

Teachers' Adherence to The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers and its Relationship with Students' Academic Performance: Basis For a Learning And Development Activity Plan at Sta. Cruz Pingkian High School

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-correlational study examined the relationship between teachers' adherence to the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) indicators and students' academic performance at Sta. Cruz Pingkian High School during the second semester of School Year 2025–2026. Thirty-three (33) Teacher I to Teacher III educators were selected through purposive sampling. The study used a researcher-made 36-item survey instrument anchored on the seven PPST domains to measure adherence, while students' General Weighted Average (GWA) in core learning areas was retrieved from official school records. Preliminary Shapiro-Wilk normality tests confirmed non-normal distributions, justifying non-parametric statistics: Spearman rank-order correlation, Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal-Wallis H, and Dunn's post-hoc test with Bonferroni correction. Results revealed high teacher adherence across all seven PPST domains (Overall $M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.25$), with Domain 2 (Learning Environment) obtaining the highest mean and Domain 7 (Personal Growth and Professional Development) the lowest. Students' academic performance was predominantly Very Satisfactory (90.9%), with GWA scores ranging from 84 to 93. Spearman correlation analysis yielded no statistically significant relationship between any PPST domain and students' GWA. Age and teaching position were the only profile variables that significantly differentiated PPST adherence. Based on these findings, the study proposed a three-day Learning and Development Activity Plan targeting Domains 3 (Diversity of Learners), 2 (Learning Environment), and 5 (Assessment and Reporting).

Keywords: Academic performance, PPST adherence, PPST domains, Spearman rank-order, teachers' professional standards

INTRODUCTION

The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), institutionalized through DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, defines teacher quality across seven domains and serves as the cornerstone of the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS). Anchored on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, and Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) model, the PPST framework posits that teachers who consistently demonstrate professional competencies in content knowledge, pedagogy, learning environment management, and assessment practices produce more effective learning experiences that improve student academic outcomes. As the K to 12 reform (R.A. 10533) reshaped teacher quality requirements in the Philippines, the PPST became the central instrument for professional accountability and continuous improvement.

Despite this strong policy foundation, national and international reports reveal persistent gaps between teacher professional standards and student learning outcomes. The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II, 2024; 2025; 2026) documented a pervasive learning crisis, with only 30.5% of Grade 3 learners rated as proficient or highly proficient and fewer than 1% of senior high school students demonstrating mastery of expected competencies. Independently, the World Bank (2023) found that 66% of Philippine teachers demonstrated medium-low use of effective teaching practices, with no observed teacher reaching high levels of pedagogical effectiveness. These reports collectively affirm that teacher competence, as operationalized by frameworks such as the PPST, directly determines learning quality.

Local studies corroborate these patterns. Mariano (2021) found significant correlations between PPST awareness and student performance in Nueva Vizcaya. Panganiban (2022) demonstrated that assessment literacy was the strongest predictor of student outcomes in Quirino Province. Talisay et al. (2020) found that RPMS-rated Proficient teachers tended to have students with higher academic performance. However, most of these studies relied on externally administered RPMS evaluations; few have examined the relationship in contexts where self-reported adherence is the primary measure. At Sta. Cruz Pingkian High School, this relationship has not been studied, creating a gap in localized evidence.

This study aimed to: (1) describe the demographic profile of teacher-respondents; (2) determine the level of teachers' perceived adherence to PPST indicators across seven domains; (3) assess the level of students' academic performance in core learning areas; (4) determine the significant relationship between PPST adherence and students' GWA; (5) determine significant differences in adherence and GWA across profile variables; and (6) propose a Learning and Development Activity Plan based on the findings.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive-correlational research design was employed. The descriptive component characterized respondents' profile, level of PPST adherence across seven domains, and students' academic performance. The correlational component examined the relationship between PPST adherence and students' GWA, as well as differences in these variables when respondents were grouped by profile.

The study was conducted at Sta. Cruz Pingkian High School (SCPHS), located in Pingkian, Kayapa, Nueva Vizcaya, during the second semester of School Year 2025–2026. The school serves approximately 700–800 students annually across junior and senior high school levels. The study used purposive sampling to select 33 Beginning to Proficient Teachers (Teacher I to Teacher III) as respondents, covering the entire population of teachers at this career stage during the reference period.

