

Teaching Challenges of Non-Education Graduate Teachers of Senior High School in the CLABAGIPLA District

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Abstract

This study examined the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers handling Senior High School classes in the CLABAGIPLA District of the Division of Surigao del Norte. Anchored on Pedagogical Content Knowledge and aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, the study assessed challenges across seven Key Result Areas: content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment, diversity of learners, curriculum and planning, assessment and reporting, community linkages and professional engagement, and personal growth and professional development. A descriptive quantitative survey design was used, with 120 non-education graduate Senior High School teachers selected through complete enumeration from Claver, Bacuag, Gigaquit, and Placer. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskal-Wallis H test. Findings showed that the respondents were mostly female, aged 31-40 years, single, Teacher II, bachelor's degree holders, and assigned mostly to the Academic Track. Overall, the teaching challenges were moderately manifested ($M = 2.79$). The lowest domain mean was content knowledge and pedagogy ($M = 2.69$), indicating persistent difficulty in pedagogical transformation, ICT integration, and instructional strategy selection. Learning environment and community linkages and professional engagement recorded the highest means ($M = 2.85$), indicating that classroom management and professional-community responsibilities remained salient areas of adjustment. Most profile variables showed no significant differences in teaching challenges; however, age significantly differentiated community linkages and professional engagement and personal growth and professional development, while civil status significantly differentiated assessment and reporting. The study concludes that the challenges are largely systemic rather than purely individual, requiring structured pedagogical conversion, mentoring, Assessment Literacy Training, Inclusive Instruction Support, And Professional Learning Communities.

Keywords: CLABAGIPLA District, Non-Education Graduate Teachers, Pedagogical Content Knowledge, Professional Development, Senior High School, Teaching Challenges

1. Introduction

Teachers remain central to the quality of basic education because they translate curriculum expectations into classroom learning experiences. In Senior High School, this function requires more than content expertise; it also requires classroom management, learner-centered pedagogy, assessment literacy, knowledge of learner diversity, and the ability to align instruction with curriculum standards. In the Philippines, the implementation of the

Enhanced Basic Education Act expanded secondary education to include Grades 11 and 12, increasing the demand for teachers in specialized tracks and strands. Republic Act No. 10533 institutionalized the enhanced basic education program and the two-year Senior High School structure, while the Department of Education subsequently opened pathways that allowed graduates of non-education programs to teach specialized SHS subjects when qualified by content expertise or technical certification (Republic Act No. 10533, 2013).

The employment of non-education graduates in Senior High School helped address staffing needs, especially in specialized Academic and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood tracks. However, it also raised instructional concerns because content mastery does not automatically translate into pedagogical competence. A graduate of business, engineering, information technology, or health sciences may possess strong disciplinary knowledge but may still experience difficulty in lesson planning, differentiation, classroom management, formative assessment, learner feedback, or professional engagement. The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), adopted through DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, identifies seven domains that define teacher quality and provides the professional benchmark for teacher learning, development, and appraisal (Department of Education, 2017). These standards offer a structured lens for examining the areas in which non-education graduate teachers may require support.

The rationale for the present study lies in the instructional transition experienced by non-education graduate teachers. Their entry into teaching may begin from professional or industry expertise rather than formal teacher preparation. While this background can enrich SHS instruction, especially in applied and technical subjects, gaps may appear when these teachers are required to translate content into developmentally appropriate, inclusive, and measurable learning. Pedagogical Content Knowledge explains this problem by emphasizing that effective teaching requires the integration of subject matter knowledge with knowledge of how learners understand, misunderstand, and engage with the subject (Shulman, 1987). Recent elaborations of PCK also stress that teachers' professional knowledge is shaped by instructional context, student characteristics, curriculum expectations, and classroom enactment (Carlson & Daehler, 2019).

The research gap addressed by this study is the limited localized evidence on the specific teaching challenges of non-education graduate Senior High School teachers in the CLABAGIPLA District, which covers Claver, Bacuag, Gigaquit, and Placer. Existing discussions frequently acknowledge the national need for SHS teachers and the general role of professional standards, but fewer studies provide district-level evidence showing which PPST-related areas are most challenging and whether these challenges vary according to teacher profile. Such evidence is necessary for designing professional development that is not generic but responsive to actual domains of difficulty.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge Theory. PCK argues that effective instruction is not produced by content knowledge alone but by the teacher's capacity to transform content into forms that learners can understand. For non-education graduate teachers, this theory is particularly relevant because their academic or technical preparation may provide content competence while leaving gaps in pedagogical reasoning, instructional representation, learner diagnosis, classroom adaptation, and assessment design. The PPST complements this theoretical base by operationalizing teacher competence into professional domains that cover knowledge, learning environment, diversity, planning, assessment, linkages, and professional growth. Together, PCK and PPST frame teaching challenges as gaps between content expertise and the professional knowledge required for effective classroom practice.

