



## INSTRUCTIONAL COMPETENCE OF TEACHERS IN THE UTILIZATION OF SELF-LEARNING MODULES

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### Abstract

This study explored the instructional competence of public elementary school teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules (SLMs). Seventy-eight teachers were surveyed and grouped according to age, highest educational attainment, length of service, and civil status. Results showed a near-equal distribution of younger and older respondents, with most lacking postgraduate degrees. Over half were tenured, and approximately two-thirds were married. Across Content Knowledge, Learning Materials, and Assessments, teachers demonstrated a very high level of instructional competence. When grouped by the identified variables, competence levels remained consistently high; however, significant differences emerged in the comparative analyses. These findings highlight the need for differentiated support strategies and inform the development of a responsive action plan to further strengthen instructional delivery through SLMs.

*Keywords:* Teachers' instructional competence, self-learning module, utilization of slm

### Bio-profile

**Maria Teresa David Elbano** is a Teacher III at the Schools Division of Silay City and served as Teacher-in-Charge for the past three (3) years. She recently completed her Master's Degree in Education (Major in Administration and Supervision). As a teacher, she is dedicated to ensuring quality, inclusive education in her school and is an advocate of school-community collaboration. She acknowledged the importance of parental and community support in school, noting that a school head is equally committed to helping teachers receive the training they need to improve their overall teaching skills.

### Introduction

#### Rationale

The unexpected disruption of traditional classroom and face-to-face instruction at the height of the pandemic prompted the Department of Education to implement its Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) to ensure learners continued learning remotely. In this regard, DepEd Order No. 018, series of 2020, was issued to provide guidelines for the use of various learning resources, including the Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) (Department of Education, 2020).

However, teachers' instructional proficiency is just as important to the effectiveness of SLMs as their availability. The capacity of a teacher to successfully convey content, make use of relevant learning resources, and meaningfully assess students' learning is referred to as instructional competency. Although many teachers struggle with course contextualization, assessment design, and aligning activities with learning objectives—problems that are exacerbated in modular learning





environments—Lucero (2018) stressed that instructional competency is fundamental to student achievement.

Benito et al. (2022) discovered that when combined with efficient teaching techniques and evaluation procedures, SLMs can enhance academic achievement, especially in mathematics. These results highlight the significance of instructor proficiency in three crucial areas: assessments, learning materials, and content knowledge.

In favor of Deped Order No. 22, s. 2024, titled "Revised Guidelines on Class Suspension in Schools During Disasters and Emergencies," and all public schools in the Negros Island Region are required to use the Weekly Learning Matrix (WeeLMat) as part of the Department's ongoing efforts to ensure learning continuity. By offering instructional direction and encouraging self-directed learning, the WeeLMat is intended to improve weekly instructional planning, increase learners' awareness of their weekly learning activities, and provide structured, flexible instruction that supports learning continuity during class suspensions.

WeeLMat becomes extremely crucial in this situation. It offers systematic feedback on how learning materials are used, comprehended, and evaluated in real classroom or modular contexts and is intended to track and measure the efficacy of SLMs. Its goal is to identify gaps in instructor competency and student comprehension while ensuring that instructional delivery aligns with curriculum standards.

Despite these realizations, there remains a lack of localized research that specifically assesses teachers' instructional competence in relation to SLM. The majority of current research concentrates on learner outcomes or generic teaching strategies, paying little attention to how educators meet the pedagogical requirements of modular learning. By evaluating instructors' proficiency in the aforementioned areas and utilizing the results to guide a focused action plan, this study seeks to close that gap.

The researcher is driven by a dedication to enhancing teaching delivery in public schools, especially through flexible learning modalities. The objective of an educational researcher focused on ICT integration and capacity-building is to produce practical insights that support teacher development and improve student learning outcomes in modular settings.

## **Literature Review**

Dela Cruz and Panganiban's (2021) study found a connection between instructional competence and teachers' capacity to create SLMs that support learner autonomy. They maintained that instructional techniques that promote self-control and critical thinking must be combined with content knowledge. To guide students' progress, the study also highlighted the importance of integrating formative assessments into modules.