The researcher used a researcher-made survey questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. Part I gathered the demographic profile. Part II measured teachers' perceived adherence to the seven PPST domains using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Very Low Adherence to 4 = High Adherence), with 36 items distributed across the domains. Part III gathered students'

mean GWA per core learning area from school records. Expert validation by master teachers, head teachers, and supervisors established content validity. Reliability testing yielded an overall Cronbach's Alpha of $\alpha = .955$, indicating excellent internal consistency. Students' academic performance was interpreted using DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015 (90–100 = Outstanding; 85–89 = Very Satisfactory; 80–84 = Satisfactory; 75–79 = Fairly Satisfactory; Below 75 = Did Not Meet Expectations).

Preliminary Shapiro-Wilk normality tests confirmed non-normal distributions in both PPST adherence scores and GWA values, justifying the use of non-parametric statistics. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for descriptive analysis; Spearman rank-order correlation (ρ) for the relationship between PPST adherence and GWA; Mann-Whitney U test for two-group comparisons (sex and derived PPST proficiency level); Kruskal-Wallis H test for multi-group comparisons (age, teaching position, educational attainment, years of experience); and Dunn's post-hoc test with Bonferroni correction for significant Kruskal-Wallis results. All inferential analyses were conducted at the $\alpha = .05$ significance level.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout. The researchers obtained formal permission from the school head and secured written informed consent from all teacher-respondents before data collection. Participation was voluntary and confidential. The researchers accessed student performance data from official school records with appropriate authorization, and they protected individual student identities throughout the process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Teacher-Respondents

Table 1

Frequency Distribution of the Profile of Teacher-Respondents

Variable / Category	f	%
Age (in years)		
25–30	10	30.3
31–35	9	27.3
36–40	8	24.2
41–45	3	9.1
46–57	3	9.1
Total	33	100.0
Sex		
Male	10	30.3
Female	23	69.7
Total	33	100.0
Years of Teaching Experience		
Less than 1 year	4	12.1
1–5 years	9	27.3
6–10 years	13	39.4
11–15 years	5	15.2
16–20 years	2	6.1
Total	33	100.0
Highest Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	10	30.3
Masteral Units	17	51.5
Master's Degree	5	15.2
Doctorate Units	1	3.0
Total	33	100.0
Current Teaching Position		
Teacher I	10	30.3
Teacher II	7	21.2
Teacher III	16	48.5

Total 33 100.0

The teacher-respondents are predominantly young-to-mid-career, female, and moderately experienced. The three youngest age brackets (25–40) account for 81.8% of the sample. Female teachers comprise 69.7% of respondents. The modal experience group is 6–10 years (39.4%), and most hold Masteral Units (51.5%) without completed graduate degrees. Teacher III constitutes nearly half the sample (48.5%). Based on derived PPST proficiency levels, 84.8% were classified as Proficient and 15.2% as Developing; no respondent fell in the Beginning category. This demographic composition is consistent with national patterns for beginning-to-proficient stage teachers in DepEd institutions, as documented by Rungduin et al. (2020) and Gepila (2020).

Level of Teachers' Adherence to PPST Indicators

Table 2

Mean Scores and Descriptive Levels of Teachers' Adherence to the Seven PPST Domains

PPST Domain	M	SD	Descriptive Level
D1 – Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	3.756	0.292	High
D2 – Learning Environment	3.812	0.260	High
D3 – Diversity of Learners	3.752	0.312	High
D4 – Curriculum and Planning	3.715	0.312	High
D5 – Assessment and Reporting	3.721	0.316	High
D6 – Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	3.709	0.343	High
D7 – Personal Growth and Professional Development	3.558	0.377	High
Overall PPST Adherence Mean Score	3.718	0.252	High

All seven PPST domains received a descriptive rating of High adherence, with an overall mean of 3.72 (SD = 0.25). Domain 2 (Learning Environment) had the highest mean (M = 3.81), while Domain 7 (Personal Growth and Professional Development) had the lowest (M = 3.56) and the widest variability (SD = 0.38). Classroom-proximate domains—D2, D1, and D3—ranked highest, while externally oriented domains D6 and D7 ranked comparatively lower. This internal hierarchy is consistent with findings by Anud and Virgencita (2023) and Gepila (2020), who identified similar domain gradients among Filipino teachers, noting high self-competency in classroom management while persistent gaps appear in diversity management and professional development engagement. The uniformly High classification and compressed score range (3.56–3.81) reflect a ceiling effect common in self-report PPST assessments conducted within evaluative contexts, where social desirability bias predictably elevates responses.