Conceptual Framework

The study conceptualizes teacher profile as the contextual input, the seven PPST Key Result Areas as the core domains where teaching challenges are manifested, and a professional development intervention as the proposed output. The framework assumes that age, sex, civil status, school district, baccalaureate degree, educational

attainment, length of service, teaching position, SHS track taught, and TESDA certification may shape how non-education graduate teachers experience instructional challenges. These challenges are examined across the seven KRAs and serve as the basis for a targeted professional support program.

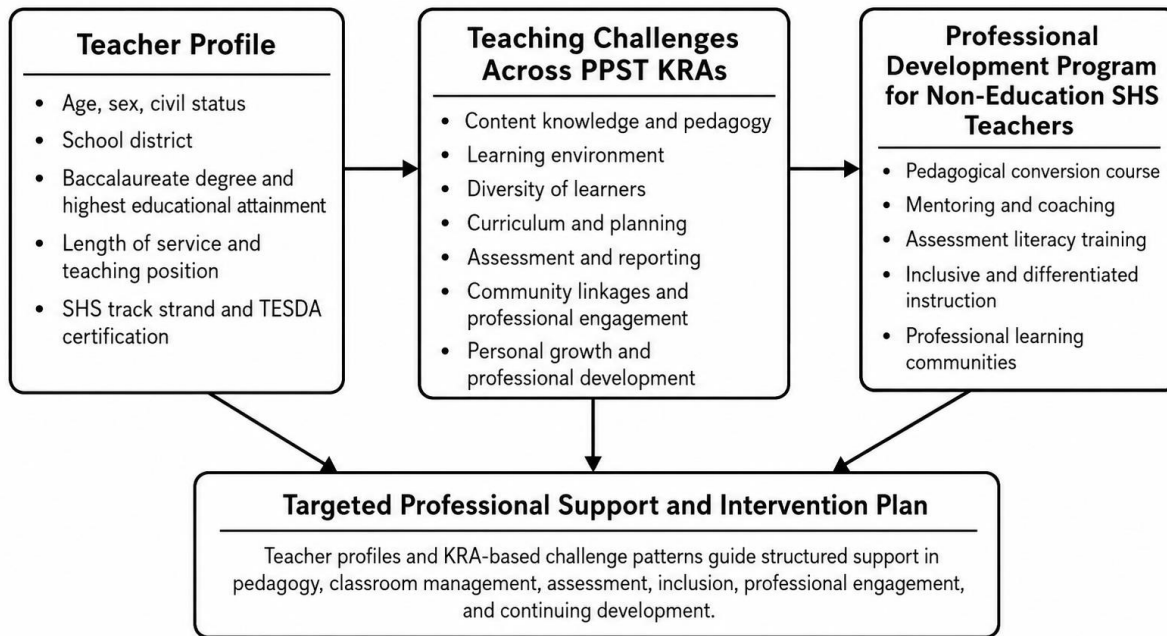


Figure note. Pedagogical Content Knowledge and the PPST frame teaching challenges as gaps between content expertise and pedagogical practice.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1 shows that the profile of non-education graduate teachers provides the background for understanding their teaching challenges. These challenges are examined through the seven PPST domains and are translated into an intervention plan focused on pedagogical conversion, mentoring, assessment literacy, inclusive instruction, and professional learning communities.

Aim and Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to identify and describe the teaching challenges faced by non-education graduate teachers teaching Senior High School in the CLABAGIPLA District of the Division of Surigao del Norte.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, school district, baccalaureate degree, highest educational attainment, length of service, teaching position, SHS track taught, and TESDA National Certificate.
2. Determine the challenges faced by non-education graduate teachers across the following areas: content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment, diversity of learners, curriculum and planning, assessment and reporting, community linkages and professional engagement, and personal growth and professional development.
3. Test whether significant differences exist in the level of teaching challenges when respondents are grouped according to profile variables.
4. Propose appropriate interventions based on the findings of the study.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to age.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to sex.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to civil status.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to school district.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to baccalaureate degree.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to highest educational attainment.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to length of service.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to teaching position.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to SHS track taught.
- There is no significant difference in the teaching challenges encountered by non-education graduate teachers when grouped according to TESDA National Certificate.

