FROM NOVICE TO NAVIGATOR: MAPPING EARLY-CAREER TEACHER COMPETENCIES TO TRANSFORM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

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Abstract

The study aimed to assess the teaching competencies of beginning teachers in the Philippines, specifically in alignment with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (CMO 74, Series 2017). The goal was to identify key competencies that could inform the design of more effective curricular and professional development programs for early-career educators. Using a sequential explanatory design, the research integrated both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In the quantitative phase, 98 beginning teachers from 24 elementary schools across the north and south districts of Magalang, Pampanga, participated in the study. These teachers completed a comprehensive questionnaire based on the seven domains and 37 strands outlined in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers. The questionnaire aimed to gauge their self-perception of competence across various teaching competencies. In addition, qualitative data were gathered through key informant interviews with one school supervisor, one principal, two Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) supervisors, and four beginning teachers. These interviews were conducted to validate and further explain the quantitative findings. The results indicated that beginning teachers generally perceived themselves as competent in professional characteristics, subject knowledge, and teaching skills. This self-assessment was corroborated by the master teachers and heads, who agreed that the teachers demonstrated solid subject-matter knowledge, effective teaching methodologies, reflective thinking, and organizational skills. Furthermore, beginning teachers were noted for their diligence and efficiency in fulfilling their teaching responsibilities, as well as in adhering to the standards and guidelines established by the Department of Education (DepEd). However, the interviews also highlighted areas where beginning teachers might benefit from additional support and development, particularly in areas beyond the standard competencies, such as classroom management, interpersonal communication, and leadership skills. These insights offer valuable recommendations for refining teacher education and professional development programs to better address the evolving needs of beginning teachers.

Keywords: Teaching- Learning, Beginning Teachers, Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form, CMO 74 Series of 2017.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, ministries of education have developed competency-based standards that define the essential attributes and skills required of effective classroom teachers. These standards serve as a framework for evaluating teacher competence and guiding policy decisions related to professional development. The Malaysian Teacher Standards (2009), for example, encapsulate the core competencies expected of teachers, while Hamilton-Ekeke (2013) identified key inclinations of a competent teacher, such as fostering students' critical reflection on social realities, promoting effective transfer of knowledge and skills, and demonstrating proficiency in both assessment design and its interpretation. For individuals aspiring to become teachers, self-assessing the extent to which they possess these competencies can be a challenging

process. Sural, Saritas, and Catalbas (2018) emphasized the need for teachers to critically examine their own skills in designing learning environments and question their abilities, especially as they begin their careers. Historically, the concept of teacher competencies evolved significantly over time. Koksal (2014) traced the development of competency-based standards, noting that the concept emerged in the late 19th century and gained prominence in the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1990s, many countries developed formal professional standards, such as in England, where the teacher competencies were revised in 2007 to focus on three main areas: professional characteristics, professional knowledge, and professional skills.

Sisman (2006) argued that teaching is a profession requiring both expertise and specific skills. Teachers are expected to demonstrate not only competence in subject matter but also in communication, classroom management, and professional attitudes. As Sural (2013) highlighted, effective teaching is not merely about content delivery but also about how teachers interact with students, manage the classroom, and reflect on their practices.

Competency in teaching is often seen as a key indicator of a nation's educational quality. Stoof, Martens, and Van Merrienboer (2000) defined teaching competencies as the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, while Korthagen (2004) further categorized them into subject-oriented competency, methodology competency, communicative/reflective thinking competency, and organizational competency. These competencies are essential for effective teaching, encompassing both cognitive and interpersonal abilities, as well as professional attitudes. In the United States, national professional standards for teachers have been implemented universally, adapting to diverse sub-cultures without losing sight of the core competencies. Similarly, in Southeast Asia, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) identified shared domains of teaching competency, including professional knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics, across the region's member countries (SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2010).

As teaching plays a critical role in shaping student outcomes, it is crucial for teachers to assess and enhance their competencies to improve student learning. Go, Yusuf, and Wong (2017) emphasized that teaching ability remains a key factor in student success, and Karacaoglu (2008) further argued that teacher competence significantly impacts students' learning experiences. Ball and Bass (2000) posited that a teacher's preparedness directly correlates with their effectiveness in the classroom. Similarly, studies by Ball and Cohen (1999) and Hill, Rowen, and Ball (2005) affirmed that well-prepared teachers, who possess deep content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and lesson structuring skills, are more effective in fostering student learning. Thus, teacher competence is closely tied to the quality of instruction and, by extension, student performance. The shift from capabilities to competency-based standards has enhanced the understanding of teaching and teacher competencies (Nguyen, Griffin, & Nguyen, 2006). Standards now include broader concepts such as values, attitudes, and skills that teachers need to evaluate their professional practice, thus providing a shared framework for making fair and reliable judgments about teaching quality (Ingvarsson & Rowe, 2007). In the Philippines, teacher competence is regulated by the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS), which was formulated by the Department of Education (DepEd)

in 2006 and implemented in 2009. The NCBTS outlines the framework for defining effective teaching and the standards required for teacher competence (Department of Education, 2006). Student performance, in turn, is assessed through the National Achievement Test (NAT), which measures academic progress in key subjects like English, Filipino, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, providing data on student and school performance across the country.

The Philippine education system has undergone significant reforms, including the K-12 program and regional integration, driven by both national and global shifts. These changes highlight the need for continuous improvement in education and a rethinking of existing teacher standards (DepEd Order No. 42, Series 2017). The government has worked to streamline the state sector and raise educational standards, including through quality assessments in teacher education programs, to ensure that teachers meet the evolving needs of the 21st-century classroom. A teacher's competence is widely regarded as one of the most influential factors in determining student success. In the Department of Education Order No. 36 (2013), it is emphasized that high-quality teachers contribute significantly to the holistic development of students, equipping them with the values and skills necessary to promote national progress.

