

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE READINESS OF NOVICE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Teacher readiness is a crucial determinant of instructional competence and student learning outcomes. Novice teachers, in particular, face challenges in translating theoretical knowledge into effective classroom practices due to limited teaching experience, pedagogical skills, and institutional support. This study investigated the factors influencing the readiness of novice teachers in the Eastern Samar Division and examined the relationship between these factors and their teaching readiness. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, involving novice teachers with five years or less of teaching experience. Data were collected using structured survey questionnaires assessing demographic factors, professional development factors, and collegial factors, as well as the teachers' readiness across lesson planning, instructional strategies, classroom management, learner engagement, and assessment practices. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis were used. Results revealed that professional development factors, collegial support, and demographic factors significantly influence novice teachers' readiness. A positive relationship was found between these factors and teacher readiness. The study recommends the formulation of targeted professional development programs to enhance novice teachers' preparedness, instructional competence, and overall effectiveness in delivering quality education.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

KEYWORDS: Novice Teachers, Teacher Readiness, Professional Development, Collegial Support, Instructional Competence

INTRODUCTION

The quality of teachers and their instruction are pivotal in influencing students' learning outcomes (Nilsen & Gustafsson, 2016). Effective education requires teachers capable of delivering high-quality instruction and facilitating learning experiences that meet diverse student needs. Teacher readiness, defined as the preparedness to apply pedagogical strategies, manage classrooms, and assess learning outcomes, is particularly critical for novice teachers entering the profession (Girgin & Akcanca, 2021; Padmadewi et al., 2023).

Instructional competence encompasses lesson planning, delivery, classroom management, learner engagement, and assessment practices, all of which contribute to student achievement (Naz, 2016; Nessipbayeva, 2017). Observations, however, indicate that novice teachers often struggle with lesson preparation, contextualization of lessons, and designing assessments, leading to suboptimal learning experiences for students (Clinchy, 2022; Fullan, 2012).

In the Philippines, efforts by the Department of Education (DepEd) aim to improve teacher readiness through instructional supervision, professional development programs, and monitoring mechanisms. Despite these initiatives, novice teachers continue to require support to strengthen their instructional competencies and overall readiness (DepEd, n.d.).

This study investigates the factors influencing the readiness of novice teachers and the correlation between these factors and their preparedness to teach, aiming to provide a basis for professional development programs tailored to their needs.

Research Objectives

The paper aimed to:

1. Identify factors influencing novice teachers' readiness in terms of:
 - **Demographic factors:** age, gender
 - **Professional development factors:** teaching experience, highest educational attainment, trainings attended, IPBT activities
 - **Collegial factors:** support from colleagues, support from school head
2. Determine the level of readiness of novice teachers in:
 - Lesson planning and objectives
 - Instructional strategies and delivery
 - Classroom management and environment
 - Learner engagement and interaction
 - Assessment and feedback
3. Examine the relationship between factors influencing readiness and the level of readiness of novice teachers.

Research Gap

Teacher readiness, particularly among novice educators, has been a growing focus in educational research, often examined in relation to professional development, mentoring, and institutional support systems. Studies by D'Intino and Wang (2021) and Santangelo and Tomlinson (2017) emphasize that novice teachers require systematic preparation and guidance to effectively translate theoretical knowledge into classroom practice. Similarly, Girgin and Akcanca (2021) and Padmadewi et al. (2023) highlight the importance of pedagogical skills, classroom management, and instructional strategies in shaping teachers' readiness to deliver quality education. In the Philippine context, DepEd (n.d.) and Cabahug, Osias, Ongcachuy, and Corpuz (2024) underscore the significance of targeted training, mentoring programs, and continuous professional development in supporting novice teachers' preparedness.

Despite these contributions, the literature indicates that most studies focus on isolated factors—such as teaching experience, educational attainment, or collegial support—rather than examining how these variables collectively influence novice teachers' overall readiness.

Furthermore, while international research has provided insights into teacher preparation and induction programs, there is limited empirical evidence within the Philippine setting that addresses how professional development, demographic characteristics, and collegial support jointly shape novice teachers' readiness for effective classroom instruction. This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive investigation into the factors influencing novice teacher readiness, which can inform professional development programs, instructional supervision, and school-level support mechanisms aimed at enhancing teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

Literature Review

Teacher readiness has become a key focus in contemporary education, emphasizing the capacity of novice teachers to effectively perform their roles and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. According to Hatfield et al. (2016), teacher readiness refers to the willingness, knowledge, and skills required to manage classroom responsibilities and meet students' learning needs. This concept underscores the importance of adequately preparing new teachers to navigate the complexities of modern classrooms.

