# Elementary School Teachers' Proficiency: Philippine Professional Standards under Flexible Teaching Modality

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**Abstracts:** The study evaluated the teaching proficiency of elementary school teachers in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, Philippines, under flexible teaching and learning modality based on the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) using a descriptive-correlational research design and stratified random sampling. The research aimed to investigate the teachers' proficiency in fostering education for sustainable development by applying its principles to teaching and learning activities. The study found a significant relationship between teachers' proficiency level based on the PPST and their teaching performance. Regression analysis revealed that Content Knowledge Pedagogy, Diversity of Learners, and Professional Growth and Professional Development are significant predictors of teaching performance. These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of teachers' subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and multicultural education in promoting student learning and improving the quality of by the significant contribution of Professional Growth and Professional Development to teachers in the classroom, as demonstrated by the significant contribution of Professional Growth and Professional Development to teachers in the classroom.

Keywords: Flexible learning, Teaching modality, Proficiency, Philippine professional standard for teachers (PPST).

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A professional teacher is equipped with the necessary skills, attitude, and universal values to effect change or learning among learners. They have a global perspective and respect their students' diverse characteristics and experiences as input in planning and designing learning opportunities. The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, built on NCBTS, complements the reform initiatives on teacher quality and articulates what constitutes teacher quality in the K to 12 reforms. The standards provide measures of professional learning, competent practice, and effective engagement, making explicit what teachers should know, be able to do, and value to achieve competence, improved student learning outcomes, and, eventually, quality education (Gepila, 2020).

The study assessed and evaluated the teaching proficiency of Elementary school teachers in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, Philippines, based on the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) under flexible teaching and learning modality. It investigated teachers' proficiency in fostering education for sustainable development by applying its principles to teaching and learning activities. The Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) is crucial for assessing teachers' proficiency. It helps faculty and administrators know the teaching quality they render to the institution and learners. The study was used as the basis for a faculty proficiency program that the school administration will consider helping teachers improve in certain aspects of the teaching and learning process.

This study aimed to assess and evaluate the teaching proficiency of Elementary school teachers in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, Philippines, based on the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) under flexible teaching and learning modality. It also investigated teachers' proficiency in fostering education for sustainable development by applying its principles to teaching and learning activities. The Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) is crucial for assessing teachers' proficiency. It helps faculty and administrators know the teaching quality they render to the institution and learners.

# 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was anchored on the theory of Warren Simmons (2015), known as the Performance Management Theory of Action, the Theory of Performance by Wallace Bacon (2001) and the Framework for 21st Century 857 Learning. It is further directed to the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers as the basis of the standards for teaching competence. The Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) components will be used to examine the proficiency level of the Elementary school teachers in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, Philippines.

According to (Mishler & Rose, 2001). the theorist introduced educational attainment and emphasized the importance of teachers in studying for an institution. It stated that the teacher's educational background was the basis for the learner's achievement in academic and curricular activities to identify an effective school with the students. Moreover, the performance management perspective treats effective teaching as an individual endeavor and thus seeks solutions focused on enhancing the identification and distribution of effective schoolteachers.

Moreover, the theory of Performance Wallace Bacon (2001) is considered by many to be the father of performance theory. In his statement, Bacon writes, "Our centre is in the interaction between readers and text which enriches, extends, clarifies and alters the interior and even the exterior lives of students. Teacher performance evaluation is crucial in educational personnel reform, so it has been an essential yet tricky issue.

Furthermore, this is also anchored on the framework for 21st Century Learning. This framework describes the skills, knowledge and expertise students must master to succeed in work and life. It blends content knowledge, specific skills, expertise, and literacies. Additionally, this enables the 21st-century professional learning communities for teachers that model the kinds of classroom learning that best promote 21st-century skills and the role of teachers in teaching the students (Donovan et al., 2014).