Furthermore, Santos and Villanueva (2022) examined how rural school teachers modified SLMs to fit local circumstances, emphasizing the importance of instructional competency in adapting materials to local contexts. According to their conceptual framework, instructors are curriculum builders who must strike a balance between community relevance and national standards to maintain the material's accessibility and significance.

In their analysis of ICT integration in SLM development, Garcia and Mendoza (2023) argued that digital literacy and the capacity to curate multimedia resources are now components of instructional competence. They stressed that educators need to be aware of how digital formats change information and how evaluations can be designed to capture higher-order thinking.

Ramos and Delos Reyes (2021) conceptualized instructional competence in terms of reflective practice. Instructors were urged to examine how students responded to SLMs and to modify their





evaluation and content-delivery methods. According to the study, competency is dynamic and evolves through feedback and ongoing development.

Manigbas et al. (2023) investigated the pedagogical and topic knowledge proficiency of teachers in the Buhi South District of Camarines Sur. The researchers used a descriptive quantitative approach and found that teachers were extremely proficient at integrating content knowledge across curriculum areas, especially when using Mother Tongue, English, and Filipino in instruction. They, however, demonstrated limited capacity to implement research-based teaching methods in SLMs. The study highlighted that the most significant component in improving topic knowledge was peer collaboration. To improve instructors' capacity to incorporate subject-matter expertise into modular instruction, it suggests focused professional development. By identifying gaps in instructional design and content application in SLM contexts, the study advances teacher development.

Additionally, Roallos's (2022) study examined how public elementary school teachers in Batangas used pedagogical strategies in line with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). The findings showed that although teachers were usually aware of subject-knowledge requirements, they found it difficult to implement constructivist and inquiry-based strategies in SLMs. Even though integrative and collaborative methods were widely employed, problems with teaching critical thinking and implementing extracurricular activities surfaced. The study found a strong correlation between teachers' awareness of content knowledge and their level of education, suggesting that academic background influences instructional competence in modular learning. Emphasizing the necessity of greater content integration in instructional practice aids in the implementation of PPST.

Furthermore, Lindero and Sario's (2024) study investigated the connection between students' learning abilities and teachers' proficiency in the Montevista District of Davao de Oro. The findings indicated that although teachers had excellent pedagogical and classroom management abilities, their technology and subject-matter expertise were lacking in modular environments. The study stressed that content-focused professional development could improve instructional impact, but it did not find a meaningful relationship between overall teacher competency and student learning outcomes. Promoting greater content understanding in SLM-based instruction advances 21st-century educational reform.

On one hand, the study of DepEd Lapu-Lapu City Division (2025), under DM No. 493, s. In 2025, assessed teacher expertise in content and pedagogy through division-wide training. Results indicated that teachers improved their ability to align SLM content with Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs), but continued to struggle with contextualizing subject matter for diverse learners. The study emphasized that content knowledge must be paired with reflective practice and curriculum mapping to ensure instructional coherence. It contributes to DepEd's professional development strategy by reinforcing the role of content mastery in modular teaching.

## **Theoretical Underpinnings**

Robert White's Competence Motivation Theory (CMT) (1959) served as the foundation for this investigation. The Motivation Theory of Competence, first put forth by Robert W. White in 1959 and later developed by Susan Harter, provides an engaging psychological framework for understanding teacher growth, especially in instructional competency and ICT integration.

This study was anchored on the Competence Motivation Theory (CMT) by Robert White (1959). The Competence Motivation Theory, originally proposed by Robert W. White in 1959, was later expanded by Susan Harter, who offers a compelling psychological lens for understanding teacher development, particularly in the context of instructional competence and ICT integration. The theory's central claim is that people are naturally motivated to work on initiatives that boost their sense of competence and efficacy. Instead of being exclusively concerned with achieving outward benefits, this internal drive stems from a fundamental need to overcome challenges and exert control



over one's environment. This translates into a teacher's pursuit of professional growth, mastery of instructional strategies, and integration of state-of-the-art tools, such as Self-Learning Modules (SLMs), into learning environments.

