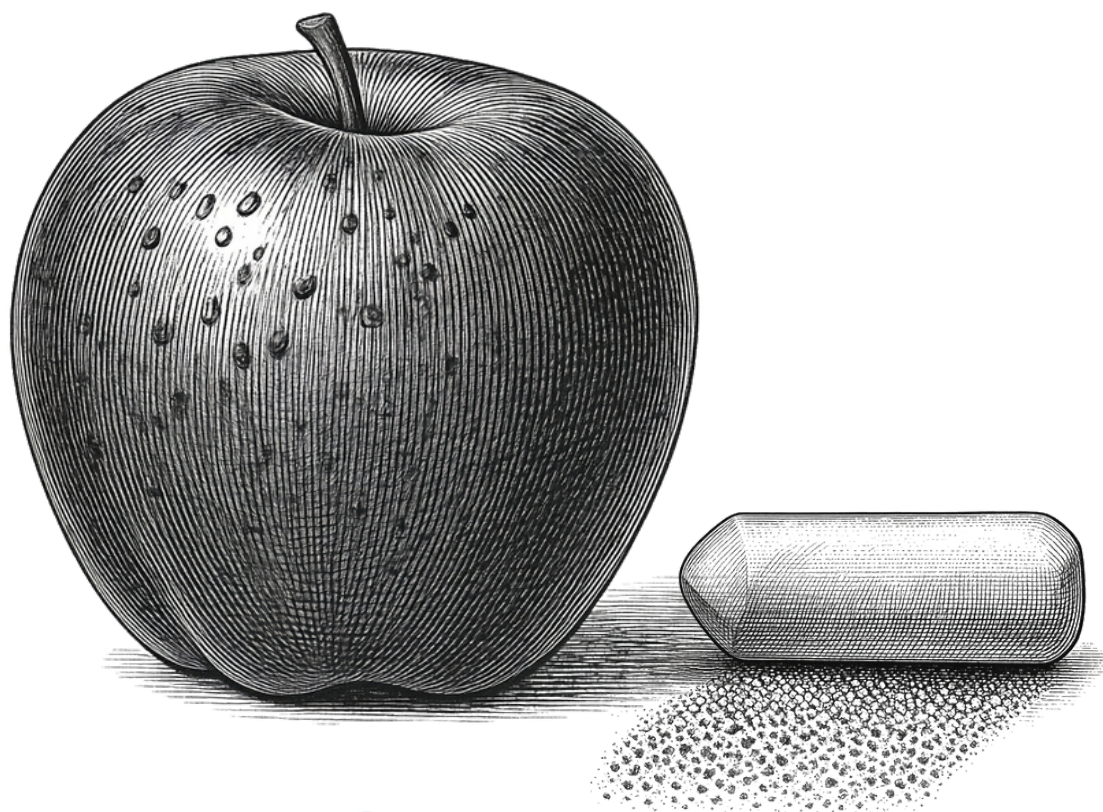


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This research journal would not have been possible without the invaluable support of the school administration, faculty and student researchers of the College of Education. Gratitude is also expressed for the Research and Development Center for its continued support and to all stakeholders who shared their selfless support for this publication.

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THE JOURNAL OF COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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The Journal of College of Education is a collection of faculty and student research works in 2024.

The research papers highlight the students' academic performance, online teaching, digital literacy, English proficiency, and traditional games.

As a whole, the research articles provide evidence-based insights on various issues concerning the Education of UPHSL involving its instructional force and learners



Editor's Note

In this issue of the College of Education Research Journal, a platform showcasing the exceptional research conducted by the College of Education undergraduate students. This issue explores diverse areas of insightful studies that delve into various aspects of travel applications, safety security, merit system and occupational dynamics.

The study titled “**Cooperative Learning: Social and Academic Skills of Selected Elementary Students**” by Saniei, Benigno Renz G., Defante, Mary Joy, and Seville, Maria Michelle T. from the College of International Hospitality Management at the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna examined how cooperative learning strategies influence the development of both social and academic skills among selected elementary students. Grounded in the growing emphasis on collaborative and student-centered learning, the study highlighted cooperative learning as a dynamic approach where learners work together in small groups, fostering positive interdependence, individual accountability, and meaningful interaction. This approach reflects the shift toward 21st-century education, where communication, teamwork, and adaptability are essential competencies.

Using structured group activities and classroom-based observations, the study assessed how cooperative learning environments contribute to students' academic performance and interpersonal development. The findings revealed that cooperative learning significantly improved students' communication skills, teamwork, and peer relationships, while also enhancing their motivation, conceptual understanding, and overall academic achievement—particularly among those with lower performance levels or limited social engagement. The study emphasized the importance of integrating cooperative learning strategies to address the holistic



development of learners and recommended further research on its long-term impact and the role of teacher facilitation in sustaining positive outcomes.

The study titled ***“TikTok’s Influence on Concentration Level and Learning Motivation Among Teacher Education Students at a Private University”*** by Katherine Anne D. Faderoga and Clarissa A. Valencia from the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna examined how the widely used social media platform TikTok affects students’ ability to focus and stay motivated in their studies. In the context of increasing digital engagement among learners, the study aimed to determine the relationship between TikTok usage, concentration levels, and learning motivation among teacher education students, highlighting both its potential benefits and limitations in academic settings. Using a descriptive-correlational research design and a validated survey questionnaire, data were collected from 104 respondents. Findings revealed that students generally perceived TikTok to have a high level of influence on both their concentration and learning motivation. Regardless of age, gender, year level, or academic program, the perceived effects remained consistent. Notably, as TikTok’s influence on concentration increased, its impact on learning motivation also rose. While the platform was seen to support engagement and motivation—especially through educational and inspiring content—it was also noted that its short-form format may not always support deeper knowledge retention. The study emphasized the importance of responsible and purposeful use of TikTok, encouraging students to balance it with their study routines, while educators were advised to integrate it thoughtfully alongside more comprehensive instructional materials to ensure meaningful learning outcomes.



The study titled ***“Early Life Stress, Behavior Management and Socio-Emotional Development Among Grade 3 Pupils”*** by Iñosa, Anna Katrina and Marquez, Trixia B. examined the relationships among early life stress, behavior management, and socio-emotional development of Grade 3 pupils from Canlalay Elementary School and Dr. Jose G. Tamayo Memorial Elementary School. Recognizing the importance of early childhood experiences in shaping learners’ behavior and emotional growth, the study aimed to determine how these variables interact and influence pupils’ development in school settings.

Using a descriptive-correlational research design and a validated survey questionnaire, data were gathered from 265 randomly selected pupils. Findings revealed that respondents generally experienced a low level of early life stress, alongside high levels of behavior management and socio-emotional development, including self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The results showed no significant relationship between early life stress and behavior management, as well as between early life stress and socio-emotional development. However, a significant relationship was found between behavior management and socio-emotional development, indicating that pupils who demonstrate better self-regulation and behavioral control also tend to exhibit stronger socio-emotional skills. The study underscores the importance of fostering positive behavior management strategies to support children’s overall emotional and social development.

The study titled ***“Social Media Use, Digital Literacy and Academic Interest of Intermediate Learners”*** by Boongaling, Sharleen Kae V., Emelo, Mark Joshua R., and Lacson, Joana Marie R. from the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna examined how social media use and digital literacy relate to the academic interest of learners in the intermediate level.



In an era where digital platforms are deeply integrated into students' daily lives, the study aimed to understand how frequently learners use social media, assess their level of digital literacy, and determine how these factors influence their motivation and engagement in school. Using a descriptive-correlational research design and a validated survey questionnaire, data were collected from 111 randomly selected Grade 4 to Grade 6 learners. Findings revealed that students often use social media, mainly for communication and academic-related purposes, and demonstrate a high level of digital literacy, particularly in communication, collaboration, and critical thinking, although lower in connectedness and creativity. Learners also showed a high level of academic interest. Correlation results indicated a low but significant positive relationship between social media use and digital literacy, no significant relationship between social media use and academic interest, and a low but significant positive relationship between digital literacy and academic interest. The study highlights that while social media use may help enhance digital literacy, it is digital literacy itself that plays a more important role in fostering students' academic engagement and interest.

The study titled ***“Professional Competencies and Challenges Encountered by Special Needs Education Teachers in Laguna”*** by Estebal, Julianne Marisa Ysabelle S., Porte, Ronna Dalle C., and Valiente, J-an C. examined the competencies and challenges experienced by special needs education (SNEd) teachers in elementary schools in Biñan and Santa Rosa. Anchored on the principles of Magna Carta for Disabled Persons (RA 7277), the study emphasized the importance of ensuring quality and inclusive education for learners with special needs, while also understanding the professional conditions of the teachers who support them.

Using survey questionnaires administered both online and in print, the study analyzed teachers' demographic profiles, competency levels, and the



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challenges they encountered. Findings revealed that respondents—mostly middle-aged female teachers with less than ten years of experience—demonstrated a very high level of professional competence, with no significant differences across profile variables. Additionally, most teachers reported encountering minimal challenges, which may be attributed to sufficient administrative support and their teaching experience. The study highlights a capable and resilient SNEd workforce and provides valuable insights for strengthening policies and support systems to further enhance special education in the region.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all the researchers whose dedication and expertise have enriched this edition. Their insightful contributions offer valuable knowledge for the hospitality management, tourism, nutrition, and dietetics industries and beyond. We invite you, the reader, to utilize these studies and discover the innovative perspectives they present. As we continue to pursue excellence in research and education, the College of International Hospitality Management Research Journal remains committed to illuminating the path towards a more informed and successful hospitality management, tourism management, and nutrition and dietetics future.

Dr. Elena A. Salinas
Editor-in-Chief



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COOPERATIVE LEARNING; SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC SKILLS OF SELECT ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Saniel, Benigno Renz G.

Defante, Mary joy

Sevillo, Maria Michelle T.

Abstract

Cooperative learning, a dynamic teaching method where students work together in small groups, has gained popularity in contemporary education for its ability to enhance student engagement, academic outcomes, interpersonal skills, and classroom community. Cooperative learning promotes positive interdependence, individual accountability, and face-to-face interaction, fostering a collaborative environment where all members contribute meaningfully, enhancing individual understanding and collective performance. The study found that cooperative learning significantly enhances social and academic skills among elementary students through structured group activities, improved communication, teamwork, and stronger relationships. Cooperative learning enhances academic performance, conceptual understanding, and motivation among students, especially those with lower achievement or limited social interaction. It addresses holistic needs and aligns with 21st-century educational goals. Future research should explore long-term impacts and teacher facilitation's role in sustaining cooperative learning outcomes.



Keyword: Cooperative Learning, active engagement, meaningful interaction

Introduction

In contemporary educational settings, the quest for effective teaching methods that enhance student engagement and achievement has led educators to explore various pedagogical strategies. One such approach that has gained significant traction is cooperative learning. Cooperative learning, an instructional method where students work together in small, structured groups to achieve common learning goals, offers a dynamic alternative to traditional, individual-centered teaching practices. This collaborative approach not only aims to improve academic outcomes but also to foster essential interpersonal skills and a sense of community within the classroom.

At its core, cooperative learning emphasizes the importance of positive interdependence, individual accountability, and face-to-face interaction. By encouraging students to rely on each other to complete tasks and solve problems, this method fosters a collaborative environment where every participant plays a vital role in the group's success. The integration of these principles helps ensure that all members contribute meaningfully, thereby enhancing both individual understanding and collective performance. The benefits of cooperative learning extend beyond academic achievement. Research has shown that cooperative learning can significantly boost student motivation, engagement, and satisfaction. Moreover, it provides valuable opportunities for students to develop critical social skills such as communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution.



These skills are increasingly recognized as essential for success in both academic and professional context.

Social skills are integral to the development of a well-rounded individual. They enable students to engage in meaningful interactions with peers, teachers, and family members, thereby enhancing their overall educational experience. Moreover, in the context of the workplace, strong social skills are often associated with better job performance, career advancement, and job satisfaction. Employers increasingly value candidates who can work well in teams, communicate clearly, and resolve conflicts constructively.

The development of social skills begins early in life and is influenced by various factors, including family environment, educational experiences, and peer interactions. Educational systems have recognized the importance of nurturing these skills, integrating them into curricula through programs that promote social and emotional learning (SEL). Such programs aim to equip students with the competencies needed to manage emotions, set positive goals, show empathy for others, and make responsible decisions. Despite the growing recognition of their importance, social skills can often be overlooked or inadequately addressed in traditional educational settings, which may focus predominantly on academic achievement. This oversight can impact students' ability to build effective relationships and succeed in collaborative environments. Therefore, it is crucial to explore the ways in which educational practices can be adapted to better support the development of social skills and ensure that students are prepared for both personal and professional challenges.

Academic skills form the foundation upon which educational success is built. They enable students to engage with complex



materials, analyze information critically, and apply knowledge effectively across various disciplines. For instance, critical thinking skills allow students to evaluate arguments, solve problems, and make informed decisions, while research skills are crucial for gathering, assessing, and synthesizing information from diverse sources. Time management and study skills, on the other hand, help students organize their efforts, meet deadlines, and balance academic responsibilities with other aspects of life. The importance of academic skills extends beyond the classroom. In today's knowledge-based economy, these skills are highly valued in professional settings, where the ability to think critically, manage time efficiently, and conduct thorough research can significantly impact career success and progression. Furthermore, as the nature of work continues to evolve with technological advancements and global integration, the capacity to learn independently and adapt to new challenges is increasingly essential.

Method

The study used a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationship between cooperative learning, social skills, and academic skills of selected elementary students at Malaban Elementary School, without attempting to manipulate the situation. The study utilized primary data from selected elementary students' survey responses and secondary sources from journals, books, online resources, and other reading materials.

The population of the study consisted of randomly selected Grades 4-6 students of Malaban Elementary School. Using Slovin's Formula, the sample size is 43. The respondents were purposively selected by the researchers which were represented by 43 each for



grades 4 level. Stratified random sampling, specifically proportional allocation was used in selecting the certain respondents.

The study used a self-made questionnaire, in which respondents choose the answers regarding the statements given. The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts. Part 1 covered the elementary students' frequency of cooperative learning. Part 2 covered the elementary students' level of social skills. Part 3 covered the elementary students' level of academic skills. The first and the third part were a self-made questionnaire, while the second part was adopted from the study of Amin et al., (2021). The research instrument was presented to the research adviser for initial checking. The survey questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's coefficient to determine the internal consistency of the items. Reliability results shared .780 (acceptable internal consistency) for cooperative learning, .734. (acceptable internal consistency) for social skills. And .816 (good internal consistency).

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the data gathered in tabular form with corresponding interpretation and analysis.



Table 1 Respondents' Level of Cooperative Learning

Questions	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1 I like working with other students on assignments.	3.16	High	8
2 I feel I learn better when working with my peers.	3.19	High	7
3 Working together make it less challenging for me to get my work done.	3.33	Very High	4
4 I am able to receive support from my group if something is not clear to me.	3.23	High	6
5 My contributions to the group are respected by my peers.	3.56	Very High	2



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6 I enjoy working with other students on assignments	3.09	High	9
7 Working together helps me to better communicate my thoughts	3.60	Very High	1

8 I am more responsible for my learning when contributing to a group	3.30	Very High	5
9 My peers evenly contribute ideas or fairly completes tasks while collaborating.	3.00	High	10
10 I enjoy sharing ideas and listening to my classmates' ideas while working in a group.	3.49	Very High	3
Overall Weighted Mean	3.30	Very High	



Table 1 shows the respondents' level of cooperative learning. The results showed that the respondents had a very high level of Cooperative learning as they perceive that if they work together, they can communicate their thoughts better, ranked first and got a weighted mean of 3.60. The respondents also had a very high perception that their contributions to the group are respected by their peers, which got a weighted mean of 3.56 and ranked 2. A very high weighted mean of 3.49 showed that the respondents enjoy sharing ideas and listening to their classmates' ideas while working in a group, ranked 3rd. Moreover, the respondents very highly perceived that working together lessens the challenge in making their work done and got a weighted mean of 3.33 and ranked 4th. This is followed by the belief that they are more responsible for learning when they contribute to a group, ranked 5th and got a weighted mean of 3.30. The respondents are able to receive support from their group if something is not clear, got a weighted mean of 3.23 and ranked 6th.

