

Lived experiences of teachers in achieving the standard competencies: Basis for continuous professional development in Nasipit district

Shiela Mae P. Yonson

Saint Joseph Institute of Technology

Butuan City, Philippines

Email: shielamae.yonson@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

This study explored the insights of teachers in achieving the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) competencies within the Nasipit District, Agusan del Norte Division. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, data were collected through validated semi-structured interviews with 25 teachers from six public schools and analyzed thematically. Findings revealed that teachers demonstrated varied perspectives and experiences in meeting standards across the seven PPST domains. Core themes highlighted the importance of content knowledge, pedagogical literacy, integration of technology, communication skills, classroom management, differentiated instruction, and continuous assessment practices. Challenges included managing diverse learners, ensuring access to resources, and sustaining professional development opportunities, while strengths were seen in fostering student engagement, ethical practice, and community linkages. A development plan was crafted to address identified gaps and promote more effective professional growth. The study concludes that achieving competencies requires ongoing support, collaboration, and context-sensitive interventions to enhance teachers' skills and sustain quality education. Ultimately, the results emphasize that well-managed professional development and reflective practice are crucial in empowering teachers to meet standards and improve student learning outcomes.

Keywords: competencies, standards, teachers, literacy, professional development, management, skills, insights

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most critical components influencing student learning is teacher competence. Teaching is complex and multifaceted, requiring educators to possess the knowledge, skills, and

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dispositions necessary to address the diverse demands of the classroom. Establishing clear standards for teacher quality is essential because they define what teachers should know, be able to do, and value. Such standards serve as benchmarks for professional learning, competent practice, and effective engagement, thereby enhancing student outcomes and ensuring quality education (Gepila, 2020). In the Philippines, teacher quality is articulated through the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which outlines domains, components, and indicators that measure professional learning and effective practice. Developed by the Research Center for Teacher Quality (RCTQ) and anchored on the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS), the PPST complements initiatives aimed at improving teacher excellence by defining expectations of knowledge, practice, and professional involvement across varied teaching and learning environments.

The institutionalization of the PPST was reinforced by DepEd Order No. 42, series of 2017, mandating its nationwide adoption and implementation. This order emphasized the PPST as a tool for identifying exemplary practices, supporting teacher development programs, and improving the overall teaching and learning process. The persistent pursuit of excellence in education highlights the dynamic interplay between students' diverse needs and teachers' competencies, which directly affects educational quality. However, gaps in student learning outcomes often stem from ineffective teaching methods, limited resources, and disparities in student engagement. Strengthening teacher competence and leveraging innovations in information technology have been shown to support effective classroom management. To bridge these gaps, targeted interventions such as continuous professional development, technology integration, and equitable access to quality education are critical. Studies have consistently demonstrated a significant relationship between teachers' proficiency in the PPST domains and their teaching performance (Maloloy-on, 2023; Gepila, 2020).

Despite these advancements, many gaps remain in teachers' proficiency, and identifying them is more constructive than framing the issue as "teaching incompetence." These gaps include insufficient mastery of content knowledge, outdated pedagogical practices, ineffective assessment strategies, and limited adaptability to diverse learners' needs. Teachers also face challenges in technology integration, as some lack digital literacy skills to effectively enhance teaching and support student learning. Moreover, inconsistent alignment between teaching practices and standard competencies complicates efforts to measure proficiency accurately. Addressing these challenges requires continuous professional development, access to resources, and systemic support to sustain teacher growth and uphold standards.

The issue of teacher incompetence, though often described in the literature with terms such as "inadequate," "marginal," or "poor-performer," has significant implications for student outcomes and the broader quality of the public school system (Grauf, 2018). Studies highlight that teacher behaviors, attitudes, knowledge gaps, and ineffective instructional strategies contribute to classroom challenges and hinder student achievement. For this reason, continuous professional development (CPD) programs are vital in equipping teachers with the skills needed to meet the PPST competencies. However, teacher progress is often assessed through subjective measures, underscoring the need for deeper inquiry into teachers' lived experiences. By listening to educators' voices and understanding the realities they face, schools and institutions can craft more responsive and effective professional development initiatives.