In 2011-2012, the Department of Education (DepEd) reported that the national average score for primary schools on the NAT was 67%, and for secondary schools, it was 49%. Despite the efforts of teachers, principals, parents, and stakeholders, these results underscored the need for further professional development, particularly for beginning teachers. In response, DepEd introduced the "Understanding by Design" (UbD) educational planning tool to improve teacher quality and address the challenges of new, inexperienced educators (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the Philippines are tasked with producing qualified teachers, but many beginning teachers struggle with the transition from education to practice. Newly-hired teachers often find themselves underprepared for the demands of their new profession. The challenges they face include classroom management, teaching strategies, and meeting student needs, which are particularly daunting for those in their early years of teaching.

According to DepEd Order No. 42 (2017), beginning teachers are those with less than four years of experience and are expected to have a strong understanding of the subjects they teach, along with the pedagogical knowledge required to support learning. However, beginning teachers often face difficulties in navigating the complexities of the classroom, making professional development crucial for their success. In response to these challenges, this study aimed to assess the competencies of beginning teachers based on the standards set in CMO 74, Series 2017, and determined whether these competencies align with the prescribed professional requirements. The study sought to provide valuable insights into the design of curricular and professional development programs that can better support teachers in their early careers, helping them transition successfully into the profession. The theoretical framework for this study is rooted in the Competence Motivation Theory, initially conceptualized by Robert White and extended by Susan Harter in the 1970s. According to this theory, individuals are motivated to engage in tasks in which they feel competent and capable. As beginning teachers gain mastery over their teaching practices and receive positive reinforcement from mentors and

supervisors, they will internalize a sense of competence and develop the motivation to continue improving their skills throughout their careers. Given the importance of teacher quality in shaping student outcomes, this study explored how the competencies of beginning teachers in the Philippines can be evaluated and enhanced to support national educational goals and regional development plans. By aligning professional development programs with the needs of beginning teachers, this study aimed to contribute to the ongoing improvement of teacher education in the Philippines.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the competencies of beginning elementary school teachers in the North and South Districts of Magalang, Pampanga, during the 2019-2020 school year, based on the standards outlined in CMO No. 74 Series of 2017. These standards include the Learning Competency-Based Standards, Outcome-Based Education (OBE) aligned with the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF), and the policies set forth in RA 10533 (K-12 Program), NCBTS, PPST, and DepEd Order No. 42, Series 2017. The findings served as inputs for the development of enhanced curricular and professional programs for beginning teachers.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. **How do beginning teachers perceive their competencies in terms of the following program outcomes?**

   1.1 Demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the diversity of learners across various learning areas.

   1.2 Manifesting meaningful and comprehensive pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in different subject areas.

   1.3 Utilizing appropriate assessment and evaluation tools to measure learning outcomes.

   1.4 Demonstrating skills in communication, higher-order thinking, and the use of tools and technology to enhance learning and teaching.

   1.5 Demonstrating positive attributes of a model teacher, both as an individual and as a professional.

   1.6 Manifesting a continuous desire for personal and professional development.

2. **How do master teachers and school heads perceive the competencies of beginning teachers in relation to the aforementioned program outcomes?**

3. **How can the competencies of beginning teachers be assessed in the following areas?**

   3.1 Content Knowledge and Pedagogy.

   3.2 Learning Environment and Diversity of Learners.

   3.3 Curriculum Development and Planning.

   3.4 Assessment and Reporting.

   3.5 Additional Competencies (Plus Factor).

4. **How can the obtained data be assessed using quantitative triangulation?**

   Sub-questions:

5. **What other competencies do beginning teachers need to develop that are essential for creating an effective learning environment?**

6. **What measures should be implemented to reinforce or enhance the competencies of beginning teachers?**

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study aimed to explore the level of competencies of beginning teachers as prescribed by CMO 74 s. 2017. A **mixed-method research** design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) was employed, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This methodology was chosen to enhance the depth and breadth of the study, enabling the research to draw on the strengths of both types of data. Specifically, a **sequential explanatory approach** was utilized, in which quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection to further explain the quantitative findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

The study followed a two-phase design: in the first phase, quantitative data were gathered and analyzed; in the second phase, qualitative data were collected based on the results of the quantitative phase to provide deeper insights and explanations.

Participants

Quantitative Phase: The study included twenty-four public elementary schools from the North and South Districts of Magalang, Pampanga, Philippines. A total of ninety-eight beginning teachers, each with four or fewer years of teaching experience, participated in the study during the 2019-2020 academic year. Additionally, master teachers and department heads, who supervise and observe the beginning teachers, were included in the sample. Total enumeration was used to ensure comprehensive representation.

Qualitative Phase: For the qualitative phase, purposive sampling (Creswell, 2013) was employed to select participants who were well-positioned to provide valuable insights. The selected participants included:

- 1 district supervisor

- 1 school principal

- 2 BEEd supervisors

- 4 beginning teachers from the study locale

These participants were chosen based on their direct interaction with and knowledge of the beginning teachers' competencies.

Instruments

Quantitative Phase: The primary instrument used to gather data was the CMO 74 series of 2017, aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers. The instrument comprises a Likert-scale survey to assess the competencies of the teachers across various domains. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, a statistician was consulted to conduct a **Cronbach's alpha** test, which measures internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha value was found to be 0.93, indicating excellent reliability and internal consistency for the instrument.

Qualitative Phase: In the qualitative phase, **key-informant interviews** were conducted using online platforms (Messenger, voice recordings, and email) due to restrictions on face-to-face meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interview questions were open-ended and designed to allow participants to provide broad and detailed responses. The interviews were semi-structured, with warm-up and main questions to guide the conversation and establish rapport. The interviews aimed to explore additional competencies that beginning teachers should develop beyond those outlined in CMO 74.

Data Collection

A formal letter requesting permission to conduct the study was sent to the relevant authorities at the selected schools. The informed consent forms were distributed to all participants to ensure they understood the purpose of the study, the expected outcomes, and any potential risks involved.

Quantitative Phase: The CMO 74-based instrument was distributed to both beginning teachers and master teachers/department heads. The master teachers and department heads were included due to their role in monitoring and observing the beginning teachers' classroom practices. The completed questionnaires were collected and analyzed to assess the teachers' self-reported competencies.