Teacher motivation is significantly influenced by perceived competence. Teachers are more likely to participate fully in professional development opportunities and persevere through instructional problems when they have confidence in their ability to plan, carry out, and evaluate instruction—particularly using digital platforms and ICT resources. Positive reinforcement, peer cooperation, and encouraging learning environments all help to bolster intrinsic motivation by reinforcing this sense of efficacy. Competence thus becomes a goal as well as a driving force behind long-term instructional progress.

A conceptual framework called Competence Motivation Theory was created to explain why people are motivated to engage, persevere, and put in a lot of effort in any given success situation. The theory's main claim is that people are drawn to engage in activities that make them feel capable. Researchers and professionals in the disciplines of sport and exercise psychology can utilize the theory to determine why and how to motivate kids, teens, and adults to engage and work hard in various accomplishment situations.

## **Objectives**

This study aimed to determine the level of teachers' instructional competence in the utilization of self-learning modules in a district of a medium-sized division in Central Philippines. Specifically, this study sought to determine: (1) the profile of the respondents in terms of age, educational attainment, length of service, and civil status; (2) the level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules in terms of content knowledge, learning materials, and assessments; (3) if there is a significant difference in the level of teachers' instructional competence in the utilization of self-learning modules when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

## **Methodology**

This section discusses the methods used to gather and analyze the data in line with the predetermined objectives. This outline includes the research design, subject-respondents, research instruments, data collection procedures, ethical considerations, data analysis, and statistical methods.

## **Research Design**

A descriptive research design was employed to assess the level of teachers' instructional competence in the use of self-learning modules in a district of a medium-sized division in Central Philippines for the School Year 2021-2022. Descriptive research is a type of research that describes existing events and conditions, which may lead to the formation of generalizations about the relationships between non-manipulated variables (Cristobal, 2013). This research design is appropriate for this study because the primary purpose is to investigate the relationship between the extent of teachers' skills and the level of learners' academic performance.

## **Respondents**

The respondents in the study were 78 public school teachers from one of the districts in a medium-sized division. Since the number of respondents is manageable, total enumeration was used.





Total enumeration is a form of "purposive sampling" that describes a single research technique where a researcher includes every member of a tiny, specifically defined population in the study. It is a specific type of purposive sampling, also known as total population sampling or census sampling. It is used when the entire population is small and meets specific criteria, ensuring that every individual is included to obtain a complete picture (Laerd Dissertation, 2022).

## **Instrument**

This study employed a self-designed questionnaire to assess teachers' digital pedagogy competence. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. This study employed a self-designed questionnaire divided into two parts: Part 1 collected profile information, and Part 2 was the questionnaire proper. The respondents were asked to rate each item using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 5 (always) to 1 (never), reflecting their perceptions and experiences. This scale captures their quantitative data to analyze and interpret the participants' responses systematically.

## **Procedure for Data Collection**

The researcher submitted a formal letter to the Schools Division Superintendent asking permission and seeking approval to conduct the study after establishing the validity and reliability test of the instrument. Upon approval, the approved copy was furnished to the School Heads, and the distribution of the data gathering instrument was arranged with said School Heads. Data collection was conducted face-to-face for five (5) days, and was collected on the fifth day to ensure timely encoding and analysis of the data.

## **Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment**

Objective 1 used a descriptive analytical scheme, and the statistical tools were Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of Age, Highest Educational Attainment, Length of Service, and Civil Status. Objective No. 2 used a descriptive-analytical scheme, and the statistical tool was the Mean to determine the level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules in terms of Content Knowledge, Learning Materials, and Assessments. Objective No. 3 used a comparative analytical scheme, and the statistical tool was the Mann-Whitney U Test to determine whether there was a significant difference in teachers' instructional competence in the utilization of self-learning modules when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

## **Ethical Considerations**

This study adhered to the guidelines set forth by the National Ethical Guidelines for Health and Social Science Research in the Philippines (Philippine Health Research Ethics Board, 2022), with its core values centered on beneficence, fairness, and respect for individuals. A formal informed consent form was required of all participants, including coordinators, teachers, and school administrators. The aim, processes, dangers, advantages, and voluntary nature of involvement were all spelled out on the form. Permission for student-related data was acquired from guardians and school administrators when needed. Every piece of information gathered was kept private. Codes were used to anonymize participant names, school identifiers, and personal data.