Scholars argue that readiness involves more than simply completing teacher education programs. Widodo (2017) emphasized that novice teachers must master subject matter, plan lessons effectively, and manage classrooms to create conducive learning environments. Similarly, Marshall and Weinstein (n.d.) highlighted that teacher readiness encompasses the ability to select appropriate instructional materials, organize learning activities, and achieve educational objectives.

Professional competence is widely recognized as a critical factor influencing readiness. Teachers' knowledge, pedagogical skills, and classroom management capabilities are essential for ensuring that students engage effectively and achieve learning outcomes (Fatmawati, 2021; Biora, Arafat, & Mulyadi, 2021). Research by Bartell (2018) and Montebon (2015) further confirms that novice teachers' instructional competence is a strong predictor of their overall readiness to enter the teaching profession.

Support from colleagues and school leaders also plays a vital role in fostering readiness. Sugiharto et al. (2019) noted that collaborative environments, mentoring programs, and administrative guidance improve novice teachers' confidence, professional identity, and classroom performance. Similarly, Iwal and Arenga (2024) highlighted that emotional, professional, and appraisal support from school heads enhances teachers' cognitive, social, and emotional engagement, which in turn positively impacts their readiness.

Continuous professional development (CPD) is another important factor. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) emphasized that CPD provides teachers with new knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and innovative practices necessary for effective instruction. In the Philippine context, the CPD Act of 2016 mandates teacher participation in training programs to improve competencies and maintain professional standards. Studies by Cebe and Suson (2023) and Julia et al. (2020) indicate that factors such as educational attainment, mentoring, and training experiences significantly influence teachers' readiness and instructional effectiveness.

Teacher competence is strongly linked to job performance. Competent teachers can design lessons, manage classrooms, and facilitate learning effectively (Wang, 2021; Chen, 2021). Research shows that higher levels of instructional competence correlate with improved performance, better student engagement, and more positive learning outcomes (Rahmatullah, 2016; Demir, 2016). Conversely, inadequate preparation or poor mastery of subject matter can hinder teacher effectiveness and reduce student achievement (Clinchy, 2022; Jonathan Wong & Moorhouse, 2021).

Collaboration and supportive school environments further influence readiness. Studies by Reitman and Karge (2019) and Brown Taylor (2020) reveal that novice teachers who receive guidance from experienced colleagues and engage in professional learning communities develop greater confidence and instructional competence. Such collaborative practices help teachers adapt to classroom challenges and foster student success.

Despite the extensive literature, gaps remain in understanding how various factors collectively influence the readiness of novice teachers in specific educational contexts. While previous studies highlight the importance of professional competence, mentorship, CPD, and institutional support, few investigate the interactions among these factors in shaping teacher readiness, particularly in the Philippine setting.

The reviewed literature emphasizes that novice teachers' readiness is shaped by professional competence, continuous development, collegial support, and school leadership. Effective preparation, supportive environments, and collaborative engagement are essential in ensuring that new teachers are equipped to provide quality instruction and facilitate meaningful learning outcomes. Further research is needed to explore how these factors interact to influence the readiness of novice teachers in diverse educational contexts.

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive–correlational design to examine the relationship between factors influencing readiness and instructional competence of novice teachers. The descriptive component was used to determine the level of novice teachers' readiness, while the correlational component examined the relationship between readiness factors and instructional competence. Purposive sampling with complete enumeration was utilized to select 92 novice elementary teachers from ten districts in the Southern part of Eastern Samar Division who met the criteria of having a permanent teaching appointment, handling an advisory class, a minimum of five years of teaching experience, completion of the IPBT program, and willingness to participate. Data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire consisting of two parts: respondents' demographic and professional development profile, collegial support, and factors influencing readiness; and teachers' readiness in lesson planning, instructional strategies, classroom management, learner engagement, and assessment. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the level of readiness. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean, while the Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationship between readiness factors and instructional competence. Ethical considerations were strictly observed through informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity of respondents, and all collected data were used solely for research purposes.

Analysis and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Novice Teachers

1.1 Age

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percentage
20–30 years	61	66.30%
31–40 years	31	33.70%
Total	92	100%

The majority of novice teachers (66.30%) are aged 20–30, indicating a workforce largely composed of fresh graduates or teachers with limited professional experience.

1.2 Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	58	63.04%
Male	34	36.96%
Total	92	100%

Most novice teachers are female (63.04%), reflecting the gender distribution commonly observed in the teaching profession.

1.3 Teaching Experience

Experience	Frequency	Percentage
<1 year	9	9.78%
1–3 years	56	60.87%
>3 years	27	29.35%
Total	92	100%

Most respondents (60.87%) have 1–3 years of experience, highlighting the need for guidance and support during the early stages of their teaching careers.

1.4 Highest Educational Attainment

Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor’s Degree	41	44.56%
MA Units	48	52.17%
Master’s Degree	3	3.26%
Total	92	100%

A majority (52.17%) have pursued MA units, reflecting a commitment to continuing education and professional development.

