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School Culture, Curriculum Development Practices and Teachers' Competence

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Abstract

Aim: This study was conducted to determine the school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence in the Schools Division of Iloilo, Province of Iloilo, Philippines.

Methodology: It used descriptive correlational research design. The statistical tools used were the frequency count, percentage, mean and Pearson r with the aid of computers' Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software. The level of significance was set at 0.05 alpha.

Results: The result of the study revealed a significant relationship between school culture, and curriculum development practices, with a Pearson r value of 0.511 and a p-value of 0.000. On the other hand, the result revealed a significant relationship between curriculum development practices and teachers' competence, with a Pearson r value of 0.411 and a p-value of 0.000. The result also revealed that there is a significant relationship between school culture, and teachers' competence, with a Pearson r value of 0.699 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 significance level, this indicates a strong and significant correlation.

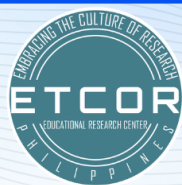
Conclusion: Based on the findings of the study, school culture, curriculum development practices, and teachers' competence are very essential for creating a positive, collaborative, and effective educational environment. By fostering open communication, promoting professional development, celebrating achievements, encouraging collaborative practices, maintaining a supportive environment, and aligning policies with shared values, school leaders can ensure that the strong school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence continue to benefit both teachers and students, ultimately enhancing overall school performance.

Keywords: school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence

INTRODUCTION

The study of school culture, curriculum development practices, and teacher competence explores the interconnectedness of these three crucial elements in shaping student learning. Researchers examine how the overall atmosphere and values of a school (school culture) influence how curriculum is designed and implemented (curriculum development practices). This in turn is seen as impacting the effectiveness of teachers (teacher competence) in delivering instruction and ultimately student achievement. By understanding these relationships, educators can create a more positive school environment, develop curricula that are engaging and effective, and ensure teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver them successfully.

Schools are very important for holding learning activities, where schools function to help improve the culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence. Schools are not only for fostering knowledge, but schools are also places to gather, play, and interact with the school environment. Schools as educational institutions really need cooperation with all parties. Because education has an important role in human life, education is a planned effort that is carried out in order to have soft skills and hard skills. Soft skills are the capacity to act in a way that complies with moral, religious, and other standards. School culture shapes curriculum development practices and these practices influence teacher competence in secondary schools.



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Along with this, the Department of Education (DepEd) emphasizes the importance of school culture in fostering professional development through Learning Action Cells (LACs) where teachers collaborate on curriculum development aligned with their competencies as outlined in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). This highlights the interconnectedness between school culture, curriculum practices, and teacher competence (DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016).

In the Philippines, curriculum development keeps on evolving and updating to the needs of the global education. Even though each institution will have its own process, the broad stages of the framework consist of analysis, design, implementation, and evaluation.

While existing research has delved into the interconnectedness of school culture, curriculum development, and teacher competence, there remains a significant gap in understanding how these factors specifically impact diverse learner populations. Most studies tend to focus on general measures of learners' achievement, often overlooking the nuanced ways in which school culture, curriculum quality, and teacher expertise shape the learning experiences and outcomes of students from varied cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and ability backgrounds. There is a need for further research to explore these effects, which could provide valuable insights into developing strategies that ensure all students - not just the majority - benefit equitably from a positive school environment, a well-developed curriculum, and highly competent educators. Addressing this gap is essential for informing inclusive practices that accommodate the unique needs of diverse student groups and promoting educational equity.

Objectives

This study was conducted to determine the school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence in the Schools Division of Iloilo, Province of Iloilo, Philippines.

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the school culture as assessed by the respondents when taken as a whole and when classified according to age, educational attainment, length of service, position, and congressional district?
2. What are the curriculum development practices as assessed by the respondents when taken as a whole and when classified according to age, educational attainment, length of service, position, and congressional district?
3. What is the level of teachers' competence when taken as a whole and when classified according to age, educational attainment, length of service, position, and congressional district?
4. Are there significant relationships among school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence?

Hypothesis

1. There are no significant relationships among school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence.

METHODS

Research Design

The study used survey and correlational methods of research with the aid of the questionnaire checklist. The survey method was used since the researcher gathered data through the use of a questionnaire. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) defined a survey as a research method used for collecting data from a pre-defined group of respondents to gain information and insights on various topics of interest. On the other hand, correlational research is a type of non-experimental research method. A researcher measures two variables, and understands and assesses the statistical relationship between them with no influence from any extraneous variable (Bhat, 2019). In this study, a correlational analysis was performed to determine the significant relationship between school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence.