In addition, the respondent highly believes that they learn better when they work with peers with a weighted mean of 3.19, ranked 7th. While others like working with other students with their assignments got a weighted mean of 3.16 and ranked 8th. The respondents also highly enjoy working with others on their assignments and got a weighted mean of 3.09, ranked 9. And in 10th place, the respondents highly believe that their peers evenly contribute ideas and fairly complete tasks while working collaboratively. Based on the overall weighted mean of 3.30, the respondents' level of cooperative learning is interpreted as "Very High," indicating a strong positive disposition towards collaborative learning experiences. This suggests that the students generally



appreciate and benefit from working with their peers, finding it less challenging to complete tasks, valuing the support and shared understanding within groups, and feeling that their contributions are respected. Furthermore, they enjoy the process of sharing and listening to ideas, which fosters better communication and a sense of shared responsibility in their learning. The findings support the study of Johnson and Johnson (2002) showing that students who work in structured cooperative groups work more productively and attain higher learning outcomes than students who work in unstructured groups.

Table 2. Respondents' Level of Social Social Skills

Questions	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I make friends easily.	3.58	Very High	4.5
2. I am confident on dates or Socialization.	2.74	High	10
3. I ask before using other people's things.	3.58	Very High	4.5



4. I feel sorry for others when bad things happen to them.	3.67	Very High	2
5. I ask friends for help with my problems.	3.21	High	7
6. I listen carefully when others are speaking	3.65	Very High	3
7. I can express my thoughts clearly and confidently.	3.12	High	8
8. I use polite words such as "Please" and "Thank you."	3.88	Very High	1
9. I help classmates when they need assistance.	3.37	High	6
10. I control my temper when	2.93	High	9



people are angry with me			
Overall Weighted Mean	3.37	Very High	

Table 2 shows the respondents' level of social skills. The highest level of agreement was observed in the consistent use of courteous language, registering a weighted mean of 3.88 and ranking first, which is interpreted as Very High. Similarly, a Very High level of agreement was noted for expressions of empathy towards others' misfortunes, with a weighted mean of 3.67 and a rank of two, as well as for attentive listening during conversations, scoring 3.65 and ranking third.

Conversely, the lowest level of agreement, categorized as High and ranking tenth, was associated with feeling self-assured in social settings and on dates, achieving a weighted mean of 2.74. Other indicators interpreted as High include seeking support from friends when facing difficulties, clearly and confidently articulating thoughts, offering assistance to classmates in need, and managing one's temper when others express anger. These findings suggest that while the respondents generally demonstrate positive social behaviors such as politeness and empathy, their social confidence, assertiveness in communication, help-seeking tendencies, and emotional regulation are at a high level.

Based on the overall weighted mean of 3.37, the respondents' level of social skills is interpreted as Very High. This suggests that, as a group, the respondents demonstrate a middle ground in their self-perceived social abilities. While they may exhibit



some positive social behaviors and feel comfortable in certain social situations, there are also areas where they perceive themselves as having room for improvement or experiencing moderate levels of confidence and skill. This overall Very High rating indicates a need for a more nuanced understanding of specific social skill strengths and weaknesses within the group, as highlighted by the individual indicator analysis.

The findings agree with Marx (2021) emphasizing that relationship skills. One of social and emotional learning. The article provides directions and illustrations. For using cooperative group activities to improve relationship skills of students. With or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorder.

Table 3 Respondent's Academic Skills

Questions	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1.I made myself ready in all my subjects	3.26	High	8
2. I pay attention and listen during every discussion.	3.44	Very High	3



3. I do my best to perform well academically.	3.67	Very High	1
4. I actively participate in every discussion.	3.21	High	9
5. I start papers and projects as soon as they are assigned.	3.47	Very High	2
6. I enjoy homework and activities because they help me improve my skills in every subject.	3.40	High	5
7. I exert more effort when I do difficult assignments.	3.37	High	6
8. Solving problems is a useful hobby for me.	3.14	High	10
9. I take notes during class to help me	3.42	Very High	4



remember important information's.			
10. I complete my homework on time.	3.33	High	7
Overall Weighted Mean	3.37	High	

Table 3 shows the respondents' academic skills. The highest agreement was with the statement reflecting a commitment to academic excellence, scoring 3.67 and ranking first, which is interpreted as High. A similarly "High" level of agreement was observed for initiating assignments promptly, scoring 3.47 and ranking second, and for attentive listening in class, scoring 3.44 and ranking third. Taking notes to aid memory also scored High, with a weighted mean of 3.42 and a rank of four. Conversely, the lowest agreement, categorized as Moderate and ranking tenth, was associated with finding problem-solving a useful hobby, achieving a weighted mean of 3.14. Other indicators interpreted as High include being prepared for all subjects, actively participating in discussions, enjoying homework and activities for skill improvement, exerting extra effort on challenging assignments, and completing homework on time.



These findings suggest that while respondents generally demonstrate positive academic behaviors such as striving for good performance, starting work early, and paying attention, their engagement in problem-solving as a hobby, overall preparedness, active participation, enjoyment of academic tasks, effort in difficult work, and timeliness of homework completion are at high level.

The results reveal an overall "High" level, indicated by a weighted mean of 3.37. This suggests that, on average, the respondents demonstrate a middle-ground level of academic proficiency. While they exhibit some positive academic behaviors, there are also areas where they show less strength or engagement. This High rating implies a need for a more detailed examination of specific academic skill areas to identify potential areas for improvement.

The findings support Maimad et al. (2023) who investigated the relationship between parental involvement and students' academic achievement in peripheral communities of the Philippines. The study revealed that while students demonstrated high academic achievement in.



Table 4 Relationship Between the Respondents' Level of Cooperative Learning and Level of Social Skills

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Cooperative learning and social skills	$r=.049$ (negligible correlation)	.753	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant

Table 4 shows the relationship between the respondents' level of cooperative learning and level of social skills where a Pearson's r value of .049 was obtained indicating a negligible correlation. Meanwhile, a probability value of .753 which was higher than the test of significance at .05 showed that there is no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant relationship between the variables. This means that the respondents' level of social skills does not depend on their level of cooperative learning.

This means that there is no statistically significant relationship between the respondents' levels of cooperative learning and their levels of social skills. In simpler terms, the data does not provide evidence that higher or lower levels of cooperative learning are associated with higher or lower levels of social skills in this group of respondents.



The findings contradict the study of Larson (2022) who implemented cooperative learning interventions in a fourth-grade classroom and observed improvements in students' social skills over time. The study noted that while initial exposure to cooperative learning might be challenging for students unaccustomed to group work, repeated and structured cooperative activities led to enhanced social interactions and reduced stress.

Table 5 Relationship Between the Respondents' Level of Cooperative Learning and Level of Academic Skills

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Cooperative Learning and Academic Skills	$r = .149$ (negligible correlation)	.339	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant

Table 5 shows the relationship between the respondents' level of cooperative learning and level of social skills where a Pearson's r value of $-.149$ was obtained indicating a negligible correlation. Meanwhile, a probability value of $.339$ which was higher than the test of significance at $.05$ showed that there is no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant relationship between the variables. This means that the



respondents' level of academic skills does not depend on their level of cooperative learning.

This also means that there is no statistically significant relationship between the respondents' levels of cooperative learning and their levels of academic skills. In simpler terms, the data does not provide evidence that higher or lower levels of cooperative learning are associated with higher or lower levels of academic skills in this group of respondents. The findings contradict the study of Santiago et al. (2022) that highlighted that while cooperative learning generally benefits academic performance, its effectiveness depends on proper implementation. Challenges such as group selection and ensuring full engagement of all pupils can affect outcomes, emphasizing the need for structured and well-facilitated cooperative activities.

Table 6 Relationship Between the Respondents' Level of Social Skills and Level of Academic Skills

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Social skills and Academic Skills	$r=.093$ (negligible correlation)	551	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant



Table 6 shows the relationship between the respondents' level of social skills and level of academic skills where a Pearson's r value of .094 was obtained indicating a negligible correlation. Meanwhile, a probability value of .551 which was higher than the test of significance at .05 showed that there is no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant relationship between the variables. This means that the respondents' level of academic skills does not depend on their level of social skills. In simpler terms, the data does not provide evidence that higher or lower levels of social skills of the respondents would also mean a higher or lower level of academic skills. The findings support Furkan and Bugra (202) who posit the relationship between cooperative learning and academic success.

On the other hand, Paroginog, Alpuerto, and Pilongo (2018) examined Grade 10 students at the University of Bohol. Their research revealed moderate levels of social skills among students, with cooperation being the most prominent. However, statistical analysis showed no significant correlation between social skills and academic performance. The authors suggested that while social skills are essential for personal development, they may not directly impact academic outcomes.

Conclusion

The respondents have a strong positive perception of cooperative learning, indicating they value and benefit from collaborative work. They have high level social skills, with some strengths and areas for improvement. Their academic skills are moderate, indicating a middle ground in academic proficiency with both strengths and weaknesses. There is no significant relationship between their level of cooperative learning and their perceived level



of social skills, and no significant relationship between their level of cooperative learning and their level of social skills.

Directions for future use

The study suggests that schools should implement programs to enhance students' social and academic skills, such as social skills training and academic support programs. Students should also actively participate in group work and embrace collaborative learning opportunities to develop their social skills, such as communication, empathy, and conflict resolution. Teachers should also focus on improving their academic skills by actively participating in class, completing assignments diligently, and seeking additional support when needed. Teachers should incorporate collaborative activities into lesson plans and provide clear guidelines to ensure productive and equitable group work. Future research should explore the complex interplay between cooperative learning, social skills, and academic skills, considering variables like student motivation, teacher practices, and classroom environment. Researchers could use qualitative and mixed-methods approaches to gain a deeper understanding of these phenomena.

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TIKTOK'S INFLUENCE ON CONCENTRATION LEVEL AND LEARNING MOTIVATION AMONG TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENT AT A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

Katherine Anne D. Faderoga

Clarissa A. Valencia

Abstract

This descriptive-correlational research, which utilized a validated and pilot-tested survey questionnaire, to achieve the purpose of the study which was to determine the significant relationship between the students' concentration level and level of learning motivation as influenced by Tiktok. The respondents of the study were one hundred four (104) teacher education students. Findings showed that the majority of the respondents were 21-24 years old, female, in second year level, and belong to the Bachelor of Secondary Education program. The respondents showed a high level of perceived influence of TikTok on their concentration, with an overall weighted mean of 2.98. Also, the respondents showed a high level of perceived influence of TikTok on their learning motivation with an overall weighted mean of 3.10. Regardless of the respondents' age, gender, year level and program, the perceived level of influence of Tiktok on their concentration and learning motivation is the same. Finally, as the influence of Tiktok on concentration increases, its influence on learning motivation also increases. Students are encouraged to continue using TikTok responsibly and purposefully, especially by engaging with educational and motivational content. Since TikTok positively influences both concentration and learning motivation when



used moderately, students should integrate short, intentional breaks with meaningful TikTok content into their study routines to support focus and motivation without causing distraction. Faculty members and academic advisors should carefully evaluate the types of TikTok content being integrated into teaching strategies. Given that TikTok's short video format was rated low in helping students assimilate knowledge more rapidly. Educators must supplement TikTok-based materials with more in-depth instructional tools to ensure meaningful learning. Orientation sessions may also address the limitations of such platforms alongside their benefits.

Keywords: *tiktok influence, concentration level, learning motivation*

Introduction

Social media has become a central aspect of modern life, significantly shaping students' behaviors, communication patterns, and academic experiences. While it can offer opportunities for learning and engagement, social media also introduces challenges such as distractions, skill deficiencies, and external influences. Among these platforms, TikTok, originally launched as Musical.ly and later acquired by ByteDance in 2016, has gained widespread popularity due to its short video format and global reach (Midson Short, 2022).

Despite its challenges, TikTok has been credited with fostering creativity and providing mental health benefits, as observed



by Herath (2020). These mixed effects highlight the platform's complex influence on students' academic and personal lives.

This study will determine if the presence of Tiktok significantly influences students' concentration level and learning motivation. Concentration, defined as the mental effort required to execute tasks effectively, plays a critical role in academic success (Raypole, 2024). The depth of concentration can range from light to deep levels, impacting the extent to which students can absorb and process information (Avila-Medina, 2021).

Similarly, learning motivation, which encompasses the social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral forces driving individuals to achieve goals, is another key determinant of academic performance (Cherry, 2023). Understanding the interplay between concentration and motivation in the context of TikTok usage is vital to addressing its impact on academic outcomes.

Ngilangil (2022) explored TikTok's level of influence on students' engagement. Based on the results of the study, Tiktok was very influential to the SNSU (Surigao del Norte State University) students. It also revealed that Tiktok had a significant relationship with the students which means Tiktok was influential and engaging. While in the study by Ngilangil's (2022), have explored TikTok's influence on student engagement, gaps remain in understanding how TikTok specifically affects cognitive and affective variables like concentration level and learning motivation among teacher education students in private universities. Addressing these variables is essential to



understanding the broader implications of TikTok on student academic performance.

Considering these identified gaps, this paper will delve into TikTok's influence, concentration level, and learning motivation. The researchers aim to see if there are significant relationships between variables, covering teacher education students at the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna.

Uses and Gratification: Jay Blumler and Elihu Katz as cited by Faiswal (2022), propose that individual users will continue to participate with social media sites if their gratifications and wants are met by such technologies. Moreover, this theory proposes that people utilize media for their benefit or satisfaction because they get what they want or need.

Cognitive Load Theory: John Sweller as cited by Clark and Kimmons (2023), emphasized that humans have limited working memory capacity, and that excessive cognitive load can hinder learning. This theory views the human mind as an information processing system that regulates the cognitive load on a person's mind and facilitates the acquisition of biologically secondary knowledge that is kept in long-term memory (Likourezos, 2021).

Numerous literature and studies collected by researchers about TikTok's Influence, Concentration Level, and Learning Motivation have only shown concepts, perceptions, causes, internal and external factors that have affected each of the variables only.



Little research has been done to know the relationship between Concentration Level and Learning Motivation under the influence of Tiktok, which is something that this study aims to answer.

This study highlights the significance of the relationship between the teacher education students' influence of Tiktok and its perceived impact on their concentration level and learning motivation.

The study shows light on how social media platforms might affect students' cognitive and affective behavior as well as their capacity to adapt and endure in their academic endeavors by diving into this relationship. Understanding this connection can help educators, policymakers, and students, enabling them to better navigate the challenges and opportunities posed by this popular platform. This descriptive-correlational research aimed at identifying the significant relationship between the students' influence of Tiktok and its impact on their concentration level and learning motivation. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following specific questions: 1. What is the respondents' profile in terms of: 1.1 Age; 1.2 Gender; 1.3 Year level; 1.4 Program? 2. What is the perceived influence of TikTok on the concentration level of the respondents? 3. What is the perceived influence of TikTok on the level of learning motivation of the respondents? 4. Is there a significant difference in the perceived influence of TikTok on their concentration level when grouped according to their profile variables? 5. Is there a significant difference in the perceived influence of TikTok on their learning motivation when grouped according to their profile variables? 6. Is there a significant



relationship between the respondents' concentration level and level of learning motivation as influenced by Tiktok?

Methods

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. The approach is chosen to explore and describe the relationships among the independent, and dependent variables. The research is descriptive in nature as it involves a thorough examination, analysis, and presentation of the collected data (Aprecia et al., 2022).

The study involved one hundred four (104) teacher education students out of 141 college students who are enrolled at the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna for the Academic Year 2024 – 2025. Respondents were randomly selected from different programs using simple random sampling techniques.

