Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment on Teachers' Instructional Competence

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ABSTRACT

This study, conducted during the academic year 2024-2025, examined the relationship between educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence among public school teachers in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon, under the Department of Education Division of Bukidnon. The participants included a representative sample of teachers from this district, selected to provide insights into the prevailing professional practices and instructional standards. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were gathered through a structured questionnaire that assessed three primary domains: educational lifestyle (self-directed learning, participation in professional development, and engagement in educational communities), collaborative environment (peer support, shared planning, and collective problem-solving), and instructional competence (content knowledge, pedagogy, curriculum planning, assessment, and professional growth). The study aimed to determine the levels of these variables, explore their interrelationships, and identify which factors most significantly predict instructional competence among teachers in the local context.

Results indicated that teachers in District III generally demonstrated high levels of educational lifestyle, particularly in self-directed learning and active participation in professional development activities. The collaborative environment was found to be moderately strong, with frequent peer support and shared instructional planning, although some logistical challenges limited deeper collaboration. Instructional competence was rated as competent across all measured domains, with notable strengths in content knowledge and curriculum planning. Statistical analyses revealed significant positive correlations between both educational lifestyle and collaborative environment with instructional competence. Regression analysis identified educational lifestyle as the strongest predictor of instructional competence, followed by collaborative environment. These significance underscore the importance of fostering lifelong learning habits and meaningful collaboration to enhance teacher effectiveness and educational outcomes in the region.

Keywords: educational lifestyle, collaboration, instructional competence, teachers, Bukidnon

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Teacher instructional competence was widely acknowledged as a critical determinant of educational quality and student success across the globe. The capacity of teachers to effectively deliver content, engage learners, and adapt to diverse classroom contexts directly influenced the learning outcomes of students and the overall performance of education systems. However, despite decades of educational reforms and investments, instructional competence among teachers remained a persistent challenge worldwide. According to UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report (2024), many countries had grappled with systemic issues such as inadequate teacher preparation, limited access to continuous professional development, and insufficient institutional support structures. These deficiencies contributed to inconsistent instructional quality and undermined efforts to achieve equitable and effective education for all learners.

The gravity of this problem was further underscored by the World Education Forum (2023), which highlighted that teacher competence gaps were a major bottleneck in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on quality education. The report emphasized that without addressing these gaps, student learning stagnation

and dropout rates would persist, especially in marginalized communities. This created a domino effect poorly prepared teachers led to ineffective instruction, which in turn resulted in low student engagement, poor academic performance, and ultimately, diminished opportunities for learners to thrive in an increasingly knowledge-driven economy.

Even in countries with advanced educational infrastructures, challenges to instructional competence persisted. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2019) reported that many teachers struggled with classroom management, differentiating instruction to meet diverse learner needs, and integrating technology effectively. These challenges were often exacerbated by insufficient access to teaching resources and limited opportunities for collaborative learning among educators. The OECD further noted that these inadequacies not only affected teacher performance but also contributed to teacher burnout and attrition, thereby perpetuating a cycle of instructional instability.

In the Philippine setting, these global challenges manifested with particular intensity. Despite numerous policy initiatives aimed at improving teacher quality, such as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 and the K to 12 curriculum reform, disparities in instructional competence remained widespread (Department of Education, 2021). The National Center for Education Statistics (2022) reported significant regional variations in teacher effectiveness, with rural and under-resourced areas facing the greatest challenges. Teachers in many public schools contended with large class sizes, frequent curriculum revisions, and a chronic shortage of instructional materials, all of which hindered their ability to deliver dynamic and responsive instruction (Bautista et al., 2023; Dela Cruz & Ramos, 2022).

Moreover, while the Department of Education (DepEd) institutionalized continuous professional development and collaborative activities through policies such as DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016, and DepEd Order No. 22, s. 2023, the practical implementation of these policies often fell short. Time constraints, limited funding, and uneven administrative support impeded teachers' meaningful participation in professional learning communities and collaborative initiatives (Department of Education, 2023; 2024). This gap between policy and practice left many teachers ill-equipped to meet the evolving demands of their profession, thereby perpetuating instructional challenges.

At the local level, particularly in the Division of Bukidnon, these national and international trends were clearly reflected. Teachers in this region reported limited access to professional development opportunities and irregular engagement in collaborative activities such as Learning Action Cells (LACs), which were designed to foster peer learning and instructional improvement. Studies showed that structured collaboration among teachers significantly enhanced instructional practices and student achievement by enabling the sharing of best practices, collective problem-solving, and mutual support (Ronfeldt et al., 2015; Vangrieken et al., 2017). However, in Bukidnon, many teachers collaborated only sporadically, often due to logistical challenges and competing responsibilities.

Recent DepEd directives, including DM No. 001, s. 2024, which introduced initiatives like Catch-Up Fridays and collaborative expertise sessions, aimed to address these gaps by institutionalizing time for teacher collaboration and professional growth. Yet, these initiatives had not been fully integrated into the daily routines of many teachers in the division, highlighting the persistent divide between policy formulation and classroom realities (Department of Education, 2023; 2024). This disconnect underscored the urgent need to identify and understand the factors that could effectively enhance instructional competence in this context.

On the other hand, emerging research pointed to the potential of two interrelated factors-educational lifestyle and collaborative environment-in bridging this gap and fostering instructional competence. Educational lifestyle referred to the habits, attitudes, and behaviors that teachers adopted toward their professional growth and learning. It encompassed self-directed learning, active participation in professional development, and engagement in educational communities. Opfer and Pedder (2011) argued that teachers who cultivated a proactive educational lifestyle were more adaptable, innovative, and resilient in their teaching practices. Similarly, Pangandaman et al. (2023) found that teachers who engaged continuously in lifelong learning and professional development were better equipped to implement new pedagogical strategies, integrate technology, and respond effectively to diverse learner needs.

Complementing this, a strong collaborative environment within schools was shown to enhance instructional competence by fostering peer support, shared planning, and collective problem-solving. Ronfeldt et al. (2015) emphasized that collaboration among teachers not only improved instructional practices but also built collective efficacy, which positively influenced student outcomes. Vangrieken et al. (2017) further highlighted that collaborative environments encouraged reflective practice and continuous improvement, which were essential for sustaining high levels of instructional competence.

Recognizing these insights, the present study adopted a strengths-based perspective to investigate how educational lifestyle and collaborative environment influenced teachers' instructional competence in the Division of Bukidnon. By examining these variables, the study aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of how teachers' professional behaviors and workplace interactions contributed to their instructional effectiveness. This approach aligned with current educational priorities that emphasized teacher agency, professional learning communities, and systemic support as key drivers of instructional improvement.

Specifically, this study sought to assess the levels of teachers' educational lifestyle and collaborative environment, explore their relationships with instructional competence across critical domains such as content knowledge, pedagogy, curriculum planning, assessment, and professional growth, and identify the most significant predictors of instructional competence. Through this inquiry, the study aimed to generate actionable recommendations that could inform targeted professional development programs and collaborative initiatives tailored to the unique context of Bukidnon.

Ultimately, this research aspired to bridge the gap between existing challenges and the desired state of enhanced teacher competence and improved student outcomes. By illuminating the pathways through which educational lifestyle and collaborative environment impacted instructional competence, the study contributed to the broader discourse on teacher quality and educational reform in the Philippines and beyond.

Statement of the Problem

This research aimed to examine the relationship between teachers' educational lifestyles and collaborative environments on their instructional competence among teachers in the Department of Education of the Division of Bukidnon. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of the educational lifestyle of teachers in terms of:

a. self-directed learning;

b. participation in professional development; and

c. engagement in educational communities?

2. What is the level of the collaborative environment of teachers in terms of:

a. peer support and feedback;

b. shared planning and teaching; and

c. collective problem-solving?

3. What is the level of the instructional competence of teachers in terms of:

a. content knowledge and pedagogy;

b. learning environment;

c. diversity of learners;

d. curriculum and planning;

e. assessment and reporting;

f. community linkages and professional engagement; and

g. personal growth and professional development?

4. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' instructional competence and:

a. Educational Lifestyle?

b. Collaborative Environment?

5. Which variable, either singly or in combination, best predicted the instructional competence of teachers?

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence in the Department of Education of the Division of Bukidnon. Specifically, it aimed to:

1. Assess the level of the educational lifestyle of teachers in terms of:

a. self-directed learning;

b. participation in professional development; and

c. engagement in educational communities.

2. Describe the level of the collaborative environment of teachers in terms of:

a. peer support and feedback;

b. shared planning and teaching; and

c. collective problem-solving.

3. Determine the level of the instructional competence of teachers in terms of:

a. content knowledge and pedagogy;

b. learning environment;

c. diversity of learners;

d. curriculum and planning;

e. assessment and reporting;

f. community linkages and professional engagement; and

g. personal growth and professional development.

4. Correlate the relationships influencing instructional competence and:

a. Educational Lifestyle; and

b. Collaborative Environment.

5. Identify which variable, singly or in combination, best predicted the instructional competence of teachers.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lay in its potential to address critical gaps in understanding how educational lifestyle and collaborative environments influenced teachers' instructional competence within the Department of Education (DepEd), Division of Bukidnon. Teacher instructional competence served as a cornerstone of effective education, directly impacting student outcomes and overall school performance. However, challenges such as limited collaboration and inconsistent professional development opportunities hindered the full realization of teacher potential. This research offered actionable insights to enhance teacher quality and instructional effectiveness, benefiting multiple stakeholders.

For DepEd policymakers and administrators, the findings provided a foundation for creating policies that addressed gaps in teacher instructional competence. By understanding how lifelong learning practices and collaborative approaches contributed to teacher effectiveness, they were able to design targeted initiatives such as mentoring programs or enhanced Learning Action Cells (LACs). These efforts helped bridge administrative-teacher divides, foster equity-oriented practices, and improve teacher quality across the DepEd Division of Bukidnon.

For teachers and school leaders, the study identified predictors of instructional competence, enabling them to pinpoint areas for growth and implement collaborative structures that enhanced job satisfaction and retention. These insights guided the creation of supportive environments that encouraged teamwork, professional development, and improved instructional practices within schools.

For students and communities, enhanced teacher competence translated to better instructional practices, which benefited students through tailored learning experiences. Additionally, strengthened community linkages fostered parental engagement and resource mobilization, creating a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

Finally, for future researchers, this study provided a foundation for developing frameworks in collaborative leadership and innovative professional development strategies. The findings offered replicable models adaptable to other regions or contexts, advancing knowledge in teacher development and instructional competence. By addressing these areas, this research contributed significantly to bridging the gap between existing challenges in teacher effectiveness and the desired outcomes of improved educational systems and student success.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The target respondents of this study were the teachers of District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The study determined the relationships between teachers' educational lifestyles, collaborative environments, and instructional competence within the Department of Education (DepEd), Division of Bukidnon. The research focused on full-time public school teachers in Bukidnon's DepEd division, excluding private school educators and non-teaching staff. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire aligned with these indicators, aiming to identify relationships between variables and determine the most effective predictors of instructional competence.

The study was confined to public school teachers in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon, which limited the generalizability of the findings to other regions or educational systems. It employed a quantitative, correlational design that did not establish causal relationships between variables. While the research identified predictors of instructional competence, it did not explore specific interventions or mechanisms that might improve teacher effectiveness. Additionally, the study excluded qualitative data due to time and resource constraints, focusing solely on self-reported responses. This reliance on self-reported data introduced potential biases, such as social desirability bias or response bias, which may have influenced the accuracy of the results.

Definition of Terms

To ensure clarity and consistency, the following terms are defined as they relate to this study, which examines educational lifestyle, collaborative environments, and instructional competence.They are arranged in alphabetical order to make an easy reference.

Assessment and reporting, refers to teachers' practices in evaluating student learning outcomes and effectively communicating progress to stakeholders, including students, parents, and administrators.

Collaborative environment, encompasses teachers' perceptions of support, shared planning, teamwork, and collective problem-solving within their school setting, fostering professional growth and instructional improvement.

Collective efficacy, refers to the shared belief among teachers that their collaborative efforts can positively influence student achievement within their school community.

Community linkages and professional engagement, refers to the degree to which teachers actively involve families, community members, and participate in professional networks to enhance educational outcomes.

Content knowledge and pedagogy, represents teachers' self-reported understanding of their subject matter and their ability to deliver effective instruction tailored to diverse learners.

Curriculum and planning, refers to the extent to which teachers use standardized curriculum frameworks and develop instructional plans that align with learning objectives.

Diversity of learners, indicates the extent to which teachers understand individual differences among students and adapt their teaching strategies to meet diverse needs.

Educational lifestyle, refers to teachers' engagement in self-directed learning, ongoing professional development, and active participation in educational communities that support lifelong learning.

Instructional competence, encompasses teachers' overall effectiveness in facilitating student learning through mastery of content knowledge, curriculum planning, community engagement, and other teaching domains.

Learning environment, refers to teachers' ability to establish a positive, inclusive, and engaging classroom climate that promotes student participation and academic success.

Peer support and feedback, highlights teachers' perception of the availability of constructive feedback and support from colleagues to improve teaching practices.

Personal growth and professional development, represents teachers' pursuit of continuous learning through reflective practice, skill enhancement activities, and professional growth opportunities.

Professional networks, represents organized groups or associations where educators share resources, strategies, and experiences to enhance instructional practices.

Reflective practice, refers to teachers' systematic evaluation of their own teaching methods and strategies for continuous improvement in instructional competence.

Self-directed learning (SDL), refers to teachers' initiative in planning, implementing, and evaluating their own learning processes to adapt to evolving educational demands.

Theoretical Framework

This research explored the relationship between teachers' educational lifestyle and collaborative environment and their instructional competence. Several sub-variables contributed to these primary constructs. The following section reviewed the relevant literature on these sub-variables, discussing current research and potential future directions.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This study examined the relationship between educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence among teachers, focusing on sub-variables such as self-directed learning, peer

support, and curriculum planning. The review of related literature and studies provided a comprehensive understanding of these concepts, drawing on theoretical perspectives and empirical findings to contextualize the research.

Educational Lifestyle

The concept of educational lifestyle among teachers has been increasingly explored in recent years, particularly in relation to teacher well-being, work-life balance, and professional development. A systematic review by Zhang et al. (2024) highlights the growing interest in teacher well-being (TWB) research, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, when teachers faced unprecedented challenges such as adapting to online teaching and managing health concerns. Future studies will likely focus on interventions to improve TWB, such as mental health services and workload management, which are critical for fostering a supportive educational environment. Richter et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of promoting teacher well-being as it directly impacts job satisfaction and retention. Future research will need to explore how school climates and organizational support systems can be optimized to enhance teachers' physical, mental, and social well-being. This aligns with findings that mentoring programs could play a pivotal role in helping teachers navigate stressors and improve their overall lifestyle.

Additionally, the work of Lau et al. (2022) suggests that balancing work-life demands is essential for sustaining teacher effectiveness. As teachers often struggle with anxiety and burnout, future investigations will likely focus on identifying coping mechanisms tailored to specific teaching fields, such as special education or STEM disciplines. These studies could guide policymakers in creating targeted interventions to address the unique needs of diverse teacher groups.

Finally, the findings from MacIntyre et al. (2022) suggest that organizational-level factors such as professional development opportunities and societal support significantly affect teacher well-being. Future studies will aim to investigate how these factors can be integrated into broader educational policies to enhance teacher lifestyles holistically. By addressing these areas, researchers can contribute to sustainable improvements in the quality of education systems globally.

Self-Directed learning

Self-directed learning (SDL) among teachers has gained significant attention in recent research, emphasizing its role in fostering autonomy and professional growth. Louws et al. (2017) explored how teachers actively engage in SDL by determining their learning goals and activities based on autonomous motivations. Their study revealed that teaching experience influences SDL preferences, with early- and late-career teachers prioritizing classroom management more than mid-career teachers. This insight is valuable for tailoring professional development programs to meet the needs of educators at different stages of their careers. Liberating and Oppressive Factors for Self-Directed Learning (2023) conducted a systematic review to identify factors that either promote or hinder SDL, highlighting the importance of supportive social, cultural, and institutional environments.

This research underscores the need for creating conditions that empower teachers to take charge of their learning, which can enhance their adaptability and effectiveness in the classroom. Chukwunemerem (2023) examined SDL activities in the context of university students but provided relevant insights for teachers as lifelong learners. The study demonstrated that SDL fosters active engagement, personal responsibility, and critical thinking skills—principles that are equally applicable to educators seeking to innovate and improve their teaching practices. Knowles et al. (2015) outlined the phases of SDL, including needs assessment, planning, engagement, and evaluation, and argued that treating teachers as capable of self-direction enhances their motivation and engagement in professional learning. This theoretical framework is instrumental in designing teacher development programs that respect educators' autonomy and encourage reflective practices.

Finally, Self-Directed Learning Research: An Imperative for Transforming Education emphasized the transformative potential of SDL in reshaping educational landscapes, advocating for research-driven approaches to empower educators as self-directed learners who can adapt to evolving pedagogical demands.

Together, these studies provide a comprehensive understanding of SDL among teachers, offering theoretical frameworks, empirical insights, and actionable strategies that can inform ongoing research and support the continuous professional growth of educators.

Participation in professional development

Teacher participation in professional development is essential for enhancing instructional practices, fostering professional growth, and improving student outcomes. Hilton et al. (2015) investigated the impact of school leaders' co-participation in teacher professional development programs. Their study demonstrated that when school leaders actively engage alongside teachers, it creates a supportive "Change Environment" that fosters reflection and enactment of new practices. Teachers reported increased confidence in applying innovative strategies, while leaders gained insights into how to better support their staff. This research underscores the importance of collaborative leadership in promoting meaningful teacher participation and sustained professional growth.