In addition, the study is further directed to the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). In the K to 12 Department of Education (DepEd) programs, this is the quality assurance instrument assessing the competence of teachers in line with the national educational standards. Through this instrument, the teacher was able to cultivate his or her ability to identify students' particular learning styles, bits of intelligence, strengths and weaknesses (Donovan et al., 2014).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research method to explore the proficiency of public elementary school teachers in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, Philippines in fostering education for sustainable development. The study's objective was to determine the extent to which teachers applied the principles of sustainable development to their teaching and learning activities. To achieve this goal, the research utilized a survey questionnaire that adhered to the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) guidelines. The study was conducted in the public elementary schools in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, Philippines. It consists of three districts namely Nasipit East District located at Kinabjangan Nasipit Agusan del Norte, Nasipit West District located at Publacion, Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, and Nasipit Northwest District located at Talisay Nasipit Agusan del Norte. The method used in gathering data was through a questionnaire via paper and pen. The research questionnaire of the study was derived from the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) of the Department of Education, ICT Competency standards for Philippine Teacher Education of Bilbao (2019), DepEd Individual Performance Commitment Review Form (IPCRF) and Criteria for Outcomes-Based Practice Teaching (Caraga State University). The instrument has undergone validation of the content by the identified experts and obtained a reliable results of reliability test and administer the said instrument via online platform to the participants of the study. In presenting, interpreting, and analyzing the data gathered by the researchers, the following statistical measures were used to treat the accumulated data in the study: frequency, weighted mean and Pearson correlational coefficient.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the profile of the elementary school teachers in terms of flexible learning modality. It revealed that blended learning has a frequency of 72 with an equivalent percentage of 55.81, while the modular class has a frequency of 55 with an equal share of 42.64. Moreover, the on-campus learning experience has a frequency of 48 with an equivalent percentage of 37.21, whereas synchronous

online class has a frequency of 15 with an equal share of 11. 63. Therefore, the table presented showed that among the different flexible learning modalities, most participants were under the blended learning modality. Amidst the pandemic, blended learning serves as the solution to continue the teaching and learning process despite the rapid attack of COVID-19. Blended learning lets students' progress at their own pace. Students can refer to course concepts and material as needed and advance when ready. An LMS makes it easy for students to reflect on earlier materials and move through coursework at their own pace. Moreover, teaching is less expensive to deliver, more affordable, and saves time. Blended learning offers flexibility in terms of availability.



Figure 1. Flexible Learning Modality.

According to (Assistant Professor, n.d.) "Flexible Learning is a set of educational philosophies and systems, concerned with providing learners with increased choice, convenience, and personalization to suit the learner. Flexible learning gives learners choices about where, when, and how learning occurs". Thus, flexible learning approaches are often designed using a full range of teaching and learning theories, philosophies and methods to provide students with opportunities to access information and expertise, contribute ideas and opinions, and correspond with other learners and mentors.

Moreover, the study revealed that blended learning might occur using internet-based tools such as Virtual Learning Environments or Learning Management Systems, discussion boards or chat rooms. It may be designed as a "blended" approach, with content available electronically and remotely, as well as "face-to-face" classroom tutorials and lectures (Köse, 2010)

Table 1 shows the distribution of the profile of the Elementary school teachers in terms of training/seminars attended. It revealed that G-meet (Google Meet) has the highest frequency of 90 with an equivalent percentage of 69.77, while entirely online has the lowest frequency of 16 with a matching ratio of 12.40. Therefore, the table presented showed that among the different training/seminars attended, most participants attended training and workshops through G-meet (Google Meet). Google Meet is a video conferencing service that enables you to join virtual meetings via audio, video, chat, and screen sharing with up to 100 people with no time limits. Google Meet also is quick and easy to access. Pushing records and talking can be much faster than other forms of communication. It's a great creative outlet. Putting creative touches on a video is easy with many platforms. (Komang Budiarta & Hery Santosa, 2020) stated that the Internet has yet to open unlimited research and learning opportunities. It also allowed teachers and students to develop online learning platforms enabling them to teach and learn comprehensively wherever they are. The online education platform invites and encourages teachers and learning Management system, text chat, voice chat and video chat).