The researchers used self-made questionnaires which they will formulate based on the information that were gathered through the use of books and the Internet. The survey questionnaire with 4-point scale was composed of three parts. Part 1, dealt with the respondent's profile in terms of their age, gender, year level, and major. Part 2, dealt with respondents' perception of TikTok's influence on their concentration level. Part 3, focused on the respondents' perception of TikTok's influence on their learning motivation.



The self-made questionnaire was presented to experts in education, research and statistics for validation. Their comments and suggestions are injected in the final draft of the research instrument before it is distributed to the respondents.

Pilot testing was conducted from selected college students of the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna - Binan Campus who were not part of the actual survey. The Cronbach alpha value was 0.787 for level of concentration indicators indicating an acceptable internal consistency. While, for the learning motivation indicators that it obtained 0.741 which also indicated as acceptable internal consistency.

The part 1 dealt with the respondent's profile in terms of their age, gender, year level, and major. Part 2 dealt with respondents' perception of TikTok's influence on their concentration level and part 3 focused on the respondents' perception of TikTok's influence on their learning motivation. Both of which used a 4-point scale with the following points ranges and verbal interpretation.

To measure the respondents' perception of TikTok's influence on their concentration level and learning motivation, the following assigned points and categorical responses were used: 4 (Strongly Agree), 3 (Agree), 2 (Disagree), 1 (Strongly Disagree).

The researchers conducted the study bearing in mind ethical considerations, especially in terms of informing and seeking permission from school administrators and respondents. Initially,



permission was sought from the research advisers and head of the school to examine potential harmful impact and risk of the study to the respondents. The researchers send a letter of request to the principal or head of the school to which the respondents belong as part of the communication and understanding of the research. Data gathering was conducted from January to March of 2025.

The respondents' identity and responses were assured of strict confidentiality as they are informed that their input of information will be used for research purposes. In the respondents' participation in answering the questionnaire, an informed consent form was provided detailing the title and purpose of the study, benefits and associated risks and statements on privacy and confidentiality

The following statistical tests were utilized in the study for the collected data: 1. Frequency and percentage distribution were used to describe the profile of the respondents. 2. Weighted Mean was used to describe the respondents (a) perception of TikTok's influence on their concentration level and (b) perception of TikTok's influence on their learning motivation and to describe teachers' assessment practices and the respondents' level of learning motivation and level of academic competence. 3. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the respondents' perception of Tiktok's influence on their concentration level and learning motivation when grouped according to their profile variables. 4. Pearson r moment correlation coefficient was used to determine if there is a significant relationship between (a) perception of TikTok's influence on their concentration level and (b) perception of TikTok's influence on their learning motivation.



Results and Discussion

This descriptive-correlational research aimed at identifying the significant relationship between the students' influence of Tiktok and its impact on their concentration level and learning motivation. This presents the data gathered in tabular forms. Each table is given a corresponding interpretation and analysis.

1. Respondents' Profile

Table 1
Respondents' Profile

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-20 years old	31	29.8
21-24 years old	66	63.5
25 years old and above	7	6.7
Gender		
Male	38	36.5
Female	66	63.5
Year Level		
1 st Year	27	26.0
2 nd Year	29	27.9
3 rd Year	22	21.2
4 th Year	26	25.0
Program		
Bachelor of Elementary Ed.	16	15.4
Bachelor of Library and Information	19	18.3



Science	18	17.3
Bachelor of Physical Education	7	6.7
Bachelor of Special Needs Education	38	36.5
Bachelor of Secondary Education	6	5.8
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education		
N=104		

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. Findings indicated that, the majority of the respondents (63.5%) are within the age group of 21-24 years old, followed by 18-20 years old (29.8%), and 25 years old & above (6.7%). The gender distribution is skewed towards females (63.5%) compared to males (36.5%). In terms of year level, 29 or 27.9% of the respondents were second year, 27 or 26.0% were 1st year, 26 or 25% were 4th year, and 22 or 21.2% were third year. Furthermore, in terms of program, 38 or 36.5% were from the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd), 19 or 18.3% were from the Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS), 18 or 17.3% were from the Bachelor of Physical Education (BPE), 16 or 15.4% were from the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd), 7 or 6.7% were from the Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNEd), and 6 or 5.8% Bachelor of Early Childhood (BCEd).

To sum up, it can be inferred that the majority of the respondents were 21-24 years old, female, in second year



level, and belong to the Bachelor of Secondary Education program.

2. Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Concentration

Table 2

Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Concentration

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Using TikTok during breaks allows me to refocus on my schoolwork.	3.31	Very High	1.5
2.Watching TikTok videos does not make it difficult for me to focus on my academic tasks.	3.16	High	5
3.I feel cognitively revived after spending a few minutes on TikTok.	3.31	Very High	1.5
4.TikTok's short video format has helped me assimilate knowledge more rapidly.	2.34	Low	10
5.Tiktok allows me to manage study breaks effectively without losing focus.	2.71	High	8
6.Spending time on Tiktok does not interfere my study schedule.	3.23	High	4
7.Watching Tiktok does not lower the quality of my study sessions.	2.97	High	7
8.Tiktok material improves my mood, allowing me to concentrate better thereafter.	3.24	High	3



9.I use Tiktok as a productivity tool to find study ideas and approaches.	2.42	Low	9
10. I feel Tiktok can assist me focus while defending the stuff I see.	3.12	High	6
Overall Weighted Mean	2.98	HIGH	

Table 2 shows the respondents' perception regarding the impact of TikTok on their concentration level. It revealed that, the majority of the respondents have a very high utilization on TikTok during breaks which allows them to refocus on their schoolwork, and they feel cognitively revived after spending a few minutes on TikTok as evidenced by a weighted mean of 3.31 and ranked 1.5. Findings also revealed that the respondents had a high perceived level of Influence of TikTok on Concentration as TikTok improves their mood, allowing them to concentrate better thereafter with the mean of 3.24 and ranked 3.

On the other hand, spending time on TikTok does not interfere with their study schedule having a weighted mean of 3.23 and ranked 4 while watching TikTok videos does not make it difficult for them to focus on their academic tasks having a weighted mean of 3.16 and ranked 5. Respondents also felt that TikTok can assist them focus while defending the stuff they see as evidenced by a weighted mean of 3.12 and ranked 6, while watching TikTok does not lower the quality of their study sessions having a mean of 2.97 and ranked 7.



Furthermore, Tiktok allows them to manage study breaks effectively without losing focus having a mean of 2.71 and ranked 8. However, two indicators were verbally interpreted as low wherein they use TikTok as a productivity tool to find study ideas and approaches as evidenced by a mean of 2.42 and ranked 9, and TikTok's short video format has helped them assimilate knowledge more rapidly with a mean of 2.34 and ranked 10.

Overall, the respondents showed a high level of perceived influence of TikTok on their concentration, with an overall weighted mean of 2.98. This suggests that while TikTok is primarily used for relaxation, it may also contribute positively to students' ability to refocus and maintain concentration—especially when used in moderation and during study breaks.

This view was in line with the study of Amin et al., (2022), who proposed that, if it was not misused, a quick break from study activities via Tiktok could enhance focus. Additionally, Obasi (2024) highlighted that albeit a "happy mood" from TikTok consumption would not directly promote academic learning that it did help lessen stress related distractions, which in turn supported study performance. Likewise, students who kept track of their usage were less likely to have concentration problems, which confirmed the findings of Anjum et al. (2024) that self-regulation was crucial. However, Opara et al. (2025) study showed that TikTok had little educational benefit because the majority of students did not see it as a tool for productivity or direct learning.



3. Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Learning Motivation

Table 3
Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Learning Motivation

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Watching TikTok videos motivates me to learn different things.	3.56	Very High	1
2. Tiktok's contents help me connect with peers, boosting my motivation to learn.	3.55	Very High	2
3. The frequent notifications from TikTok doesn't make me unmotivated to learn.	2.95	High	7
4. Using TikTok during study breaks helps me recharge	3.25	Very High	4



to studying with more focus.			
5. TikTok videos inspire me to set academic goals to stay motivated in my studies.	2.84	High	9
6. TikTok's entertaining content reduces my interest in studying or attending classes.	2.58	High	10
7. Educational TikTok videos make learning more engaging for me.	2.89	High	8
8. Spending time on TikTok does not distract me from completing my academic tasks.	2.98	High	6
9. Watching TikTok for learning makes me more inclined to seek in-depth academic resources.	3.17	High	5



10. Watching TikTok content related to study tips motivates me to improve my learning habits.	3.27	Very High	3
Overall Weighted Mean	3.10	HIGH	

Table 3 shows the respondents' perceived level of influence of Tiktok on learning motivation. The respondents rated watching TikTok videos motivates them to learn different things as very high with a weighted mean of 3.56 and ranked 1. Tiktok's contents help them connect with peers, boosting their motivation to learn, also receiving a very high rating with a mean of 3.55 and ranked 2nd. Additionally, watching TikTok content related to study tips motivates them to improve their learning habits as reflected by its very high rating, which has a weighted mean 3.27 and ranked 3. The respondents also found value in using TikTok during study breaks which helps them recharge to studying with more focus, had a very high verbal interpretation with a weighted mean of 3.25 and ranked 4.

Meanwhile, watching TikTok for learning makes them more inclined to seek in-depth academic resources, receiving a high rating with a weighted mean of 3.17 and ranked 5. Spending time on TikTok does not distract them from completing academic tasks. It was rated high with a mean of 2.98 and ranked 6. The respondents agreed to a lesser extent that the frequent notifications from TikTok doesn't make



them unmotivated to learn as evidenced by a weighted mean of 2.95 and ranked 7.

Moreover, educational TikTok videos make learning more engaging for them but only moderate with a mean of 2.89 and ranked 8. The statement that TikTok videos inspire them to set academic goals to stay motivated in their studies got a weighted mean of 2.84 and ranked 9. Last, the idea that TikTok's entertaining content reduces their interest in studying or attending classes had a mean of 2.58 and ranked 10.

Overall, the respondents showed a high level of perceived influence of TikTok on their learning motivation with an overall weighted mean of 3.10. This implies that despite drawbacks, the platform's educational and peer-centered content appears to enhance students' motivation when used in a balanced and purposeful way.

The results suggest that TikTok can support student motivation by offering both discovery and social interaction. As noted by Rozati (2025), educational content on TikTok can stimulate thinking when related to school topics. Its short videos also help students mentally recharge, often improving mood and focus—a phenomenon linked to the so-called “TikTok brain.”

Sinaga et al. (2025) found that students, especially younger ones, use TikTok to find study tips and motivation. However, as Zhou, Ye, and Liu (2023) warn, its main use remains leisure, so its educational value depends on intentional and balanced use.



4. Difference in the Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Concentration When Respondents are Grouped According to their Profile Variables

Table 4
Difference in the Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Concentration When Respondents are Grouped According to their Profile Variables

Profile Variables	Test Statistic	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	$\chi^2=1.387$	.500	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Gender	$U=1200.500$ $Z=-.363$	.717	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Year Level	$F=1.525$	.213	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Program	$F=.190$	.966	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant

***Significant @.05**

For the difference in the level of influence of Tiktok on concentration when the respondents are grouped according to their age ($\chi^2=1.387$), gender ($U=1200.500$; $Z=-.363$), year level ($F=1.525$) and program ($F=.190$), probability values of .500, .717, .213 and .966 were obtained, respectively. These values were all higher than the



test of significance at .05, suggesting that there is not enough statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis that indicates no significant difference. This means that regardless of the respondents' age, gender, year level and program, the perceived level of influence of Tiktok on their concentration is the same.

This can be explained by the notion that cognitive responses to short-form video platforms tend to be uniform across different student profiles. Bassey (2024) suggests that regardless of age, students experience similar psychological effects when engaging with short-form video content, including TikTok. Hill et al. (2024) show that male and female students perceive the platform equally, particularly when using it during study breaks, which has the same effect on focus. TikTok's reported cognitive influence at the year level is less diverse due to its extensive and consistent use across academic levels (Flores et al., 2024). In addition, Rasool et al. (2024) observe that regardless of academic specialization, students often express similar views on the impact of media on concentration, even when academic load varies between programs. Hence, the outcome indicates that TikTok has a consistent effect on focus across student profiles

5.Difference in the Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Learning Motivation When Respondents are Grouped According to their Profile Variables



Table 5
Difference in the Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Learning Motivation When Respondents are Grouped According to their Profile Variables

Profile Variables	Test Statistic	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	$\chi^2=1.629$	.443	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Gender	U=1009.500 Z=-1.662	.096	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Year Level	F=1.804	.151	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Program	F=.342	.886	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant

***Significant @.05**

For the difference in the level of influence of Tiktok on learning motivation when the respondents are grouped according to their age ($\chi^2=1.629$), gender (U=1009.500; Z=-1.662), year level (F=1.804) and program (F=.342), probability values of .443, .096, .151 and .886 were obtained, respectively. These values were all higher than the test of significance at .05, suggesting that there is not enough statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis that indicates



no significant difference. This means that regardless of the respondents' age, gender, year level and program, the perceived level of influence of Tiktok on their learning motivation is the same.

The findings can be attributed to the study by Raza et al. (2023) who claimed that despite the age gaps, young users usually exhibit similar motivational patterns when using social media platforms such as TikTok for academic purposes. Plus Slimani (2024) stated regardless of gender, students tend to develop similar working habits—including procrastination or distraction and when engaging with the app, thereby neutralizing motivational differences.

Wahyudi and Budiman (2024) further support the finding by stating that TikTok's format and content type influence students similarly across academic levels, while Wayessa et al. (2024) highlight that students from various programs share a common digital experience on TikTok, resulting in similar motivational perceptions. Thus, the findings showed the idea that learning motivation influenced by TikTok is not determined by demographic characteristics.



6. Relationship Between the Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Concentration and Learning Motivation

Table 6

Relationship Between the Perceived Level of Influence of Tiktok on Concentration and Learning Motivation

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Concentration and Learning motivation	$r=.565$ (moderate correlation)	.000 *	H_0 rejected	Significant
*Significant @ .01				

For the relationship between the perceived level of influence of Tiktok on concentration and learning motivation, a Pearson's r value of .565 was obtained indicating a moderately positive correlation. Meanwhile, the obtained p -value was .000 which was lower than the test of significance at .01, suggesting that there is enough statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between the variables. This means that the higher the level of influence of Tiktok on concentration, the higher the level of its influence on learning motivation as perceived by the respondents. In other words, as the influence of Tiktok on concentration increases, its influence on learning motivation also increases.



This finding is consistent with Manzoor et al. (2024), who emphasize that moderate and purposeful engagement with TikTok can enhance both focus and academic drive. Roshan et al. (2024) add that platforms like TikTok can help ‘recharge’ students emotionally, thereby improving both attention and academic motivation. Furthermore, Pratiwi, Heriyudanta, and Daryono (2024) note that short, well-timed breaks using platforms like TikTok may relieve academic stress and positively affect students’ motivation to learn. This reinforces the idea that concentration and motivation are interconnected cognitive and behavioral domains, both influenced by digital media usage. The findings support the notion that TikTok’s impact spans multiple dimensions of academic behavior, affirming the value of guided and goal-oriented social media engagement in educational contexts.

Conclusion

The present study aimed at identifying the relationship between the students’ influence of Tiktok and its impact on their concentration level and learning motivation. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the respondents were predominantly young adult females in their second year of the Bachelor of Secondary Education program. TikTok is primarily used for relaxation, and it may also contribute positively to students’ ability to refocus and maintain concentration especially when used in moderation and during study breaks. However, short video format



may not always facilitate deeper cognitive processing or retention, limiting its role as a tool for enhancing academic concentration. Although TikTok's educational and peer-centered content can boost motivation when used purposefully. However, excessive exposure to entertainment-focused content may counteract motivational gains, emphasizing the importance of mindful usage. Regardless of the respondents' age, gender, year level and program, the perceived level of influence of Tiktok on their concentration is the same. Similarly, regardless of the respondents' age, gender, year level and program, the perceived level of influence of Tiktok on their learning motivation is the same. Last, the higher the level of influence of Tiktok on concentration, the higher the level of its influence on learning motivation as perceived by the respondents.