Qualitative Phase: After the quantitative data were gathered, interviews were conducted with the selected key informants (district supervisor, principal, BEEd supervisors, and beginning teachers). These interviews provided further insights into the competencies that beginning teachers need to develop and suggestions for improving teacher training and professional development.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines set by the university. Permission was obtained from the appropriate authorities before the research commenced. Informed consent was provided to all participants to ensure they were aware of the study's objectives and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was assured, and pseudonyms were used in reporting the findings to protect participants' identities.

Data Analysis

Given the mixed-methods design, the data analysis was conducted in two stages:

Quantitative Data Analysis: The quantitative data from the Likert-scale questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including **mean** and **standard deviation**, to determine the level of competencies of the beginning teachers. The results were then described using adjectival ratings based on the IPCRF scale adopted by the Department of Education.

Qualitative Data Analysis: For the qualitative data, verbatim transcriptions of the interviews were completed. The data were organized, coded, and analyzed using **open coding** and **axial coding** to identify patterns and themes. Once saturation was reached, the researcher synthesized the data to identify constructs and overarching themes. The findings were triangulated by comparing insights from different participant groups. The final analysis was verified with the informants to ensure accuracy and validity.

The **thematic analysis** approach was used to interpret the qualitative data, allowing for a deeper understanding of the beginning teachers' competencies and the key areas that need further development.

3. RESULTS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

I. Competencies of the teachers as perceived by the teacher- respondents

Table 1.1: Demonstrate in-depth understanding of the diversity of learners in various learning areas

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Identify various types of learners and provide them with appropriate , culturally- relevant learning activities and experiences	3.24	0.60	Satisfactory
2. Develop and utilize relevant materials that match the learners' learning styles , goals and culture	3.28	0.54	Satisfactory
3. Select instructional strategies for the development of learners' critical and creative thinking skills	3.32	0.48	Satisfactory
4. Utilize developmentally appropriate activities in teaching the different learning areas	3.08	0.57	Satisfactory
5. Utilize appropriate technologies to achieve the learning outcomes	3.40	0.58	Satisfactory
6. Apply theories of learning in designing learning- teaching experiences	3.44	0.51	Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.29 Satis

Legend:
4.5- 5.0- Outstanding
3.5-4.49- Very satisfactory
2.5-3.49- Satisfactory
1.5-2.49- Unsatisfactory
Below 1.49- Poor

Table 1.1 reflects the teacher-respondents' perceptions of their in-depth understanding of the diversity of learners in various learning areas. The overall mean score of 3.29, corresponding

to a "Satisfactory" rating, indicates that teachers perceive their competency in this area as generally adequate. The individual parameters show the following mean scores and standard deviations: 3.24 (0.60), 3.28 (0.54), 3.32 (0.48), 3.08 (0.57), 3.40 (0.58), and 3.44 (0.51), all falling within the "Satisfactory" range.

These results suggest that teachers feel they can adequately identify their students' learning styles and provide activities tailored to these styles. Additionally, teachers perceive themselves as satisfactorily using diverse materials and strategies suited to these styles, thereby fostering critical and creative thinking. They also report the satisfactory use of appropriate technologies and the application of learning theories in designing teaching-learning experiences.

The findings are consistent with Hamilton-Ekeke's (2013) study, which asserts that effective teachers should focus on developing skills to help students reflect on social realities, facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills naturally, and utilize appropriate assessment tools to achieve instructional goals. These competencies are essential for designing and interpreting learning activities and assessments, both teacher-produced and externally-generated.

Table 1.2: Manifest meaningful and comprehensive pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of different subject areas

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Explain subject matter content clearly, accurately and comprehensively	3.76	0.44	Very Satisfactory
2. Relate current content with past and future lessons	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
3. Integrate recent developments in education and in the specific field to enrich learning	3.68	0.48	Very Satisfactory
4. Provide examples for real life to make learning meaningful	3.76	0.44	Very Satisfactory
5. Utilize appropriate teaching-learning methods and technology for specific –subject matter content	3.44	0.51	Satisfactory
6. Keep abreast with educational issues, trends, and practices vis-à-vis local and global context to provide relevant learning experiences	3.72	0.46	Very Satisfactory

Table 1.2 assesses whether the teachers manifest meaningful and comprehensive pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in different subject areas. The overall mean score of 3.66, which corresponds to a "Very Satisfactory" rating, indicates that teachers perceive themselves as highly competent in this area. Among the six parameters listed in the table, only item 5, "Utilize appropriate teaching-learning methods and technology for specific subject matter content," received a mean score of 3.44, which is interpreted as "Satisfactory."

The results suggest that teachers are very satisfactory in explaining subject matter content, effectively linking this content to past and future lessons. They also perceive themselves as capable of using meaningful real-life examples and employing appropriate teaching methods to stay current with educational issues, trends, and practices in both local and global contexts. This enables them to provide relevant and engaging learning experiences. However, there remains room for improvement in the use of technology-based teaching-learning methods specific to their subject areas.

These findings align with the studies of Ball and Cohen (1999) and Hill, Rowen, and Ball (2005), which emphasize that well-prepared teachers are more effective in leveraging three core areas of knowledge: content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), and lesson structure knowledge. Therefore, teacher quality and performance are closely interrelated, with PCK playing a central role in teaching effectiveness.

Table 1.3: Utilize appropriate assessment and evaluation tools to measure learning outcomes

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Design authentic assessment, evaluation instruments and alternative assessment tools	3.76	0.44	Very Satisfactory
2. Interpret assessment results and use these to improve learning and teaching	4.00	0.00	Very Satisfactory
3. Keep accurate and updated records of the learners' performance using technology tools where feasible and appropriate	3.36	0.49	Satisfactory
4. Provide timely feedback of assessment results to parents and other stakeholders	3.20	0.41	Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.58- Very Satisfactory

Table 1.3 evaluates whether teacher-respondents use appropriate assessment and evaluation tools to measure learning outcomes. The overall mean score of 3.58, with a descriptive rating of "Very Satisfactory," indicates that the teachers perceive themselves as highly competent in this area.

