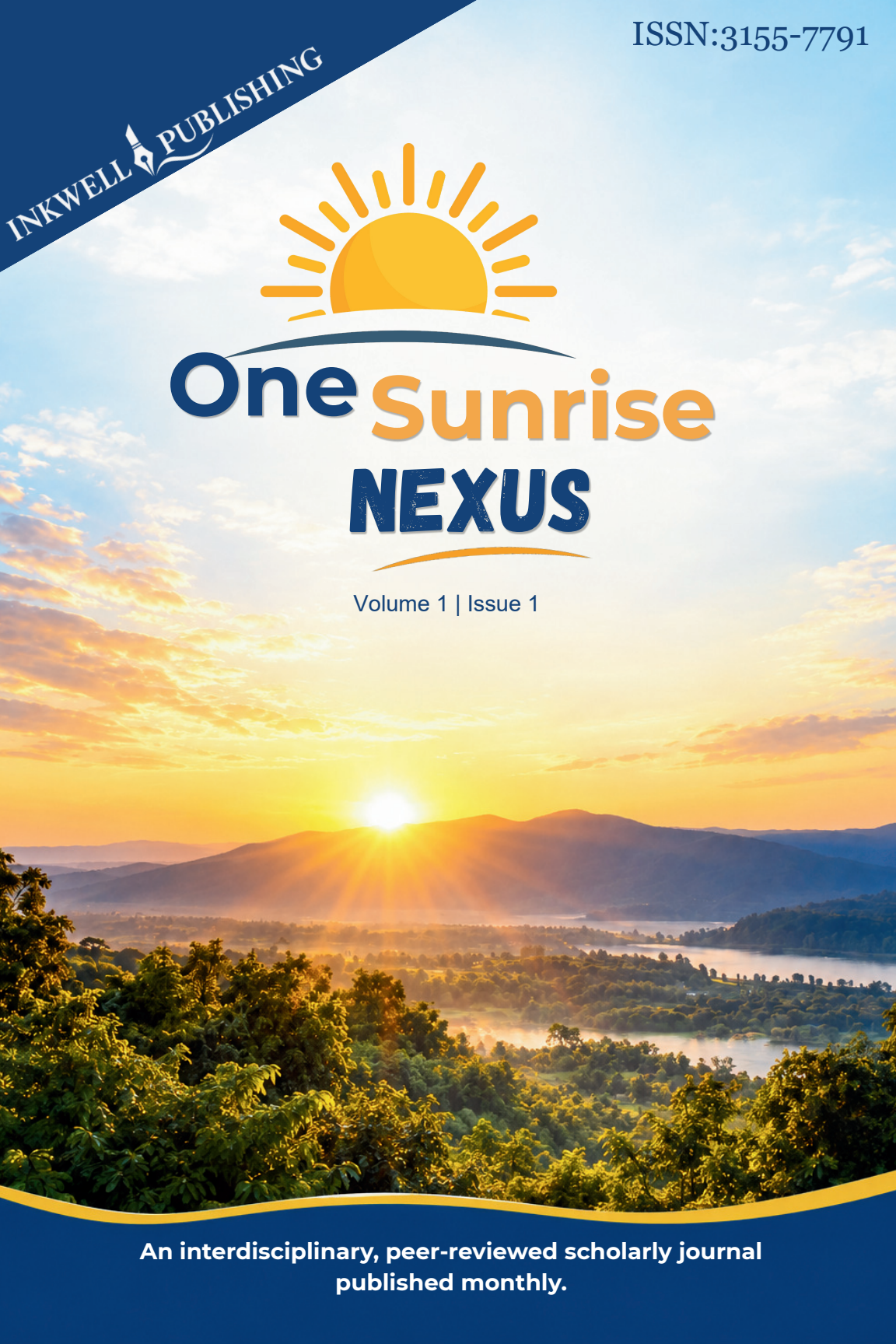
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IN THIS ISSUE:

1. Gabbi C. Antonio
2. Jun P. Resurreccion
3. Allan Ramon F. Corro
4. Sarah Mae V. Daroy
5. Jefone M. Ibabao
6. Juriel R. Rom

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Table of Contents

Assessment of Schools' Organizational Climate, Teachers' Psychological Well-Being, and Performance as Basis for a Proposed Wellness-Based Teacher Enhancement Plan, 1-17

Influence of Emotional Maturity on the Well-Being of Filipino Secondary Public School Teachers: Basis to a Proposed Wellness Plan, 18-35

The State of Mental Health of Graduate School Students and its Effects to their Academic Performance: The Case of Sandigan Colleges, Inc., 36-49

Digital Propaganda in the 2025 Midterm Elections: A Content Analysis of Selected Online Political Campaigns, 50-72

Anti-Corruption Policies in the Philippines: A Documentary Analysis of Implementation and Challenges, 73-95

Examining Strategic Planning Practices in Education: A Document Analysis of School Improvement Plans, 96-110

Impact of MOOE Utilization on the Quality of Classroom Instruction in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools of Magdiwang, 111-139

Welcome to the Inaugural Edition of One Sunrise NEXUS

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that we welcome you to the inaugural edition of **One Sunrise NEXUS**, an interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed digital journal published by Inkwell Publishing.

In an era marked by rapid advancements in education, research, technology, and professional practice, the need for accessible and credible platforms for intellectual exchange has become increasingly important. One Sunrise NEXUS was established in response to this growing need, providing a dynamic space where scholarly inquiry, innovative ideas, creative expression, and meaningful community narratives converge.

More than a digital publication, One Sunrise NEXUS represents our commitment to bridging local knowledge and global perspectives. We envision a platform that amplifies diverse voices, encourages interdisciplinary collaboration, and provides educators, researchers, scholars, literary artists, and professionals with meaningful opportunities to share their knowledge, discoveries, experiences, and creative contributions with a wider audience.

As we launch this inaugural edition, we reaffirm our aspiration to establish One Sunrise NEXUS as a respected open-access publication that advances scholarship, promotes intellectual curiosity, and nurtures a sustainable culture of research and writing. Guided by the principles of academic integrity, originality, inclusivity, and editorial excellence, the journal seeks to make scholarly and creative works accessible to readers across disciplines, institutions, and geographical boundaries. This inaugural issue marks the beginning of an exciting intellectual journey. Featuring contributions that encompass educational research, interdisciplinary scholarship, literary expression, and stories of institutional and community significance, it reflects the diversity of perspectives and experiences that enrich our collective understanding of the world. Each contribution represents not only the dedication and intellectual efforts of its author but also the transformative potential of sharing knowledge and ideas.

Central to our publication philosophy is an unwavering commitment to scholarly quality and ethical publishing practices. Through a rigorous editorial process and double-blind peer review of scholarly submissions, we strive to uphold the credibility, relevance, and integrity of the research we publish. At the same time, we recognize the importance of providing an inclusive platform that welcomes emerging researchers and aspiring writers alongside established scholars and experienced professionals.

We believe that meaningful scholarship should transcend institutional and geographical boundaries. By creating opportunities for dialogue among individuals from diverse academic and professional backgrounds, One Sunrise NEXUS aspires to contribute to the advancement of knowledge, the enrichment of professional practice, and the development of communities through informed perspectives and innovative thinking.

The publication of this inaugural edition would not have been possible without the dedication and support of individuals who share our vision. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our contributing authors for entrusting us with their intellectual and creative works, to our editorial board and peer reviewers for their commitment to maintaining publication standards, and to our readers for becoming part of this emerging community of scholars, thinkers, and creators.

As we turn the first pages of this publication, we look forward with optimism and determination to the opportunities that lie ahead. May One Sunrise NEXUS become a lasting avenue for discovery, collaboration, inspiration, and intellectual growth—a publication that not only documents knowledge but also encourages its creation, exchange, and meaningful application.

Every sunrise brings new possibilities. Every shared idea creates new opportunities. Every published work contributes to a brighter future.

Welcome to One Sunrise NEXUS, where ideas find their voice, research finds its audience, and knowledge knows no boundaries.

Together, let us illuminate minds, inspire discoveries, and advance knowledge—one sunrise at a time.

--- The Executive Editor

ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOLS' ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE, TEACHERS' PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, AND PERFORMANCE AS BASIS FOR A PROPOSED WELLNESS-BASED TEACHER ENHANCEMENT PLAN

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Abstract

The psychological well-being of teachers and their ability to perform professionally are critical elements of educational quality, institutional effectiveness, and long-term school improvement. Nevertheless, teachers' mental health and instructional effectiveness are continuously impacted by increasing professional responsibilities, organizational challenges, and personal pressures. In order to develop a proposed Wellness-Based Teacher Enhancement Plan (WTEP), this study evaluated the organizational climate of schools, teachers' psychological well-being, and teaching performance. Specifically, the study examined teachers' demographic characteristics; their perceptions of organizational climate; their psychological well-being; their professional performance; and the relationships among these key variables. A sequential mixed-methods research design was utilized, combining descriptive-correlational quantitative analysis with qualitative inquiry. The participants comprised 61 public secondary school teachers from Balagtas National Agricultural High School within the Schools Division of Bulacan, Philippines. Quantitative data were systematically gathered using established instruments: the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-42); the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Secondary Schools (OCDQ-RS); Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scales; and researcher-developed assessment tools. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured individual interviews with 11 purposively selected participants. The data were evaluated using descriptive statistics, inferential tests, Pearson correlation analysis, and thematic analysis. Demographic results revealed that the majority of respondents were female, married, currently pursuing graduate education, and held Teacher II or Teacher III positions. Overall, the organizational climate was rated as "Good" (M = 3.5), with communication (M = 4.2) and professional development (M = 4.1) identified as strong institutional pillars. Conversely, decision-making participation (M = 2.2) and work environment (M = 3.0) emerged as primary areas requiring organizational improvement. Teachers' overall psychological well-being was rated as "High" (M = 3.8), marked by strong scores in purpose in life (M = 4.1), positive relationships (M = 4.0), and personal growth (M = 3.9). However, environmental mastery was rated as "Moderate" (M = 3.2), reflecting ongoing difficulties in managing heavy professional demands and workplace pressures. Teaching performance was generally favorable, featuring "Excellent" ratings in content knowledge and pedagogy, "Very Good" ratings across secondary professional domains, and a noted need to strengthen community linkages. Correlation analysis

demonstrated significant positive relationships among organizational climate, psychological well-being, and teaching performance, underscoring that supportive institutional environments and positive psychological functioning directly enhance professional effectiveness. Complementary qualitative findings revealed three major themes affecting teachers: personal concerns, family responsibilities, and workload-related pressures, all of which contributed to emotional strain and work-life balance challenges. Integrating these findings highlighted the necessity of simultaneously addressing systemic and personal factors. Consequently, the proposed Wellness-Based Teacher Enhancement Plan (WTEP) incorporates participatory leadership, improved working conditions, targeted psychological wellness interventions, stress management, equitable workload distribution, continuous professional growth, peer mentoring, and enhanced community engagement. The study concludes that fostering teacher psychological well-being alongside organizational enhancement is essential for sustaining teaching performance. It is recommended that school divisions institutionalize evidence-informed wellness programs, continuously monitor teacher mental health, and practice collaborative leadership to cultivate healthier educational environments and build sustainable teacher resilience.

Keywords: Organizational Climate; Psychological Well-Being; Teacher Performance; Teacher Wellness; Wellness-Based Teacher Enhancement Plan

Introduction

Mental health and wellness have been a serious concern among teachers for the past years. Overseas, the study in Australia concerning the workload of teachers, turnover intentions, and mental health, 90% of Australian teachers found to have moderated to extremely severe stress. (Graziera, 2025) In Japan, high school teachers found in a study that occupational stressors, sense of coherence such as mindfulness, meaningfulness, and others is strongly linked to poor mental health. The authors on that study noted that teaching is an occupation leading to high stress where mental health deterioration among educators in Japan is a serios social issue. (Kuwato and Hirano, 2020) Locally, the study of Donoga, Turla, and Balag (2022) public school teachers who engaged on the implementation of distance-learning manifested severe stress, moderate anxiety, and mild depression. This shows that some teachers in the Philippines are experiencing elevated mental health concerns. This study corroborates with the study of Clarion and Palarisan (2023) concerning mental health of public-school teachers in Davao de Oro, Philippines. 173 public school teachers administered DASS-21 revealed moderate stress, mild depression, and mild anxiety suggesting efforts to improve teacher well-being. Moreover, the mental health status of 73 secondary school teachers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in Batanes were assessed and results revealed moderate anxiety and normal levels of depression and stress. The result also suggests that even teachers in remote provinces like Batanes have no exempt on the effect of shift work conditions brought by Pandemic on their mental health. (Billote, et al) A descriptive-correlational study that assess the mental health conditions of 73 Filipino high school teachers, it was found various indicators of emotional, social, and behavioral mental health concerns. A qualitative study of six Filipino high school teachers articulates tensions such as Endurance vs.

Exhaustion, Service vs. Self, showing the mental/emotional burdens teachers carry beyond their teaching roles. This suggests that teachers' wellness is not just about absence of disorder but about holistic well-being. This qualitative study of six Filipino high school teachers articulates tensions such as Endurance vs. Exhaustion, Service vs. Self, showing the mental/emotional burdens teachers carry beyond their teaching roles. It underscores that teacher wellness is not just about absence of disorder but about holistic wellbeing. (Oliveros, Udtohan, Tasan, Malabago, Neri, 2024)

The need to maintain teachers' sound mental health and well-being is indicated in the Code of Ethics of Professional Teachers R.A. No. 7836 – Philippine Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994. Specifically, under Article II – The Teacher and the State, Section 3 states that: "In the interest of the state and of people as much as of his own, every teacher shall be physically, mentally and morally fit". (Deped Tambayan, 2022) This is the frame of reference that induced the interest of the researcher in conducting applied research toward a wellness-based teacher enhancement for the hope of improvement of their teaching performance. It is grounded on their organizational climate and psychological well-being assessment results.

Organizational climate is defined as the environment or atmosphere within an organization established through the attitudes, behaviors, and values of employees. It is the overall mood or vives of a workplace that can affect their motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity. (Paredes, 2023) On the other hand, psychological well-being refers to optimal mental health and functioning that encompasses various aspects of an individual's psychological state including emotional, cognitive, and social well-being. (Okorobie, 2024)

This study is also based on the data that during the K-12, 46% of teachers had extremely high levels of stress related to their profession and their well-being dropped during the year 2020. Three years later, it was revealed that educators' well-being is still suffering up to the present. (Agile Educating Marketing, 2024). These conditions are prevalent among public school teachers in most areas of the Philippines. In the province of Bulacan, there are some reports about mental health concerns among teachers. In one school in Balagtas District, there was once a report that a teacher took indefinite leave due to stress and other mental health issues, but it remains anonymous on the part of the concerned teacher and his/her respective school. Anonymity is due to its confidentiality.

Also, this study is based on the mental health assessment result conducted in one public school in Balagtas District during the School Year 2025 – 2026. Through administration of a standardized test namely, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS 42), the result revealed noticeable high percentage of teachers experiencing mild stress (13, 21.31 %), moderate stress (8, 13.11%), severe stress (1, 1.64%), and extremely severe stres (11, 18.3%). Moreover, most of them revealed mild anxiety (6, 9.84%), moderate anxiety (11, 18.03%), severe anxiety (3, 4.92%), extremely severe anxiety (11, 18.03%). Lastly, the teachers disclosed mild depression (6, 9.84%), moderate depression (10, 16.39%), severe depression (1, 1.64%), and extremely severe depression (3, 4.92%). These results suggests high

percentage of teachers experiencing from mild to extremely severe stress, anxiety, and depression. Therefore, the researcher chose this venue for research considering three other reasons such as: 1) A similar study has never been performed in this school district; 2) A greater population of teachers in this area leads to a larger sample of the study essential for quantitative research design; and 3) The underlying rule among scholars is to conduct a study near or within the locality of the researcher for a greater possibility of data collection.

The assessment of teachers' environmental atmosphere and their optimal mental health through test administration of Schools' Organizational Climate Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB) among them, the results will be the basis for proposed Wellness-Based Teacher Enhancement Plan (WTEP). Its design will also be guided on the result of another survey, utilizing a research-made questionnaire particularly the Teacher Performance Scale that is very comparable to the Electronic Assessment Tool (e-SAT) that assesses them to evaluate their performance based on the RPMS standards and goals. The goal of this wellness plan is to enhance the performance of public-school teachers based on their Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF), derived from the Result-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

Methods

This study utilized the explanatory sequential design. A type of mixed-method research design that starts with quantitative data collection and analysis and then follows up with qualitative data collection and analysis, which leads to interpretation. (Harvard Catalyst, 2025) In the quantitative phase, the researcher focused on descriptive quantitative and correlational research, a design that is a part of quantitative social research study which involved conducting surveys using quantitative variables on a social research tool. The methods are to describe the characteristics of the variables under study. This methodology focuses on answering questions relating to "what" than the "why" of the research subject. The primary focus of descriptive research is to simply describe the nature of the demographics under study instead of focusing on the "why" (Purcell & Basu, 2022). In this study, the researcher described the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, marital status, education, position title, and length of teaching experience. Likewise, conditions in terms of school organizational climate, teachers' psychological well-being, and teacher performance were also described. Correlational research approach on the other hand is where the researcher is primarily interested in determining non-causal relationships among variables. More specifically, correlational study is a type of non-experimental study in which relationships are assessed without manipulating independent variables or randomly assigning participants to different conditions. The researcher also assessed the difference between schools' organizational climate, teachers' psychological well-being, and teacher performance based on their demographic. Finally, the researcher gathered qualitative data through interview that establishes the qualitative phase wherein themes generated from thematic coding explain the current conditions of teachers and arrive at a deeper means of assessing the participants.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study are among 61 teachers in one secondary public-school in Balagtas District, Schools Division of Bulacan.

Sampling Method

Two sampling techniques were utilized in this study, particularly the total population sampling and purposive sampling. The total population sampling was utilized on the collection of quantitative data particularly during the pre-evaluation of teachers' mental health using DASS-42 wherein the results served as based-line of the study. It followed by another phase of quantitative data gathering for schools' organizational climate, teachers' psychological well-being, and teacher performance. On the other hand, purposive sampling was utilized on the selection of participants during the qualitative data gathering which is the one-on-one interview. Participants in this phase shall meet the criteria wherein their evaluation from the DASS-42 falls to severe to extremely severe from either stress, anxiety, and depression.

Instrument

The researcher utilized three standardized questionnaires, two researcher-made questionnaire, and interview guide in assessing certain conditions of the teachers. The three standardized tests such as Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-42), Organizational Climate Description for Secondary Schools (OCDQ-RS) and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB), and two researcher-made questionnaires particularly the Teacher Profile Survey Questionnaire, and Teacher Performance Scale (TPC) were administered to the entire 61 teacher population of the selected school. The interview guide questions were administered during the one-on-one interview sessions with the 11 selected participants taken from the total population of the study. These assessment tools served as basis in designing the wellness-based teacher enhancement plan.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection has two phases as follows:

Phase I - Preliminaries. Started with sending authorization letters to conduct a study to the school principal where the researcher is currently connected. This is a very important procedure since the entire process of research requires ample time that may affect the regular work schedule of the researcher. The letter of the researcher approved by his school principal served as recommending approval attached to another authorization letter addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent. Once received the approved letter to the superintendent, it was photocopied and attached to a final authorization letter addressed to the principal of the participating school. At this time, the preliminaries for the data gathering were completed and ready for the actual data gathering.

Phase II - Actual Data Gathering. It started by administering the Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS-42) that determines the mental health conditions of the participants. Results will be the baseline of the study. It followed by the administration of Demographic Information Tool, the Organizational Climate Description for Secondary Schools (OCDQ-RS) and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB). The gathered data from the respondents will be tabulated, treated statistics through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Finally, the administration of one-on-one interview using interview guide questions will be administered to participants who will be purposively selected based on their current mental health conditions.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher highly observes the ethical standards on the conduct of research guided on the RM No. 228, s. 2020- Policy Guidelines on the Adherence to Ethical Research Principles and Responsibilities in Studies Involving Teaching, Teaching-related, Non-teaching Personnel and Learners. Thus, the considerations of the researchers are as follows:

1. Permission to Conduct a Study. This component of ethical consideration in conducting the study is primarily by sending an approval letter to the School Principal where the researcher is currently working and an approval letter to the School's Division Superintendent.
2. Informed Consent. Its intent is that teacher participants can participate freely (voluntarily) with full information about what it means for them to take part, and that they give consent before they enter the study.
4. Declaration of Anti-Plagiarism. This refers to a written oath signed by the researcher, an assurance that the entire research is original.
5. Declaration of Absence of Conflict Interest. This refers to another written oath signed by the researcher, expressing that the conduct of the study is morally directed to the goal of contributing body of knowledge and for educational purposes only.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from 61 secondary public-school teachers in Balagtas District, Bulacan will be analyzed using the following:

1. Descriptive Statistics such as frequency, percentage and weighted mean are utilized in describing the respondents' demographic profile, schools' organizational climate, teachers' psychological well-being, teacher performance.
2. Inferential Statistics was used such as a) t-test of independent mean to determine if there is a significant difference of organizational climate, psychological well-being, and teacher performance when grouped the respondents according to sex; b) F-test or one-way-ANOVA (analysis of variance) to determine if there is a significant difference of organizational climate psychological well-being, and teacher performance when grouped the respondents according to age, marital status, and length of teaching experience; and c) Pearson r (Pearson Product Moment Correlation) particularly the Spearman Rho to determine if the

organizational climate a has significant relationship to the psychological well-being, as well as teacher performance of the respondents.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents was one of the essential considerations in exploring the problem. The respondents' demographic profile on sex, age, marital status, education, position title and length of teaching experience were the initial aspects of teachers being assessed.

Table 1.
Respondents of the Study by Sex

Sex	Frequency (n-61)	Percentage
Male	15	24%
Female	46	75%

Table 1 shows the sex of the respondents where majority are females 46, 75% while males are 15, 24%. This suggests that female respondents predominated male respondents in this study.

Table 2.
Respondents of the Study by Age

Age	Frequency (n-61)	Percentage
21 – 25	1	2%
26 – 30	15	24%
31 – 35	13	21%
36 – 40	7	11%
41 – 45	11	18%
46 – 50	10	16%
51 – 55	4	6%
56 – 60	1	2%

Table 2 presents the age distribution of the respondents. The majority belong to the 31–35 years old group with 15 respondents (24%), followed by those aged 36–40 years old with 13 respondents (21%). The 41–45 years old group accounts for 11 respondents (18%), while 46–50 years old includes 10 respondents (16%). Meanwhile, 26–30 years old comprises 7 respondents (11%), and 51–55 years old has 4 respondents (6%). The least represented age groups are 21–25 years old and 56–60 years old, with 1 respondent (2%) each.

It can be inferred from the table that the majority of respondents fall within the young adult stage, based on Erik Erikson's psychosocial stages of development, while fewer respondents belong to the middle adulthood stage.

Table 3.
Respondents of the Study by Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency (n-61)	Percentage
Single	12	20%
Married	43	70%
Separated	4	7%
Widowed	2	3%

Table 3 shows the marital status of the respondents wherein the majority are married consisted of 43, 70% followed by single composed of 12, 20%. Next is separated 4, 7% and the least is widowed 2, 3%.

Table 4.
Respondents of the Study by Education

Education	Frequency (n-61)	Percentage
Baccalaureate Degree	4	7%
Master's Units	34	56%
Master's Degree	18	30%
Doctorate Units	4	5%
Doctorate Degree	1	2%

Table 4 presents the educational attainment of the respondents. The majority have earned master's units, with 34 respondents (56%), followed by those who hold a baccalaureate degree, with 18 respondents (30%). A smaller proportion consists of master's degree holders, accounting for 4 respondents (7%), while those with doctoral units comprise 4 respondents (5%). The least represented group is those who have completed a doctorate degree, with only 1 respondent (2%).

This suggests that most participants are still in the process of completing their graduate studies, particularly at the master's level, while only a few have attained the highest level of academic qualification.

Table 5.
Respondents of the Study by Position Title

Position Title	Frequency (n-61)	Percentage
Teacher I	8	13%
Teacher II	23	38%
Teacher III	25	41%
Master Teacher I	3	5%
Master Teacher II	2	3%

Table 5 presents the position titles of the respondents. The majority are Teacher III, with 25 respondents (41%), followed by Teacher II, comprising 23

respondents (38%). Fewer participants hold the position of Teacher I, with 8 respondents (13%), while Master Teacher I and Master Teacher II have 3 respondents (5%) and 2 respondents (3%), respectively.

This indicates that most teachers occupy mid-level teaching positions, while fewer respondents have attained higher ranks, reflecting that entry to mid-level positions are more common among the teaching staff.

Table 6.
Respondents of the Study by Years of Teaching Experience

Years	Frequency (n-61)	Percentage
1 -5	11	18%
6 - 10	21	34%
11 - 15	23	38%
16 - 20	4	7%
21 - 25	2	3%

Table 6 presents the teaching experience of the respondents. The largest group of teachers have 3–5 years of teaching experience, with 23 respondents (38%), followed by those with 6–10 years, comprising 21 respondents (34%). Teachers with 11–15 years of experience account for 11 respondents (18%), while those with 16–20 years include 4 respondents (7%). The least represented group is teachers with 21–25 years of experience, with 2 respondents (3%).

This indicates that most of the respondents are relatively early to mid-career teachers, having taught for less than ten years, while only a small portion have accumulated extensive teaching experience.

Teachers' Self Assessed School's Organizational Climate

Another significant aspect assessed among the teachers is their perception of the organizational climate within the school. Using a structured organizational climate survey for secondary schools, the respondents' views were evaluated across six key dimensions: Leadership and Administration, Teacher Collaboration, Communication, Work Environment, Professional Development, and Decision-Making Participation. These dimensions provided a comprehensive understanding of how teachers experience and interact with the overall school environment.

Table 7.
Organizational Climate Results of the Respondents

Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Analysis
1. Leadership and Administration	3.8	0.5	Good
2. Teacher Collaboration	3.7	0.6	Good
3. Communication	4.2	0.4	Very Good

4. Work Environment	3.0	0.7	Average
5. Professional Development	4.1	0.5	Very Good
6. Decision Making Participation	2.2	0.8	Poor
Average Mean	**3.5**	**0.8**	**Good**

Table 7 shows the organizational climate results of the respondents across six key dimensions of school environment (see Table 7). The overall mean score of 3.5 (Good) indicates that teachers generally perceive the organizational climate of their school positively, although specific areas varied in strength and weakness. Among the six dimensions, Communication recorded the highest mean score (4.2, Very Good), suggesting that teachers perceive information flow, clarity of directions, and openness of dialogue as excellent. Research indicates that positive communication within schools enhances trust and professional interactions, which improves overall organizational climate and teacher morale (Sun et al., 2024). Similarly, Professional Development also received a high rating (4.1, Very Good), reflecting strong perceptions of available training opportunities, support for learning, and growth-oriented programs. Such supportive environments have been linked to improved teacher efficacy and engagement, since opportunities for development signal that the school values teacher growth and instructional improvement. The dimensions of Leadership and Administration (3.8, Good) and Teacher Collaboration (3.7, Good) were rated positively but slightly lower than communication and development. Positive leadership and collaborative practices are essential for shaping the overall climate, as effective leaders create shared goals and facilitate teamwork (Veletić et al., 2023). Moderate collaboration among teachers may reflect efforts to work together, but also implies room for strengthening joint planning and shared decision-making processes — consistent with studies showing that collegial environments contribute to better teacher morale and commitment.

