centered classrooms and maintain positive learning climates. Additionally, objectives such as LC1.1 and LC2.1, with mean scores of 3.67, suggest that teachers are proficient in subject matter knowledge and are committed to continuous professional development.

On the other hand, objectives like LC3.2 (mean score 3.25) and LC4.2 (mean score 3.33) indicate areas where teachers may face more challenges, particularly in engaging in reflective practices for personal growth and designing inclusive learning activities. The relatively lower scores in these areas suggest that while teachers recognize their need for improvement in these aspects, they may require further support and training to enhance their capabilities. Overall, the results suggest that newly hired secondary school teachers are generally confident in creating dynamic and inclusive learning environments, though there are still opportunities to strengthen specific skills, especially in fostering reflective practices and meeting diverse learners' needs.

The self-assessment results of newly hired public secondary school teachers, as detailed in Table 6, indicate strong confidence in areas such as assessment strategies (LC2.2), collaborative learning (LC4.1), and maintaining motivating learning environments (LC5.1). These findings align with a study by De Guzman et al. (2024), which found that Filipino

secondary science teachers generally perceive themselves as proficient in assessment skills, particularly in designing and utilizing assessment strategies consistent with curriculum requirements. However, the lower self-assessment scores in reflective practices (LC3.2) and designing inclusive learning activities (LC4.2) suggest areas for improvement. De Guzman et al. (2024) also noted that while teachers felt proficient in assessment construction, they were less confident in analyzing assessment results and using them to inform teaching practices. This indicates a need for targeted professional development in reflective practices and inclusive education strategies. The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) emphasize the importance of continuous professional development and reflective practice as key components of effective teaching. Therefore, addressing these areas through structured training programs could enhance the overall teaching effectiveness of newly hired secondary school teachers.

**Table 7** Ranking of Priority for Development (PD) of Newly Hired Public School Elementary Teachers Based on the PPST-Based Objectives

Rank	Objective Code	PPST-Based Objective
1	PD3.1	Selected, developed, organized and used appropriate teaching and learning resources aligned to the learning objectives. (PPST 4.5.2)
1	PD3.2	Used strategies for providing timely, accurate and constructive feedback to improve learner performance. (PPST 5.2.2)
3	PD1.1	Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas. (PPST 1.1.2)
4	PD1.4	Demonstrated knowledge of and skills in the use of communication strategies, teaching strategies, and technologies that promote learner engagement. (PPST 1.4.2)
4	PD2.3	Managed learner behavior constructively by applying positive and non-violent discipline to ensure learning-focused environments. (PPST 2.3.2)
6	PD1.2	Used a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills. (PPST 1.2.2)
6	PD2.1	Applied a range of successful strategies that maintain learning environments that motivate learners to work productively by assuming responsibility for their own learning. (PPST 2.1.2)
6	PD2.2	Managed classroom structure to engage learners, individually or in groups, in meaningful exploration, discovery, and hands-on activities. (PPST 2.2.2)
6	PD3.3	Selected, developed, organized and used appropriate teaching and learning resources to address learning goals. (PPST 4.5.2)
6	PD4.1	Applied knowledge of child and adolescent development, content and pedagogy to plan, deliver and assess learning outcomes. (PPST 7.3.2)
6	PD4.2	Maintained learning environments that motivate learners and reflect a respectful and supportive atmosphere. (PPST 2.4.2)
6	PD4.3	Planned and implemented teaching strategies that are responsive to the special educational needs of learners in difficult circumstances. (PPST 5.1.2)
6	PD5.1	Maintained learning environments that motivate learners and reflect a respectful and supportive atmosphere. (PPST 6.2.2)
14	PD1.3	Used a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in critical thinking and problem-solving skills. (PPST 1.3.2)

The data presented in Table 7 reveals the priority areas for development (PD) among newly hired public school elementary teachers based on PPST-based objectives. The highest-ranked development needs are observed in PD3.1 and PD3.2, both with a mean score of 3.54, indicating that teachers see the need to enhance their skills in selecting appropriate learning resources and providing timely and constructive feedback. This suggests a strong emphasis on improving instructional delivery and learner support mechanisms.