Ultimately, the PPST provides a framework not only to assess teacher competence but also to guide professional learning and growth. This study focuses on teachers' experiences in achieving standard competencies within the Nasipit District, Agusan del Norte Division. By capturing their insights, it aims to shed light on the complex connection between teacher competence and student learning outcomes. The findings are expected to contribute to broader educational reforms, highlighting the importance of sustained professional development, reflective practice, and supportive systems. In doing so, this research underscores the vital role of teachers as implementers of educational policies and as key agents in shaping the future of Philippine education.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to determine the lived experiences of teachers in achieving the standard competencies, serving as a basis for designing effective continuous professional development (CPD) programs. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the insights of teachers in achieving the standard competencies in the aspects of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy, Learning Environment, Diversity of Learners, Curriculum and Planning, Assessment and Reporting, Community Linkages and Professional Engagement, and Personal Growth and Professional Development?
2. Based on the insights of the teachers, what development plan can be proposed for their Continuous Professional Development?

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological research design to investigate and gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of teachers in achieving standard competencies in the Nasipit District. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the exploration of teachers' diverse responses and perspectives, which served as the basis for crafting a development plan that supports their continuous professional growth. By focusing on participants' lived experiences, the study provided rich insights into how teachers navigate the requirements of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) in their professional practice.

The research was conducted in Nasipit District Cluster 3, formerly known as Nasipit Northwest District, which served as the primary research locale. Eight elementary schools were covered by this study: Talisay Central Elementary School SPED Center, Camagong Elementary School, Hinandayan Elementary School, Minbahandi Elementary School, Sta. Ana Elementary School, Amontay Elementary School, Aclan Elementary School, and Tabon Elementary School. Talisay Central Elementary School SPED Center, located along the national highway, houses the Cluster 3 office and served as the central hub of the district. Camagong Elementary School is also located near the highway, while Hinandayan Elementary School and Minbahandi Elementary School are situated in the highlands, approximately 12 kilometers and 40 kilometers away, respectively. Sta. Ana Elementary School is situated 2.9 kilometers from Camagong via the Butuan–Cagayan de Oro–Iligan Road, while Amontay Elementary School lies at the center of

Barangay Amontay, about 0.65 kilometers from Sta. Ana. The last two schools are both in Barangay Aclan: Aclan Elementary School, located in a coastal area 1.4 kilometers away from Amontay, and Tabon Elementary School, located in the highlands approximately 4.9 kilometers from Aclan.

The study involved 25 elementary school teachers from Nasipit District Cluster 3 who met the inclusion criteria established by the researcher. The criteria required teachers to have at least five years of teaching experience, to be subject teachers across various disciplines for broader representation, to demonstrate technological literacy through the integration of digital tools into classroom instruction, and to be available and accessible during the study period. Teachers' technological literacy was evidenced by their participation in professional development opportunities such as training workshops, advanced degrees, and certifications in educational technology. They also demonstrated competence through the creation of lesson plans that incorporated digital tools, the use of interactive resources, and proficiency in learning management systems such as Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams to organize coursework and facilitate communication. Based on the inclusion criteria, the distribution of participants was as follows: Aclan Elementary School had three teachers, Amontay Elementary School had three, Camagong Elementary School had six, Sta. Ana Elementary School had two, Tabon Elementary School had three, and Talisay Central Elementary School SPED Center had seven. Minbahandi Elementary School and Hinandayan Elementary School had no representatives, as all their teachers had less than five years of experience.

To gather data, the researcher developed a semi-structured interview guide composed of open-ended questions designed to elicit teachers' lived experiences in achieving the standard competencies. The instrument focused on exploring the PPST domains, with seven open-ended questions guiding the interviews. These questions allowed participants to reflect on their achievements, challenges, and strategies in relation to content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment, diversity of learners, curriculum and planning, assessment and reporting, community linkages and professional engagement, and personal growth and professional development. The use of an interview guide ensured consistency while allowing flexibility for participants to elaborate on their experiences.