Direction For Future Use

Students are encouraged to continue using TikTok responsibly and purposefully, especially by engaging with educational and motivational content. Since TikTok positively influences both concentration and learning motivation when used moderately, students should integrate short, intentional breaks with meaningful TikTok content into their study routines to support focus and motivation without causing distraction. Faculty members and academic advisors should carefully evaluate the types of TikTok content being integrated into teaching strategies. Given that TikTok's short video format was rated low in helping students assimilate knowledge more rapidly. Educators must supplement TikTok-based materials with more in-depth instructional tools to ensure meaningful learning. Orientation sessions may also



address the limitations of such platforms alongside their benefits. The university administration should recognize both the potential and risks of social media platforms like TikTok as educational tools. TikTok's entertaining content may reduce students' interest in studying or attending classes, any official TikTok initiatives should prioritize content that clearly supports academic goals and avoids reinforcing entertainment-driven distractions. Content creators targeting the student demographic should continue producing content that is educational, inspiring, and conducive to maintaining concentration and motivation. Understanding the positive impact they have, creators should balance entertainment with valuable, enriching information that supports students' academic journeys. Parents and guardians are encouraged to guide students in developing healthy social media habits by supporting the responsible use of platforms like TikTok. They should foster open discussions about balancing leisure and academic responsibilities to help students maximize the positive impacts of social media on their concentration and motivation. Future researchers may conduct further studies on TikTok's impact on student behavior and academic performance to broaden understanding.

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EARLY LIFE STRESS, BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG GRADE 3 PUPILS

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Abstract

This descriptive-correlational research, which utilized a validated and pilot-tested survey questionnaire, aimed to determine the significant relationship between the level of early life stress, level of behavior management, and level of socio-emotional development among Grade 3 pupils from Canlalay Elementary School and Dr. Jose G. Tamayo Memorial Elementary School. The respondents were two hundred sixty-five (265) randomly selected Grade 3 pupils at Canlalay Elementary School and Dr. Jose G. Tamayo Memorial Elementary School. Research findings highlighted that the respondents have a low level of early life stress, shows that they are not often teased by their parents; their parents are willing to attend any of their school-related activities: they do not think of living with another family; their parents not often get angry and yell at them; their parents do not blame them for things they didn't do and they do not feel stressed at home. The findings also showed that respondents have a high level of behavior management, shows that respondents can still stay calm when having trouble completing a task (e.g., building, drawing, dressing), can decide what to do very quickly and go after it when offered a choice of activities, can stop the forbidden activity when told "no" and can stop crying even when not being comforted by classmates or teacher. The findings further showed that respondents have a high level of overall socio-emotional development in terms of



self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making. There was no relationship between the level of early life stress and level of behavior management among Grade 3 pupils. There was also no relationship between the level of early life stress and level of socio-emotional development among Grade 3 pupils. There was a relationship between the level of behavior management and level of socio-emotional development among Grade 3 pupils.

Keywords: Early Life Stress, Behavior Management, Socio-Emotional Development, Grade 3 Pupils, Child Development, Descriptive-Correlational, Philippines

Introduction

The early years are the foundation of a child's life which encompasses a wide range of adverse events and environmental factors that can disrupt a child's normal developmental trajectory (Kouame, 2019). These stressors may include but are not limited to, poverty, neglect, abuse, physical, emotional, or sexual, parental substance abuse, parental mental illness, family instability, exposure to violence, and other traumatic experiences. Researchers in developmental psychology, neuroscience, and related disciplines have extensively studied the profound and lasting effects of these stressors on various aspects of a child's development.

The impact of early life stress is not confined to immediate consequences but often extends across the lifespan. Studies have shown that chronic or severe stress experienced during sensitive periods of brain development can significantly alter neural circuits, affecting cognitive functions such as attention, memory, and executive functioning. Furthermore, early life stress can disrupt the regulation of



stress response systems, leading to long-term alterations in hormonal and physiological responses to stress (Lambert, 2014; Radcliff, 2019).

According to Atrooz and Salim (2019), in addition to its effects on cognitive and physiological development, early life stress profoundly influences emotional and social development. It can compromise the formation of secure attachments, impair emotional regulation, and hinder the development of healthy interpersonal relationships. Moreover, exposure to chronic stress in early life is associated with an increased risk of mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other behavioral problems.

According to Skinner (1953), behavior management refers to a broad range of theories, approaches, and interventions utilized to modify, guide, and regulate behaviors in individuals. B.F. Skinner's contributions to behaviorism laid the foundation for behavior management, emphasizing the role of environmental contingencies and reinforcement in shaping and controlling behavior. His work, particularly "The Behavior of Organisms" (1938) and "Science and Human Behavior" (1953), introduced concepts such as operant conditioning and reinforcement schedules, forming the basis for many behavior management techniques used in education, therapy, and various other settings.

Moreover, understanding behavior management by highlighting the significance of observational learning, imitation, and modeling in acquiring new behaviors, Bandura also proposed that individuals learn behaviors by observing others, and this knowledge has implications for behavior modification and intervention strategies in education, therapy, and social contexts. Behavior management encompasses a wide array of strategies, including positive reinforcement, token economies, behavior contracts, cognitive-behavioral interventions, and collaborative problem-solving



approaches. It aims to address a range of behaviors across diverse populations, from children in educational settings to individuals with behavioral challenges or mental health issues. (Bandura, 1977; Jackson, 2019).

Socio-emotional development refers to the intricate process through which individuals acquire and navigate a range of social and emotional competencies, forming the foundation for their interpersonal relationships, emotional regulation, and overall well-being. Introducing the concept of psychosocial stages, each characterized by a unique developmental task critical for establishing a coherent sense of self and healthy social interactions. Erikson emphasized the significance of successfully resolving these psychosocial crises in fostering social-emotional growth and identity formation across the lifespan (Erik Erikson, 1968; Renatovna, 2021).

Furthermore, it includes the capacity to identify and comprehend feelings in oneself and others, control emotions well, build and preserve relationships, and function in social situations. Over the course of a person's life, these competencies continue to grow and change as a result of personal experiences, familial ties, cultural norms, and society influences. Current studies continue to examine diverse facets of socio-emotional development in diverse developmental stages and cultural contexts. Research examines how parenting practices, peer relationships, social media, and educational interventions affect children's, adolescents', and adults' development of socioemotional competencies, emotional regulation, and social competence. This focuses on the implications of socio-emotional development in diverse settings, emphasizing the significance of fostering healthy social-emotional skills in promoting mental health, resilience, and positive social outcomes across various populations and life stages (Bowlby, 1980; Suryana, 2020).



Smith and Pollak (2022) stated that children who have experienced negative events often exhibit behavioral challenges, which are indicative of the relationship between early life stress, behavior management, and socio-emotional development. Developmental neuroscience emphasizes the significance of a supportive environment in mitigating the impact of early life stress on behavior and socio-emotional development. These challenges may manifest as difficulties in emotion regulation, impulsivity, aggression, or withdrawn behavior, impacting their social interactions and relationships. Additionally, early stress can have a negative impact on behavior and emotional regulation, but it can also be mitigated by interventions that foster positive interactions and provide nurturing environments.

Considering the above premises, the researchers conducted a study to determine if there is a significant relationship between the level of early life stress, level of behavior management, and level of socio-emotional development among Grade 3 pupils from Canlalay Elementary School and Dr. Jose G. Tamayo Memorial Elementary School.

Methods

To measure the relationship between the level of early life stress, the level of behavior management, and the level of socio-emotional development of the respondents, a descriptive-correlational research design was utilized. According to Bickman and Rog (2017), descriptive-correlational research is the best method for collecting information to demonstrate relationships and describe the phenomenon as it exists and is often done before an



experiment to know what specific things to manipulate and include in an experiment.

The study covered two hundred sixty-five (265) randomly selected Grade 3 pupils at Canlalay Elementary School and Dr. Jose G. Tamayo Memorial Elementary School. The total population was 402 Grade 3 pupils. Using stratified random sampling with 95% level of confidence and 5% margin of error, the sample size was 265 which was proportionally distributed to 9 sections.

The study used adapted and standardized questionnaires in which respondents chose the answers regarding the statements given. The questionnaires were divided into three parts. The first part of the questionnaire covered the level of early life stress. The second part of the instrument covered behavior management and the third part of the instrument focused on the socio-emotional development of the respondents. The first and second part were adapted questionnaires, while the third part was a standardized questionnaire adopted from The Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ). All three parts were translated in Tagalog. The researchers presented the survey questionnaire to the research adviser for initial checking. For further validation, the researchers consulted experts in early childhood education, research, and statistics.

To ensure reliability of the research instrument, the researchers measured the internal consistency of indicators through Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Pilot testing was conducted with selected Grade 3 pupils in University of Perpetual Help System-Laguna, Basic Education Department, who were not part of the actual survey. For level of early life stress indicators, the Cronbach's alpha value was .702 indicating an acceptable internal consistency while for the level of behavior management indicators,



the Cronbach's alpha value was .711 indicating an acceptable internal consistency.

After the validation of the instrument, the researchers secured consent from the Office of the School Principal of Canlalay Elementary School and Dr. Jose G. Tamayo Memorial Elementary School to conduct the study. Coordination was also done with the teachers in order to schedule the survey. The researchers conducted a survey measuring the learners' level of early life stress, level of behavior management and level of socio-emotional development. Since the respondents of the study are minors, the respondents' verbal assent was sought by. Then, the questionnaire was reproduced, handed to the respondents, and retrieved. The data gathered was organized, tallied, and subjected to statistical analysis.

The following statistical tests were used in the study: 1) Weighted mean was used to describe the respondents' a) level of early life stress b) level of behavior management and c) level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management and responsible decision making and 2) Pearson r Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationship between the respondents' level of early life stress, level of behavior management and level of socio-emotional development.

Results and Discussion

This descriptive-correlational research aimed to determine the significant relationship between the level of early life stress, level of behavior management, and level of socio-emotional development among Grade 3 pupils from Canlalay Elementary School and Dr. Jose G. Tamayo Memorial Elementary School. This section presents the



respondents' level of early life stress, respondents' level of behavior management and respondents' level of socio-emotional development. Data based on summary and test of relationship are also presented in this section.

Table 1
Respondents' Level of Early Life Stress

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. <i>Madalas akong asarin ng aking mga magulang.</i> (I am often teased by my parents.)	1.94	Low	8
2. <i>Kailangan ko laging kumilos sa bahay.</i> (I always need to do household chores at home.)	3.56	Very High	1
3. <i>Ako ay nakakatanggap ng parusa kapag hindi ako nasunod sa mga patakaran.</i> (I get punished for not following the rules.)	2.64	High	2
4. <i>Ang aking mga magulang ay ayaw dumalo sa alinman sa aking mga gawain na may kaugnayan sa paaralan</i> (My parents are unwilling to attend any of my school-related activities.)	2.11	Low	6
5. <i>Minsan naisip kong manirahan sa ibang pamilya.</i> (I sometimes think of living with another family.)	1.77	Low	9.5



6. <i>Pakiramdam ko ay ayaw sa aking ng aking magulang.</i> (I feel like I am disliked by either of my parents.)	1.77	Low	9.5
7. <i>Madalas magalit at sigawan ako ng aking magulang.</i> (My parents often get angry and yell at me.)	2.27	Low	4
8. <i>Madalas akong naiwan sa bahay mag-isa para alagaan ang sarili ko.</i> (I am often left at home alone to take care of myself.)	2.52	High	3
9. <i>Madalas ako sisihin ng aking magulang sa mga bagay na hindi ko naman ginawa.</i> (My parents blame me for things I didn't do.)	2.07	Low	7
10. <i>Nakakaramdam ako ng stress sa bahay.</i> (I feel stressed at home.)	2.15	Low	5
Overall Weighted Mean	2.28	Low	

As shown in Table 1, indicator 2 showed that respondents are tasked to do chores at home as this obtained Rank 1 with a weighted mean of 3.56 verbally interpreted as very high. They also have a high level of early life stress as shown in indicators 3 and 8 indicating that respondents are receiving punishment for not following the rules and left alone in their houses to take care of themselves. These two ranked 2 and 3 with weighted mean of 2.64 and 2.52 respectively.



To sum up, an average of weighted mean of 2.28 showed that respondents have a low level of early life stress, shows that they are not often teased by their parents; their parents are willing to attend any of their school-related activities: they do not think of living with another family; their parents not often get angry and yell at them; their parents do not blame them for things they didn't do and they do not feel stressed at home. In line with this, the degree to which a person has control over the particular stressor and the availability of coping mechanisms determine whether or not they perceive stress negatively. Negative experiences in the past, indicating that the impact of earlier stressful events is amplified by subsequent stressful encounters (Enlow et al., 2013; Kim & Drake, 2019; McEwen, 2018).

In addition, evidence suggests that individuals are sensitive to environmental influences in different ways (Pluess et al., 2018), and, as some degree of resilience or vulnerability runs in families, genetic inheritance may also be involved (Keers et al., 2016; Kuijper et al., 2019). Children with greater levels of executive functioning are better able to control their emotions when faced with problems, cognitive information processing skills may be more adaptive in stressful circumstances. Because of this, the children are more likely to handle stressful situations well and are less likely to feel stressed (Taylor & Ruiz, 2019; Maat et al., 2022).

Steele (2022) stated that the use of punitive punishment tactics left pupils emotionally damaged and disengaged from the teachings being taught in the classroom, rather than successfully managing their behavior. When faced with challenges, misbehaving kids, and inadequate assistance, even seasoned educators resorted to such harsh forms of discipline.

Despite the low level of early life stress among the grade 3 pupils, the researchers stand with Whiting et al (2021) that consideration of stress is important to understand, and take account



of, especially the effects of stress on children's learning and that research must be done to fully characterize this relationship.

Table 2
Respondents' Level of Behavior Management

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. <i>Kaya kong manatiling kalmado kahit na nagkakaproblema ako sa pagkumpleto ng isang Gawain.</i> <i>Halimbawa: pagguhit, pagbibihis, etc.</i> (I can still stay calm when I'm having trouble completing a task. Example: building, drawing, dressing, etc.)	3.23	High	6
2. <i>Kaya kong magpasya nang mabilis at mamili sa iba't ibang gawain.</i> (I can decide what to do very quickly and go after it when offered a choice of activities)	2.60	High	9
3. <i>Ako ay madaling makisali kapag may pinagagawang bagong gawain ang aking guro.</i> (I can get involved immediately when encountering a new activity.)	3.30	Very High	3
4. <i>Mapapansin ko agad kapag tinatawag ako sa aking pangalan.</i> (I can pay attention right away when I am called by my name.)	3.39	Very High	1



5. Itinitigil ko ang ipinagbabawal na gawain kapag sinabing "hindi" (I stop the forbidden activity when told "no")	3.14	High	7
6. Madali kong tanggapin kapag may nagsabi sa akin ng "hindi" o bawal. (I can easily accept when someone told me "no")	3.27	Very High	4.5
7. Tumatakbo ako sa silid-aralan upang makipaglaro sa aking kaklase kapag may libreng oras. (I run around the classroom with my classmate when it's free time)	2.27	Low	10
8. Kaya kong maghintay hanggang sa ako na ang tawagin. (I can wait patiently for my turn.)	3.37	Very High	2
9. Nagagawa kong mag-ingat kapag may hawak akong isang bagay na babasagin. (I am able to be careful when holding something breakable)	3.27	Very High	4.5
10. Kaya kong tigilan ang aking pag-iyak kahit hindi ako dinadamayan ng mga kaklase ko o guro. (I can stop crying even when I am not being comforted by my classmates or teacher)	2.93	High	8
Overall Weighted Mean	3.08	High	

As shown in Table 2, indicator 4 showed that respondents can pay attention right away when being called by their names as this



obtained Rank 1 with a weighted mean of 3.39 verbally interpreted as very high. Indicator 8 also showed that they have a very high level of behavior management indicating that respondents can wait patiently for their turn. This ranked 2 with a weighted mean of 3.37. Indicator 3 showed that respondents can get involved immediately when encountering a new activity. This ranked 3 with verbal interpretation very high. Indicators 6 and 9 ranked 4.5 with a verbal interpretation of very high, indicating that respondents can easily accept when someone told them “no” and are able to be careful when holding something breakable. Indicator 1 showed that respondents can stay calm when having trouble completing a task (e.g., building, drawing, dressing). This ranked 6 with verbal interpretation high. Indicator 5 ranked 7 with a verbal interpretation of high, indicating that respondents can stop the forbidden activity when told “no”. Indicator 10 ranked 8 with a verbal interpretation of high, indicating that respondents can stop crying even when they are not being comforted by their classmates or teacher. Indicator 2 ranked 9 with a verbal interpretation of high, indicating that respondents can decide what to do very quickly and go after it when offered a choice of activities. Indicator 7 ranked 10 with a verbal interpretation of high, indicating that respondents run around the classroom when it's free time.