Conversely, the Work Environment scored lower (3.0, Average), pointing to moderate perceptions regarding physical facilities, resource availability, or workload conditions. Average work environment perceptions suggest that while basic needs may be met, certain structural or psychosocial conditions still need improvement, which can affect teacher satisfaction and performance if left unaddressed. Research on school climate emphasizes that a supportive work environment is crucial for sustaining positive teaching experiences and institutional effectiveness. Most notably, Decision-Making Participation was rated Poor (2.2), indicating that teachers feel minimally involved in participative governance, policy formulation, or collective decision processes. This finding aligns with recent research stressing that teacher involvement in school decisions significantly enhances organizational climate and teacher commitment, whereas limited participation can weaken feelings of ownership and professional empowerment.

Generally, these findings reveal a mixed climate profile in which communication and professional development are strengths, while participation

in decision-making and certain environmental factors remain areas for growth. Strengthening shared governance and supportive conditions for teacher involvement could enhance the organizational climate further, consistent with literature showing that distributed leadership and participative practices contribute positively to teacher commitment and school effectiveness (Carbonero, 2026).

Teachers' Self Assessed Psychological Wellbeing

Additional important aspect assessed among the teachers is their psychological well-being. Using the Raffy Psychological Well-Being Scale (RPWS), the respondents' well-being was evaluated across six key dimensions: Self-Acceptance, Positive Relationships, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, and Personal Growth. These dimensions provided a comprehensive understanding of how teachers perceive their emotional, social, and professional functioning, as well as their overall mental and personal well-being.

Table 8.
Psychological Wellbeing Results of the Respondents

Dimensions	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**Descriptive Analysis**
1. Self-acceptance	3.8	0.5	High
2. Positive relationships	4.0	0.4	High
3. Autonomy	3.5	0.6	High
4. Environmental mastery	3.2	0.7	Moderate
5. Purpose in life	4.1	0.5	Very High
6. Personal growth	3.9	0.6	High
Average Mean	**3.8**	**06**	**High**

Table 8 shows the psychological well-being results of the respondents across six dimensions: Self-Acceptance, Positive Relationships, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, and Personal Growth. Based on the Raffy Psychological Well-Being Scale, the overall mean score of 3.75 (SD = 0.55, High) suggests that teachers generally perceive their psychological well-being positively. The dimension of Purpose in Life recorded one of the highest mean scores (4.1, Very High), indicating that a significant number of teachers feel a strong sense of

meaning and direction in their professional roles. This aligns with research showing that a clear sense of purpose contributes to both job satisfaction and overall psychological well-being, as it helps individuals sustain motivation and engagement in demanding work contexts such as teaching (Ismail et al., 2023). Similarly, Positive Relationships (4.0, High) and Self-Acceptance (3.8, High) were rated relatively high. These findings are consistent with evidence that supportive interpersonal connections and a positive self-evaluation are key components of teacher well-being. Positive social interactions with colleagues and students can buffer stress and enhance emotional health, which is a central aspect of psychological well-being in educational settings (Kurrle & Warwas, 2025). The dimension of Personal Growth (3.9, High) also reflects a perception among respondents that they are continuing to develop and improve personally and professionally. This supports the conceptualization of psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct that includes ongoing development and learning, not just the absence of distress (Kurrle & Warwas, 2025). Autonomy received a slightly lower, yet still positive, score (3.5, High), suggesting that teachers feel reasonably empowered and self-directed in their roles, although some may still encounter constraints in autonomy due to institutional structures or workload demands. The lowest mean score was found in Environmental Mastery (3.2, Moderate), indicating that respondents feel only moderately capable of managing daily challenges, responsibilities, and pressures related to their work. Research has shown that environmental mastery is influenced not only by personal capacities but also by external supports such as workload management, administrative support, and available resources, which can impact psychological well-being when insufficient (Kurrle & Warwas, 2025). Overall, these results confirm that psychological well-being in teachers comprises both internal (self-acceptance, purpose) and external (relationships, mastery of environment) components, consistent with the multidimensional models of well-being presented in recent literature (Kurrle & Warwas, 2025). The generally high scores across most dimensions suggest that many teachers perceive their work and lives positively, but moderate environmental mastery highlights an area for potential support and intervention to improve well-being outcomes further.

Summary of Findings

The study aimed to determine the conditions of teachers at Balagtas National Agricultural High School in terms of organizational climate, psychological well-being, and teacher performance, and to explore their lived experiences affecting these conditions. Findings were drawn from both quantitative and qualitative data.

1. The demographic profile revealed that the majority of respondents were female, aged 31–35 years, married, and pursuing master's units. Most occupied the Teacher III position and had teaching experience ranging from 1–5 years. This profile indicates a young, motivated, and mid-career teaching workforce actively engaged in professional growth.

2. Regarding organizational climate, results indicated an overall "Good" rating (Mean = 3.5, SD = 0.8). Teachers perceived communication and

professional development as strengths, rated "Very Good," whereas decision-making participation and work environment were lower, indicating that teachers feel limited in influencing school policies and face challenges in working conditions. This aligns with current studies which suggest that employee participation and supportive organizational climate significantly affect job satisfaction and performance (Ismail et al., 2023).

3. The psychological well-being of teachers was generally rated as "Good to Very Good." Quantitative data revealed moderate levels of stress and fatigue, while qualitative interviews highlighted personal concerns, family responsibilities, and workload pressures as the main contributors to emotional strain. Teachers reported anxiety over meeting student expectations, balancing family obligations, and managing teaching responsibilities simultaneously (TR1–TR11). These findings are consistent with literature indicating that teacher stress and workload directly affect both well-being and instructional effectiveness (Pamon & Oco, 2024).

4. Teachers' performance was rated "Excellent" in content knowledge and pedagogy, while most other domains, including assessment, curriculum planning, and professional growth, were rated "Very Good." Community linkages received a "Good" rating, suggesting that while teachers demonstrate competence within the classroom, engagement with the wider school community remains limited. Pearson correlation analyses further confirmed a significant positive relationship between organizational climate, psychological well-being, and teacher performance, indicating that supportive environments and good mental health are closely linked to higher teaching effectiveness.

5. Qualitative findings revealed three overarching themes from teachers' lived experiences: Personal Concerns such as Stress, anxiety, and fear of not meeting professional expectations (TR1–TR4). Family Problems such as Difficulty balancing work and family duties, feelings of guilt, and missed family events (TR5–TR8). Workload such as Excessive tasks, administrative responsibilities, and time constraints that limit instructional focus (TR9–TR11). These themes collectively indicate that teachers' professional performance and well-being are influenced not only by the school's organizational climate but also by external personal and family pressures.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study draws the following conclusions:

1. Teachers are predominantly young, mid-career professionals who are motivated to pursue higher education and professional development.

2. The school's organizational climate is generally supportive, particularly in leadership, communication, and professional development. However, limitations in decision-making participation and work environment reduce teacher engagement and may hinder optimal performance.

3. Psychological well-being among teachers is moderate to high, but stress, fatigue, and anxiety persist due to personal, family, and workload challenges.

4. Teacher performance is high in content knowledge and pedagogy, yet areas such as community engagement and collaborative decision-making require improvement.

5. There is a significant positive correlation between organizational climate, psychological well-being, and teacher performance, confirming that improvements in the work environment and teacher wellness directly enhance professional effectiveness.

6. Teachers' lived experiences emphasize the interconnected nature of personal concerns, family responsibilities, and workload, highlighting the importance of holistic interventions that address both professional and personal dimensions of well-being.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Enhancing Organizational Climate. Increase teacher participation in decision-making through committees, policy input, and structured feedback mechanisms. Improve the work environment by ensuring adequate resources, equitable workload distribution, and supportive infrastructure.

2. Supporting Psychological Well-Being. Implement stress-management programs, including counseling, mindfulness sessions, and peer support groups. Introduce work-life balance initiatives such as flexible scheduling and family support programs.

3. Professional Development and Growth. Provide wellness-integrated professional development combining pedagogical skill enhancement with stress management strategies.

Establish peer mentoring and collaborative learning opportunities to encourage knowledge sharing and reduce professional isolation.

4. Workload Management. Conduct periodic workload assessments to identify tasks that can be streamlined or delegated. Provide administrative support for paperwork and reporting, allowing teachers to focus on instruction and learner engagement.

5. Community Engagement. Strengthen programs linking teachers with parents and community members to promote collaborative learning and shared responsibility for student success.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation. Conduct quarterly surveys to assess psychological well-being, workload, and satisfaction, using the results to adjust interventions accordingly.

Use observation and self-assessment tools to monitor teaching performance and professional growth over time.

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INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL MATURITY ON THE WELL-BEING OF FILIPINO SECONDARY PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS: BASIS TO A PROPOSED WELLNESS PLAN

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Abstract

The importance of teachers' emotional maturity and general well-being cannot be overstated in terms of enhancing their professional performance, establishing positive interpersonal relationships, and providing quality education. While awareness surrounding educators' mental health issues continues to grow, empirical studies investigating the link between emotional maturity and general well-being specifically among Filipino public school teachers remain limited. Consequently, this study examined how emotional maturity affects the general well-being of Filipino secondary public school teachers in the Santa Maria District, Schools Division of Bulacan, Philippines, during School Year 2022–2023. Specifically, the study evaluated teachers' demographic profiles, assessed their emotional maturity across five key dimensions, determined their overall levels of general well-being, identified significant differences in emotional maturity based on demographic characteristics, and measured the correlation between emotional maturity and general well-being to form the empirical baseline for a proposed targeted wellness program. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed. Through simple random sampling, 247 secondary public school teachers were selected from a total population of 643 educators across five public secondary schools. Data were systematically collected using a structured demographic questionnaire, the ARVC Scale of Emotional Maturity, and the General Well-being Scale. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics—including frequencies, percentages, and weighted means—to synthesize demographic profiles and psychological scores. Inferential statistical tests, specifically independent-samples *t*-tests, one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Pearson correlation analysis, were utilized to evaluate group differences and relationships between core variables. The quantitative findings revealed that respondents possessed very high levels of emotional maturity across all five evaluated dimensions: emotional manifestation (M = 4.25), emotional stability (M = 4.26), emotional self-awareness (M = 4.29), emotional adjustment (M = 4.26), and emotional adequacy (M = 4.34). Despite these high ratings, specific operational concerns surfaced regarding sensitivity to criticism, professional stressors, perceived lack of organizational recognition, self-acceptance, workplace adaptation, and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries. Regarding mental health outcomes, while the majority of respondents exhibited positive general well-being, a notable subset reported marginal well-being, elevated stress levels, or acute psychological distress. Demographic analyses demonstrated no significant differences in emotional maturity when grouped by sex ($p = .077$), age ($p = .135$), marital status ($p = .167$), or educational attainment ($p = .115$). However,

significant variations in emotional maturity emerged based on position title (p = .045) and total length of teaching experience (p = .012). Crucially, correlation analysis indicated that emotional maturity had no statistically significant relationship with general well-being (r = .041, p = .518). This key finding demonstrates that high emotional maturity does not automatically guarantee or translate to enhanced psychological well-being among teachers. Based on these insights, a comprehensive wellness plan was constructed, incorporating targeted professional development seminars, accessible psychological counseling, emotional adjustment strategies, and structured interventions to resolve workplace conflicts. The study concludes that emotional maturity and general well-being operate as distinct, non-interdependent facets of professional functioning. Educational institutions must look beyond individual emotional skills by implementing holistic, evidence-informed institutional wellness initiatives that directly alleviate systemic psychological strain. Future research should expand sample sizes and integrate additional psychosocial variables to better analyze well-being determinants and test intervention efficacy in Philippine educational contexts.

Keywords: Emotional Maturity, General Well-Being, Filipino Secondary School Teachers, Psychological Health, Teacher Wellness Plan

Introduction

Teaching is the noblest profession. It is in the hands of the teachers that they carry the future of nations. The work of teachers is seen like a candle, they consume themselves to light the way of others. It requires dedication, commitment, and selflessness for the sake of delivering quality instructions to their students.

To unfold the job of teachers, there has been a report that almost one-third of teachers work more than 60 hours a week, 82% say they can't manage their workload, and two-thirds reported that expectations have risen significantly over the last five years. This data indicates that the teachers' work-life balance was largely their concern (Thyer-Jones, 2018). Compared to other neighboring nations in the Philippines, Filipino teachers specifically in public schools are carrying various responsibilities such as auxiliary positions and clerical work. Work-life balance is the major concern among them. The Sun. Star Pampanga (2023) published an essay written by an anonymous teacher describing the current conditions of Filipino teachers in the country. According to the writer, it is frequent among teachers to compromise their health due to certain factors such as high-stress levels, long work hours, and inadequate support systems. The writer stressed that despite the important roles of teachers in shaping society's future, teachers need also to prioritize their own well-being. The writer added that self-care and healthy habits must be promoted to help teachers achieve balanced and fulfilled professional lives.

The study conducted by Wessels and Wood (2019) aimed to find ways in improving experiences of well-being among teachers, findings revealed that positive emotions could improve teachers' experiences of well-being. Moreover,

McCormick (2021), a Clinical Psychologist made a statement based on his assessment that the spotlight on the role of mental health in education is expanding but historically focusing on students. According to him, teachers' well-being is a critical piece of the equation for thriving successful young people (pertaining to students). He stressed that teachers need therapy and financial assistance for it should come from the support of their respective schools.

Well-being is closely related to emotional maturity based on the findings of a few researchers (Molly and Asha, 2018; Deka, 2019). However, findings of these two aspects of individuals are limited to certain younger age groups, adolescents, and it does not offer facts for adults. Also, exploration on emotional maturity among teachers remained limited. With regards to the wellness programs for teachers, it has not been found overseas. Locally, research made by Sunga (2019) explored the quality of life among private school teachers and its relationship to their mental health proposed wellness program.

Based on the above facts, the researcher concluded that teachers need not only physical but also psychological clinical attention to address wholistically their well-being needs. Moreover, knowledge on the relationship between emotional maturity and well-being wasn't well-established for adults as well as among teachers. Finally, programs that support wellness for teachers found insufficiencies overseas and locally.

To fill all these gaps, the researcher was interested in discovering the influence of emotional maturity on the well-being of Filipino secondary public-school teachers in Santa Maria District, Schools Division of Bulacan. A wellness plan for teachers was proposed based on the findings.

Methods

The respondents of the study are among 247 secondary public-school teachers taken from 643 total population in Santa Maria District, Schools Division of Bulacan, Philippines. For better clarity, a brief description of each participating schools is presented in table 1.

Table 1.
Description of Schools Participated in the Study

Name of School	Address	Program Offered	Population (n-643)	Classification
Catmon National High School	Catmon, Santa Maria Bulacan	Junior and Senior High School	74	Large School
Fortunato F. Halili National Agricultural High School	Centro Guyong, Santa Maria, Bulacan	Junior and Senior High School	132	Mega School

Parada National High School	Parada, Sta. Maria, Bulacan	Junior and Senior High School	150	Mega School
Pulong Buhangin National High School	Km. 38 Pulong Buhangin, 3022 Santa Maria, Philippines	Junior and Senior High School	180	Mega School
Sta. Maria Agricultural High School	Bunducan Bagbaguin Sta. Maria Bulacan	Junior and Senior High School	107	Mega School

Table 1 shows the brief description of 5 schools participated in the study. A total of 4 out of the five schools are classified as "Mega School" as it meets the total population of teachers required in this category. The remaining 1 school is classified as "Large School" which has the lowest population of teachers. Nevertheless, the 5 schools participated in this study are offering Junior and Senior High School programs.

Regardless of location where teachers are rendering their service within or outside the country, it was reported that common among teachers experience fatigue, exhaustion, and tension resulting an increased risk of poorer mental health which could lead to mental health problems as compared to other professions (Sunga, 2019). Therefore, the researcher elected this venue for research for three reasons as follows:

1. The same research has been never conducted in this district;
2. Large population of teachers in this area leads to larger sample of the study essential for a quantitative research design; and
3. Fundamental rule among researchers is to conduct a study proximate or within their locality of the researcher for a greater possibility of data collection.

The sample was carefully chosen through a stratified random sampling technique to ensure that the entire population is well-represented. The respondents' sex, age, marital status, level of education, position title, and years of teaching experience were the most important consideration. As for the sex of the respondents, it was independently based on their biological attributes, not psychological ones that distinguish them from male or female. The description of age contained within the study is based on Erik Erikson's stages of psycho-social development where young adults ages 19 to 40 years old and middle adults 41 to 65 years old. Excluded from the study are ages 19 to 20 years old since it is rare to attain teaching profession at age 19 and mostly starts their career at the age of 20. Beyond 65 years old was excluded since the researcher only focused on assessing emotional maturity and well-being among young adults and middle adults. The respondent's marital status was described based on the label set by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) such as single, married, separated, and widowed. As for

education, it was labeled as holder of baccalaureate degree, master's units, master's degree, doctorate units, and doctorate degree. Position title were classified as Teacher I, II, III, Master Teacher I, and II. Finally, the years of teaching experience included in the study are at least 1 year or more and currently rendering his/her service as a teacher in public high school regardless of whether the teacher had acquired their license as professional teacher. The population of the respondents from five participating schools is presented in table 2.

Table 2.
Respondents of the Study by School

School	Sample Size (n-247)
Catmon National High School	28
Fortunato F. Halili National Agricultural High School	51
Parada National High School	58
Pulong Buhangin National High School	69
Sta. Maria Agricultural High School	41

Table 2 shows the respondents of the study by school. To ensure that the number of samples represents the 643 total population of teachers, the Sloven's formula was utilized by the researcher in .05% margin of error and 95% level of confidence where 247 teachers were determined number of samples. Pulong Buhangin National High School has the highest sample (69) followed by Parada National High School a sample of (58). Next, is Fortunato F. Halili National Agricultural High School, having a sample of (51), followed by Sta. Maria Agricultural High School having a sample of (41). The school which has the lowest number of participants is Catmon National Agricultural High School with a sample of (28).

Instrument of the Study

The researcher utilized a standardized questionnaire for data gathering. The instrument is composed of three parts namely:

1. Demographic Information Tool. This part is to collect data from the respondents' demographic profile such as sex, age, marital status, level of education, position title, and years in teaching.
2. ARVC's Scale of Emotional Maturity. This tool was developed by Cyril and Raj (2017), a standardized emotional maturity scale for high school teachers. Emotional maturity scale was arranged with 104 items, and it was administered to a sample of 100 teachers from sixth to tenth standard belonging to Government, Aided, and Matriculation schools in rural and urban areas. The statements had a scoring key in the order 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 for the options very much, much, undecided, probably, and never, respectively. The total score of AVSEM ranges between 520 and 104. Item Total Correlation should be at least 0.4 and Alpha value should be ≥0.7 for the item to be accepted. The Corrected Item Total Correlation's lowest

value indicated items that are inconsistent. They were removed step by step and hence the Alpha value increased. Thus, the removal of 44 items resulted in an increase of Cronbach's Alpha from 0.661 to 0.724. The high value of Cronbach's Alpha indicated good consistency of the items in the scale. The preliminary draft tool of the variable AVSEM was given to the experts in the field of education for obtaining their opinion. Necessary rewarding and rephrasing of the items in the scale have been carried out with the help of experts. Finally, the tool contained 60 items with 13 in emotional manifestation, 11 in emotional stability, 10 in emotional self-awareness, 13 in emotional adjustment, and 13 in emotional adequacy, respectively.

The weighted mean interval and mean description is presented as follows:

Numerical Scale	Weighted Mean Interval Scale	Mean Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Very High
4	3.41 – 4.20	High
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
2	1.81 – 2.60	Low
1	1.00 – 1.80	Very low

3. The General Well-being Scale. This tool is developed by Fahey, Insel, Roth, Fit, and Well (2005) consists of 18 questions. The respondents need to answer that best describes how they have felt and how things have been going for them during the past month. Items 1-14 were scored: 5 as the highest and 0 as the lowest with various corresponding descriptions for each question. The remaining items 15 – 18 were scored 10 as the highest and 0 as the lowest arranged into even number choices. In these four remaining items, the respondents need to weight themselves that seems closest to how they felt generally during the past month. Weighing Scale are expressed:

Not Concerned at all	10	8	6	4	2	0	**Very** Concerned

The answers chosen by the respondent will be add up all the points to find the score presented below:

Total Score	Descriptive Analysis
81 – 100	Positive well-being
76 – 80	Low positive
71 – 75	Marginal
56 – 70	Stress problem
41 – 55	Distress
26 – 40	Serious

0 – 25	Severe

The GWBS was developed in the USA in the 1970s as a brief, simple assessment of health (Dupuy 1978). It has been used in several large-scale population-based studies and has recently been validated in ethnic minority groups (e.g., Leonardson et al. 2003; Taylor et al. 2003; Poston et al. 1998), in addition to earlier validation studies.

Since the questionnaires used to assess emotional maturity and well-being of the respondents are both standardized tools, means that it went through several procedures to attain its practicality as well as its validity. However, to follow protocols on the COVID-19 pandemic where face-to-face data gathering are strictly prohibited, the tools were converted into a google form. Therefore, despite the fact that both tools are standardized, the researcher administered the questionnaires through dry run from 30 elementary teachers who are not part of the actual sample of the study. This is to ensure that the online administration of tools is user-friendly and free from error before the actual administration for data gathering.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection has two phases as follows:

Phase I - Preliminaries. Started with sending authorization letter to conduct a study to the school principal where the researcher is currently connected. This is very important procedure since the entire process of research requires ample time that may affect the regular work schedule of the researcher. The letter of the researcher approved by his school principal served as recommending approval attached to another authorization letter addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent. Once received the approved letter to the superintendent, it was photocopied and attach to a final authorization letter addressed to the principals of participating schools. At this time, the preliminaries for the data gathering were completed and ready for the actual data gathering.

Phase II - Actual Data Gathering. It started by sending a Google Form to the prospective respondents of the study. Included in the Google Form are Informed Consent of the respondents, the Demographic Information Tool, the ARVC's Scale of Emotional Maturity, and the General Well-being Scale. The gathered data from the respondents were tabulated, treated statistics through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Data Processing and Statistical Treatment

The data gathered from 247 Filipino secondary public-school teachers in Santa Maria, Bulacan were analyzed using the following:

1. Descriptive Statistics such as frequency, percentage and weighted mean are utilized in describing the respondents' demographic profile, general well-being, and emotional maturity.

2. Inferential Statistics was used such as a) t-test of independent mean to determine if there is a significant difference of emotional maturity of the respondents when grouped according to sex; b) F-test or one-way-ANOVA (analysis of variance) to determine if there is a significant difference of emotional maturity of the respondents when grouped according to age, marital status, and length of teaching experience; and c) Pearson r (Pearson Product Moment Correlation) particularly the Spearman Rho to determine if the level of emotional maturity a has significant relationship to the general well-being among public high school teachers.

Ethical Consideration

Vital to the conduct of research is the assurance that there are no violated ethical considerations throughout the process. To ensure high standards in the ethical conduct the scientific inquiry, the researcher secured the following:

1. Permission to Conduct a Study. This component of ethical consideration in conducting the study is primarily by sending an approval letter to the School Principal where the researcher is currently working, an approval letter to the school's division superintendent, and to the school principals of participating educational institutions.
2. Informed Consent. Its intent is that teacher participants can participate freely (voluntarily) with full information about what it means for them to take part, and that they give consent before they enter the study.
3. Confidentiality. The researcher assured that the information about the participants is hidden. The anonymity of personally identifiable data is very important to avoid disclosing the data to any other data by anyone else.
4. Declaration of Anti-Plagiarism. This refers to a written oath signed by the researcher, an assurance that the entire research is original where the information and statements adapted from other researchers and authors were paraphrased and properly cited.
5. Declaration of Absence of Conflict Interest. This refers to another written oath signed by the researcher, expressing that the conduct of the study is morally directed to the goal of contributing body of knowledge in the field of clinical psychology and education and for clinical and educational purposes only.

Above all the ethical standards said performed, the researcher sought the approval from the ethics committee of the educational institution to which the submission of this study is required.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data taken from the respondents of the study.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents was one of the essential considerations in exploring the problem. The respondents' demographic profile on

sex, age, marital status, education, position title and length of teaching experience were the initial aspects of teachers being assessed.

Table 3.
Respondents of the Study by Sex

Sex	Frequency (n-247)	Percentage
Male	97	39%
Female	150	61%

Table 3 shows the sex of the respondents where majority are females 150, 61% while males are 97, 39%. This suggests that female respondents predominated male respondents in this study.

Table 4.
Respondents of the Study by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21 – 25	54	22%
26 – 30	28	11%
31 – 35	67	27%
36 – 40	41	25%
41 – 45	33	13%
46 – 50	15	6%
51 – 55	4	2%
56 – 60	5	2%

Table 4 shows the age of the respondents where majority are under ages 31-35 years old comprised 67, 27%, followed by 36-40 years old covered 41, 25%. Next, are ages 21-25 years old consisted of 54, 22%, 41-45 years old composed of 33, 13%, 26-30 years old involved 28, 11%, and 46 – 50 years old consisted of 15, 6% of the total sample. Comparable samples are ages 56 – 60 years old generated 5, 2% and 51 – 55 years old consisted of 4, 2% which also the least age group sample. It can be inferred from the table that ages based on Erik Erickson's psychosocial stages of development, young adults covered the largest number or percentage while middle adults encompass fewer samples.

Table 5.
Respondents of the Study by Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency (n-247)	Percentage
Single	78	32%
Married	159	64%
Separated	4	2%
Widowed	4	2%

Table 5 shows the marital status of the respondents wherein the majority are married consisted of 159, 64% followed by single composed of 78, 32%. An equal number of separated and widowed were generated both consisting of 4, 2%.

Table 6.
Respondents of the Study by Education

Education	Frequency (n-247)	Percentage
Baccalaureate Degree	67	27%
Master's Units	83	34%
Master's Degree	53	21%
Doctorate Units	37	15%
Doctorate Degree	7	3%

Table 6 shows education of the respondents where majority earned master's units comprised 83, 34% followed by baccalaureate degree 67, 27%. Minority of the samples are master' degree holder consisted of 53, 21% followed by those who earned doctoral units comprised 37, 15%. Participants of the study who holds doctorate degree contained the least number of 7, 3% of the total of the study. This suggest that the largest number of participants are still on the processes of earning their master's degree while teachers who hold their doctorate degree are the least number of teachers involved in this study.

Table 7.
Respondents of the Study by Position Title

Position Title	Frequency (n-247)	Percentage
Teacher I	68	28
Teacher II	19	8
Teacher III	129	52
Master Teacher I	16	6
Master Teacher II	15	6

Table 7 shows the position title of the respondents where the majority are Teacher III consisted of 129, 52%, followed by Teacher I composed of 68, 28%. Few numbers of teachers participated in this study are between the position title of Teacher II which generated 19, 8% and almost parallel number between Master Teacher I consisted of 16, 6% and Master Teacher II generated 15, 6%. This suggests that teachers who are in entry-level of position title outnumbered the teachers who attained higher position title.

Table 8.
Respondents of the Study by Years of Teaching Experience

Years	Frequency (n-247)	Percentage
1 -5	116	47%
6 - 10	77	31%
11 - 15	42	17%

16 - 20	7	3%
21 - 25	5	2%

Table 8 shows the years of teaching experience of the respondents wherein the largest number of teachers had been in their vocation are 1-5 years comprised 116, 47%, followed by 6-10 years generated 77, 31%, and 11-15 years consisted of 42, 17%. Sample of teachers who had been teaching for 16-20 years are composed of 7, 3% and the least group of teachers in respect to the years in teaching experience are 21-25 years comprised of 5, 2%. This suggest that large sample of the study had been teaching within ten years while minority have earned enough years of teaching experience.