Trainings/Seminar Attended	f	%
Synchronous Online Class	48	37.21
Asynchronous Online Class	49	37.98
Using Google Meet	55	42.64
GMeet	90	69.77
Using Zoom	83	64.34
On Campus Learning Experience	65	50.39
Blended Learning	83	64.34
Fully Online	16	12.40
Modular Class	30	23.26

**Table 1.** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Profile of the Elementary School Teachers in Terms of Trainings/Seminar Attended.

Table 2 shows the distribution of the profile of Elementary school teachers in terms of teaching position. It was revealed that most of the participants are Teacher III with a frequency of 58 with an equivalent percentage of 44. 96. Therefore, based on the table presented, most of the participants are Teacher III.

**Table 2.** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Profile of the Elementary School Teachers in Terms of Teaching Position.

Teaching Position	f	%
Teacher I	43	33.33
Teacher II	18	13.95
Teacher III	58	44.96
SPETI	6	4.65
SPET II	2	1.55
SPET III	1	0.78
MT I	1	0.78

The DepEd Order No. 66, s. 2007 "Revised Guidelines on the Appointment and Promotion of Others Teaching, Related Teaching and Non-Teaching Positions" and under the observance of the Equal Employment Opportunity principle set by the Civil service commission, an Assessment and Evaluation of applications for vacancies to Teacher II and Teacher III position.

The table illustrated the summary of the proficiency level of the participants in terms of the following components of the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST). It was revealed that the majority of the participants are advanced proficient in terms of Personal Growth and Professional Development with a weighted mean of 3.52. Meanwhile, the weakest point found in the content knowledge and pedagogy with a weighted mean of 3.30.

Table.

Summary of the Mean Distribution of the proficiency level of the participants in terms of the following components of the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST).

Components of the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST)	Mean	Description	
Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	3.30	Proficient	
Learning Environment	3.46	Proficient	
Diversity of Learners	3.43	Proficient	
Curriculum and Planning	3.42	Proficient	
Assessment and Reporting	3.45	Proficient	
Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	3.51	Advanced Proficient	
Personal Growth and Professional Development	3.52	Advanced Proficient	
Overall Mean	3.44	Proficient	

Legend: 3.50-4.00 Advanced Proficient; 2.50-3.49 Proficient; 1.50-2.49 Developing; 1.00-1.49 Beginning

Therefore, based on the data gathered about the proficiency level of the participants in terms of the following components of the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) majority of the participants are advanced proficient in Personal Growth and Professional Development. Thus, this shows that the participants are aware of themselves and their profession. However, the data shows that they are proficient in Content Knowledge and Pedagogy. Additionally, it could be based on some factors why the participants are proficient in terms of content knowledge and pedagogy it could be based on some factor like the working loads of the elementary teacher.

In terms of 21st century skills, teachers are expected to guide and support their student's production readiness, curiosity, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking (Partner for 21st century 2015). Thus, one of the competencies needed by teachers today is Personal Growth and Professional Development which also relates on how teachers teach, and the use of appropriate strategies and methods (Hakim, 2021). According to (*DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES IN SCHOOL EDUCATION (A DIDACTIC INTERPRETATION)*, n.d.), teaching ability is a general characteristic of a person related to knowledge and skills, which is manifested through action. The basic skills of teaching are basically in the form of a basic and special form behavior that a teacher must have as initial capital to carry out his learning tasks in a planned and professional manner in teaching and is one type of skill that must be mastered by the teacher, both motor and cognitive mental functions.

The table illustrated summary of the mean distribution of the proficiency level of performance of the Elementary school teachers in the performance evaluation cycle in the school year 2021-2022 in terms of basic education services and core behavioral competencies. It was revealed that the majority of the participants are very satisfactory in terms of Self-management and Professional Skills with a weighted mean of 3.90. Meanwhile, the least weighted mean point was found in the Community Linkages and Professional Engagement and Personal Growth and Professional Development with a weighted mean of 3.79.

#### Table.

Summary of the Mean Distribution of the proficiency level of performance of Elementary school teachers in the performance evaluation cycle in the school year 2021-2022 in terms of basic education services and core behavioral competencies.