Following the approval of the thesis proposal and the validation of the interview guide, the researcher formally requested permission from the Division of Agusan del Norte to conduct the study. Approval was granted by the Schools Division Superintendent, after which the District Supervisor of Nasipit Northwest District and the school heads of the participating schools were approached and informed of the study's objectives and procedures. Upon approval, schedules for one-on-one interviews were arranged at times most convenient for the participants. Informed consent was secured before conducting the interviews, including permission for audio recording to ensure accurate documentation of responses. Participants were assured that recordings would be of high quality and used solely for research purposes, with the option to review their data upon request.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the study. Participants were fully informed about the purpose, scope, and significance of the research through formal letters of request, verbal discussions, and prior orientation. They were assured that all information gathered would remain confidential, securely stored, and accessible only to the researcher. Under no circumstances would their responses be disclosed without their consent, thereby ensuring

protection of their privacy and rights. In addition, all external sources used in the study were acknowledged following APA referencing guidelines, thereby upholding academic integrity and transparency.

The data collected from the interviews were subjected to thematic analysis, which was employed to identify, analyze, and interpret recurring patterns and themes. Transcribed recordings of the interviews were carefully examined to generate categories that reflected the teachers' collective experiences and insights. To complement this process, a word cloud application was utilized to visually represent the most frequently mentioned terms and concepts, highlighting the ideas emphasized by the participants. This analytical approach ensured that the findings were reliable, valid, and representative of the participants' perspectives, thereby contributing meaningful insights into the challenges and achievements of teachers in attaining standard competencies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigated the lived experiences of twenty-five elementary teachers from Nasipit District Cluster 3, Division of Agusan del Norte, in achieving the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). The participants came from six schools across the district, with representation from Aclan Elementary School (3 teachers), Amontay Elementary School (3), Camagong Elementary School (6), Sta. Ana Elementary School (2), Tabon Elementary School (3), and Talisay Central Elementary School SPED Center (7). Minbahandi Elementary School and Hinandayan Elementary School had no participants because their teachers did not yet meet the inclusion criteria of at least five years of teaching experience. The study used a phenomenological qualitative design and gathered data through a validated semi-structured interview guide composed of seven open-ended questions. The interviews focused on the seven PPST domains and were analyzed using thematic analysis, supported by verbatim responses, researcher observations, and relevant literature.

Content knowledge and pedagogy

Teachers stressed that mastery of content knowledge was the foundation of effective classroom instruction. Four respondents highlighted that mastering subject matter ensured accurate delivery, prevented misconceptions, and fostered curiosity in learners. They explained that content mastery gave them the confidence to plan lessons, prepare appropriate performance tasks, and provide engaging activities that enhanced critical thinking. Participants also emphasized that lesson planning was not merely a technical requirement but an important pedagogical tool to ensure preparedness, organization, and depth of instruction. Kamamia (2015) supported these findings by explaining that teachers with strong content knowledge can highlight essential concepts, clarify misconceptions, and design meaningful learning experiences that impact learners well beyond the classroom.

Formal training was also a crucial factor in enhancing teachers' pedagogical competence. Three respondents underscored the role of seminars, workshops, and professional development programs in broadening their pedagogical approaches. They described training as essential for

refreshing their teaching methods, acquiring new strategies, and strengthening confidence in applying 21st-century skills. Guerriero (2015) likewise asserted that pedagogical knowledge is a key marker of teacher quality, enabling educators to design inclusive, evidence-based instructional practices.

Technology integration emerged as a particularly significant theme, with eleven teachers citing its importance in modern pedagogy. They described using Microsoft Office, PowerPoint, interactive online games, and other ICT resources to support instruction. However, they also admitted varying levels of proficiency and expressed the need for continuous training. Teachers explained that practice was the most effective way to improve technological literacy, while others noted that professional development opportunities in ICT would further strengthen their teaching capacity. This finding resonates with Ertmer (2013), who highlighted that teachers who effectively contextualize and integrate technology are better positioned to implement innovative instructional models such as flipped classrooms and blended learning.