To sum up, an average weighted mean of 3.08 showed that respondents have a high level of behavior management, shows that they are in a classroom that is secure, efficient, and productive, encouraging student participation and curbing disruptive conduct for successful behavior management (Ingersoll et al., 2018). Academic performance is improved by prosocial behaviors like paying attention, being prepared for work, asking for help, engaging in class, and doing assignments (Alter and Haydon, 2017, and Smolkowski et al., 2023).

According to Bapst et al. (2023), the observation that a healthy relationship between teachers and students is necessary for effective behavior management in the classroom. Students relate



rules, classroom order, and teacher proximity more strongly with behavior management efficacy. The way educators discipline their students in the classroom has a profound impact on the conduct, learning, and self-perceptions of the pupils.

Table 3
Respondents' Level of Socio-Emotional Development:
Self-Awareness

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. <i>Alam ko kung ano ang iniisip at ginagawa ko.</i> (I know what I am thinking and doing.)	3.59	Very High	1
2. <i>Naiintindihan ko kung bakit ko ginagawa ang mga ginagawa ko.</i> (I understand why I do what I do.)	3.43	Very High	2
3. <i>Naiintindihan ko ang aking mood at damdamin.</i> (I understand my moods and feelings.)	3.42	Very High	3
4. <i>Alam ko kapag moody ako.</i> (I know when I am moody.)	3.04	High	4
5. <i>Nakikita ko sa mukha ng mga tao kapag galit sila.</i> (I can read people's faces when they are angry.)	3.02	High	5



Overall Weighted Mean	3.30	Very High	
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As shown in Table 3, the indicator 1 showed that respondents know what they are thinking and doing as this obtained Rank 1 with a weighted mean of 3.59 verbally interpreted as very high. From indicators 2 and 3, they have a very high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-awareness indicating that respondents understand why they do what they do and understand their moods and feelings. These two ranked 2 and 3 with a weighted mean of 3.43 and 3.42 respectively. From indicators 4 and 5, they also have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-awareness indicating that respondents know when they are moody and read people's faces when they are angry. These two ranked 4 and 5 with a weighted mean of 3.04 and 3.02 respectively

To sum up, an average weighted mean of 3.30 showed that respondents have a very high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-awareness. As studied by Fonagy (2018) Emotions are interpersonally regulated throughout childhood, which is a fundamental beginning point for comprehending these learning processes. As Beebe and Lachmann (2019) point out, a child's understanding of its own emotional reactions can be mostly attributed to the caregiver's empathy, responsiveness, mirroring, and attunement (usually the mother). Infants can only express a very small spectrum of emotions from birth. For instance, a wide range of factors, including hunger, thirst, fatigue, cold, having a soiled diaper, discomfort, or surprise, can cause what seems to be the same behavior of crying. It is the person's responsibility to diagnose the issue and offer the necessary treatment.

Additionally, the range of facial expressions, gestures, and other activities that make up the observable nonverbal representation of emotions may increase as the kid gets older and expands their repertoire of emotions (Widen and Russell 2019). An observer may



determine the child's potential emotional states by combining the latter with the social or environmental context in which the responses occur. When somebody else mirrors a child's emotions, visual and auditory cues that correspond with interoceptive experiences are provided, which facilitates the initiation of internal experience conceptualization.

Table 4
Respondents' Level of Socio-Emotional Development: Social Awareness

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. <i>Nalalaman ko ang nararamdaman ng mga tao sa pamamagitan ng pagtingin sa kanilang mga ekspresyon sa mukha.</i> (I recognize how people feel by looking at their facial expressions)	3.09	High	2
2. <i>Madali para sa akin na maunawaan ang nararamdaman ng isang tao</i> (It is easy for me to understand why people feel the way they do)	3.26	Very High	1
3. <i>Alam ko ang iniisip ng mga tao kapag sila ay</i>	2.95	High	5



<i>malungkot, galit o masaya.</i> (If someone is sad, angry or happy, I believe I know what they are thinking)			
4. <i>Naiintindihan ko ang reaksiyon ng mga tao.</i> (I understand why people react the way they do)	3.00	High	3
5. <i>Kung ang isang kaibigan ay nagagalit, mayroon akong ideya kung bakit</i> (If a friend is upset, I have a pretty good idea why)	2.97	High	4
Overall Weighted Mean	3.05	High	

As shown in Table 4, the indicator 2 showed that respondents can easily understand why people feel the way they do as this obtained Rank 1 with a weighted mean of 3.26 verbally interpreted as very high. From indicator 1, they have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of social awareness indicating that respondents can recognize how people feel by looking at their facial expressions. This ranked 2 with a weighted mean of 3.09. They also have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of social awareness from indicators 4, 5, and 3, indicating that respondents understand why people react the way they do; have an idea why a friend is upset; and if someone is sad, angry or happy, they believe they know what they are thinking. These three ranked 3, 4 and 5 with a weighted mean of 3.00. 2.97 and 2.95 respectively.

To sum up, an average weighted mean of 3.05 showed that respondents have a high level of socio-emotional development in



terms of social awareness. As studied by Highfield and Webber (2021), it takes leadership at all educational levels, pedagogical approaches, and curriculum integration to create SEL practices that are sustainable and culturally sensitive. A study by Denston et al., (2022) also shows how crucial it is to create SEL practices in elementary and secondary education settings in order to promote well-being.

Table 5
Respondents' Level of Socio-Emotional Development:
Self-Management

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. <i>Kaya kong manatiling kalmado sa mga stressful na sitwasyon</i> (I can stay clam in stressful situations)	2.83	High	5
2. <i>Kaya kong manatiling kalmado at malampasan iba't-ibang sitwasyon.</i> (I can stay calm and overcome anxiety in new or changing situations)	3.33	Very High	1
3. <i>Kaya kong manatiling kalmado kapag nagkamali</i> (I can stay calm when things go wrong)	3.15	High	4
4. <i>Kaya kong kontrolin ang nararamdaman ko kapag may nangyaring masama</i>	3.16	High	3



(I can control the way I feel when something bad happens)			
5. <i>Kapag may sama ng loob ako sa isang tao, kakalmahin ko muna ang aking sarili bago ko siya kausapin.</i> (When I am upset with someone, I will wait till I have calmed down before discussing the issue)	3.31	Very High	2
Overall Weighted Mean	3.15	High	

As shown in Table 5, the indicator 2 showed that respondents can stay calm and overcome anxiety in new or changing situations as this obtained Rank 1 with a weighted mean of 3.33 verbally interpreted as very high. They also have a very high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management indicating that respondents wait till they have calmed down before discussing the issue if they are upset with someone. These two ranked 2 with a weighted mean of 3.31. They have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management from indicators 4 and 3, indicating that respondents can control the way they feel when something bad happens and stay calm when things go wrong. These two ranked 3 and 4 with a weighted mean of 3.16 and 3.15 respectively. They also have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management from indicator 1, indicating that they can stay calm in stressful situations. This ranked 5 with a weighted mean of 2.83.

To sum up, an average weighted mean of 3.15 showed that respondents have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management. According to Nael (2019), pupils who have strong socioemotional abilities are better able to differentiate between activities that are motivated by emotion and those that are mental,



which helps them grow and behave well. It is possible to determine if a child's actions are driven by their senses or by reason by understanding how they feel about themselves. It is commonly known that children who have excellent socio-emotional development can also demonstrate good growth in other areas, such as cognitive functions, learning preferences, and participation in preferred behaviors. Both teachers and students may suffer when they confront disruptive behavior in their students (Beahm, 2021).

Table 6
Respondents' Level of Socio-Emotional Development: Relationship Management

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. <i>Palagi akong humihingi ng tawad kapag nasaktan ko ang aking kaibigan nang hindi sinasadya</i> (I always apologize when I hurt my friend unintentionally)	3.43	Very High	1
2. <i>Palagi kong sinusubukan i-comfort ang aking mga kaibigan kapag malungkot sila</i>	3.32	Very High	2



(I always try and comfort my friends when they are sad)			
3. <i>Pinipilit kong huwag punahin ang kaibigan ko kapag nag-aaway kami</i> (I try not to criticize my friend when we quarrel)	2.88	High	4.5
4. <i>Ako ay nagpaparaya sa mga pagkakamali ng aking kaibigan</i> (I am tolerant of my friend's mistakes)	2.88	High	4.5
5. <i>Tumatayo ako para sa sarili ko nang hindi ibinababa ang iba</i> (I stand up for myself without putting others down)	2.97	High	3
Overall Weighted Mean	3.10	High	

As shown in Table 6, the indicator 1 showed that respondents will always apologize when they hurt a friend unintentionally as this obtained Rank 1 with a weighted mean of 3.43 verbally interpreted as very high. They also have a very high level of socio-emotional development in terms of relationship management from indicator 2, indicating that respondents always try and comfort friends when they are sad. This ranked 2 with a weighted mean of 3.32. From indicator 5, they have a high level of



socio-emotional development in terms of relationship management, indicating that respondents stand up for themselves without putting others down. This ranked 3 with a weighted mean of 2.97. They also have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management from indicators 3 and 4, indicating that respondents try not to criticize a friend when they quarrel and are tolerant of friend's mistakes. These two ranked 4.5 with a weighted mean of 2.88.

To sum up, an average weighted mean of 3.10 showed that respondents have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of relationship management. As stated by Bapst et al. (2023), the way educators discipline their students in the classroom has a profound impact on the relationship management of the pupils. This reflects on the relationship that is formed by the teachers that the pupils will apply to their peers. Given this, educators must use a variety of strategies to enhance kids' socio-emotional growth and encourage positive conduct in relationship management. (Poulou et al., 2018; Schonert-Reichl, 2017).

Table 7
Respondents' Level of Socio-Emotional Development: Responsible Decision Making

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. <i>Kapag gumagawa ng mga desisyon, iniisip ko ang mga kahihinatnan ng aking mga aksyon</i>	3.27	Very High	2.5



(When making decisions, I take into account the consequences of my actions)			
2. <i>Tinitiyak ko na mas maraming positibong resulta kapag gumagawa ng desisyon</i> (I ensure that there are more positive outcomes when making a choice)	3.06	High	5
3. <i>Iniiisip ko ang mga positibong kalalabasan ng sitwasyon bago magpasya sa aking aksyon</i> (I weigh the strengths of the situation before deciding on my action)	3.27	Very High	2.5
4. <i>Isinasa-isip ko ang aking pinili bago gumawa ng desisyon</i> (I consider the criteria chosen before making a recommendation)	3.24	High	4



5. <i>Isinasa-isip ko ang mga kalakasan at kahinaan ng diskarte bago magpasya na gamitin ito</i> (I consider the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy before deciding to use it)	3.30	Very High	1
Overall Weighted Mean	3.23	High	

As shown in Table 7, the indicator 5 showed that respondents are considering the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy before they decide to use it as this obtained Rank 1 with a weighted mean of 3.30 verbally interpreted as very high. They also have a very high level of socio-emotional development in terms of relationship management from indicator 1 and 3 indicating that when they are making decisions, they think about the consequences of their actions. This ranked two ranked 2.5 with a weighted mean of 3.27. They also have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management from indicator 4, indicating that they think about the positive outcomes of the situation before they decide on their action as this obtained ranked 4 with a weighted mean of 3.24. They also have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management from indicator 2 indicating that they ensure more positive results when making a decision as this obtained ranked 5 with a weighted mean of 3.06.

To sum up, an average weighted mean of 3.23 showed that respondents have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of responsible decision making. According to a recent study by Sangmi (2024), respecting children's decisions has a significant



impact on the emotional well-being of the pupils. This means that the children must be involved in the decision-making processes and make them feel that their opinions are valued.

Table 8
Summary Table of the Respondents' Level of Socio-Emotional Development

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1.Self-awareness	3.30	Very High	1
2.Social awareness	3.05	High	5
3.Self-management	3.15	High	3
4.Relationship management	3.10	High	4
5.Responsible decision making	3.23	High	2
Overall Weighted Mean	3.17	High	

As shown in Table 8, the indicator 1 showed that respondents' social awareness obtained Rank 1 with a weighted mean of 3.30 verbally interpreted as very high. They have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management indicating that respondents are responsible in decision making as this obtained Rank 2 with a weighted mean of 3.23. They also have another high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management from indicators 3 and 4, indicating that respondents' self-management and relationship management. These two ranked 3 and 4 with a weighted mean of 3.15 and 3.10 respectively. And lastly, respondents have a high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self-management from indicator 2, indicating the respondents in terms of social awareness. This ranked 5 with a weighted mean of 3.05.



To sum up, an average weighted mean of 3.17 showed that respondents have a high level of overall socio-emotional development. Socio-emotional development is a crucial aspect of children's growth. Teachers are the backbone of social and emotional learning (SEL) practices and programs in classrooms and schools, and they have a significant impact on students' social and emotional development as well as their own. Schonert-Reichl (2017) examined the outcomes of many interventions that have been carried out in recent years with the express goal of enhancing teachers' social-emotional competency and stress management in the classroom in order to support the pupils' socio-emotional development.

Table 9
Relationship Between the Respondents' Level of Early Life Stress and Level of Behavior Management

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Early life stress and behavior management	$r=.034$ (negligible correlation)	.719	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Significant @ 0.05				

For the relationship between the respondents' level of early life stress and level of behavior management, a Pearson's r value of .034 was obtained indicating a negligible correlation. While a probability value of .719 was higher than the test of significance at .05 showed that there is no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant relationship between the



variables. This means that respondents' level of early life stress has no bearing on their behavior management. This non-relationship can be explained by Rasmani (2021) stating that effective behavior management in the classroom is a skill that relies on the teachers to possess. As the head of the class, the instructor has the power to shape the way kids learn, what they know, and how their character develops.

The findings contradict the study made by Kim & Drake (2019) stating that exposure to ELS may cause behavioral symptoms that appear in childhood or adolescence or that emerge in adulthood. One theory is that people who are exposed to ELS become more sensitive to future stresses and, hence, are more likely to experience psychological discomfort. ELS has been shown to have a critical effect on children's functioning in later life. For example, children who witness adverse life experiences or witness parental psychopathology are more likely to experience emotional and behavioral problems later in life.

As mentioned in another study by Woodard (2019), as more professionals study adverse childhood experiences, it is increasingly noted that adversity and stress in early childhood years impact health, behavior, and life outcomes. This, then, undermines a child's ability to attend and get along with others. A biological problem that becomes a behavior problem.

Table 10
Relationship Between the Respondents' Level of Early Life Stress and Level of Socio-Emotional Development

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation



Early life stress and socio-emotional development	$r=.125$ (negligible correlation)	.182	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Significant @ .05				

For the relationship between the respondents' level of early life stress and level of socio-emotional development, a Pearson's r value of .125 was obtained indicating a negligible correlation. While a probability value of .182 was higher than the test of significance at .05 showed that there is no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant relationship between the variables. This means that respondents' level of early life stress has no bearing on their level of socio-emotional development. This non-relationship can be explained by Vulpe (2021) as stressful circumstances can significantly raise the risk in adulthood and not in early childhood. The likelihood of students quitting college, feeling anxious and uneasy about their knowledge, significantly increasing their alcohol and cigarette usage, experiencing sleeplessness, and losing their appetite is from their ELS experiences.