Learning Policy Institute (2017) reviewed 35 methodologically rigorous studies to identify features of effective professional development. The report highlighted active learning, collaboration, sustained duration, and alignment with curriculum goals as essential components. These features were shown to positively influence teacher practices and student achievement. This study provides actionable strategies for designing professional development programs that encourage teacher participation and lead to measurable improvements in education.

Njenga (2023) proposed a theoretical framework for understanding teacher participation in continuing professional development (CPD). The study emphasized the interplay between personal motivation, institutional support, and external incentives in driving teacher engagement. It suggested that CPD programs should address both intrinsic factors, such as career aspirations, and extrinsic factors like recognition and resources. This framework offers insights into tailoring professional development initiatives to maximize teacher involvement.

Tandfonline (2020) explored context-specific, collaborative, and teacher-driven professional development models. The study found that programs allowing teachers to co-create strategies and share expertise within their unique educational contexts are more effective in fostering engagement. Teachers reported feeling empowered to take ownership of their learning, which enhanced their motivation to participate actively in professional development activities.

EPI (2020) examined the role of early career supports and continuous professional development in addressing teacher shortages. The report highlighted that learning communities provide essential mentorship opportunities and collaborative spaces for teachers to share best practices. Early-career teachers who participated in these communities demonstrated higher retention rates and greater confidence in their teaching abilities. This research underscores the importance of creating supportive environments to sustain teacher participation in professional development.

These studies collectively highlight the critical role of structured, collaborative, and context-specific professional development programs in encouraging teacher participation. They emphasize the need for leadership support, tailored frameworks, and sustained efforts to create environments where teachers feel motivated and empowered to engage actively in their professional growth. This body of research informs strategies for designing impactful initiatives that benefit both educators and students alike.

Engagement in educational communities

Teacher engagement in educational communities recent research emphasizing its role in fostering collaboration, professional growth, and improved student outcomes. Frontiers in Education (2024) explored the use of Lesson Study as a model for developing teacher communities. This study, conducted in two schools, demonstrated how successive cycles of Lesson Study helped teachers collaborate on curriculum planning, share pedagogical practices, and navigate differences of opinion constructively. The findings revealed that Lesson Study fosters communal responsibility for individual growth, strengthens teacher identity, and encourages reflection on teaching practices. This research highlights the potential of structured collaborative

models to build cohesive teacher communities and enhance professional development. McLaughlin and Talbert (2016) examined the role of research engagement among school teachers within educational communities. The study found that when teachers actively participate in research-based practices and discussions, they develop a deeper understanding of pedagogical methods and contribute to a culture of continuous learning. This engagement not only benefits individual teachers but also strengthens the collective capacity of educational communities to address challenges and implement reforms effectively. Tandfonline (2020) focused on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and their engagement with research to bridge the gap between pedagogy and practice. The study emphasized that teacher participation in collaborative research initiatives fosters a nexus between theoretical knowledge and classroom application. By engaging with peers in reflective practices and co-developing strategies, teachers enhance their instructional approaches while contributing to a shared vision for student success. Baricaua Gutierrez (2016) investigated the impact of collaborative environments on science teachers' professional development through Lesson Study. The findings highlighted that participation in such communities promotes shared values, collective creativity, and a common vision for teaching. This collaborative approach also helps educators adapt to curriculum reforms and implement innovative teaching strategies more effectively.

Lastly, The University of Aberdeen (2016) explored research engagement as a tool for fostering teacher collaboration within educational communities. The study emphasized that when teachers engage with academic research and apply evidence-based practices collectively, they build stronger professional networks. These networks support the exchange of ideas, foster mutual accountability, and enhance both teaching quality and student outcomes. These studies collectively demonstrate that teacher engagement in educational communities is essential for fostering collaboration, professional growth, and innovation. They provide actionable insights into how structured models like Lesson Study and research-based practices can strengthen teacher communities, improve instructional quality, and create a culture of shared responsibility for educational success.

Collaborative Environment

Teacher collaboration in educational environment plays a crucial role in fostering professional growth, enhancing teaching practices, and improving student outcomes. Recent research has provided valuable insights into the impact of collaborative environments on teachers and their work. The OECD TALIS report (2018) highlights that collaborative school environments contribute significantly to improved teaching quality. Activities such as team teaching, mentoring, joint class activities, and peer feedback are associated with increased teacher self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and active teaching practices. These findings underscore the importance of frequent collaboration in creating a virtuous cycle of professional learning and student engagement. Burton (2015) conducted a qualitative study exploring the impact of teacher collaboration on learning and development in a rural elementary school. The study identified shared goals, teacher efficacy, and positive interdependence as key factors in effective collaboration. It also emphasized the role of school leadership in fostering collaborative relationships and providing resources to support these efforts. This research demonstrates how collaboration enhances instructional practices and builds a culture of continuous improvement. Schleifer et al. (2017) examined the challenges and benefits of fostering teacher collaboration within schools. Their guide to research highlighted that schools structured for collaboration—rather than isolation—achieve better student academic outcomes. Collaborative environments allow teachers to share expertise, coordinate lessons, analyze data, and develop innovative strategies. However, the study also noted challenges such as costs, sustainability, and potential marginalization of certain teachers or students. These findings provide actionable strategies for transforming schools into collaborative workplaces. Tandfonline (2023) explored teacher collaboration in inclusive education settings, focusing on differentiated instruction as a product of exchange and co-construction among educators. The study found that synchronized efforts among teachers lead to more effective implementation of inclusive practices, benefiting diverse learners. This highlights the importance of structured collaboration in addressing the needs of all students while fostering professional growth.

Finally, UNESCO (2022) emphasized developing teachers' research and collaborative capacity through curriculum reform in teacher education programs. The study advocates for embedding collaborative practices into teacher training to prepare educators for dynamic educational environments. By fostering co-construction

of knowledge during training, teachers gain the skills necessary to engage effectively with peers in professional settings. These studies collectively demonstrate that teacher collaboration is essential for building supportive professional environments that enhance teaching quality and student outcomes. They provide actionable insights into designing effective collaborative practices, emphasizing shared goals, leadership support, and structured frameworks that promote continuous learning and innovation among educators.

Peer support and feedback

Peer support and feedback among teachers have been widely studied in recent years, highlighting their role in fostering professional growth, collaboration, and improved teaching practices. Frontiers in Psychology (2023) explored the features of peer feedback in educational settings, particularly in writing classrooms. The study found that peer feedback supplements teacher feedback by identifying areas for improvement, fostering collaborative learning, and raising awareness of learning goals. However, it noted that peer feedback often focuses on identifying issues rather than providing detailed solutions or suggestions, which could limit its impact. This research underscores the need for structured training to enhance the quality of peer feedback among teachers, ensuring it is both constructive and actionable. Tandfonline (2023) examined the experiences of students with peer feedback in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and mathematics classrooms. Although focused on students, the findings are relevant to teachers as they highlight how peer feedback fosters self-efficacy, self-monitoring, and enjoyment while reducing anxiety. For teachers, these benefits translate into a supportive professional environment where peers can collaborate to refine instructional strategies and build confidence in their teaching practices. PMC (2021) investigated the interaction between teacher feedback and peer group dynamics in classroom engagement. The study revealed that positive teacher feedback combined with engaged peer groups significantly enhances classroom engagement. While this research primarily focuses on students, it provides valuable insights for teachers engaged in peer support systems. Teachers working in collaborative environments can similarly benefit from positive reinforcement and shared accountability, leading to improved professional performance. Tandfonline (2021) explored the relationship between teacher feedback and students' social acceptance, well-being, and emotions. The study emphasized that constructive feedback fosters a positive atmosphere conducive to learning. When applied to teachers, this principle suggests that peer feedback can enhance professional relationships by promoting trust, mutual respect, and emotional well-being within educational communities.

Finally, UNESCO (2022) emphasized the role of collaborative environments in teacher training programs. It advocated for embedding peer support and feedback mechanisms into teacher education to prepare educators for dynamic classroom environments. This approach ensures that teachers develop the skills necessary to engage effectively with their peers, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. These studies collectively demonstrate that peer support and feedback are essential for creating collaborative professional environments that enhance teaching quality and foster personal growth among educators. They provide actionable insights into designing effective peer feedback systems by emphasizing structured training, mutual respect, and shared accountability, ultimately contributing to improved educational outcomes.

Shared planning and teaching

Teacher shared planning and teaching have been increasingly recognized as essential practices for enhancing instructional quality, fostering collaboration, and improving student outcomes. Learning Policy Institute (2017) emphasized the importance of shared planning and collaboration in improving teacher effectiveness. The study found that stability and structured collaboration help teachers refine their instructional strategies and adapt to curriculum changes more effectively. This research underscores the value of creating supportive environments where teachers can engage in collective problem-solving and share best practices, ultimately enhancing both teaching quality and student learning. Tandfonline (2016) examined the effects of teacher collaboration in curriculum design teams, revealing that collaborative planning positively impacts professional development and curriculum implementation. Teachers who engage in joint design processes develop a deeper understanding of curriculum goals and are better equipped to address diverse student needs. This study highlights the importance of fostering collaborative spaces where teachers can co-create instructional materials and align teaching practices with educational objectives. Tandfonline (2024) explored research-practice partnerships designed to support teacher professional development through shared planning. The study

demonstrated that collaborative efforts between researchers and educators enhance teachers' ability to integrate evidence-based practices into their instruction. This approach not only improves teaching effectiveness but also strengthens the connection between research and practice, ensuring that instructional strategies are grounded in current educational theories.

DepEd (2025) introduced interim guidelines for performance monitoring and evaluation, emphasizing the role of shared planning in meeting curriculum and assessment requirements. The guidelines highlight that teachers who engage in collaborative planning are better able to design and implement focused teaching programs that align with learning objectives. This research underscores the importance of structured planning processes in ensuring consistency and coherence in instructional delivery. Frontiers in Education (2023) investigated the challenges of blended learning, including the role of collaborative planning in addressing technological and instructional barriers. The study found that joint planning helps teachers align learning objectives with activities and materials, fostering a more holistic approach to instruction. However, it also noted that collaborative planning can be time-consuming, requiring institutional support to ensure its sustainability. These studies collectively demonstrate the critical role of shared planning and teaching in enhancing instructional competence and fostering professional growth. They highlight the importance of creating collaborative environments, providing institutional support, and aligning planning processes with curriculum goals. By addressing these factors, schools can empower teachers to work together effectively, ultimately improving both teaching practices and student outcomes.

Collective Problem-Solving

Teachers' collective problem-solving has been a focal area in recent educational research, emphasizing its significance in fostering collaboration, innovation, and improved teaching practices. Computers & Education (2022) explored student teachers' collaborative problem-solving processes using Epistemic Network Analysis (ENA). The study revealed that high-performing groups engaged in negotiating ideas and maintaining positive communication, while low-performing groups focused on sharing resources and regulating problem-solving activities. These findings highlight the importance of fostering negotiation and idea exchange among teachers to enhance collective problem-solving efforts. This research provides insights into designing collaborative learning environments that promote dynamic and interactive problem-solving processes. Jigsaw and Case Study Approaches in CSCL Contexts (2022) examined structured collaborative activities to support online learning. The study emphasized the effectiveness of methods like Jigsaw and case studies in fostering discussion, exchange, and collaboration among participants. For teachers, these strategies can be adapted to facilitate collective problem-solving by encouraging diverse perspectives and structured teamwork. This research underscores the role of structured collaboration in enhancing problem-solving skills within educational communities.

Teachers' Pedagogical Designs for Technology-Supported Inquiry (2022) analyzed how Finnish teachers implemented inquiry-based learning units to promote collective student inquiry. The study demonstrated that technology-supported collaborative environments enable teachers to design and execute collective problem-solving tasks effectively. This research highlights the potential of integrating technology into teaching practices to enhance collaboration and collective inquiry among educators. Strategies for Collaborative Writing in CSCL Environments (2021) identified phases of knowledge construction in computer-supported collaborative learning environments. The study found that collaborative writing fosters critical thinking, shared responsibility, and deeper engagement with content. These findings are applicable to teachers working collectively on curriculum development or pedagogical strategies, as collaborative writing serves as a tool for refining ideas and addressing challenges collectively.

Finally, Case Studies on Collective Inquiry in Primary Education (2020) demonstrated how collective inquiry processes enhance collaboration among educators by promoting shared goals and mutual accountability. Teachers who engage in collective inquiry benefit from exchanging expertise, refining instructional strategies, and addressing classroom challenges collaboratively. This research provides actionable strategies for fostering collective problem-solving within educational teams. These studies collectively emphasize the importance of structured collaboration, technology integration, and interactive strategies in enhancing teachers' collective

problem-solving abilities. They provide a foundation for designing professional development programs that foster dynamic teamwork, negotiation skills, and shared accountability among educators, ultimately benefiting both teaching practices and student outcomes.

Instructional Competence

Teacher instructional competence of recent educational research, emphasizing its crucial role in enhancing student learning outcomes and overall educational quality. Kunter et al. (2013) conducted a comprehensive study investigating various aspects of teachers' professional competence, including pedagogical content knowledge, professional beliefs, work-related motivation, and self-regulation. Their findings revealed that teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, enthusiasm for teaching, and self-regulatory skills positively impacted instructional quality, which in turn affected student outcomes. This research underscores the multidimensional nature of teacher competence and its direct influence on classroom effectiveness. Frontiers in Education (2023) explored the development of four key competencies for teacher educators in Vietnam, highlighting the importance of knowledge and skills, ethical manner, motivation, and self-reflection. The study emphasized the need for contextual competency, particularly in developing countries undergoing educational reforms. This research provides valuable insights into the complex nature of teacher competencies and the importance of continuous professional development in response to changing educational demands. Tandfonline (2023) synthesized reviews of empirical studies on teacher education effectiveness published over three decades (1993-2023). This meta-analysis highlighted the emergence of teacher education effectiveness as a research paradigm, emphasizing the importance of evidence-based practices in developing teacher competencies. The study provides a comprehensive overview of the evolving understanding of effective teacher education and its impact on instructional competence.

Emerald Insight (2022) reviewed research on teacher competencies in higher education, focusing on the changing landscape of teaching and learning in tertiary institutions. The study identified key competencies required for effective instruction in higher education settings, including technological proficiency, adaptability, and interdisciplinary knowledge. This research contributes to our understanding of the specific competencies needed for teaching at different educational levels. Tandfonline (2023) examined teacher curriculum competence, exploring how teachers act in curriculum making. This study highlights the importance of teachers' ability to interpret, adapt, and implement curricula effectively, emphasizing the dynamic nature of instructional competence in relation to curriculum development and implementation.

These studies collectively demonstrate the multifaceted nature of teacher instructional competence and its critical role in educational effectiveness. They provide valuable insights into the development of teacher competencies, the impact of these competencies on student outcomes, and the importance of context-specific approaches to teacher education and professional development.

Content knowledge and pedagogy

Teacher content knowledge and pedagogy are critical components of effective teaching, as they enable educators to deliver subject matter in ways that enhance student understanding and engagement. Shulman’s foundational work on Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) continues to influence contemporary studies, highlighting the intersection of subject matter knowledge and pedagogical strategies. Shulman defined PCK as the ability of teachers to transform subject matter into teachable formats tailored to students’ needs, incorporating elements such as curriculum knowledge, teaching strategies, and understanding of learners’ misconceptions. This concept remains central to discussions about teacher competence, as it underscores the need for educators to balance deep content knowledge with effective pedagogical approaches.

A systematic review by Frontiers in Education (2023) explored the development of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) through Lesson Study. TPACK extends Shulman’s framework by integrating technological knowledge into pedagogy and content knowledge. The review found that Lesson Study provides contextualized opportunities for teachers to self-assess and develop innovative teaching strategies using technology. This research highlights how TPACK equips educators with the skills needed to adapt their

teaching methods to modern digital environments, fostering both teacher growth and student engagement. Evaluating teachers' PCK in classroom-based assessment was the focus of a case study among ESL secondary school teachers in Malaysia (2023). The study revealed that teachers with strong PCK were better equipped to implement assessments that align with curriculum goals while addressing students' learning needs. It emphasized the importance of ongoing professional development to enhance teachers' ability to integrate assessment practices into their instructional strategies effectively. Tandfonline (2018) examined science teachers' amalgamation of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and PCK. The study demonstrated that teachers who successfully integrate these domains are more capable of addressing complex scientific concepts in ways that resonate with students. It also highlighted the dynamic nature of PCK, which evolves with teaching experience and exposure to diverse classroom contexts.

Finally, The Institute for Learning and Teaching (2024) emphasized the role of PCK in bridging theory and practice. It argued that effective teaching requires not only mastery of subject matter but also an understanding of how students learn specific concepts within diverse educational settings. This research underscores the importance of equipping teachers with tools to adapt their pedagogy to various student needs and cultural contexts.

These studies collectively demonstrate that integrating content knowledge with pedagogy is essential for effective teaching. They provide actionable insights into professional development strategies that enhance teachers' ability to adapt instruction, leverage technology, implement assessments, and address diverse student needs—all contributing to improved educational outcomes.