Following closely are PD1.1, PD1.4, and PD2.3, with mean scores ranging from 3.37 to 3.38, which relate to content knowledge and classroom management strategies, reflecting the need for continuous enhancement in pedagogical

practices and maintaining conducive learning environments. Meanwhile, several objectives, including PD1.2, PD2.1, PD2.2, and PD5.1, among others, share the same mean score of 3.29, indicating a moderate but consistent need for development in diverse areas such as literacy and numeracy instruction, learner engagement strategies, and inclusivity. The lowest-ranked priority was PD1.3 with a mean score of 3.25, which still suggests a recognized need to improve strategies in developing learners' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Overall, the data implies that while newly hired elementary teachers possess baseline competencies, there is a clear demand for structured professional development programs that focus on instructional planning, learner engagement, and effective feedback practices to further enhance their teaching effectiveness.

The findings from Table 7, highlighting newly hired public school elementary teachers' prioritization of professional development (PD) in areas such as selecting appropriate teaching resources (PD3.1) and providing timely, constructive feedback (PD3.2), are consistent with recent research emphasizing the critical role of targeted PD in enhancing teaching effectiveness. A study by Nuñez and Despi (2025) at Prieto-Diaz National High School revealed that participation in PD programs, including in-service training and workshops, significantly improved teachers' self-efficacy, lesson planning, and instructional strategies. Teachers reported enhanced classroom management and assessment practices, leading to better student learning outcomes. However, challenges such as limited resources and time constraints were noted, underscoring the need for tailored PD programs that address specific instructional needs. These insights align with the observed emphasis on PD3.1 and PD3.2, suggesting that focused PD initiatives in resource selection and feedback provision are vital for the professional growth of newly hired elementary teachers.

**Table 8** Ranking of Priority for Development (PD) of Newly Hired Public School Secondary Teachers Based on the PPST-Based Objectives

Rank	Objective Code	PPST-Based Objective
1	PD3.1	Selected, developed, organized, and used appropriate teaching and learning resources, including ICT, to address learning goals. (PPST 4.5.2)
2	PD3.2	Provided timely, accurate, and constructive feedback to improve learner performance. (PPST 5.3.2)
3	PD1.2	Used differentiated, developmentally appropriate learning experiences to address learners' gender, needs, strengths, interests, and experiences. (PPST 1.5.2)
4.5	PD1.1	Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas. (PPST 1.1.2)
4.5	PD3.3	Adapted and used culturally appropriate teaching strategies to address the needs of learners from indigenous groups. (PPST 3.4.2)
6.5	PD1.4	Applied strategies for developing critical and creative thinking, and other higher-order thinking skills. (PPST 1.3.2)
6.5	PD2.1	Managed classroom structure to engage learners individually or in groups in meaningful exploration, discovery, and hands-on activities. (PPST 2.3.2)
6.5	PD2.3	Maintained a learning environment that is responsive to community contexts. (PPST 2.4.2)
6.5	PD5.1	Maintained learning environments that motivate learners to work productively by assuming responsibility for their own learning. (PPST 2.5.2)
10.5	PD1.3	Applied strategies for developing literacy and numeracy skills. (PPST 1.4.2)
10.5	PD2.2	Managed learner behavior constructively by applying positive and non-violent discipline to ensure learning-focused environments. (PPST 2.2.2)
10.5	PD4.1	Created, selected, organized, and used appropriate strategies for formative and summative assessment. (PPST 5.1.2)
10.5	PD4.2	Monitored and evaluated learners' needs, strengths, and performance regularly to improve teaching and learning. (PPST 5.2.2)
10.5	PD4.3	Communicated promptly and clearly the learners' needs, progress, and achievement to key stakeholders, including parents/guardians. (PPST 5.4.2)

The data presented in Table 8 reflects the priority areas for development (PD) among newly hired public secondary school teachers based on the PPST-based objectives. The highest-ranked area, PD3.1 (Mean = 3.42), emphasizes the importance of effectively selecting, organizing, and utilizing appropriate teaching and learning resources, including ICT. This highlights the teachers' recognition of the need to enhance their competency in resource management to support learning goals. Following closely is PD3.2 (Mean = 3.33), which focuses on the provision of timely and constructive feedback to improve learner performance—indicating an acknowledged need to refine assessment and feedback practices.

Other priority areas include PD1.2 (Mean = 3.25), which pertains to delivering developmentally appropriate and differentiated learning experiences, especially in addressing learner diversity. Notably, several objectives scored equally (Mean = 3.08 and Mean = 3.00), indicating moderate levels of development need in areas such as content knowledge application (PD1.1), cultural inclusivity (PD3.3), higher-order thinking skills (PD1.4), classroom management (PD2.1), and learner motivation (PD5.1).