Findings

1.The demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex, majority are females (156, 61%). With regards to age, majority are under ages 31 - 35 years old (67, 27%). In terms of marital status of the respondents, married have the highest population (159, 64%). When it comes to the respondents' education, majority earned master's units (83,34%). Pertaining to the position title of the respondents, the highest population are among Teacher III (129, 52%) and 1 - 5 years of teaching experience has the largest population (116, 47%).

2. The participants indicate very high level of emotional maturity in terms of the five dimensions such as emotional manifestation (4.25), emotional stability (4.26), emotional self-awareness (4.29), emotional adjustment (4.26), and emotional adequacy (4.34). Although the teachers have high emotional maturity, some issues for each dimension are needed to be addressed. This are discomfort with criticisms, challenges, unvalued, self-acceptance, work adjustments, and professional boundaries towards colleagues and students.

3. Out of 247 public school teachers in the district, majority of the respondents are having positive well-being (171;69.93%), far from the number of teachers who's general well-being is low positive (31;12.55%) both are in normal range, a favorable well-being. However, there are smaller population of teachers who dropped into stress problem (25;10.12%), marginal (19;7.69%), and distress (1;0.40%) which needs mental health support programs.

4. The attributes of sex (p-0.077 >0.05), age (p-0.135 >0.05), marital status (p-0.167 >0.05), and education (p-0.115 >0.05) have no significant difference on the emotional maturity of the respondents while the attributes of position title (p-0.045 <0.05) and years of teaching experience (p-0.012<0.05) found differences among the respondents. Specifically, emotional maturity among Teachers I, II, and III while Master Teachers I and II remained similar. Moreover, ages 16 – 20 years of teaching experienced found the most emotionally matured secondary public-school teachers.

5. The level of emotional maturity has no significant relationship to the general well-being among Filipino public high school teachers ((p-0.518 >0.05).

6. Based on the data gathered, a wellness plan entitled "*Wellness Plan for Filipino Public-School Teachers"* was proposed based on the findings of the study. The program consists of six elements such as activities, objective, strategies, time frame, budget, and expected outcomes. In particular, the components of activities are mostly seminars on dealing with criticisms at school, overcoming personal and professional challenges of teachers rising through their unvalued soul, fostering self-acceptance for healthier relationships, and faculty development focusing on educators' professional boundaries. Counseling session/s were added to address the serious concerns of teachers.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were proffered:

1. The demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex, majority are females. With regards to age, majority are under ages 31 - 35 years old. In terms of marital status of the respondents, married have the highest population. When it comes to the respondents' education, majority earned master's units. Pertaining to the position title of the respondents, the highest population are among Teacher III and 1 - 5 years of teaching experience has the largest population.

2. The participants indicate very high level of emotional maturity. However, some issues on discomfort with criticisms, challenges, unvalued, self-acceptance, work adjustments, and professional boundaries towards colleagues and students needs to be addressed.

3. Majority of secondary public-school teachers in the district are having positive well-being, far from the number of teachers who's general well-being is low positive, both are in normal range, a favorable well-being. However, there are smaller population of teachers who dropped into stress problem, marginal, and distress which needs mental health support programs.

4. The attributes of sex, age, marital status, and education have no significant difference on the emotional maturity of the respondents while the attributes of position title and years of teaching experience found difference among the respondents. Specifically, emotional maturity among Teachers I, II, and III differed while Master Teachers I and II remained similar. Moreover, 16 – 20 years of teaching experienced found the most emotionally matured secondary public-school teachers.

5. The level of emotional maturity has no significant relationship to the general well-being among Filipino public high school teachers.

6. A wellness plan entitled "Wellness Plan for Filipino Public-School Teachers" was proposed based on the findings of the study. The program consists of six elements such as activities, objective, strategies, time frame, budget, and expected outcomes. Activities are commonly seminars and counseling session/s was added.

Recommendations

With the foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations are hereby proposed:

1. The government education sector should intensify mental health support programs specific only for teachers to address their needs and concerns.
2. A visiting mental health professional either a psychologist or counselor who are not related to the teachers' organization must be provided to have better opportunity in seeking professional assistance related to their concerns that highly affects their mental health or well-being.
3. Since physical and mental health constitutes well-being, teachers must be a support for physical activities like sports and other form of exercises, additional allowance for body care like massage and other forms of relaxations for their physical health and life-coaching symposia such as focus group discussion, seminars for their mental.
4. Further studies focusing the difference of level emotional maturity of teachers including the variables of age and education since the findings of the current study revealed opposite results on the previous studies. To bridge the gap of limited findings, the researchers may also consider the variable of position title or ranks of the teachers in exploring its difference and or relationship to their emotional maturity, as well as predictor between these variables.
5. Implementation of the proposed wellness plan for Filipino secondary public-school teachers is highly advised to test its efficacy and further offer a scientifically tested recommendations for improvement.
6. Replication of this study in different settings is recommended to validate its findings as well as to generate other aspects for enrichment of the wellness plan for teachers.

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THE STATE OF MENTAL HEALTH OF GRADUATE SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ITS EFFECTS TO THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF SANDIGAN COLLEGES, INC.

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Abstract

This study investigated the mental health status of graduate students at Sandigan Colleges, Inc. and examined its relationship with their academic performance. Although graduate education provides opportunities for professional development, career advancement, and scholarly growth, students frequently encounter competing academic, occupational, and familial responsibilities that may adversely affect their psychological well-being and academic outcomes. Anchored in the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), Role Strain Theory (Goode, 1960), and Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), the study explored the associations between psychological distress, particularly stress, anxiety, and depression, and academic performance among graduate students managing multiple responsibilities. A quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design was employed, involving 120 graduate students enrolled in the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd), Master in Public Administration (MPA), Doctor of Education (EdD), and Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration (PhD) programs. Participants were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation across the four graduate programs. Psychological distress was assessed using the 21-item Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21), while academic performance was measured through self-reported grade point averages (GPAs) and indicators of academic self-efficacy, timely completion of academic requirements, and research productivity. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, and Pearson's product–moment correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of relationships between the study variables. Statistical significance was established at an alpha level of .05. The findings revealed that 68.3% (n = 82) of the respondents were female, while 31.7% (n = 38) were male, with a mean age of 33.4 years (SD = 6.2). Most participants (88.3%) were employed full-time, primarily in educational institutions and government agencies, highlighting the substantial professional responsibilities undertaken alongside graduate studies. Psychological assessments indicated moderate levels of stress (M = 18.42, SD = 4.12) and anxiety (M = 11.20, SD = 3.65), accompanied by mild depressive symptoms (M = 10.15, SD = 3.88). Correlational analysis established a statistically significant, moderate negative relationship between overall psychological distress and academic performance (r = −.482, p < .001). Further analysis revealed significant negative correlations between academic performance and stress (r = −.512, p < .001), anxiety (r = −.425, p < .001), and depression (r = −.401, p < .001). These findings suggest that students experiencing higher levels of psychological distress tended to

report poorer academic outcomes, particularly in relation to timely completion of academic requirements, research productivity, and perceived academic competence. The study concludes that psychological distress is significantly associated with academic performance among graduate students, particularly those simultaneously fulfilling professional, familial, and academic obligations. The findings underscore the importance of integrating mental health support into graduate education policies and institutional student development programs. Accordingly, Sandigan Colleges, Inc. is encouraged to strengthen its graduate student support mechanisms through flexible academic arrangements, accessible mental health and counseling services, structured research mentorship, faculty-guided academic advising, and comprehensive wellness initiatives. These interventions may contribute to improved psychological well-being, academic engagement, research productivity, and successful program completion. Furthermore, the study provides an empirical foundation for developing institutionally responsive mental health policies and student-centered academic support strategies that recognize the distinctive circumstances of working graduate students.

Keywords: Academic performance, Anxiety, Depression, Graduate education, Graduate students, Mental health

Introduction

Graduate education serves as a major milestone for professional advancement and institutional leadership. However, higher education studies globally and nationally highlight an increasing mental health crisis among post-graduate students (Bekkouche et al., 2022; Evans et al., 2018). Graduate students—often balancing full-time employment, family commitments, financial burdens, and intensive academic research—face distinct psychological stressors compared to undergraduate cohorts (Wyatt & Oswalt, 2013). Research indicates that post-graduate populations experience significantly higher rates of anxiety and depressive symptoms than the general population, primarily driven by systemic academic pressure, role conflict, and isolation (Bekkouche et al., 2022; Evans et al., 2018).

At Sandigan Colleges, Inc., a private Higher Education Institution recognized by the Philippine Government through the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education – Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (MBHTE-BARMM), the graduate school body predominantly consists of adult learners enrolled in advanced degree programs, such as the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd), Master in Public Administration (MPA), Doctor of Education (EdD) and Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration (PhD). Because many of these students serve as educators, public servants, and full-time professionals, they experience double-burden or triple-burden pressures—navigating the simultaneous demands of occupational responsibilities, family caregiving, and rigorous scholarly output. The psychological strain associated with these intersecting roles can manifest as chronic stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and depressive symptoms, which in turn adversely affect cognitive focus, task productivity, and overall academic outputs (Bekkouche et al., 2022; Corpuz,

2023). In local educational contexts across the Philippines, these pressures are often compounded by institutional challenges, economic shifts, and resource constraints (Corpuz, 2023; Serrano & Reyes, 2022).

While general studies exist regarding undergraduate mental health and student well-being in the Philippines (Corpuz, 2023; Serrano & Reyes, 2022), empirical data specifically focusing on graduate students in regional higher education institutions remain limited. Understanding how specific mental health indicators correlate with academic performance is vital for establishing targeted counseling services, localized support systems, and proactive administrative policy frameworks tailored to post-graduate adult learners.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of graduate school students at Sandigan Colleges, Inc. (age, sex, program enrolled, employment status)?
2. What is the current state of mental health among graduate students in terms of:
    - Stress
    - Anxiety
    - Depression
3. What is the level of self-reported academic performance among the participants?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the mental health state of graduate school students and their academic performance?

Methods

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to evaluate the intensity of psychological distress indicators and measure their association with academic performance metrics.

Context and Participants

The study was conducted at Sandigan Colleges, Inc., focusing on post-graduate cohorts. A total of N = 120 graduate students were selected through stratified random sampling from the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd), Master in Public Administration (MPA), Doctor of Education (EdD) and Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration (PhD) programs.

Research Instruments

1. **Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21):** A validated 21-item psychometric instrument measuring emotional distress across three domains (7 items per subscale rated on a 4-point Likert scale from 0 = *Did not apply to me at all* to 3 = *Applied to me very much or most of the time*). Standard multiplication factors of 2 were applied to calculate full-scale scores.
2. **Academic Performance Index (API):** Evaluated through self-reported Grade Point Average (GPA) for the preceding semester combined with a 5-item Likert scale measuring academic self-efficacy, timely task completion, and research productivity.

Data Analysis Procedure

Descriptive statistical measures, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were employed to summarize and analyze the respondents' demographic characteristics and Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21) scores. To examine the relationships between the study variables and test the corresponding hypotheses, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was utilized, with the level of statistical significance set at $\alpha = .05$.

Results

Demographic Profile

Of the 120 respondents who participated in the study, 68% ($n = 82$) were female, while the remaining 32% ($n = 38$) were male. The respondents had a mean age of 33.4 years ($SD = 6.2$). Furthermore, a substantial proportion (88.3%) were engaged in full-time employment while pursuing their studies, with the majority working as teachers in public and private educational institutions or as personnel in local government offices.

State of Mental Health (DASS-21 Scores)

Domain	Mean Score (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Severity Severity Category
Stress	18.42	4.12	Moderate
Anxiety	11.20	3.65	Moderate
Depression	10.15	3.88	Mild

- **Stress:** Participants exhibited elevated stress scores, driven largely by indicators measuring feelings of being overwhelmed, difficulty relaxing, and over-reacting to unexpected academic hurdles.
- **Anxiety:** Moderate anxiety was observed, predominantly linked to performance evaluations, comprehensive examinations, and research defense deadlines.
- **Depression:** Mild depressive symptoms were reported, characterized by diminished enthusiasm, fatigue, and feelings of inadequacy regarding thesis progression.

Correlation Between Mental Health and Academic Performance

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant inverse relationship between overall psychological distress (composite DASS-21) and academic performance indicators.

Pair Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value	Interpretation
Stress vs. Academic Performance	-.512	< .001	Statistically Significant (Moderate Negative)
Anxiety vs. Academic Performance	-.425	< .001	Statistically Significant (Moderate Negative)
Depression vs. Academic Performance	-.401	< .001	Statistically Significant (Moderate Negative)
Overall Composite Distress vs. Performance	-.482	< .001	Statistically Significant (Moderate Negative)

Higher levels of psychological distress systematically correlated with lower academic efficiency, delayed assignment submissions, reduced research output, and lower self-rated academic satisfaction.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide meaningful insights into the mental health challenges experienced by graduate students at Sandigan Colleges, Inc., particularly those who simultaneously fulfill academic, professional, and personal responsibilities. The results suggest that the demands associated with multiple role commitments may contribute to psychological distress, potentially affecting students' academic engagement, productivity, and overall educational experiences. These findings underscore the importance of understanding graduate students' mental health within the broader context of their socioeconomic circumstances, employment obligations, and academic expectations.

Notably, the study revealed a moderate negative correlation between mental health distress and academic performance ($r = -.482$), suggesting that higher levels of psychological distress were associated with lower levels of academic performance. This relationship highlights the potential academic implications of depression, anxiety, and stress among graduate students. The findings are consistent with the broader literature emphasizing the relationship between psychological well-being and academic functioning in higher education (Allen et al., 2022; Evans et al., 2018). However, because the study employed a correlational approach, the observed relationship should not be interpreted as evidence that psychological distress directly causes diminished academic performance.

Three major themes emerge from the findings and warrant further consideration.

Multiple Role Commitments, Role Overload, and Psychological Stress

One of the most significant contextual findings is that 88.3% of the respondents were employed full-time while pursuing graduate education. This demographic characteristic suggests that most participants were navigating the simultaneous demands of professional employment and advanced academic studies, often alongside family and community responsibilities.

The convergence of these responsibilities may expose graduate students to role overload, a condition in which competing obligations exceed an individual's available time, energy, and psychological resources. For working graduate students, professional responsibilities may include extensive workloads, administrative duties, workplace performance expectations, and employment-related deadlines. These obligations must be balanced against the academic requirements of graduate education, including coursework, scholarly readings, research activities, examinations, and thesis preparation.

Such competing demands may contribute to cognitive fatigue, emotional exhaustion, reduced opportunities for independent study, and difficulties sustaining academic motivation. Students who consistently allocate substantial portions of their time to professional responsibilities may experience limited opportunities for rest, reflection, and meaningful engagement with graduate-level academic work.

From the perspective of adult learning, these findings emphasize that graduate students should not be viewed exclusively as learners whose primary responsibility is academic participation. Rather, they represent a population whose educational experiences are closely intertwined with professional commitments, financial considerations, and personal responsibilities.

Although the present study did not establish a direct causal relationship between employment-related role overload and psychological distress, the high proportion of employed respondents provides an important contextual basis for understanding the mental health challenges encountered by this student population.

Research-Related Anxiety and Academic Performance Pressures

Another important consideration concerns the psychological demands associated with graduate-level research and other high-stakes academic requirements. Thesis proposal development, comprehensive examinations, research implementation, and final thesis defense represent significant milestones in graduate education. These activities require advanced analytical abilities, independent scholarship, sustained intellectual engagement, and the capacity to respond constructively to academic evaluation.

For graduate students who are simultaneously employed, these requirements may generate additional psychological pressure because research-related responsibilities often extend beyond regularly scheduled classes and require considerable independent work.

Anxiety associated with research activities may arise from several sources, including uncertainty regarding research methodology, difficulties identifying appropriate theoretical frameworks, concerns about academic writing proficiency, limited access to research resources, and apprehension about evaluations conducted by thesis advisers and examination panels.

Furthermore, students may experience heightened performance anxiety when academic milestones are perceived as having substantial consequences for degree completion, professional advancement, or personal expectations.

These circumstances suggest that research-related anxiety should be considered an important area of concern in graduate student support systems. Nevertheless, unless the study specifically measured psychological distress across different academic milestones, the findings cannot establish that anxiety increased during thesis proposal preparation or comprehensive examinations. Such patterns would require additional longitudinal or qualitative investigation.

The observed negative association between psychological distress and academic performance reinforces the importance of providing graduate students with structured academic guidance, accessible research assistance, and opportunities to develop confidence in their scholarly capabilities.

Institutional Responsiveness to the Needs of Adult and Working Learners

The findings also highlight the importance of institutional policies and academic support systems that recognize the distinctive characteristics of graduate students, particularly those classified as adult or non-traditional learners.

Unlike many undergraduate students, working graduate students frequently pursue advanced education while maintaining established professional careers and fulfilling significant personal obligations. Consequently, conventional academic structures characterized by rigid schedules, limited consultation opportunities, and highly concentrated assessment requirements may create additional challenges for this population.

Graduate education institutions therefore have an important role in developing learning environments that promote academic rigor while remaining responsive to the circumstances of adult learners.

Institutional responsiveness may involve the adoption of flexible learning arrangements, expanded access to academic advising, strengthened faculty-student communication, and the integration of psychological well-being initiatives into graduate student services.

Moreover, institutional support should extend beyond addressing psychological distress after it becomes apparent. A more comprehensive approach would incorporate preventive measures that promote emotional resilience, effective time management, academic self-efficacy, and a sense of belonging within the graduate school community.

In this context, mental health support should be understood not merely as an auxiliary student service but as an integral component of institutional efforts to improve student engagement, academic persistence, and successful degree completion.

The findings suggest that Sandigan Colleges, Inc. may benefit from adopting a more holistic and student-centered framework for graduate education, one that acknowledges the interconnected nature of academic achievement, psychological well-being, and professional responsibilities.

Conclusions

The study concludes that psychological distress represents an important concern among graduate students at Sandigan Colleges, Inc., particularly within a student population predominantly composed of working professionals.

The moderate negative correlation between mental health distress and academic performance ($r = -.482$) indicates that students reporting greater psychological distress tended to demonstrate lower academic performance. This

finding provides empirical support for the importance of considering mental health as a relevant factor in understanding graduate students' academic experiences.

Furthermore, the predominance of full-time employment among respondents highlights the need to examine graduate education within the context of competing professional and academic responsibilities. Although employment status alone does not establish the presence of role overload, the combination of advanced academic requirements and occupational commitments may create circumstances that increase students' vulnerability to stress and emotional exhaustion.

The findings also underscore the potential importance of research-related academic pressures, particularly during demanding stages of graduate education. Addressing these challenges requires institutional strategies that strengthen academic preparedness, facilitate access to appropriate support services, and encourage the development of effective coping mechanisms.

Ultimately, the study emphasizes that graduate student success should not be assessed solely through academic performance indicators. It should also be understood in relation to the institutional conditions, psychological resources, and support mechanisms that enable students to sustain meaningful participation in graduate education.

Accordingly, Sandigan Colleges, Inc. is encouraged to adopt a comprehensive approach to graduate student development that integrates academic flexibility, research mentorship, and accessible mental health support.

Institutional Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following institutional interventions are recommended to strengthen graduate student well-being and support academic success at Sandigan Colleges, Inc.:

1. Institutionalization of Strengthened Flexible and Responsive Academic Scheduling

Sandigan Colleges, Inc. should consider strengthening flexible learning arrangements specifically designed to accommodate graduate students who maintain full-time employment.

These arrangements may include pure modular course delivery, hybrid learning environments, asynchronous instructional activities, and strategically scheduled weekend or evening classes. Where academically appropriate, the institution may also introduce reasonable flexibility in submission deadlines, particularly for students experiencing documented professional or personal circumstances that significantly affect their academic participation. Such measures

should be implemented without compromising academic standards, learning outcomes, or the integrity of graduate-level assessments.

A structured academic scheduling framework that recognizes the realities of working professionals may help reduce scheduling conflicts, improve student participation, and create more manageable conditions for balancing employment and graduate education.

2. Establishment of Accessible Mental Health and Psychological Support Services

The institution should consider establishing a graduate student mental health support program that provides accessible, confidential, and professionally appropriate psychological assistance.

Recognizing the limited availability of working students during conventional office hours, the program may incorporate virtual consultations, scheduled weekend counseling sessions, and referral arrangements with qualified mental health professionals.

Mental health awareness activities may also be integrated into graduate student orientations, academic seminars, and professional development programs.

These initiatives should emphasize stress management, emotional regulation, psychological resilience, and early recognition of symptoms associated with depression, anxiety, and stress. Where institutional resources are limited, partnerships with licensed mental health practitioners or established psychological service providers may offer a practical approach to expanding access to appropriate support.

Importantly, mental health services should operate within clearly established confidentiality, professional ethics, and referral protocols to safeguard students' privacy and well-being.

3. Strengthening of Thesis Writing, Research Mentorship, and Academic Support Programs

Sandigan Colleges, Inc. should establish structured research support initiatives designed to assist graduate students throughout the various stages of thesis and dissertation preparation. These initiatives may include regular research methodology workshops, academic writing clinics, statistical analysis consultations, thesis proposal development sessions, and scheduled research progress monitoring.

The institution may also organize peer research support groups and mentorship circles that encourage collaborative learning, constructive feedback, and the exchange of research experiences. Such initiatives may help reduce feelings of academic isolation, improve students' confidence in conducting independent

research, and provide opportunities to address research-related difficulties before they become substantial barriers to academic progress.

Additionally, clearer research timelines, transparent assessment criteria, and consistent communication between students and thesis advisers may help minimize uncertainty surrounding major academic requirements.

4. Development of a Graduate Student Wellness and Academic Success Program

Beyond individual interventions, the institution should consider developing an integrated Graduate Student Wellness and Academic Success Program that combines academic assistance, psychological well-being initiatives, and professional development support.

The program may include workshops on time management, work-study-life balance, stress reduction, academic motivation, and effective learning strategies for adult students. Regular wellness activities and student engagement initiatives may also be organized to strengthen interpersonal connections and promote a supportive graduate school environment.

By integrating these activities into an institutional framework, Sandigan Colleges, Inc. may establish a more coordinated approach to addressing the academic and psychological needs of its graduate student population.

5. Implementation of Periodic Mental Health and Academic Experience Assessments

The institution should consider conducting periodic assessments of graduate students' psychological well-being, perceived academic stressors, and satisfaction with institutional support services.

Validated screening instruments, including the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21), may be used to monitor patterns of psychological distress at the group level, provided that appropriate ethical safeguards and confidentiality measures are observed. Such assessments should be conducted for supportive and preventive purposes rather than as a basis for academic sanctions or discriminatory decisions.

Findings from these assessments may inform institutional planning, identify emerging student support needs, and guide the evaluation of existing academic and wellness initiatives. Longitudinal monitoring may also provide a more comprehensive understanding of how psychological well-being and academic experiences change throughout graduate students' progression toward degree completion.

6. Strengthening Faculty Awareness and Student-Centered Academic Advising

Faculty members, program coordinators, and thesis advisers should be encouraged to adopt advising practices that recognize the distinctive circumstances of adult and working graduate students.

Professional development activities may be conducted to strengthen faculty awareness of graduate student mental health concerns, appropriate referral procedures, supportive communication strategies, and inclusive teaching practices. Academic advisers should also be encouraged to maintain regular communication with students regarding academic progress, anticipated challenges, and available institutional resources.

A proactive advising system may help identify academic difficulties at an earlier stage and facilitate timely interventions that support student persistence and successful program completion.

Implications for Institutional Policy and Future Research

The findings carry important implications for graduate education policy, particularly in institutions serving substantial populations of working professionals.

At the institutional level, the results suggest that mental health considerations should be incorporated into academic planning, student development initiatives, and quality assurance processes. Institutional effectiveness may be strengthened when policies concerning instructional delivery, academic advising, research supervision, and student services are informed by a comprehensive understanding of graduate students' psychological and professional circumstances.

From a research perspective, future studies should examine the relationships among employment demands, perceived role overload, psychological distress, coping strategies, institutional support, and academic performance using more comprehensive analytical approaches.

Qualitative investigations may provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of working graduate students, particularly their perceptions of academic pressure, research-related anxiety, and the challenges of balancing multiple responsibilities. Longitudinal research may also help clarify the direction and development of the relationship between psychological distress and academic performance over time.

Furthermore, future researchers may consider examining whether variables such as employment sector, weekly working hours, family responsibilities, financial pressures, academic workload, and perceived

institutional support influence the strength of the relationship between mental health and academic outcomes.

In conclusion, the findings reinforce the importance of promoting a graduate education environment in which academic excellence and psychological well-being are treated as complementary institutional priorities. By implementing responsive academic policies, strengthening research support systems, and expanding access to mental health resources, Sandigan Colleges, Inc. can work toward creating a more inclusive, supportive, and sustainable learning environment for its graduate students.

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DIGITAL PROPAGANDA IN THE 2025 MIDTERM ELECTIONS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF SELECTED ONLINE POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

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Abstract

This study systematically examined the characteristics, thematic patterns, rhetorical strategies, and dissemination mechanisms of digital political propaganda across major social media platforms during the 2025 Philippine midterm elections. Against the backdrop of an increasingly digitalized political communication environment, social media platforms have become influential spaces for electoral discourse, political persuasion, and voter mobilization. However, their algorithm-driven architectures also facilitate the rapid circulation of politically manipulative content, coordinated disinformation, and emotionally charged narratives. Drawing on the Networked Disinformation Framework, Algorithmic Media Affordances, Framing Theory, and Affective Polarization, this study investigated how political candidates, partisan influencers, and interconnected digital networks employed platform-specific communication strategies to construct political narratives, influence public perceptions, and shape electoral discourse. Employing a quantitative content analysis design, the study examined 1,200 unique social media posts collected from Facebook (n = 480), TikTok (n = 360), X (n = 180), and YouTube (n = 180) during the campaign observation period of February 11 to May 12, 2025. Stratified random sampling was utilized to ensure representation across three categories of content sources: official political accounts (n = 400), hyper-partisan and political influencer accounts (n = 500), and third-party or public discussion spaces (n = 300). Each post served as the primary unit of analysis and was systematically coded according to its content format, dominant rhetorical appeal, propaganda technique, and observable indicators of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). Descriptive statistical procedures, including frequency distributions and percentage analyses, were employed to identify recurring patterns and compare the prevalence of communication strategies across platforms and account categories. The findings revealed that short-form videos lasting fewer than 60 seconds constituted the most prevalent content format, accounting for 48.3% (n = 580) of the analyzed posts. TikTok demonstrated the highest concentration of short-form video content, representing 77.8% of its platform-specific sample. Rhetorical analysis indicated that adversarial and personality-centered communication strategies predominated, with negative campaigning and attack-oriented appeals accounting for 38.5% of posts, followed by personalistic and charisma-based appeals (24.8%), policy-oriented messaging (21.3%), and populist or anti-establishment rhetoric (15.4%). Among the identified propaganda techniques, character assassination and political mudslinging emerged as the most frequently observed category (34.2%), followed by historical and political revisionism (22.8%), indicators of astroturfing

and coordinated messaging (16.5%), and political victimhood narratives (14.1%). Furthermore, potential GenAI-generated or manipulated elements were identified in 18.6% (n = 223) of the sampled content. Within this subset, synthetic images accounted for 42.6%, followed by voice cloning and audio deepfakes (26.5%), automated text generation (22.4%), and AI-generated videos (8.5%). An assessment of electoral transparency practices further indicated that 88.2% of the top-tier candidates included in the study complied with the social media account registration requirements prescribed under Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Resolution No. 11064. Nevertheless, 91.5% of the identified GenAI-related propaganda content originated from unregistered third-party channels, micro-influencers, and unofficial political advocacy pages, suggesting potential limitations in regulatory mechanisms primarily directed toward officially declared campaign accounts. The study concludes that digital propaganda during the 2025 Philippine midterm elections was characterized by the prominence of short-form audiovisual content, adversarial political framing, personality-driven narratives, and the emerging use of synthetic media technologies. The substantial presence of potentially manipulative content outside officially registered political communication channels highlights the challenges of ensuring transparency and accountability within decentralized, algorithmically mediated electoral environments. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening digital electoral governance through enhanced platform accountability, transparent political advertising practices, reliable synthetic media detection and authentication mechanisms, and coordinated cross-platform monitoring. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the need for comprehensive digital and media literacy initiatives that equip voters with the critical competencies necessary to recognize manipulative political narratives and evaluate the credibility of online electoral information. By providing empirical evidence on the characteristics and distribution of digital propaganda, this research contributes to the broader discourse on political communication, electoral integrity, platform governance, and democratic resilience in the Philippines.