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Population and Sampling

The respondents of the study were the teachers of the Schools Division of Iloilo Province, Philippines. A stratified proportionate random sampling technique was utilized in the study. The sample size were the 391 teachers. The respondents from the First Congressional District were 89 or 22.8 percent; in the Second Congressional District were 63 or 16.1 percent; in the Third Congressional District were 85 or 21.7 percent, in Fourth Congressional District were 78 or 19.9 percent, and in the Fifth Congressional District, the number of respondents were 76 or 19.4 percent, with a total of 391 teachers, teaching mathematics.

Instrument

The study used researcher-made questionnaire. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire through the assistance of the school heads of the different schools in the Schools Division of Iloilo so that the purpose of the study was properly understood by the respondents to ensure the accuracy of the responses. Permission to participate in the study was sought from each respondent. They were informed that their privacy and confidentiality are going to be protected. They were assured that the information was solely for the research purposes.

For the safety of the of the respondents, in this regard, the researcher used a two-way process in reaching out to her respondents by having an online and printed questionnaire. The researcher informed the school heads that open responses for the online questionnaire was counted only for one (1) week, the same with the retrieval of printed questionnaires from the teachers. When all the questionnaires were accomplished, these were retrieved immediately.

Data Collection

Before the survey was conducted, the researcher asked permission from the Dean of the Graduate School to administer the research instrument to the respondents. The researcher requested the approval of the Schools Division Superintendent and School Heads. Upon approval, the researcher went to the different schools in the Schools Division of Iloilo and administered the said questionnaire.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Statistical analyses were used to determine the school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence. Frequency count, percentage and mean were used to describe the responses of the teachers. Pearson-r for the significant relationship or correlation. After the administration of the questionnaire, the data was collated, encoded, tabulated and interpreted with the used of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Ethical Consideration

For the ethical consideration, the researcher sent permission letter via hand-carry mail to the schools division superintendent of all secondary schools in the Province of Iloilo and to all School heads, and mathematics coordinators. Second, the researcher maintained the privacy of participants during and after the collection of data. Codes were used to hide their identity. Third, the study observed anti-plagiarism act by recognizing other researchers who contributed to this study. Lastly, the researcher considered the data and the people involved in the study with a high level of confidentiality.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Teachers' competence, curriculum development practices and school cultures are critical components that shape the educational experience and impact students outcomes. Teachers' competence defined by their knowledge, skills and ability to engage students, is foundational to effective teaching and learning. Curriculum development practices, which involve designing, implementing and evaluating educational content, ensure that students are exposed to relevant and rigorous learning experiences. Meanwhile, the culture within a school, characterized by its



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values, beliefs and norms, influences how both teachers and students engage with the learning process. The results of the study were presented below.

Table 1. School Culture When Classified According to Age, Educational Attainment, Length of Service, Position and Congressional District.

Variables	Mean	Description
As A Whole	4.03	High
Age		
40 years old and below	3.92	High
41 years old and above	3.90	High
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	3.89	High
Master's Degree	3.93	High
Doctorate Degree	4.09	High
Length of Service		
20 years & below	3.94	High
21 years & above	3.87	High
Position		
Teacher I-III	3.92	High
Master Teacher I-II	3.81	High
Congressional District		
1 st District	3.77	High
2 nd District	3.91	High
3 rd District	3.98	High
4 th District	4.15	High
5 th District	3.72	High

Legend: Scale of Mean 5.00 -4.21 Very High (VH), 4.20 -3.41 High (H), 3.40 - 2.61 Average (M), 2.60 -1.81 Low (L), 1.80 - 1.00 Very Low (VL)

Table 1 shows the school culture when classified according to age, educational attainment, length of service, position and congressional district.



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The level of school culture when they were taken as a whole was (M=4.03) high. As to age, the 40 years old and below was (M=3.92) high, and the 41 years old and above was (M=3.90) high. As to educational attainment, the bachelor's degree was (M=3.89) high, the master's degree was (M=3.93) high, and the doctorate degree were (M=4.09) high. As to length of service, the 20 years and below was (M=4.31) high, and the 21 years and above was (M=3.87) high. As to position, the Teacher I-III was (M=3.92) high, and the Master Teacher I-III was (M=3.81) high.

