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PREPAREDNESS AND COMPETENCE OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS IN TEACHING AND WRITING RESEARCH: ITS IMPLICATIONS TO EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study investigates the preparedness and competence of Senior High School (SHS) teachers in teaching research in Lower Apayao, Philippines. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, data was gathered through a questionnaire and assessment tests administered to SHS teachers. Findings reveal that the majority of teachers are young, predominantly female, with significant proportions holding Teacher III positions and having between 6-10 years of teaching experience. Most teachers are English or Science majors, actively pursuing higher educational qualifications, yet lacking in formal training specifically focused on research writing. Implications suggest a critical need for targeted professional development programs and curriculum integration to enhance teachers' research competencies. Recommendations include mandatory and updated professional training, collaboration with higher education institutions for mentorship, and embedding research workshops into the SHS curriculum to foster a culture of research excellence among educators. These efforts are crucial in preparing SHS teachers to effectively guide students in their research pursuits, thereby advancing educational quality and student outcomes.

Keywords: Research writing, practical research, research competency enhancement plan, Senior High School teachers, Continuing Professional Development

INTRODUCTION

In the landscape of Philippine education, the ability of teachers to effectively teach and write research plays a pivotal role in shaping the academic and professional development of students. With the implementation of Senior High School (SHS) curriculum reforms, subjects such as Practical Research 1 and 2 have been introduced

to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students. The successful delivery of these subjects hinges significantly on the preparedness and competence of teachers. This study delves into the profile, perceived level of preparedness, and competence of SHS teachers in Lower Apayao, Philippines,

specifically focusing on their engagement with teaching and writing research.

Understanding the personal and professional profiles of teachers is crucial in assessing their readiness to impart research skills effectively. Personal factors such as age, sex, and civil status provide insights into the demographic characteristics that may influence teaching approaches and professional engagement (Klint, nd). Similarly, professional attributes including teaching position, length of teaching experience, major specialization, highest educational attainment, and participation in research-related seminars and trainings are critical indicators of teachers' capacity to engage in research (Ducyao, 2023). Moreover, examining the number of years teachers have handled research subjects and their engagement in actual research activities offers a comprehensive view of their practical experience and involvement in academic inquiry (Gepila, 2020).

Furthermore, this study aims to explore the perceived level of preparedness and competence among SHS teachers in teaching and writing research. Preparedness encompasses the teachers' confidence and readiness in terms of knowledge and skills required for effective research instruction, while competence evaluates their actual capability and effectiveness in executing research-related tasks (Prosekov et al., 2020). By elucidating these dimensions, the study seeks to identify strengths and areas for improvement in the professional development of SHS teachers in Lower Apayao. This information is crucial for designing targeted interventions and professional development programs that can enhance teachers' abilities to foster a research-oriented culture in their classrooms, aligning with the educational goals set forth by the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines.

In essence, this research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current landscape of research engagement among SHS teachers in Lower Apayao. By addressing the profile, preparedness, and competence of teachers in teaching and writing research, the study seeks to contribute valuable insights that can inform educational policies, curriculum development, and professional development initiatives aimed at improving the quality of education and enhancing student outcomes in the Philippines.

Thus, this study intends to determine the Senior High School teachers' preparedness in teaching research subjects and their research competency and performance in research writing. The findings of this study will serve as bases for developing a Research Competency Enhancement Plan. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of teachers in terms of:
 - a. Personal
 - a.1 age
 - a.2 sex
 - a.3 civil status
 - b. Professional
 - b.1 teaching position
 - b.2 length of teaching experience
 - b.3 major/specialization
 - b.4 highest educational attainment

- b.5 number of attended seminars/trainings on research
 - b.6 number of years handling the research subject/s
 - c. Research writing engagement
 - c.1 number of research conducted
 - c.2 status of research (published or unpublished)
 - d. Performance rating for the last two years with the descriptive rating
2. What is the perceived level of preparedness of the respondents in teaching and writing research?
 3. What is the perceived level of competence of the respondents in teaching and writing research?

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research method with a questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. Descriptive design was used to determine the profile, level of preparedness, and research competence in teaching and writing research by Practical Research 2 teachers in Senior High Schools in Lower Apayao. Complete enumeration was employed as the sampling technique, involving all Practical Research 2 teachers in the region.

The research instrument included a survey questionnaire and a self-made assessment test. The questionnaire covered demographic profiles and perceived research competence, adapted from Afolabi et al. (2022). A 10-item checklist created by the researcher assessed the level of preparedness. The questionnaire was validated by research experts and its reliability confirmed through Cronbach's alpha. Data collection involved personal administration of the questionnaire and assessment test, with casual interviews conducted to support the responses.