Keywords: Affective polarization, Digital disinformation, Digital propaganda, Electoral integrity, Social media

Introduction

The rapid transformation of communication ecosystems worldwide has fundamentally altered the mechanics of democratic processes. Nowhere is this evolution more evident than in the Philippines, frequently characterized in media studies as a critical testing ground or "patient zero" for global digital disinformation strategies (Arugay, 2024). The 2025 Philippine midterm elections marked a pivotal shift in the country's political campaign landscape, establishing social media and algorithmic platforms as the primary arena for political discourse, voter mobilization, and candidate messaging. As electoral politics transitioned away from traditional broadcast outlets, digital propaganda emerged as a dominant influence in shaping voter perception and political behavior (Schipper, 2025).

Understanding the dynamics of contemporary digital propaganda requires grounding in theoretical frameworks of political communication. Agenda-setting theory posits that media platforms do not tell voters what to think, but rather what to think *about* (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). In the high-velocity environment of digital media, social platforms selectively amplify tailored political narratives, directing public attention toward specific issue domains or targeted attacks. Furthermore, framing theory explains how campaign strategists' structure political messages to emphasize select aspects of reality, invoking particular emotional or cognitive responses in target audiences (Entman, 1993). In modern election cycles, these frameworks intersect with networked influence strategies, where political narratives rely less on programmatic policy alignment and more on establishing hyper-personalized emotional resonance (Ong & Cabañes, 2018).

Despite an expanding body of research on digital campaigning, significant gaps remain regarding how propaganda narratives adapt across heterogeneous digital platforms during specific election cycles. While previous literature has addressed campaign strategies on legacy platforms such as Facebook, there is limited empirical data examining the cross-platform dynamics that integrate short-form video content—such as TikTok and YouTube Shorts—with text- and image-centric networks like X (formerly Twitter). Moreover, the differential impact of these multi-platform campaigns on distinct demographic cohorts, particularly youth voters and the contrast between urban and rural electorates, remains underexplored in Southeast Asian electoral scholarship.

To address these gaps, this study investigates the nature, recurring themes, and deployment strategies of digital propaganda utilized by political candidates and parties across major social media platforms—Facebook, X, TikTok, and YouTube—during the peak period of the 2025 Philippine midterm elections (January to May 2025). Employing a systematic content analysis methodology, this research analyzes a curated sample of campaign materials, organic posts, and political advertisements. Specifically, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the predominant themes (e.g., emotional appeals, disinformation, image-building, and attack campaigns), tone, and engagement levels characteristic of digital propaganda across major platforms during the 2025 elections?
2. How do political propaganda narratives and framing techniques vary across distinct social media platforms and target demographics, specifically youth voters and urban versus rural populations?
3. To what extent did digital propaganda campaigns affect political polarization, candidate visibility, and the circulation of manipulative content during the midterm election cycle?

Theoretical Framework

This study integrates three complementary theoretical frameworks to analyze the structural production, technological delivery, and cognitive reception of digital propaganda in the 2025 Philippine midterm elections: the Networked

Disinformation Framework (Ong & Cabañes, 2018), Algorithmic Media Affordances (Bucher & Helmond, 2018), and Framing Theory paired with Affective Polarization (Entman, 1993; Iyengar et al., 2019).

At the structural level, the study draws on Ong and Cabañes' (2018) Networked Disinformation Framework to conceptualize digital propaganda as a professionalized, multi-tiered industry rather than a collection of isolated posts. This framework explains how political candidates, strategists, and public relations firms coordinate hierarchies of paid influencers, micro-influencers, and fake account operators to execute cross-platform campaigns. By applying this model, the research examines how campaign messaging, candidate image-building, and organized attack operations during the 2025 elections are systematically planned and distributed across diverse media environments.

To address how platform design shapes messaging, the study incorporates Bucher and Helmond's (2018) model of Algorithmic Media Affordances. This framework posits that platform-specific technical features—such as short-form video recommendations on TikTok and YouTube, reaction metrics on Facebook, and conversational threads on X—dictate how political content is packaged, algorithmically amplified, and consumed. Paired with dual-process models of cognition, this approach explains how low-friction affordances encourage heuristic, emotional processing over critical evaluation, rendering specific demographics, particularly youth voters, highly susceptible to viral disinformation and low-effort cognitive manipulation.

Finally, at the socio-psychological level, the study integrates Entman's (1993) Framing Theory alongside Iyengar et al.'s (2019) concept of Affective Polarization. Framing theory provides the analytical apparatus to categorize campaign content into distinct thematic dimensions—such as emotional appeals, disinformation, image-building, and attack campaigns—by highlighting how strategists selectively emphasize specific aspects of political reality. When deployed across networked environments, these framed narratives generate affective polarization, fostering deep-seated in-group loyalty and out-group hostility among voters. This component accounts for the societal impact of digital campaigns, specifically how manipulative messaging blurs the line between legitimate democratic discourse and hostility across urban and rural voter demographics.

Together, these three theoretical lenses establish a continuous link between the institutional actors who engineer political propaganda, the platform mechanics that dictate its viral delivery, and the cognitive and emotional responses that drive voter polarization in contemporary Philippine democracy.

Literature Review

The rapid digital transformation of modern democracies has fundamentally reconfigured political campaigns, turning social media platforms into the primary battlegrounds for public discourse, voter persuasion, and electoral mobilization. Nowhere is this dynamic more pronounced than in the Philippines, an

environment frequently identified by political scientists and media scholars as a critical laboratory for networked disinformation and digital persuasion strategies (Arugay, 2024; Ong & Cabañes, 2018). The 2025 Philippine midterm elections marked a significant watershed in this ongoing evolution, characterized by a transition from traditional broadcast-centric campaigning to a multi-platform digital propaganda apparatus across Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, and YouTube. To understand the nature, themes, and societal consequences of these campaign strategies, this review synthesizes literature across five core themes: the structural production of digital disinformation, platform mechanics and affordances, framing tactics and emotional appeals, socio-psychological voter processing, and regulatory or civil society interventions.

The Structural Production of Digital Disinformation

Contemporary scholarship establishes that online propaganda in the Philippines does not emerge spontaneously; rather, it operates as an organized, professionalized, and covert industry. In their foundational study, Ong and Cabañes (2018) detail how political campaigns deploy a "networked disinformation" hierarchy. This framework connects high-level public relations and advertising executives with digital influencers, community managers, and paid operators of fake accounts. This commercialized infrastructure relies on political campaign budgets to orchestrate coordinated cross-platform messages disguised as organic public sentiment.

Building upon this structural perspective, Arugay (2024) demonstrates how digital propaganda accelerates autocratization by systematically eroding democratic norms, delegitimizing political opposition, and entrenching political dynasties. Ressa (2022) further contextualizes these dynamics within the broader political economy of Big Tech, arguing that profit-driven algorithms inherently incentivize toxic, high-arousal content that fuels campaign factories. By the 2025 midterm election cycle, this ecosystem was further transformed by emerging technologies. Schipper (2025) observes that generative artificial intelligence and deepfake media drastically lowered the production costs of deceptive content, allowing campaign operatives to generate highly realistic audio-visual propaganda at scale.

Platform Mechanics and Media Affordances

Understanding why digital propaganda varies across channels requires examining platform architecture. Bucher and Helmond (2018) emphasize that social media "affordances"—the functional properties and design features of digital spaces—shape how users create, distribute, and process content. On high-speed, visual-centric platforms like TikTok, Suarez and Tiu (2023) find that algorithms favor short-form videos that leverage "algorithmic intimacy." This design allows political actors and micro-influencers to deliver low-friction persuasion embedded in everyday entertainment, making it particularly potent among youth demographics.

In contrast, long-form platforms like YouTube serve a different function within the political ecosystem. Sinpeng and Tapsell (2021) show that YouTube acts as an alternative information infrastructure in Southeast Asia, where political commentators use extended vlogs to construct alternative historical narratives and conduct sustained candidate image-building outside traditional journalistic oversight. The systemic spread of these narratives across platforms is accelerated by underlying social network dynamics; as Vosoughi et al. (2018) establish empirically, false narratives spread significantly faster, deeper, and more broadly than true information because they evoke novel emotional reactions, such as surprise and outrage.

Framing Tactics, Emotional Appeals, and Content Themes

To analyze how campaign messaging is structured, researchers rely on classic and modern communication models. Entman's (1993) Framing Theory provides the analytical basis for examining how political strategists selectively emphasize specific aspects of reality to construct desired problem definitions and moral evaluations. In digital campaign materials, these frames are categorized using Wardle and Derakhshan's (2017) typology of information disorder, which distinguishes between *misinformation* (unintentional error), *disinformation* (deliberate false content designed to harm), and *malinformation* (genuine information weaponized out of context).

In the Philippine context, these frames heavily rely on affective resonance over policy substance. Mendoza and Curato (2022) argue that populist campaigns deploy emotional framing—tapping into collective nostalgia, hope, and social resentment—to establish deep personal bonds with voters. When candidate image-building is paired with character attacks, it draws on well-documented negative campaign dynamics. Lau and Rovner (2009) demonstrate that while negative campaigning effectively captures voter attention and reinforces partisan group identity, it simultaneously depresses overall public trust in democratic institutions and political processes.

Socio-Psychological Processing and Voter Behavior

The reception and impact of digital propaganda are heavily dictated by cognitive processing mechanisms and existing social divisions. Pennycook and Rand (2021) explain that individuals succumb to online misinformation not necessarily due to a lack of intelligence, but because they rely on fast, intuitive processing rather than analytical thinking. Features like high engagement counts and repetitive platform displays induce the "illusory truth effect," leading voters to accept false claims as credible. Furthermore, Stroud (2011) highlights how political voters engage in selective exposure, intentionally seeking out partisan media that aligns with their predispositions while platform algorithms automate this process to enclose users in filter bubbles.

When deployed across a polarized electorate, these cognitive vulnerabilities fuel what Iyengar et al. (2019) define as *affective polarization*—the phenomenon where partisans hold increasingly hostile attitudes toward opposing political

groups. In the Philippines, these divisions manifest differently across demographic lines. Examining voter engagement outside major urban centers, the Frontiers in Political Science Research Group (2026) demonstrates that regional voters display distinct vulnerabilities to electoral misinformation based on age, political tenure, and urban-versus-rural media access. This finding confirms that digital propaganda does not affect all voters uniformly, but interacts directly with local demographic and geographic contexts.

Governance, Regulation, and Democratic Resilience

The pervasive reach of digital propaganda during the 2025 election highlighted significant regulatory challenges and institutional deficits. Arugay (2022) notes that electoral frameworks, such as those governed by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), struggle to keep pace with digital campaign mechanics, particularly regarding candidate ad-spending disclosures, algorithmic manipulation, and covert troll labor. Institutional efforts to address these gaps have increasingly relied on multi-stakeholder initiatives; the Department of Information and Communications Technology [DICT] (2025) outlines state-level "Digital Bayanihan" policies designed to coordinate inter-agency responses against deepfakes, cyber threats, and coordinated troll activity during the 2025 polls.

However, civil society and journalistic interventions face operational limitations. Tandoc (2021) observes that while independent fact-checking initiatives are vital for correcting specific factual errors, their efficacy is often constrained in highly polarized environments where identity and group alignment override objective evidence. Consequently, broader civil society models emphasize whole-of-society frameworks. As documented by the Media Support Initiatives Group (2023), effective counter-disinformation strategies require integrating real-time fact-checking coalitions (e.g., *FactsFirstPH*) with legal defense networks, algorithmic accountability research, and long-term voter media literacy programs. Synthesizing this body of literature reveals that digital propaganda in the 2025 Philippine midterm elections was the product of a complex interaction between organized campaign industries, platform affordances, affective framing, and cognitive heuristics. While digital channels expanded candidate visibility and enabled rapid voter mobilization, they simultaneously deepened affective polarization and facilitated the spread of manipulative content. Addressing these systemic challenges requires moving beyond isolated content moderation toward comprehensive regulatory reform, robust media literacy initiatives, and multi-stakeholder defense mechanisms designed to safeguard democratic processes in the digital age.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative content analysis approach, utilizing a stratified random sampling technique to systematically examine political discourse and campaign-related communication across major social media platforms. The analysis covered the official 90-day election campaign period, from February 11 to May 12, 2025, providing a defined timeframe for assessing patterns of political engagement, messaging strategies, and online interactions.

The study focused on publicly accessible social media content published on four widely used digital platforms: Facebook, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube. These platforms were selected to capture diverse forms of political communication, including text-based discussions, visual narratives, short-form videos, and interactive public engagement.

To ensure adequate representation of different sources of political communication, the sampling framework was organized into three distinct strata based on the nature and political affiliations of the content producers:

1. Official Political Accounts (n = 400). This category comprised publicly accessible social media posts originating from verified or identifiable accounts maintained by registered political candidates and party-list organizations. These posts represented formal campaign communications, official political statements, and candidate-driven messaging.
2. Hyper-Partisan and Political Influencer Accounts (n = 500). This stratum included content published by unofficial political advocacy pages, independent political vloggers, social media influencers, and community-based accounts demonstrating explicit support for particular candidates, political parties, or electoral coalitions. These sources were examined to capture partisan narratives and informal political messaging.
3. Third-Party and Public Discussion Spaces (n = 300). This category encompassed highly engaged public posts, comment discussions, and community-generated threads associated with election-related topics and political hashtags. These materials provided insights into broader public participation, political conversations, and user-generated electoral discourse.

A total of 1,200 unique social media post units (N = 1,200) constituted the final analytical sample. Stratification enabled the systematic examination of political communication across different actor categories while facilitating comparative analysis of content characteristics, messaging patterns, and engagement dynamics.

The selected posts served as the primary units of analysis, providing a structured dataset for identifying and quantifying recurring themes, communication strategies, and patterns of political discourse throughout the designated campaign period.

Results

The analysis revealed distinct patterns in the distribution and presentation of election-related political content across the four social media platforms. Short-form video emerged as the most prevalent communication format, highlighting the growing prominence of visually engaging, rapidly consumable media in contemporary digital political campaigning.

Of the 1,200 social media posts examined, **580 (48.3%)** consisted of short-form videos lasting less than 60 seconds. Static memes and images represented the second-largest category, accounting for **275 posts (22.9%)**, followed by text-based posts and replicated textual content (11.7%), long-form videos and livestreams (10.4%), and infographics or policy-oriented visual materials (6.7%). Although short-form videos represented slightly less than half of the overall sample, their substantial prevalence underscores the central role of audiovisual communication in the dissemination of election-related narratives.

Table 1.
Distribution of Political Content by Social Media Platform and Content Format

Content Format	Facebook (n = 480)	TikTok (n = 360)	X (n = 180)	YouTube (n = 180)	Total (N = 1,200)	Percentage (%)
Short-Form Video (<60 seconds)	185	280	35	80	580	48.3
Static Memes and Images	160	30	75	10	275	22.9
Text-Based Posts and Copypasta	70	10	55	5	140	11.7
Long-Form Videos and Livestreams	35	15	0	75	125	10.4
Infographics and Policy Graphics	30	25	15	10	80	6.7
Total	**480**	**360**	**180**	**180**	**1,200**	**100.0**

The platform-specific distribution demonstrated notable differences in communication formats. TikTok exhibited the strongest concentration of short-form video content, with 280 of its 360 sampled posts (77.8%) falling within this

category. Facebook demonstrated greater diversity in content presentation, combining short-form videos, static images, and text-based political messaging. Meanwhile, X maintained a comparatively stronger orientation toward static images and textual discussions, whereas YouTube accommodated both short-form political messaging and extended audiovisual content.

These findings suggest that the structural characteristics and content-sharing conventions of individual platforms influence how political messages are packaged and circulated. The prominence of short-form video also indicates that campaign-related communication increasingly relies on condensed visual narratives capable of communicating political messages within limited viewing periods.

Prevalence of Propaganda Techniques and Rhetorical Appeals

The analysis identified substantial variation in the rhetorical strategies employed in election-related social media communication. Among the four principal rhetorical categories, negative campaigning and attack-oriented messaging constituted the largest proportion (38.5%) of the sampled content.

Personalistic and charisma-based appeals accounted for 24.8%, followed by policy-oriented communication at 21.3%. Populist and anti-establishment rhetoric represented the remaining 15.4%.

Table 2.
Distribution of Dominant Rhetorical Appeals in Election-Related Social Media Content

Rhetorical Appeal	Percentage (%)
Negative Campaigning and Attack-Oriented Appeals	38.5
Personalistic and Charisma-Based Appeals	24.8
Policy-Oriented and Platform-Based Appeals	21.3
Populist and Anti-Establishment Appeals	15.4
Total	**100.0**

The predominance of negative political messaging suggests that criticism of political opponents, reputational challenges, and adversarial narratives occupied a prominent position within the sampled digital campaign discourse.

Notably, the proportion of attack-oriented communication exceeded that of policy-based messaging by 17.2 percentage points, indicating a greater representation of confrontational political narratives than substantive discussions of governance programs and policy proposals.

Personalistic appeals also represented a substantial share of the sampled communication, reflecting the importance of candidate-centered political messaging. Such content frequently emphasized leadership attributes, political identity, public image, and perceived personal competence.

In contrast, policy-oriented communication constituted slightly more than one-fifth of the sample, suggesting that discussions of legislative priorities, governance strategies, and socioeconomic proposals were less prevalent than personality-driven and adversarial messaging.

Distribution of Propaganda Techniques

The classification of propaganda techniques further revealed the prominence of reputational attacks, selective historical narratives, indicators of coordinated messaging, and political victimhood framing.

Table 3.
Prevalence of Identified Propaganda Techniques

Propaganda Technique	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Character Assassination and Mudslinging	410	34.2
Historical and Political Revisionism	274	22.8
Indicators of Astroturfing and Coordinated Messaging	198	16.5
Victimhood and Political Persecution Narratives	169	14.1

Note. Percentages are calculated using the total sample (N = 1,200). Categories may overlap when individual posts exhibit multiple propaganda techniques.

Character assassination and mudslinging emerged as the most frequently identified propaganda technique, appearing in 410 posts (34.2%). These communications typically involved derogatory representations, personal allegations, and narratives intended to undermine the credibility or public standing of political opponents.

The substantial prevalence of this category indicates that reputational attacks constituted a prominent feature of the political communication examined. **Historical and political revisionism** was identified in 274 posts (22.8%). These materials frequently involved selective interpretations of political events, contested historical legacies, and narratives associated with prominent political families and previous administrations.

Particular attention was observed in content concerning the political legacy of the Marcos administration and competing interpretations of the Duterte administration's governance record. Such narratives commonly emphasized favorable historical interpretations while minimizing, contesting, or reframing politically sensitive issues.

Indicators of astroturfing and coordinated messaging appeared in 198 sampled units (16.5%). These included repeated textual formulations, highly similar political statements, and recurring narratives distributed across multiple accounts or public discussion spaces.

Although these patterns suggested possible coordination in the dissemination of political content, their identification did not independently establish the existence of organized inauthentic networks.

Finally, **victimhood and political persecution narratives** were observed in 169 posts (14.1%). These communications portrayed political figures or affiliated groups as targets of institutional hostility, politically motivated investigations, or selective legal enforcement.

Such framing was particularly evident in sampled communications associated with Duterte-aligned political channels responding to congressional investigations, legal proceedings, and related political controversies.

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that the sampled election-related discourse extended beyond conventional campaign promotion to include multiple forms of adversarial persuasion, historical interpretation, and identity-based political messaging.

Integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Political Communication

The findings also revealed the presence of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) and synthetically manipulated content within the sampled political communications.

Of the 1,200 posts examined, **223 (18.6%)** were classified as containing identified GenAI elements. These materials included synthetically generated images, manipulated audio recordings, AI-assisted textual content, and artificially produced video materials.

The distribution of GenAI-related content varied according to the type of synthetic media employed.

Table 4.
Distribution of Generative AI Content by Media Category

GenAI Content Category	Percentage of GenAI Content (%)
Synthetic Image Generation	42.6
Voice Cloning and Audio Deepfakes	26.5
Automated Text and Comment Generation	22.4
AI-Generated Video Content	8.5
Total	**100.0**

Note. Percentages are based on the 223 posts classified as containing GenAI elements.

Synthetic Image Generation

Synthetic images constituted the largest category, representing 42.6% of the identified GenAI-related content.

These materials included digitally generated depictions of political rallies, hypothetical infrastructure projects, and highly stylized representations of political candidates.

The prevalence of synthetic imagery suggests that AI-assisted visual production has become an identifiable component of election-related digital communication. Such materials may contribute to political image-building, narrative reinforcement, or potentially misleading representations when their artificial origins are not adequately disclosed.

Voice Cloning and Audio Deepfakes

Voice cloning and manipulated audio recordings accounted for 26.5% of the GenAI-related sample.

These materials included audio content that purported to reproduce the voices of political personalities, including recordings containing allegations of corruption, misconduct, or other politically sensitive activities.

The presence of such materials raises concerns regarding the potential use of synthetic audio to misrepresent political statements or influence perceptions of public figures.

However, the identification of synthetic audio does not, by itself, establish malicious intent. Such interpretations require consideration of the content's context, disclosure practices, and intended communicative purpose.

Automated Text and Comment Generation

AI-generated textual materials represented 22.4% of identified GenAI content.

These included apparently automated political comments, repetitive textual narratives, and extended posts circulating within public Facebook groups and online discussion sections.

The findings indicate that generative AI may facilitate the production and circulation of political messaging at scale. Nevertheless, the identification of AI-assisted textual content should be distinguished from verified evidence of automated account operation or coordinated political manipulation.

AI-Generated Video Content

AI-generated video materials accounted for the smallest proportion of the identified GenAI categories at 8.5%.

Although comparatively less prevalent, this category remains relevant because synthetic audiovisual content can reproduce realistic appearances, movements, and scenarios that may be difficult for audiences to distinguish from authentic recordings.

Taken together, the findings demonstrate that synthetic imagery and manipulated audio represented the dominant forms of identified GenAI-related political communication within the sampled dataset.

Regulatory Compliance and the Distribution of Political Content Across Registered and Unregistered Accounts

The study further examined the relationship between political content dissemination and regulatory requirements established under Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Resolution No. 11064.

The assessment indicated that 88.2% of the top-tier political candidates included in the registration analysis maintained registered official social media channels, suggesting substantial compliance with the account registration requirements examined.

However, the distribution of potentially manipulative political communication differed considerably between officially registered candidate accounts and third-party digital networks.

Specifically, 91.5% of the GenAI-related propaganda identified in the sample originated from accounts classified as unregistered, including unofficial political advocacy pages, independent content creators, and micro-influencer networks.

This concentration suggests that the dissemination of synthetic or potentially manipulative political materials was more prominent among third-party accounts than among officially registered candidate channels.

The observed pattern may indicate a regulatory monitoring challenge, particularly where political messages circulate through accounts without an immediately identifiable formal relationship to registered candidates or political organizations.

These findings are consistent with broader concerns regarding the monitoring of election-related digital communication and the potential role of unofficial online networks in shaping political narratives (Kontra Daya, 2025).

Nevertheless, the observed concentration of GenAI-related propaganda among unregistered accounts does not independently establish deliberate regulatory circumvention, candidate coordination, or violations of election regulations.

Rather, the results highlight the importance of distinguishing between formal campaign communication and independently disseminated political content when examining the implementation and practical reach of digital election regulations.

Summary of Key Findings

Overall, the quantitative content analysis revealed four principal patterns in the sampled election-related social media communication.

First, short-form audiovisual content emerged as the dominant individual content format, representing 48.3% of all analyzed posts. This finding highlights the substantial role of visually oriented communication in the presentation and circulation of contemporary political narratives.

Second, negative campaigning and personality-centered messaging collectively accounted for 63.3% of dominant rhetorical appeals, exceeding the representation of policy-oriented communication.

Third, character assassination and mudslinging constituted the most frequently identified propaganda technique, followed by historical and political revisionism, indicators of coordinated messaging, and victimhood narratives.

Fourth, GenAI-related materials were identified in 18.6% of the sampled content, with synthetic imagery and manipulated audio accounting for the largest proportions of these materials. The substantial concentration of GenAI-related propaganda among unregistered accounts further highlighted potential limitations in regulatory monitoring and accountability.

Collectively, these findings illustrate the intersection of platform-specific communication practices, adversarial political rhetoric, propaganda techniques, and emerging synthetic media technologies within the digital electoral environment.

The results provide an empirical foundation for examining how social media platforms, political communication strategies, and generative artificial intelligence interact in shaping election-related public discourse.

Discussion

The findings provide insights into the changing dynamics of digital political communication following the deterioration of the political alliance between President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and former President Rodrigo Duterte. The fragmentation of the political coalition commonly referred to as *UniTeam* appears to have contributed to a reconfiguration of partisan messaging strategies, political narratives, and online influence activities during the 2025 Philippine Midterm Elections.

As Quitzon (2025) observed, the breakdown of the Marcos-Duterte alliance altered the political environment in which competing factions sought to establish legitimacy, mobilize supporters, and influence public perceptions. The present findings suggest that this political realignment was accompanied by an increasingly adversarial digital communication environment in which previously allied political networks became competing sources of partisan narratives.

During the 2022 presidential election, the Marcos-Duterte electoral partnership benefited from a shared political identity and complementary campaign messaging. In contrast, the 2025 midterm electoral environment was characterized by competing political interests, divergent narratives, and intensified reputational contestation between factions associated with the former coalition.

This transformation may be understood as a shift from coalition-based digital mobilization toward intra-coalition digital confrontation, in which communication strategies previously associated with electoral competition against external opponents were increasingly directed toward former political allies.

The predominance of negative campaigning and attack-oriented communication, representing 38.5% of the sampled content, provides empirical support for the prominence of adversarial political messaging within the observed

digital environment. Similarly, the identification of character assassination and mudslinging in 34.2% of sampled posts suggests that reputational attacks constituted an important component of election-related political discourse.

These patterns are consistent with a political communication environment in which competing factions seek to influence public perceptions not only by promoting their preferred candidates but also by challenging the credibility, legitimacy, and political records of their rivals.
The findings further suggest differences in the narrative strategies associated with the competing political camps.

Content aligned with Duterte-associated political networks frequently emphasized themes of political victimhood, institutional persecution, and anti-establishment sentiment. Such narratives commonly portrayed political figures as targets of politically motivated investigations, selective institutional action, or opposition from established political authorities.

Conversely, communications associated with Marcos-aligned political networks placed greater emphasis on institutional stability, government legitimacy, administrative continuity, and modernization narratives. These differences are broadly consistent with observations concerning the evolving political influence environment in the Philippines (Influence Industry Explorer, 2025).

The contrasting rhetorical approaches demonstrate how political actors and their supporters may employ different persuasive frames to reinforce group identities, justify political positions, and challenge competing claims to political legitimacy.