Learning environment

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping learning environments that foster inclusivity, engagement, and academic success. Munna and Kalam (2021) conducted a literature review on teaching and learning processes, emphasizing the importance of interactive and inclusive environments. Their findings revealed that active learning strategies, such as role-play and formative feedback, significantly enhance student confidence and engagement. The study also highlighted the need for teachers to adapt their methods to accommodate diverse learning styles, promoting inclusivity and reducing barriers to education. This research underscores the importance of tailoring teaching practices to meet the needs of all learners. Emerald Insight (2020) examined teachers' capacity to create inclusive learning environments, focusing on strategies for addressing diverse student needs. The study identified key practices such as differentiated instruction, collaborative activities, and culturally responsive teaching as essential for fostering inclusivity. It emphasized that professional development programs should equip teachers with the skills to implement these strategies effectively, ensuring equitable access to education for all students. Afzal et al. (2021) explored the role of blended and experiential learning approaches in enhancing classroom engagement. Their research demonstrated that combining online and offline learning methods not only improves student participation but also helps teachers address individual learning barriers. By incorporating a variety of teaching tools and resources, educators can create dynamic environments that cater to auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners. This study highlights the importance of flexibility and innovation in designing effective learning environments. UNESCO (2022) emphasized the role of teacher training in building inclusive classrooms. The study advocated for integrating inclusive education principles into teacher education programs, enabling educators to identify and address barriers to learning effectively. It also highlighted the importance of fostering positive teacher-student relationships to create supportive and engaging classroom atmospheres.

Finally, Tandfonline (2019) investigated the impact of classroom design on student outcomes. The study found that well-structured physical and social environments significantly enhance student engagement and academic performance. Teachers who actively involve students in co-creating classroom norms and activities foster a sense of belonging and ownership among learners, contributing to a positive educational experience. These studies collectively emphasize the critical role teachers play in creating inclusive and engaging learning environments. They provide actionable insights into strategies such as differentiated instruction, active learning, professional development, and collaborative classroom design—all of which are essential for addressing diverse learner needs and promoting equitable education outcomes.

Diversity of learners

Teachers' ability to address the diversity of learners has been a focal point of recent educational research, emphasizing strategies that promote inclusivity, engagement, and equitable learning outcomes. Munna and Kalam (2021) highlighted the importance of interactive and inclusive teaching methods, such as role-play and formative feedback, to cater to diverse learning styles. Their research underscores the need for teachers to adapt their practices to ensure all students, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, can participate meaningfully in the learning process. This approach fosters a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment. Edutopia (2015) explored differentiated instruction as a framework for addressing diverse learners in mixed-ability classrooms. The study emphasized the teacher's role in connecting content, process, and product to students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. By offering varied instructional methods—such as videos, graphic organizers, and hands-on activities—teachers can create flexible learning experiences that resonate with different learners. This research highlights the importance of tailoring instruction to meet individual needs while maintaining high academic standards. Smigielski (2025) examined the growing need for cultural competence and inclusive strategies in teacher preparation programs. With the increasing diversity of student populations, the study emphasized the importance of equipping teachers with skills to address special needs, cultural differences, and emotional intelligence. It advocated for continuous professional development to help teachers implement inclusive practices effectively, ensuring all students have equitable access to learning opportunities. Grand Canyon University (2022) identified practical strategies for supporting diverse learners, including providing lesson previews, encouraging collaborative discussions, and extending learning opportunities. These approaches help students engage with content at their own pace while fostering a sense of belonging and confidence in the classroom. This research emphasizes the role of scaffolding and differentiation in creating accessible and meaningful learning experiences.

Finally, ERIC (2020) investigated the relationship between learning styles and teaching strategies, highlighting the effectiveness of cooperative learning, deductive and inductive approaches, and integrative methods in addressing diverse learners. The study found that teachers who employ a variety of strategies can better accommodate different learning preferences, enhancing student engagement and academic success. These studies collectively demonstrate the critical role teachers play in addressing the diversity of learners. They provide actionable insights into differentiated instruction, cultural competence, collaborative learning, and adaptive teaching strategies, all of which are essential for creating inclusive and effective learning environments. This body of research informs ongoing efforts to prepare teachers for the complexities of modern classrooms, ensuring all students can thrive.

Curriculum and planning

Teacher curriculum and planning, emphasizing their critical role in shaping effective teaching practices and student outcomes. Frontiers in Education (2024) explored the role of teacher educators as curriculum developers, highlighting their ability to innovate and adapt syllabi to meet the needs of student teachers. The study revealed that teacher educators often face challenges such as limited resources and time constraints but overcome these through autonomy, collaboration, and continuous professional development. This research underscores the importance of flexibility and innovation in curriculum planning, which can enhance the quality of teacher education programs and better prepare educators for diverse classroom contexts. Edutopia (2015) provided practical insights into curriculum planning for new teachers, emphasizing the need for clear learning objectives, differentiated instruction, and formative assessments. The study highlighted that effective planning involves aligning lessons with curriculum standards while addressing individual student needs. This approach ensures that teachers can create engaging and inclusive learning experiences, fostering both academic and social growth among students. Wiley (2023) examined how primary teachers interpret and implement curriculum reforms, focusing on the Australian context. The study found that teachers' ability to translate curriculum frameworks into practice depends on their understanding of the content, pedagogical knowledge, and professional support. This research highlights the importance of providing teachers with adequate training and resources to effectively implement curriculum changes, ensuring that reforms translate into meaningful classroom practices.

DepEd (2025) introduced interim guidelines for performance monitoring and evaluation of teachers, emphasizing the role of lesson plans and assessment materials in curriculum implementation. The study highlighted that structured planning and evaluation tools can enhance teachers' instructional competence and accountability. This research provides a framework for integrating curriculum planning into professional development, ensuring that teachers are equipped to deliver high-quality education. Tandfonline (2023) explored teacher curriculum competence, focusing on how teachers interpret and act on curriculum materials. The study revealed that teachers' decision-making in curriculum planning is influenced by their professional knowledge, contextual understanding, and collaborative practices. This research underscores the importance of empowering teachers to adapt curricula to their specific contexts, fostering innovation and responsiveness in teaching practices.

These studies collectively demonstrate that effective curriculum and planning are essential for creating inclusive, engaging, and high-quality learning environments. They provide actionable insights into the challenges and strategies involved in curriculum development, emphasizing the importance of flexibility, professional support, and collaborative practices. This body of research informs ongoing efforts to enhance teacher preparation and curriculum implementation, ultimately benefiting both educators and students.

Assessment and reporting

Teacher assessment and reporting are essential components of effective education, enabling educators to evaluate learning outcomes and refine instructional practices. Benton and Young (2018) emphasized the importance of using multiple measures formal, informal, traditional, and authentic as part of a balanced evaluation system. Their research highlighted that integrating student feedback, self-assessment, and peer evaluation fosters a mastery-oriented approach to formative assessment. This process encourages teachers to focus on personal growth and improvement rather than fearing comparisons with others. By creating an environment that supports challenge and development, assessment becomes a rewarding experience that enhances teaching methods and skills. DeLuca et al. (2018) explored how teachers' values and beliefs influence their assessment practices. The study found that systemic policies and cultural contexts shape teachers' approaches to evidence collection and reporting. This research underscores the importance of aligning professional development initiatives with broader educational reforms to ensure consistency between classroom practices and policy expectations. Xu and Brown (2016) introduced the Teacher Assessment Literacy in Practice (TALIP) framework, which integrates cognitive traits, belief systems, and socio-cultural influences into assessment literacy. Their study highlighted the cyclical nature of assessment literacy development, emphasizing that teachers improve their practices through continuous learning and application. This framework supports educators in adapting assessments to diverse contexts while maintaining alignment with curriculum goals. Cowie et al. (2014) focused on formative assessments as tools for transforming learning goals into actionable activities that reflect student achievement. Their research demonstrated how formative data enables teachers to adjust instruction based on individual needs, ensuring assessments actively support student growth rather than merely measuring performance.

Finally, Gotch and McLean (2019) examined the impact of state-sponsored teacher development programs on improving assessment literacy. Their findings revealed that structured professional development significantly enhances teachers' ability to design assessments, interpret results, and report findings effectively. This research highlights the value of sustained support for educators in mastering complex assessment tasks. These studies collectively emphasize the multifaceted nature of teacher assessment and reporting competencies. They provide actionable insights into frameworks like TALIP, formative assessment strategies, and professional development programs that help educators navigate diverse contexts. By addressing gaps in training and aligning practices with systemic reforms, this body of research contributes to improving teaching quality and student outcomes.

Community linkages and professional engagement

Teacher community linkages and professional engagement have been increasingly recognized as crucial components of effective teaching practice and professional development. Green (2016) examined the impact of

place-based and community pedagogies on pre-service teachers' professional engagement. The study found that fieldwork experiences significantly enhanced student teachers' understanding of community resources and their potential for future teaching. This research underscores the value of integrating community-based learning experiences into teacher education programs to foster stronger connections between schools and their local communities. Drew et al. (2016) investigated a collaborative schools-university research initiative, which led to increased teacher agency and critical engagement with practice. The study highlighted how partnerships between schools and higher education institutions can promote teacher research engagement and professional development, fostering a more reflective and evidence-based approach to teaching. Cain (2015) reported on a project where teachers integrated research findings about gifted and talented pupils into their practice through semi-autonomous projects. This study demonstrated how teachers can effectively engage with and apply research in their classrooms, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

The Aberdeen University study (2016) discussed the importance of research engagement for teachers as part of their professional role. It argued that active forms of research engagement lead to better outcomes in terms of professional learning and skills development. The study also presented the establishment of a school-based research center as a model for increasing teachers' research engagement and community linkages.

These studies collectively emphasize the importance of fostering teacher community linkages and professional engagement through various means, including fieldwork experiences, school-university partnerships, and research engagement. They suggest that such initiatives can enhance teacher effectiveness, promote evidence-based practice, and strengthen connections between schools and their broader communities.

Personal growth and professional development

Teacher personal growth and professional development are essential for fostering effective teaching practices and improving student outcomes. Özer, Can, and Duran (2020) conducted a study to identify teachers' professional development needs and proposed an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). The research highlighted that professional development should be tailored to individual teachers' needs, combining formal and informal activities such as workshops, peer observation, and participation in professional networks. The study emphasized that personalized plans enhance teachers' ability to adapt to evolving educational demands while fostering both personal growth and professional competence. Learning Policy Institute (2017) reviewed 35 rigorous studies on effective teacher professional development. The report identified key features of successful initiatives, including active learning, collaboration, sustained duration, and alignment with curriculum goals. These features were shown to positively impact teaching practices and student achievement. This research underscores the importance of designing professional development programs that are both practical and transformative, helping teachers integrate new strategies into their classrooms effectively. Sims et al. (2021) proposed the IGTP model (Insights, Goal-directed behaviors, Techniques, Practice) for teacher professional development. Their meta-analysis revealed that programs incorporating mechanisms addressing these four dimensions are more effective in improving instructional practices and student outcomes. The study emphasized the need for professional development initiatives to focus on both skill acquisition and the embedding of these skills into daily teaching practice. Stone (2014) defined professional development as encompassing planned and unplanned efforts that contribute to both personal and professional growth. The study highlighted that voluntary participation in professional learning activities is often more impactful than mandated training sessions. Teachers who engage in self-directed learning opportunities tend to develop deeper insights into their practice and exhibit greater adaptability in addressing classroom challenges. Desimone et al. (2017) explored the role of collaborative learning communities in supporting teacher growth. Their research demonstrated that peer collaboration fosters reflective practices, enhances pedagogical knowledge, and builds a sense of shared accountability among educators. This approach strengthens both individual competencies and collective efficacy within schools.

These studies collectively demonstrate that teacher personal growth and professional development require a multifaceted approach combining individualization, collaboration, active learning, and sustained support. They provide actionable insights for designing programs that empower teachers to continuously improve their

instructional practices while fostering their personal growth, ultimately benefiting students and education systems alike.

Conceptual Framework

This study was anchored on the premise that enhancing teachers' instructional competence was vital for educational improvement, particularly within the Department of Education (DepEd) Division of Bukidnon. The research investigated how two key factors-educational lifestyle and collaborative environment-related to and potentially predicted teachers' instructional competence. By examining these relationships, the study sought to provide evidence-based recommendations for professional development and policy interventions that addressed existing gaps in teacher effectiveness. The framework integrated established educational theories to clarify the pathways through which self-directed growth and collaborative practices influenced teaching proficiency, as outlined in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers and recent DepEd directives.

The concept of educational lifestyle in this study was grounded in Malcolm Knowles' Adult Learning Theory (1975), which asserted that adults were self-directed learners who thrived when they had autonomy over their professional growth. Knowles posited that adult learners, such as teachers, were motivated by internal drives and learned best when they could relate new knowledge to their experiences. In the context of DepEd Bukidnon, this theory was operationalized through teachers' engagement in self-directed learning, participation in professional development (e.g., training on Catch-Up Fridays), and active involvement in educational communities. These activities were hypothesized to foster adaptability and innovative teaching strategies, enabling teachers to better respond to evolving student needs and curriculum changes. Thus, Knowles' theory directly informed the study's focus on how educational lifestyle contributed to higher levels of instructional competence.

The collaborative environment variable drew from Lev Vygotsky's Social Constructivism (1978), which emphasized the importance of social interaction and collaborative learning in cognitive development. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggested that teachers could enhance their instructional skills through guided interactions with more knowledgeable peers. Complementing this, Johnson and Johnson's Social Interdependence Theory (1989) highlighted that structured group goals and mutual support fostered collective efficacy and improved outcomes. In the Bukidnon context, these theories were reflected in practices such as Learning Action Cells (LACs), peer support, shared planning, and collective problem-solving, as encouraged by DepEd policies. The study posited that such collaborative structures not only facilitated knowledge sharing and strategy refinement but also built a culture of continuous improvement, which was essential for instructional competence.

Instructional competence, the dependent variable, was anchored in Mallillin's Instructional Skills and Competency Skills Theory (2023). Mallillin identified multiple domains of teacher competence, including content knowledge, curriculum planning, assessment, and community engagement, all of which required adaptability and reflective practice. This theory aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers and DepEd mandates, emphasizing the need for teachers to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical classroom strategies. In this study, instructional competence was measured by teachers' effectiveness in areas such as differentiated instruction, assessment and reporting, and fostering inclusive learning environments-key competencies needed to address the diverse needs of Bukidnon's student population.

The conceptual framework posited that a strong educational lifestyle (as per Knowles) equipped teachers with the motivation and skills for continuous learning, while a robust collaborative environment (as per Vygotsky and Johnson & Johnson) provided the social context and support necessary for refining and contextualizing these skills. Mallillin's theory served as the evaluative lens through which the impact of these variables on instructional competence was assessed. In the specific context of DepEd Bukidnon, this integrated framework guided the analysis of how self-directed professional growth and collaborative practices interacted to enhance teacher effectiveness. The study's findings were expected to inform targeted interventions-such as enhanced LACs and professional development programs-that leveraged both individual and collective strengths to bridge existing gaps in instructional competence and ultimately improve student outcomes.

Research Paradigm

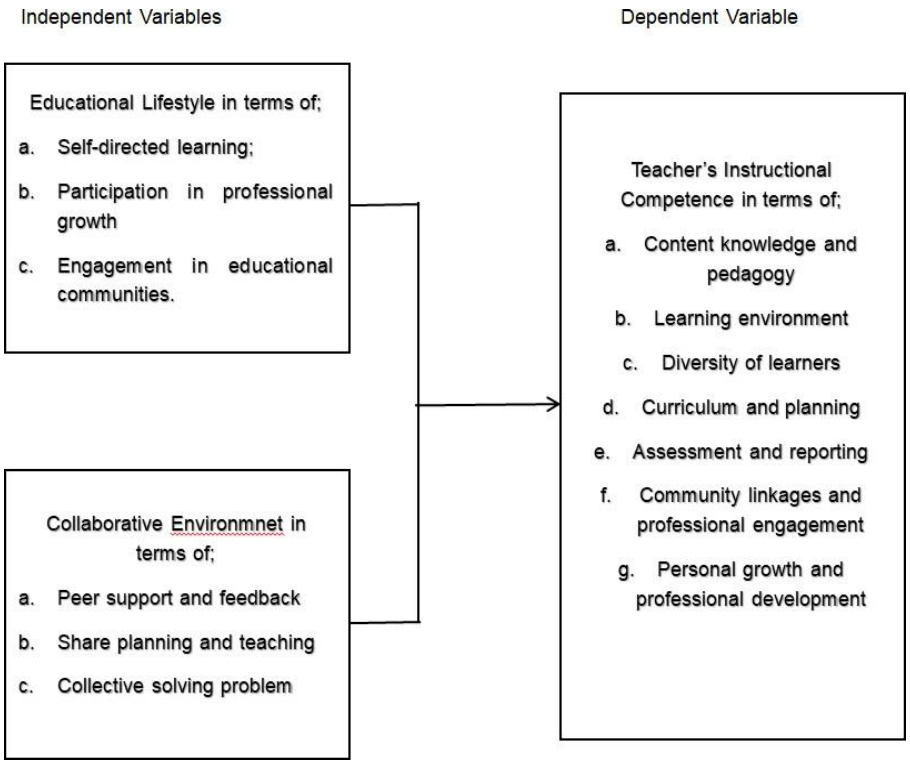


Figure 1. The schematic diagram showing the relationship of Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment on Teacher's Instructional Competence.

Hypothesis of the Study

Based on the established theoretical framework and the existing literature, this study hypothesizes that teachers' educational lifestyle and collaborative environment will be positively related to their instructional competence within the Department of Education, Division of Bukidnon.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between educational lifestyle and collaborative environment factors to teacher's instructional competence.