Basic Education Services and Core Behavioral Competencies	Mean	Description
Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	3.83	Very Satisfactory
Learning Environment	3.86	Very Satisfactory
Diversity of Learners, Curriculum and Planning and Assessment and Reporting	3.81	Very Satisfactory
Community Linkages and Professional Engagement and Personal Growth and Professional Development	3.79	Very Satisfactory
Self-management	3.90	Very Satisfactory
Professionalism and Ethics	3.90	Very Satisfactory
Results focus	3.82	Very Satisfactory
Teamwork	3.89	Very Satisfactory
Service Orientation	3.85	Very Satisfactory
Innovation	3.84	Very Satisfactory
Overall Mean	3.85	Very Satisfactory

Legend 4:50-5:00 Outstanding, 3:50-4:49 Very Satisfactory, 2:50-3:49 Satisfactory, 1:50-2:49 Unsatisfactory, 1:00-1:49 Poor

Therefore, based on the data gathered about the of the proficiency level of performance of the Elementary school teachers in the performance evaluation cycle in the school year 2021-2022 in terms of basic education services and core behavioral competencies majority of the participants are very satisfactory in Professionalism and Ethics and Self-management. Thus, this shows that the participants are very satisfactory when it comes to managing themselves. They also have the capacity to interact with students, colleagues, administrators, parents, and other members of the community in an appropriate and respectful way that encourages a successful learning environment. Moreover, they are ethically all aware to serve the learning needs of all children, and to do this they must recognize, understand, and demonstrate an appreciation for the perspectives, cultural backgrounds, values and beliefs, world views, and different kinds of motivation that students bring to school.

According to (*The\_hidden\_curriculum,\_ethics\_teaching,\_and\_the.1*, n.d.) the ethics of the teaching profession are the moral beliefs and rules about right and wrongs that influence teachers' behavior, attitude, and ideals. Teaching is a noble profession and teachers must operate with set professional standards. These set standards are prescribed in the form of ethics. They are the reflection of the values of the teachers and their profession. Professional development of teachers must fulfill certain needs which must include the social need for an efficient and humane educational system capable of adaptation to evolving social needs, finding ways of helping staff. to improve and encourage teachers to have the desire to live a satisfying and stimulating personal life.

Above table indicates the correlation between participants' proficiency level of the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants. It revealed that the correlation between participants' proficiency level of the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance has a correlational coefficient of .327 (low positive association) with a significance of .000 (p-value < 0.05) which rejects the null hypothesis.

Table. Correlation Analysis between the proficiency level of the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants

Variables	r-value	p- value	Interpretation	Decision
Duration of the videos Average percentage viewed	.327*	.000	Significant	Reject Ho

Level of significance at 0.05

Therefore, the results shows that the participants' proficiency level in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) has an impact to the teaching performance of the participants. Thus, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis (there no significant relationship between the proficiency level of the teachers in the light of Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants) and accept the alternative hypothesis (there is significant relationship between the proficiency level of the teachers in the light of Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants). Furthermore, with the use of Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient the result indicates that there is a significant relationship between participants' proficiency level of the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants). Furthermore, with the use of Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient the result indicates that there is a significant relationship between participants' proficiency level of the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance.

According to the study conducted by (Gepila, 2020), teachers are catalysts of national development. With them, the nation is able to produce and develop learners, who may lead the country to development and progress. Enhancing teachers' quality and upholding quality teaching standards, therefore, should be given utmost importance for the long term and sustainable nation building. In the case of the Philippines, teachers' competence is assessed through Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), a new framework that was adopted from its former paradigm, National Competency Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS) through DepEd Order no. 42, s. 2017. In the case of the Philippines, the Department of Education through the Teacher Education Council (TEC), issued DepEd Order no. 42, s. 2017 entitled National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers recognize the importance of professional standards in the continuing professional development and advancement of teachers based on the principle of lifelong learning which refers to the systematic acquisition, upgrade of knowledge, skills and attitude, and promotes self-directed learning.