The findings contradict the studies by Hoglund & Leaderbeater, 2007; Perez-Edgar et al., 2013; Weissman et al., 2019, stating that the negative impact of early life stress for enhanced threat sensitivity may result in social withdrawal and heightened decrease of socio-emotional skills. In addition, only when social interaction proceeds smoothly may early childhood learning environments be established. Each individual can establish a pattern of relationships through good social interaction, free from external interference (Mundiri & Adhimiy, 2019).

Table 11



Relationship Between the Respondents' Level of Behavior Management and Level of Socio-Emotional Development

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Behavior management and socio-emotional development	$r = .425$ (moderate correlation)	.000*	H_0 rejected	Significant
Significant @ .01				

For the relationship between the respondents' level of behavior management and level of socio-emotional development, a Pearson's r value of .425 was obtained indicating a moderate correlation. While a probability value of .000 was lower than the test of significance at .01 showed that there is sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting a significant relationship between the variables. This means that the higher the level of behavior management, the higher the level of socio-emotional development of the respondents. This relationship can be explained by a study by Nael (2019) stating that children who have strong socioemotional abilities are better able to differentiate between activities which helps them grow and behave well. It is possible to determine if a child's actions are driven by their senses or by reason by understanding how they feel about themselves.

The findings support the study made by Garcia (2021) stating that learners may experience significant behavioral issues as a result of their socio-emotional development. Given this, educators must focus on using the strategies to enhance kids' socioemotional growth and encourage positive conduct in preschoolers (Poulou et al., 2018; Schonert-Reichl, 2017).



Conclusion

The present study aimed at determining the level of early life stress, level of behavior management, and level of socio-emotional development among Grade 3 pupils from Canlalay Elementary School and Dr. Jose G. Tamayo Memorial Elementary School. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the respondents have a low level of early life stress. that they are not often teased by their parents; their parents are willing to attend any of their school-related activities; they do not think of living with another family; their parents not often get angry and yell at them; their parents do not blame them for things they didn't do and they do not feel stressed at home. Meanwhile, the respondents have a high level of behavior management and a high level of socio-emotional development. The respondents can still stay calm when having trouble completing a task (e.g., building, drawing, dressing), can decide what to do very quickly and go after it when offered a choice of activities, can stop the forbidden activity when told "no" and can stop crying even when not being comforted by classmates or teacher. The respondents have very high level of socio-emotional development in terms of self awareness and high level of socio-emotional development in terms of social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making. Test of relationship showed that the respondents' level of early life stress has no bearing on their behavior management, the respondents' level of early life stress has no bearing on their level of socio-emotional development and the higher the respondents' level of behavior management, the higher the level of socio-emotional development.



Directions for Use

Primary learners and teachers should stay in a positive and healthy environment to ensure a low level of early life stress. Primary teachers should focus on the development of behavior management skills through positive reinforcement, token economies, behavior contracts, cognitive-behavioral interventions, and collaborative problem-solving approaches in order to increase the pupils' level of socio-emotional development. Parents of primary learners should support the development of their children's behavior management skills, such as paying attention, being prepared for work, asking for help, engaging in class, and doing assignments, in order to improve their socio-emotional development. School administrators should take part in initiating programs and activities, such as conflict resolution, anger management, character building, counseling and mentoring programs that aimed at improving the students' behavior management and socio-emotional development. Early childhood teachers and pre-service teachers should focus on supporting the pupils' behavior management and socio-emotional development, while also keeping in mind the stress that they experience. Future researchers may replicate the study using qualitative research to look into the pupils' early life stress experiences and understand the phenomenon better.

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SOCIAL MEDIA USE, DIGITAL LITERACY AND ACADEMIC INTEREST OF INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

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Abstract

This descriptive-correlational research aimed to determine the social media use, digital literacy, and academic interest of intermediate learners by utilizing a validated and pilot-tested survey questionnaire. Specifically, the study sought to answer the frequency of intermediate learners' social media use, level of digital literacy, and level of academic interest, as well as to determine the relationships among these variables. The respondents of the study were 153 intermediate learners randomly selected from Grade 4 to Grade 6 learners at University of Perpetual Help System Laguna, Philippines. The sample size was 111 which was determined using slovin's formula. Research findings revealed that intermediate learners often use social media with a weighted mean of 2.92, primarily for communication and academic-related activities. This study also highlighted that the respondents possess a high level of digital literacy particularly in areas such as communication, collaboration, and critical thinking, although respondents scored lower in connectedness and creativity. Furthermore, the respondents of the study demonstrated a high level of academic interest with an overall weighted mean of 3.23, showing their motivation to study and perform well in school. Meanwhile, test of relationship showed a low but significant positive relationship between social media use and digital literacy ($r = .228$, $p = .016$), a



negligible and non-significant correlation between social media use and academic interest ($r = -.120$, $p = .211$), and a low but significant positive correlation between digital literacy and academic interest ($r = .381$, $p = .000$). The findings suggest that while frequent use of social media may support the development of digital literacy, it has no direct influence on academic interest, whereas digital literacy appears to play a more crucial role in promoting learners' academic engagement.

Keywords: *academic interest, digital literacy, intermediate learners, social media use, descriptive-correlational, Philippines*

Introduction

As globalization occurs, a number of innovations and inventions, such as technology and social media platforms, exist nowadays. These changes and developments created their own pros and cons, which affected many lives. According to Shafeeq et al. (2019), globalization is a powerful tool that promotes economic progress, provides greater living conditions for the general public, and improves social lives. It raises people's living standards through improved roads and transportation, health care, education, and communication. However, even though it generates new and evolving trends in various domains, globalization is also a danger for everyone. In this modern era, most individuals, especially students, are now familiar with and well-adapted to these changes and developments, wherein students live comfortably and easier than before. As stated by Aslam et. al. (2018), the acceleration of the transmission of knowledge and technology across boundaries benefits everyone, particularly students. Innovations and inventions resulted in an



increase in productivity, allowing many people to produce something more easily. This progress was one of the keys to increased development, although it does not occur in all situations.

Many parents and teachers have worries about the situation today since children gradually become addicted in technology and social media platforms wherein the usage of these escalated that influences the daily routine, digital literacy, interest, academic performance and achievements of students. As children become well familiar with these advancements, both entertainment and self-expression occurs. This happens because these enable them to form online identities, engage with others, and build social networks that provide a meaningful connection to peers. However, the use of these technologies, particularly social media, can have a detrimental impact on children, resulting in distractions, disrupted sleep, rumor spreading, being exposed to toxic and unrealistic perspectives of other people's lives, and peer pressure. In today's world, it happens that children often rely on various social media platforms which lead to concern about the children's academe as it may possibly suffer (Murtaza, 2023).

Social media became part of the children's daily life routine wherein it was used as a way of communicating and interacting with other people however, it may affect the life and development of a learner which cause bother to the society since it is not appropriate for the youth to be exposed in social media because of some applications that may have a negative effect to them. Social media use only has minimal positive benefits for an individual as well as negative connection with indulgence. In relation to other study



conducted about digital literacy, it explains that digital literacy continues to expand nowadays and includes the social media influence on the school demands and furthermore, it focuses on enhancing and developing the use of digital literacy as it emerged as part of the educational matters (Chen & Lin, 2021).

There are studies stating that there are still advantages of digital technology use in which help the teachers and the students to communicate well even in the online platform that can benefit the students to further boost the abilities or skills of the learners in terms of the four (4) macro skills which includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Therefore, the researchers conducted this study to determine the learners' frequency of social media use, level of digital literacy, and level of academic interest including its correlation. This study is relevant especially in the 21st century since this contains information that is timely nowadays and will benefit individuals in the society. This study also presents data, facts, and findings which strengthen its relevance. Conclusively, the researchers found out the relationship of the three variables which can contribute and can be added to a new set of research papers in the field of education and research.

Methods

To measure and understand social media use, digital literacy and academic interest of intermediate learners, a descriptive-correlational research design was used through a self-made and adapted survey questionnaire. Descriptive-correlational design of research describes



a relationship among variables allowing researchers to explore how one variable may predict another (Devi et al., 2023).

The respondents of the study were 111 intermediate learners from Grades 4 to 6 at the University of Perpetual Help System Biñan, Laguna, Academic Year 2023–2024. The respondents consisted of 153 learners across the three grade levels, with 44 from Grade 4, 51 from Grade 5, and 58 from Grade 6. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula, and stratified random sampling was used to ensure proportional representation across the different grade levels.

Pilot testing of the survey questionnaire was conducted among 15 Grade 4 to 6 learners from Sto. Tomas Elementary School in Biñan, Laguna with similar qualifications as those of the actual respondents. The instrument resulted in Cronbach's alpha values of .701 for frequency of social media use, .747 for digital literacy, and .874 for academic interest indicating acceptable to good internal consistency.

The research instrument was composed of three parts: Part 1, a self-made questionnaire, covered the intermediate learner's frequency of social media use; Part 2 covered intermediate learner's level digital literacy, adapted from the study of Amin et al. (2021); and Part 3 covered the intermediate learner's level of academic interest which was also a self-made questionnaire. The research instrument used a 4-point Likert scale with the following numerical ranges and verbal interpretations: 3.25–4.00 (Always/Very High), 2.50–3.24 (Often/High), 1.75–2.49 (Sometimes/Low), and 1.00–1.74 (Never/Very Low). For digital literacy and academic interest, the same numerical range applied with corresponding interpretations based on agreement such as Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

The researchers first sought permission from the Basic Education Principal of the University of Perpetual Help System Biñan, Laguna.



Coordination was also made with teachers and school coordinators to set a suitable time for conducting the survey. Since the respondents were minors, parental consent was obtained through distributed assent forms. The survey questionnaires were distributed in printed form and collected manually. The process was carried out with careful consideration of ethical standards such as voluntary participation, confidentiality of respondents' identities, and use of the data strictly for academic purposes.

The following statistical tests were utilized in the study for the collected data: 1) Weighted Mean was used to describe the respondents' a) frequency of social media use, b) level of digital literacy, and c) level of academic interest, 2) Pearson r Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilized to determine the significant relationship between the respondents' a) frequency of social media use and level of digital literacy, b) frequency of social media use and level of academic interest, and c) level of digital literacy and level of academic interest.

Results and Discussion

This descriptive-correlational study aimed at identifying the social media use, digital literacy and academic interest of intermediate learners. This section presents the respondent's social media use, level of digital literacy and level of academic interest. The data gathered about the relationship of the variables of the study are also presented in this section.



Table 1. Respondents' Social Media Use

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
A.Duration	2.45	OFTEN	3
1. I spend 3-4 hours using facebook	2.16	Sometimes	7
2. I use tiktok more than 30 minutes.	2.73	Often	6
B.Frequency	3.24	OFTEN	1
1. I am using social media platforms.	3.34	Always	2
2. I like browsing different social media platforms during my free time	3.14	Often	3
C.Purpose	3.08	OFTEN	2
1. I use social media platforms for academic purposes.	2.80	Often	5
2. I use social media platforms to improve my digital literacy skills.	2.95	Often	4
3. I use social media platforms to keep in touch with my friends.	3.49	Always	1
Overall Weighted Mean	2.92	OFTEN	

Table 1 shows the Social media use of the Intermediate learners' as perceived by the parents with the weighted mean, rank and interpretation. It was divided into three dimensions which were the duration, frequency, and purpose. Among each given item, the indicators under the frequency got the weighted mean of 3.24 (rank 1) with the verbal interpretation of often, it explains that the Intermediate learners were using social media platforms often and liked to browse on different social media platforms during their free time. While,



indicators included in the purpose got the weighted mean of 3.08 (rank 2) with the verbal interpretation of often, which illustrates that Intermediate learners use social media platforms for academic purpose, to improve digital literacy skills and to keep in touch with their friends. On the other hand, the indicators under the duration got the weighted mean of 2.45 (Rank 3) with the verbal interpretation of often as well, explaining that the Intermediate learners spend 3 to 4 hours in using facebook and use tiktok for more than 30 minutes. By the overall mean, it shows that the weighted mean of 2.92 with the verbal interpretation of often, includes the duration, frequency, and purpose which cover every indicator in each dimension. The findings support the literature of Azizi et al., (2019) which stated that social networking sites and applications were widely used by students wherein spending a lot of time on these sites became part of many people's daily routine. It was also revealed that among the various age groups of students, university students are among the most numerous users of social media.

Table 2. Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy: Communication

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I can easily read online contents from screen.	3.30	Very High	1
2. I can type quickly using both hands.	3.27	Very High	2
3. I interact through online audio-video call.	3.18	High	3
Overall Weighted Mean	3.25	VERY HIGH	



The data presented in table 2 shows the level of digital literacy of the Intermediate learners in terms of communication with the weighted mean, rank and interpretation. Among each item given, the indicator 1 "I can easily read online contents from screen" got the weighted mean of 3.30 (Rank 1) with the verbal interpretation of very high. While the indicator 2 "I can type quickly using both hands" got the weighted mean of 3.27 with the verbal interpretation of very high. On the other hand, the indicator 3 "I interact through online audio-video call" got the lowest item with the weighted mean of 3.18 (rank 3) and has the verbal interpretation of high. The overall weighted mean of the level of digital literacy of the Intermediate learners in terms of communication gathered an overall weighted mean of 3.25 with a verbal interpretation of very high. The findings support the idea made by Spires et al., (2019) which discussed that numerous digital reading and writing strategies for a variety of media formats are part of digital literacy.

These consist of text, words, pictures, audio, video, motion graphics, and multimodal formats wherein the ability to find, understand, and use digital content on the Web is essential and must be developed.



Table 3. Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy: Critical Thinking

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. My subject assigns me online activities relating to real life problems.	2.97	High	2
2. I can find different pieces of information online.	3.30	Very High	1
3. I have an online reflective journal to write.	2.44	Low	3
Overall Weighted Mean	2.90	HIGH	

As presented in table 3, it shows the data about the level of digital literacy when it comes to critical thinking of Intermediate learners with the weighted mean, rank and interpretation. Among each item given, the indicator 2 "I can find different pieces of information online" got the weighted mean of 3.30 (Rank 1) with the verbal interpretation of very high. On the other hand, the indicator 1 "My subject assigns me online activities relating to real life problems" got the weighted mean of 2.97 with the verbal interpretation of high. While, the indicator 3 "I have an online reflective journal to write" got the weighted mean of 2.44 with a verbal interpretation of low. The overall weighted mean of the level of digital literacy of the Intermediate learners in terms of critical thinking gathered an overall weighted mean of 2.90 with a verbal interpretation of high.

To sum up, table 3 reveals that the intermediate learners can find various information in the online world wherein there were some subjects that assigned them to online activities related to real life



scenarios but, some of them do not write an online reflective journal. The findings support the study made by Nufaisah (2022) indicating that digital literacy is one of the aspects of modern era where having an ability to use and obtain the information from the digital world occurs which is vital to the learning process as this considerably impacts classroom environment.

Table 4. Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy: Character

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I do not use and share others' personal information, pictures, conversation etc. without their consent.	3.46	Very High	2
2. I avoid posting negative online comments.	3.53	Very High	1
Overall Weighted Mean	3.50	VERY HIGH	

Table 4 shows the respondents' level of digital literacy which was under the dimension of character. The indicator that has the highest rank was seen in indicator 2 with a weighted mean of 3.53 and verbal interpretation as very high. This means intermediate learners avoid negative online comments in an online world. Indicator 1, the 2nd rank in all indicators was seen as very high with a weighted mean of 3.46. This affirmed that the intermediate learners did not use and share other personal information, pictures and conversation without the consent of others so that they can also avoid posting negative comments in the digital world.



To sum up, the respondents' level of digital literacy under the dimension of character got the overall weighted mean of 3.50 and was verbally interpreted as very high. The findings concur the study of Neumann et al., (2022) which stated that students' use of social media also demonstrated understanding of online safety, ability to manage risks, and the ability to choose who can be trusted and interacted with.