H1: Educational lifestyle and collaborative environment factors, either singly or in combination, will significantly predict instructional competence among teachers in the DepEd,

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter detailed the methodology used to determine the relationships between teachers' educational lifestyles, collaborative environments, and instructional competence within the Department of Education (DepEd), Division of Bukidnon. A quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design was employed, with multiple regression analysis used to identify predictors of instructional competence. The chapter described the research design, setting, participants and sampling, instruments (including validity and reliability), data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques.

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationships between teachers' educational lifestyles, collaborative environments, and instructional competence within the Department of Education (DepEd), Division of Bukidnon. The descriptive component assessed the levels of teachers' educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence. Additionally, the correlational component examined the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Furthermore, the data, when properly analyzed, served as the basis for developing

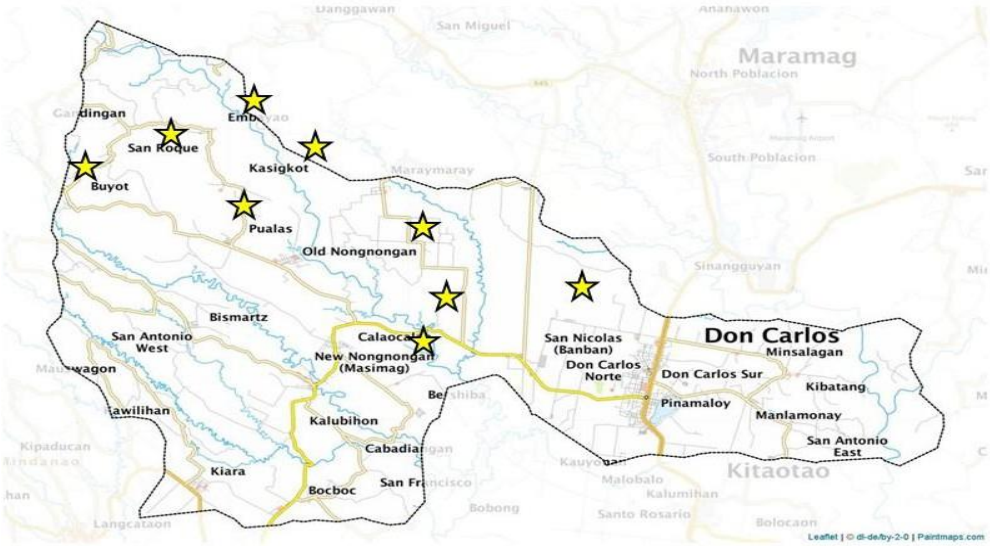
programs to enhance the collaborative environment in the Division of Bukidnon, increasing confidence in findings that could lead to sustainable teacher outcomes.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in Don Carlos District II and III, a significant educational sector within the Division of Bukidnon, situated in the southern portion of the first-class municipality of Don Carlos, Bukidnon. This district, characterized by its fertile agricultural lands and favorable climate, encompasses 12 schools: Calao-calao Elementary School, Old Nongnongan Elementary School, Old Nongnongan National High School, Pualas ES, San Nicolas Central ES, San Nicolas National High School, Embayao ES, Buyot IS, Maray-Maray E, San Roque ES, Kasigkot ES, Masimag ES and Masimag HS. As of the 2020 census, Don Carlos has a population of 69,273, primarily rural and largely dependent on agricultural production, creating a distinct socio-economic environment where family values, community cooperation, and agricultural traditions are prominent. This context makes Don Carlos District III a compelling location to investigate the interplay between teachers' educational lifestyles, collaborative environments, and instructional competence, particularly concerning professional development initiatives and community engagement. Understanding these dynamics within this specific context is crucial for developing effective support strategies for teachers in similar rural settings, ultimately contributing to improved educational outcomes for students in agricultural communities, directly aligning with the study's objective to determinate the relationship between teachers' educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence in the Department of Education of the Division of Bukidnon.

The district provides a representative sample of the challenges and opportunities faced by teachers in rural Philippine communities, allowing for a focused and in-depth investigation across multiple schools.

Municipality of Don Carlos



Legend: = Location of the school where the study will be conduct.

Figure 2: The Map of Don Carlos District III, Division of Bukidnon

The location of the study as shown in the Division Map

Respondents of the Study

The respondents in this study were 250 full-time teachers from District III, Municipality of Don Carlos, Division of Bukidnon, within the Department of Education (DepEd). Participants was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation from each of the eleven schools within the district (Calao-calao Elementary School, Old Nongnongan Elementary School, Old Nongnongan National High

School, Pualas ES, San Nicolas Central ES, Embayao ES, Buyot ES, Maray-Maray ES and Kasigkot ES), and will be included into the study after having voluntarily provided their consent for the study.

Research Instruments

The primary data collection instrument for this study was a structured, self-administered questionnaire designed to investigate the relationships between teachers' educational lifestyles, collaborative environments, and instructional competence within the Department of Education (DepEd), Division of Bukidnon. The questionnaire was developed based on the specific objectives of the study and drew upon established methodologies in educational research, employing a 5-point Likert scale to measure teachers' perceptions and experiences across the key constructs. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or frequency by selecting the most appropriate response option for each statement, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," or from "Never" to "Always," depending on the item's focus. This approach allowed for nuanced quantitative data collection while maintaining clarity and ease of response.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts: Part I focused on the teachers' educational lifestyle, including indicators such as self-directed learning, participation in professional development, and engagement in educational communities; Part II addressed the collaborative environment, covering peer support and feedback, shared planning and teaching, and collective problem-solving; and Part III assessed instructional competence, examining domains such as 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.

To facilitate efficient data collection and maximize participation, the questionnaire was administered both in printed form and electronically via a Google Form created by the researcher. The online questionnaire link was distributed to teachers in District III, Municipality of Don Carlos, allowing respondents to complete the survey conveniently on their own devices at their preferred time. Clear instructions accompanied both the printed and online versions to ensure respondents understood how to answer each item accurately. The use of Google Forms also enabled automatic data compilation and preliminary analysis, enhancing the reliability and efficiency of the research process.

Additionally, the instrument was pilot-tested with a small group of teachers to refine question clarity, response options, and overall flow before full deployment.

In summary, this mixed-mode data collection method, combining structured Likert-scale items with both paper-based and digital formats, aimed to capture a comprehensive and reliable picture of teachers' educational lifestyles, collaborative environments, and instructional competence in the study area.

Scoring Procedure

The questionnaire on Educational Lifestyle measures engagement in Self-Directed Learning, Professional Development Participation, and Educational Community Engagement, each with five items scored on a Likert scale. This was pilot tested with the scale's reliability is confirmed by a Cronbach Alpha of .725. Scores for each sub-variable are calculated by summing responses, providing a concise asses sment of continuous learning and professional growth.

Scale	Mean Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Highly Engaged
4	3.51-4.50	Agree (A)	Engaged
3	2.51-3.50	Neutral (N)	Moderately Engaged
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree (D)	Slightly Engaged
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Not Engaged

The questionnaire on Collaborative Environment evaluates three sub-variables: Peer Support and Feedback, Shared Planning and Teaching, and Collective Problem-Solving, each with five items scored on a Likert scale (SD to SA). The scale's reliability is confirmed by a Cronbach Alpha of .741. Scores for each sub-

variable are calculated by summing responses, providing a concise assessment of teamwork, collaboration, and problem-solving in the educational setting.

Scale	Mean Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Highly collaborative
4	3.51-4.50	Agree (A)	Collaborative
3	2.51-3.50	Neutral (N)	Moderately Collaborative
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree (D)	Slightly Collaborative
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Not Collaborative

The scoring procedure for Instructional Competence evaluates seven sub-variables: 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, with five items each scored on a Likert scale (SD to SA). The scale's reliability is confirmed by a Cronbach Alpha of .940. Scores for each sub-variable are calculated by summing responses, providing a concise assessment of teaching expertise, classroom management, inclusivity, and professional development.

Scale	Mean Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Exemplary Practitioner
4	3.51-4.50	Agree (A)	Proficient Practitioner
3	2.51-3.50	Neutral (N)	Developing Practitioner
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree (D)	Emerging practitioner
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Beginning Practitioner

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection commenced upon receiving approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of Bukidnon to conduct the survey among teachers within the selected schools of District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The researcher coordinated closely with the school principals of the participating schools to schedule data collection sessions and to inform teachers about the study. Prior to administering the questionnaire, the informed consent process was reviewed with each teacher, ensuring they understood their rights and the nature of their participation. The questionnaires were administered in person during group sessions, where instructions and clarifications were provided as needed to ensure accurate completion. Additionally, to increase accessibility and convenience, the researcher created an online version of the questionnaire using Google Forms, and the link was shared with teachers who preferred to respond electronically. This dual approach allowed respondents to choose their preferred method of participation. Once completed, the paper questionnaires were collected by the researcher and transported to a secure location for data entry and analysis, while online responses were automatically compiled via the Google Forms platform. All collected data were stored securely on password-protected computers and in locked filing cabinets to maintain confidentiality and prevent unauthorized access.

Statistical Treatment

This study utilized a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods to address its research objectives. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions) were calculated to characterize teachers' educational lifestyle (self-directed learning, professional development participation, and engagement in educational communities), collaborative environment (peer support/feedback, shared planning/teaching, and collective problem-solving), and instructional competence across seven domains (content/pedagogy knowledge, learning environment, learner diversity, curriculum planning, assessment/reporting, community linkages, and professional growth). Correlation analysis using Pearson's r coefficients examined relationships between instructional competence and educational lifestyle and collaborative environment (research question 4), including sub-scale correlations (e.g., self-directed learning and content knowledge). Significance was evaluated via t-tests. Multiple regression analysis identified predictors of instructional competence (research question 5), treating instructional competence as the dependent variable and educational lifestyle and collaborative environment indicators as independent

variables. Both simultaneous and stepwise regression methods were tested to optimize model fit, with standardized beta coefficients and R-squared values assessing predictor contributions and model strength. Assumptions of linearity, error independence, homoscedasticity, and residual normality were verified to ensure validity. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 14.0, with statistical significance defined as $p < 0.05$.

Ethical Considerations

This study, involving 250 respondents, was conducted in strict compliance with established ethical standards to ensure the protection and well-being of all participating teachers. Prior to participation, each respondent was provided with comprehensive information detailing the study's purpose, procedures, potential benefits, and risks, ensuring transparency and informed decision-making. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants, affirming their voluntary agreement to participate and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. To maintain confidentiality, all personal identifiers were removed, and data were anonymized to ensure that individual responses could not be traced back to participants. Data were securely stored in password-protected and encrypted electronic databases, accessible only to the principal investigator and authorized research team members, in compliance with data protection laws. Additionally, hard copies of consent forms and other documents were stored in locked filing cabinets. These measures reflected the ethical principles of respect for autonomy, confidentiality, and non-maleficence, as outlined in the Belmont Report (1979), ensuring the ethical integrity of the research process. The researcher encouraged adherence to these practices to uphold ethical standards and foster trust in the research community.

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

This chapter provides an explanation, interpretation, and implication of the study's results. The variables evaluated in this study are Educational Lifestyle, Collaborative Environment, and Instructional Competence of teachers, in the Deped District III of Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The results presented here are arranged accordingly to the objectives stated in the earlier part of this paper. The two hypothesis stated were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Educational Lifestyle

Self-Directed Learning

Table 1 presents the self-directed learning behaviors of teachers in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The overall mean score for self-directed learning is 4.243, which falls within the "Agree" range and corresponds to the qualitative interpretation of "Engaged." This suggests that, on average, teachers in the district are actively involved in self-directed learning, seeking opportunities to enhance their professional skills and adapt to the evolving demands of education.

Table 1. Educational lifestyle of the Teachers' in Terms of Self-Directed Learning

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I use technology and digital resources to enhance my professional development and stay updated on best teaching practices.	4.39	Agree	Engaged
I regularly reflect on my teaching practices and identify areas for improvement.	4.26	Agree	Engaged
I actively seek out new educational research and apply it to my teaching.	4.22	Agree	Engaged
I take the initiative to set personal learning goals and develop plans to achieve them.	4.22	Agree	Enanged
I independently explore new teaching methodologies and strategies.	4.13	Agree	Engaged
Mean	4.243	Agree	Enanged

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Engaged
3.51-4.50	Agree	Engaged
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderately Engaged
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Slightly Engaged
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not Engaged

Among the five indicators, the highest mean score was for the statement, “I use technology and digital resources to enhance my professional development and stay updated on best teaching practices” (mean = 4.39). This highlights teachers’ proactive approach in leveraging technology for continuous learning. The second highest mean was for “I regularly reflect on my teaching practices and identify areas for improvement” (mean = 4.26), underscoring the importance teachers place on reflective practice as a tool for ongoing self-improvement. Conversely, the lowest mean scores-though still within the "Engaged" range-were observed for “I independently explore new teaching methodologies and strategies” (mean = 4.13) and “I take the initiative to set personal learning goals and develop plans to achieve them” (mean = 4.22). These findings suggest that while teachers generally demonstrate strong engagement in self-directed learning, there is relatively less emphasis on independently seeking out new teaching methods and systematically setting personal learning objectives.

The results indicate that teachers in District III were highly engaged in self-directed learning, particularly in the use of technology and reflective practices. This strong engagement with technology aligns with the ongoing digital transformation in education and reflects teachers’ commitment to staying current with best practices. Supporting this, Trust (2017) found that integrating technology into professional development not only enhances teacher motivation but also fosters instructional innovation, which corroborates the high engagement observed in this area. Similarly, Farrell (2015) emphasized that regular reflective practice is essential for effective teaching and sustained professional growth.

However, the relatively lower engagement in independently exploring new methodologies and setting personal learning goals may point to barriers such as time constraints, limited resources, or insufficient institutional support. Pangandaman et al. (2023) reported that Filipino teachers often face systemic challenges-including heavy workloads and restricted access to professional development resources-that hinder full participation in self-directed learning. Lai (2015) also highlighted that contextual factors such as school culture and administrative support can constrain teachers’ capacity for self-directed learning.

These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions aimed at strengthening teachers’ self-directed learning capacities. School leaders and policymakers should consider providing structured opportunities, adequate resources, and incentives to encourage independent exploration of innovative teaching methodologies and systematic goal-setting. By addressing these areas, schools can cultivate a stronger culture of lifelong learning and professional innovation, thereby better supporting teachers in adapting to the evolving educational landscape and ultimately enhancing instructional quality and student outcomes.

Participation in Professional Development

Table 2 illustrates the extent of teachers’ participation in professional development activities in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The overall mean score for this dimension is 4.134, which falls within the "Agree" range, corresponding to the qualitative interpretation of "Engaged." This indicates that, on average, teachers are actively involved in professional development, demonstrating a positive attitude toward continuous learning and growth.

Table 2. Educational lifestyle of the Teachers' in Terms of Participation in Professional Development

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I frequently attend professional development workshops, seminars, and conferences.	4.17	Agree	Engaged
I apply knowledge/skills from professional development to my classroom practice.	4.13	Agree	Engaged
I seek feedback from peers and mentors on my professional development progress.	4.13	Agree	Engaged
I set personal goals for professional growth and track my progress over time.	4.13	Agree	Engaged
I actively participate in professional learning communities and share my expertise.	4.11	Agree	Engaged
Mean	4.134	Agree	Engaged

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Engaged
3.51-4.50	Agree	Engaged
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderately Engaged
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Slightly Engaged
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not Engaged

Among the indicators, the highest mean was observed for "I frequently attend professional development workshops, seminars, and conferences" (mean = 4.17), highlighting teachers' proactive engagement in formal learning opportunities. The second highest mean, shared by three indicators, is 4.13-notably for "I apply knowledge/skills from professional development to my classroom practice." This suggests that teachers not only attend professional development activities but also integrate new knowledge and skills into their teaching. In contrast, the two lowest mean scores, though still within the "Engaged" range, are "I actively participate in professional learning communities and share my expertise" (mean = 4.11) and "I seek feedback from peers and mentors on my professional development progress" (mean = 4.13). These results imply that while teachers are engaged in professional development, there is slightly less emphasis on collaborative activities and feedback-seeking compared to direct participation and application.

These findings suggest that teachers in District III are highly committed to professional growth through active participation in workshops and the practical application of new knowledge. This pattern aligns with the research of Desimone and Garet (2015), who found that effective professional development is characterized by active engagement and relevance to classroom practice. The slightly lower engagement in collaborative activities-such as participation in professional learning communities and seeking feedback-may indicate barriers such as limited time, insufficient institutional support, or a lack of established collaborative culture.

Vangrieken et al. (2017) emphasized that sustained and meaningful teacher collaboration requires intentional facilitation and organizational support, noting that without these, collaborative efforts may not fully flourish. Additionally, Opfer and Pedder (2017) highlighted the importance of reflective feedback and peer interaction in deepening professional learning, suggesting that enhancing these aspects could further amplify the benefits of professional development.

The implications are clear: while teachers are commendably engaged in professional development, there is an opportunity to strengthen collaborative practices and feedback mechanisms. Educational leaders should consider fostering a culture that values collaboration and peer support, perhaps by providing dedicated time for professional learning communities and structured feedback opportunities. By doing so, schools can maximize the impact of professional development, leading to greater instructional effectiveness and improved student outcomes.