As to congressional district, the 1st district was (M=3.77) high, the 2nd district was (M=3.91) high, the 3rd district was (M=3.98) high, the 4th district was (M=4.15) high, and the 5th district was (M=3.72) high. The analysis of school culture in the Schools Division of Iloilo, classified by various demographic factors, reveals consistently high ratings across different groups. Overall, the level of school culture was high. When broken down by age, both groups, those 40 years old and below and those 41 years old and above, also rated the school culture as high. In terms of educational attainment, those with bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctorate degrees all perceived the school culture positively, with doctorate holders rating it highest. Regarding length of service, teachers with 20 years and below rated the culture higher compared to those with 21 years and above. Position-wise, Teacher I-III and Master Teacher I-II both rated the school culture as high, though slightly lower among master teachers. Among the congressional districts, the 4th district had the highest rating, while the 5th district had the lowest, though still high. These findings suggest a generally positive school culture across various demographic factors, with some variations.

The very high results imply that, teachers' shared beliefs, values, attitudes, expectations, and social norms that permeate all aspects of a school environment implies all of the time.

Table 2. Curriculum Development Practices When Classified According to Age, Educational Attainment, Length of Service, Position and Congressional District

Variables	Mean	Description
As A Whole	4.30	Very High
Age		
40 years old and below	4.33	Very High
41 years old and above	4.28	Very High
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	4.27	Very High
Master's Degree	4.36	Very High
Doctorate Degree	4.38	Very High
Length of Service		
20 years & below	4.32	Very High
21 years & above	4.28	Very High
Position		
Teacher I-III	4.30	Very High



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Master Teacher I-II	4.30	Very High
Congressional District		
1 st District	4.27	Very High
2 nd District	4.34	Very High
3 rd District	4.25	Very High
4 th District	4.48	Very High
5 th District	4.18	High

Legend: Scale of Mean 5.00 -4.21 Very High (VH), 4.20 -3.41 High (H), 3.40 - 2.61 Average (M), 2.60 -1.81 Low (L), 1.80 - 1.00 Very Low (VL)

Table 2 shows the curriculum development practices when classified according to age, educational attainment, length of service, position and congressional district.

The level of curriculum development practices when they were taken as a whole was (M=4.30) very high. As to age, the 40 years old and below was (M=4.33) very high, and the 41 years old and above was (M=4.28) very high. As to educational attainment, the bachelor's degree was (M=4.27) very high, the master's degree was (M=4.36) very high, and the doctorate degree were (M=4.38) very high. As to length of service, the 20 years and below was (M=4.32) very high, and the 21 years and above was (M=4.28) very high. As to position, the Teacher I-III was (M=4.30) very high, and the Master Teacher I-III was (M=4.30) very high. As to congressional district, the 1st district was (M=4.27) very high, the 2nd district was (M=4.34) very high, the 3rd district was (M=4.25) very high, the 4th district was (M=4.48) very high, and the 5th district was (M=4.18) high.

The analysis of curriculum development practices in the Schools Division of Iloilo reveals very high ratings across various demographic groups. Overall, the curriculum development practices level was very high. When classified by age, teachers 40 years old and below rated it slightly higher compared to those 41 years old and above. Educational attainment showed that teachers with bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctorate degrees all rated curriculum development practices very high, with doctorate holders rating it the highest. Length of service indicated that teachers with 20 years and below rated it higher compared to those with 21 years and above. Both Teacher I-III and Master Teacher I-III positions rated it equally high. Among congressional districts, the 4th district had the highest rating, while the 5th district had the lowest, though still high. These findings indicate a uniformly very high perception of curriculum development practices across different demographic factors, with minor variations.

The theory of John Dewey, a renowned educational philosopher, argued for a more student-centered and experiential approach to curriculum development. He believed that curriculum should emerge from the lived experiences and interests of students. Dewey's ideas laid the groundwork for a more holistic and pragmatic approach to curriculum design.

Supported with the study of Zhai (2019), as cited in Lacia (2019), it was found out that teacher-led curriculum development can have a positive impact on student achievement. When teachers have a direct hand in designing the curriculum, they can tailor it to meet the diverse learning needs of their students, leading to improved learning outcomes.



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Table 3. Teachers' Competence When Classified According to Age, Educational Attainment, Length of Service, Position and Congressional District.