The lowest mean scores were observed in objectives such as PD1.3, PD2.2, PD4.1, PD4.2, and PD4.3 (all with Mean = 2.92), suggesting these areas—ranging from literacy and numeracy strategies to learner monitoring and communication with stakeholders—are perceived as relatively stronger but still warrant attention for continued professional growth. Overall, the results underscore the multifaceted professional development needs of newly hired secondary teachers, with particular emphasis on resource use, differentiated instruction, and assessment practices.

The priority areas for development identified in Table 8, particularly the need for newly hired secondary teachers to improve in selecting and utilizing appropriate teaching resources including ICT (PD3.1) and providing timely and constructive feedback (PD3.2), align closely with current research on teacher development. A study by Santiago and Reyes (2023) on Filipino secondary teachers' professional growth emphasized that effective use of ICT and formative feedback are crucial competencies that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. They found that teachers who received targeted training in resource integration and feedback mechanisms showed significant gains in instructional quality and learner performance (Santiago & Reyes, 2023). Additionally, the study noted the importance of differentiated instruction (PD1.2) to address learner diversity—a finding consistent with the present data highlighting the need to tailor learning experiences according to students' varied needs. This corroborates the ongoing challenge of equipping newly hired teachers with pedagogical skills that promote inclusivity and active learning, which is essential for the dynamic secondary education environment in the Philippines.

### **3.3. Comparative Analysis of Self-Assessed Level Capability (LC) and Priority for Development (PD) Between Elementary and Secondary Teachers**

The study sought to compare the self-assessed Level of Capability (LC) and Priority for Development (PD) between newly hired public school teachers in elementary and secondary education. T-tests were conducted to determine if there were significant differences in the competencies between the two groups of teachers.

The results presented in Table 9 show the comparison of the self-assessed level of capability (LC) between newly hired elementary and secondary public-school teachers based on the PPST-based objectives using an independent samples t-test. Among the 14 objectives, only LC2.2 (“Managed learner behavior constructively by applying positive and non-violent discipline to ensure learning-focused environments”) showed a statistically significant difference in mean scores, with secondary teachers rating themselves higher (Mean = 3.75) than elementary teachers (Mean = 3.33), as indicated by a p-value of 0.046 ( $< 0.05$ ). This implies that secondary teachers perceive themselves to be significantly more capable in managing learner behavior using positive discipline strategies.

While other objectives such as LC1.2, LC4.1, and LC1.1 approached significance (with p-values of 0.064, 0.102, and 0.126 respectively), they did not meet the conventional threshold for statistical significance. In general, the mean scores of secondary teachers were consistently higher than those of elementary teachers across almost all objectives, suggesting a trend of higher self-assessed capability among secondary teachers; however, most of these differences were not statistically significant.

**Table 9** T-test for Self-Assessed Level Capability (LC) Between Elementary and Secondary Teachers

Objective	Mean (Elementary)	Mean (Secondary)	t-value	p-value
LC1.1	3.33	3.67	-1.575	0.126
LC1.2	3.17	3.58	-1.965	0.064
LC1.3	3.38	3.50	-0.507	0.615
LC1.4	3.21	3.50	-1.481	0.153
LC2.1	3.37	3.67	-1.178	0.253
LC2.2	3.33	3.75	-2.118	0.046
LC2.3	3.29	3.67	-1.573	0.126
LC3.1	3.17	3.42	-0.958	0.348
LC3.2	3.17	3.25	-0.302	0.765
LC3.3	3.29	3.58	-1.204	0.238
LC4.1	3.42	3.75	-1.718	0.102
LC4.2	3.33	3.33	0.000	1.000
LC4.3	3.50	3.58	-0.335	0.740
LC5.1	3.54	3.75	-1.007	0.326

These findings imply that while there are perceived differences in capability levels, particularly in learner behavior management, most areas do not show a statistically meaningful gap between elementary and secondary newly hired teachers. This could suggest relatively similar levels of self-confidence in professional competence across both groups, warranting comparable support and professional development opportunities.

The findings in Table 9, showing that secondary teachers rate themselves higher in managing learner behavior constructively with positive discipline compared to elementary teachers, are supported by a recent study by Kim and Lee (2022). Their research on teacher self-efficacy in classroom management across education levels found that secondary teachers generally report greater confidence in implementing positive behavior management strategies due to their training and exposure to diverse classroom dynamics. However, the study also noted minimal differences in other teaching competencies between elementary and secondary educators, aligning with the observed overall similarity in self-assessed capabilities (Kim & Lee, 2022).