Critical thinking and problem-solving skills were also identified as central to effective pedagogy. Three teachers emphasized that they functioned as facilitators of inquiry, encouraging students to analyze information, evaluate perspectives, and construct deeper understanding rather than relying on rote memorization. According to Hattie (2016), fostering critical thinking is essential for learners to process knowledge independently, and teachers who guide students toward inquiry-based learning build resilience and adaptability in the classroom.

Finally, communication skills were consistently described as vital. Four respondents reported that fluency, clarity, and engagement in communication created stronger relationships with learners and increased lesson retention. Pellegrino (2013) similarly noted that communication is key to translating abstract concepts into concrete understanding. Teachers agreed that effective communication not only transmitted knowledge but also modeled respect, encouraged mutual trust, and supported interactive learning.

Learning environment

Seven teachers emphasized the importance of discipline and setting classroom standards to maintain order and productivity. They described the use of rules, consistent routines, and behavioral expectations as essential tools to minimize confusion and ensure smooth lesson flow. Monteiro (2021) supported this finding, explaining that structured and supportive classrooms sustain students' interest and promote consistent engagement.

Positive relationships with students were also highlighted by five respondents. They explained that empathy, mutual respect, and genuine care for learners' well-being created an atmosphere of trust where students felt safe to express themselves. Wentzel (2016) confirmed that teacher–student rapport enhances motivation, engagement, and academic performance.

Disruptive behavior was another recurring theme, with seven teachers acknowledging that it was inevitable in the classroom. They reported strategies such as observation, note-taking, providing verbal reminders, applying restorative practices, and implementing fair consequences. Respondents emphasized that patience and calmness were key to handling conflicts effectively. Khasinah (2017) observed that positive and restorative approaches promote a safe learning environment, while Cruickshank and Metcalf (2019) noted that no single discipline strategy is universally effective, requiring teachers to carefully assess each context before responding.

Student engagement was also recognized as vital by five teachers, who described employing interactive strategies such as group discussions, real-life applications, and collaborative learning. Fredricks (2014) explained that highly engaged students demonstrate better academic performance, attendance, and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers affirmed that engagement not only improved comprehension but also created enjoyable and dynamic classroom environments.

Diversity of learners

Teachers acknowledged that learners bring unique backgrounds, abilities, and learning styles to the classroom. Five participants stressed the importance of recognizing prior knowledge, strengths, and preferences to design inclusive instruction. They adopted multimodal strategies to address different learning styles, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches. Romanellie and Pharm (2016) likewise found that identifying learning styles enhances engagement and outcomes by tailoring content to the needs of students.

Differentiated instruction was emphasized by six teachers as an effective means of addressing diversity. They reported using flexible grouping, tiered tasks, and individualized interventions to ensure equitable access to learning. Suprayogi (2017) confirmed that differentiated instruction promotes inclusivity, equity, and achievement by accommodating varied student needs.

Five teachers described the importance of connecting lessons to real-world contexts. They argued that linking content to students' daily lives increased motivation, made lessons more meaningful, and encouraged deeper understanding. Hammond (2020) supported this by stating that real-life applications enhance motivation and comprehension, fostering strong connections between knowledge and lived experiences.

Seven participants also highlighted the challenge of addressing diverse audiences, particularly in terms of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They reported adjusting communication styles to suit age, family context, and cultural values, thereby making learning more inclusive. Gay (2018) stressed that culturally relevant pedagogy affirms learners' identities and promotes belonging, reinforcing the importance of adaptability in instruction.

Teachers further agreed that diversity can be harnessed positively by encouraging student participation, validating unique perspectives, and creating supportive environments where learners feel respected. Fredricks (2014) noted that engaged participation fosters a sense of value and motivation among learners.