Statistical analysis involved the use of descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, percentages, and means, to address the research questions on preparedness, competence, performance, and problems encountered. Specific scales, including Likert scales, were employed to interpret the levels of preparedness and competence, as well as performance and problem severity.

Ethical considerations included obtaining approval from school administrators and respondents. A consent form accompanied the request for participation, informing participants of their rights and obligations. The study adhered to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, ensuring the confidentiality of participant information. Volunteer participation was emphasized, with no monetary compensation or rewards offered. The identities of the participants were kept confidential, and their responses were used solely for the study, with names and any disclosed information maintained as private.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data gathered, analyzed, and interpreted in answers to the problems raised. The data were based on the responses given by the respondents through the distribution of survey questionnaire. Furthermore, it presents the findings of the study from which conclusions and recommendations were made.

Profile of the Teachers

The demographic characteristics of teachers was established and presented in results. The findings in Table 1, 2, 3 and 4 below

show the demographic results of the teachers who participated in this study.

Personal Profile

The background information of the teachers revealed that the majority, 4 (26.7%), are aged 26-30 years and 4 (26.7%) are 31-35 years old, with a mean age of 35.27 years, indicating they are in their early adulthood and millennial generation. This suggests they are capable and motivated to improve their teaching skills, as supported by Bullo et al. (2021). Most respondents are female, 11 (73.33%), compared to 4 (26.67%) males. This aligns with the trend that more women pursue teaching, as highlighted by Parker (2021) and Wong (2019). The predominance of female teachers supports the notion that teaching is a woman-dominated profession, as noted by Regalado (2017) and Gacusan & Calangi (2022). Additionally, Sarabia and Collantes (2020) emphasize that women are often seen as better suited for teaching roles due to their capacity for human development work. The majority of respondents, 12 (80%), are married, likely due to their age and family commitments, while 3 (20%) are single. This demographic distribution reflects their life stages and responsibilities.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution on the personal profile of teachers

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20 - 25	1	6.7
26 - 30	4	26.7
31-35	4	26.7
36-40	2	13.3
41-45	3	20.0
56-60	1	6.7
Mean Age = 35.27		
Sex		
Male	4	26.7
Female	11	73.3
Civil Status		
Single	3	20.0
Married	12	80.0

Professional Profile of Respondents

Most of the teacher-respondents hold a Teacher III position (40%), a high-ranking role in the Department of Education, indicating substantial teaching ability (Klint, n.d.). Teacher II and Teacher I positions account for 26.7% and 13.3%, respectively, while 20% are Master Teacher I, with no Master Teacher II respondents. The majority have 6-10 years of service (40%), followed by 1-5 years (26.7%) and 11-15 years (20%), with an average of 10.20 years. This longevity suggests loyalty and commitment, as supported by Mom et al. (2021) and Janardhanan & Raghavan (2018) (Gacusan & Calangi, 2022).

English and Science majors dominate Practical Research 2 teaching (26.7% each), followed by Mathematics (20%), TLE (13.3%), and one each in Filipino and Social Studies/Araling Panlipunan (6.7%). This is attributed to the higher number of English core subjects in Senior High School (Abinan, 2021). Regarding educational attainment, 33.3% have doctorate units,

26.7% hold an MA/MS degree, and 20% each have MA/MS units and PhD degrees. This indicates a commitment to professional growth, which aligns with DepEd Order No. 66, s. 2007 and Gacusan & Calangi (2022).

Training in research writing is notably lacking, with 33.3% of teachers having no training and only 6.7% attending four sessions. This lack of training is attributed to time constraints and financial limitations. Continuous professional development is crucial, as noted by Isaboke et al. (2021), to enhance teachers' skills and curriculum implementation.

The Senior High School (SHS) was introduced in 2016, with most respondents teaching Practical Research 2 for a year (40%). Others have varying years of experience, with 20% teaching for eight years. This suggests that many teachers are still adapting to the subject, highlighting the need for ongoing professional development.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage distribution on the professional profile of teachers

Teaching Position	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher I	2	13.3
Teacher II	4	26.7
Teacher III	6	40.0
Master Teacher I	3	20.0
Master Teacher II	0	0
Length of Teaching Experience		
1--5	4	26.7
6--10	6	40.0
11--15	3	20.0
21--25	1	6.7
31--35	1	6.7
Average Length of Teaching Experience = 10.20 years		
Major/Specialization		
Social Studies	1	6.7
English	4	26.7
Science	4	26.7
Filipino	1	6.7
Mathematics	3	20.0
Technology and Livelihood Education	2	13.3
Educational Attainment		
With MA/MS Units	3	20.0