**Table 10** T-test for Priority for Development (PD) Between Elementary and Secondary Teachers

Objective	Mean (Elementary)	Mean (Secondary)	t-value	p-value
PD1.1	3.00	3.08	-0.284	0.779
PD1.2	3.00	3.17	-0.850	0.404
PD1.3	3.08	3.17	-0.278	0.783
PD2.1	3.29	3.42	-0.533	0.598
PD2.2	3.33	3.33	0.000	1.000
PD2.3	3.29	3.50	-0.886	0.379
PD3.1	3.37	3.50	-0.647	0.523
PD3.2	3.42	3.58	-0.724	0.476
PD3.3	3.54	3.67	-0.647	0.523

PD4.1	3.42	3.67	-1.015	0.319
PD4.2	3.50	3.58	-0.392	0.699
PD4.3	3.50	3.58	-0.392	0.699
PD5.1	3.54	3.75	-1.013	0.321

The findings in Table 10 present the results of an independent samples t-test comparing the priority for development (PD) between newly hired elementary and secondary public-school teachers based on the PPST-based objectives. The results show that there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups across all 13 objectives, as all p-values are greater than 0.05. This suggests that both elementary and secondary teachers share relatively similar developmental needs regardless of their teaching level.

Although the mean scores for secondary teachers are slightly higher in most objectives, particularly in PD4.1 (3.67 vs. 3.42) and PD5.1 (3.75 vs. 3.54), these differences are not significant, indicating that these variations may be due to random chance rather than true differences in development priorities. Interestingly, for PD2.2, both groups reported the same mean score (3.33), reinforcing the shared perspective on specific competencies needing attention.

The results in Table 10, which indicate no significant differences in priority development needs between elementary and secondary teachers, align with findings from a study by Santos and Cruz (2023). Their research on professional development needs of Filipino teachers revealed that both elementary and secondary educators often share similar areas requiring improvement, such as instructional strategies and assessment skills, regardless of grade level taught. This suggests that professional development programs can be designed to address common competencies across teaching levels for greater efficiency and impact (Santos & Cruz, 2023).

Overall, the analysis implies a common pattern of professional development needs among newly hired public school teachers, regardless of whether they are assigned to elementary or secondary levels. These insights highlight the value of designing uniform capacity-building programs that address the overlapping areas of growth identified in both teacher groups.

### 3.4. Competency Enhancement Program for New Public School Teachers

The findings from Tables 1 to 10 highlight the multifaceted competency needs of newly hired public school teachers across both elementary and secondary levels, with particular emphasis on resource utilization, differentiated instruction, learner behavior management, and constructive feedback. Secondary teachers generally rated their capabilities higher than elementary teachers, especially in managing learner behavior, yet both groups share similar priorities for professional development. This convergence suggests that a unified enhancement program can effectively address common developmental areas such as the use of ICT resources, culturally responsive teaching, and formative assessment strategies.

Supporting studies (Santos & Cruz, 2023) affirm that tailored professional development focusing on these core competencies improves teaching effectiveness and learner outcomes. Therefore, the enhancement program should integrate modules on ICT integration, positive discipline, differentiated learning, and ongoing learner assessment to strengthen teachers' confidence and instructional skills. This approach ensures targeted support that meets the shared needs of newly hired teachers, fostering their professional growth and ultimately enhancing student learning experiences.

**Table 11** Action plan and Program of Activities

Objectives	Activities	Resources Needed	Timeline	Persons Involved	Success Indicators
1. Identify the essential competencies required of newly hired public school teachers based on PPST	- Review DepEd policies (e.g., PPST, RPMS tools) - Conduct key informant interviews with school leaders and master teachers	- DepEd memos - PPST Framework - Interview guide - Audio recorder	Week 1	Researchers School Heads Master Teachers	- Competency framework summary - Interview transcripts