Table presents the summary of Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) domain that best predicts the teaching performance of public elementary school teachers in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte. The results of the regression analysis showed that Content Knowledge Pedagogy ( $\beta = 0.285$ , p < .05), Diversity of Learners ( $\beta = -0.126$ , p < .05) and Professional Growth and Professional Development ( $\beta = 0.066$ , p < .05) significantly predicted teaching performance, while Learners Environment ( $\beta = -0.102$ , p > .05) and Curriculum and Planning ( $\beta = -0.077$ , p > .05) had non-significant relationships.

As stated by (Gepila, 2020) the PPST shall be used as the basis for all learning and development programs for teachers. Since it is mandated that the selection and promotion of the teachers will be based on these sets of standards, performance appraisals; therefore, it should also be modified and aligned with PPST. A practical categorization to evaluate teachers' professional competencies into general competencies and specialized competencies was identified (Sjölin et al., 2015). What composes general competencies covers the ability of the teachers to become skillful in applying theories about learning psychology, teaching-learning process, classroom management, teaching methods, assessment, and evaluation into the actual classroom field. Meanwhile, specialized competencies make sure that teachers have the content mastery of what they are teaching including the

effective ways in organizing the content and learning experiences. Additionally, through PPST, an educational evaluation could be implemented effectively in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Such evaluation informs the success of any educational plan. It holds true since the achievement and/or improvement of educational plans in each country depends on the capability of the teachers to transform educational goals effectively through their scientific competencies and professional skills.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study found that participants' proficiency level in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) impacted their teaching performance. The researcher rejected the null hypothesis (there was no significant relationship between the proficiency level of the teachers in the light of the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants) and accepted the alternative hypothesis (there was a significant relationship between the proficiency level of the teachers in the light of Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants). The use of the Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient indicated a significant relationship between the participants' proficiency level of the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants' proficiency level of the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and the teaching performance of the participants' proficiency level of the teachers in the Philippine Professional Standard for Teachers (PPST) and teaching performance.

Furthermore, the majority of the participants showed an advanced level of proficiency in Personal Growth and Professional Development, indicating that they are aware of themselves and their profession. This competency is essential for teachers in today's educational landscape, as it relates to how teachers teach and the use of appropriate strategies and methods. Teaching ability is a general characteristic of knowledge and skills manifested through action. The study suggests that teachers must master both motor and cognitive mental functions to carry out their learning tasks in a planned and professional manner.

The data gathered about the proficiency level of elementary school teachers in the performance evaluation cycle in the school year 2021-2022 indicated that most participants were very satisfactory in Professionalism, Ethics, and Self-management. This finding suggests that the participants could interact with students, colleagues, administrators, parents, and other community members appropriately and respectfully, encouraging a thriving learning environment. They were also ethically aware of serving the learning needs of all children and recognizing their perspectives, cultural backgrounds, values and beliefs, world views, and different kinds of motivation that students bring to school. Therefore, professional development for teachers must fulfil needs, including the social need for an efficient and humane educational system capable of adaptation to evolving social needs.

Thus, the theory of Warren Simmons (2012), known as the Performance Management Theory of Action, the Theory of Performance by Wallace Bacon (2006) and the Framework for 21st Century Learning supports the findings of the study which further directed to the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers as the basis of the standards for teaching competence.

The regression analysis finding states that Content Knowledge Pedagogy is a significant predictor of teaching performance aligns with previous research emphasizing the importance of teachers' subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in promoting student learning. Similarly, the inclusion of diversity of learners in the PPST domains reflects the growing recognition of the importance of multicultural education in enhancing the quality of education. The significant contribution of Professional Growth and Professional Development to teaching performance also suggests that ongoing professional development can enhance teachers' skills and knowledge and improve their effectiveness in the classroom.

While Learners Environment and Curriculum and Planning were found to have non-significant relationships with teaching performance in this specific context, they may still play a crucial role in effective teaching and be important factors in other contexts. Assessment and Reporting and Community Linkages and Professional Engagement had significant relationships with teaching performance but with smaller effect sizes. These findings highlight the importance of addressing the diverse needs of students, effective assessment practices, and engaging with the community and other professionals in promoting teachers' professional growth and development.

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