MA/MS Graduate	4	26.7
with Ph.D. Units	5	33.3
Ph.D. Graduate	3	20.0
Number of trainings/seminars attended along the research		
0	5	33.3
1	3	20.0
2	2	13.3
3	2	13.3
4	1	6.7
5	2	13.3
Number of years handling the subject		
1	6	40.0
2	1	6.7
3	1	6.7
5	2	13.3
6	1	6.7
7	1	6.7
8	3	20.0

Research Writing Engagement of the Respondents

The table shows the distribution of respondents based on the number and status of the research/es conducted. The data shows that there are 3 (20%) who had no research conducted, 6 (40%) with one (1) research made, 4 (26.7%) had two (2) researches and to date only one (1) or 6.7% had conducted both 3 and 4 researches. Meanwhile as to status, 10 (66.7%) had their studies unpublished, only two (2) had their work published in the regional level, while three (3) or 20% of them had none.

This means that the teachers have low participation and contribution to research as a mandate of the Department of Education. This is maybe due to the challenges they faced in neither making nor conducting researches as found out by studies such as heavy teaching load, lack of materials and resources, and research skills and knowledge. This is evident in the findings of Murro (2022) which presented that lack or limited knowledge or skills in research writing, lack of materials and resources, lack of time to do one due to workloads assignment and others are some of the reasons of having a low level of competence in research writing. With this, it implies that they need to be motivated to do

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage distribution on the performance rating of the respondents for the last two rating periods

Performance Rating	Descriptive Value	IPCR 2021- 2022		IPCR 2022- 2023	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
4.500-5.000	Outstanding	9	60	12	80

research writing as a culture. Ulla (2018) supported that teachers should be encouraged to do research and to offer research training programs to equip them which will include research collaboration where teachers can share their practices, skills and knowledge. Additionally, strong support systems among teachers and school management should be established considering that research is a tiresome and time- consuming endeavor.

Table 3. Frequency and percentage distribution on the number and status of researches conducted by respondents

Number of researches conducted	Frequency	Percentage
0	3	20.0
1	6	40.0
2	4	26.7
3	1	6.7
4	1	6.7
Status of researches conducted	Frequency	Percentage
None	3	20.0
Unpublished	10	66.7
Published	2	13.3

Performance Rating of the Respondents for the Last Two School Year

The Individual Performance Commitment Review Form (IPCRF) of the teachers which shows the performance appraisals of each teacher based on set of standards is consistent with DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015 and pursuant to Section 5 of DO 42, s. 2017. It is used to evaluate their performance as to classroom teaching and practices based on given set of competencies. The performance rating of each teacher is scored annually in which the overall rating for the accomplishments is categorized as Outstanding (O) for 4.500-5.000, Very Satisfactory (VS) for 3.500-4.499, and Satisfactory (S) for 2.500-3.499, Unsatisfactory for 1.500-2.499 and below 1.499 as Poor.

For the School Year 2021-2022, 9 (60%) had outstanding performance while 6 (40%) had Very Satisfactory. During the School Year 2022-2023, there are 12 (80%) who had an outstanding performance whereas 3 (20%) had Very Satisfactory. It is observed from the figures that most of the teachers are performing outstandingly in teaching every year. And as described in DepEd Order No. 2, S. 201, the data implies that the teachers have extraordinary level of achievement and commitment, have demonstrated exceptional job mastery in all areas of responsibility contributory to the organization's excellence. It hereby suggests that the teachers are doing great in their field.

3.500-4.499	Very Satisfactory	6	40	3	20
		Average Performance Rating = 4.21 (Very Satisfactory)		Average Performance Rating = 4.62 (Outstanding)	

Perceived Preparedness of Respondents

The table details the perceived level of preparedness of the teacher-respondents in teaching Practical Research subject. It is evidently shown that the teachers are always prepared in three areas: (a) I carefully plan and prepare my research lessons in advance on daily basis; and, (b) I always reflect on my journey of teaching research in order to improve for better result outcomes. On the other hand, the respondents are often prepared in seven areas: (a) I have passion for teaching research. I put time and effort into my lessons; (b) I am trained in research writing. I have the skills and potentials in teaching research lessons; (c) I ensure that I deliver research lessons in an interesting manner; (d) I am guided by experienced mentors in research writing; (e) I collaborate with expert teacher-researchers for current updates in research; (f) I have conducted researches; (g) I constantly attend to professional development activities (online and face-to-face) to gain useful information about research; and, (h) I guarantee quality teaching performance in my research classes. Generally, it shows that the level of perceived preparedness of the teachers in teaching Practical Research is often prepared with an overall mean of 3.07. This is supported by Meador (2019) in his article which states that good teachers are almost in a continuous state of preparation and planning about the next lesson for this impact student learning. When teachers are prepared in teaching, quality teaching is ensured.