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2. Literature Review

The literature indicates that non-education graduate teachers may enter the profession with strong disciplinary or industry-related expertise but with uneven preparation for classroom practice. This creates a recurring tension between subject-matter competence and pedagogical enactment. Shulman's PCK remains useful in explaining this tension because it positions teaching as the transformation of content into representations, explanations, activities, questions, and assessments appropriate for learners. Carlson and Daehler's refined model of PCK further emphasizes that professional knowledge is mediated by classroom context and student outcomes, suggesting that non-education graduate teachers require sustained opportunities to convert content expertise into teachable knowledge.

The PPST provides the professional structure for identifying where this conversion is required. Content knowledge and pedagogy require the teacher to select strategies, communicate clearly, and use ICT meaningfully in instruction. Learning environment requires classroom routines, positive discipline, student engagement, and safe learning spaces. Diversity of learners requires differentiated instruction, cultural responsiveness, and inclusive practices. Curriculum and planning require alignment of competencies, learning objectives, activities, and assessment. Assessment and reporting require valid tools, interpretation of results, and constructive feedback. Community linkages and professional engagement require collaboration with parents, stakeholders, and colleagues. Personal growth and professional development require reflective practice and continuous learning. Thus, teaching challenges are multidimensional and cannot be reduced to content preparation alone.

Recent teacher education and professional development discussions also emphasize that teaching quality is strengthened through structured induction, mentoring, and learning communities. The OECD's TALIS 2018 report showed that teachers benefit from collaborative professional learning and support systems that connect classroom practice with continuing development (OECD, 2019). UNESCO has similarly underscored that inclusive and

equitable education requires teachers who are prepared to respond to diverse learners, use appropriate pedagogies, and operate within supportive school systems (UNESCO, 2020). These ideas are directly relevant to non-education graduate SHS teachers because their needs are not limited to content review but include classroom-based professional formation.

Assessment literacy is another important strand in the literature. Teachers need to design valid assessments, interpret learner evidence, and use results to improve instruction. DeLuca, LaPointe-McEwan, and Luhanga (2016) emphasized that assessment literacy is shaped by standards, measures, and classroom use. For non-education graduates, assessment and reporting may be difficult because formal exposure to formative assessment, rubrics, item analysis, and feedback mechanisms may be limited. Such gaps can affect both the accuracy of learner evaluation and the teacher's ability to adjust instruction based on evidence.

Synthesizing the literature, the current study is positioned at the intersection of teacher professional standards, PCK, and localized SHS staffing realities. While national policies permit qualified non-education graduates to teach in Senior High School, professional support must ensure that these teachers acquire pedagogical competence. The present study contributes localized evidence by identifying which PPST domains are moderately challenging and which profile variables are associated with differences in challenge levels in the CLABAGIPLA District.

3. Methodology

The study used a descriptive quantitative research design with a survey method. This design was appropriate because the study sought to describe the profile of non-education graduate teachers, measure their perceived level of teaching challenges across the PPST Key Result Areas, and determine whether significant differences existed when respondents were grouped according to profile variables. The approach enabled the researcher to collect numerical data and analyze patterns of difficulty across the seven professional domains.

The study was conducted in the CLABAGIPLA District, composed of the municipalities of Claver, Bacuag, Gigaquit, and Placer in the Division of Surigao del Norte. The respondents were 120 non-education graduate teachers teaching Senior High School. Complete enumeration was used because the target group was limited and identifiable within the district. The distribution included 46 respondents from Claver, 22 from Bacuag, 14 from Gigaquit, and 38 from Placer.

The research instrument was a researcher-developed questionnaire based on the seven PPST Key Result Areas. Part I gathered profile information, including age, sex, civil status, school district, baccalaureate degree, highest educational attainment, length of service, teaching position, SHS track taught, and TESDA National Certificate. Part II measured teaching challenges across content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment, diversity of learners, curriculum and planning, assessment and reporting, community linkages and professional engagement, and personal growth and professional development. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale with the following interpretation: 3.25-4.00, high level of challenge; 2.50-3.24, moderate level of challenge; 1.75-2.49, low level of challenge; and 1.00-1.74, no challenge.