Among the four parameters, the first two—"Design authentic assessment, evaluation instruments, and alternative assessment tools" (mean = 3.76) and "Interpret assessment results and use these to improve learning and teaching" (mean = 4.00)—received the highest ratings, both falling within the "Very Satisfactory" range.

In contrast, the other two parameters—"Keep accurate and updated records of the learners' performance using technology tools where feasible and appropriate" (mean = 3.36) and "Provide timely feedback of assessment results to parents and other stakeholders" (mean = 3.20)—were rated as "Satisfactory."

The low standard deviation indicates that responses were clustered closely around the mean, signifying a consensus among the teacher-respondents regarding their competencies in these areas.

These results suggest that teacher-respondents perceive themselves as very satisfactory in designing authentic assessments that enhance both teaching and learning. They also feel competent in interpreting assessment results to improve educational outcomes. While teachers are also able to keep accurate and updated records using technology, and provide feedback to stakeholders, they recognize there is still room for improvement in these areas, particularly in the timely communication of assessment results.

These findings align with the standards set by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), which emphasizes the importance of teachers developing a clear framework for assessment competencies. This framework should guide teachers in effectively monitoring student progress, ultimately ensuring the delivery of quality instruction.

Table 1.4: Manifest skills in communication, higher order thinking and use of tools and technology to accelerate learning and teaching

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Demonstrate skills in creative and critical thinking, logical reasoning, problem solving, and decision making in various classroom situations	4.00	0.00	Very Satisfactory
2. Create learning experiences that develop the learners' higher order thinking skills	3.24	0.44	Satisfactory
3. Provide opportunities that develop the learners' communication skills	3.20	0.41	Satisfactory
4. Use tools and technology to enhance learning and teaching	3.36	0.49	Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.45- Satisfactory

Table 1.4 assesses whether teacher-respondents manifest skills in communication, higher-order thinking (HOTS), and the use of tools and technology to accelerate learning and teaching. The overall mean of 3.45, with a descriptive rating of "Satisfactory," indicates that the teacher-respondents generally perceive themselves as competent, though with some room for improvement in certain areas.

The analysis reveals that the teacher-respondents rated themselves **Very Satisfactory** in demonstrating creative and critical thinking, logical reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making in classroom situations. These skills are foundational in fostering higher-order thinking and providing students with meaningful learning experiences.

However, when it comes to creating learning experiences that specifically develop higher-order thinking skills, providing opportunities to enhance students' communication skills, and using technology-based tools to enrich learning, the respondents rated themselves as only **Satisfactory**.

This suggests that while the teachers are confident in their ability to foster creativity and logical decision-making in the classroom, they recognize the need for further development in structuring lessons and activities that promote HOTS, communication, and the effective integration of technology into their teaching practices. This finding is consistent with the research of Sural (2013), who emphasized that effective teaching requires more than just subject knowledge.

Teachers must possess a holistic set of competencies, including communication skills, classroom management, and the ability to foster critical thinking. These characteristics, along with their beliefs and attitudes toward the profession, play a crucial role in shaping instructional effectiveness and the overall learning environment.

Table 1.5: Demonstrate positive attributes of a model teacher, both as an individual and as a professional

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Act according to the norms of the teaching profession in dealing with students, parents, colleagues and other stakeholders	3.20	0.41	Satisfactory
2. Manifest positive personal and professional qualities of a teacher	3.24	0.44	Satisfactory
3. Observe integrity and professionalism in handling issues, conflicts, and controversies related to student welfare as well as parents and community concerns	4.00	0.00	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.48- Satisfactory

Table 1.5 looks at whether teacher-respondents show the positive qualities of a model teacher, both personally and professionally. The overall mean score of **3.48**, rated as **Satisfactory**, suggests that the teachers generally see themselves as meeting the standards, though there is room for improvement.

The table covers three areas:

1. **Acting according to the norms of the profession** when dealing with students, parents, and others (mean score = **3.20**, Satisfactory).

2. **Showing positive personal and professional qualities** as a teacher (mean score = **3.24**, Satisfactory).

3. **Maintaining integrity and professionalism** when handling issues related to student welfare and community concerns (mean score = **4.00**, Very Satisfactory).

These results show that the teachers feel they are **Satisfactory** in following the professional norms, being positive role models, and handling most situations well. However, they rate themselves **Very Satisfactory** in staying professional when dealing with sensitive issues like student welfare and parent concerns.

Table 1.6: Manifest a desire to continuously pursue personal and professional development

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Pursue personal growth and professional development through attendance in seminar-workshops , participation in demo-fests, conducting action research and other education-related activities	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
2. Participate actively in the school's community outreach activities	4.00	0.00	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.80- Very Satisfactory

Table 1.6 evaluates the teacher-respondents' commitment to continuous personal and professional development. With an overall mean score of **3.80**, rated as **Very Satisfactory**, the data reflects a strong desire among teachers to actively pursue growth in their careers.

Two specific aspects were measured:

1. **Pursuit of personal and professional development**, which includes participation in seminars, workshops, demonstration festivals (demo-fests), action research, and other educational activities. This aspect received a mean score of **3.60**, rated as **Very Satisfactory**.

2. **Engagement in outreach activities** initiated by their respective schools, which scored **4.00**, also rated as **Very Satisfactory**.

These findings suggest that teacher-respondents are highly proactive in advancing their professional growth. They actively participate in professional development activities such as workshops and research and contribute meaningfully to their schools' outreach initiatives. The results indicate a strong commitment to both their personal growth and their roles in fostering a positive impact within their educational communities.