Engagement in Educational Communities

Table 3 presents the level of engagement of teachers in educational communities in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The overall mean score is 3.916, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Engaged." This indicates that teachers are generally active in connecting with broader educational networks and professional communities, reflecting a recognition of the value of sharing best practices and staying informed about educational trends beyond their immediate environment.

Table 3. Educational lifestyle of the Teachers' in Terms of Engagement in Educational Communities

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I participate in educational social media groups to stay updated on innovative practices.	4.09	Agree	Enagaged
I actively participate in online forums/communities related to education.	4.00	Agree	Engaged
I collaborate with educators from other schools/districts to share best practices.	4.00	Agree	Engaged
I contribute to educational blogs or write articles for educational publications.	3.79	Agree	Engaged
I regularly read educational journals/publications to stay informed about trends.	3.70	Agree	Engaged
Mean	3.916	Agree	Engaged

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Engaged
3.51-4.50	Agree	Engaged
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderately Engaged
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Slightly Engaged
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not Engaged

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are "I participate in educational social media groups to stay updated on innovative practices" (mean = 4.09) and a tie between "I actively participate in online forums/communities related to education" and "I collaborate with educators from other schools/districts to share best practices" (mean = 4.00 each). These findings highlight that teachers are most engaged in digital and collaborative platforms, leveraging social media and online forums to access new ideas and innovations in teaching. In contrast, the bottom two indicators are "I contribute to educational blogs or write articles for educational publications" (mean = 3.79) and "I regularly read educational journals/publications to stay informed about trends" (mean = 3.70). While still within the "Engaged" range, these lower scores suggest less involvement in content creation and academic reading compared to participation in interactive online communities.

The results indicate that teachers in District III are highly engaged in informal, digital, and collaborative professional learning environments. This strong participation in online and social media-based communities aligns with findings by Trust, Krutka, and Carpenter (2016), who reported that online professional learning networks provide teachers with timely access to resources, peer support, and innovative practices, thereby enhancing instructional competence. Similarly, Hur and Brush (2020) found that engagement in online communities fosters a sense of professional belonging and encourages the sharing of best practices across schools and districts.

However, the relatively lower engagement in academic writing and reading points to potential barriers such as time constraints, limited access to academic resources, or a lack of confidence in scholarly communication. Kelly and Antonio (2016) observed that while teachers value professional reading and sharing, factors like workload and perceived relevance can limit their involvement in these activities. Furthermore, Carpenter and

Krutka (2015) highlighted that teachers are more likely to participate in informal, interactive online spaces than in formal academic publishing or reading.

These findings have important implications for professional development planning. The high engagement in digital and collaborative communities suggests that professional development initiatives should leverage these platforms to maximize teacher participation and learning. At the same time, schools and educational leaders should consider providing targeted support, recognition, or incentives to encourage greater involvement in academic writing and research-based reading. Balancing informal digital engagement with more formal academic discourse can help teachers stay connected with innovative practices while deepening their understanding of evidence-based strategies.

The Teachers' Overall Educational Lifestyle

Table 4 summarizes the mean scores, descriptive ratings, and qualitative interpretations for the three core dimensions of teachers' educational lifestyle in the Division of Bukidnon. The overall mean score is 4.097, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Engaged." This indicates that teachers consistently demonstrate a high level of engagement in their educational lifestyle.

Table 4. Teachers' Overall Educational Lifestyle

Variables	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
Self-Directed Learning	4.243	Agree	Engaged
Participation in Professional Development	4.134	Agree	Engaged
Engagement in Educational Communities	3.916	Agree	Engaged
Overall Mean	4.097	Agree	Engaged
Legend:			
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating		Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree		Highly Engaged
3.51-4.50	Agree		Engaged
2.51-3.50	Neutral		Moderately Engaged
1.51-2.50	Disagree		Slightly Engaged
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree		Not Engaged

The three core dimensions reflect this engagement as follows: Self-Directed Learning (M = 4.243), Participation in Professional Development (M = 4.134), and Engagement in Educational Communities (M = 3.916). These results suggest that teachers are proactive in seeking learning opportunities, actively participate in both formal and informal professional development activities, and maintain connections with peers and broader educational networks.

The findings reveal that teachers in Bukidnon possess foundational habits and attitudes essential for continuous professional growth and instructional competence. This pattern is consistent with contemporary research emphasizing the importance of self-directed learning, which empowers teachers to take ownership of their professional development, fostering adaptability and ongoing improvement (Knowles et al., 2015; Louws et al., 2017). The strong engagement in professional development aligns with the Learning Policy Institute (2017) and Hilton et al. (2015), who highlight the critical role of structured, collaborative, and sustained learning opportunities in enhancing teacher effectiveness.

Moreover, active participation in educational communities supports innovation and collective efficacy, as noted by Frontiers in Education (2024) and McLaughlin & Talbert (2016), who emphasize how professional networks and collaborative inquiry contribute to shared expertise and instructional improvement.

In the context of DepEd Bukidnon, these results are particularly significant given regional challenges such as disparities in teacher effectiveness and limited opportunities for collaboration. The robust educational lifestyle observed among Bukidnon teachers positions them well to adapt to evolving educational demands, implement innovative teaching strategies, and ultimately improve student outcomes.

The implications underscore the need to sustain and enhance opportunities for self-directed learning, professional development, and community engagement. School leaders and policymakers are encouraged to design targeted initiatives that leverage these strengths, close gaps in instructional competence, and foster a resilient and effective educational system within the Division of Bukidnon. The teachers' overall educational lifestyle in Bukidnon is strong and multifaceted, serving as a vital foundation for instructional excellence and ongoing professional growth.

Collaborative Environment

Peer Support and Feedback

Table 5 displays the level of peer support and feedback among teachers in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The overall mean score is 3.887, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Collaborative." This indicates that teachers are generally positive and active participants in providing and receiving peer support and feedback, a vital component of a collaborative and supportive school culture.

Table 5. Collaborative Environment of the Teachers' in Terms of Peer Support and Feedback

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I provide constructive feedback to my peers to help them improve their teaching practices.	4.13	Agree	Collaborative
I feel comfortable asking my colleagues for help and support.	4.00	Agree	Collaborative
Our school has a structured process for peer mentoring and coaching.	3.87	Agree	Collaborative
Teachers in my school provide emotional support and encouragement to each other.	3.83	Agree	Collaborative
I regularly receive constructive feedback from my peers on my teaching.	3.61	Agree	Collaborative
Mean	3.887	Agree	Collaborative

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly collaborative
3.51-4.50	Agree	Collaborative
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderately collaborative
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Slightly collaborative
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not collaborative

The highest mean scores were recorded for "I provide constructive feedback to my peers to help them improve their teaching practices" (mean = 4.13) and "I feel comfortable asking my colleagues for help and support" (mean = 4.00). These findings suggest that teachers are proactive in offering constructive feedback and feel at ease seeking assistance, fostering trust and continuous professional growth within the school community. Conversely, the lowest mean scores-though still within the "Agree" range-were for "Teachers in my school provide emotional support and encouragement to each other" (mean = 3.83) and "I regularly receive constructive feedback from my peers on my teaching" (mean = 3.61). While these scores indicate engagement, they are comparatively lower, pointing to potential gaps in the consistency of receiving feedback and emotional support.

These results reveal that teachers in District III actively contribute to peer support by providing constructive feedback and feel comfortable seeking help, both critical behaviors that foster a culture of professional trust and ongoing improvement. This aligns with Ronfeldt et al. (2015), who found that robust peer feedback mechanisms correlate with enhanced instructional quality and higher teacher satisfaction. Similarly, Vangrieken et al. (2017) emphasized that comfort in seeking peer support is foundational for effective collaboration and collective teacher efficacy.

However, the relatively lower scores related to receiving regular feedback and emotional support suggest that reciprocal feedback practices and emotional encouragement may be less consistent. These limitations could

stem from time constraints, insufficient formal feedback structures, or cultural factors that inhibit open emotional sharing. Kraft and Papay (2016) noted that while teachers value feedback, its frequency and quality often depend heavily on school leadership and organizational support. Furthermore, Collie et al. (2015) underscored the importance of emotional support among teachers, linking it to improved well-being and reduced burnout-factors essential for sustaining collaborative engagement and teacher retention.

The implications for school leadership are clear: although there is a solid foundation of peer support through feedback and help-seeking, schools should strengthen formal structures that promote regular, reciprocal feedback and emotional support. Implementing or enhancing peer mentoring programs, allocating time for collaborative reflection, and cultivating a culture that values both professional and emotional support can improve instructional competence, teacher morale, and retention.

Teachers in District III demonstrated commendable engagement in peer support and feedback, particularly in providing feedback and seeking assistance. To further enhance the collaborative environment, educational leaders should prioritize increasing opportunities for reciprocal feedback and emotional support, thereby fostering a more holistic and supportive professional community.

Shared Planning and Teaching

Table 6 presents the collaborative practices of teachers in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon, specifically focusing on shared planning and teaching. The overall mean score was 3.955, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Collaborative." This indicates that teachers generally participated actively in collaborative activities such as joint planning, team teaching, and resource sharing-key practices that foster a culture of collective efficacy and enhance instructional quality.

Table 6. Collaborative Environment of the Teachers' in Terms of Share Planning and Teaching

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
We work together to develop assessments and evaluate student progress.	4.21	Agree	Collaborative
I engage in team teaching or co-teaching with my colleagues.	4.04	Agree	Collaborative
We have regular meetings to align our teaching strategies and goals.	3.95	Agree	Collaborative
I frequently collaborate with my colleagues to plan lessons and develop curriculum.	3.83	Agree	Collaborative
We regularly share teaching resources and materials with each other.	3.74	Agree	Collaborative
Mean	3.955	Agree	Collaborative

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly collaborative
3.51-4.50	Agree	Collaborative
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderately collaborative
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Slightly collaborative
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not collaborative

The highest mean scores were recorded for "We work together to develop assessments and evaluate student progress" (mean = 4.21) and "I engage in team teaching or co-teaching with my colleagues" (mean = 4.04). These results suggest that teachers are most engaged in collaboratively developing assessments and participating in team teaching, reflecting their commitment to shared accountability for student learning and the advantages of pooling expertise. Conversely, the lowest mean scores-though still within the "Agree" range-were for "I frequently collaborate with my colleagues to plan lessons and develop curriculum" (mean = 3.83) and "We regularly share teaching resources and materials with each other" (mean = 3.74). While these scores indicate engagement, they are comparatively lower, suggesting potential challenges in sustaining frequent lesson planning and resource sharing.

These findings reveal that teachers in District III highly value collaborative assessment development and team teaching, practices associated with improved instructional quality and student outcomes. This aligns with Ronfeldt et al. (2015), who demonstrated that collaborative assessment and co-teaching contribute to enhanced teaching effectiveness and student achievement. Additionally, Vangrieken et al. (2017) found that shared planning and teaching strengthen professional relationships and foster a collective sense of responsibility among educators.

However, the relatively lower engagement in regular lesson planning and resource sharing may stem from practical barriers such as time constraints, heavy workloads, or insufficient formal structures to support collaboration. Kelchtermans (2017) noted that while teachers recognize the benefits of collaboration, these challenges often limit the frequency and depth of their collaborative efforts. Similarly, Opfer and Pedder (2017) emphasized the necessity of supportive leadership and dedicated collaboration time to sustain meaningful teacher teamwork.

The implications for school leaders and policymakers are clear: while collaborative assessment and team teaching are well-established practices, there is a need to institutionalize and expand support for regular lesson planning and resource sharing. Providing structured time for collaboration, fostering a culture of openness, and recognizing collaborative efforts in teacher evaluations can help overcome existing barriers. Strengthening these facets of collaboration will promote more consistent and effective instructional practices, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students.

Teachers in District III demonstrate commendable engagement in shared planning and teaching, particularly in assessment development and team teaching. To further enhance the collaborative environment, educational leaders should prioritize support for regular lesson planning and resource sharing, ensuring that all teachers have the opportunity and resources to collaborate effectively.

Collective Problem-Solving

Table 7 presents data on the collaborative environment of teachers in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon, specifically focusing on collective problem-solving. The overall mean score is 4.034, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Collaborative." This indicates that teachers are generally active in collaborative efforts to address challenges related to student learning and school improvement, reflecting a positive culture of cooperation and shared responsibility.

Table 7. Collaborative Environment of the Teachers' in Terms of Collective Problem-Solving

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
We work together to address challenges and solve problems related to student learning.	4.21	Agree	Collaborative
We have a system in place for sharing successful teaching strategies and interventions.	4.04	Agree	Collaborative
We collaborate to identify and address systemic barriers to student success.	4.04	Agree	Collaborative
The staff in our school openly discuss and analyze data to improve teaching practices.	3.96	Agree	Collaborative
Our school encourages cross-disciplinary collaboration to solve complex educational issues.	3.91	Agree	Collaborative
Mean	4.034	Agree	Collaborative

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly collaborative
3.51-4.50	Agree	Collaborative
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderately collaborative
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Slightly collaborative
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not collaborative

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are "We work together to address challenges and solve problems related to student learning" (mean = 4.21) and a tie between "We have a system in place for sharing successful teaching strategies and interventions" and "We collaborate to identify and address systemic barriers to student success" (both with a mean of 4.04). These results highlight teachers' active engagement in joint problem-solving and the presence of mechanisms for sharing effective practices and tackling systemic issues. In contrast, the bottom two indicators are "The staff in our school openly discuss and analyze data to improve teaching practices" (mean = 3.96) and "Our school encourages cross-disciplinary collaboration to solve complex educational issues" (mean = 3.91). Although these scores still indicate engagement, they are comparatively lower, suggesting these practices may be less frequent or less developed.

The findings suggest that teachers in District III are strongly committed to collaborative problem-solving, particularly in addressing student learning challenges and sharing successful strategies. This aligns with recent research by Zheng et al. (2023), who found that collaborative teacher problem-solving positively impacts student performance by fostering social interaction and cognitive engagement. Similarly, Hamengkubuwono et al. (2022) demonstrated that teacher collaboration enhances students' critical thinking and metacognitive skills, emphasizing the educational value of joint problem-solving. Moreover, Mattsson (2020) highlighted that collaborative teaching practices, including problem-solving, contribute to improved student outcomes and teacher development, although effectiveness depends on the quality and nature of collaboration.

The relatively lower engagement in data-driven discussions and cross-disciplinary collaboration may reflect challenges such as limited time, insufficient training in data literacy, or organizational barriers. As Mattsson (2020) and other scholars note, effective use of data for collaborative improvement requires intentional structures and professional development to build teachers' skills in data analysis and teamwork. Furthermore, fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration demands systemic support and coordination across departments, which can be complex to implement.

The implications for school leaders are clear: while collective problem-solving is well-established, there is a need to strengthen data-informed decision-making and promote interdisciplinary collaboration. Providing targeted professional development on data use and creating formal structures to facilitate cross-disciplinary teamwork can deepen the impact of collaborative problem-solving on teaching quality and student success.

Teachers in District III demonstrate strong engagement in collective problem-solving, particularly in addressing learning challenges and sharing strategies. To further enhance their collaborative environment, educational leaders should prioritize improving data-driven practices and fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration, supported by adequate training and systemic resources.

Teachers' Overall Collaborative Environment

Table 8 presents teachers' overall collaborative environment measured across three key variables. Collective Problem-Solving, Shared Planning and Teaching, and Peer Support and Feedback. Each variable's mean score ranges from 3.887 to 4.034, all within the "Agree" range, corresponding to the qualitative interpretation of "Collaborative." The overall mean score of 3.959 consolidates the finding that teachers in the Division of Bukidnon are generally engaged in collaborative practices.

Table 8. Teachers' Overall Collaborative Environment

Variables	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
Collective Problem-Solving	4.034	Agree	Collaborative
Share Planning and Teaching	3.955	Agree	Collaborative
Peer Support and Feedback	3.887	Agree	Collaborative
Overall Mean	3.959	Agree	Collaborative

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly collaborative
3.51-4.50	Agree	Collaborative

2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderately collaborative
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Slightly collaborative
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not collaborative

The highest mean score was observed in Collective Problem-Solving (4.034), followed closely by Shared Planning and Teaching (3.955), with Peer Support and Feedback scoring the lowest (3.887). Despite minor differences, all domains reflect a positive and participatory culture where teachers actively collaborate to solve problems, plan instruction, and support one another.

These results indicate a robust collaborative environment among teachers, characterized by active participation in problem-solving, shared instructional planning, and mutual support. The mean scores near 4.0 suggest that collaboration is embedded in the school culture, fostering continuous reflection and collective responsibility for instructional improvement. Engagement in collective problem-solving and peer feedback points to a culture of ongoing professional dialogue essential for addressing classroom challenges and refining teaching strategies. Similarly, shared planning promotes curriculum coherence and alignment, which are critical for consistent and effective instruction.

The implications highlight the need to maintain and further strengthen collaborative structures within schools. Institutional support-such as dedicated collaboration time, professional development focused on teamwork, and facilitation of research-practice partnerships-is vital to sustain and deepen these practices. A strong collaborative environment not only enhances teacher professional growth but also positively influences student learning outcomes by ensuring instructional practices are coordinated and responsive to diverse learner needs.

These findings are supported by contemporary research and educational frameworks. The Learning Policy Institute (2017) emphasizes that structured collaboration improves teacher effectiveness by refining instructional strategies through shared learning. Studies published by Tandfonline (2016, 2024) underscore the benefits of shared planning and research-practice partnerships in enhancing curriculum alignment and professional development. Furthermore, DepEd (2025) guidelines advocate for collaborative planning as a key strategy to meet curriculum standards. Recent work from Frontiers in Education (2023) also highlights that collaborative teacher environments are crucial for overcoming instructional challenges, especially in blended and technology-integrated learning contexts. Together, these sources validate the observed engagement levels and affirm that fostering a collaborative professional environment is essential for instructional quality and student success.