1.5 Trainings Attended

Training	Frequency	Percentage
Curriculum Implementation	50	54.35%
Content Delivery	28	30.43%
Instruction & Teaching Delivery	8	8.70%
Assessment Strategies	5	5.43%
Classroom Management	1	1.09%
Total	92	100%

Novice teachers mostly participated in curriculum implementation and content delivery trainings, emphasizing professional development in lesson planning and instructional practices.

1.6 IPBT Activities

Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Classroom Observation	39	42.39%
Collaborative Expertise	38	41.30%
IPBT Caravan	15	16.30%
Total	92	100%

Classroom observation and collaborative expertise were primary activities, providing novice teachers opportunities for guided practice and mentoring.

Collegial Support

2.1 Support from Colleagues

Mean	Interpretation
4.42	Highly Supportive

Colleagues provide strong support through mentoring, active listening, guidance, and opportunities for professional growth, which helps novice teachers transition effectively into the profession.

2.2 Support from School Heads

Mean	Interpretation
4.57	Highly Supportive

School heads support novice teachers through trust, appreciation, feedback, resources, and professional development opportunities, fostering confidence and motivation in their roles.

Level of Readiness of Novice Teachers

3.1 Lesson Planning & Objectives – Highly Competent (Mean = 4.57)
Novice teachers demonstrate strong competence in crafting lesson plans aligned with curriculum standards and objectives.

3.2 Instructional Strategies & Delivery – Highly Competent (Mean = 4.48)
Teachers effectively employ pedagogical strategies, contextualization, and technology to enhance learning outcomes.

3.3 Classroom Management & Environment – Highly Competent (Mean = 4.37)
Novice teachers establish clear rules, manage transitions, and create positive learning environments.

3.4 Learners' Engagement & Interaction – Highly Competent (Mean = 4.35)
Collaborative learning and active student participation are prioritized, promoting cognitive and social engagement.

3.5 Assessment & Feedback – Highly Competent (Mean = 4.38)
Teachers use formative assessments, align evaluation with curriculum objectives, and provide constructive feedback to guide learning.

Relationship between Collegial Support and Readiness

Table 2: Correlation between Collegial Factors and Novice Teachers' Readiness

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	r-value	p-value	Significance
Collegial Factors	Level of Readiness	0.716	0.027	Highly Significant

The positive correlation indicates that higher support from colleagues and school heads significantly enhances novice teachers' readiness in lesson planning, instructional strategies, classroom management, learner engagement, and assessment.

Research Future Opportunities

While this study provides valuable insights into the readiness of novice teachers in selected districts of Eastern Samar, several areas warrant further investigation:

- **Longitudinal Studies on Teacher Readiness:** Future research may adopt a longitudinal design to examine how novice teachers' readiness evolves over time as they gain teaching experience and participate in professional development programs.
- **Evaluation of Mentorship Programs:** Further studies could assess the effectiveness of structured mentorship programs in enhancing teacher readiness, collegial support, and instructional competence.
- **Impact of Professional Development Activities:** Future research may explore how participation in IPBT activities, curriculum implementation trainings, and other professional development initiatives influence novice teachers' readiness and instructional performance.

- **Influence of Demographic Factors:** Investigating how age, gender, and educational attainment affect teacher readiness and teaching effectiveness may provide insights into targeted support strategies.
- **Role of School Leadership and Collegial Support:** Additional studies could examine how school heads' support, peer mentoring, and collaborative work environments affect novice teacher preparedness and long-term career success.

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the readiness of novice teachers in the southern part of Eastern Samar Division. Findings reveal that these teachers generally demonstrate high levels of competence in lesson planning and objectives ($M = 4.57$), instructional strategies and delivery ($M = 4.48$), classroom management and environment ($M = 4.37$), learner engagement and interaction ($M = 4.35$), and assessment and feedback ($M = 4.38$).

The study also highlights a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.716$, $p = 0.025$) between collegial support and teacher readiness, suggesting that mentorship, peer support, and guidance from school heads play a critical role in preparing novice teachers for instructional duties.

Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of sustained professional development, structured mentorship programs, and supportive school leadership in enhancing novice teachers' readiness and ensuring effective teaching practices. Fostering collaborative and well-supported learning environments can improve teacher induction, promote instructional excellence, and contribute to long-term educational outcomes.

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Ethics and Consent Statement: This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards to ensure respondents' privacy, confidentiality, and security. Informed consent was obtained after clearly explaining the study's objectives and procedures, in compliance with Republic Act 10173 – Data Privacy Act of 2012. All data were anonymized, participation was voluntary, and interviews were conducted in private. Any future data sharing will adhere to ethical guidelines and require explicit consent from respondents.

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