## Results and Discussions

This summarizes the study's findings, which are based on careful data gathering, in-depth analysis, and thoughtful interpretation.

### Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age, Educational Attainment, Length of Service, and Civil Status

**Table 1**

*Profile of the Respondents*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Younger (Below 38 years old)	38	48.70
	Older (38 years old and above)	40	51.30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Highest educational attainment	Lower (Bachelor's degree)	46	59.00
	Higher (MA and PhD)	32	41.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Length of service	Shorter (Below 10 years)	37	47.40
	Longer (10 years and above)	41	52.60
	<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Civil status	Single	20	25.60
	Married	58	74.40
	<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The respondent's profile reflects a balanced distribution across age and service length, with 51.30% aged 38 and above and 52.60% having served for 10 years or more. In terms of educational attainment, 59.00% hold only a bachelor's degree. As to civil status data, it reveals that 74.40% are married. This implies that there is a need for differentiated capacity-building strategies, ones that recognize both the experience and developmental potential of this group. Tailored interventions such as flexible graduate programs, modular ICT training, and school-based mentoring could be especially effective in enhancing instructional competence and sustaining long-term professional growth.

### Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers in the Utilization of Self-learning modules in the areas of Content Knowledge, Learning Materials, and Assessment of Learning



**Table 2**

*Level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules in the area of Content Knowledge*

Content Knowledge	Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, I ....</i>			
	1. Prepare a weekly learning plan based on the most essential learning competencies.	4.79	Very high level
	2. Integrate ICT in preparing content.	4.47	High level
	3. fully utilize content knowledge across all curriculum areas.	4.67	Very high level
	4. employ teaching strategies that are centered on literacy and numeracy.	4.74	Very high level
	5. Utilize strategic, critical, and creative thinking skills.	4.54	Very high level
	6. Design an effective communication strategy tailored to learners' needs.	4.64	Very high level
	7. Always demonstrate the right understanding of lesson contents.	4.73	Very high level
	8. Use my teaching experience to cater to the learning needs of the pupils.	4.74	Very high level
	9. Apply knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas.	4.74	Very high level
	10. Use collaborative efforts with co-teachers to improve my own pedagogical strategies.	4.59	Very high level
	<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>4.67</b>	<b>Very high level</b>

Table 2 presents the level of instructional competence of teachers in utilizing self-learning modules (SLMs) in the area of content knowledge. The overall mean score of 4.67 is interpreted as "very high level". This indicates that teachers exhibit strong mastery of curriculum content and pedagogical strategies essential for effective SLM implementation.

Line-item No. 1, which states that "As a teacher, I prepare weekly learning plan contents based on the most essential learning competencies," got the highest mean score of 4.79, interpreted as "very high level". This reflects teachers' alignment with DepEd's curriculum standards and their responsiveness to prioritized learning outcomes.

On the other hand, line Item No. 2, which states that "As a teacher, I integrate ICT in preparing content," received the lowest mean score of 4.47, interpreted as "high level".

The relatively lower score on ICT integration is aligned with Liou's (2015) observation that systemic constraints and limited autonomy can hinder grassroots innovation, particularly in technology-enhanced instruction. The data suggests that while teachers possess robust content knowledge and pedagogical competence, strategic investments in ICT capacity-building—such as modular training, peer coaching, and resource provisioning—could further elevate their instructional effectiveness in SLM delivery.