Level of Students' Academic Performance

Table 3

Frequency Distribution of Students' General Weighted Average (GWA) in Core Learning Areas

GWA Score	f	%	Cumulative %	Descriptive Rating
84	1	3.0	3.0	Satisfactory
85	14	42.4	45.5	Very Satisfactory
86	9	27.3	72.7	Very Satisfactory
87	3	9.1	81.8	Very Satisfactory
88	3	9.1	90.9	Very Satisfactory
89	1	3.0	93.9	Very Satisfactory
90	1	3.0	97.0	Outstanding
93	1	3.0	100.0	Outstanding
Total	33	100.0		

The dominant performance level across all 33 class sections was Very Satisfactory (90.9%), with GWA scores ranging from 84 to 93. The entire score range spans only nine points, with 93.9% of sections scoring between 84 and 88. GWA 85 was the most frequently occurring score (n = 14, 42.4%). Two sections reached Outstanding (GWA 90 and 93), and only one fell in the Satisfactory range (GWA 84). At the subject level, TLE recorded the highest mean GWA (M = 87.71, SD = 2.87) and Science the lowest (M = 85.20, SD = 0.45). This severe compression effect—attributable to composite GWA aggregation, DepEd minimum grade policies, and institutionally benchmarked grading norms—is consistent with Bernardo (2018), who found that composite GWA in Philippine schools frequently masks genuine performance heterogeneity.

Relationship Between Teachers' Adherence to PPST Indicators and Students' Academic Performance**Table 4***Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Matrix of PPST Domains, Overall PPST Adherence, and Students' GWA*

Variable	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	GWA
D1 – Content Knowledge	—							
D2 – Learning Environment	.709**	—						
D3 – Diversity of Learners	.438*	.394*	—					
D4 – Curriculum & Planning	.726**	.700**	.402*	—				
D5 – Assessment	.590**	.704**	.315	.569**	—			
D6 – Community Linkages	.442**	.414*	.377*	.606**	.510**	—		
D7 – Personal Growth	.617**	.500**	.238	.549**	.649**	.553**	—	
Overall PPST Adherence	.810**	.768**	.574**	.818**	.797**	.698**	.788**	-.027
GWA	-.071	.111	.188	-.033	.100	.012	-.150	—

Spearman correlation analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between any of the seven PPST domains and students' GWA. Domain-GWA coefficients ranged narrowly from $r_s = -.150$ (D7) to $r_s = .188$ (D3), with all p-values exceeding .05. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted: there is no significant relationship between teachers' PPST adherence and students' academic performance. By contrast, inter-domain correlations among PPST domains were largely significant and positive ($r_s = .238-.726$), confirming the internal coherence of the PPST framework as perceived by respondents.

The non-significant GWA correlations are most parsimoniously explained by two converging methodological conditions: range restriction in both variables (PPST adherence compressed between 3.50–4.00; GWA compressed between 84–93, with 90.9% of cases between 85–88) and ceiling-effect bias from self-reported PPST ratings. Together, these conditions prevent any bivariate correlation technique from detecting a meaningful signal. This finding does not contradict the theoretical frameworks cited — Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Shulman's PCK model both predict that effective teaching influences student outcomes — but exposes the measurement limitations of this study. As Talisay et al. (2020) demonstrated, the adherence–performance relationship becomes empirically recoverable only when external RPMS evaluations and subject-specific performance metrics replace self-report and composite GWA.

Differences in PPST Adherence and Academic Performance by Profile Variables**Table 5***Summary of Non-Parametric Test Results for PPST Adherence and GWA by Profile Variables*

Profile Variable	Test Used	PPST Adherence H or U / p	GWA H or U / p	Decision (Adherence)
Sex	Mann-Whitney U	U = — / p = .170	U = — / p = .240	Accept H ₀
Age	Kruskal-Wallis H	H = 9.763 / p = .045*	H = 6.072 / p = .194	Reject H ₀
Teaching Position	Kruskal-Wallis H	H = 6.777 / p = .034*	H = 5.214 / p = .074	Reject H ₀
Educational Attainment	Kruskal-Wallis H	H = 3.636 / p = .304	H = 1.572 / p = .666	Accept H ₀
Years of Experience	Kruskal-Wallis H	H = 5.637 / p = .228	H = 5.100 / p = .277	Accept H ₀
Derived PPST Proficiency Level	Mann-Whitney U	U = 0.00 / p < .001*	U = 105.00 / p = .069	Reject H ₀