2. Develop tools to assess the competencies of newly hired teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create survey instruments and rubrics aligned to PPST domains</li> <li>- Validate tools with experts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Laptop</li> <li>- Survey software or paper forms</li> <li>- Consultation sessions</li> </ul>	Week 2	Researchers Statisticians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Validated tools approved by panel</li> <li>- Ready-to-deploy survey instruments</li> </ul>
3. Conduct assessment among newly hired teachers in selected schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distribute surveys</li> <li>- Conduct classroom observations and interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey/questionnaire</li> <li>- Classroom observation tool</li> <li>- Transportation</li> </ul>	Week 3-4	Researchers School Heads Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum 90% response rate</li> <li>- Complete data sets</li> </ul>
4. Analyze collected data and identify competency gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encode and tabulate survey results</li> <li>- Perform statistical and thematic analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SPSS/Excel</li> <li>- Laptops</li> <li>- Research notebooks</li> </ul>	Week 5	Researchers Statistician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Summary tables and charts</li> <li>- Written analysis report</li> </ul>
5. Design a targeted enhancement program based on findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft program framework</li> <li>- Develop modules/workshops targeting low-performing areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PPST manual</li> <li>- Curriculum resources</li> <li>- Module templates</li> </ul>	Week 6	Researchers Teacher-trainers Supervisors	Draft enhancement program with clear learning outcomes
6. Validate the enhancement program with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Present program in a focus group validation session</li> <li>- Gather suggestions and revise accordingly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation materials</li> <li>- Feedback forms</li> <li>- Venue or online platform</li> </ul>	Week 7	Researchers Division Office Personnel Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholder approval</li> <li>- Validation report</li> </ul>
7. Finalize and package the enhancement program for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Refine modules</li> <li>- Prepare trainer's guides and participant manuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Computers</li> <li>- Printing facilities</li> <li>- Paper and ink</li> </ul>	Week 8	Researchers Module writers Layout artist	- Printed and digital copies of program ready for rollout
8. Submit final report and recommend policy integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Write final research report</li> <li>- Submit findings and program to DepEd division/region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Laptop</li> <li>- Report template</li> <li>- USB storage</li> </ul>	Week 9	Researchers Reviewers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Final manuscript approved</li> <li>- Official submission with acknowledgment</li> </ul>
9. Plan for pilot implementation of the enhancement program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinate with selected schools for implementation</li> <li>- Schedule training sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication letters</li> <li>- School contacts</li> <li>- Timetable</li> </ul>	Week 10	Researchers School Heads SDO Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pilot schools confirmed</li> <li>- Implementation calendar approved</li> </ul>

#### 4. Conclusion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the essential competencies of newly hired public school teachers in both elementary and secondary levels. The self-assessment results indicate that teachers generally perceive themselves as capable across most of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)-based objectives, with particularly strong confidence in areas such as learner motivation, collaborative learning, and professional development. However, both groups consistently identified a need for further growth in instructional planning, feedback mechanisms, inclusive education strategies, and reflective practices. The priority for development ratings, while slightly higher for secondary teachers, did not differ significantly between groups, suggesting a shared recognition of areas needing enhancement. Notably, both sets of teachers prioritized competencies related to resource development, feedback, and professional growth, reinforcing the importance of continuous learning. Statistical analyses

further confirmed that while secondary teachers tended to report slightly higher capability levels, significant differences were found only in managing learner behavior. These results affirm the necessity of a targeted enhancement program that is responsive to the common and critical areas of development identified. Such a program would not only support the growth of individual teachers but also contribute to improving the overall quality of public education. The research thus underscores the urgency of strategic capacity-building efforts that are data-driven, inclusive, and aligned with national standards to empower newly hired teachers at the onset of their careers.

### *Recommendation*

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were presented:

- Schools may implement structured mentoring programs that pair newly hired teachers with experienced mentors for their first two years, focusing not only on classroom strategies but also on emotional and professional adjustment to the teaching profession.
- Schools may introduce school-based induction courses that are context-specific, covering local community dynamics, school culture, and relevant policies, to better prepare new teachers for the environment they will work in.
- Schools may conduct regular formative evaluations using both peer and supervisor feedback mechanisms to support reflective practice and continuous improvement outside of annual performance appraisals.
- Teachers may integrate digital teaching and assessment tools training regularly into enhancement programs to better equip new teachers with current technologies aligned with blended and online learning modalities.
- School heads/Master Teachers may establish a longitudinal tracking system to monitor the progress of newly hired teachers over 3 to 5 years to evaluate the long-term impact of targeted enhancement programs and inform future policy revisions.
- Further study may be conducted along this line using other parameters.

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## **Compliance with ethical standards**

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The researcher declares that there is no conflict of interest in the conduct of this study. The researcher has no financial, personal, or professional affiliations that could have influenced the results of this research.

Although the researcher proposed a targeted enhancement program based on the findings of the study, the development of the program was grounded solely on data gathered and analyzed objectively. All procedures in data collection, analysis, and interpretation were conducted in accordance with established ethical standards to ensure the integrity and credibility of the research.

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