Curriculum and planning

Curriculum alignment was repeatedly highlighted by ten teachers. They explained that ensuring coherence between intended, enacted, and achieved curricula prevented overlap, clarified objectives, and guaranteed that learning was responsive to student needs. Haider (2015) affirmed that curriculum alignment ensures consistency and balance, providing pathways for effective student outcomes.

Feedback, collaboration, and mentorship were also key factors in curriculum design. Seven respondents shared that exchanging ideas with colleagues, seeking professional help, and welcoming constructive feedback contributed to the improvement of instructional plans. Teachers stressed that collaborative planning not only enhanced creativity but also supported professional growth. Ferns et al. (2023) similarly concluded that collaborative curriculum partnerships strengthen teacher competence by fostering authentic learning experiences and shared accountability.

Access to technology also shaped curriculum development, with eight teachers reporting that they used ICT tools and online resources to design interactive and engaging lessons. They pointed out that practical exposure to technology improved their problem-solving abilities and confidence in integrating ICT into their teaching. Raulston and Alexiou-Ray (2018) emphasized that technological literacy is a necessary skill for teachers to adapt to the demands of 21st-century education.

Assessment and reporting

Teachers consistently identified assessment as a tool for monitoring progress, guiding instruction, and ensuring accountability. Nine respondents reported that selecting appropriate assessment methods was essential to achieving the goals of instruction. They described using formative and summative assessments, rubrics, and student outputs to evaluate learning. Popham (2017) emphasized that combining multiple forms of assessment provides a more accurate and comprehensive measure of student achievement.

Seven teachers explained that communicating assessment results transparently with students and parents created accountability and collaboration. They emphasized that regular feedback, remediation sessions, and conferences fostered shared responsibility for student progress. Bookhart (2017) similarly stressed that clear communication of assessment outcomes motivates learners and engages parents in the learning process.

Reflective practices were also crucial, with six teachers reporting that they critically examined student outcomes and their own teaching practices to identify areas of improvement. They explained that reflection enabled them to adjust teaching strategies and enhance learning effectiveness. Hattie (2015) confirmed that reflective assessment practices improve both student achievement and instructional quality.

Three teachers emphasized the role of parental involvement in assessment, noting that parent–teacher collaboration helped identify learners’ strengths, needs, and backgrounds. Jaynes (2016) showed that parental engagement significantly contributes to improved student performance, reinforcing the need for collaboration between schools and families.

Community linkages and professional engagement

Community linkages were viewed as critical to fostering collaboration between schools, parents, and the broader community. Nine teachers highlighted that engaging with parents allowed them to better understand students’ backgrounds, personalities, and home contexts. They reported that parental involvement-built trust, opened lines of communication, and created

shared responsibility for student outcomes. Epstein (2016) likewise noted that parental engagement fosters stronger school–community partnerships and supports student success.

Teachers also emphasized responsiveness to community contexts. Eight respondents shared that awareness of cultural norms, socio-economic conditions, and community assets allowed them to tailor lessons and foster inclusivity. They argued that recognizing and respecting community dynamics helped create supportive environments where students felt valued. Khalifa (2016) confirmed that culturally responsive teaching promotes trust, relevance, and student engagement.

Four teachers highlighted parent–teacher conferences as structured opportunities to discuss progress, strengths, and areas of improvement. They explained that conferences-built rapport, established transparency, and strengthened collaboration with families. Walker (2014) found that parent–teacher conferences promote open dialogue, trust, and shared accountability for student learning.

Finally, four respondents stressed that professional ethics—particularly honesty, fairness, and accountability—were essential to building trust with students, parents, and the community. They observed that ethical behavior reassured stakeholders and established credibility. Campbell (2014) similarly emphasized that professional ethics foster trust and strengthen the reputation of educators in the community.

Personal growth and professional development

Personal growth and professional development were identified as indispensable for long-term effectiveness in teaching. Teachers described reflective practice as particularly important. Seven participants explained that they regularly assessed their teaching methods, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. They agreed that reflection not only improved instruction but also enhanced self-awareness and evidence-based decision-making. Schon (2017) stressed that reflective practice enables continuous improvement in pedagogy, classroom management, and instructional planning.