Table 5. Perceived Level of Preparedness of Respondents

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Value	Transposed Value
1. I have passion for teaching research. I put time and effort into my lessons.	3.2	Agree	Often Prepared
2. I am trained in research writing. I have the skills and potentials in teaching research lessons.	2.73	Agree	Often Prepared
3. I carefully plan and prepare my research lessons in advance on daily basis.	3.47	Strongly Agree	Always Prepared
4. I ensure that I deliver research lessons in an interesting manner.	3.13	Agree	Often Prepared
5. I am guided by experienced mentors in research writing.	2.93	Agree	Often Prepared
6. I collaborate with expert teacher- researchers for current updates in research.	3.13	Agree	Often Prepared
7. I always reflect on my journey of teaching research in order to improve for better result outcomes.	3.33	Strongly Agree	Always Prepared
8. I have conducted research/es.	2.93	Agree	Often Prepared
9. I constantly attend to professional development activities (online and face-to-face) to gain useful information about research.	2.67	Agree	Often Prepared
10. I guarantee quality teaching performance in my research classes.	3.13	Agree	Often Prepared
Weighted Mean	3.07	Agree	Often Prepared

Level of Research Competence of Respondents in Teaching Research Subjects as to Research Knowledge and Research Skills

Research competence of the teacher-respondents is highly competent in seven areas: (a) I know how to write the statement of the problem of my research; (b) I know how to formulate research objectives; (c) I know how to formulate research questions/hypotheses; (d) I know how to explain the significance of the study; (e) I know how to identify and apply relevant theories in my study; (f) I know the critical skills needed to read and summarize the contents of the literature; and, (g) I know how to use suitable academic referencing style to format list of references. On the other hand, the respondents are moderately competent in the other five areas: (a) I know how to review and analyze previous literature; (b) I know how to develop conceptual model for my study; (c) I know how to determine subjects and draw participants for my study; and (d) I know how to choose the right research methodology for my research work; and (e) I know how to use the current statistical tool for my data analysis.

In general, the overall mean of the respondents' level of research competence as to their research knowledge is moderately competent with value of 3.07. This indicates that the respondents perceived themselves as competent in terms of knowledge on research writing and the parts. They seemingly think of themselves capable of undertaking research/es.

Meanwhile the respondents have moderately competent level of research competence as to research skills with a 3.15 weighted mean. They looked at themselves as competent in terms of the skills necessary in research writing. Specifically details give an idea about the areas where the

respondents are highly competent and moderately competent. There are five areas in which they are highly competent: (a) I have the ability to define a research problem; (b) I have the ability to plan research; (c) I can explain the purpose of my research; (d) I can confidently describe data collection procedure; (e) I can make valid conclusion from the result of analysis. On the contrary, they are moderately competent in eight areas: (a) I can write an abstract; (b) I can confidently develop background to the study in any research work; (c) I can confidently write the significance of the study; (d) I can do a literature review; (e) I can develop correctly a conceptual model for my research; (f) I can develop the pattern of my literature review using my conceptual model; (g) I am able to identify appropriate method for analyzing data; and, (h) I can identify relevant theories that best explain my research.

Data generally implies that the respondents have the necessary knowledge and skill in doing research successfully, however needs to further enhance on some areas where they are classified as moderately competent such as in writing the review of previously conducted literature, development of conceptual model, sampling, choosing the most appropriate research methodology and statistical tools for data analysis, writing the abstract, its background, the significance as well as the theories that best explains the study.