Variables	Mean	Description
As A Whole	4.53	Very High
Age		
40 years old and below	4.58	Very High
41 years old and above	4.49	Very High
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	4.49	Very High
Master's Degree	4.61	Very High
Doctorate Degree	4.79	Very High
Length of Service		
20 years & below	4.59	Very High
21 years & above	4.48	Very High
Position		
Teacher I-III	4.53	Very High
Master Teacher I-II	4.58	Very High
Congressional District		
1 st District	4.50	Very High
2 nd District	4.55	Very High
3 rd District	4.51	Very High
4 th District	4.72	Very High
5 th District	4.40	Very High

Legend: Scale of Mean 5.00 -.4.21 Very High (VH), 4.20 -3.41 High (H), 3.40 - 2.61 Average (M), 2.60 -1.81 Low (L), 1.80 - 1.00 Very Low (VL)

Table 3 shows the teachers' competence when classified according to age, educational attainment, length of service, position and congressional district.

The level of teachers' competence when they were taken as a whole was (M=4.53) very high. As to age, the



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40 years old and below was (M=4.58) very high, and the 41 years old and above was (M=4.49) very high. As to educational attainment, the bachelor's degree was (M=4.49) very high, the master's degree was (M=4.61) very high, and the doctorate degree were (M=4.79) very high. As to length of service, the 20 years and below was (M=4.59) very high, and the 21 years and above was (M=4.48) very high.

As to position, the Teacher I-III was (M=4.53) very high, and the Master Teacher I-III was (M=4.58) very high. As to congressional district, the 1st district was (M=4.50) very high, the 2nd district was (M=4.55) very high, the 3rd district was (M=4.51) very high, the 4th district was (M=4.72) very high, and the 5th district was (M=4.40) very high.

The analysis of curriculum development in the Schools Division of Iloilo reveals very high ratings across various demographic groups. Overall, the teachers' competence level was very high. When classified by age, teachers 40 years old and below rated it slightly higher compared to those 41 years old and above. Educational attainment showed that teachers with bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctorate degrees all rated teachers' competence very high, with doctorate holders rating it the highest. Length of service indicated that teachers with 20 years and below rated it higher compared to those with 21 years and above. Both Teacher I-III and Master Teacher I-II positions rated it equally high. Among congressional districts, the 4th district had the highest rating, while the 5th district had the lowest, though still high. These findings indicate a uniformly very high perception of teachers' competence across different demographic factors, with minor variations.

The very high results imply that, teacher's competence demonstrated excellent ability to consistently achieve and develops clear, concise, and measurable learning objectives aligned with curriculum standards.

Teachers who possess strong pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) are better equipped to design effective lessons and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. Teachers with higher levels of content knowledge tend to have students with better academic performance (Smith & Johnson, 2022).

Table 4. Relationship between the School Culture, Curriculum Development Practices, and Teachers' Competence.

Categories		Sch. Culture	Cur. Practices	Dev.	Teachers' Competence
Sch. Culture	Pearson Correlation	1	.511**		.411**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000		.000
	N	391	391		391
Cur Dev. Practices	Pearson Correlation	.511**	1		.699**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			.000
	N	391	391		391
Teachers' Competence	Pearson Correlation	.411**	.699**		1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	391	391		391

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



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Table 4 shows the relationship between school culture, curriculum development practices, and teachers' competence.

The analysis revealed a significant relationship between school culture, and curriculum development practices, with a Pearson r value of 0.511 and a p -value of 0.000. Since the p -value is less than the 0.05 significance level, this indicates a significant, albeit low, correlation. The findings suggest that higher levels of school culture are associated with higher levels of curriculum development practices. Thus, the null hypothesis, which posited no significant relationship between school culture, and curriculum development practices, was rejected.

The analysis reveals a significant relationship between school culture and curriculum development practices. This finding indicates that as the level of school culture improves, there is a corresponding improvement in curriculum development practices. The significant result suggests that school culture plays a meaningful role in enhancing how curriculum is developed, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis that proposed no relationship between these two factors.

Results revealed a significant relationship between curriculum development practices and teachers' competence, with a Pearson r value of 0.411 and a p -value of 0.000. Since the p -value is less than the 0.05 significance level, this indicates a strong and significant correlation. The findings suggest that higher levels of governance are associated with higher levels of curriculum development practices. Thus, the null hypothesis, which posited no significant relationship between curriculum development practices and teachers' competence, among respondents, was rejected.