Instructional Competence

Content Knowledge and Pedagogy

Table 9 presents data on teachers' instructional competence in the domains of content knowledge and pedagogy. The overall mean score is 4.226, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Proficient Practitioner." This indicates that teachers generally demonstrate a strong level of competence and actively employ pedagogical strategies that foster values, inclusivity, respect, inquiry, and collaboration, thereby contributing to a positive and supportive learning environment.

Table 9. Instructional Competence that Teachers' exhibit in the Content Knowledge and Pedagogy

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I actively promote values through class discussions.	4.35	Agree	Proficient practitioner
I maintain a positive and inclusive classroom atmosphere.	4.26	Agree	Proficient practitioner
I promote respect, empathy, and collaboration among students.	4.22	Agree	Proficient practitioner
I foster a culture of inquiry by encouraging students to ask questions.	4.22	Agree	Proficient practitioner

I collaboratively develop classroom rules with students.	4.09	Agree	Proficient practitioner
Mean	4.226	Agree	Proficient practitioner

Legend:

Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Exemplary practitioner
3.51-4.50	Agree	Proficient practitioner
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Developing practitioner
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Emerging practitioner
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Beginning practitioner

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are “I actively promote values through class discussions” (mean = 4.35) and “I maintain a positive and inclusive classroom atmosphere” (mean = 4.26). These results highlight teachers’ prioritization of moral values and inclusivity, essential components of effective pedagogy and holistic student development. Conversely, the bottom two indicators are “I collaboratively develop classroom rules with students” (mean = 4.09) and “I foster a culture of inquiry by encouraging students to ask questions” (mean = 4.22, tied with promoting respect, empathy, and collaboration). Although these scores still indicate engagement, they are slightly lower, suggesting these practices may be less consistently implemented or areas for further enhancement.

The findings suggest that teachers in District III are highly competent in promoting values and maintaining inclusive classrooms, which are critical for nurturing students’ social and emotional development alongside academic growth. This aligns with Calama-an and Ayson (2025), who emphasize the teacher’s role in shaping both academic and socio-emotional competencies. Furthermore, Blömeke et al. (2022) found that teacher competence in content knowledge and pedagogy significantly influences instructional quality and student learning progression, underscoring the importance of these competencies in classroom practice.

The relatively lower scores for collaboratively developing classroom rules and fostering inquiry point to potential challenges in balancing classroom management with student autonomy or a need for further professional development focused on inquiry-based learning. Zhang and An (2024) highlight that instructional competence extends beyond content delivery to include engaging students in active learning and co-constructing classroom norms, which enhances motivation and learning outcomes.

These findings imply that while teachers demonstrate strong foundational competencies, there is an opportunity to deepen collaborative practices and inquiry facilitation. Strengthening these areas can foster more student-centered classrooms that promote critical thinking and shared responsibility. Supporting this, Calama-an and Ayson (2025) recommend continuous capability-building programs to sustain and enhance teacher competencies, particularly in fostering inquiry and collaborative classroom management.

Teachers in District III exhibit a commendable level of instructional competence in content knowledge and pedagogy, especially in promoting values and inclusivity. To further improve instructional quality, educational leaders should emphasize professional development that enhances collaborative rule-setting and cultivates a culture of inquiry among students.

Learning Environment

Table 10 presents data on teachers’ instructional competence in creating an effective learning environment. The overall mean score is 4.069, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Proficient Practitioner." This indicates that teachers generally demonstrate competence in integrating current educational trends, updating their subject knowledge, designing instructional plans, collaborating with colleagues, and structuring lessons effectively. Such engagement reflects their commitment to keeping teaching relevant and responsive to students’ evolving needs.

Table 10. Instructional Competence that Teachers' exhibit in the Learning Environment

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I integrate current trends and developments into my teaching.	4.30	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I consistently update my knowledge of the subject matter through seminars, workshops, and research.	4.17	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I design instructional plans that align with the curriculum framework and learning competencies.	4.00	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I collaborate with colleagues to share resources and discuss new content knowledge.	4.00	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
My lessons are well-structured and incorporate varied instructional strategies.	3.87	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Mean	4.069	Agree	Proficient Practitioner

Legend:

Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Exemplary practitioner
3.51-4.50	Agree	Proficient practitioner
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Developing practitioner
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Emerging practitioner
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Beginning Practitioner

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are "I integrate current trends and developments into my teaching" (mean = 4.30) and "I consistently update my knowledge of the subject matter through seminars, workshops, and research" (mean = 4.17). These suggest that teachers prioritize continuous professional growth and the incorporation of up-to-date knowledge in their instruction. Conversely, the bottom two indicators are "I design instructional plans that align with the curriculum framework and learning competencies" (mean = 4.00) and "My lessons are well-structured and incorporate varied instructional strategies" (mean = 3.87). While still within the "Agree" range, these lower scores point to potential challenges in consistently aligning lesson plans with curriculum standards and employing diverse teaching methods.

The results indicate that teachers in District III are highly engaged in professional learning and actively integrate current trends into their teaching, which is essential for maintaining instructional quality. This is supported by Blömeke et al. (2022), who found that teacher competence in integrating up-to-date knowledge significantly enhances instructional effectiveness and student learning. Similarly, Calama-an and Ayson (2025) emphasized the critical role of ongoing professional development in sustaining teachers' instructional competence.

However, the relatively lower engagement in curriculum-aligned planning and varied instructional strategies suggests areas for growth. Challenges in these areas may limit the ability to meet diverse learner needs effectively. Opfer and Pedder (2017) noted that while teachers often understand curriculum requirements, difficulties in lesson structuring and strategy variation can hinder instructional impact. Moreover, Zhang and An (2024) highlighted that employing diverse instructional approaches is vital for student engagement and improved learning outcomes.

These findings imply that targeted support is needed to help teachers strengthen curriculum alignment and diversify their instructional methods. Providing professional development focused on lesson planning and varied teaching strategies, along with opportunities for collaborative planning, can enhance these competencies. Strengthening these areas will improve teaching quality and ultimately boost student achievement. Teachers demonstrate commendable instructional competence in maintaining current knowledge and engaging in professional growth. To further elevate instructional effectiveness, emphasis should be placed on supporting curriculum-aligned planning and the use of varied instructional strategies.

Diversity of Learners

Table 11 presents data on teachers' instructional competence in addressing learner diversity within the Division of Bukidnon. The overall mean score of 4.131 falls within the "Agree" range, indicating that teachers are generally proficient practitioner and demonstrate a consistent level of competence in recognizing and responding to the diverse needs of their students. This suggests that teachers actively promote inclusivity and equity through culturally responsive teaching and differentiated instruction.

Table 11. Instructional Competence that Teachers' exhibit in the Diversity of Learners

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I recognize and respect cultural differences among students.	4.26	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I gather information about learners' differences to better tailor my teaching approaches.	4.17	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I advocate for inclusive education practices that promote equity and access for all learners.	4.17	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I advocate for inclusive education practices.	4.09	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I differentiate instruction to accommodate the diverse learning needs of students.	3.96	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Mean	4.131	Agree	Proficient Practitioner

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Exemplary practitioner
3.51-4.50	Agree	Proficient practitioner
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Developing practitioner
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Emerging practitioner
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Beginning Practitioner

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are "I recognize and respect cultural differences among students" (mean = 4.26) and a tie between "I gather information about learners' differences to better tailor my teaching approaches" and "I advocate for inclusive education practices that promote equity and access for all learners" (both with a mean of 4.17). These results highlight teachers' strong cultural awareness and proactive efforts to understand and accommodate students' unique backgrounds and needs. Conversely, the bottom two indicators are "I advocate for inclusive education practices" (mean = 4.09) and "I differentiate instruction to accommodate the diverse learning needs of students" (mean = 3.96). While still within the "Agree" range, the relatively lower score for differentiation suggests this area may require further development.

The findings indicate that teachers in Bukidnon demonstrate commendable competence in cultural awareness and advocacy for inclusive education, which are critical for fostering equitable and supportive learning environments. This aligns with Munna and Kalam (2021), who emphasize the effectiveness of inclusive teaching methods such as role-play and formative feedback in engaging diverse learners. Additionally, Smigielski (2025) highlights the growing importance of cultural competence and continuous professional development in preparing teachers to meet diverse student needs.

However, the lower mean score for differentiated instruction suggests challenges in consistently implementing tailored teaching strategies. This may be due to factors such as limited resources, large class sizes, or insufficient training. Research by Edutopia (2015) underscores the importance of differentiated instruction, advocating for varied teaching methods to address students' readiness and learning profiles. Furthermore, studies by Grand Canyon University (2022) and ERIC (2020) stress the significance of scaffolding, collaborative learning, and adaptive teaching strategies in effectively reaching diverse learners.

The implications of these findings highlight the need for sustained professional development focused on differentiated instruction. School leaders and policymakers should prioritize training programs that equip teachers with practical strategies to tailor instruction to diverse learner needs. Additionally, fostering a school

culture that values diversity and encourages teacher collaboration to share best practices can further enhance instructional competence. These efforts will help bridge gaps in inclusive teaching and ensure equitable access to quality education for all students.

Teachers in Bukidnon exhibit a high level of instructional competence in addressing learner diversity, particularly in cultural awareness and inclusivity advocacy. To further strengthen their effectiveness, targeted support in differentiated instruction is essential. The literature supports the view that continuous learning, reflective practice, and collaborative professional environments are key drivers of inclusive and effective teaching, validating the focus on educational lifestyle and collaborative environments as predictors of instructional competence.

Curriculum and Planning

Table 12 presents data on teachers' instructional competence in curriculum and planning, measured through five key indicators on a five-point Likert scale. The overall mean score is 4.131, with individual means ranging from 4.00 to 4.26. All indicators received a descriptive rating of "Agree," corresponding to the qualitative interpretation of "Proficient Practitioner." This demonstrates that teachers in the Division of Bukidnon consistently exhibit competence in curriculum development and instructional planning as part of their professional practice.

Table 12. Instructional Competence that Teachers' exhibit in the Curriculum and Planning

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I develop well-structured learning experiences.	4.26	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I use a variety of formative and summative assessment strategies.	4.17	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I use assessment data to modify and improve my teaching practices.	4.13	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I design coherent and sequenced instructional units and lesson plans.	4.09	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I design lessons that cater to diverse learners' needs and abilities.	4.00	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Mean	4.131	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Legend:			
Scale/Range		Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00		Strongly Agree	Exemplary practitioner
3.51-4.50		Agree	Proficient practitioner
2.51-3.50		Neutral	Developing practitioner
1.51-2.50		Disagree	Emerging practitioner
1.00-1.50		Strongly Disagree	Beginning Practitioner

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are "I develop well-structured learning experiences" (mean = 4.26) and "I use a variety of formative and summative assessment strategies" (mean = 4.17). These results suggest that teachers excel in designing organized, purposeful learning experiences and effectively employ diverse assessment methods to monitor and support student progress. Conversely, the bottom two indicators are "I design coherent and sequenced instructional units and lesson plans" (mean = 4.09) and "I design lessons that cater to diverse learners' needs and abilities" (mean = 4.00). While these scores still indicate engagement, they suggest some challenges in consistently sequencing instruction and differentiating lessons to meet all students' needs.

The findings indicate that teachers in Bukidnon demonstrate strong instructional competence in structuring lessons and utilizing varied assessment strategies, which are foundational to effective teaching and learning. This aligns with recent research from Frontiers in Education (2024), which highlights the critical role of flexibility, innovation, and ongoing professional development in curriculum planning, especially when adapting instruction to diverse educational contexts. Similarly, Edutopia (2015) emphasizes that clear learning

objectives combined with varied assessment approaches significantly enhance student engagement and achievement.

However, the relatively lower scores in lesson sequencing and differentiation point to areas where teachers may encounter difficulties. Challenges in translating curriculum frameworks into coherent instructional sequences and tailoring lessons to diverse learners are consistent with findings by Wiley (2023), who noted that effective curriculum implementation depends on teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and access to professional support. Furthermore, Tandfonline (2023) stresses that curriculum planning is influenced by teachers' professional knowledge, contextual understanding, and collaborative opportunities, underscoring the need for ongoing support and peer learning. The lower score for differentiation suggests that while teachers are committed to inclusivity, additional training and resources are necessary to fully address diverse learner needs.

These results imply that while teachers possess a solid foundation in curriculum development and assessment use, there is a clear need to enhance skills in instructional sequencing and differentiated instruction. School leaders and policymakers should prioritize targeted professional development, collaborative planning sessions, and mechanisms for sharing best practices to strengthen these competencies. This approach is supported by DepEd (2025), which advocates for structured planning and evaluation tools, and by broader literature linking continuous learning, collaboration, and reflective practice to effective curriculum implementation and improved student outcomes.

Teachers in Bukidnon show strong and consistent engagement across all aspects of curriculum and planning, with particular strengths in lesson structuring and assessment. To further elevate instructional quality and inclusivity, sustained professional development and targeted interventions are recommended to ensure all learners benefit from well-planned and responsive teaching.

Assessment and Reporting

Table 13 presents data on teachers' instructional competence in assessment and reporting, measured through five key indicators. The overall mean score is 4.167, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Proficient Practitioner." This indicates that teachers generally demonstrate consistent and effective practices in assessment and reporting, reflecting their commitment to transparency, fairness, and student-centered feedback.

Table 13. Instructional Competence that Teachers' exhibit in the Assessment and Reporting

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I communicate effectively with parents and stakeholders regarding student progress.	4.23	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I provide timely and constructive feedback to students.	4.21	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I design fair and valid summative assessments.	4.18	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to evaluate student learning.	4.17	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I regularly employ formative assessment strategies.	4.04	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Mean	4.167	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Legend:			
Scale/Range		Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00		Strongly Agree	Exemplary practitioner
3.51-4.50		Agree	Proficient practitioner
2.51-3.50		Neutral	Developing practitioner
1.51-2.50		Disagree	Emerging practitioner
1.00-1.50		Strongly Disagree	Beginning Practitioner

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are "I communicate effectively with parents and stakeholders regarding student progress" (mean = 4.23) and "I provide timely and constructive feedback to students" (mean = 4.21). These results highlight teachers' strong engagement in fostering open communication and delivering meaningful feedback, essential for building partnerships with families and supporting student learning. Conversely, the bottom two indicators are "I use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to evaluate student learning" (mean = 4.17) and "I regularly employ formative assessment strategies" (mean = 4.04). While still indicating engagement, the relatively lower score for formative assessment suggests room for improvement in the frequency and effectiveness of formative practices.

The findings suggest that teachers in the Division of Bukidnon are proficient in core assessment and reporting competencies, particularly in communication with stakeholders and providing constructive feedback to students. This aligns with Benton and Young (2018), who emphasize the importance of balanced evaluation systems and effective communication in promoting student success. Similarly, DeLuca et al. (2018) highlight how teachers' values and systemic policies shape assessment practices, underscoring the critical role of communication and feedback in educational settings.

However, the lower engagement in formative assessment practices points to opportunities for enhancing ongoing instructional adjustments and individualized student support. Research by Cowie et al. (2014) demonstrates the transformative impact of formative assessment on student growth and learning. Furthermore, Xu and Brown (2016), through their Teacher Assessment Literacy in Practice (TALIP) framework, advocate for continuous professional development to improve teachers' formative assessment literacy. The slightly lower score for employing diverse assessment tools also indicates a need for broadening assessment methods to better capture varied aspects of student learning.

These findings imply that while teachers possess strong foundational skills in assessment and reporting, targeted professional development is needed to deepen formative assessment practices and diversify assessment strategies. School leaders should prioritize training programs and collaborative opportunities that enhance teachers' assessment literacy and data interpretation skills. Additionally, policies that encourage regular communication with stakeholders and embed assessment literacy within teacher development frameworks will further strengthen these competencies. Such initiatives foster a culture of continuous improvement and accountability, ultimately enhancing student outcomes and stakeholder satisfaction.

Teachers in Bukidnon demonstrate robust engagement in assessment and reporting, with particular strengths in communication and feedback. To sustain and elevate instructional quality, focused support on formative assessment and diversified evaluation strategies is essential. These conclusions are strongly supported by contemporary research and theoretical frameworks, validating the study's focus on educational lifestyle, collaborative environments, and instructional competence as interconnected drivers of effective teaching.

Community Linkages and Professional Engagement

Table 14 presents data on teachers' instructional competence in community linkages and professional engagement, assessed through five key indicators. The overall mean score is 4.156, which falls within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Proficient Practitioner." This indicates that teachers in the Division of Bukidnon consistently demonstrate competence and commitment in ethical practice, collaboration with external partners, community participation, continuous professional development, and reflective teaching.