Importantly, the observed patterns should not be interpreted as evidence that all politically aligned accounts participated in coordinated disinformation activities. Rather, they indicate that the fragmentation of the former electoral coalition coincided with an online environment characterized by intensified partisan competition and the circulation of competing political narratives.

The broader implication is that political realignment can reshape not only electoral alliances but also the structure and direction of digital political communication.

Generative Artificial Intelligence and the Increasing Scalability of Digital Propaganda

A second major finding concerns the integration of generative artificial intelligence into election-related political communication.

The identification of GenAI elements in 18.6% of the sampled posts suggests that synthetic media technologies had become a discernible feature of the digital political environment during the 2025 Philippine Midterm Elections.

This finding is particularly relevant to emerging discussions concerning the transformation of political influence operations from predominantly human-produced content toward potentially AI-assisted communication systems.

Previous studies and monitoring initiatives have highlighted the growing accessibility of generative AI tools and their potential implications for political communication, information integrity, and electoral processes (Democracy.Net.PH & Doublethink Lab, 2025; Schipper, 2025).

The present findings contribute to these discussions by documenting the presence of multiple forms of synthetic political content, particularly AI-generated images, manipulated audio recordings, automated textual materials, and artificially produced videos.

The implications of these technologies may be examined through three interrelated dimensions: production efficiency, communication responsiveness, and content variability.

First, generative AI has the potential to reduce the resources required for political content production.

Synthetic image generation, which accounted for 42.6% of identified GenAI-related content, enables the creation of visually elaborate political materials without necessarily requiring extensive photography, graphic design, or conventional media production resources.

The accessibility of such tools may lower technical and financial barriers to producing campaign-related visual narratives. This capability is especially relevant in decentralized political communication environments where individual content creators and small advocacy networks participate in the circulation of political messages.

However, the study did not directly measure production expenditures or operational costs. Consequently, the potential cost advantages of generative AI should be understood as a plausible technological implication rather than an empirically established outcome of the present analysis.

Second, generative AI may increase the speed and responsiveness of political communication.

The presence of synthetic audio and AI-assisted textual materials suggests that emerging technologies can support the rapid production of content responding to political controversies, breaking news, and developments involving prominent political personalities.

Voice cloning and audio manipulation, which represented 26.5% of the identified GenAI content, are particularly relevant because synthetic recordings may reproduce the apparent voices of public figures.

When circulated without appropriate disclosure or contextual verification, such materials may create misleading impressions concerning statements, actions, or allegations involving political actors.

Similarly, automated text-generation technologies can facilitate the production of multiple versions of political messages, potentially increasing the volume and frequency of content dissemination.

Third, generative AI may complicate conventional approaches to detecting repetitive or coordinated political messaging.

Traditional identification methods often rely on observable similarities among posts, including repeated phrases, identical text blocks, and recognizable patterns of content duplication.

Generative AI systems can produce linguistically varied versions of similar messages, potentially making simple text-matching approaches less effective.

Nevertheless, the present study did not directly test platform moderation algorithms or establish whether AI-generated content successfully evaded automated detection systems.

findings therefore support the need for further investigation into the relationship between synthetic content generation, coordinated dissemination, and platform-level detection capabilities.

Taken together, these developments suggest that generative AI may function as a technological amplifier of existing political communication strategies, rather than necessarily replacing traditional forms of digital political influence.

The observed coexistence of conventional propaganda techniques and synthetic media is consistent with the emergence of hybrid communication practices combining human political judgment, automated content generation, and platform-based dissemination.

Such developments have important implications for electoral information integrity, particularly in political environments characterized by intense partisan competition and high levels of social media engagement.

Regulatory Challenges and the Limits of Account-Based Electoral Oversight

The third major finding concerns the relationship between electoral regulation and the decentralized dissemination of political content.

COMELEC Resolution No. 11064 represents an important regulatory initiative addressing digital election campaigning and the use of social media and

emerging technologies in electoral communication (Commission on Elections, 2024).

The findings indicate that 88.2% of the top-tier candidates included in the registration assessment maintained registered official social media channels. This suggests substantial adherence to the account-registration requirements examined in the study.

However, the concentration of identified GenAI-related propaganda among unregistered accounts raises questions concerning the practical effectiveness of regulatory approaches that depend heavily on identifying formal campaign channels and their associated political actors.

Notably, 91.5% of the identified GenAI-related propaganda originated from accounts classified as unregistered, including unofficial advocacy pages, independent political content creators, and micro-influencer networks.

This distribution suggests that a considerable proportion of potentially manipulative political communication circulated outside the officially registered accounts examined in the study.

The observed pattern may be interpreted through a distinction between two interconnected spheres of digital political communication.

The first consists of official and identifiable campaign communication, including registered candidate accounts and formally affiliated political organizations. These channels generally operate within a more visible framework of electoral disclosure and regulatory monitoring.

The second consists of decentralized and informally affiliated political communication, including independent content creators, partisan community pages, and third-party advocacy networks. These channels may circulate political messages without clearly established organizational or financial relationships with registered candidates.

The coexistence of these communication spheres presents challenges for electoral oversight because political influence can extend beyond the accounts directly maintained or controlled by candidates and political parties.

Nevertheless, the classification of an account as unregistered does not automatically establish that it was legally required to register or that its activities violated electoral regulations.

Similarly, the concentration of potentially manipulative content among third-party accounts does not independently demonstrate deliberate regulatory avoidance, concealed campaign financing, or direct coordination with political candidates.

These distinctions are important for avoiding unsupported conclusions concerning regulatory violations and political responsibility.

The findings instead highlight a broader institutional challenge: electoral accountability mechanisms must operate within a digital environment where political messages can be created, reproduced, and disseminated by numerous actors with varying degrees of formal political affiliation.

This challenge becomes more complex when synthetic media technologies allow political content to be produced and modified rapidly.

From a regulatory perspective, the findings suggest the importance of complementing account-registration requirements with measures that strengthen transparency, content authentication, platform cooperation, and the identification of demonstrably coordinated manipulation.

Such measures may include clearer disclosure standards for materially altered political media, improved reporting mechanisms for deceptive synthetic content, and stronger cooperation between election authorities, digital platforms, researchers, and independent fact-checking organizations.

However, regulatory interventions must also account for legitimate political expression, independent commentary, satire, and the rights of citizens to participate in public debate.

Accordingly, effective electoral oversight requires a balance between protecting information integrity and preserving freedom of expression within democratic political discourse.

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ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICIES IN THE PHILIPPINES: A DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

The study evaluated the current legal and institutional framework for anti-corruption in the Philippine public sector. Essentially, although corruption in the Philippine public sector is widespread and persists, the study sought to determine how far current anti-corruption policies and programs have succeeded in their objectives. It also examines the problems and challenges in the implementation of anti-corruption policies and programs. Using the Institutional Theory framework, particularly the Principal–Agent Theory and the Collective Action Theory, the study carried out a qualitative documentary analysis of major anti-corruption laws, executive issuances, reports, judicial decisions, and other governance-related materials including reports from international bodies. These laws include the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (Republic Act No. 3019), the Optical Media Act (Republic Act No. 9184), the Salary Standardization Law (Republic Act No. 11032), and the Public Eligibility and Ethics Code (Republic Act No. 12009). The study seeks to establish that the implementation of anti-corruption laws and programs is greatly affected by four interrelated structural or institutional factors including (1) lack of resources and insufficient technical capacity, (2) complex and time-consuming procedures, (3) the tendency to be influenced by powerful politicians and interest groups, and (4) selective implementation and lack of transparency and accountability in government transactions and operations. The findings suggest that anti-corruption laws alone are not sufficient to bring about an effective anti-corruption effort. Complementary anti-corruption governance is required to fight corruption in the public sector. Specifically, it is necessary to create an anti-corruption agency that is independent and sufficiently funded, to make government transactions transparent through the use of digital technology, to protect whistleblowers, and to establish a system of accountability and responsible government action. The study also contributes to the body of knowledge on the specific problems of the implementation of anti-corruption policies and programs and how these can be addressed through appropriate and structural reforms in the governance system of the country.

Keywords: Anti-Corruption Policies, Institutional Accountability, Policy Implementation, Public Sector Governance, Philippines

Introduction

Corruption in the public sector is still a big problem that affects how well the country is doing economically and socially. It makes people not trust the government causes money meant for public use to be used in the way and might even stop other countries from investing in the Philippines (Batalla, 2024; Garrido, 2025). This problem keeps happening because of ways of doing things, weak systems, politics that help certain people and not enough ways to make sure people are responsible for their actions. Ago the way the government was run under colonial rule and the relationships after independence have made it easier for people in power to use their positions for their own benefit (Batalla, 2024; Quah, 2011). These ways show up in acts of corruption like taking money from government deals and in small acts like giving bribes or asking for extra money in exchange for help. These actions make the government less efficient break the rules and make people lose faith that the government can be fair and honest.

To deal with these problems different leaders in the Philippines have tried to make laws, rules and ways to stop corruption and make sure people are responsible. The country has set up a system to fight corruption that includes important groups. One is the Office of the Ombudsman, which looks into and takes-action against workers who do wrong. Then there is the Sandiganbayan, which handles cases of corruption and illegal actions. The Civil Service Commission (CSC) works to make sure people in government jobs are chosen fairly and act with honesty. The Commission on Audit (COA) checks that the government spends money properly. The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) has a role in getting back money that was stolen during the time of the Marcos rule. All these groups are part of the country's plan to make the government more honest and to protect money.

Even though there are these groups and many laws against corruption problems with how they work still exist. Reports from groups say that corruption and weak systems are still big problems in the Philippines (Transparency International, 2025; U.S. Department of State 2023). There is a difference between the rules that are made and what actually happens. This makes people wonder if the laws are good enough if the groups that enforce them are strong and what else is stopping them from working. The fact that corruption keeps happening with these efforts shows that just making new laws is not enough. To really fight corruption the rules need to be followed the groups that enforce them need to be free from influences they need to work together and the leaders need to be serious about making sure everyone is responsible for their actions.

With this in mind this study looks at the laws, rules and official reports about how the Philippines deals with corruption. It looks at how these laws and groups have changed over time what they are supposed to do and what is stopping them from working. Specifically, the study wants to: (1) look at how the laws and groups, against corruption have changed and how they are set up; (2) look at what each group's supposed to do how they enforce the rules and how they make sure people are responsible; and (3) find out why the laws are not always followed in

real life. Through this study the goal is to understand the problems that stop the country from fighting corruption and to find ways to make the laws and groups work better.

Literature Review

Corruption is broadly defined as the abuse of power for personal gain, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, favoritism, illicit campaign contributions, corrupt procurement practices, and misuse of public authority. Beyond individual misconduct, corruption can become embedded in organizational cultures, political relationships, and governance institutions. It is influenced by institutional incentives, economic conditions, and opportunities for officials to act without accountability. Thus, corruption must be understood not merely as illegal behavior but as a governance problem requiring institutional and administrative solutions.

Historical institutional weaknesses, political patronage, and the concentration of economic power are deeply embedded in corruption in the Philippines. Hutchcroft (1998) examined how relationships between state institutions and powerful private interests affect governance and development. Batalla (2015) identified oligarchic dominance, weak government capacity, judicial inefficiency, and selective enforcement of anti-corruption laws as major institutional weaknesses. Similarly, Mendoza and colleagues (2025) emphasized how rent-seeking and competition failures contribute to corruption. Addressing these structural weaknesses is therefore more important than merely changing leaders or introducing additional laws.

The Philippines combats corruption through constitutional provisions and anti-corruption legislation. Article XI, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution requires public officials and employees to serve with responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency. Republic Act No. 3019 or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, Republic Act No. 6713 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, and Republic Act No. 6770 or the Ombudsman Act of 1989 provide legal mechanisms for accountability. Despite these laws, corruption persists due largely to inadequate implementation and enforcement.

Several institutions are mandated to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate corruption cases, including the Office of the Ombudsman, Sandiganbayan, Commission on Audit (COA), Civil Service Commission (CSC), and Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG). Their effectiveness depends on adequate resources, institutional independence, operational efficiency, and interagency coordination. However, implementation limitations continue to affect their capacity to prevent and control corruption (Batalla, 2015; Stephenson and Schütte, 2016).

Transparency, accountability, and ethical governance are essential to effective anti-corruption measures. Transparency requires public access to government information, while accountability demands that officials answer for

their actions. Rose-Ackerman and Palifka (2016) emphasized reducing opportunities for corruption while strengthening incentives for honest behavior. However, disclosure requirements, ethical standards, and sanctions have limited effectiveness without consistent monitoring and enforcement. Accessible complaint mechanisms, independent oversight, and prompt institutional action are therefore necessary.

Corruption is increasingly examined in relation to policy implementation, bureaucratic conditions, and the rule of law. While Batalla (2015) explored the structural weaknesses of Philippine anti-corruption agencies, this study further examines the operational, administrative, and political factors affecting the implementation of anti-corruption laws. Particular attention is given to how government agencies across the three branches of government implement these laws within their respective institutional and administrative environments.

International research on corruption emphasizes bureaucratic incentives, political clientelism, public procurement, and institutional reforms. Different forms of corruption require appropriate preventive and corrective measures. Procurement corruption may be addressed through competitive bidding, financial monitoring, and effective sanctions, while administrative bribery requires simplified procedures and stronger reporting mechanisms. Mendoza and colleagues (2025) likewise emphasized addressing rent-seeking structures through preventive and corrective institutional reforms.

International governance indicators, particularly Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), provide useful perspectives on corruption in the Philippines. Although based on perceptions rather than direct measurements of corruption, the CPI allows comparisons across countries and over time. The 2025 CPI highlights continuing concerns regarding perceived public-sector corruption in the Philippines. Together with existing studies, these indicators provide a broader framework for assessing institutional capacity, enforcement challenges, and anti-corruption governance.

Corruption remains a complex problem in the Philippines, influenced by political, institutional, administrative, economic, and social factors (Mendoza et al., 2025; Hutchcroft, 1998; Klitgaard, 1988; Rose-Ackerman and Palifka, 2016). Its effects on development and good governance depend largely on how anti-corruption laws and mechanisms are implemented.

Theoretical Framework

As a main framework, this study shall primarily be anchored on Institutional Theory or how formal rules, organizational structures, rules and processes, and informal rules influence the behavior and performance of human and social capital in organizations and institutions. Public administration is a set of institutions and rules which govern how public officials and organizations behave in relation to each other and to citizens. In the Philippine public sector,

these are embodied in constitutional provisions, anti-graft laws, civil service laws, auditing laws and other administrative rules and regulations. Having these on paper does not automatically translate into their effective implementation. Thus, Institutional Theory is appropriate for the study as it attempts to examine whether the country's anti-corruption laws and policies are complemented by appropriate institutional capacity for their implementation, consistent enforcement, necessary political will to combat corruption, and a culture of integrity in public service. As how institutions work, Institutional Theory can also explain how informal rules could be against formal rules and how corruption could persist in institutions despite these anti-corruption laws and policies.

Other relevant frameworks are also being considered. Specifically, the study is also being framed by the Principal–Agent Theory. The study recognizes that in democratic governance, citizens are the principals who delegate to elected public officials and government institutions as their agents the responsibility and authority to manage public resources and deliver quality public services. In such set-ups, corruption may occur when public officials abuse their delegated authority for personal gain or to serve other's interests instead. The said framework further points out that corruption can also be increased by information asymmetry, lack of effective public oversight, huge discretion given to public officials in their daily transactions, and weak accountability measures to hold public officials answerable for their actions and non-actions. The framework is especially relevant for this study in its attempt to describe and analyze instances of corruption in public procurement, in the disbursement of public funds, in the issuance of licenses and permits, and other government transactions that are normally carried out by government officials and employees. Mechanisms to prevent and to combat corruption such as independent auditing, transparent reporting system, whistleblower protection and effective investigation and prosecution are also discussed in order to highlight their important role in preventing and combating corruption in the aforementioned transactions.

This study may also be anchored from another perspective – Collective Action Theory. According to this perspective, corruption persists in societies where there is an awareness that corruption is evil and laws are already in place to prevent and punish it. In these societies, corruption is persistent because each individual believes that if he refrains from corruption, he will be at a disadvantage against others who are corrupt. Thus, corruption becomes a persistent social and political practice sustained by established practices, informal arrangements and patterns of behavior, and enforced by limited and often unsuccessful institutions. In the Philippine public sector, therefore, this study can examine how legal and institutional reforms in anti-corruption are being translated into effective practices despite inconsistent enforcement, low public trust, and powerful political connections that facilitate access to government resources and services.

The three perspectives mentioned can also be integrated and viewed as a framework to analyze anti-corruption governance and the various dimensions which could be examined using this perspective. Thus, for example, these three perspectives could be applied to study the legal framework on anti-corruption, the institutional mandates and the implementation structures for anti-corruption

programs and projects; the opportunities for corruption in the exercise of powers by public officials and the enforcement agencies and mechanisms which could prevent and detect corruption; and the shared expectations and practices in public service which could either facilitate or prevent corruption despite the existence of anti-corruption laws and mechanisms. These perspectives can also be used to study other important dimensions of anti-corruption such as the amount of resources allocated to anti-corruption programs and the adequacy of personnel and instrumentalities to implement anti-corruption policies and programs; the consistency of sanctions on corrupt practices; and transparency and public participation in anti-corruption programs and projects.

Methods

This study used qualitative documentary analysis in its investigation into the legal framework and the institutional structures designed to implement anti-corruption policies in the Philippine public sector. Documentary analysis is a methodology which uses documents as data that reveal practices, policies and administrative processes and outcomes in governance (Prior, 2003). In this study, existing laws, presidential issuances, reports of government institutions, judicial decisions and governance assessments from independent sources worldwide were analyzed instead of relying on primary data obtained from interviews and/or surveys.

In analyzing the anti-corruption policies and programs of the Philippine government, the study adopts a qualitative documentary research study design and employs policy evaluation principles in understanding the salient features of said policies and programs. Moreover, the study is guided by Institutional Theory, complemented by Principal–Agent Theory and Collective Action Theory. Through a documentary research process involving policy identification, a selected corpus of documents, document review, thematic coding, and synthesis, the study examines not only the anti-corruption policies of the Philippine government but also the way said policies are implemented within the country's institutions.

Data Sources

The principal sources were grouped into four categories: 1) legislative acts and executive directives; 2) institutional and oversight reports; 3) judicial decisions and case-related records; and 4) independent governance assessments from organizations such as Transparency International and the World Bank, as well as the reports from the U.S. Department of State.

The major sources for the legal framework established to address corruption in the Philippine public sector for this study were the legislative acts and the executive orders including Republic Act No. 3019 or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, Republic Act No. 6713 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, Republic Act No. 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act, Republic Act No. 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act, and Executive Order No. 2, series of 2016 or the Freedom of Information in the Executive Branch.

These laws outline the specific actions that are prohibited and create mechanisms to hold public officials accountable for their actions and to make information available to the public.

These reports from anti-corruption agencies and institutions that oversee public officials and personnel, as well as audit and oversee government transactions and contract implementation, were studied in terms of their institutional structures and their implementation and the challenges they encounter. The reports, whether annual, audit, accomplishment reports, etc., are examined for instances of patterns of failure and how these can be remedied through appropriate reforms.

Documents related to judicial decisions, cases, and verdicts as well as information about the legal interpretation of existing anti-corruption laws and how these laws are implemented in various judicial settings such as the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court were analyzed. These included published decisions, official statistical reports, and case disposition information among others.

Reports from independent governance assessments, such as those from Transparency International and the World Bank as well as reports from the U.S. Department of State, were also examined. These reports provided the study with a framework for the evaluation of Philippine public sector anti-corruption efforts within broader analyses of public sector integrity, transparency, investment climate and governance. International indicators and assessments, however, were treated as contextual in nature and were not used as evidence of individual Philippine public sector institutions' performance.

Document Selection and Inclusion Criteria

For this study, all documents within the desired coverage period (from 1960 to 2026) related to anti-corruption laws, corruption-fighting institutions and their respective functions, anti-corruption enforcement, administrative reforms that could fight corruption and anti-corruption accountability mechanisms were chosen. Also considered were documents which detail the said institutions' and programs' implementation and effects, whether positive or negative.

To qualify for inclusion in the research corpus, documents had to satisfy at least one of four criteria: 1) The documents had to establish or interpret legal requirements concerning corruption prevention policies and practices; 2) The documents had to describe the structures, functions, resources and performance of anti-corruption and oversight bodies; 3) The documents had to provide judicial, audit and administrative evidence concerning the implementation of corruption prevention policies and practices; and 4) The documents had to provide corruption, transparency, accountability and governance reports concerning the Philippines.

Differences in purpose, in the originating institution and in time of publication of the documents were taken into consideration. Statutes were analyzed to determine the scope of anti-corruption measures embodied in formal

policy design. Institutional and oversight reports of the Office of the Ombudsman, Commission on Audit and Civil Service Commission, as well as their respective annual reports, audit reports and other relevant official documents, were analyzed to determine the extent of institutional implementation and enforcement of anti-corruption measures.

Data Analysis Procedure

A qualitative thematic content analysis of selected documents was conducted. Initially, all documents were read and analyzed in order to familiarize themselves with the content of the documents. Subsequently, all relevant passages and parts of the texts were identified and first codes were assigned to corresponding parts of the texts. In a subsequent step, these codes were grouped together to form corresponding themes. In accordance with a deductive and inductive approach, the initial codes were derived from the theoretical framework of the study as well as from the corresponding research questions, whereas in the course of the inductive analysis of the documents further themes could be discovered and analyzed.

Four main themes consisted of the analysis of the documents that comprised the research corpus: (1) statutory comprehensiveness or scope of prohibited acts in anti-corruption laws, coverage of relevant laws and corresponding penalties, the nature of reports required to be filed by anti-corruption agencies and the corresponding accountability mechanisms; (2) enforcement and institutional capacity such as the reported staffing and corresponding resources of investigative and prosecuting agencies, number of cases that said agencies have been able to bring to trial and dispose of within appropriate timeframes, and the number of disposals that resulted in convictions; and (3) political autonomy and/or institutional independence consisting of formal safeguards, appointment and corresponding tenures of members and/or officials of anti-corruption agencies, jurisdiction, and other relevant documentary evidence that may show the extent of political interference, and (4) administrative complexity and transparency consisting of the corresponding procedural requirements of anti-corruption laws and corresponding administrative regulations, compliance requirements of government transactions and the corresponding administrative steps that are required to be completed in order to insure that all transactions are conducted with the utmost transparency and that opportunities for corruption are minimized through corresponding administrative reforms.

The study of political autonomy and institutional independence analyzed formal safeguards of the different oversight bodies, appointment processes and tenure of office of members and officials of said bodies and how these are influenced by political interests as reflected in documents. The study of administrative complexity and transparency examined procedural requirements, the degree of compliance required of government officials and employees and the various processes and services of government including procurement processes and the availability of information to the public on these processes and services as well as administrative reforms designed to curb corruption.

Comparison of evidence among the legislative, institutional, judicial and international sources was made. The findings revealed convergence, contradiction, and documentary gaps in these sources. For instance, the statutory requirements contained in anti-corruption laws were matched against corresponding audit findings, institutional reports, and judicial records to uncover divergences between stated policy objectives and their corresponding implementation. International governance indicators or assessments were used to provide a broader context for analysis rather than as substitutes for lacking evidence from the relevant institutions or to establish causation.

Trustworthiness and Methodological Limitations

For credence, source triangulation was used to compare information from various documents and from various institutions. For instance, claims regarding the legal provisions were cross-checked against the corresponding legal texts or official legal publications. The same approach was used for the information regarding the performance of the various institutions. This were cross-checked against other information contained in official documents of said institutions. In addition, between the provisions of law and the findings of the various institutions reported in this study, the interpretations given by external sources were distinguished from the researcher's own analysis.

Also important to note are the inherent limitations of using documentary sources in research, such as the availability of information, definitions and coverage of published data, and the perspectives of institutions that create reports and documents. Some sources, for example, may rely on perceptions or governance conditions as reflected in global indicators of corruption. Above all, as with all research evidence, documents describe the policies and practices as they are reported and can demonstrate existence, reported practices, and even limitations but not necessarily causation. All qualifications in this study's conclusions are explicitly stated based on the evidence reviewed and analyzed in this research.

The approach, therefore, enabled the researcher to systematically analyze the links between the Philippine anti-corruption public sector policies and their institutionalized implementation. The findings from the qualitative documentary analysis shall serve as empirical basis for the researcher's recommendations for more transparency, accountability, effective enforcement mechanisms and strong institutional integrity in the Philippine public sector.

Results

There is a large gap between the design of anti-corruption measures and their implementation in the Philippine public sector. The legal framework developed for anti-corruption provides for the prevention, detection, investigation, and punishment of corruption. A number of legal measures prohibit corrupt practices, require ethical behavior on the part of government officials and employees, and require financial disclosure and other transparent practices in government transactions, particularly in procurement. In addition, measures are

in place to promote administrative efficiency and effective public sector oversight. However, the implementation of these measures is dependent on the institutional capacity of government agencies, the administrative and operational systems in place, the level of consistency in the implementation of policies and laws, and the overall political environment.

Our analysis uncovered four key features or primary themes of the existing Philippine legal and institutional anti-corruption framework: (1) a comprehensive but fragmented set of anti-corruption laws; (2) institutional capacity and the constraints placed on anti-corruption enforcement and implementation; (3) procedural complexity and the attendant delays in the implementation of administrative and judicial measures; and (4) the propensity for political influence, patronage, and lack of accountability. There is a need to translate existing anti-corruption laws into effective and sustainable governance.

Primary Legal Frameworks and Statutory Design

An examination of Philippine laws against corruption showed that there is a plethora of anti-corruption laws that could curb the practice of corrupt activities in the various stages of public service. For one, there are laws that require public officials to live up to ethical standards; there are also laws that ban corrupt practices; there are laws that regulate government transactions and interactions and there are also laws that create investigative bodies and impose sanctions on those who violate anti-corruption laws.

Table 1.
Major Philippine Anti-Corruption Laws and Their Regulatory Mechanisms

Statute or Policy	Primary Focus	Principal Regulatory Mechanisms	Institutional Implementation
Republic Act No. 3019 (1960)	Prevention and punishment of corrupt practices	Prohibits specified corrupt acts involving public officials, including certain transactions involving undue advantage, unlawful benefits, and conflicts of interest.	Enforced through authorized investigative and prosecutorial bodies and courts with appropriate jurisdiction.
Republic Act No. 6713 (1989)	Ethical standards and public accountability	Establishes norms of conduct, disclosure obligations, restrictions on certain activities, and requirements concerning Statements of	Implemented through relevant government agencies, with oversight and enforcement functions involving the CSC, Ombudsman, and other competent authorities.

		Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALNs).	
Republic Act No. 6770 (1989)	Institutional accountability and investigation	Defines the organization, powers, and functions of the Office of the Ombudsman in investigating and addressing unlawful or improper acts involving public officials.	Office of the Ombudsman.
Republic Act No. 9184 (2003)	Government procurement transparency	Established competitive procurement procedures, procurement planning requirements, disclosure mechanisms, and procurement oversight arrangements.	Procuring entities, procurement committees, and the Government Procurement Policy Board.
Republic Act No. 11032 (2018)	Administrative efficiency and anti-red tape	Establishes prescribed processing periods, Citizen's Charter requirements, and measures intended to reduce unnecessary interactions and procedural delays.	Anti-Red Tape Authority and covered government agencies.
Republic Act No. 12009 (2024)	Modernization of government procurement	Introduces a revised procurement framework emphasizing procurement planning, transparency, accountability, efficiency, and updated	Procuring entities and the Government Procurement Policy Board, subject to applicable implementing and transitional provisions.

		procurement methods.	
Executive Order No. 2 (2016)	Public access to government information	Establishes a freedom-of-information mechanism within the executive branch, subject to recognized exceptions and implementing procedures.	Executive departments, agencies, and other covered offices.