II. Competencies of the teachers as perceived by the master-teachers/heads

Table 2.1: Demonstrate in-depth understanding of the diversity of learners in various learning areas

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Identify various types of learners and provide them with appropriate , culturally- relevant learning activities and experiences	3.36	0.49	Satisfactory
2. Develop and utilize relevant materials that match the learners' learning styles , goals and culture	3.64	0.49	Very Satisfactory
3. Select instructional strategies for the development of learners' critical and creative thinking skills	3.32	0.47	Satisfactory
4. Utilize developmentally appropriate activities in teaching the different learning areas	3.08	0.57	Satisfactory
5. Utilize appropriate technologies to achieve the learning outcomes	3.40	0.57	Satisfactory
6. Apply theories of learning in designing learning- teaching experiences	3.44	0.50	Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.37 Satisfactory

Table 2.1 presents the assessments made by master teachers and department heads regarding the teacher-respondents' understanding of the diversity of learners in various learning areas. The data reveals the following:

1) **Identifying various types of learners and providing appropriate, culturally relevant learning activities** – Mean: **3.36**, interpreted as **Satisfactory**.

2) **Developing and utilizing relevant materials that align with learners' learning styles, goals, and culture** – Mean: **3.64**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**.

3) **Selecting instructional strategies to develop learners' critical and creative thinking skills** – Mean: **3.32**, interpreted as **Satisfactory**.

4) **Utilizing developmentally appropriate activities for teaching different learning areas** – Mean: **3.08**, interpreted as **Satisfactory**.

5) **Using appropriate technologies to achieve learning outcomes** – Mean: **3.40**, interpreted as **Satisfactory**.

6) **Applying learning theories to design effective teaching experiences** – Mean: **3.44**, interpreted as **Satisfactory**.

These results suggest that, according to the master teachers and department heads, the teacher-respondents are generally **satisfactory** in their ability to use instructional materials, strategies, and technologies that align with diverse learners' needs. Notably, they are **very satisfactory** in providing culturally and gender-sensitive learning activities.

Table 2.2: Manifest meaningful and comprehensive pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of different subject areas

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Explain subject matter content clearly, accurately and comprehensively	3.92	0.27	Very Satisfactory
2. Relate current content with past and future lessons	3.88	0.33	Very Satisfactory
3. Integrate recent developments in education and in the specific field to enrich learning	3.80	0.40	Very Satisfactory
4. Provide examples for real life to make learning meaningful	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
5. Utilize appropriate teaching-learning methods and technology for specific –subject matter content	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
6. Keep abreast with educational issues, trends, and practices vis-à-vis local and global context to provide relevant learning experiences	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.73- Very Satisfactory

Table 2.2 presents the assessment of master teachers and department heads regarding whether the teachers demonstrate meaningful and comprehensive pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) across different subject areas. The overall mean was **3.73**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**.

The six parameters assessed all received a **Very Satisfactory** rating, reflecting the following:

- Master teachers and heads agreed that teachers were highly effective in integrating recent developments in education, and using appropriate teaching strategies and technologies that align with subject-matter content. These strategies were relevant to both local and global issues, trends, and educational practices.

- Teachers were also perceived as very satisfactory in explaining the content thoroughly, and effectively linking it to past and future lessons.

- Additionally, the teachers were seen as proficient in providing contextualized and localized examples, enhancing students' understanding of the lessons.

These results suggest that master teachers and heads view their teachers as highly competent

in presenting subject content in a relevant, clear, and engaging manner, using current educational strategies and resources.

Table 2.3: Utilize appropriate assessment and evaluation tools to measure learning outcomes

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Design authentic assessment, evaluation instruments and alternative assessment tools	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
2. Interpret assessment results and use these to improve learning and teaching	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
3. Keep accurate and updated records of the learners' performance using technology tools where feasible and appropriate	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
4. Provide timely feedback of assessment results to parents and other stakeholders	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.60- Very Satisfactory

Table 2.3 presents the assessment of master teachers and department heads regarding whether teachers utilize appropriate assessment and evaluation tools to measure learning outcomes. The overall mean was **3.60**, which was rated as **Very Satisfactory**. The four parameters assessed all received a mean score of **3.60**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**. From the data, it can be inferred that master teachers and heads felt their teachers performed very well in:

- Developing effective teaching and learning assessments and evaluation tools.

- Interpreting assessment results to improve both teaching and learning.

- Providing timely and constructive feedback to stakeholders.

- Maintaining accurate and updated records of learners' performance using suitable and feasible technology.

These findings suggest that the teachers were highly competent in their assessment practices, particularly in using technology to manage and communicate learner performance.

Table 2.4: Manifest skills in communication, higher order thinking and use of tools and technology to accelerate learning and teaching

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Demonstrate skills in creative and critical thinking, logical reasoning, problem solving, and decision making in various classroom situations	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
2. Create learning experiences that develop the learners' higher order thinking skills	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
3. Provide opportunities that develop the learners' communication skills	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
4. Use tools and technology to enhance learning and teaching	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.60- Very Satisfactory

Table 2.4 reflects the evaluation of master teachers and department heads regarding whether teachers manifest skills in communication, higher-order thinking, and the use of tools and technology to accelerate learning and teaching. The overall mean score was **3.60**, which was rated as **Very Satisfactory**.

The four parameters assessed all received the same mean score of **3.60**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**.

These parameters were:

- Demonstrating creative and critical thinking skills, logical reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making in various classroom situations.

- Creating learning experiences that develop students' higher-order thinking skills.

- Providing opportunities to develop students' communication skills.

- Using tools and technology to enhance learning and teaching.

The findings suggest that master teachers and heads agreed that teachers performed very well in fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. They were also seen as effective in helping students develop higher-order thinking skills. Furthermore, teachers were considered very satisfactory in providing opportunities to develop communication skills and in integrating technology to enhance the learning process.

Table 2.5: Demonstrate positive attributes of a model teacher, both as an individual and as a professional

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Act according to the norms of the teaching profession in dealing with students, parents, colleagues and other stakeholders	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
2. Manifest positive personal and professional qualities of a teacher	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
3. Observe integrity and professionalism in handling issues, conflicts, and controversies related to student welfare as well as parents and community concerns	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.60- Very Satisfactory

Table 2.5 presents the evaluation by master teachers and department heads regarding whether teachers demonstrate the positive attributes of a model teacher, both personally and professionally. The overall mean score was 3.60, which was rated as Very Satisfactory. The three parameters assessed included:

1. Acting according to the norms of the teaching profession when dealing with students, parents, colleagues, and other stakeholders.