The instrument was validated by education experts and pre-tested among non-education graduate teachers who were not part of the final sample. Cronbach's alpha was computed using IBM SPSS, yielding an alpha coefficient of 0.91, which indicated strong internal consistency. Data gathering was conducted after securing permission from the Schools Division Superintendent and the heads of participating schools. The researcher personally administered and retrieved the questionnaires. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw.

Frequency count and percentage were used to describe the profile of respondents. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to describe the level of teaching challenges across the seven KRAs. Because the Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that the data were not normally distributed, nonparametric tests were used. The Mann-Whitney U

test was applied for profile variables with two groups, while the Kruskal-Wallis H test was used for variables with more than two groups. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Profile variable	Result
Age	25-30 years old: 37 (30.8%); 31-40 years old: 68 (56.7%); 41-50 years old: 15 (12.5%)
Sex	Male: 44 (36.7%); Female: 76 (63.3%)
Civil status	Single: 63 (52.5%); Married: 57 (47.5%)
School district	Claver: 46 (38.3%); Bacuag: 22 (18.3%); Gigaquit: 14 (11.7%); Placer: 38 (31.7%)
Baccalaureate degree	Business and Management: 35 (29.2%); Engineering and Technology: 28 (23.3%); IT/Computer Science: 23 (19.2%); Social Sciences: 12 (10.0%); Arts and Humanities: 9 (7.5%); Natural Sciences: 7 (5.8%); Health Sciences: 6 (5.0%)
Highest educational attainment	Bachelor's Degree: 84 (70.0%); Master's Degree: 36 (30.0%)
Length of service	0-3 years: 53 (44.2%); 4-10 years: 67 (55.8%)
Teaching position	Teacher I: 30 (25.0%); Teacher II: 84 (70.0%); Teacher III: 6 (5.0%)
SHS track taught	Academic: 80 (66.7%); TVL: 40 (33.3%)
TESDA National Certification	NC I: 71 (59.2%); NC II: 25 (20.8%); Trainers Methodology Certificate: 24 (20.0%)

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Table 1 shows that the respondents were predominantly female, mostly aged 31-40 years, and largely single. Most respondents came from Claver and Placer, while the largest baccalaureate-degree groups were Business and Management, Engineering and Technology, and IT/Computer Science. Most were bachelor's degree holders, Teacher II, and had 4-10 years of service. The profile indicates that the respondents were early- to mid-career teachers with diverse non-education backgrounds, which is relevant because their teaching challenges may arise from the transition between disciplinary expertise and pedagogical practice.

Table 2. Summary of Teaching Challenges Across PPST Key Result Areas

Domain	Mean	Interpretation	Key implication
Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	2.69	Moderately Challenging	Lowest domain mean: notable issues include ICT integration and use of research-based pedagogy.
Learning Environment	2.85	Moderately Challenging	Highest domain mean: concerns include classroom structure, learner engagement, and safe learning spaces.
Diversity of Learners	2.79	Moderately Challenging	Challenges include differentiated instruction and support for learners with varied needs.
Curriculum and Planning	2.80	Moderately Challenging	Moderate difficulty in aligning lessons, competencies, materials, and learning plans.
Assessment and Reporting	2.77	Moderately Challenging	Concerns include use of assessment data, assessment design, and reporting tasks.
Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	2.85	Moderately Challenging	Highest domain mean: challenges involve collaboration, stakeholder linkages, and professional networking.
Personal Growth and Professional Development	2.79	Moderately Challenging	Moderate concern in continuing professional learning and collaboration.
Overall	2.79	Moderately Challenging	Challenges are present across all domains but are not severe.

Table 2 indicates that non-education graduate teachers experienced moderate teaching challenges across all seven KRAs. Content knowledge and pedagogy recorded the lowest mean ($M = 2.69$), but it remains a meaningful concern because it refers to the core process of transforming content expertise into teachable knowledge. Learning environment and community linkages and professional engagement recorded the highest means ($M = 2.85$), suggesting that classroom management, learner engagement, stakeholder linkages, and professional participation require structured support. The overall mean ($M = 2.79$) confirms that these teachers are able to perform their duties but continue to need pedagogical, assessment, and professional development support.