Table 5. Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy: Curation

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I search for material from websites.	3.15	High	1
Overall Weighted Mean	3.15	HIGH	

As presented in table 5 the respondents' level of digital literacy which was under the dimension of curation has 1 indicator that has a weighted mean of 3.15 and is verbally interpreted as high. The result means that the intermediate learners' level of digital literacy in curation dimension was high specifically in searching material from websites in which they can find as well as use online sources and applications from the internet.

The findings support the idea of Fallon (2020) which indicates that students' abilities to use "educational" applications and digitally sourced information, or comprehending efficient combinations of pedagogical, content, and technological knowledge are seen as



promoting the incorporation of electronic materials into teaching and learning.

Table 6. Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy: Connectedness

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I am involved in different online communities for volunteer work.	2.26	Low	2
2. I actively participate in online polls/surveys.	2.63	High	1
Overall Weighted Mean	2.45	LOW	

Table 6 presents the respondents' level of digital literacy which was under the dimension of connectedness. The indicator that has the highest rank was seen in indicator 2 with a weighted mean of 2.63 and verbal interpretation of high. This means intermediate learners actively participate in an online poll/survey. Indicator 1, the 2nd rank, was seen as low with a weighted mean of 2.26. This reveals that most of the respondents with an age of 11-13 years old do not involve themselves in different online communities for voluntary work.

To sum up, the respondents' level of digital literacy under the dimension of connectedness obtained an overall weighted mean of 2.45 which was verbally interpreted as low. Overall, this opposed the article of Murtaza (2023) stating that as children became well familiar with the advancements, both entertainment and self-expression occurs. This happens because these enable them to form online



identities, engage with others, and build social networks that provide a meaningful connection to peers.

Table 7. Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy: Creativity

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I write online blogs giving new ideas and opinions.	2.24	Low	3
2. I like to post information on my social media accounts.	2.18	Low	4
3. I create videos and post them online.	2.50	High	2
4. I have creative ideas but do not know how to use them online.	2.74	High	1
Overall Weighted Mean	2.42	LOW	

Table 7 shows the respondents' level of digital literacy which was under the dimension of creativity. The indicators that have the highest rank were seen in indicator 4 with a weighted mean of 2.74 and verbal interpretation of high. This means intermediate learners have creative ideas but don't know how to use them online. Indicator 3 which has 2nd rank was seen as high with a weighted mean of 2.50. This affirmed that the intermediate learners create videos and post them online. The rank 3 was seen in indicator 1 with a weighted mean of 2.24 and verbal interpretation of low which presents that



most of the respondents do not write online blogs that give ideas and opinions. The indicator that has the lowest rank was seen in indicator 2 with a weighted mean of 2.18 and verbally interpreted as low which conveys that most of the respondents did not like to post information on their social media accounts.

Table 7 reveals that the intermediate learners with an age of 11-13 years old have so many creative ideas but cannot able to apply as well as share those in the digital world which supports the idea of Nilaphruek and Charoenporn (2023) which tackled that the main problem was the ICT skill levels of the youth are low and in order to facilitate that problem, it is necessary to implement proper education about technology so that learners can able to improve their digital literacy.

Table 8. Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy: Collaboration

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. In digital world, I work with others in groups.	2.59	High	3
2. Working in online groups helps me to learn from others.	3.00	High	1
3. I work online with my peers to find solutions to problems.	2.77	High	2
Overall Weighted Mean	2.79	HIGH	

Table 8 shows the respondents' level of digital literacy which was under the dimension of Collaboration. The indicator that has the highest rank was seen in the indicator 2 with a weighted mean of 3.00 and verbally interpreted as high. Indicator 3 which have the 2nd rank was seen as high with a weighted mean of 2.77. The 3rd rank was



seen in the indicator 1 of table 8, this presents that working with others in a digital world resulted as high with a weighted mean of 2.59. The respondents' level of digital literacy under the Collaboration dimension got an overall average of 2.79 and verbally interpreted as high. This means that most of the intermediate learners learned from others through online groupings and have the ability of finding solutions by working online with their peers which concur the article of Baron (2019) that digital literacy was a collection of abilities required for an individual to participate actively in the contemporary Internet-mediated world. A capability that enables one to access, navigate, comprehend, and participate in the contemporary digital economy.

Table 9. Summary Table of the Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1.Communication	3.25	Very High	2
2.Critical thinking	2.90	High	4
3.Character	3.50	Very High	1
4.Curation	3.15	High	3
5.Connectedness	2.45	Low	6
6.Creativity	2.42	Low	7
7.Collaboration	2.79	High	5
Overall Weighted Mean	2.92	HIGH	

Table 9 presents the summary table of the respondents' level of digital literacy that covers 1 to 7 dimensions which are Communication, Critical Thinking, Character, Curation,



Connectedness, Creativity and Collaboration. Character, which was placed as Indicator 3 got the highest rank (rank 1) with a weighted mean of 3.50 and was verbally interpreted as very high. Followed by Indicator 1 "communication" (rank 2) with a weighted mean of 3.25 and verbally interpreted as very high. The 3rd rank was seen in the indicator 4 "Curation" which has the weighted mean of 3.15 and high verbal interpretation. Indicator 2 reflected that the intermediate learners' level of digital literacy under the dimension of critical thinking got the 4th rank which was seen as high with a weighted mean of 2.90, while indicator 7 "collaboration" which was placed as rank 5 got an average of 2.79 and verbally interpreted as high. On the other hand, as reflected in table 9, the indicators that were placed as Rank 6 and 7 were the indicator 5 "connectedness" and indicator 6 "creativity" since these two were seen as low since indicators' 5 and 6 only have a weighted mean of 2.45 and 2.42.

The overall respondents' level of digital literacy resulted with an average of 2.92 and was verbally interpreted as high that supports the study of Bejakovic and Mmjavac (2020) stating that without adequate digital literacy, it is impossible to participate in the economy and the digital society, particularly having in mind the digital transformation that the world of work is experiencing in the content and the organization. Beyond the work environment, it also affects the way people live and communicate.



Table 10. Respondents' Level of Academic Interest

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I don't feel boredom during class discussion.	2.86	High	10
2. I enjoy doing activities that improve my knowledge and skills in every subject.	3.35	Very High	3
3. I love attending classes especially when I can demonstrate my skills.	3.22	High	6
4. I actively participate in classroom activities.	3.18	High	7
5. I do assignments regularly.	3.30	Very High	4.5
6. I want to get good grades on tests, quizzes, assignments and projects.	3.72	Very High	1
7. I listen attentively to the lecture of my teachers.	3.30	Very High	4.5
8. I study harder to improve my performance in class.	3.36	Very High	2
9. I make myself prepared in every class discussion.	3.00	High	9
10. I prefer finishing my activities before playing.	3.05	High	8
Overall Weighted Mean	3.23	HIGH	



As reflected in table 10, the respondents' level of academic interest obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.23 with a high verbal interpretation since all of the indicators were ranging with an average of 2.86 to 3.72. Indicator 1 obtained the rank 10 which shows that the respondents don't feel boredom during class discussion, while indicator 2 was seen as rank 3 with a weighted mean of 3.35 and verbal interpretation of very high which confirmed that respondents enjoy doing activities when they improve their knowledge and skills in every subject. Indicator 3 (Rank 6) obtained high verbal interpretation with 3.22 weighted mean which indicates how much students love attending class when it covers demonstration or sharing of skills. Indicator 4 (Rank 7) with a weighted mean of 3.18 and verbally interpreted as high shows that respondents actively participate in classroom activities. On the other hand, Indicators 5 and 7 got the 4.5 rank which were verbally interpreted as very high. These two indicators resulted to a very high verbal interpretation since its weighted mean were both 3.30. Indicator 6 obtained the 1st rank among all indicators with an average of 3.72 and verbal interpretation of very high which indicates that the respondents want to get good grades on their quizzes, tests, assignments, and project. Indicator 8 was seen as rank 2 with very high results which concur that the respondents improve their performance in class by studying harder. Indicators 9 (rank 9) and 10(rank 8) obtained an average of 3.00 and 3.05 with a verbal interpretation as high. These two last indicators got these results since most of the respondents agreed that they make themselves prepared in every class discussion and prefer finishing activities before playing.

To sum up, the overall findings supported the idea of Slavisa et al., (2023) which stated that every student's academic interest was significantly influenced by cooperative and



collaborative group activities. It demonstrates the value of using group activities to encourage academic success. A collaborative reflection during teaching and learning is crucial as it hooks the interest of many students. As the classroom becomes interactive, students intend to engage with the discussion which leads them to a good academic performance.

Table 11. Relationship Between the Respondents' Frequency of Social Media Use and Level of Digital Literacy

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Social media use and digital literacy	$r=.228$ (low correlation)	.016*	H_0 rejected	Significant
*Significant @ 0.05				

For the relationship between the respondents' frequency of social media use and their level of digital literacy, a Pearson's r value of .228 was obtained indicating a low correlation. Meanwhile, a probability value of .016 which was lower than the test of significance at .05 showed that there is sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting a significant relationship between the variables. This means that the more the respondents use social media, the higher the level of their digital literacy.

The findings support the study made by Durak and Seferoglu (2020) stating that social media use was quite beneficial, particularly



for communication, social engagement, and even education. Digital literacy was the most crucial variable since it was a driving force in using social media. Specifically, this discussed that the higher the digital literacy of learners, the higher the chance they can navigate social media platforms.

Table 12. Relationship Between the Respondents' Frequency of Social Media Use and Level of Academic Interest

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Social media use and academic interest	$r = -.120$ (negligible correlation)	.211	Failed to reject H_0	Not Significant
Significant @ 0.05				

For the relationship between the respondents' frequency of social media use and their level of academic interest, a Pearson's r value of $-.120$ was obtained indicating a negligible correlation. Meanwhile, a probability value of $.211$ which was higher than the test of significance at $.05$ showed that there is no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant relationship between the variables. This means that the respondents' social media use has no bearing on their level of academic interest. Therefore, the findings contradict the study made by Heng (2023) stating that academic interest was also one of the problems in today's generation wherein most individuals gradually lose interest due to social media usage.



Table 13. Relationship Between the Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy and Level of Academic Interest

Variables	Statistical Treatment (Pearson's)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Digital literacy and academic interest	$r=.381$ (low correlation)	.000	H_0 rejected	Significant
*Significant @ 0.01				

For the relationship between the respondents' level of digital literacy and level of academic interest, a Pearson's r value of .381 was obtained indicating a low correlation. Meanwhile, a probability value of .000 which was lower than the test of significance at .01 showed that there is sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting a significant relationship between the variables. This means that the higher the level of respondents' digital literacy, the higher the level of their academic interest. This relationship can be supported by the study of Erni et al., (2023) stating that the development of digital skills in students encourages them to participate in every class session in which active learning gradually becomes the center of the teaching-learning process that helps attain great academic interest.

Conclusions



The present study aimed to determine the social media use, digital literacy and academic interest of intermediate learners at University of Perpetual Help System Biñan, Laguna. Based on the findings of the study, the respondents often use social media, and they exhibit a high level of digital literacy as well as a high level of academic interest. Most of the intermediate learners navigate social media platforms not only to connect with others but also to support their academic activities which shows that digital engagement can be purposeful and educational. The respondents' frequency of social media use and level of digital literacy have a significant relationship which shows that the more intermediate learners use social media, the higher their digital literacy skills. However, the relationship between social media use and academic interest is not significant which indicates that the intermediate learners' frequency of social media use has no bearing on their level of academic interest. On the other hand, there is a significant relationship between digital literacy and academic interest wherein the higher the intermediate learners' level of digital literacy, the higher the level of their academic interest.

Directions for future use

Intermediate teachers should educate intermediate learners on setting limitations for social media use, particularly on platforms like Facebook and TikTok by discussing information about responsible usage and internet safety into their lessons in order to help students develop awareness and skills necessary for safe online engagement. In addition, teachers should require learners to maximize all means of using educational online platforms such as Blogger, WordPress, and Tumblr, where they can reflect on their learning experiences and express their ideas in the virtual world that promotes both creativity and academic growth. Parents also play an important role in



supporting learners' academic interest by offering encouragement and emotional support that can help reduce pressure and increase student participation in class activities. School administrators should review and recommend for the improvement of the curriculum by incorporating social media and digital platforms into the teaching and learning process. This integration will provide learners with more opportunities to develop digital literacy skills essential for 21st-century learning. Future researchers should conduct a study using other variables such as reading interest, comprehension skills, and academic competence that were not covered in the present study. Lastly, future researchers should investigate why there was no significant relationship between social media use and academic interest.

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PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES AND CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION TEACHERS IN LAGUNA

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Abstract

This study investigates the professional competencies and challenges of special needs education (SNEd) teachers in elementary schools in Biñan and Sta. Rosa, Laguna, Philippines. Rooted in the framework of the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons (RA 7277), it affirms the right to quality education for all, including learners with special needs. Using surveys (both online and printed), the study examined teacher profiles (age, gender, teaching experience, education, position, and income), their competency levels, and the challenges they face. Most respondents were middle-aged women with less than 10 years of teaching experience, holding college degrees, and occupying Teacher I positions. A majority earned ₱30,000 or less monthly.

Results revealed that teachers possess a very high level of professional competence, with no significant difference in competencies across demographic variables. Most respondents reported few challenges, likely due to adequate administrative support and teaching experience.



Overall, the study highlights a competent, predominantly female SNEd teaching workforce experiencing minimal professional challenges, offering a basis for policy recommendations and support strategies in special education.

Keywords: *Special Needs Education, teacher competencies, inclusive education, educational challenges, teacher profile, professional development, Laguna*

Introduction

According to the United Nations, one of the basic rights of a human is the right to education. In order to exercise this right, we have to provide the learners quality education with enough facilities, learning materials, and competent teachers to guide the learner in building up their knowledge and skills. Although challenges and barriers cannot be avoided especially in the special need's education program, we need someone who can guide us through those challenges and face them together. It will not be easy but with the cooperation of the teachers and parents, it will be easier to provide quality education for learners with special needs. Llego, (2022) stated that the Special Education (SPED) program are programs and services that are provided for the learners with disabilities. The program and services include learning resource support, transition program, curriculum adaptations, and academic interventions. Assessment of the learners' strengths, difficulties, and interests are essential in planning and



preparing for the appropriate transition program for the learners with disabilities.

In accordance with the National Council on Disability Affairs, Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, or the RA 7277 specifically under section 12 indicates Access to Quality Education - "The State shall take into consideration the special requirements of disabled persons in the formulation of educational programs and policies." And as well as section 14 which states Special Education - "that the State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of special education for visually impaired, hearing impaired, mentally retarded persons, and other types of exceptional children in all regions of the country." This strongly addressed the urgency of giving learners with special needs the appropriate education they should receive. This also gives the SPED program the support it needs such as funding for an effective implementation of the special education program. People in the field of education are familiar with special education or SPED. Although not all educators are qualified or have experience teaching in this field. Special education is a program where learners with special needs are educated by a special education (SPED) teacher either in a mainstream classroom or in a self-contained classroom.

Special education differs in terms of the offers for segregated setting while a mainstream school offers segregated, inclusive, or integrated setting and the



difference whether they are educated by a regular or specialist teacher. Special education is associated with teaching the learners with special needs that range from mild to severe cases even those with physical, behavioral, emotional, learning disability, or even the gifted learners (Winter, S. 2020). SPED teachers play a huge role when it comes to educating and empowering learners with special needs. To teach in a special education classroom, a teacher should be competent enough in handling learners with special needs (Alfane 2020). Teaching or handling learners with special needs is significantly different from teaching ordinary learners (Magsambol et al., 2020). They can't also enjoy their life outside their work due to the lack of support from the government, which causes the SPED teachers to experience burnout despite being passionate and determined in teaching and caring for their learners (Ancheta et al., 2023). A lot of teachers these days from around the world are working as SPED teachers, although they do not have any proper training at all due to the lack of SPED teachers, making schools hire regular teachers. This makes people question the competency of the teacher since they did not have any proper training on how to teach learners with special needs, how to assess their needs, how to handle their behaviors, what strategies are good for the learners, etc. A lot of studies showed that the competency of the teacher is a factor for building the learners' skills and knowledge.