There is also a significant relationship between curriculum development practices and teachers' competence. This means that improvements in curriculum development practices are associated with higher levels of teachers' competence. The strong correlation found supports the idea that effective curriculum practices contribute positively to the competence of teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis, which claimed no significant relationship, is rejected, highlighting the importance of robust curriculum development for boosting teachers' effectiveness.

Results revealed a significant relationship between school culture, and teachers' competence, with a Pearson r value of 0.699 and a p -value of 0.000. Since the p -value is less than the 0.05 significance level, this indicates a strong and significant correlation. The findings suggest that higher levels of school culture are associated with higher levels of teachers' competence. Thus, the null hypothesis, which posited no significant relationship between school culture, and teachers' competence, among respondents, was rejected.

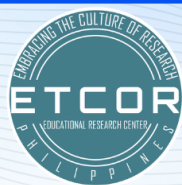
The significant relationship between school culture and teachers' competence suggests that a positive school culture is closely linked to higher levels of teacher competence. As school culture strengthens, teachers' competence tends to increase as well. This strong correlation leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis that no significant relationship exists between school culture and teachers' competence. It underscores the impact of a supportive and effective school culture on enhancing teachers' skills and performance.

School culture plays a significant role in shaping student's academic and social outcomes. The values and norms present in school's culture are directly related to a student engagement and academic achievement. Their research indicates that schools with positive inclusive cultures that emphasize student well-being and support are more likely to see improvements in both behaviour and academic outcomes. A positive school culture that prioritizes equity allows for the development of a curriculum that caters to diverse learners. Additionally, well-trained and competent teachers are crucial for effectively implementing such a curriculum and fostering a positive learning environment.

In a similar vein, Bowers (2021) notes that a strong school culture plays a crucial role in mitigating the negative effects of external stressors. The study indicates that school with a strong sense of community are more resilient and adaptable during periods of crisis, maintaining student engagement and well-being.

Conclusion

Based on the result of the study, the researcher concluded that the school culture, curriculum development practices, and teachers' competence are very essentials for creating a positive, collaborative, and effective educational environment.



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School culture indicates that there is a strong, cohesive set of shared beliefs, values, attitudes, expectations, and social norms among the teachers. This strong school culture contributes to a positive, collaborative, and effective educational environment. It supports the implementation of educational practices and fosters a supportive atmosphere that benefits both teachers and students. The high level of shared culture helps create a consistent and conducive environment for achieving educational goals and enhancing overall school performance.

Curriculum development practices indicate that teachers are thoroughly and effectively engaging in the systematic process of curriculum creation. This involves well-organized planning, alignment with educational standards, and a focus on guiding student learning towards desired outcomes. The strong involvement and expertise of teachers in curriculum development contribute to a well-structured, relevant, and adaptive curriculum that positively impacts student achievement and educational quality.

Teachers' competence denotes that teachers are highly effective in setting and achieving clear, concise, and measurable learning objectives that align with curriculum standards. This level of competence ensures that educational goals are consistently met, supports structured and goal-oriented instruction, and positively impacts student learning. Teachers' proficiency in developing well-aligned learning objectives contributes to a high-quality educational environment and enhances overall instructional effectiveness.

Recommendations

In view of the findings, the researcher recommended that the school culture, curriculum development practices and teachers' competence must be maintained and enhanced towards quality education.

Maintaining and strengthening the inclusive and cohesive school culture through continuous engagement and inclusive policies, ensuring that all teachers, regardless of their personal or professional backgrounds can be able to contribute effectively to the teaching and learning process.

Enhancing curriculum development practices through providing ongoing professional development, fostering collaboration among teachers, utilizing data-driven decision-making, integrating technology, aligning the curriculum with educational standards, enhancing adaptability, and supporting continuous improvement will be resulting to a better curriculum practices implementation. By focusing on these areas, schools can ensure that the curriculum remains well-structured, relevant, and adaptive, ultimately leading to improved student achievement and quality education.

To further enhance teachers' competence, the system must provide and allow teachers for ongoing professional development focused on advanced instructional strategies and alignment with curriculum standards to ensure the continued effectiveness and quality of education. Implement tailored professional development and support programs that address the evolving needs of teachers at different career stages to enhance their competence and effectiveness in the classroom. Adopt a holistic approach to educational improvement by simultaneously enhancing school culture, curriculum development practices, and teacher competence, as these interconnected elements reinforce each other and contribute to overall educational success. By doing so, these three elements have big impact on the teaching and learning process in the future.

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