Table 3. Summary of Significant Difference Tests by Profile Variables

Profile variable	Affected domain	Result	Decision
Age	Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	Significant	Reject H0 for this domain
Age	Personal Growth and Professional Development	Significant	Reject H0 for this domain
Civil status	Assessment and Reporting	Significant	Reject H0 for this domain
Sex, school district, baccalaureate degree, highest educational attainment, length of service, teaching position, SHS track taught, TESDA certification	Most KRA domains	Not significant	Fail to reject H0 for most comparisons

Table 3 shows that most profile variables did not significantly differentiate the teaching challenges of respondents. This suggests that the difficulties are largely common among non-education graduate teachers and may be systemic rather than purely individual. However, age significantly differentiated challenges in community linkages and professional engagement and personal growth and professional development. Civil status also significantly differentiated assessment and reporting. These findings suggest that professional maturity, life circumstances, and available time may shape specific teaching responsibilities even when the broader challenge pattern remains similar.

Table 4. Proposed Professional Development Program Components

Program component	Focus	Expected output
Pedagogical conversion	Foundations of teaching, PCK, lesson delivery, and SHS curriculum alignment	Non-education SHS teachers gain basic teacher-preparation competencies.
Classroom and learning environment	Positive discipline, inclusive spaces, classroom routines, and child protection	Teachers establish structured and supportive learning environments.
Instruction and differentiation	Lesson planning, scaffolding, micro-teaching, ICT integration, and differentiated instruction	Teachers improve learner-centered instructional practice.
Assessment and reporting	Rubrics, test construction, item analysis, performance assessment, and feedback	Teachers strengthen assessment literacy and reporting quality.
Professional engagement and capstone	Peer coaching, portfolio building, and professional learning communities	Teachers sustain professional growth and collaborative practice.

Table 4 presents a proposed professional development response to the findings. Since the challenges are moderate but distributed across all PPST domains, the intervention should not be limited to one seminar. It should be implemented as a sustained professional development program combining foundations of pedagogy, classroom management, inclusive instruction, assessment literacy, mentoring, and professional learning communities. This structure is consistent with the need to support non-education graduate teachers as they develop from content specialists into pedagogically competent SHS teachers.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that non-education graduate teachers in the CLABAGIPLA District experience moderate teaching challenges across all seven PPST Key Result Areas. The results confirm that content expertise alone is insufficient for effective Senior High School teaching because classroom instruction also requires pedagogical transformation, learner differentiation, curriculum alignment, assessment literacy, stakeholder engagement, and sustained professional growth. Since most profile variables did not significantly differentiate challenge levels, the difficulties appear to be systemic and rooted in the transition from non-education preparation to classroom teaching. However, significant differences by age and civil status in selected domains suggest that professional maturity and personal circumstances influence certain teaching responsibilities. Overall, the study affirms the need for structured pedagogical conversion and institutional support for non-education graduate teachers.

It is recommended that the Department of Education, school heads, and district leaders implement a sustained professional development program for non-education graduate Senior High School teachers. The program should prioritize pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management, differentiated instruction, curriculum planning, assessment literacy, and community engagement. School heads should establish mentoring and coaching systems that pair non-education graduate teachers with experienced educators or master teachers. Assessment and reporting support should be strengthened through workshops on test construction, rubrics, item analysis, feedback, and learner progress reporting. Professional learning communities should be institutionalized to reduce isolation, promote peer learning, and support reflective practice. Future studies may include training history, licensure status, classroom observation data, learner performance indicators, and qualitative interviews to produce a deeper understanding of how non-education graduate teachers develop professional competence over time.

Declarations

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CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

Charlotte P. Gerida: conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data collection, formal analysis, writing - original draft, and project administration. Manuel B. Dayondon: supervision, validation, technical review, and writing - review and editing.

Ethical Statement

The study obtained the necessary permissions from the Schools Division Superintendent and participating school heads. Respondents were informed of the study purpose, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and their right to withdraw. Data were reported in aggregate form.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare no competing financial, personal, institutional, or professional interests that may have influenced the conduct or findings of the study.

Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings of this study are available from the authors upon reasonable request, subject to approval of concerned school authorities and applicable data privacy requirements.

AI Usage Disclosure

AI-assisted tools were used for language refinement, organization, and formatting support. The authors reviewed, verified, and approved the final manuscript and remain responsible for the accuracy and integrity of the content.



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