2. Demonstrating positive personal and professional qualities of a teacher.

3. Observing integrity and professionalism in handling issues, conflicts, and controversies related to student welfare, as well as parent and community concerns.

All three parameters received a mean score of 3.60, interpreted as Very Satisfactory, with a standard deviation of 0.50.

These results suggest that master teachers and department heads viewed their teachers as very satisfactory in adhering to professional norms, displaying positive personal and professional qualities, and handling challenges with integrity and professionalism.

Table 2.6: Manifest a desire to continuously pursue personal and professional development

Parameters	MEAN	SD	DR
1. Pursue personal growth and professional development through attendance in seminar-workshops , participation in demo-fests, conducting action research and other education-related activities	3.60	0.50	Very Satisfactory
2. Participate actively in the school's community outreach activities	4.00	0.00	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 3.80- Very Satisfactory

The last parameter in **Table 2.6** assesses whether master teachers and department heads perceived teachers as demonstrating a strong desire for continuous personal and professional development. The overall mean score for this parameter was **3.80**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**. Two sub-parameters were evaluated:

1. Pursuing personal growth and professional development through activities such as attending seminar workshops, participating in demo-fests, conducting action research, and engaging in other education-related activities, which received a mean score of **3.60** with a standard deviation of **0.50**.

2. Actively participating in the school's community outreach activities, which received a mean score of **4.00** with a standard deviation of **0.00**.

These findings suggest that master teachers and department heads viewed their teachers as very satisfactory in actively engaging in professional development activities and contributing to school community outreach efforts. Teachers showed a strong commitment to enhancing their skills and advancing their careers in education.

III. Competencies of the teacher-respondents based on IPCRF

Table 3.1: Content Knowledge and Pedagogy

Parameters	MEAN	DR
1. Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas.	4.33	Very Satisfactory
2. Used a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills.	4.37	Very Satisfactory
3. Applied a range of teaching strategies to develop critical and creative thinking, as well as other higher-order thinking skills.	4.07	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 4.26- Very Satisfactory

Table 3.1 presents the assessment of the teachers' **Content Knowledge and Pedagogy**. The overall mean score was **4.26**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**.

Three key parameters were evaluated:

1. **Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas**, with a mean score of **4.33**, described as **Very Satisfactory**.

2. **Used a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills**, which received a mean score of **4.37**, also **Very Satisfactory**.

3. **Applied a range of teaching strategies to develop critical and creative thinking and other higher-order thinking skills**, with a mean score of **4.07**, described as **Very Satisfactory**.

The findings indicate that teachers were rated as **Very Satisfactory** in applying their content knowledge across various subjects and in using diverse pedagogical strategies to improve students' literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking skills. These teachers effectively employed strategies that promote higher-order thinking among learners.

Table 3.2: Learning environment and diversity of learners

Parameters	MEAN	DR
1. Managed classroom structure to engage learners, individually or in groups, in meaningful exploration, discovery and hands-on activities within a range of physical learning environments.	4.30	Very Satisfactory
2. Manage learner behavior constructively by applying positive and non-violent discipline to ensure learning-focused environment.	4.37	Very Satisfactory
3. Used differentiated, developmentally appropriate learning experiences to address learners' gender, needs, strengths, interests and experiences.	4.30	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 4.32-Very Satisfactory

Table 3.2 presents an assessment of the **Learners' Learning Environment and Diversity** with an overall mean score of **4.32**, which is described as **Very Satisfactory**. The evaluation focused on three key parameters:

1. **Managed classroom structure to engage learners, individually or in groups, in meaningful exploration, discovery, and hands-on activities within a range of physical learning environments**, with a mean score of **4.30**, described as **Very Satisfactory**.

2. **Managed learner behavior constructively by applying positive and non-violent discipline to ensure a learning-focused climate**, which received a mean score of **4.37**, also **Very Satisfactory**.

3. **Used differentiated, developmentally appropriate learning experiences to address learners' gender, needs, strengths, interests, and experiences**, with a mean score of **4.30**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**.

The results indicate that teachers are **very satisfactory** in managing both individual and group activities that foster meaningful exploration and discovery in diverse physical learning

environments. They also demonstrate strong abilities in maintaining a positive, non-violent classroom climate and in designing differentiated learning experiences that cater to the diverse needs and strengths of their students.

Table 3.3: Curriculum and Planning

Parameters	MEAN	DR
1. Planned, managed and implemented developmentally sequenced teaching and learning processes to meet curriculum requirements and varied teaching contexts.	4.07	Very Satisfactory
2. Participated in collegial discussions that use teacher and learner feedback to enrich teaching practice.	4.53	Outstanding
3. Selected developed, organized and used appropriate teaching and learning resources, including ICT, to address learning goals.	4.20	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 4.26- Very Satisfactory

Table 3.3 presents the assessment of **Curriculum and Planning**, with an overall mean score of **4.26**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**. This section covered three parameters:

1. **Planned, managed, and implemented developmentally sequenced teaching and learning processes to meet curriculum requirements and varied teaching contexts**, which received a mean score of **4.07**, described as **Very Satisfactory**.

2. **Participated in collegial discussions that used teacher and learner feedback to enrich teaching practice**, with a mean score of **4.53**, interpreted as **Outstanding**.

3. **Selected, developed, organized, and used appropriate teaching and learning resources, including ICT, to address learning goals**, which had a mean score of **4.20**, rated as **Very Satisfactory**.

The results indicate that teachers are **very satisfactory** in planning and implementing developmentally appropriate learning activities that align with curriculum standards. They excel particularly in **collaborating with colleagues** and using feedback to enhance their teaching practices. Additionally, they are **very satisfactory** in selecting and utilizing resources, including **ICT**, to effectively meet learning goals.