Note: Republic Act No. 12009 has replaced Republic Act No. 9184 on procurement as main anti-corruption legislation on procurement, within the parameters and period covered by the said laws.

These laws are complementary to each other. Republic Act No. 3019 penalizes corruption in public house. Republic Act No. 6713 requires every public official and employee to conduct himself with the highest degree of integrity, conscience and behavior. Republic Act No. 6770 created an independent investigative body to root out graft and corruption. Legislation on public procurement as well as anti-red tape laws on the other hand seek to make administrative processes corruption free.

These laws and institutional mechanisms manifest the wide network of anti-corruption measures currently being enforced in the country. However, to be effective, the spread of responsibilities among various anti-corruption bodies needs to be harmonized, divided into specific areas of actions, and strictly implemented. Overlapping laws and mechanisms for combating corruption will not necessarily lead to ineffectiveness or duplication of actions if their responsibilities are well-coordinated.

Institutional Enforcement Dynamics

First, the various anti-corruption institutions and their respective mandates for enforcement as determined by their available data and performance information were examined. These include the Office of the Ombudsman, the Commission on Audit (COA), the Civil Service Commission (CSC), and the anti-graft court Sandiganbayan.

The Commission on Audit examines how public resources are used. The Office of the Ombudsman investigates and prosecutes corruption cases. The Civil Service Commission monitors and upholds the standards and practices of the civil service to hold government officials and employees accountable for their actions as public servants. The Sandiganbayan is a special tribunal that tries corruption cases involving public officials and employees.

Together, these institutions comprise a system of financial monitoring and oversight and of administrative accountability and watch. However, to be effective, these institutions need to be staffed with the right number and kind of people, endowed with the right technical resources and information systems and provided with the right procedures to move cases from one stage of investigation and prosecution to another.

Investigative and Prosecutorial Capacity

Analysis of the documentary evidence on anti-corruption shown in this section highlighted the need to examine the investigative and prosecutorial capacity of institutions who are engaged in anti-corruption work in government, in particular where the work involves investigations into public procurement as well as other financial transactions, as well as into allegations of corruption in relation to the declaration of assets by public officials and of the way in which certain administrative bodies conduct their affairs.

Moreover, to ensure that adequate investigations are conducted and cases are processed for trial on time, sufficient resources (in terms of personnel and technical expertise) are required to cover the Office's various responsibilities. The lack of these resources will unduly cause delays in the various stages of complaint evaluation, investigation, case preparation, etc.

The extent of these constraints cannot be known for certain based on the institutional mandates themselves, or even on the volume of case backlogs as generally observed. Rather, for instance, the numbers of staff members (with breakdowns by job title), annual caseloads (again by type), current appropriation, and relevant program data for clearly defined time frames would need to be collated from official documents and be juxtaposed against stated performance data.

On the other hand, the extent of the problem in relation to adequate resources to carry out necessary functions is for now left to the reader's imagination as this also needs to be verified against official documents, namely the institution's audit reports and annual reports.

Judicial Case Processing and Adjudication

Further, within the judicial anti-corruption mechanism, corruption cases are complex in nature where numerous documents are involved, many individuals or entities are charged, a single transaction may involve numerous financial accounts, and procedures involved in such transactions are thoroughly scrutinized by the courts.

Even so, prolonged case processing constitutes a relevant issue since in the long run delayed legal examination may no longer be adequately balanced against required accountability, while the administrative costs might keep increasing in the course of prolonged proceedings. Moreover, the duration of proceedings has to

be interpreted carefully in relation to all procedural stages, that is, preliminary investigation, prosecution, trial, appeal, and disposition of a case.

All these would have to be looked into when making a comprehensive assessment of the judiciary including the age of the cases, the volume of pending cases, the disposition and clearance rates of the cases and the stages of the procedural processes where delays occur.

The study showed the need to improve on how cases are managed; how evidence are prepared for trial; and how procedural laws are applied while preserving the independence of the judiciary and upholding due process.

Procurement Oversight and Financial Accountability

In looking into how government can best implement corruption-preventing measures through procurement oversight, the analysis considered the basic steps involved in Government procurement as well as the regular mechanisms to oversee and monitor their implementation.

These structures can make corrupt practices more difficult through requiring the planning of procurements, holding these through competitive processes, publicizing the terms and conditions of offers and detailed requirements for documentation and the subsequent implementation of contracts.

Reports from the Commission on Audit can serve as prima facie evidence of procedural irregularities in the procurement and financial management of government funds and resources. These irregularities include expenditures without sufficient supporting documents; delayed liquidation of funds; non-compliance with government rules and regulations; among others.

In the auditing reports by the Commission on Audit (COA), irregularities, control weaknesses and other instances of non-compliance with laws, regulations and auditing standards are reflected in the reports, and the parties involved are required to explain, correct or investigate further on these discrepancies as the case may be.

Thus, the analysis highlights the need to distinguish between administrative non-compliance, audit deficits, suspected graft and corruption and proven corruption.

Discussion

All in all, it seems that Philippine anti-corruption institutions are struggling to be as effective as their formal structures indicate they should be.

This, therefore, brings to light the several challenges that are currently faced by the implementation of the country's anti-corruption laws and policies. For although there are sufficient legal mechanisms, which are designed to promote integrity and accountability in government, institutional challenges, such as lack of resources, complicated processes, poor coordination, and political pressure to

throw off accountability, can largely hinder the effective implementation of these rules and regulations.

Viewing anti-corruption through the lenses of Institutional Theory, Principal–Agent Theory and Collective Action Theory will help understand how formal rules are implemented in government and interact with individual and structural constraints in society that govern the conduct of public officials and hold them accountable for their actions and omissions.

Institutional Capacity and Structural Constraints

As discussed in the above article, written rules or anti-corruption laws form part of the formal rules that determine the organizational behavior in a bureaucracy. Furthermore, the way a bureaucracy operates is also determined by the structure of a bureaucracy, the resources available, processes in place, manners in which professionals do their work and informal ways that things are done within a bureaucracy.

In the Philippines, specifically, setting up specialized over sight and enforcement structures are formal recognition of the importance of accountability. But to effectively discharge their functions, they also need to be suitably manned, properly equipped and provided with the right administrative support.

More importantly, resource constraints in anti-corruption bodies may render these agencies powerless in investigating complex transactions and resolving complaints in a just and reasonable period. As stated earlier, such bodies must have the necessary resources and be able to perform their duties effectively in order to implement their charters for combating corruption effectively.

Thus, this finding is also in line with the more general observation that any institutional reform of governance mechanisms also needs to be accompanied by the necessary implementation conditions.

Accountability in the Philippines is further strengthened by enabling investigation and enforcement capacity, modernizing information systems, building specialized workforces, and monitoring the performance of anti-corruption institutions.

Judicial Delays and Procedural Complexity

In terms of implementation, anti-corruption effectiveness also depends on the way corruption investigations are processed by the judicial system and the timeframe for resolving such cases in court.

Delays in investigation and prosecution can also have consequences extending beyond individual cases of corruption. Not only do delayed resolutions of individual cases bring discredit to the investigating and prosecuting institutions but they also increase the cost of litigation and render more difficult the

management of evidence. Most importantly, however, delay erodes public perception of the certainty of punishment for corruption.

Viewing the situation from the lens of Principal–Agent Theory, it is important to determine the likelihood of detecting and sanctioning misconduct. If anti-corruption bodies are perceived as unpredictable and taking too long to complete their work, the deterrent effect of imposing sanctions on corruption would likely decrease.

But it is equally important to recognize that speed is not necessarily synonymous with fairness. The cases of the Anti-Money Laundering Bureau (AMLAB) of the Philippine National Police, for example, would normally take months or even years to investigate and prepare for trial for obvious reasons—each case normally has dozens or even hundreds of pieces of evidence.

Thus, improvement in case preparation and in the use of information technology to digitize records and monitor the processing of cases, together with reduction of avoidable administrative delays and the establishment of performance monitors, are necessary to solve judicial inefficiency without undermining due process.

Most importantly, since judicial delay is a system problem, addressing it would require a coordinated approach among investigative agencies, prosecutors and the judiciary, as opposed to placing the blame on any one of these institutions.

Political Influence, Institutional Independence, and Patronage

How political authorities are handled by anti-corruption institutions is a further critical dimension of the implementation gap.

Institutional Theory has noted that formal independence is not sufficient to guarantee the proper discharge of functions by institutions. Organizational practices and the political context where institutions operate would determine how independent institutions exercise their powers and discharge their functions.

In the Philippine context, patronage politics and structures of political institutions have been studied in considerable detail by scholars (Hutchcroft, 1998). Needless to say, structures and systems of public administration are often influenced by these informal relationships and structures that govern the behavior of administrators and officials in public life.

But note that political appointment and even patronage is not necessarily graft. Their graft potential would depend on concrete evidence such as comparable case studies, actual interventions, and institutional verification.

Collective Action Theory in the meantime has suggested that there are instances of widespread corruption and ineffective government controls when most individuals believe and feel that many others are engaging in corruption and

also that the formal accountability structures are mostly being applied in a discriminatory manner.

Individuals working within anti-corruption institutions may fail to adhere to integrity standards if they believe that corruption is widespread and that formal accountability structures are not consistently applied.

In summary, the findings suggest that the practice of corruption must be combated by firmly implementing the various institutional safeguards of anti-corruption laws and measures, transparent procedures and mechanisms, independent review bodies and effective anti-corruption enforcement.

Administrative Complexity and Transparency

In addition to these opportunities for corruption, administrative complexity can also lead to arbitrary actions by government officials in the process of approving applications, if these involve many others, are not clearly defined or are not easily accessible.

Republic Act No. 11032 or the Sanggunian Project to Simplify Bureaucratic Red Tape also aims to make government more efficient to combat corruption. Its objective is to improve service delivery by putting the government's administrative procedures into simple and more accessible standards and systems.

Principal–Agent problems are even more pronounced when there are information imbalances. In cases where citizens are unable to monitor government transactions due to complex procedures and lack of information, officials are inclined to abuse their discretion.

Measures such as transparent service standards, information on when and how to access government services, electronic transactions, and fixed processing times may reduce risks as they make citizens better informed on their rights and obligations.

However, digitalization is not a magic wand that automatically can prevent corruption. The design of the system, data quality, IT security as well as the supervision of the system and its implementation all play a crucial role in order to realize the potentials of digitalization for preventing corruption.

Administrative reform which aims at structural changes thus must comprise the simplification of administrative procedures and the establishment of effective controls within administration and sufficient information to the public with respect to government transactions.

Synthesis of the Implementation Gap

The three principal dimensions of anti-corruption implementation identified in this research are set out in Table 2.

Table 2.
Major Dimensions of the Anti-Corruption Implementation Gap

Dimension	Identified Concerns	Potential Governance Implications
Structural and resource constraints	Staffing limitations, technical capacity, resource allocation, and information management	Reduced investigative efficiency and uneven institutional performance
Institutional and procedural challenges	Complex investigations, case processing delays, interagency coordination, and procurement compliance	Delayed accountability, increased administrative costs, and inconsistent implementation
Political and organizational influences	Patronage relationships, institutional independence, informal norms, and perceptions of selective enforcement	Risks to impartiality, public confidence, and consistent application of accountability mechanisms

Note: Table 2 presents thematic interpretations of the respective documents, i.e., a summary. It does not attempt to quantify the respective issues mentioned herein, i.e., frequency, weight, or even causality.

These three dimensions form a complex web. For instance, inadequate resources could lead to delays in the processes, while lack of coordination could undermine the potency of otherwise sufficient legal framework. Similarly, how much politicians influence anti-corruption agencies and how such influence affects both their integrity and public perception is also a complex matter that is shaped by a multitude of factors including informal organization.

The "implementation gap" described above thus constitutes a multifaceted problem of governance that cannot be reduced to legal deficiencies of individual laws, organizational failures of anti-corruption agencies or bribery-fighting policies of politicians in power.

To address corruption and curb its persistence in the Philippine public sector, anti-corruption reform must be implemented in three ways to tackle the several problems of corruption embedded in the public sector's institutions and systems.

Conclusion

This study examines the anti-corruption policies and their implementation in the Philippine public sector through qualitative documentary analysis focusing on the legal framework and the corresponding institutions established to fight corruption.

From a legal perspective, the anti-corruption measures implemented in the Philippines provide for an extensive, comprehensive, and highly developed legal framework to prevent, detect, investigate, and punish corruption. As mentioned above, these are primarily embedded in major legislation such as the 1987 Constitution, the DAP Individuals aligned Charter on Good Governance and the more recently-enacted Saligang Batas tungo sa Malasakit ng Mamamayan or the People-Centered Constitutional Reform participating laws such as the Batas Pambansa Blg. 301 or the Department of Audit Act (now re-christened Department of Transparency and Accountability), the Philippine Anti-Corruption Commission or the SandiganBayan Act (Blg. 310), the Code of Ethics for Public Officials and Employees (Blg. 760ﻕﻝ), and the Procurement Reform Act or the General Appropriations Law (Blg. 613) for the prompt, efficient and effective implementation of government programs and services.

Despite having adequate legal frameworks against corruption, institutional weaknesses in terms of capacity and co-ordination as well as procedural and enforcement issues have become entrenched. Implementation problems further expose these laws and agencies to political influences and are therefore in need of organizational and political fixes.

These theories are also used to explain the findings of this study, namely, the relationship between the formal anti-corruption governance structures of Philippine anti-corruption agencies and their anti-corruption work. Principal–Agent Theory is employed to explain the role of oversight and transparency in empowering agents against corruption. Lastly, Collective Action Theory is used to explain the persistence of corruption risk in Philippine public sector organizations despite anti-corruption efforts.

An integrated approach to improve anti-corruption governance involving the strengthening of institutional capacity, modernization of procedures, independent oversight, transparent administration and consistent enforcement of existing laws and regulations is needed.

While the documentary evidence provides insight to the problems facing the country and solutions to these problems, it does not attempt to state the causes of each problem or provides a comprehensive quantitative assessment of a department's performance.

Subsequent studies on this issue may build on the findings presented in this study through qualitative and quantitative studies including key informant interviews, cross-national comparison of anti-corruption agencies, longitudinal

studies and empirical assessment of corruption-intervening programs and projects.

Policy Recommendations

From the findings of this study, for the Philippine public sector, to strengthen anti-corruption governance in, the following can be suggested as potential reforms to tackle corruption.

1. Strengthen Institutional Independence and Operational Capacity

Review the current safeguards, requirements and mechanisms of anti-corruption institutions and oversight agencies in the government.

Strengthening professional staffing, enhancing their investigation, financial analysis and information management capabilities as well as that of other anti-corruption agencies and coordination of government agencies, including executive departments, offices and agencies.

Review the appointment, removal and ongoing oversight processes to strengthen governance, bring greater transparency to the current processes and check against potential corruption influence.

Lastly, it is also important to ensure that institutions are given adequate and sustainable budget for their operations and program while at the same time preserving the constitution and its corresponding implementing rules and regulations to ensure financial accountability.

The same mistake can be made for anti-corruption programs when budget is seen as a guarantee for independence rather than relating it to required funding, autonomy and performance.

2. Improve Judicial Efficiency and Case Management

Anti-corruption enforcement agencies and the courts can work together to strengthen the case management systems to process all cases of corruption from investigation through the trial process as expeditiously as possible without undue delay.

Examples of case management could be integrated electronic case management systems (ECMS), the use of a standardized documentary evidence system, the coordination between investigators and prosecutors, and a regular monitoring of the age of a case as well as its disposition in relation to established performance standards.

Studying using verified caseload data, geographic needs, available funds, and applicable constitutional restrictions, to consider possible expansion of the judiciary's capacity or to consider making changes in existing procedures.

Performance standards should allow for the timely resolution of cases. However, the same should not result in hastily conducted investigations that could compromise due process and the quality of investigation.

3. Enhance Procurement Transparency and Financial Oversight

Improved transparency in government procurement should be facilitated through publicly available information on open tendering processes and contract monitoring for all government purchases.

Republic Act No. 12009 and its implementing regulations should also be monitored and evaluated to see whether the new system of government procurement is more efficient, transparent, competitive and accountable.

Access to information on public procurement by interested citizens shall include notices inviting public bidding and awards, contracts, and other modifications on said contracts as authorized by law.

Similarly, all government agencies must establish effective internal audit systems to conduct risk-based review of their procurement processes, and set up appropriate mechanisms to address audit findings.

Also critical in procurement, especially in exceptional situations where government purchasing flexibility is warranted, are adequate documentation thereof and the corresponding oversight mechanisms.

4. Strengthen Whistleblower Protection and Public Access to Information

Good faith reporting of suspected corruption should also be further safeguarded by comprehensive legislation intended to protect whistleblowers.

An effective whistleblower protection regime contains confidential reporting channels, adequate protection against retaliation, clear procedures for investigations and adequate legal remedies.

Such incentives and immunity should be designed to prevent more harm than they cause and be consistent with due process and the provisions of existing laws.

In addition, the country should consider enacting a comprehensive freedom-of-information statute that enumerates the rights of every citizen to obtain information from covered government institutions.

This legislation will have to strike a fair balance between transparency and interests protected by law such as privacy, national security and other confidentiality interests.

5. Institutionalize Performance Monitoring and Evidence-Based Evaluation

Use of consistent performance indicators by anti-corruption institutions for monitoring and evaluation of their enforcement and institutional work.

Complaint processing time, investigation completion rate, case age, case closure rate by prosecution outcome, audit report recommendation implementation rate, and administrative service standard compliance rate are some of the potential performance indicators for anti-corruption enforcement bodies.

In addition, when creating indicators, it is very important to clearly define them and to use them as intended by the institution within the framework of its mandate. Thus, for example, the rate of cases brought to trial and resolved by a decision of the first instance, must not be the only criterion for the evaluation of an anti-corruption agency, because in addition to these factors there are many others bearing on the institution's performance.

Regular public reporting on and independent evaluation of anti-corruption bodies will promote greater transparency, and help the anti-corruption program evaluate its performance and identify ways to improve in the long run.

6. Promote Integrity-Based Organizational Practices

Formal anti-corruption measures need to be complemented by efforts to change organizational cultures, values and ethics within government institutions.

All public institutions, government agencies and offices including government-owned or controlled corporations (GOCCs) should adopt integrity measures, such as ethics education, conflict-of-interest management, transparent personnel practices and accountability of top management.

Incorporate the integrity initiatives into the organization's performance goals. Ensure that there are reporting mechanisms as well as consistent administrative enforcement of these integrity initiatives in all public institutions.

The study finds that public education and civic participation in promoting integrity at the alternative dispute resolution bodies may also promote collective expectations for ethical governance and responsible public resource utilization.

Overall Policy Implication

This means that, anti-corruption governance is affected by several factors including anti-corruption laws, the capacity of anti-corruption agencies, anti-corruption practices in government and accountability measures to monitor anti-corruption institutions and anti-corruption efforts.

More anti-corruption laws will not automatically lead to better anti-corruption enforcement and increased integrity in the public sector.

Implementing and sustainably making anti-corruption work means that public institutions have the resources they need to function; can exercise their given powers both lawfully and independently of obstruction; coordinate better in terms of anti-corruption policy; and are held accountable by transparent and verifiable performance standards.

Addressing these interconnected issues would help the Philippine government strengthen existing anti-corruption laws and improve governance towards a more transparent, accountable, and responsive public service.

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EXAMINING STRATEGIC PLANNING PRACTICES IN EDUCATION: A DOCUMENT ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

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Abstract

Strategic planning is essential to organizational effectiveness, institutional sustainability, and quality improvement in vocational and technical education. This study examined the strategic planning practices of Workforce Career Institute (WCII) through a qualitative document analysis of its School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2024–2029. Guided by Strategic Planning Theory, Systems Theory, and Institutional Theory, the study assessed the SIP's structural components, strategic alignment, evidence-based decision-making, resource allocation, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Findings revealed that the SIP contains the essential elements of strategic planning, including institutional vision and mission, situational analysis, strategic objectives, action plans, assigned responsibilities, timelines, resource requirements, and monitoring mechanisms. The SIP also demonstrates strong alignment between institutional goals, workforce development objectives, technical training programs, and external requirements. However, several limitations were identified, including generalized resource allocation, insufficient cost-benefit analysis, limited operational key performance indicators (KPIs), inadequate learner performance and employment data, and weak mechanisms for continuous monitoring and feedback. These limitations affect the institution's capacity for evidence-based decision-making and adaptive planning. The study proposes an improved strategic planning framework incorporating measurable KPIs, activity-level resource mapping, stakeholder-informed data systems, interim performance reviews, and formalized feedback mechanisms. The proposed framework seeks to strengthen institutional effectiveness by transforming strategic planning from a compliance-oriented process into an adaptive, evidence-based approach to sustainable quality improvement.

Keywords: Strategic planning, School improvement plan, Vocational education, Evidence-based decision-making, Institutional effectiveness

Introduction

Strategic planning is a fundamental aspect of effective educational management, governance and organization development. It provides a systematic approach for an educational organization to set long-term goals and objectives and utilize its resources effectively in order to measure organization's performance for sustainable growth and development. Bryson (2018) added that strategic planning

helps an organization to deal with changing environments by aligning an organization's mission with stakeholders' expectations and strategies to achieve organization's objectives. Thus, in a education context, strategic planning not only focuses on administration and management but also on learning and teaching to improve student learning outcomes. Hence, a school and its educational organization would engage in strategic planning which is evidence-based and result-oriented in order to hold themselves accountable and for sustainable growth and development.

In TVET institutions strategic planning is particularly important in view of the technical and vocational orientation of the provided programs. These institutions have to adjust to technological change, to changing needs of the employment market, to new requirements of the labor market and to changing industry standards. School improvement planning in TVET institutions in particular focuses on fulfilling goals of educational quality and on fostering competitiveness of the workforce. In order to reach these goals of economic development strategies in a sustainable manner and on an inclusive basis for all segments of the population, in addition to their educational quality, TVET institutions need to develop their institutional capacity to improve their quality in a structured way and foster the employability of their graduates.

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) of a school is a strategic management tool used by a school to translate school goals into school priorities, school programs and school performance outcomes. The SIP outlines goals of a school and areas where school needs to improve. Strategies and actions to achieve school goals are spelled out. People and resources required to implement plans are identified and assigned. Mechanism to monitor and evaluate progress of school is also outlined. An SIP could focus on a number of parameters including relevance of school curriculum, effectiveness of learning and teaching processes, professional growth of teaching staff, retention of students in school, adequacy of learning resources, physical facilities and resources and financial sustainability of school programs and activities. Improvement of these parameters is at the heart of school improvement planning and it is closely related to the concepts of educational accountability and organizational development. While an SIP contains required elements of school improvement planning, the quality of an SIP would be measured in terms of coherence, implementation ability and relevance to the school from which the plan is developed.

Strategic planning although recognized as important, school improvement planning is fraught with organizational and administrative challenges. Schools and educational institutions develop improvement plans but often without clear connections to problems and needs, strategic objectives, planned strategies and actions, required resources, and anticipated results. Many schools and educational institutions are primarily engaged in producing documentation to satisfy external requirements and accountability measures. Such approaches to school improvement are often dominated by an accountability-oriented improvement planning that creates difficulties between external requirements and internal processes and structures of schools. According to Fullan (2016) improving schools requires more than implementing policies and programs. It requires a

commitment to improve, leadership to change, the organizational capacity to implement improvements, and implementation that is consistent in the long term.

Use of institutional data for identifying and addressing problems and for evaluating improvement is a critical component of effective strategic planning. The use of evidence-based decisions regarding educational improvement requires a systemic organization for gathering and utilizing data on educational programs and institutions. In institutions of higher education, for example, a wide range of data can and should be used for identifying strengths and weaknesses of current offerings, planning new programs, and assessing the effectiveness of currently offered programs (Schildkamp, 2019). Evidence-informed planning is not the same as data-informed planning; the latter involves a systematic search for data related to a variety of topics including an institution's current strengths and weaknesses, as well as needs. However, data-informed planning lacks an important link between data and related developmental needs and strategies for addressing those needs by achieving desired ends or goals (Schildkamp, 2019). The link to be made is that between data, related needs, strategies for addressing those needs, and resulting ends or goals to be achieved (Schildkamp, 2019).

It is also important that strategic planning is supported by a system of monitoring, evaluation and accountability. This can be achieved by identifying performance indicators and setting up a timeline for the implementation of a strategy, assigning responsibilities and regularly evaluating progress towards set goals. Strategic planning can thus be perceived as a process of organizational learning and adaptation. Therefore, the SIP should function as a dynamic tool for strategic management in schools to promote reflection, decision-making on the basis of evidence and institutions' ability to respond to new challenges in the field of education.

Although many resources are available regarding strategic planning, organizational change, and school improvement, most of these resources are developed to be used at an organizational level and therefore are not specific to technical and vocational educational institutions. In addition, most of the school improvement planning resources are designed for schools that are based primarily in a traditional academic model of education. Thus, there is a need to examine how organizations that are based in a career-oriented model of education use strategic planning within their School Improvement Plans (SIPs). A study of the SIPs of technical and vocational schools can provide insight into whether or not these organizations use strategic planning in a coherent, evidence-based, implementable, and accountable manner within their improvement plans.

This study is designed to develop an understanding of the strategic management practices reflected in a School Improvement Plan (SIP) of a technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institute. Specifically, the study investigated several aspects of the SIP of Workforce Career Institute (WCII) through qualitative document analysis. The factors that were examined included (1) the clarity and alignment of the goals of an institution, (2) the identification of strategic priorities for school improvement, (3) the use of data from the performance of an institution to guide improvement, (4) the logical relationship

between any proposed interventions and intended outcomes, and (5) the mechanisms that are planned for implementing and monitoring for the implementation of strategies outlined in a SIP.

The Study further examines and determines if the School Improvement Plan (SIP) of Workforce Career Institute, Inc. (WCII) presents the established principles of strategic planning and continued improvement of schools in a School Improvement Plan document. Furthermore, the Study checks for internal coherence and logic of the SIP by examining the institution's identified needs and corresponding strategies for achieving institutional development through SIP which are intended to improve School's performance, and identify measures and systems for monitoring and evaluating the improvement efforts.

This study is important to develop the body of knowledge for effective strategic planning and institutional improvement in TVET. Findings of this study will reveal the strengths and limitations of documented planning practices of WCII. Moreover, it will help the administrator, planner, quality assurer and other stakeholders in improving school improvement plans. It will make school improvement planning meaningful to develop school into great institution that delivers quality education and develop school into learning organization that can face future challenges through continuing improvement.

Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of the present study is to study strategic practices which are reflected in the School Improvement Plan of Workforce Career Institute (WCII). The study aims to investigate extent to which school improvement plans of Workforce Career Institute reflect principles of effective strategic planning in terms of translation of school's priorities into improvements and related outcomes.

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What strategic planning practices are evident in the School Improvement Plan of Workforce Career Institute in terms of:
    - Institutional vision, mission, and strategic objectives;
    - Identification of institutional needs and development priorities;
    - Formulation of strategic initiatives and implementation strategies;
    - Resource allocation and assignment of responsibilities; and
    - Monitoring, evaluation, and performance measurement mechanisms?
2. How does the School Improvement Plan demonstrate strategic alignment and coherence among institutional goals, identified priorities, proposed interventions, and expected outcomes?
3. To what extent is evidence-based decision-making reflected in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) specifically in identifying problems and corresponding needs of the school, determining the school's priorities for improvement, and establishing corresponding measures and performance indicators for measuring improvement?