Table 14. Instructional Competence that Teachers' exhibit in the Community Linkages and Professional Engagement

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I abide by the code of ethics for professional teachers.	4.30	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I collaborate with external partners to enhance learning opportunities.	4.16	Agree	Proficient Practitioner

I actively participate in school and community events.	4.14	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I engage in continuous professional development activities.	4.09	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I reflect on my teaching practices and seek feedback.	4.09	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Mean	4.156	Agree	Proficient Practitioner

Legend:		
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Exemplary practitioner
3.51-4.50	Agree	Proficient practitioner
2.51-3.50	Neutral	Developing practitioner
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Emerging practitioner
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Beginning Practitioner

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are "I abide by the code of ethics for professional teachers" (mean = 4.30) and "I collaborate with external partners to enhance learning opportunities" (mean = 4.16). These results underscore teachers' strong professional integrity and proactive efforts to build partnerships that enrich student learning experiences. Conversely, the bottom two indicators are "I engage in continuous professional development activities" and "I reflect on my teaching practices and seek feedback" (both with a mean of 4.09). While these scores still reflect positive engagement, they suggest areas where further support could enhance teacher growth and instructional effectiveness.

The findings suggest that teachers in Bukidnon exhibit a robust culture of ethical practice and active community collaboration, which are vital for fostering inclusive and responsive education. This aligns with Green (2016), who highlights the transformative impact of community pedagogies and place-based learning on teacher engagement and professional understanding. Additionally, Drew et al. (2016) emphasize the importance of school-university partnerships in promoting teacher agency, research involvement, and reflective practice-key elements of sustained professional engagement.

However, the relatively lower engagement in continuous professional development and reflective practice points to potential barriers such as limited time, resources, or access to structured learning opportunities. Research by Cain (2015) and the Aberdeen University study (2016) demonstrates that active involvement in research and community engagement enhances professional learning outcomes and skill development. These findings indicate a need for school leaders and policymakers to prioritize initiatives that provide structured professional development, encourage reflective teaching, and foster partnerships with local organizations, universities, and research institutions.

The implications are clear: strengthening ongoing professional learning and reflective practices, alongside maintaining strong community linkages, will enhance instructional competence and promote a more inclusive, community-responsive educational environment. This is consistent with the study's emphasis on educational lifestyle and collaborative environments as predictors of instructional competence, supported by the works of Opfer and Pedder (2011), Ronfeldt et al. (2015), and Somekh (2008), who underscore the importance of self-directed learning, engagement in educational communities, and peer collaboration.

Teachers in Bukidnon demonstrate strong engagement in community linkages and professional ethics, with opportunities to deepen their professional development and reflective practices. The literature affirms that these dimensions are integral to effective teaching, ongoing professional growth, and improved student outcomes, validating the study's focus on fostering educational lifestyles and collaborative environments to enhance instructional competence.

Personal Growth and Professional Development

Table 15 presents data on teachers' instructional competence in personal growth and professional development, measured through five key indicators on a five-point Likert scale. The overall mean score is 4.130, which falls

within the "Agree" range and is qualitatively interpreted as "Proficient Practitioner." This indicates that teachers generally demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors that support their ongoing professional development and commitment to growth.

Table 15. Instructional Competence that Teachers' exhibit in the Personal Growth and Professional Development

INDICATOR	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I am committed to lifelong learning and continuous improvement.	4.39	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I demonstrate a growth mindset and embrace challenges.	4.09	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I maintain a positive attitude towards teaching.	4.09	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I set goals for my professional growth and development.	4.04	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
I actively seek opportunities to expand my knowledge and skills.	4.04	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Mean	4.130	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Legend:			
Scale/Range		Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00		Strongly Agree	Exemplary practitioner
3.51-4.50		Agree	Proficient practitioner
2.51-3.50		Neutral	Developing practitioner
1.51-2.50		Disagree	Emerging practitioner
1.00-1.50		Strongly Disagree	Beginning Practitioner

The top two indicators with the highest mean scores are "I am committed to lifelong learning and continuous improvement" (mean = 4.39) and "I demonstrate a growth mindset and embrace challenges" (mean = 4.09). These results reflect teachers' strong dedication to continuous learning and resilience in adapting to the evolving demands of education. Conversely, the bottom two indicators are "I set goals for my professional growth and development" and "I actively seek opportunities to expand my knowledge and skills" (both with a mean of 4.04). While still indicating engagement, these slightly lower scores suggest areas where additional support could strengthen teachers' proactive professional development efforts.

The findings suggest that teachers in the Division of Bukidnon exhibit a robust commitment to lifelong learning and demonstrate a growth mindset, both of which are essential for adapting to ongoing changes in educational practices. This aligns with Özer, Can, and Duran (2020), who emphasize the value of individualized professional development plans tailored to teachers' unique needs, fostering adaptability and instructional competence. Likewise, the Learning Policy Institute (2017) highlights that effective professional development involves active learning, collaboration, and alignment with curriculum goals, which collectively support sustained teacher growth.

However, the relatively lower engagement in goal-setting and actively seeking development opportunities indicates potential challenges such as limited access to tailored programs or insufficient guidance in structuring professional growth. Research by Sims et al. (2021) introduces the IGTP model (Insights, Goal-directed behaviors, Techniques, Practice), demonstrating that programs addressing these dimensions effectively enhance instructional practices and teacher agency. These findings underscore the importance of structured support to help teachers translate intentions into concrete professional growth.

The implications are clear: school leaders and policymakers should prioritize providing ongoing, individualized professional development opportunities that foster self-directed learning, goal-setting, and reflective practice. Establishing collaborative professional learning communities, mentoring systems, and broad access to diverse development resources can further empower teachers. Such initiatives not only improve instructional competence but also promote resilience, adaptability, and job satisfaction, ultimately benefiting students and the wider educational community.

The Teachers' Overall Instructional Competence

Table 16 summarizes teachers' self-reported proficiency across seven key domains of instructional competence: Content Knowledge and Pedagogy, Assessment and Reporting, Community Linkages and Professional Engagement, Diversity of Learners, Curriculum and Planning, Personal Growth and Professional Development, and Learning Environment. Each domain was assessed using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), with results reported as mean scores, descriptive ratings, and qualitative interpretations.

Table 16. Teachers' Overall Instructional Competence

Variables	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	4.226	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Assessment and Reporting	4.167	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	4.156	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Diversity of Learners	4.131	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Curriculum and Planning	4.131	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Personal Growth and Professional Development	4.130	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Learning Environment	4.069	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Overall Mean	4.144	Agree	Proficient Practitioner
Legend:			
Scale/Range	Descriptive Rating		Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree		Exemplary practitioner
3.51-4.50	Agree		Proficient practitioner
2.51-3.50	Neutral		Developing practitioner
1.51-2.50	Disagree		Emerging practitioner
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree		Beginning Practitioner

All domain means ranged from 4.069 to 4.226, with an overall mean of 4.144, corresponding to a descriptive rating of "Agree" and a qualitative interpretation of "Proficient Practitioner." The highest mean was observed in Content Knowledge and Pedagogy (4.226), while the lowest was in the Learning Environment domain (4.069), though both remain solidly within the "Engaged" category. This consistent pattern indicates that teachers in the Division of Bukidnon perceive themselves as actively engaged across all facets of instructional competence, with slight variations suggesting potential areas for targeted enhancement.

These findings suggest that teachers in Bukidnon possess a strong and well-rounded foundation of instructional competence, demonstrating engagement in content mastery, assessment practices, professional growth, and community involvement. The data reflect a professional culture that values lifelong learning, ethical practice, and responsiveness to diverse student needs. However, the relatively lower score in the Learning Environment domain points to opportunities for further strengthening classroom dynamics and instructional design to better meet evolving educational demands. Similarly, ongoing support for personal growth and professional development remains essential to sustain and elevate teacher effectiveness.

The implications underscore the importance of sustaining and expanding professional development programs, fostering collaborative practices, and nurturing supportive school cultures. Policymakers and school leaders are encouraged to build on these strengths by providing continuous learning opportunities, facilitating peer collaboration, and promoting reflective teaching practices. Targeted interventions, such as enhancing the learning environment and supporting personal growth initiatives, can further elevate overall instructional competence.

These conclusions are strongly supported by contemporary research and theoretical frameworks. For instance, the Learning Policy Institute (2017) and Özer, Can, & Duran (2020) emphasize the critical role of sustained, individualized professional development and collaborative learning communities in enhancing teacher

competence. Research by Ronfeldt et al. (2015) and Somekh (2008) highlights how collaborative environments positively influence instructional quality and student outcomes. Additionally, Opfer & Pedder (2011) and Desimone et al. (2017) affirm the significance of educational lifestyle factors-such as self-directed learning and reflective practice-in fostering teacher growth and instructional effectiveness.

The data reveal a uniformly engaged teaching workforce in Bukidnon with clear strengths across multiple domains of instructional competence. By leveraging these strengths and addressing areas with room for growth, educational leaders can ensure continued improvement in teaching quality and student achievement.

Relationships influencing Instructional Competence and Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment

The table "Correlation Influencing the Dependent and Independent Variables" presents the relationships between various aspects of teachers' educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and their instructional competence. Each variable-such as self-directed learning, participation in professional development, engagement in educational communities, peer support and feedback, shared planning and teaching, and collective problem-solving-was analyzed for its correlation (r) with instructional competence. All variables show strong positive correlation coefficients (r = .475 to .909) with p-values of .000, indicating statistical significance at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 17. Correlate the relationships influencing of Dependent and Independent Variables

VARIABLES	R.Value	P.Value
Educational Lifestyle	.846	.000**
Self-Directed Learning	.909	.000**
Participation in Professional Development	.846	.000**
Engagement in Educational Communities	.475	.000**
Collaborative Environment	.766	.000**
Peer Support and Feedback	.752	.000**
Shared Planning and Teaching	.793	.000**
Collective Problem-Solving	.569	.000**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation coefficients (r) indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between each independent variable (educational lifestyle and collaborative environment sub-factors) and the dependent variable (instructional competence):

Self-Directed Learning (r = .909) and Participation in Professional Development (r = .846) show the strongest positive correlations, suggesting that teachers who are proactive in their own learning and engage in professional development are much more likely to exhibit high instructional competence. Educational Lifestyle overall (r = .846) also reflects a very strong relationship, affirming the centrality of lifelong learning behaviors. Collaborative Environment (r = .766) and its sub-factors-Shared Planning and Teaching (r = .793) and Peer Support and Feedback (r = .752)-demonstrate robust positive associations, indicating that supportive, collaborative school cultures are closely linked to higher instructional competence. Collective Problem-Solving (r = .569) and Engagement in Educational Communities (r = .475), while slightly lower, still represent moderate to strong positive relationships, reinforcing the value of teamwork and professional networking. The p-values (.000 for all) confirm that these relationships are statistically significant, meaning that the probability of these results occurring by chance is exceedingly low.

The data imply that both educational lifestyle and collaborative environment are critical, mutually reinforcing predictors of instructional competence among teachers in DepEd Bukidnon. The particularly high correlation for self-directed learning and professional development participation suggests that teachers who take ownership of their professional growth are most likely to excel in instructional competence. The strong correlations for collaborative practices (peer support, shared planning) further imply that instructional

competence flourishes in environments where teachers work together, share resources, and solve problems collectively.

The null hypothesis-that there is no significant relationship between teachers' educational lifestyle/collaborative environment and instructional competence-is rejected for all variables, as all correlations are significant at the 0.01 level.

These findings have actionable implications for policy and practice, Professional development programs should be designed to promote self-directed learning and provide ample opportunities for teachers to pursue individual and collaborative growth. School leadership should foster a collaborative culture by encouraging shared planning, peer feedback, and collective problem-solving. Educational communities and networks should be strengthened to support ongoing engagement and knowledge sharing among teachers. Targeted interventions in these areas are likely to yield significant improvements in instructional competence, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes and overall school performance. The findings aligns with Opfer & Pedder (2011) and Learning Policy Institute (2017) highlight the importance of self-directed learning and sustained professional development in improving teacher effectiveness. Ronfeldt et al. (2015) and Somekh (2008) provide evidence that collaborative environments-characterized by peer support, shared planning, and collective efficacy-significantly enhance instructional quality and student outcomes. Desimone et al. (2017) and Sims et al. (2021) further emphasize the role of collaborative learning communities and goal-directed professional development in fostering both individual and collective teacher competence. The strong, significant correlations align with these theoretical perspectives, confirming that both individual initiative (educational lifestyle) and systemic support (collaborative environment) are essential for high instructional competence.

Regression Analysis of the Variables

The Table 18 presents the results of the regression analysis between instructional competence and the sub-variables of Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment which are predictors of Teachers' Instructional competence.

Table 18. Regression Analysis between the Interdependent and Dependent Variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	-.244	.107		-2.286	.023
	Participation in Professional Development	.791	.069	.597	11.406	
	Shared Planning and Teaching	.684	.049	.576	13.943	.000
	Self-Directed Learning	.434	.048	.398	9.117	.000
	Collective Problem-Solving	-.410	.045	-.300	-9.070	.000
	Engagement in Educational Communities	-.215	.036	-.174	-5.974	.000
	Peer Support and Feedback	-.240	.060	-.196	-4.022	.000
R= 0.961		R^2= 0.923	F-Value= 489.570		PROB= 0.000	

The regression model indicates that the combined predictors explain 92.3% of the variance in teachers' instructional competence ($R^2 = 0.923$), demonstrating a very strong explanatory power. The overall model is highly significant ($F = 489.570$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the selected variables collectively influence instructional competence.

Among the predictors, Participation in Professional Development emerged as the strongest positive predictor ($\beta = 0.597$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that teachers who actively engage in professional development activities tend to exhibit higher levels of instructional competence. This is closely followed by Shared Planning and Teaching ($\beta = 0.576$, $p < 0.001$), which also has a substantial positive impact. Self-Directed Learning ($\beta = 0.398$, $p < 0.001$) further contributes positively and significantly to instructional competence.

Interestingly, Collective Problem-Solving ($\beta = -0.300$, $p < 0.001$), Engagement in Educational Communities ($\beta = -0.174$, $p < 0.001$), and Peer Support and Feedback ($\beta = -0.196$, $p < 0.001$) have negative standardized coefficients. This suggests that, when controlling for the other variables in the model, higher scores in these areas are associated with a slight decrease in instructional competence.

The negative Beta coefficients do not necessarily imply that these factors harm instructional competence; rather, they may reflect complex interrelationships among the collaborative variables. For instance, multicollinearity or overlapping effects can occur when predictors share variance, causing some coefficients to appear negative in a multiple regression context. It is also possible that when teachers are highly engaged in professional development and shared planning, the incremental benefit of additional collective problem-solving or peer feedback diminishes or becomes redundant. This underscores the complexity of collaborative dynamics and suggests that the quality and integration of these collaborative practices matter more than their mere frequency.

The regression equation can be expressed as:

$$Y = -0.244 + 0.434X_1 + 0.684X_2 - 0.410X_3 + 0.791X_4 - 0.215X_5 - 0.240X_6$$

Where:

Y = Instructional Competence

X_1 = Self-Directed Learning

X_2 = Shared Planning and Teaching

X_3 = Collective Problem-Solving

X_4 = Participation in Professional Development

X_5 = Engagement in Educational Communities

X_6 = Peer Support and Feedback

These results indicate that teachers who actively participate in professional development, engage in shared planning and teaching, and practice self-directed learning are more likely to demonstrate higher instructional competence. This aligns with theoretical frameworks emphasizing lifelong learning and collaborative practices as key drivers of teacher effectiveness (Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Learning Policy Institute, 2017).

The negative coefficients for collective problem-solving, engagement in educational communities, and peer support and feedback highlight that simply increasing collaborative activities is not sufficient. Instead, the effectiveness of collaboration depends on its focus, quality, and how well it integrates with other professional growth activities. Overlapping roles or redundancy among collaborative practices may dilute their individual impact when considered alongside strong professional development and shared planning.

The null hypothesis stating there is no significant effect of educational lifestyle and collaborative environment variables on instructional competence is rejected. All predictors have statistically significant coefficients ($p < 0.001$), confirming their influence.

The practical implications for professional development, the strongest predictor, suggesting that investment in ongoing, targeted professional development programs is crucial for enhancing instructional competence. Shared Planning, schools should encourage collaborative lesson planning and team teaching, as these have a substantial positive impact. Self-Directed Learning, policies that promote teacher autonomy and self-initiated learning should be prioritized. Collaboration Nuances, the negative coefficients for some collaborative factors imply that simply increasing collaboration is not enough; the quality, focus, and integration of collaborative

practices matter. Professional learning communities should be structured to avoid redundancy and ensure meaningful engagement.

The study alignment with theories and literature of Learning Policy Institute (2017): Emphasize the transformative effect of self-directed learning and professional development on teacher competence. Ronfeldt et al. (2015): Support the role of collaborative environments, but also note the need for purposeful, well-structured collaboration. Desimone et al. (2017), Sims et al. (2021): Highlight the importance of integrating individual and collective professional growth for sustained instructional improvement.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter presents the summary of key findings, draws conclusions based on the results, and offers recommendations for policy makers, school leaders, teachers, and future researchers. It synthesizes the outcomes of the study, highlighting the overall levels of engagement in educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence among teachers in DepEd District III of Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The chapter also discusses the significant relationships and predictive influences identified through correlation and regression analyses, providing a foundation for actionable insights and future directions.

Summary

This study investigated the relationship between teachers' educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence among public school teachers in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon, for the school year 2024–2025. The dependent variable was teachers' instructional competence, measured across seven domains, while the independent variables were educational lifestyle (self-directed learning, participation in professional development, engagement in educational communities) and collaborative environment (peer support and feedback, shared planning and teaching, collective problem-solving). The respondents were public elementary and secondary teachers in District III, Don Carlos, Bukidnon.