Table 3.4: Assessment and Reporting

Parameters	MEAN	DR
1. Designed, selected, organized and used diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies consistent with curriculum requirements.	4.07	Very Satisfactory
2. Monitored and evaluated learner progress and achievement using learner attainment data.	4.17	Very Satisfactory
3. Communicated promptly and clearly the learners' needs, progress and achievement to key stakeholders, including parents / guardians.	4.21	Very Satisfactory

Overall Mean- 4.15- Very Satisfactory

Table 3.4 outlines the assessment and reporting competencies of teachers, with an overall mean score of **4.15**, interpreted as **Very Satisfactory**.

The three parameters evaluated were:

1. **Designed, selected, organized, and used diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies consistent with curriculum requirements**, which received a mean score of **4.07**, rated as **Very Satisfactory**.

2. **Monitored and evaluated learner progress and achievement using learner attainment data**, with a mean score of **4.17**, described as **Very Satisfactory**.

3. **Communicated promptly the learners' needs, progress, and achievement to key stakeholders, including parents/guardians**, which scored **4.21**, also rated as **Very Satisfactory**.

The results suggest that teachers are highly effective in **designing and utilizing various assessment strategies** aligned with curriculum standards. They are also very competent in **monitoring learner progress**, using data to assess achievement, and effectively **communicating** learners' progress and needs to stakeholders, including **parents and guardians**.

Table 3.5: Plus Factor

Parameters	MEAN	DR
1. Performed various related work/activities that contribute to the teaching-learning process.	3.93	Very Satisfactory

Table 3.5 highlights the additional contributions of teachers beyond their core teaching responsibilities. The **overall mean score** for this category was **3.93**, which is rated as **Very Satisfactory**.

This indicates that teachers are **competent and proactive** in engaging in various related activities that **support and enhance the teaching-learning process**.

Table 4: Quantitative triangulation based on the three parameters used

Parameters	Numerical Rating	Adjectival Rating
CMO 74 series of 2017 (as perceived by beginning teachers)	3.54	Very Satisfactory
CMO 74 series of 2017 (as perceived by master teachers/heads	3.61	Very Satisfactory
Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF)	4.18	Very Satisfactory

Table 4 shows the triangulated results based on three different instruments used in this study. The first was the teachers' self-assessment based on the **CMO 74 series of 2017**, which gave an average rating of **3.54**, considered **Very Satisfactory**. The second source was the **master teachers/heads' assessment**, which gave a slightly higher rating of **3.61**, also rated as **Very Satisfactory**. Finally, the **Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF)** for the participants showed a mean score of **4.18**, also rated as **Very Satisfactory**. This suggests that the beginning teachers demonstrated consistent **competence across all instruments**, indicating strong performance overall.

I. Other Competencies Needed by Beginning Teachers

Identifying the necessary competencies for effective teaching is crucial, especially given the diversity of students' needs. There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach, so beginning teachers must continuously adapt and refine their competencies.

From interviews with participants, especially those teaching at the elementary level, key areas were identified for improvement. The data were analyzed thematically, focusing on transcription and related literature.

During the Key-Informant-Interview, the participants were asked to describe beginning teachers' competencies in delivering instruction. They first clarified what teaching competencies meant to them and then proceeded to answer the main research question.

Theme 1: Competency in Identifying Target Competencies for Learners

The Department of Education mandates specific competencies for teachers, but the participants felt that many beginning teachers still lacked clarity on these prescribed competencies. As a result, they often struggled to meet the required skills.

One participant shared, **"Many beginning teachers are still puzzled about what competencies to meet inside the classroom. This is because there are numerous factors that hinder the national targets set by the Department of Education. Additionally, their experience may not be enough to fully master these competencies."** (P1)

Theme 2: Competency to Teach the Basic 3Rs

At the elementary level, beginning teachers must be skilled in teaching the foundational 3Rs (Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic). These basic skills are essential as learners enter school with limited knowledge. Teachers play a key role in building this foundation. As one participant noted, "Learners are like blank slates when they first enter school." Teachers are responsible for preparing them for more complex learning ahead.

Theme 3: Competency in Teaching Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC)

In addition to the 3Rs, beginning teachers must be competent in teaching Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC). Previously allotted 40 minutes, this subject was shortened and integrated into other subjects under K-12. However, with the passage of Republic Act No. 11476, GMRC has been reestablished as a separate subject in the curriculum. Teachers must be equipped to instill values such as patience, honesty, and integrity in students, starting at the elementary level.

Theme 4: Competency to Deliver Lessons Within the Allotted Time

Effective teaching requires time management, but many beginning teachers struggle to adhere to the allotted time for each lesson. They often spend too much time on preliminaries and have to rush through core content, impacting student mastery. As one participant explained, "New teachers lack time management skills, and often the lesson is shortened because they're running out of time."

Theme 5: Competency in Emotional Stability

Emotional stability is crucial for teachers, as the profession can be highly stressful. Many beginning teachers face anxiety, burnout, and stress from balancing multiple teaching modalities and personal responsibilities.

The pandemic has intensified these challenges, with many teachers struggling to adapt to new teaching technologies and methods. One participant shared, "Many teachers are taking their lives because of depression," highlighting the need for emotional support and self-care. Teachers must develop emotional resilience to cope with the pressures of the profession.

Theme 6: Competency to Develop Rapport with Parents and Learners

Rapport, or a good relationship, is crucial for teachers to build trust with both students and their parents. Teachers should foster open communication with parents to provide updates on their children's performance and behavior.

However, some beginning teachers struggle to find the right balance in their relationship with parents, sometimes becoming too familiar or distant. As one participant mentioned, "Teachers should communicate with parents but maintain boundaries, as parents are their partners in education."

Theme 7: Competency to Teach Using Online Methods

The shift to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant challenge for many teachers, especially those unfamiliar with technology. Teachers need to be tech-savvy to use online platforms like Zoom, Google Classroom, and other tools effectively.