**Table 3**

*Level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules in the area of Learning Materials*



Learning Materials	Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, I ....</i>			
	1. Make use of available teaching and learning resources to address learning goals	4.76	Very high level
	2. Carefully manage the learning process based on available learning materials.	4.68	Very high level
	3. Take into serious account the relevance of available learning materials.	4.67	Very high level
	4. source learning materials aligned with learners' competencies.	4.72	Very high level
	5. Take into consideration the integration of ICT-based instructions with available learning materials.	4.41	High level
	6. Evaluate the level of learners' overall progress based on previously used learning materials.	4.49	High level
	7. Consider learners' preferred learning styles in preparing for each learning material.	4.53	Very high level
	8. Reflect professional goals in sourcing the appropriate learning materials.	4.54	Very high level
	9. Design and evaluate learning strategies based on the learning materials available at hand.	4.56	Very high level
	10. collaborate with peers to gather best teaching practices, particularly in the selection and use of learning materials.	4.56	Very high level
	<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>4.59</b>	<b>Very high level</b>

Table 3 presents the level of instructional competence of teachers in utilizing self-learning modules (SLMs) in the area of Learning Materials. The overall mean score of 4.59 is interpreted as a very high level. Line-item No. 1, which states "As a teacher, I make use of available teaching and learning resources to address learning goals," received the highest mean score of 4.76, interpreted as a very high level. Meanwhile, Line Item No. 5, which states that "As a teacher, I take into consideration the integration of ICT-based instructions with available learning materials," got the lowest mean score of 4.41, interpreted as "high level. This score suggests that ICT integration remains an area for growth. This finding is consistent with Cabero-Almenara and Llorente-Cejudo (2020), who highlighted the challenges teachers face in embedding digital tools into instructional design. It also echoes Liou's (2015) assertion that systemic constraints and limited autonomy may hinder grassroots innovation in technology-enhanced instruction.

**Table 4**

*Level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules in the area of Assessment of Learning*

Assessment of Learning	Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a teacher, I ....</i>			
	1. Prepare and administer assessments regularly.	4.71	Very high level
	2. Make sure that assessments are within module-discussed lessons only.	4.65	Very high level



3. Keep a record of assessment results.	4.69	Very high level
4. Provide assessment feedback to parents.	4.44	High level
5. Use assessment results to measure learners' level of understanding.	4.62	Very high level
6. Take time to investigate if learners have difficulties in their assessments.	4.29	High level
7. provides pointers to learners prior to the assessment date.	4.33	High level
8. Review assessments and how answers are derived after the retrieval of learners' assessments.	4.44	High level
9. Encourages learners to study hard for the assessments.	4.64	Very high level
10. Communicate with parents to know the difficulties of their children.	4.50	Very high level
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>4.53</b>	<b>Very high level</b>

Table 4 presents the level of instructional competence of teachers in utilizing self-learning modules (SLMs) in the area of Assessment of Learning. The overall mean score of 4.53, interpreted as a very high level, indicates that teachers demonstrate strong proficiency in designing, administering, and interpreting assessments to support learner progress in modular instruction. Line-item No. 1, which states "As a teacher, I prepare and administer assessments regularly," received the highest mean score of 4.71, interpreted as "very high level". This reflects teachers' consistent engagement in evaluating learner performance and their commitment to maintaining instructional accountability. It aligns with the findings of Cobanbana and Pañares (2023), who emphasized that regular assessment practices embedded in SLMs contribute significantly to improved academic outcomes and instructional effectiveness. On the other hand, line-item No. 6 which states "As a teacher, I take time in investigating if learners have difficulties in their assessments" got the lowest mean score of 4.29, interpreted as "high level". This means that deeper diagnostic assessment practices may be underutilized. This finding is reflective of the findings of DepEd Region VIII (2023), which reported that many teachers struggle to interpret assessment data for differentiated instruction. It also echoes DepEd (2022), which highlighted the need for stronger assessment literacy to bridge classroom-level evaluations with broader learning metrics. These results reinforce the importance of equipping teachers with advanced assessment strategies—such as error analysis, feedback loops, and learner conferencing—to enhance their instructional competence in modular settings.

As emphasized by Cobero and Cabanban (2022), integrating performance-based tasks and reflective assessment practices within SLMs can foster deeper understanding and more responsive teaching. Strengthening these competencies through targeted professional development will ensure that assessments not only measure learning but also inform and improve it.