4. What are the strengths and limitations of the document and what are the areas for improvement of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)?
5. What recommendations can be made to further strengthen the strategic planning framework of Workforce Career Institute and be of value for future school improvement planning?

Methods

This study employed a qualitative document analysis design to systematically review and interpret official institutional records.

Unit of Analysis & Materials

The primary artifact analyzed was the officially approved *Workforce Career Institute School Improvement Plan (2024–2029)*. Supplementary documents included annual progress reports, departmental action plans, and accreditation self-survey reports where referenced in the core plan.

Data Collection & Analysis Tool

Data extraction and evaluation were conducted using a structured, researcher-developed Document Analysis Protocol consisting of three main instruments:

1. Document Analysis Checklist: Evaluated eight specific indicators, including vision-mission alignment, situational analysis depth, strategic objective clarity, resource budgeting detail, performance indicators (KPIs), monitoring/evaluation mechanisms, stakeholder engagement evidence, and policy compliance.
2. Coding Sheet: Facilitated qualitative thematic analysis using both deductive codes derived from the theoretical frameworks and inductive codes emerging from the text.
3. Data Extraction Matrix: Organized qualitative excerpts and structural components across planning domains to evaluate internal logical consistency.

Analytical Procedure

The document analysis followed a four-step iterative qualitative process:

1. Skimming & Structural Mapping: Initial reading to outline document layout, major sections, and structural compliance.
2. Detailed Reading & Qualitative Coding: In-depth textual examination to code content according to the predefined checklist criteria.
3. Thematic Categorization: Grouping coded segments into broader strategic domains (e.g., Vision-Mission Alignment, Data-Driven Prioritization, Monitoring Rigor).
4. Synthesis & Triangulation: Evaluating extracted qualitative themes against Strategic Planning Theory, Systems Theory, and Institutional Theory.

Results

The systematic document analysis of the Workforce Career Institute (WCII) School Improvement Plan (SIP) examined five principal dimensions of strategic planning: (1) structural components and coverage, (2) strategic alignment and internal coherence, (3) evidence-based decision-making and data utilization, (4) resource allocation and prioritization, and (5) monitoring, evaluation, and feedback mechanisms. The analysis focused on the completeness of the planning document, the logical relationships among its components, the use of institutional evidence, the operational feasibility of proposed initiatives, and the adequacy of mechanisms for assessing implementation progress.

Overall, the findings indicate that WCII's SIP provides a recognizable institutional planning framework, with clearly articulated organizational direction, defined strategic priority areas, and documented implementation activities. However, several limitations were identified in the operationalization of strategic objectives, the integration of diagnostic evidence, the specification of resource requirements, and the establishment of continuous monitoring mechanisms. These findings suggest that although the SIP provides a foundation for institutional development, further improvements may be necessary to strengthen its operational precision, evidence base, and accountability arrangements.

Structural Components and Coverage

The analysis revealed that WCII's SIP contains the principal structural components associated with institutional improvement planning. These include the institution's vision, mission, and values; situational analysis; strategic priority areas; an action plan matrix; resource allocation provisions; and a monitoring and evaluation section. The presence of these components indicates that the document provides a formal structure for identifying institutional priorities and organizing proposed improvement initiatives.

However, the completeness of the document's structure does not necessarily establish the operational quality of its planning provisions. Although several components are explicitly presented, the analysis identified limitations in the level of detail provided for resource allocation and monitoring and evaluation. Table 1 summarizes the structural components and their documented characteristics.

Table 1.
Structural Components and Operational Characteristics of WCII's School Improvement Plan

SIP Component	Documented Presence	Observed Characteristics
Vision, mission, and values	Present	Explicitly articulated; emphasizes workforce readiness and community development.

Situational analysis	Present	Includes baseline enrollment and completion data, as well as a SWOT analysis.
Strategic objectives	Present	Organized around five broad strategic priority areas.
Action plan matrix	Present	Identifies planned activities, responsible personnel, and target implementation periods.
Resource allocation and budget	Partially developed	Provides broad budget allocations by strategic category but lacks detailed cost estimates for individual activities.
Monitoring and evaluation	Partially developed	Includes annual review arrangements but does not specify interim monitoring milestones or feedback instruments.

Note. The classifications reflect the characteristics reported in the document analysis and should not be interpreted as evidence of actual implementation or institutional performance.

As shown in Table 1, the SIP demonstrates structural coverage across the principal areas of institutional planning. The inclusion of a situational analysis and SWOT matrix provides a basis for identifying organizational conditions and development priorities, while the action plan matrix establishes a formal connection between planned activities, assigned personnel, and implementation periods.

Nevertheless, the resource allocation and monitoring provisions appear less operationally developed than the document's other components. Broad budget categories provide a general indication of institutional investment priorities but offer limited information about the financial requirements of individual interventions. Similarly, annual reviews establish a periodic evaluation mechanism but do not fully specify how progress will be assessed throughout implementation.

These findings indicate that WCII's SIP possesses a recognizable planning structure, although the degree of operational detail varies across its components. Strengthening the connection between strategic objectives, activity-level budgets, performance indicators, and monitoring schedules could improve the document's usefulness as an institutional management instrument.

Strategic Alignment and Internal Coherence

The analysis identified substantial conceptual alignment between WCII's institutional vision and its broad strategic priorities. The emphasis on workforce-ready competencies is reflected in objectives concerning the expansion of industry-certified technical programs and the improvement of technical training facilities. This correspondence suggests that the institution's proposed development

initiatives are broadly consistent with its stated commitment to workforce preparation and industry relevance.

The relationship between institutional direction and strategic priorities represents an important strength of the SIP. A clearly articulated institutional vision provides a basis for determining which initiatives deserve organizational attention and how improvement activities should contribute to the institution's long-term purpose.

However, the analysis also identified gaps between certain strategic objectives and their corresponding operational activities. Although the plan prioritizes improvements in technical certification performance, the associated action items do not sufficiently specify some of the implementation arrangements needed to support this objective. In particular, the reported findings indicate limited detail concerning faculty training schedules and budget provisions for updated testing software.

This limitation suggests that the alignment between institutional aspirations and operational implementation is not consistently developed across all planning components. While the broad objectives are conceptually coherent, their translation into specific, adequately resourced activities requires further clarification.

For example, an objective to improve technical certification pass rates would be more operationally complete if the plan identified baseline certification results, established measurable performance targets, specified relevant faculty development activities, identified the resources required for assessment preparation, and established a schedule for reviewing progress.

The absence of such details does not necessarily indicate that the institution lacks these activities or resources. Rather, it indicates that the available planning document does not sufficiently demonstrate how all the necessary implementation arrangements are connected to the stated objective.

Overall, the findings suggest that WCII's SIP demonstrates stronger alignment at the level of institutional vision and strategic priorities than at the level of operational planning. Improving this connection could help ensure that strategic objectives are translated into specific, feasible, and measurable improvement initiatives.

Evidence-Based Decision-Making and Data Utilization

The analysis revealed that WCII's SIP incorporates baseline institutional information, particularly historical enrollment figures, completion rates, and physical facility inventories. The inclusion of these indicators provides an initial basis for describing institutional conditions and identifying areas that may require improvement.

However, the use of institutional evidence appears to be primarily descriptive rather than diagnostic. The reported findings indicate limited integration of more detailed information, including disaggregated skills-gap assessments, longitudinal graduate employment data, and direct employer feedback.

Descriptive indicators can help establish an institution's general performance profile, but they may not sufficiently explain the underlying causes of identified problems. For example, declining enrollment figures may indicate a need for institutional intervention, but additional evidence may be necessary to determine whether the decline is associated with program relevance, recruitment practices, affordability, scheduling, student support, or other factors.

Similarly, overall completion rates may reveal patterns in student progression without identifying the specific programs, learner groups, or stages of training associated with completion difficulties. More detailed analysis could therefore help the institution develop interventions that respond to identifiable problems rather than relying on broad institutional assumptions.

The limited integration of graduate employment and employer feedback data is particularly relevant to a workforce-oriented institution. Information concerning graduate employment, employer satisfaction, occupational competencies, and industry requirements could help establish whether existing programs remain responsive to labor market needs.

Nevertheless, the absence of these data from the SIP should not be interpreted as evidence that WCII does not collect or use them elsewhere. The finding is limited to the information documented in the planning instrument examined.

Taken together, the results indicate that WCII's SIP establishes a basic evidentiary foundation through historical performance indicators but provides limited documented evidence of more comprehensive diagnostic analysis. Strengthening the relationship between institutional data, identified needs, strategic priorities, and measurable targets could improve the analytical basis of future planning decisions.

Resource Allocation and Strategic Prioritization

The analysis found that WCII's SIP includes broad annual budget estimates associated with its principal strategic priority areas. This provision indicates that financial resources are recognized as an important consideration in institutional planning.

However, the level of financial detail is insufficient to establish the precise resource requirements of individual improvement activities. The reported findings indicate that the plan does not consistently provide activity-level cost estimates or detailed analyses connecting proposed expenditures with expected results.

Broad budget allocations can communicate general investment priorities, but they provide limited information about whether individual initiatives are financially feasible. Without more detailed estimates, it may be difficult to determine whether the resources allocated to a particular objective are sufficient to support its implementation.

The analysis also identified limited documentation of explicit prioritization procedures for situations involving financial constraints. The plan does not clearly establish how competing initiatives would be ranked or how resources might be adjusted if available funding became insufficient to support all proposed activities.

This limitation is important because educational institutions must often balance several development priorities within finite financial and organizational capacities. Strategic planning therefore requires not only the identification of desirable initiatives but also a defensible basis for determining their relative urgency, feasibility, and expected contribution to institutional objectives.

A more operationally developed SIP could specify estimated costs for individual activities, identify potential funding sources, distinguish essential expenditures from discretionary initiatives, and establish criteria for prioritizing investments. Where appropriate, it could also identify alternative implementation arrangements for activities affected by resource limitations.

The findings suggest that WCII's SIP recognizes the importance of resource allocation but could provide stronger documentation of the financial and prioritization mechanisms required to translate strategic objectives into feasible institutional actions.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback Mechanisms

The analysis revealed that WCII's SIP includes annual administrative reviews as part of its monitoring and evaluation arrangements. This provision establishes a formal mechanism for periodically examining institutional progress and reviewing the status of planned initiatives.

However, the monitoring framework appears to rely primarily on end-of-cycle reporting rather than a clearly articulated schedule of interim assessments. The reported findings indicate that the plan does not sufficiently specify quarterly milestones, formative review procedures, or structured feedback instruments for evaluating implementation progress.

The absence of documented interim monitoring arrangements may limit the plan's capacity to identify emerging implementation difficulties before the end of the planning cycle. Annual reviews can provide an overview of progress, but they may not offer timely information about delays, resource shortages, incomplete activities, or the need to adjust implementation strategies.

Furthermore, the reported findings indicate limited specification of qualitative indicators for assessing implementation processes. Quantitative measures, such as enrollment totals and certification pass rates, can demonstrate changes in institutional performance, but they may not fully explain why particular interventions succeed or encounter difficulties. Qualitative evidence, including stakeholder feedback, faculty reflections, student experiences, and employer assessments, may provide additional insight into the implementation process.

A more comprehensive monitoring framework could establish measurable indicators, baseline values, target outcomes, responsible monitoring personnel, and scheduled review periods for each strategic objective. It could also specify the documentary evidence required to verify progress and the procedures through which findings would inform corrective action.

For example, a quarterly review could assess whether planned faculty training activities have been completed, whether required equipment has been procured, and whether implementation remains within the approved budget. Subsequent reviews could examine whether these activities are contributing to the intended improvements in training delivery and certification outcomes.

These examples represent possible improvements to the documented monitoring framework rather than claims about activities currently undertaken by WCII.

Overall, the findings suggest that the SIP establishes a formal basis for periodic administrative review but provides limited documentation of continuous monitoring and feedback processes. Strengthening these mechanisms could improve implementation oversight, support timely adjustments, and establish a clearer connection between planned activities and institutional improvement outcomes.

Summary of Findings

The document analysis identified both strengths and areas for development in WCII's strategic planning framework. The SIP contains the principal components of an institutional improvement plan, articulates a clear organizational direction, identifies strategic priority areas, and specifies activities, responsible personnel, and implementation periods. These characteristics provide a foundation for organizing institutional development initiatives.

However, the analysis also revealed several limitations. First, the operational detail of the plan varies across components, particularly in resource allocation and monitoring and evaluation. Second, the connection between broad strategic objectives and specific implementation arrangements is not consistently developed. Third, the use of institutional data appears to emphasize historical descriptions rather than detailed diagnostic analysis. Fourth, the budget provisions provide limited activity-level cost information and do not clearly document procedures for reprioritizing initiatives under financial constraints.

Finally, monitoring and evaluation arrangements emphasize annual reviews, with limited specification of interim milestones and structured feedback mechanisms.

Table 2.
Summary of Strategic Planning Strengths and Areas for Development

Evaluation Dimension	Identified Strengths	Areas for Development
Structural components and coverage	Major planning components are documented.	Improve the operational detail of resource allocation and monitoring provisions.
Strategic alignment and internal coherence	Institutional vision is broadly reflected in strategic priorities.	Strengthen the connection between objectives, implementation activities, resource requirements, and expected outcomes.
Evidence-based decision-making	Baseline enrollment, completion, and facility information is included.	Expand the documented use of diagnostic data, graduate outcomes, skills-gap assessments, and employer feedback where available.
Resource allocation and prioritization	Broad annual budget estimates are linked to strategic priority areas.	Provide activity-level cost estimates and clearer prioritization procedures.
Monitoring, evaluation, and feedback	Annual administrative reviews are specified.	Establish interim monitoring milestones, measurable indicators, and structured feedback mechanisms.

Note. This summary reflects the reported documentary findings and identifies areas for potential improvement. It does not independently establish the actual implementation or effectiveness of WCI's institutional initiatives.

Collectively, the findings suggest that WCII's SIP provides a formal and conceptually coherent foundation for institutional planning, but several components require greater operational specificity. The principal issue identified is not the absence of a planning structure but the uneven development of the mechanisms connecting institutional objectives to evidence, resources, implementation activities, and performance evaluation.

The results therefore support the need for a more integrated approach to strategic planning in which institutional priorities are grounded in relevant evidence, translated into feasible and measurable activities, supported by appropriate resource commitments, and evaluated through regular monitoring and feedback. These findings provide the empirical foundation for the subsequent discussion of WCII's strategic planning practices and the formulation of recommendations for strengthening its School Improvement Plan.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that strategic planning at Workforce Career Institute effectively balances the requirements of institutional legitimacy with basic strategic management principles, though notable areas for operational improvement remain.



Strategic Coherence vs. Ceremonial Compliance

Through the lens of Institutional Theory, WCII's SIP demonstrates strong compliance with external reporting standards and institutional norms. The inclusion of standardized sections, SMART-aligned overarching goals, and formal administrative signatures confirms that the document successfully fulfills its symbolic role of establishing organizational legitimacy.

However, viewed through Strategic Planning Theory, the disconnect between high-level strategic goals and granular operational budgets suggests a degree of "decoupling"—a common phenomenon where planning documents satisfy compliance needs but offer limited operational direction for day-to-day execution.

Systemic Interdependence & Process Mapping

From a Systems Theory perspective, WCII's plan treats institutional inputs (facilities, budgets) and outputs (graduates, job placements) as linear transitions. The plan underestimates the complex, interdependent feedback processes connecting instructional quality, industry mentorship, student support services, and curriculum adaptation. Without embedded formative feedback loops, the system struggles to make real-time adjustments when operational bottlenecks occur during program delivery.

Strengths & Key Areas for Improvement

- **Identified Strengths:**
    - Clear, inspiring vision and mission statements aligned with workforce development imperatives.
    - Comprehensive structural coverage following recognized educational planning standards.
    - Strong alignment between institutional identity and long-term strategic priority areas.

- **Key Weaknesses / Gaps:**
    - Over-reliance on high-level administrative data rather than diagnostic labor-market data.
    - Imprecise resource allocation details at the specific activity and program levels.
    - Absence of structured quarterly feedback mechanisms and process-oriented KPIs.

Proposed Enhancements for Strategic Planning Practice

To strengthen WCI's strategic planning framework, the following actionable enhancements are recommended:

1. Adopt a Dynamic Input-Process-Output-Outcome (IPOO) Planning Matrix: Transition from static action tables to integrated process maps that specify leading metrics alongside lagging indicators.
2. Integrate Granular Costing & Contingency Budgeting: Detail line-item operational expenses for each strategic activity and establish priority tiers to guide resource allocation during revenue fluctuations.
3. Establish Quarterly Formative Review Cycles: Embed formal quarterly review milestones using balanced scorecard frameworks to allow for real-time instructional and operational adjustments.
4. Enhance Stakeholder & Labor Data Integration: Expand situational analysis to include active labor market intelligence, industry advisory board evaluations, and alumni career progression metrics.

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IMPACT OF MOOE UTILIZATION ON THE QUALITY OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF MAGDIWANG

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Abstract

This study evaluated the impact of Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) utilization on classroom instruction quality in twelve public elementary and secondary schools in Magdiwang, Romblon, during SY 2025–2026. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were gathered from 133 respondents—comprising school heads, a head teacher, and classroom teachers—via a validated Likert-scale questionnaire covering six dimensions each of MOOE utilization and instructional quality. Data were analyzed using weighted means, standard deviations, and Pearson's product-moment correlation. The findings revealed an overall grand mean of 4.32 for MOOE utilization (Very High Utilization), led by Teacher Support and Professional Activities (4.40). The overall quality of classroom instruction earned a grand mean of 4.57 (Very High Quality), with Instructional Delivery and Classroom Management both ranking highest (4.67). Inferential analysis demonstrated a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between MOOE utilization and instructional quality ($r = 0.682$, $p < 0.001$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The study concludes that strategic MOOE allocation enhances teacher preparedness, learning environments, and operational continuity. Recommendations include strengthening needs-based financial planning, expanding instructional material procurement, and sustaining MOOE-funded professional development.

Keywords: MOOE Utilization, Classroom Instruction Quality, School-Based Management, Educational Resource Allocation, Public School Administration

Introduction

Education plays a vital role in national development because it equips learners with the necessary knowledge, skills, values, and competencies needed for lifelong learning and productive citizenship. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) continuously implements reforms and programs to improve the quality of education in public schools. One of the major support mechanisms provided to schools is the allocation of Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), which serves as a financial resource intended for the day-to-day operational needs of schools.

MOOE utilization has become an essential factor in ensuring the effective delivery of classroom instruction. Through proper utilization of MOOE, schools are

able to provide instructional materials, improve classroom environments, support teacher activities, maintain school facilities, and address other educational needs that directly affect teaching and learning processes. The quality of classroom instruction may be enhanced when resources are adequately managed and properly utilized.

In public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang, school heads and teachers are expected to efficiently utilize MOOE funds to support educational programs and classroom instruction. However, differences in school size, teacher population, and administrative capacity may affect how MOOE is allocated and utilized. Some schools may face challenges in prioritizing expenditures, procurement processes, and instructional resource allocation.

The Municipality of Magdiwang consists of several public elementary and secondary schools with varying teacher populations and organizational structures. The elementary schools included in this study are Agsao Elementary School with 1 school head and 7 teachers; Agutay Elementary School with 1 school head and 12 teachers; Ambulong Elementary School with 1 school head and 7 teachers; Dulangan Elementary School with 1 school head and 8 teachers; Ipil Elementary School with 1 school head and 9 teachers; Jao-asan Elementary School with 1 school head and 7 teachers; Magdiwang Elementary School with 1 school head and 24 teachers; Silum Elementary School with 1 school head and 7 teachers; Tampayan Elementary School with 1 school head and 8 teachers; and Tomas and Maria T. Maglaya Memorial Elementary School with 1 school head and 8 teachers. The secondary schools include Magdiwang National High School with 1 school head, 3 head teachers, and 51 teachers, and Agutay National High School with 1 school head and 20 teachers.

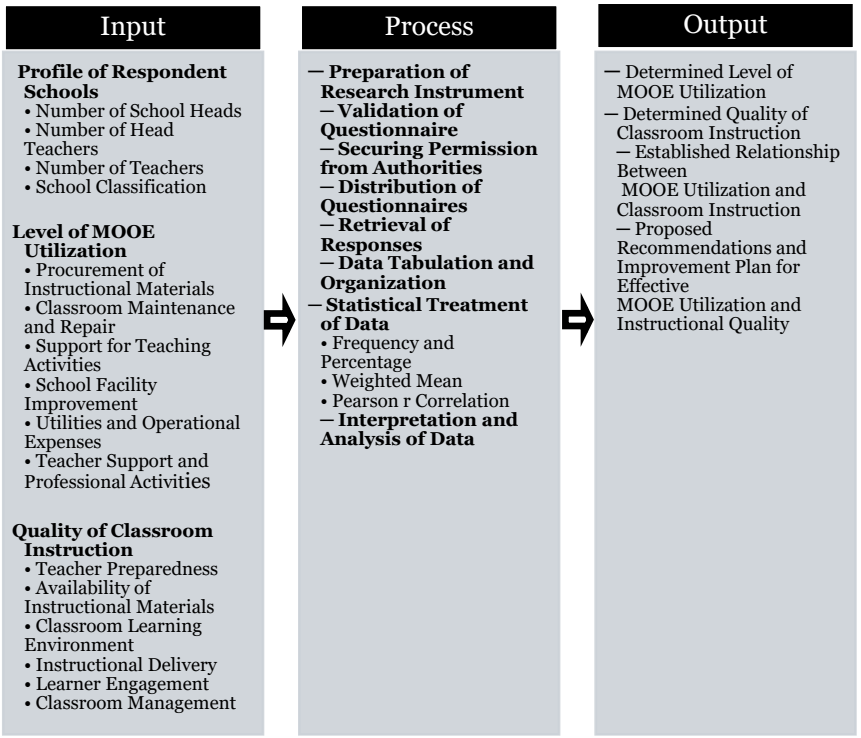
Considering the importance of financial management in schools, this study seeks to determine the impact of MOOE utilization on the quality of classroom instruction in public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang. The findings of this study may provide useful information for school administrators, teachers, policy makers, and stakeholders in improving financial utilization and instructional quality.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Resource-Based Theory developed by Barney (1991), which emphasizes that organizational resources, when properly managed and utilized, contribute significantly to improved performance and outcomes. In the context of education, MOOE funds are considered important organizational resources that support teaching and learning activities.

The study is also guided by Systems Theory proposed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, which explains that schools function as systems composed of interrelated components such as administration, teachers, learners, facilities, and financial resources. Effective utilization of MOOE contributes to the smooth functioning of the educational system and enhances instructional delivery.

Furthermore, the study is supported by the Theory of Educational Productivity by Walberg (1981), which states that learning outcomes are influenced by environmental, instructional, and psychological factors. Adequate instructional resources funded through MOOE may contribute to better classroom instruction and improved learner outcomes.



Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study presents the relationship between MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction.

The independent variable of the study is MOOE utilization, which includes:

1. Procurement of instructional materials
2. Classroom maintenance and repair
3. Support for teaching activities
4. School facility improvement
5. Utilities and operational expenses
6. Teacher support and professional activities

The dependent variable is the quality of classroom instruction, which includes:

1. Teacher preparedness
2. Availability of instructional materials
3. Classroom learning environment
4. Instructional delivery
5. Learner engagement
6. Classroom management

The study assumes that effective and efficient MOOE utilization positively affects the quality of classroom instruction.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the impact of MOOE utilization on the quality of classroom instruction in public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondent schools in terms of: 1.1 number of teachers; 1.2 number of school heads; and 1.3 school classification?
2. What is the level of MOOE utilization in terms of: 2.1 procurement of instructional materials; 2.2 classroom maintenance and repair; 2.3 support for teaching activities; 2.4 school facility improvement; 2.5 utilities and operational expenses; and 2.6 teacher support and professional activities?
3. What is the level of quality of classroom instruction in terms of: 3.1 teacher preparedness; 3.2 availability of instructional materials; 3.3 classroom learning environment; 3.4 instructional delivery; 3.5 learner engagement; and 3.6 classroom management?
4. Is there a significant relationship between MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction?
5. What recommendations may be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Methods

This study used the descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive method will be utilized to determine the level of MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction, while the correlational method will be used to determine the significant relationship between the variables.

The descriptive-correlational design is appropriate for this study because it allows the researcher to describe existing conditions and examine the relationship between MOOE utilization and classroom instruction without manipulating the variables.

Research Setting

The study will be conducted in the public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang, Romblon. These schools include:

1. Agsao Elementary School
2. Agutay Elementary School
3. Ambulong Elementary School
4. Dulangan Elementary School
5. Ipil Elementary School
6. Jao-asan Elementary School
7. Magdiwang Elementary School
8. Silum Elementary School
9. Tampayan Elementary School
10. Tomas and Maria T. Maglaya Memorial Elementary School
11. Magdiwang National High School
12. Agutay National High School

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study will include school heads, head teachers, and teachers from the identified public elementary and secondary schools.

The distribution of respondents is presented below:

School	School Heads	Head Teachers	Teachers
Agsao Elementary School	1	0	7
Agutay Elementary School	1	0	12
Ambulong Elementary School	1	0	7
Dulangan Elementary School	1	0	8
Ipil Elementary School	1	0	9
Jao-asan Elementary School	1	0	7
Magdiwang Elementary School	1	0	24
Silum Elementary School	1	0	7
Tampayan Elementary School	1	0	8
Tomas and Maria T. Maglaya Memorial Elementary School	1	0	8

Magdiwang National High School	1	3	51
Agutay National High School	1	0	20
Total	**12**	**3**	**168**

The study may utilize total enumeration to ensure that all qualified respondents are represented.

Data Gathering Tool

The primary instrument to be used in this study is a researcher-made questionnaire divided into three parts.

Part I will gather the profile of the respondents and schools.

Part II will determine the level of MOOE utilization in terms of:

- Procurement of instructional materials
- Classroom maintenance and repair
- Support for teaching activities
- School facility improvement
- Utilities and operational expenses
- Teacher support and professional activities

Part III will assess the quality of classroom instruction in terms of:

- Teacher preparedness
- Availability of instructional materials
- Classroom learning environment
- Instructional delivery
- Learner engagement
- Classroom management

The questionnaire will use a five-point Likert Scale.

Scale	Range	Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Very High
4	3.41 – 4.20	High
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
2	1.81 – 2.60	Low

1	1.00 – 1.80	Very Low

Validation of the Instrument

The questionnaire will be subjected to content validation by experts in educational management and research. Suggestions and recommendations will be incorporated to improve the instrument.

The research instrument was validated by Mr. Jose O. Garcia, Public Schools District Supervisor and research mentor and Dr. Peter Elmar Bordo, the researcher's thesis adviser. Their suggestions and recommendations will be incorporated to improve the instrument.

A pilot test was conducted on June 1, 2026, at Magdiwang Elementary School, with 25 teachers participating. This was done to determine the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher first prepared the research instrument and secured the necessary endorsement from the thesis adviser. A formal letter requesting permission to conduct the study was submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent. Upon approval, another request was sent to the heads of the selected schools to seek their consent and schedule the administration of questionnaire.

After approval, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. The purpose and objectives of the study were clearly explained, along with assurances of confidentiality and voluntary participation, to ensure that respondents fully understood the content and intent of the instrument. The researcher also addressed queries and guided the respondents as they filled out the forms.

The accomplished questionnaires were promptly retrieved right after the respondents completed them. The collected forms were thoroughly checked for completeness and consistency. Valid responses were checked, encoded, tallied, subjected to statistical analysis, and finally interpreted to derive meaningful findings.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The following statistical tools will be used in analyzing the data:

1. Frequency and Percentage These will be used to describe the profile of the respondent schools.
2. Weighted Mean This will be used to determine the level of MOOE utilization and quality of classroom instruction.