A number of challenges are faced by both the special education (SPED) teachers and the learners with special needs from its facilities, learning materials, number of SPED teachers, qualification of the teachers, etc. that are still encountered today. Especially that the society's main goal in the present is to promote inclusivity. This agenda faced a lot of challenges and barriers as it is not implemented effectively here in the Philippines making inclusivity hard to achieve. The sped program has been around for years, yet the requirements and the needs of the said program still have not changed despite having the support from the government (Andrade et al., 2022).

Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the relationship between the level of professional competencies and challenges encountered by the special need's education teacher in Laguna.

Methods

This chapter outlines the research methods and procedures used in the study. It details the research design, respondent selection (using total enumeration), data sources, instrument construction and validation, and statistical techniques for data analysis.

The study used a descriptive research design, as defined by Creswell (2021), to describe the characteristics of the population—in this case, Special Needs Education (SNEd) teachers in Biñan and Sta. Rosa. Data were collected primarily through surveys. This design was chosen to



effectively examine the teachers' professional competencies and the challenges they face.

The primary data for this study came from survey responses of Special Needs Education (SNEd) teachers, while secondary data were gathered from online sources, books, journals, and other reading materials.

The study involved 30 randomly selected public school SNEd teachers from Biñan and Sta. Rosa, Laguna, out of a total population of 32. Using stratified random sampling with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the sample was determined to ensure fair representation of different subgroups within the population. This sampling method ensured that all relevant teacher attributes were considered in the selection process.

The study used a three-part questionnaire as its main research instrument, appropriate for its descriptive design. Part 1 focused on respondents' demographic profiles (self-made). Parts 2 and 3 assessed professional competencies and challenges encountered by SNEd teachers, adapted from existing tools.

All parts were validated by experts in special education, research, and statistics. To ensure reliability, a pilot test was conducted with non-participant teachers in Laguna. Results showed excellent reliability for the competencies section (Cronbach's $\alpha = .967$) and acceptable reliability for the challenges section (Cronbach's $\alpha = .700$).

The study used a 4-point Likert scale to evaluate the respondents' level of professional competencies. The scoring system is as follows 4 points (3.25–4.00): *Strongly*



Agree – Very High 3 points (2.50–3.24): *Agree* – High 2 points (1.75–2.49): *Disagree* – Low 1 point (1.00–1.74): *Strongly Disagree* – Very Low. To assess the challenges encountered by the respondents, the study used a 4-point Likert scale with the following interpretation 4 points (3.25–4.00): *Strongly Agree* 3 points (2.50–3.24): *Agree* 2 points (1.75–2.49): *Disagree* 1 point (1.00–1.74): *Strongly Disagree*. This scale helped quantify the extent to which respondents experienced various challenges in special needs education.

The researcher of this study sought permission and approval from the school head of City of Biñan and Sta. Rosa Elementary School to administer the collection of data through printed questionnaires and online (Google form). The researchers explained the goal of the study, and the respondents had the choice to decline answering the questionnaires and it was respected. All information or data acquired from respondents are kept strictly confidential. After the retrieval of the questionnaires, the raw data were subjected for tabulation, statistical analysis, and interpretation.

The study utilized the following statistical tools for data analysis Frequency and Percentage Distribution – to describe respondents' profiles (age, gender, teaching experience, education, position, and income). 2. Weighted Mean – to assess Respondents' level of professional competencies. Challenges encountered in special needs education. 3. T-test – to examine differences in professional competencies based on years of teaching and monthly income. 4. Mann-Whitney U Test – to analyze differences in professional competencies based on gender and highest



educational attainment. 5. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) – to determine differences in professional competencies based on age and position. These tests helped identify patterns and group-based variations in the data.

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
35 years old and below	16	53.3
36-45 years old	8	26.7
46 years old and above	6	20.0
Gender		
Male	2	6.7
Female	28	93.3
Years of teaching		
10 years and below	18	60.0



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11 years and above	12	40.0
Highest educational attainment		
College	24	80.0
Master's	6	20.0
Position		
Teacher I	15	50.0
Teacher III	2	6.7
SPET I	8	26.7
SPET II	1	3.3
SPET III	4	13.3
Monthly Income		
30,000 and below	16	53.33
31,000 and above	14	46.67
N=30		

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of 30 respondents who take part in this research. A number of profile characteristics such as: age, gender, years of



teaching experience, highest level of education attained, position, and monthly salary, are used to organize the data. The majority of the respondents (53.3%) were 35 years old below, while the 36 to 45 years old and 46 years old above age groups were represented at percentages 26.7% and 20.0% respectively. In terms of Gender, majority of SNED Teachers are female (93.3%) compared to male (6.7%). The majority of the respondents (60.0%) have 10 years and below experience in teaching, while (40.0%) from them are already in teaching force for 11 years and above. On the Highest educational attainment, the majority of the SNED Teachers attained a college degree (80.0%) than those with Master's degree at (20.0%). In terms of position, (50%) of the SNED teachers hold the position of Teacher I which takes a higher proportion than Teacher II which has (6.7%), SPET I (26.7%), the SPET II (3.3%) and SPET III (13.3%). Over half (53.33%) of SNED teacher's monthly income is 30,000 below, compared to (46.67%) SNED teachers with 31, 000 and above monthly income



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2. Respondents' Level of Professional Competencies in Special Needs Education

Table 2

Level of Professional Competencies in Special Needs Education

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I use a variety of instructional materials when teaching	3.70	Very High	7
2. I apply effective learning strategies (e.g. Universal Design for Learning)	3.67	Very High	11.5
3. I inform the parents about the value of independent learning.	3.77	Very High	2



4. I analyze difficult concepts carefully so that they can be presented to the students in an understandable way.	3.67	Very High	11.5
5. I formulate valid and reliable tests to assess the student's progress.	3.67	Very High	11.5
6. I create opportunities for the student's participation during the discussion	3.67	Very High	11.5
7. I use a multi-sensory approach when teaching.	3.70	Very High	7



8. I use questions that vary in difficulty in order to accommodate the different abilities of the student.	3.67	Very High	11.5
9. I manage my learning environment by setting rules and routines	3.77	Very High	2
10. I give careful consideration to the various ability levels of my students when planning lessons.	3.73	Very High	4.5
11. I evaluate the applicability of teaching materials before use	3.70	Very High	7



12. I help the students in ways which will assist them to become independent learners	3.73	Very High	4.5
13. I attend seminars/training/workshops for my professional development.	3.57	Very High	18
14. I always think about my lesson planning before the actual lesson.	3.67	Very High	11.5
15. I always show sensitivity when dealing with students with special needs.	3.77	Very High	2
16. I reflect on some of my teaching	3.63	Very High	15.5



methods during the lesson			
17. I organize various symposiums aimed at professional development.	3.43	Very High	17
18. I use knowledge gained from experience to teach the students well.	3.63	Very High	15.5
Overall Weighted Mean	3.67	Very High	

As shown in Table 2, the Level of Professional Competencies in Special Needs Education to be “very high” with an average weighted mean of 3.67. The indicator with the highest weighted mean and ranking first is “They inform the parents about the value of independent learning” with a weighted mean of 3.77, “Manage my learning environment by setting rules and routines” (weighted mean 3.77) and “Always



show sensitivity when dealing with students with special needs (weighted mean 3.77) It follows the “Give careful consideration to the various ability levels of my students when planning lessons”(weighted mean 3.73), “Help the students in ways which will assist them to become independent learners” (weighted mean 3.73) and “Use a variety of instructional materials when teaching(weighted mean 3.70), “Use a multi-sensory approach when teaching”(weighted mean 3.70), “Evaluate the applicability of teaching materials before use”(weighted mean 3.70) Next “Apply effective learning strategies Universal Design for Learning” (weighted mean 3.67), “Analyze difficult concepts carefully so that they can be presented to the students in an understandable way” (weighted mean 3.67), “Formulate valid and reliable tests to assess the student’s progress”(weighted mean 3.67), “Create opportunities for the student’s participation during the discussion” (weighted mean 3.67), “Use questions that vary in difficulty in order to accommodate for the different abilities of the student” (weighted mean 3.67), “Always think about my lesson planning before the actual lesson”(weighted mean 3.67) and “Reflect on some of my teaching methods during the lesson” (weighted mean 3.63) “Use knowledge gained from experience to teach the students well” (weighted mean 3.63), “Organize various symposiums aimed at professional development” (weighted mean 3.43) Lastly “Attend seminars/trainings/workshops for my professional development”(weighted mean 3.57).

The findings suggest that most respondents are highly competent in a variety of areas related to special education. It supports the study of Durdukoca et al., (2021) wherein it reviewed the competencies of the special needs’ education teachers for inclusive education, to obtain data regarding the



teacher's in-class practices and to also evaluate or analyze their view of professional competencies in depth. The study resulted in determining that the participating educators in terms of inclusive education have high levels of professional competency.

3. Difference in the Respondents' Level of Professional Competencies in Special Needs Education When Grouped According to their Profile Variables

Table 3 Difference in the Respondents' Level of Professional Competencies in Special Needs Education When Grouped According to their Profile Variables

Profile Variables		Mean/ Mean Rank	Inferential Statistics	P-value	Decision	Interpretat
Age	35 years old and below	3.66	F=.137	.873	Failed to reject H0	Not Significant
	36-45 years old	3.65				
	46 years old	3.75				



	and above					
Gender	Male	14.25	U=25.50 0 Z=-.21 2	.832	Failed to reject H0	Not Significant
	Female	15.59				
Years of teaching	10 years and below	3.63	t=-.723	.476	Failed to reject H0	Not Significant
	11 years and above	3.74				
Highest educational attainment	College	14.60	U=50.50 0 Z=-1.13 9	.255	Failed to reject H0	Not Significant
	Master's	19.08				



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e nt						
Posi	Teacher I	3.60				
	Teacher III	3.97				

	SPET	3.71	F=.5	.723	Failed to reject H0	Not Significant
	SPET II	3.94				
	SPET III	3.65				
Monthly inco me	30,00 0 and be lo w	3.64	t=-.50	.615	Failed to reject H0	Not Significant
	31,00 0 and above	3.71				

Table 3 shows the difference in the respondents' level of professional competencies in special needs education. For age ($F=.137$), gender ($U=25.500$; $Z=-.212$), years of teaching ($t=-.723$), highest educational attainment ($U=50.500$; $Z=-1.139$), position ($F=.518$) and monthly income ($t=-.509$), no significant differences were found as shown by the probability



values of .873, .832, .476, .255, .723 and .615, respectively. These p-values were all higher than the test of significance at .05, suggesting that there is not enough statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This means that regardless of the respondents' age, gender, years of teaching, highest educational attainment, position and monthly income, their level of professional competencies in special needs education is the same.

This can be due to SNEd teachers doing similar practices inside their classrooms. According to Durdukoca (2021), instruction is based on the student's needs, level of readiness, and adaptation of different activities that will improve their life skills regardless of what disability the students have, which are all done by SNEd teachers making their practice similar to each other. The findings contradict the study made by Aldosiry (2020) stating that there is a factor in the profile variables that affects the professional competency of the SNEd teachers. This study argues that the SNEd teachers who have more years of teaching experience compared to the less experienced SNEd teachers experience less stress in handling the students and have higher levels of professional competency. The findings also contradict the study made by Bruno et al., (2021) stating that the SNEd teachers decided to stay and continue to pursue their career regardless of the challenges experienced specifically with the factor related to their salary or financial compensation.



4. Challenges Encountered by the Respondents in Special Needs Education

Table 4 Challenges Encountered by the Respondents in Special Needs Education

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I don't feel satisfied with the benefits and salary I get from teaching.	2.90	Agree	3 5
2. My income cannot meet my living expenses.	2.70	Agree	6 5
3. I often struggle due to insufficient materials needed in teaching special needs education classes.	2.87	Agree	5
4. I have limited knowledge of the special needs education curriculum.	2.90	Agree	3 5
5. I lack the competence to deal with learners'	1.77	Disagree	1 5



challenging behavior.			
6. Teaching special needs education is really not my specialization.	1.73	Strongly Disagree	16
7. I receive little to no support from my supervisors and coworkers.	1.97	Disagree	13
8. My current organization provides unfair treatment.	1.90	Disagree	14
9. I feel overwhelmed at work.	2.27	Disagree	11.5
10. I have difficulty choosing learning objectives, along with the corresponding activities that suit the needs of the student.	2.43	Disagree	9
11. It is challenging to design a learning program (IEP) suitable for students' needs.	2.70	Agree	6.5



12. I feel like there are many things I cannot do to maximize students' potential.	2.37	Disagree	10
13. The uncertain situation hinders the evaluation process. (e.g. sudden tantrums of learners)	2.97	Agree	2
14. I realized that choosing an appropriate assessment method that would determine the learner's strengths and needs is challenging	3.37	Strongly Agree	1
15. I have trouble building collaborations with parents through online media since it sometimes led to misperceptions and is prone to conflict.	2.27	Agree	11.5
16. I have trouble setting up with parents due to conflicting schedules.	2.57	Agree	8
Overall Weighted Mean	2.48	Disagree	



As shown in Table 4, the Challenges Encountered by the Respondents in Special Needs Education, according on the survey's findings, The indicator with the highest weighted mean of 3.37 and ranking first is “ I realized that choosing an appropriate assessment method that would determine the learner's strengths and needs is challenging”,demonstrating an overall agreement among participants. Following closely is indicator “ The uncertain situation hinders the evaluation process. (e.g. sudden tantrums of learners)” with a weighted mean of 2.97. This is followed by indicators “I don't feel satisfied with the benefits and salary I get from teaching,” (weighted mean: 2.90), “I have limited knowledge on the special need's education curriculum.” (weighted mean 2.90), both ranking 3.5. Indicators “I often struggle due to insufficient materials needed in teaching special needs education classes” (weighted mean: 2.87), “My income cannot meet my living expenses” (weighted mean 2.70) and “It is challenging to design a learning program (IEP) suitable for students' needs” (weighted mean 2.70), “I have trouble setting up with parents due to conflicting schedules” (weighted mean 2.57 were also the challenges special needs education teachers encountered.

To sum up, the result of an overall weighted mean of 2.48 shows that the majority of the respondents “disagree” with the list of challenges in the questionnaire. The findings support the study made by (Betiini et al.,) wherein stated that there are still number of challenges in SPED Program faced util now and still is expected to continue up until the next few years, however, the findings also imply that respondents appears to have little challenges encountered due to the administrative



support and years of teaching experience supporting the study of (Aldosiry, 2020)

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: 1. There is a numerous, middle-aged, female teaching workforce in the field of special needs education. 2. The respondents are highly competent in a variety of areas related to special education. 3. Regardless of the respondents' age, gender, years of teaching, highest educational attainment, position and monthly income, their level of professional competencies in special needs education is the same. 4. The respondents appear to have little challenges encountered due to the administrative support and years of teaching experience (Aldosiry, 2020).

Directions for future use

SNEd teachers should engage in continuous training to enhance their competencies, particularly in integrating technology into the classroom. School administrators in SNEd centers in Laguna are encouraged to offer seminars focused on handling complex cases of children with disabilities. Additionally, headteachers should regularly monitor the availability of resources, such as assistive devices, and the condition of physical facilities to ensure that the needs of learners with disabilities are met. For future research, it is recommended to expand the study to areas with larger



populations and explore the relationship between therapy benefits and student performance in academic and skill areas. Researchers should also examine the impact of mainstreaming on both SNEd students and General Education Teachers to better understand how to effectively support students with disabilities in an inclusive education setting.

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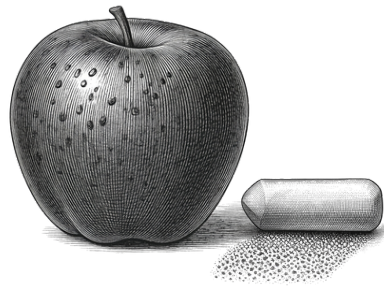
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