### **Comparative Analysis in the Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers in the Utilization of Self-learning Modules in terms of Content Knowledge, Learning Materials, and Assessment of Learning when grouped and compared according to Age, Educational Attainment, Length of Service, and Civil Status**



**Table 5**

*Differences in the Level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules in the area of Content Knowledge, and when grouped and compared according to variables*

Content knowledge							
Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U test	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	38	36.70	653.50	0.278	0.05	Not significant
	Older	40	42.16				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	46	37.38	638.50	0.312	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	32	42.55				
Length of Service	Shorter	37	32.80	510.50	0.011	0.05	Significant
	Longer	41	45.55				
Civil Status	Single	20	31.20	414.00	0.053	0.05	Not Significant
	Married	58	42.36				

Table 5 reveals the differences in the level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules (SLMs) in the area of Content Knowledge when grouped and compared according to selected variables. Among the four variables, Age, Highest Educational Attainment, Length of Service, and Civil Status, only length of service yielded a significant difference in instructional competence, with a p-value of 0.011, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold. This indicates that teachers with longer service (mean rank = 45.55) possess significantly higher instructional competence in content knowledge compared to those with shorter service (mean rank = 32.80), affirming the influence of professional experience on pedagogical depth and curriculum mastery.

In contrast, the variables age, educational attainment, and civil status all showed no significant differences in instructional competence, with p-values of 0.278, 0.312, and 0.053, respectively. Although older teachers (mean rank = 42.16) and those with higher educational attainment (mean rank = 42.55) had slightly higher mean ranks than their counterparts, the differences were not statistically significant. Similarly, while married teachers (mean rank = 42.36) scored higher than single teachers (mean rank = 31.20), the p-value of 0.053 suggests that civil status does not significantly affect instructional competence in content knowledge.

The hypothesis, which states "There is no significant difference in the level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules (SLMs)," is therefore rejected.

These findings reinforce the conclusion that length of service is a key determinant of instructional competence in content knowledge, consistent with the results from previous tables. This aligns with the study of Santos and Villanueva (2022), who emphasized that sustained teaching experience contributes to deeper curriculum understanding and more effective instructional planning. The absence of significant differences across other variables suggests that competence in content knowledge may be more closely tied to professional practice and exposure rather than demographic or academic background alone.

**Table 6**



*Differences in the Level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules in the area of Learning Materials, and when grouped and compared according to variables*

<b>Learning materials</b>							
Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U test	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	38	39.20	748.50	0.907	0.05	Not significant
	Older	40	39.79				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	46	39.36	729.50	0.947	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	32	39.70				
Length of Service	Shorter	37	35.61	614.50	0.144	0.05	Not Significant
	Longer	41	43.01				
Civil Status	Single	20	32.75	445.00	0.117	0.05	Not Significant
	Married	58	41.83				

Table 6 reveals differences in teachers' instructional competence in the utilization of self-learning modules (SLMs) in the area of Learning Materials, grouped and compared by selected variables: age, highest educational attainment, length of service, and civil status.

The results show that none of the variables yielded a statistically significant difference, as all p-values exceeded the 0.05 significance threshold. This suggests that instructional competence in managing and utilizing learning materials is consistently high across demographic and professional categories.

For the variable age, younger teachers had a mean rank of 39.20, while older teachers had 39.79, with a p-value of 0.907, indicating no significant difference. Similarly, for educational attainment, teachers with lower qualifications had a mean rank of 39.36, and those with higher qualifications had a mean rank of 39.70, with a p-value of 0.947, which is not significant. These findings imply that both younger and older teachers, as well as those with varying academic backgrounds, demonstrate comparable levels of competence in sourcing, managing, and applying learning materials in SLM delivery.

Although teachers with longer service had a higher mean rank (43.01) compared to those with shorter service (35.61), the p-value of 0.144 indicates that the difference is not statistically significant. Likewise, for civil status, married teachers had a mean rank of 41.83, while single teachers had 32.75, with a p-value of 0.117, again not significant. These results suggest that while trends may indicate slightly higher competence among more experienced or married teachers, the differences are not strong enough to be considered statistically meaningful.