The results revealed that teachers demonstrated a high level of engagement in their educational lifestyle, with an overall mean of 4.097 ("Engaged"). Among the three dimensions, self-directed learning had the highest mean (4.243), followed by participation in professional development (4.134), and engagement in educational communities (3.916). These findings suggest that teachers are proactive in seeking learning opportunities, participating in both formal and informal professional development, and connecting with peers and educational networks.

The findings showed that the collaborative environment among teachers was also robust, with an overall mean of 3.959 ("Collaborative"). The highest engagement was observed in collective problem-solving (4.034), followed by shared planning and teaching (3.955), and peer support and feedback (3.887). This pattern indicates that collaborative practices such as joint problem-solving, shared instructional planning, and mutual support are embedded within the school culture, fostering a participatory and supportive professional environment.

The analysis of instructional competence across seven domains yielded an overall mean of 4.144 ("Proficient Practitioner"), with all domains scoring within the "Agree" range. The highest engagement was in content knowledge and pedagogy (4.226), while the lowest was in the learning environment (4.069). This uniformity suggests that teachers possess a strong foundation of instructional competence, with strengths distributed across all domains, but also highlights areas for targeted support, particularly in enhancing the learning environment and personal growth.

Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between both educational lifestyle and collaborative environment with teachers' instructional competence. Teachers who were more engaged in self-directed learning, professional development, educational communities, and collaborative practices tended to report higher levels of instructional competence. These findings emphasize the interconnectedness of professional habits, collaboration, and instructional effectiveness.

Regression analysis identified educational lifestyle and collaborative environment as significant predictors of instructional competence, with educational lifestyle emerging as the stronger predictor. This suggests that teachers who actively pursue lifelong learning and professional growth, while also engaging in collaborative practices, are more likely to exhibit higher instructional competence. These results support the importance of fostering a culture of continuous learning and collaboration to enhance teacher effectiveness.

Conclusion

The study's findings reveal that teachers in the Division of Bukidnon exhibit a consistently high level of engagement in their educational lifestyle, particularly excelling in self-directed learning and participation in professional development. Their proactive approach to learning and connection with educational communities underscores a strong foundation for continuous professional growth and adaptability in teaching.

Similarly, the collaborative environment among teachers is robust, with active participation in collective problem-solving, shared planning and teaching, and peer support and feedback. These collaborative practices foster a culture of mutual support and shared responsibility, which is essential for instructional improvement and addressing classroom challenges effectively.

Teachers' instructional competence is uniformly strong across multiple domains, with particular strengths in content knowledge and pedagogy. Although all domains are rated as "Engaged," there is room for further enhancement, especially in developing dynamic learning environments and supporting ongoing personal and professional growth.

The positive correlations between educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence highlight the interconnectedness of these factors. Teachers who actively engage in self-directed learning and collaborative practices tend to demonstrate higher instructional competence, emphasizing the importance of fostering both individual and collective professional development.

Finally, educational lifestyle and collaborative environment are significant predictors of instructional competence, with educational lifestyle showing a stronger influence. These results suggest that sustained support for lifelong learning, reflective practice, and collaborative engagement should be prioritized by school leaders and policymakers to elevate teaching quality and student outcomes in Bukidnon.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are respectfully proposed to further enhance teachers' instructional competence through the development of their educational lifestyle and collaborative environment.

For school administrators and the Division of Bukidnon education officials may continue to support and encourage teachers' self-directed learning and participation in professional development activities. Providing accessible, relevant, and ongoing training programs may empower teachers to take ownership of their professional growth and remain adaptable to changing educational demands.

To school principals and department heads may foster and institutionalize collaborative practices such as collective problem-solving, shared planning, and peer feedback within their schools. Creating structured opportunities for teachers to collaborate regularly may strengthen the culture of mutual support and shared responsibility, leading to improved instructional strategies and student learning outcomes.

For the Teacher development coordinators and curriculum specialists may focus on enhancing instructional competence across all domains, with particular attention to enriching the learning environment and supporting teachers' personal and professional growth. Tailored interventions and resources may be provided to address these areas and ensure a more dynamic and inclusive classroom experience.

To the policymakers and education planners may recognize the strong relationship between educational lifestyle, collaborative environment, and instructional competence by designing policies that integrate and

promote both individual and collective professional development. Incentives and frameworks that encourage lifelong learning and collaboration may sustain teacher effectiveness and positively impact student achievement.

To the school leaders and stakeholders may prioritize creating a supportive infrastructure that facilitates continuous learning and collaboration among teachers. This includes allocating time for professional learning communities, mentoring programs, and reflective practices that may nurture teacher resilience, adaptability, and instructional excellence.

Lastly, to future researchers: further studies may be conducted to explore additional factors influencing instructional competence, such as the impact of technology integration, leadership styles, and community involvement. Longitudinal research may also provide deeper insights into how educational lifestyle and collaborative environments evolve over time and affect teaching effectiveness in diverse contexts.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A.

Research questionnaire

Republic of the Philippines
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
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Center of Development
Email: education@cmu.edu.ph

Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment on Teacher's Instructional Competence

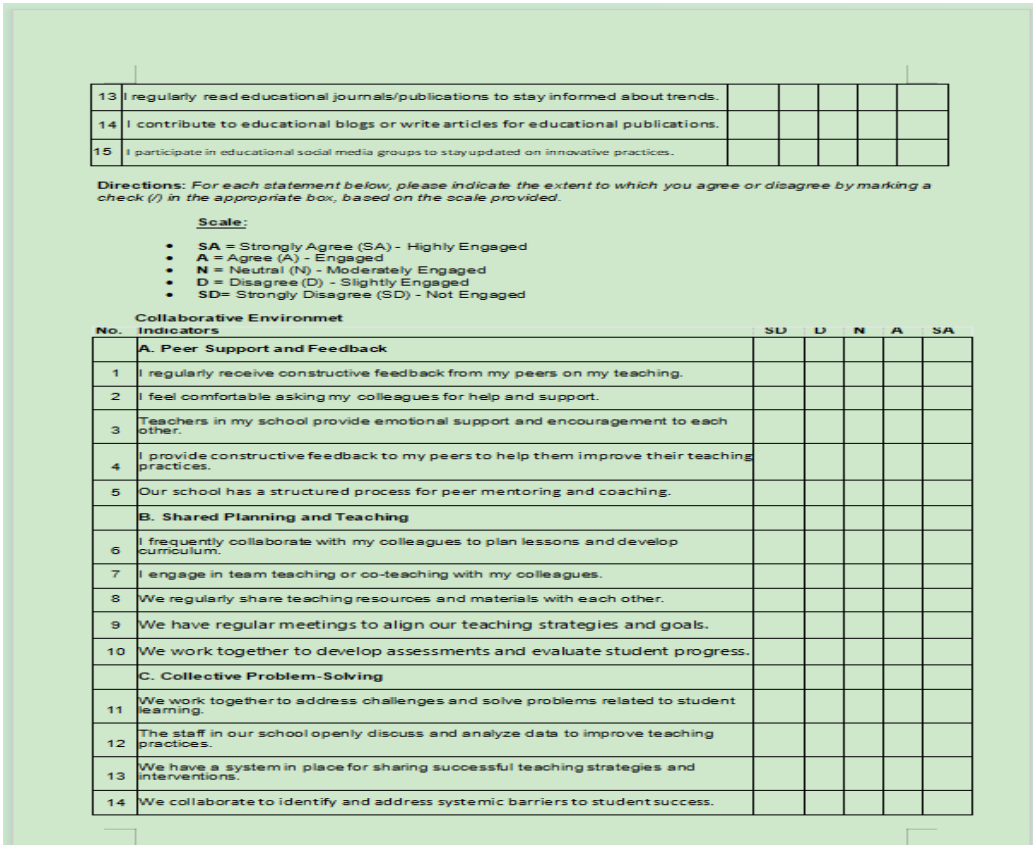
Directions: *For each statement below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by marking a check (/) in the appropriate box, based on the scale provided.*

Scale:

- **SA** = Strongly Agree (SA) - Highly Engaged
- **A** = Agree (A) - Engaged
- **N** = Neutral (N) - Moderately Engaged
- **D** = Disagree (D) - Slightly Engaged
- **SD** = Strongly Disagree (SD) - Not Engaged

Educational Lifestyles

No.	Indicators	SD	D	N	A	SA
	A. Self-Directed Learning					
1	I actively seek out new educational research and apply it to my teaching.					
2	I independently explore new teaching methodologies and strategies.					
3	I regularly reflect on my teaching practices and identify areas for improvement.					
4	I take the initiative to set personal learning goals and develop plans to achieve them.					
5	I use technology and digital resources to enhance my professional development and stay updated on best teaching practices.					
	B. Participation in Professional Development					
6	I frequently attend professional development workshops, seminars, and conferences.					
7	I actively participate in professional learning communities and share my expertise.					
8	I apply knowledge/skills from professional development to my classroom practice.					
9	I seek feedback from peers and mentors on my professional development progress.					
10	I set personal goals for professional growth and track my progress over time.					
	C. Engagement in Educational Communities					
11	I actively participate in online forums/communities related to education.					
12	I collaborate with educators from other schools/districts to share best practices.					



13	I regularly read educational journals/publications to stay informed about trends.					
14	I contribute to educational blogs or write articles for educational publications.					
15	I participate in educational social media groups to stay updated on innovative practices.					

Directions: *For each statement below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by marking a check (/) in the appropriate box, based on the scale provided.*

Scale:

- **SA** = Strongly Agree (SA) - Highly Engaged
- **A** = Agree (A) - Engaged
- **N** = Neutral (N) - Moderately Engaged
- **D** = Disagree (D) - Slightly Engaged
- **SD**= Strongly Disagree (SD) - Not Engaged

Collaborative Environmet

No.	Indicators	SD	D	N	A	SA
	A. Peer Support and Feedback					
1	I regularly receive constructive feedback from my peers on my teaching.					
2	I feel comfortable asking my colleagues for help and support.					
3	Teachers in my school provide emotional support and encouragement to each other.					
4	I provide constructive feedback to my peers to help them improve their teaching practices.					
5	Our school has a structured process for peer mentoring and coaching.					
	B. Shared Planning and Teaching					
6	I frequently collaborate with my colleagues to plan lessons and develop curriculum.					
7	I engage in team teaching or co-teaching with my colleagues.					
8	We regularly share teaching resources and materials with each other.					
9	We have regular meetings to align our teaching strategies and goals.					
10	We work together to develop assessments and evaluate student progress.					
	C. Collective Problem-Solving					
11	We work together to address challenges and solve problems related to student learning.					
12	The staff in our school openly discuss and analyze data to improve teaching practices.					
13	We have a system in place for sharing successful teaching strategies and interventions.					
14	We collaborate to identify and address systemic barriers to student success.					

15	Our school encourages cross-disciplinary collaboration to solve complex educational issues.					

Directions: *When answering the following statements, mark check (/) the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement based on the following scale and description below:*

Scale:

- **SA** = Strongly Agree (SA) - Highly Engaged
- **A** = Agree (A) - Engaged
- **N** = Neutral (N) - Moderately Engaged
- **D** = Disagree (D) - Slightly Engaged
- **SD** = Strongly Disagree (SD) - Not Engaged

Instructional Competence

No.	Indicators	SD	D	N	A	SA
	A. Content Knowledge and Pedagogy					
1	I consistently update my knowledge of the subject matter through seminars, workshops, and research.					
2	I integrate current trends and developments into my teaching.					
3	I design instructional plans that align with the curriculum framework and learning competencies.					
4	My lessons are well-structured and incorporate varied instructional strategies.					
5	I collaborate with colleagues to share resources and discuss new content knowledge.					
	B. Learning Environment					
6	I maintain a positive and inclusive classroom atmosphere.					
7	I promote respect, empathy, and collaboration among students.					
8	I actively promote values through class discussions.					
9	I collaboratively develop classroom rules with students.					
10	I foster a culture of inquiry by encouraging students to ask questions.					
	C. Diversity of Learners					
11	I differentiate instruction to accommodate the diverse learning needs of students.					
12	I gather information about learners' differences to better tailor my teaching approaches.					
13	I advocate for inclusive education practices.					

14	I recognize and respect cultural differences among students.					
15	I advocate for inclusive education practices that promote equity and access for all learners.					
	D. Curriculum and Planning					
16	I design lessons that cater to diverse learners' needs and abilities.					
17	I develop well-structured learning experiences.					
18	I design coherent and sequenced instructional units and lesson plans.					
19	I use a variety of formative and summative assessment strategies.					
20	I use assessment data to modify and improve my teaching practices.					
	E. Assessment and Reporting					
21	I use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to evaluate student learning.					
22	I provide timely and constructive feedback to students.					
23	I regularly employ formative assessment strategies.					
24	I design fair and valid summative assessments.					
25	I communicate effectively with parents and stakeholders regarding student progress.					
	F. Community Linkages and Professional Engagement					
26	I engage in continuous professional development activities.					
27	I reflect on my teaching practices and seek feedback.					
28	I actively participate in school and community events.					
29	I collaborate with external partners to enhance learning opportunities.					
30	I abide by the code of ethics for professional teachers.					
	G. Personal Growth and Professional Development					
31	I set goals for my professional growth and development.					
32	I actively seek opportunities to expand my knowledge and skills.					
33	I demonstrate a growth mindset and embrace challenges.					
34	I maintain a positive attitude towards teaching.					
35	I am committed to lifelong learning and continuous improvement.					

Appendix B.

Letter to the Division Superintendent

Republic of the Philippines
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Central Mindanao University
University Town, Musuan, Bukidnon
Center of Development
Email: education@cmu.edu.ph

March 17, 2025

VICTORIA V. GAZO, PhD, CESO V
Schools Division Superintendent
Division of Bukidnon
Sumpong, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon

Ma'am:

Greetings of Peace!

The undersigned is a first- year student taking up a Mater of Arts in Education, Major in Educational Administration, at College of Education, Central Mindanao University. I am conducting my research entitled"Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment on Teacher's Instructional Competence" as part of the requirement of the subject Maed-276 Educational Evaluation and Data Analysis.

Rest assured that it is conducted in accordance with ethical research standards. Participation will be voluntary, and the confidentiality of all respondents will be strictly maintained and the information gathered will be used solely for research purposes only in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Hoping for your kind and favorable consideration. Your support in allowing us to approach the teachers and collect data would be greatly appreciated. Thank you and more power!

Respectfully yours,

GERLIE C. TAN-ABRENICA
Researcher

Noted by:

RAUL C. ORONGAN, PhD
Subject Professor

Recommending Approval:

DENIS A. TAN, PhD
Dean

By the authority of the Dean
Jan[illegible] Ucang
3.17.25

Approved:

VICTORIA V. GAZO, PhD, CESO V
Schools Division Superintendent

Letter from the Division Superintendent

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
REGION X – NORTHERN MINDANAO
SCHOOLS DIVISION OF BUKIDNON

Department of Education
School Division of Bukidnon
994
RELEASED
3/21/25

First Endorsement
March 20, 2025

Respectfully returned to **Gerlie C. Tan-abrenica,** Researcher, Central Mindanao University, Musuan, Maramag, Bukidnon, the herein request to conduct the study titled "*Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment on Teachers' Instructional Competence*" to the teachers of this Division with the information that this Office interposes no objection subject to the following conditions:

1. that Consent Form shall be asked from the respondents as proof of their voluntary participation in the study;
2. that the administration of the questionnaires shall not in any way interfere with the respondent's routines in the school;
3. that the proponents shall present the outcome of the study to the Division Research Dissemination Activities and shall furnish a copy of the results of the research study for reference purposes; and
4. that this permission shall be subject to immediate revocation the moment it is found prejudicial to the Department of Education.

VICTORIA V. GAZO
Schools Division Superintendent

Copy furnished:
Planning & Research

DepED MATATAG
BAGONG PILIPINAS

Address: Fortich St., Sumpong, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon
Hotline Number: +639178423657
Email Address: bukidnon[illegible]deped.gov.ph
Website: https://bukidnon.deped.gov.ph

Request Letter to the Respondents

Republic of the Philippines
CENTRAL MINDANAO UNIVERSITY
University Town, Musuan, Maramag, Bukidnon
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Research Title: **Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment on Teacher's Instructional Competence.**
Researcher: **GERLIE C. TAN- ABRENICA**
Affiliation: **CENTRAL MINDANAO UNIVERSITY**

Contact Information: ***0970-953-0156/ gerlietan77@gmail.com***

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS:
The purpose of this research will determine the Educational Lifestyle and Collaborative Environment on Teacher's Instructional Competence. By participating in this study, you will help advance our understanding of how these factors influence educational outcomes and contribute to the development of strategies to enhance teacher's Instructional competence. The benefits of this research include the potential to improve teacher well-being, inform policy changes, and create a more supportive work environment, ultimately leading to better educational experiences for students.

PROCEDURES:
As a participant, you will be asked to complete a survey that assesses your perceptions of educational lifestyle, and collaborative environment on teacher's instructional competence. You also have the option to participate in a one-on-one interview to provide more in-depth insights. Your participation in both the survey and interview is voluntary.

RISKS AND CONFIDENTIALITY:
Your participation in this study involves minimal risks. All information collected will be kept confidential. Your identity will be protected using pseudonyms in reporting data. Any data shared during interviews will be recorded accurately and securely.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:
Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. You can choose not to answer specific questions or opt out of the interview process without consequences.

CONSENT:
By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the information provided in this consent form. You voluntarily agree to participate in this research study on Attitude and Health on Productivity of the Teachers.

Participant's Signature: _____
Date: _____

For any questions or concerns regarding this research study or your participation, please contact the researcher at the provided contact information.

To God be the Glory