As one participant noted, "Teachers must be technology literate to teach in distance learning." Being able to engage students and deliver clear lessons through technology is essential for success in online education.

Theme 8: Competency to Exhibit Financial Literacy

Financial literacy emerged as a vital competency for beginning teachers. Many teachers struggle with managing their finances, often falling prey to loan sharks. As one participant observed, "Teachers are easily persuaded by loan sharks without considering if their salary is enough after deductions." A solid understanding of personal finance would allow teachers to manage their money responsibly, reduce stress, and focus more on their teaching responsibilities.

Emergent Framework and Proposed Curriculum for Beginning Teachers

Based on the findings, an emergent framework and a proposed curriculum for beginning teachers have been developed to address the key competencies identified in this study. The framework will guide professional development programs to ensure teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their roles.
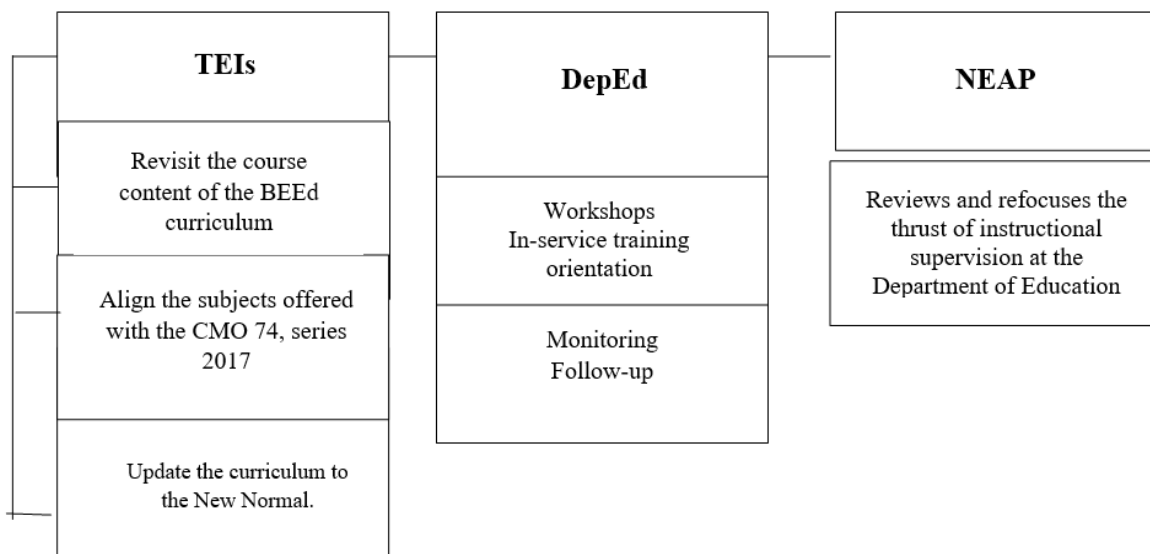
The emergent framework emphasizes the collaborative roles of *Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs)*, the *Department of Education (DepEd)*, and the *National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP)* in strengthening the competencies of beginning teachers.

1. Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs):

TEIs play a foundational role in preparing beginning teachers. The curriculum planners should regularly review and align the *Bachelor of Elementary Education* curriculum with the *Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)*, particularly the *CMO 74 series of 2017*. Additionally, TEIs should ensure that the curriculum is updated to meet the demands of the *New Normal* in education, especially in light of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Department of Education (DepEd):

Once employed, beginning teachers must receive continuous professional development. DepEd should organize workshops, training sessions, and seminars to enhance teachers' instructional skills and competencies. Moreover, consistent monitoring and follow-up are essential to ensure teachers apply what they learn and maintain high standards in their practice.

3. National Educators Academy of the Philippnes (NEAP):

NEAP is responsible for reviewing and refining the *instructional supervision* approach within DepEd. This includes refocusing efforts to ensure teachers receive meaningful and consistent support in their teaching practice, contributing to their growth and development.

This framework proposes a coordinated effort from TEIs, DepEd, and NEAP to ensure that beginning teachers are equipped with the competencies needed for effective teaching and to adapt to the evolving educational landscape.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the researcher concludes the following:

1) Beginning teachers perceive themselves as competent in professional characteristics, knowledge, and skills according to the CMO 74 series of 2017.

2) Master teachers and school heads agree that beginning teachers demonstrate strong competencies in subject knowledge, teaching methods, communication, and organizational skills.

3) Data from the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) show that beginning teachers effectively meet their teaching tasks and comply with DepEd standards.

4) Despite being competent, beginning teachers still require further development in certain areas to enhance their teaching effectiveness.

5) A professional development program is proposed to address these gaps and help achieve the desired learning outcomes.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, the researcher recommends the following:

1) **Teacher Education Institutions** should review and align the Bachelor of Elementary Education curriculum with the CMO 74 series of 2017 and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers.

2) **Curriculum Updates** should be made to adapt to the New Normal and current educational needs.

3) The **Department of Education** (DepEd), in partnership with the **National Educators Academy of the Philippines** (NEAP), should offer intensive training courses to further improve teachers' competencies.

4) DepEd should organize **seminar-workshops** focused on developing teaching skills that foster higher-order thinking skills in students.

5) **Orientation Programs** for beginning teachers on the profession, DepEd policies, and other key educational aspects should be conducted.

6) A **seminar-workshop** on managing time, stress, and building resiliency should be provided for beginning teachers.

7) Future researchers are encouraged to study **secondary school teachers** and consider using different instruments to assess their competencies.

Declaration Statement

I hereby declare that the research study titled *"Assessment of Teaching Competencies of Beginning Teachers in the Philippines: Insights for Curriculum and Professional Development"* is my original work and has not been previously published or submitted for publication elsewhere. The data collected, analyzed, and presented in this manuscript were gathered and interpreted in accordance with ethical research standards.

I affirm that all sources of information and ideas from other authors or contributors have been properly cited and acknowledged. Furthermore, I take full responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the content and findings presented in this study.

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