Overall, the findings highlight a consistent level of instructional competence in the use of learning materials across teacher profiles.

The hypothesis, which states that "There is no significant difference in the level of teacher competence in the utilization of SLMs," is therefore accepted.

This supports the assertion of Villanueva and Santos (2020) that competence in instructional resource management is shaped more by contextual practice and institutional support than by demographic factors. It also reinforces the need for inclusive professional development programs that cater to all teachers, regardless of age, qualification, tenure, or civil status.





**Table 20**

*Difference in the Level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules in the area of Assessment of Learning, and when grouped and compared according to variables*

Assessment of Learning							
Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U test	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	38	37.92	700.00	0.542	0.05	Not significant
	Older	40	41.00				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	46	39.11	718.00	0.853	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	32	40.06				
Length of Service	Shorter	37	35.20	599.50	0.106	0.05	Not Significant
	Longer	41	43.38				
Civil Status	Single	20	29.70	384.00	0.023	0.05	Significant
	Married	58	42.88				

Table 20 reveals the differences in the level of instructional competence of teachers in the utilization of self-learning modules (SLMs) in the area of Assessment of Learning when grouped and compared according to selected variables: age, highest educational attainment, length of service, and civil status.

The results show that only one variable, civil status, yielded a statistically significant difference, as its p-value fell below the 0.05 significance threshold. All other variables showed no significant differences, indicating that instructional competence in assessing learning through SLMs is generally consistent across most demographic and professional categories.

For the variable age, younger teachers had a mean rank of 37.92, while older teachers had 41.00, with a p-value of 0.542, indicating no significant difference. Similarly, for educational attainment, teachers with lower qualifications had a mean rank of 39.11, and those with higher qualifications had 40.06, with a p-value of 0.853, also not significant. These findings suggest that both younger and older teachers, as well as those with varying academic backgrounds, demonstrate comparable levels of competence in assessing learning outcomes through SLMs.

Although teachers with longer service had a higher mean rank (43.38) compared to those with shorter service (35.20), the p-value of 0.106 indicates that the difference is not statistically significant. However, for civil status, married teachers had a mean rank of 42.88, while single teachers had 29.70, with a p-value of 0.023, indicating a statistically significant difference. This suggests that married teachers exhibit higher instructional competence in the assessment of learning compared to their single counterparts.

Overall, the findings highlight a generally consistent level of instructional competence in the area of assessment across teacher profiles, with the exception of civil status, which showed a significant variation.

The hypothesis, which states that "There is no significant difference in the level of teacher competence in the utilization of SLMs," is therefore partially rejected.





## **Conclusion**

The study's findings indicate that the teaching workforce is generally stable, experienced, and professionally grounded, as reflected in the respondents' demographic profile. While most teachers do not hold postgraduate degrees, their tenured status and personal stability suggest sustained engagement in the profession, which may contribute to consistency in instructional delivery. More importantly, teachers demonstrated a very high level of instructional competence in the use of self-learning modules across content knowledge, learning materials, and assessment, underscoring their strong alignment with curriculum standards and their effective adaptation to modular instruction. Notably, instructional competence remained consistently high across age, educational attainment, tenure, and marital status. This uniformity suggests that effective modular instruction has been successfully institutionalized and internalized across the teaching force, minimizing disparities that might otherwise arise from demographic differences. Overall, the results highlight the adaptability, commitment, and professionalism of teachers in implementing self-learning modules, affirming their capacity to deliver quality education across diverse contexts and reinforcing the viability of modular learning as an effective instructional approach.

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## **Conflict of Interest**

The author declares the absence of any conflict of interest that could have influenced the content or conclusions of this paper. She affirms that no financial, personal, or professional relationships with other individuals or organizations have compromised the objectivity, integrity, or impartiality of the research work. As a final point, no external parties influenced the study design, data collection, analysis, or interpretation.



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