Table 6. Assessment on the Perceived Level of Competence of the Respondents in Teaching Research Subjects

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Value	Transposed Value
Research Knowledge			
1. I know how to write the statement of the problem for my research.	3.33	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
2. I know how to formulate research objectives.	3.4	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
3. I know how to formulate research questions/hypotheses.	3.4	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
4. I know how to explain the significance of the study.	3.4	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
5. I know the critical skills needed to read and summarize the contents of the literature	3.2	Agree	Moderately Competent
6. I know how to review and analyze previous literature.	3.13	Agree	Moderately Competent
7. I know how to identify and apply relevant theories in my study.	3.27	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
8. I know how to develop conceptual model for my study.	3.27	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
9. I know how to determine subjects and draw participants for my study.	3.27	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
10. I know how to use suitable academic referencing style to format list of references.	3.2	Agree	Moderately Competent
11. I know how to choose the right research methodology for my research work.	3.07	Agree	Moderately Competent
12. I know how to use the current statistical tool for my data analysis.	2.73	Agree	Moderately Competent
Weighted Mean	3.22	Agree	Moderately Competent
Research Skills			
1. I can write an abstract.	3.13	Agree	Moderately Competent
2. I can confidently develop background to the study in any research work.	2.87	Agree	Moderately Competent
3. I have the ability to define a research problem.	3.33	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
4. I have the ability to plan research.	3.27	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
5. I can explain the purpose of my research.	3.33	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
6. I can confidently write the significance of the study.	3.2	Agree	Moderately Competent
7. I can do a literature review.	3.2	Agree	Moderately Competent

8. I can develop correctly a conceptual model for my research.	3.0	Agree	Moderately Competent
9. I can confidently describe data collection procedure.	3.27	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
10. I can develop the pattern of my literature review using my conceptual model.	3.13	Agree	Moderately Competent
11. I am able to identify appropriate method for analyzing my data.	2.8	Agree	Moderately Competent
12. I can make valid conclusion from the result of analysis.	3.27	Strongly Agree	Highly Competent
13. I can identify relevant theories that best explain my research.	3.13	Agree	Moderately Competent
Weighted Mean	3.15	Agree	Moderately Competent

Implications for Enhancing SHS Teachers' Preparedness and Competence in Teaching Research in Lower Apayao

The findings of this study have significant implications for the Department of Education (DepEd) Philippines and other educational stakeholders. The observed lack of preparedness and competence among Senior High School (SHS) teachers in Lower Apayao, especially in teaching Practical Research 2, highlights the urgent need for targeted professional development programs. Despite many teachers holding advanced degrees and substantial teaching experience, the lack of specific training in research methods and writing is evident. This gap underscores the necessity for DepEd to prioritize ongoing, specialized training sessions and workshops that focus on research pedagogy. Such initiatives would not only enhance teachers' technical skills but also boost their confidence and effectiveness in delivering research-related content. Additionally, it is crucial for DepEd to allocate funding and resources to support teachers in attending these professional development programs, addressing the financial constraints that hinder their participation.

For other stakeholders, including school administrators and policymakers, the study emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive environment that encourages continuous professional growth. Schools should implement mentorship programs where experienced research teachers guide less experienced ones, fostering a collaborative learning atmosphere. Stakeholders should also advocate for the integration of research training into the initial teacher education curriculum, ensuring that new teachers enter the profession with a solid foundation in research skills. Furthermore, the need for a robust evaluation system that regularly assesses teachers' preparedness and competence in teaching research is apparent. By addressing these areas, stakeholders can ensure that SHS teachers are well-equipped to guide students in developing critical research skills, ultimately improving the overall quality of education in Lower Apayao and beyond.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this study has shed light on the current landscape of Senior High School (SHS) teachers' preparedness and competence in teaching research in Lower Apayao. The findings underscore the significance of enhancing teachers' training and professional development programs specifically tailored to research methodologies and writing skills. The identified gaps in preparedness and competence among SHS teachers highlight the need for targeted interventions and support mechanisms. Stakeholders, particularly the Department of Education and

educational policymakers, should consider integrating comprehensive training modules and continuous professional development opportunities that address these specific needs. By doing so, they can empower teachers to effectively impart research skills and knowledge to students, thereby enriching the educational experience and fostering a culture of research excellence in the SHS curriculum.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the preparedness and competence of Senior High School (SHS) teachers in teaching research in Lower Apayao. Firstly, there is a critical need for the Department of Education (DepEd) and other educational institutions to develop and implement targeted professional development programs focused on research methodologies and writing skills. These programs should be mandatory and regularly updated to align with current trends and standards in educational research. Additionally, collaboration with higher education institutions and experienced educators can provide mentorship opportunities and resources to support teachers' continuous learning and growth in this domain. Moreover, integrating practical workshops and seminars on research pedagogy into the SHS curriculum can further equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively guide students in their research endeavors. By investing in these initiatives, DepEd and stakeholders can foster a culture of research excellence among SHS teachers, ultimately enhancing the quality of education and preparing students for future academic and professional pursuits.

Declaration of no conflict of interest

The author hereby declares no conflict of interest and this article is her original work.

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