Feedback, collaboration, and mentorship were also highly valued. Seven respondents reported that exchanging ideas, accepting constructive criticism, and supporting colleagues promoted growth. Teachers emphasized that collaboration fostered creativity, professional competence, and shared responsibility for student success. Ferns et al. (2023) also argued that mentorship and collaboration are crucial in building teacher capacity and ensuring sustained professional excellence.

Teachers further highlighted lifelong learning as an essential mindset. Two respondents described teaching as a commitment to continuous education, requiring adaptability and openness to new methods. Fullan (2014) confirmed that lifelong learning fosters personal growth, instructional innovation, and responsiveness to evolving classroom needs.

Intrinsic motivation was another important factor. Three teachers explained that their passion for teaching and desire to make a difference in children’s lives compelled them to seek ongoing development opportunities. Legault (2016) found that intrinsic motivation is associated with persistence, enjoyment, and creativity in professional practice.

Seeking learning opportunities was also a strong theme. Teachers described attending conferences, workshops, graduate courses, and online forums to remain updated on trends and strategies. Fullan (2016) noted that proactively seeking such opportunities enables teachers to refine instructional methods and adapt to diverse classroom dynamics.

Finally, teachers recognized the importance of work–life balance. Three respondents shared that time management, setting priorities, and establishing boundaries prevented burnout and sustained enthusiasm. Skaalvik (2015) explained that maintaining balance enhances mental health, prevents burnout, and ensures a sustainable teaching career. Teachers emphasized that balance enabled them to manage stress, pursue development opportunities, and remain committed to their vocation.

Development plan for continuous professional development

Based on teachers' insights, a development plan was proposed for continuous professional development (CPD) in Nasipit District for S.Y. 2024–2025. This plan was validated by school and district authorities and addressed all seven PPST domains. For Content Knowledge and Pedagogy, the plan recommended workshops, seminars, and peer observations to improve subject mastery and teaching strategies, with student performance and engagement serving as indicators of success. For Learning Environment, the plan emphasized training in classroom management, collaborative seating arrangements, and the integration of technology to foster inclusivity and discipline. For Diversity of Learners, the plan included professional development in inclusive education, multicultural content integration, and the creation of individualized learning plans to address unique learner needs.

In Curriculum and Planning, the plan recommended workshops, interdisciplinary collaborations, and data-driven decision-making to align instructional content with standards. In Assessment and Reporting, training on formative and summative strategies, rubrics, and feedback cycles were emphasized, with consistent communication to parents and students as a priority. For Community Linkages and Professional Engagement, the plan outlined initiatives such as community outreach, participation in professional organizations, and parent engagement programs to strengthen partnerships. Finally, in the domain of Personal Growth and Professional Development, the plan promoted self-reflection, goal setting, mentorship, and participation in conferences to support lifelong learning and resilience.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to determine the insights of teachers in achieving the standard competencies within the Nasipit District of the Division of Agusan del Norte. Through a qualitative phenomenological design and the use of a validated semi-structured interview guide, the lived experiences of twenty-five teachers from six schools were explored. The participants, each with at least five years of teaching experience, shared their perspectives on the seven domains of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Using thematic analysis, the study identified themes and subthemes that reflected both the strengths and challenges of teachers as they pursued professional growth and instructional excellence. The findings were not

only descriptive of the teachers' realities but also served as the basis for crafting a development plan that addressed challenges and supported continuous professional development.

The study revealed that teachers' insights into the domain of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy highlighted the importance of subject mastery, lesson planning, and quality instruction. Formal training and professional development activities provided teachers with the foundation for effective pedagogy, while the integration of technology such as Microsoft Office, interactive games, and ICT-based tools was seen as essential in enhancing student engagement. Teachers also emphasized fostering critical thinking and problem-solving, as well as honing communication skills to ensure that lessons were delivered effectively and understood by all learners. These findings demonstrated that mastery of content must be coupled with adaptive pedagogical strategies to achieve competency in this domain.