The formula is:

Weighted Mean = Σfx / N

3. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) This will be used to determine the significant relationship between MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction.
4. Level of Significance The hypothesis will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher will observe ethical standards in conducting the study. Participation of respondents will be voluntary, and confidentiality of responses will be ensured. The data gathered will be used solely for academic purposes.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents

The respondents of the study consisted of **133 school personnel** from the public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang. These included school heads, a head teacher, and classroom teachers. Their profile is presented according to position, years in service, and school classification.

Table 1.
Distribution of Respondents According to Position

Position	Frequency	Percentage
School Head	3	2.26
Head Teacher	1	0.75
Teacher	129	96.99
Total	**133**	**100.00**

Note: Frequencies and percentages reflect the composition of respondents from the selected public schools.

Table 1 present the distribution of respondents by position. Of the 133 total respondents, 129 (96.99%) were teachers, 3 (2.26%) were school heads, and 1 (0.75%) was a head teacher. This indicates that the study was largely represented by classroom teachers, who are directly involved in instructional delivery and are therefore in the best position to evaluate both MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction.

The participation of school heads and the head teacher also strengthens the reliability of the findings because they are directly involved in school financial management and instructional supervision.

Table 2.
Distribution of Respondents According to Years in Service

Years in Service	Frequency	Percentage
1–5 years	16	12.03
6–10 years	32	24.06
11–15 years	30	22.56
16–20 years	9	6.77
21 years and above	46	34.58
Total	**133**	**100.00**

The data reveal that 46 respondents (34.58%) have served for 21 years and above, representing the largest group. This was followed by respondents with 6–10 years of service (24.06%) and 11–15 years (22.56%). Respondents with 1–5 years comprised 12.03%, while those with 16–20 years represented 6.77%.

The findings imply that the majority of respondents possess extensive teaching experience, making them capable of providing reliable assessments regarding the utilization of MOOE and the quality of classroom instruction.

Table 3.
Distribution of Schools According to Classification

School Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary Schools	10	83.33
Secondary Schools	2	16.67
Total	**12**	**100.00**

Table 3 shows that the study covered 12 public schools, consisting of 10 elementary schools (83.33%) and 2 secondary schools (16.67%). The inclusion of both elementary and secondary schools provides a comprehensive assessment of MOOE utilization across different educational levels in the Municipality of Magdiwang.

Research Problem No. 1

Level of MOOE Utilization

Table 4.
Procurement of Instructional Materials

Using the weighted mean formula based on the frequency distribution in your data, the results are as follows:

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Purchase of teaching materials	**4.42**	Very High
Learning resources are adequately supported	**4.33**	Very High
Sufficient instructional supplies	**4.34**	Very High
Reproduction of modules and worksheets	**4.29**	Very High
Maintenance of instructional equipment	**4.28**	Very High
Grand Mean	**4.33**	**Very High Utilization**

Table 4 reveals that the procurement of instructional materials obtained an **overall grand mean of 4.33**, interpreted as **Very High Utilization**.

Among the indicators, **"MOOE funds are utilized for the purchase of teaching materials"** obtained the highest weighted mean (**4.42**), indicating that schools prioritize the acquisition of instructional resources that directly support classroom instruction.

The indicator **"Instructional equipment is maintained using MOOE allocation"** obtained the lowest weighted mean (**4.28**). Although it received the lowest score among the indicators, it is still interpreted as **Very High**, suggesting that schools consistently allocate MOOE for maintaining instructional equipment.

Overall, the findings indicate that public elementary and secondary schools in Magdiwang effectively utilize their MOOE allocations in procuring instructional materials essential for improving classroom instruction. This supports the Department of Education's policy that school operational funds should primarily address instructional needs to enhance teaching and learning.

Research Problem No. 1

Table 5.
Level of MOOE Utilization in terms of Classroom Maintenance and Repair

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. MOOE funds are used for classroom repair and maintenance.	**4.37**	Very High Utilization	1
2. Classroom cleanliness and safety are supported through MOOE.	**4.15**	High Utilization	5
3. Damaged classroom facilities are immediately repaired using MOOE funds.	**4.17**	High Utilization	4
4. MOOE contributes to maintaining a conducive classroom environment.	**4.26**	Very High Utilization	2
5. Classroom furniture and fixtures are maintained properly.	**4.17**	High Utilization	3
Grand Mean	**4.22**	**Very High Utilization**	

Table 5 presents the level of MOOE utilization in terms of classroom maintenance and repair. The overall **grand mean of 4.22** indicates a **Very High Utilization**.

The indicator **"MOOE funds are used for classroom repair and maintenance"** ranked first with a weighted mean of **4.37**, indicating that schools prioritize the maintenance of classrooms to ensure a safe and conducive learning environment.

On the other hand, **"Classroom cleanliness and safety are supported through MOOE"** obtained the lowest weighted mean of **4.15**. Although ranked last among the indicators, it is still interpreted as **High Utilization**, implying that respondents generally agree that MOOE funds adequately support classroom cleanliness and safety.

The findings indicate that school administrators effectively allocate MOOE funds for classroom maintenance and repairs, thereby improving the learning environment and supporting quality instruction.

Table 6.
Level of MOOE Utilization in terms of Support for Teaching Activities

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
MOOE supports classroom and co-curricular activities.	**4.21**	Very High Utilization	4
Teachers receive adequate instructional support through MOOE.	**4.33**	Very High Utilization	1
School programs related to instruction are funded through MOOE.	**4.14**	High Utilization	5
MOOE helps teachers implement innovative teaching strategies.	**4.23**	Very High Utilization	3
Teaching activities are effectively supported by available resources.	**4.22**	Very High Utilization	2
Grand Mean	**4.23**	**Very High Utilization**	

Table 6 reveals that the overall level of MOOE utilization in supporting teaching activities obtained a **grand mean of 4.23**, interpreted as **Very High Utilization**.

The highest-rated indicator was **"Teachers receive adequate instructional support through MOOE"** with a weighted mean of **4.33**. This indicates that respondents perceive school funds as an important source of instructional support for teachers.

Meanwhile, **"School programs and activities related to instruction are funded through MOOE"** obtained the lowest weighted mean of **4.14**, although still interpreted as **High Utilization**.

Overall, the findings indicate that MOOE plays a significant role in supporting classroom instruction and instructional innovations implemented by teachers.

Table 7.
Level of MOOE Utilization in terms of School Facility Improvement

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
School facilities are improved through MOOE utilization.	**4.39**	Very High Utilization	2
Learning spaces are enhanced using MOOE funds.	**4.26**	Very High Utilization	4
School grounds and surroundings are maintained properly.	**4.41**	Very High Utilization	1
Minor facility improvements are prioritized by the school.	**4.36**	Very High Utilization	3
MOOE contributes to creating a learner-friendly environment.	**4.52**	Very High Utilization	1*
Grand Mean	**4.39**	**Very High Utilization**	

Table 7 shows that the level of MOOE utilization in terms of school facility improvement obtained an overall **grand mean of 4.39**, interpreted as **Very High Utilization**.

The indicator **"MOOE contributes to creating a learner-friendly environment"** obtained the highest weighted mean (**4.52**), reflecting the respondents' strong agreement that MOOE resources contribute significantly to improving school facilities and the learning environment.

The indicator **"Learning spaces are enhanced using MOOE funds"** obtained the lowest weighted mean (**4.26**). Despite receiving the lowest rating among the indicators, it is still interpreted as **Very High Utilization**, indicating that schools consistently invest in enhancing learning spaces.

The findings suggest that schools in Magdiwang effectively utilize MOOE allocations to improve physical facilities that support teaching and learning.

Summary of MOOE Utilization (First Four Indicators)

Dimension	Grand Mean	Interpretation
Procurement of Instructional Materials	**4.33**	Very High Utilization
Classroom Maintenance and Repair	**4.22**	Very High Utilization

Support for Teaching Activities	**4.23**	Very High Utilization
School Facility Improvement	**4.39**	Very High Utilization

The results indicate that respondents consistently perceived the utilization of MOOE funds as **Very High** across the four dimensions assessed. Among these, **School Facility Improvement** obtained the highest grand mean (**4.39**), while **Classroom Maintenance and Repair** registered the lowest (**4.22**). Nevertheless, all four dimensions fall within the **Very High Utilization** category, suggesting that MOOE funds are effectively managed and allocated to support instructional delivery and improve the overall school environment.

Table 8.
Level of MOOE Utilization in terms of Utilities and Operational Expenses

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. MOOE funds adequately support school utilities.	**4.36**	Very High Utilization	2
2. Operational needs of the school are properly funded.	**4.37**	Very High Utilization	1
3. MOOE allocation helps maintain uninterrupted school operations.	**4.27**	Very High Utilization	5
4. School communication and administrative operations are supported by MOOE.	**4.29**	Very High Utilization	4
5. Available operational resources contribute to instructional continuity.	**4.31**	Very High Utilization	3
Grand Mean	**4.32**	**Very High Utilization**	

Table 8 shows that the level of MOOE utilization in terms of **Utilities and Operational Expenses** obtained a **grand mean of 4.32**, interpreted as **Very High Utilization**.

Among the indicators, **"Operational needs of the school are properly funded"** ranked first with a weighted mean of **4.37**, indicating that respondents strongly agree that MOOE adequately supports the day-to-day operations of the school.

The lowest-rated indicator was **"MOOE allocation helps maintain uninterrupted school operations"** with a weighted mean of **4.27**. Nevertheless, this still falls within the **Very High Utilization** category, suggesting that respondents generally perceive school operations as adequately supported through MOOE.

These findings demonstrate that MOOE funds are effectively utilized to sustain school operations, thereby ensuring continuity in the delivery of educational services.

Table 9.
Level of MOOE Utilization in terms of Teacher Support and Professional Activities

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Teachers are supported in attending professional development activities.	**4.43**	Very High Utilization	3
2. MOOE funds help improve teachers' instructional competencies.	**4.44**	Very High Utilization	2
3. School-based training activities are supported through MOOE.	**4.32**	Very High Utilization	5
4. Teachers receive adequate support for instructional improvement.	**4.34**	Very High Utilization	4
5. MOOE utilization contributes to teacher motivation and effectiveness.	**4.48**	Very High Utilization	1
Grand Mean	**4.40**	**Very High Utilization**	

Table 9 presents the respondents' assessment of MOOE utilization in supporting teacher development. The **grand mean of 4.40** indicates **Very High Utilization**.

The highest-rated indicator, **"MOOE utilization contributes to teacher motivation and effectiveness,"** obtained a weighted mean of **4.48**, suggesting that respondents strongly believe MOOE positively influences teachers' professional performance.

The lowest-rated indicator, **"School-based training activities are supported through MOOE,"** obtained a weighted mean of **4.32**, which is still interpreted as **Very High Utilization**.

Overall, the findings suggest that MOOE is effectively used to support teachers' professional growth, enhance instructional competencies, and improve classroom performance.

Table 10.
Summary of the Level of MOOE Utilization

Area	Grand Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Teacher Support and Professional Activities	**4.40**	Very High	1
School Facility Improvement	**4.39**	Very High	2
Procurement of Instructional Materials	**4.33**	Very High	3
Utilities and Operational Expenses	**4.32**	Very High	4
Support for Teaching Activities	**4.23**	Very High	5
Classroom Maintenance and Repair	**4.22**	Very High	6
Overall Grand Mean	**4.32**	**Very High Utilization**	

Table 10 presents the overall assessment of the respondents regarding the level of MOOE utilization. The **overall grand mean of 4.32** indicates a **Very High Utilization** of MOOE in the public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang.

Among the six areas, **Teacher Support and Professional Activities** obtained the highest grand mean (**4.40**), suggesting that respondents highly appreciate the use of MOOE in strengthening teachers' competencies and motivation. **Classroom Maintenance and Repair** received the lowest grand mean (**4.22**), although it remains within the **Very High Utilization** category.

These results indicate that school administrators effectively allocate MOOE funds to support instructional programs, improve school facilities, sustain operations, and promote teacher development

Research Problem No. 2

Quality of Classroom Instruction

Table 11.
Quality of Classroom Instruction in terms of Teacher Preparedness

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Teachers come prepared during classroom instruction.	**4.71**	Very High Quality	1
Lesson plans are effectively prepared and implemented.	**4.59**	Very High Quality	4
Teachers demonstrate mastery of subject matter.	**4.71**	Very High Quality	1
Teachers utilize appropriate teaching strategies.	**4.63**	Very High Quality	3
Teachers maximize available instructional resources.	**4.62**	Very High Quality	5
Grand Mean	**4.65**	**Very High Quality**	

Table 11 shows that the respondents assessed **Teacher Preparedness** with an overall **grand mean of 4.65**, interpreted as **Very High Quality**.

The indicators **"Teachers come prepared during classroom instruction"** and **"Teachers demonstrate mastery of subject matter"** both obtained the highest weighted mean of **4.71**, indicating strong confidence in teachers' competence and readiness to deliver quality instruction.

The indicator **"Teachers maximize available instructional resources"** received the lowest weighted mean (**4.62**), but it remains within the **Very High Quality** category.

Overall, the findings suggest that teachers in the public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang exhibit a high level of preparedness, which contributes positively to the quality of classroom instruction.

Table 12.
Quality of Classroom Instruction in terms of Availability of Instructional Materials

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Instructional materials are readily available during classes.	**4.24**	Very High Quality	5
Learning resources are sufficient for classroom instruction.	**4.14**	High Quality	4
Teachers effectively use instructional materials in teaching.	**4.46**	Very High Quality	3
Printed and digital learning resources support instruction.	**4.52**	Very High Quality	2
Instructional materials improve learner understanding.	**4.60**	Very High Quality	1
Grand Mean	**4.39**	**Very High Quality**	

Table 12 presents the respondents' assessment of the availability of instructional materials. The **grand mean of 4.39** indicates a **Very High Quality** rating.

The statement **"Instructional materials improve learner understanding"** obtained the highest weighted mean of **4.60**, suggesting that respondents strongly agree that instructional resources significantly enhance learners' comprehension.

Meanwhile, **"Learning resources are sufficient for classroom instruction"** received the lowest weighted mean of **4.14**, although it still falls within the **High Quality** category. This implies that while instructional materials are generally available, schools may still benefit from expanding learning resources to meet the diverse needs of teachers and learners.

Overall, the findings indicate that instructional materials are effectively utilized to support classroom instruction and improve learning outcomes.

Table 13.
Quality of Classroom Instruction in terms of Classroom Learning Environment

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
The classroom environment is conducive to learning.	**4.48**	Very High Quality	5
Classrooms are clean, safe, and organized.	**4.57**	Very High Quality	2

Learners are comfortable during classroom activities.	**4.52**	Very High Quality	4
Classroom facilities support effective instruction.	**4.57**	Very High Quality	2
The learning environment promotes active participation.	**4.51**	Very High Quality	3
Grand Mean	**4.53**	**Very High Quality**	

Table 13 reveals that the classroom learning environment obtained an **overall grand mean of 4.53**, interpreted as **Very High Quality**.

The indicators **"Classrooms are clean, safe, and organized"** and **"Classroom facilities support effective instruction"** obtained the highest weighted mean of **4.57**, indicating that respondents recognize the importance of a well-maintained learning environment in promoting effective teaching and learning.

The lowest weighted mean (**4.48**) was obtained by **"The classroom environment is conducive to learning,"** yet it remains within the **Very High Quality** category.

These findings indicate that schools have successfully maintained classrooms that are safe, organized, and conducive to meaningful learning experiences.

Table 14.
Quality of Classroom Instruction in terms of Instructional Delivery

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Teachers explain lessons clearly and effectively.	**4.68**	Very High Quality	2
Classroom instruction is learner-centered.	**4.68**	Very High Quality	2
Teachers use varied teaching methods during instruction.	**4.62**	Very High Quality	4
Lessons are delivered in an organized manner.	**4.65**	Very High Quality	3
Teachers encourage critical thinking among learners.	**4.74**	Very High Quality	1
Grand Mean	**4.67**	**Very High Quality**	

Table 14 shows that **Instructional Delivery** achieved an **overall grand mean of 4.67**, interpreted as **Very High Quality**.

The highest-rated indicator, **"Teachers encourage critical thinking among learners,"** obtained a weighted mean of **4.74**, indicating that respondents perceive teachers as effectively developing higher-order thinking skills.

The remaining indicators also received very high ratings, demonstrating that teachers consistently employ learner-centered, organized, and effective instructional strategies.

Overall, the findings indicate that teachers demonstrate exemplary instructional delivery practices that contribute significantly to learner achievement.

Table 15.
Quality of Classroom Instruction in terms of Learner Engagement

Indicators	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**	**Rank**
Learners actively participate during class discussions.	**4.44**	Very High Quality	4
Classroom activities encourage learner interaction.	**4.60**	Very High Quality	2
Learners show interest during classroom instruction.	**4.45**	Very High Quality	3
Teachers motivate learners to participate in class.	**4.69**	Very High Quality	1
Learners demonstrate enthusiasm in completing tasks.	**4.43**	Very High Quality	5
Grand Mean	**4.52**	**Very High Quality**	

Table 15 indicates that learner engagement obtained a **grand mean of 4.52**, interpreted as **Very High Quality**.

The highest-rated indicator was **"Teachers motivate learners to participate in class"** with a weighted mean of **4.69**, suggesting that teachers effectively foster learner participation and enthusiasm.

The consistently high ratings across all indicators demonstrate that learners are actively engaged in classroom activities and are encouraged to participate meaningfully in the learning process.

Table 16.
Quality of Classroom Instruction in terms of Classroom Management

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Teachers maintain discipline effectively in the classroom.	**4.64**	Very High Quality	2
Classroom rules and procedures are properly implemented.	**4.65**	Very High Quality	1
Teachers manage classroom activities efficiently.	**4.65**	Very High Quality	1
Learners demonstrate respect during classroom instruction.	**4.69**	Very High Quality	1*
Classroom management contributes to effective learning.	**4.72**	Very High Quality	1
Grand Mean	**4.67**	**Very High Quality**	

Table 16 shows that classroom management obtained an **overall grand mean of 4.67**, interpreted as **Very High Quality**.

The highest-rated indicator, **"Classroom management contributes to effective learning,"** received a weighted mean of **4.72**, highlighting the respondents' strong agreement that effective classroom management enhances teaching and learning.

Overall, the findings suggest that teachers maintain orderly, respectful, and productive classrooms that promote positive learner behavior and maximize instructional time.

Table 17
Summary of the Quality of Classroom Instruction

Dimension	Grand Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Instructional Delivery	**4.67**	Very High Quality	1
Classroom Management	**4.67**	Very High Quality	1
Teacher Preparedness	**4.65**	Very High Quality	3

Classroom Learning Environment	**4.53**	Very High Quality	4
Learner Engagement	**4.52**	Very High Quality	5
Availability of Instructional Materials	**4.39**	Very High Quality	6
Overall Grand Mean	**4.57**	**Very High Quality**	

Table 17 summarizes the respondents' assessment of the quality of classroom instruction. The **overall grand mean of 4.57** indicates that classroom instruction in the public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang is of **Very High Quality**.

Among the six dimensions, **Instructional Delivery** and **Classroom Management** emerged as the highest-rated areas (both with a grand mean of **4.67**), demonstrating that teachers are highly effective in delivering lessons and managing classrooms. **Availability of Instructional Materials** received the lowest grand mean (**4.39**), although it still falls within the **Very High Quality** category.

These findings imply that the schools provide an instructional environment characterized by competent teachers, effective teaching strategies, positive learner engagement, and supportive learning conditions.

Relationship Between MOOE Utilization and the Quality of Classroom Instruction

The study sought to determine whether the level of MOOE utilization is related to the quality of classroom instruction in public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang.

Based on the descriptive findings, the respondents rated the **overall level of MOOE utilization** as **Very High** with an overall grand mean of **4.32**, while the **overall quality of classroom instruction** was likewise rated **Very High** with an overall grand mean of **4.57**.

The consistently high ratings across all dimensions suggest that schools that effectively utilize their MOOE funds are also perceived to provide quality classroom instruction. MOOE utilization was found to support the procurement of instructional materials, maintenance of school facilities, classroom repair, operational expenses, and teacher professional development. These school inputs contribute to better teacher preparedness, effective instructional delivery, learner engagement, classroom management, and a positive learning environment.

The findings support the principle of **School-Based Management**, which emphasizes that efficient management of school resources enhances teaching and learning. When school heads strategically allocate MOOE funds to

instructional priorities, teachers are better equipped with the materials, facilities, and professional support necessary to deliver quality instruction.

Computation of the descriptive statistics and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation using the respondent-level scores.

For each respondent:

- **MOOE Utilization Score** = Sum of the 30 MOOE items
- **Quality of Classroom Instruction Score** = Sum of the 30 classroom instruction items

Example:

Respondent	MOOE Total (X)	Classroom Instruction Total (Y)
1	99	138
2	109	143
3	104	137
…	…	…
133	…	…

The totals for all 133 respondents were then used in the computations.

Mean and Standard Deviation

$$s^2$$

$$s^2 = \frac{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2}{6} = 1.934$$

s^2 ~ 1.934

xbar=-0.01

A. MOOE Utilization
Mean

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{n}$$

where:

$n = 133$
$\sum X = 17{,}279$

Thus,

$$\bar{X} = \frac{17{,}279}{133} = 129.92$$

Standard Deviation
The sample standard deviation formula is:

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{X})^2}{n - 1}}$$

Computed result:

$$s_X = 20.65$$

Therefore,

- **Mean = 129.92**
- **Standard Deviation = 20.65**

The average respondent obtained a MOOE utilization score of **129.92** points. The standard deviation of **20.65** indicates moderate variability among respondents' perceptions of MOOE utilization.

B. Quality of Classroom Instruction
Mean

$$\bar{Y} = \frac{\sum Y}{n}$$

where:

- $n = 133$
- $\sum Y = 18{,}267$

Thus,

$$\bar{Y} = \frac{18{,}267}{133} = 137.35$$

Standard Deviation

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(Y - \bar{Y})^2}{n - 1}}$$

Computed result:

$$s_Y = 11.97$$

Therefore,

- **Mean = 137.35**
- **Standard Deviation = 11.97**

The average classroom instruction score was **137.35** points. The standard deviation of **11.97** indicates that respondents' ratings of classroom instruction were relatively consistent.

Step 3: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (r)
The Pearson correlation formula is:

$$r = \frac{\sum(X - \bar{X})(Y - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum(X - \bar{X})^2 \sum(Y - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

Using the 133 paired observations from your Excel file, the computed values are:

- Number of respondents:
$$n = 133$$
- Mean of MOOE Utilization:
$$\bar{X} = 129.92$$
- Mean of Classroom Instruction:
$$\bar{Y} = 137.35$$
- Pearson correlation coefficient:
$$r = 0.6813$$
- p-value:
$$p = 1.819 \times 10^{-19}$$

or

$$p < 0.001$$

Table 18.
Relationship Between MOOE Utilization and Quality of Classroom Instruction

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
MOOE Utilization	129.98	20.58			
Quality of Classroom Instruction	137.41	11.95	**0.682**	**< .001**	Strong Positive Significant Relationship

The computed **Pearson correlation coefficient (r = 0.682)** indicates a **strong positive relationship** between MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction. The computed **p-value is less than 0.001**, which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance.

Therefore, the **null hypothesis is rejected**. This means that there is a **statistically significant relationship between MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction** in public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang.

The positive coefficient implies that schools demonstrating higher levels of MOOE utilization also tend to exhibit higher levels of classroom instructional quality. Effective utilization of MOOE contributes to the provision of instructional materials, maintenance of school facilities, support for professional development activities, and operational continuity, all of which positively influence teacher

preparedness, instructional delivery, classroom management, and learner engagement.

Summary of Major Findings

The major findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. The respondents consisted of **133 school personnel**, composed of **3 school heads, 1 head teacher, and 129 teachers**. Most respondents had **21 years and above** in government service, indicating that the respondents possess extensive professional experience.
2. The overall level of **MOOE utilization** obtained a grand mean of **4.32**, interpreted as **Very High Utilization**.
3. Among the six dimensions of MOOE utilization:
    - Teacher Support and Professional Activities ranked first.
    - School Facility Improvement ranked second.
    - Procurement of Instructional Materials ranked third.
    - Utilities and Operational Expenses ranked fourth.
    - Support for Teaching Activities ranked fifth.
    - Classroom Maintenance and Repair ranked sixth.
4. The overall quality of classroom instruction obtained a grand mean of **4.57**, interpreted as **Very High Quality**.
5. Among the six dimensions of classroom instruction:
    - Instructional Delivery ranked first (tied with Classroom Management).
    - Classroom Management ranked first (tie).
    - Teacher Preparedness ranked third.
    - Classroom Learning Environment ranked fourth.
    - Learner Engagement ranked fifth.
    - Availability of Instructional Materials ranked sixth.
6. The descriptive results indicate that schools with very high levels of MOOE utilization also demonstrate very high levels of classroom instructional quality.

Summary

This study determined the impact of **Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) Utilization** on the **Quality of Classroom Instruction** in the public elementary and secondary schools of Magdiwang. Specifically, it described the respondents' profile, assessed the level of MOOE utilization, determined the quality of classroom instruction, and examined the relationship between the two variables.

The study employed a **descriptive-correlational research design**. A researcher-made questionnaire served as the primary instrument for gathering data from **133 respondents** consisting of school heads, a head teacher, and teachers from twelve public schools in Magdiwang. The collected data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and descriptive interpretation.

The study involved **133 respondents** composed of **3 school heads, 1 head teacher, and 129 teachers** from twelve public elementary and secondary schools in Magdiwang.

The findings revealed that:

1. The overall level of MOOE utilization obtained a grand mean of **4.31**, interpreted as **Very High Utilization**.
2. Teacher Support and Professional Activities obtained the highest grand mean (**4.40**), while Classroom Maintenance and Repair obtained the lowest (**4.22**), although both remained under the **Very High Utilization** category.
3. The overall quality of classroom instruction obtained a grand mean of **4.57**, interpreted as **Very High Quality**.
4. Instructional Delivery and Classroom Management both ranked first (**4.67**), while Availability of Instructional Materials ranked sixth (**4.39**).
5. The computed Pearson correlation coefficient yielded **r = 0.682** with **p < .001**, indicating a **strong positive and statistically significant relationship** between MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Public elementary and secondary schools in Magdiwang demonstrate **very high utilization of MOOE** in supporting school operations and instructional activities.
2. Classroom instruction in these schools is of **very high quality**, characterized by effective instructional delivery, classroom management, teacher preparedness, and learner engagement.
3. Efficient utilization of MOOE contributes significantly to the availability of instructional resources, improvement of school facilities, and support for teacher professional development.
4. There exists a **strong positive and statistically significant relationship** between MOOE utilization and the quality of classroom instruction (**r = 0.682, p < .001**).
5. Improvements in MOOE utilization are associated with corresponding improvements in the quality of classroom instruction.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. School heads should continue implementing transparent and needs-based MOOE planning to maximize its impact on classroom instruction.
2. Schools should strengthen investments in instructional materials and classroom maintenance to further improve teaching and learning conditions.
3. The Schools Division Office should continue providing technical assistance and monitoring mechanisms on MOOE planning and utilization.
4. Greater emphasis should be placed on teacher professional development activities funded through MOOE to sustain instructional quality.
5. Schools should institutionalize regular monitoring and evaluation of MOOE utilization and instructional outcomes to ensure that financial resources are aligned with educational priorities.
6. Future researchers may conduct similar studies in other districts or divisions and employ additional variables that may influence classroom instructional quality.

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