Among the five profile variables examined, only age and teaching position produced statistically significant differences in Overall PPST Adherence. Age yielded a significant difference ($H = 9.763$, $p = .045$), with mean ranks increasing monotonically from the youngest group ($MR = 10.40$ for ages 25–30) to the oldest ($MR = 27.33$ for ages 46–57), reflecting the deepening professional competence predicted by Shulman's PCK model across career stages. Teaching position similarly produced a significant difference ($H = 6.777$, $p = .034$), with adherence progressing from Teacher I ($MR = 11.30$) to Teacher III ($MR = 21.25$). Dunn's post-hoc analysis with Bonferroni correction identified the Teacher I versus Teacher III comparison as the sole significant pairwise difference ($Adj. p = .032$), consistent with findings by Cabradilla (2025) and Gepila (2020) who reported that statistically significant PPST competency differences emerge most reliably between early-career and advanced-career teachers.

No significant differences in GWA were found across any profile variable grouping. When grouped by derived PPST proficiency level, adherence differed highly significantly ($U = 0.00$, $p < .001$), as mathematically predetermined by the classification algorithm. Notably, students in the Developing group outranked students in the Proficient group in mean GWA

(24.00 vs. 15.75), a reversal consistent with Gepila's (2020) caution that self-assessed proficiency does not reliably predict actual classroom effectiveness. Sex, educational attainment, and years of teaching experience produced no significant differences in either variable. The non-significant experience finding, especially when contrasted with the significant age effect, supports Padillo et al.'s (2021) and Bruner's constructivist argument that years of teaching are a poor proxy for professional growth when the quality of reflective engagement is uncontrolled.

Proposed Learning and Development Activity Plan

Based on the non-significant but directionally informative domain-GWA correlation pattern — D3 Diversity of Learners ($r_s = .188$), D2 Learning Environment ($r_s = .111$), and D5 Assessment and Reporting ($r_s = .100$) — and corroborated by regional literature (Panganiban, 2022; Dela Cruz, 2021; Mariano, 2021; Yabo & Mabalot, 2022), a three-day Learning and Development Activity Plan was proposed under the program title "Project PMES: Strengthening PPST-Aligned Teaching Competencies Through a Results-Based Learning and Development Program." The plan targets all 33 Teacher I to Teacher III respondents and focuses on Domains 3, 2, and 5 as priority areas, supported by reflective practice under Domain 7.

Day 1 covers understanding learner diversity and differentiated instruction strategies (D3), with deliverables including a Learner Profile Matrix and a Differentiated Lesson Plan. Day 2 addresses assessment literacy and using student academic performance data to improve teaching practices (D5 and D2), producing an assessment tool portfolio and a revised intervention plan. Day 3 develops reflective practice mechanisms and individual action planning (D7 and all priority domains), resulting in a Reflection Journal and Individual Classroom Action Plan (ICAP) with SMART goals. Monitoring and evaluation will use PPST-aligned classroom observation tools, lesson plan reviews, and disaggregated quarterly student performance data rather than composite GWA alone.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers at Sta. Cruz Pingkian High School reported high adherence across all seven PPST domains (Overall $M = 3.72$), with Domain 2 (Learning Environment) highest and Domain 7 (Personal Growth and Professional Development) lowest and most variable. Students' academic performance was uniformly Very Satisfactory but statistically undifferentiated, with GWA scores compressed within a nine-point range. Spearman correlation analysis found no statistically significant relationship between any PPST domain and students' GWA, so the null hypothesis was accepted. This finding reflects measurement inadequacy—simultaneous range restriction in both variables—rather than the absence of a true relationship.

Age and teaching position were the only profile variables that significantly differentiated PPST adherence, with the Teacher I versus Teacher III gap identified as the key positional difference. Sex, educational attainment, and years of experience did not significantly differentiate either adherence or GWA. No significant GWA differences were found across any profile variable grouping.

The following recommendations are offered. First, triangulate self-report PPST assessments with externally conducted classroom observations and RPMS-based evaluations before using them as the basis for professional development planning. Second, replace or supplement composite GWA with subject-specific quarterly examination scores and performance task ratings designed to generate the variability needed for informative correlational analyses. Third, school administrators should institutionalize structured mentoring arrangements pairing Teacher I educators with Teacher III mentors, directly addressing the empirically confirmed positional adherence gap. Fourth, the proposed Learning and Development Activity Plan should be implemented and monitored using disaggregated student performance data, with special attention to Domains 3, 2, and 5 as priority areas. Fifth, future research should expand sampling frames to include Master Teachers and senior faculty, employ externally validated performance measures, and use subject-specific academic indicators to produce more robust and informative evidence on the PPST adherence–student performance relationship.

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AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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