In relation to Learning Environment, teachers described the necessity of setting standards, maintaining discipline, and cultivating positive relationships built on empathy and respect. They addressed challenges such as managing disruptive behavior through restorative practices and fair consequences, while also highlighting the importance of student engagement through active, real-world, and student-centered methods. These practices were viewed as vital in creating classrooms that are safe, inclusive, and conducive to meaningful learning.

Insights on the Diversity of Learners underscored the value of recognizing students' varied learning styles, prior knowledge, and cultural backgrounds. Teachers described the use of differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, and inclusive strategies to tailor their methods to diverse needs. They also emphasized the importance of real-life applications and collaborative learning to enhance engagement. These findings highlighted how sensitivity to diversity leads to more responsive and equitable teaching.

For Curriculum and Planning, participants stressed the significance of curriculum alignment to avoid overlapping content and to ensure that real-world applications and targeted curricula were implemented effectively. Collaboration, mentorship, and feedback were viewed as indispensable in designing curricula, while access to ICT tools and resources strengthened innovation and creativity in lesson planning. Teachers affirmed that collaboration and technology integration enriched both the quality and relevance of instructional materials.

The domain of Assessment and Reporting revealed the multifaceted role of assessment in guiding instruction and monitoring progress. Teachers reported using varied methods tailored to objectives, conducting continuous monitoring, and tracking both individual and class-wide performance. They emphasized transparent communication of assessment results to students and parents, the value of remediation and review, and the need to explore alternative assessment methods. Reflective practices in assessment enabled teachers to evaluate their instructional strategies and refine their methods, while engagement with parents provided essential context about students' performance and needs.

Community Linkages and Professional Engagement emerged as a domain where teachers recognized the importance of building trust, fostering open communication, and engaging with parents and communities. They described practices such as taking down notes on student concerns, maintaining consistent communication with parents, conducting parent-teacher conferences, and being responsive to community contexts. Professional ethics, grounded in

honesty, respect, and accountability, were emphasized as essential for sustaining credibility and building strong school–community partnerships.

In terms of Personal Growth and Professional Development, teachers acknowledged the importance of reflective practice to enhance self-awareness and guide evidence-based decision-making. Collaboration and mentorship provided valuable insights and fostered professional growth, while lifelong learning ensured that teachers remained updated on trends and innovations. Intrinsic motivation was identified as a driving force for professional improvement, alongside the willingness to address weaknesses such as technological skills. Teachers also expressed the need for seeking structured learning opportunities through developmental programs, while balancing professional responsibilities with personal well-being through effective time management and work–life integration.

Drawing from these findings, a development plan was crafted to address challenges and strengthen continuous professional development across the seven domains of the PPST. This plan outlined structured objectives, activities, and strategies tailored to enhance teachers' content mastery, pedagogical skills, classroom management, inclusivity, curriculum alignment, assessment literacy, community engagement, and personal growth. Resources, timelines, and evaluation indicators were also incorporated to ensure systematic implementation and measurable outcomes.

Based on the comprehensive insights, several recommendations were made. The Department of Education may carry out interventions that enhance teachers' working environments and create customized development plans aligned with specific needs. Regular monitoring and evaluation at the district or division level were suggested to identify teachers' concerns and provide timely interventions through seminars and training. School heads were encouraged to maximize Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions for reskilling and upskilling teachers, including the formation of clustered LACs across districts to share best practices. Teachers themselves were urged to actively participate in seminars, workshops, and training programs as a means to design effective and responsive activities for their classrooms. Finally, future researchers may further refine and test the proposed development plan to assess its effectiveness in improving teacher performance and addressing competency gaps.

In conclusion, this study affirmed that achieving the PPST standard competencies requires a multifaceted approach that integrates pedagogy, assessment, inclusivity, professional ethics, and continuous development. Teachers in Nasipit District demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and commitment in addressing challenges while striving toward excellence. The development plan designed in this study provides a structured and practical framework that not only supports teachers' professional growth but also advances the broader goal of improving student outcomes and sustaining educational quality in the Philippine context.

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