

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL

Vol 27 No 2 May - August 2026



Quality Certified by TCI
January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025



ASEAN
CITATION
INDEX

Index 2020-2024



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CSDJ

ISSN 3027-7493 (Online) ISSN 3027-7485 (Print)

Community and Social Development Journal : CSDJ

Vol 27 No 2 May – August 2026

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<https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/cmruresearch/index>
ISSN 3027 - 7493 (Online)
ISSN 3027 - 7485 (Print)

This journal has been certified by the Thai Journal Citation Index Center Group 1 (TCI 1)

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Principals' Leadership Styles and Teacher Retention in Secondary Schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria: A Mixed-Methods Study

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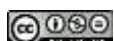
(Received: 21 February 2026, Revised: 14 March 2026, Accepted: 17 March 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.287346>

Abstract

Teacher retention remains a major challenge in secondary schools in Nigeria. This study investigated the influence of principals' leadership styles on teacher retention in public secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. A mixed-methods research design combining descriptive survey and qualitative interviews was adopted. Data were collected from 420 participants (20 principals and 400 teachers) selected from 20 secondary schools across five Local Government Areas using a multi-stage sampling technique involving purposive, stratified, and simple random sampling. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and one-way ANOVA with SPSS. Results indicated that transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.462$) was the strongest predictor of teacher retention, followed by democratic leadership ($\beta = 0.298$) and transactional leadership ($\beta = 0.149$), while autocratic leadership negatively predicted retention ($\beta = -0.241$). Leadership styles explained 62.7% of the variance in teacher retention ($R^2 = 0.627$). Qualitative findings further highlighted communication, administrative support, fairness, and professional development as key factors influencing teacher retention. The study concludes that transformational and democratic leadership practices significantly enhance teacher retention in Nigerian secondary schools.

Keywords: Leadership styles, Teacher retention, Transformational leadership, Secondary schools, Nigeria



Introduction

Organizational happiness is one of the key factors that plays important role in the success or otherwise of an organization. It is not out of place then to conclude that organizational happiness in a school setting with teacher's performance plays a mediating role in the success of the school (Bahat & Isik, 2023). The organizational happiness among others affects and determines individual teacher's development, as his/her tendency to comply with the internal norms, develop his/her skills and act in harmony with the standards set for the personnel of the school strongly depend on it. As such, most teachers expect an emotionally pleasing, beautiful and happy environment at school, being their place of work for their maximum performance. Organizational happiness refers to how employees feel psychologically and emotionally at their workplace. Mental well-being is important for teachers. It refers to the support, recognition, personal growth and leadership they receive in schools. Supportive leadership practices assure the satisfaction and retention of employees. According to the positive organizational behavior theory. The individual teacher who is happy at school, resulting probably from the positive school environment created by the principal's good leadership styles and positive interactions with other personnel in the school, is more likely to wish to stay in such school. It should be noted that the feelings and thoughts that one gathers around certain purpose in the school is very important to ones psyche and motivation. These are keys to teacher's retention at school. Therefore, the energy and leadership styles of school principals are very important in the bid to positively affect the emotions and interests of every individual in a school setting (teaching and non-teaching staff), but more importantly, those of teachers teaching in the school (Demir & Zincirli, 2021).

Effective school leaders try as much as possible to activate teachers to achieve the institutional goals of the school. They also try as much as possible to maintain positive teaching and learning environments (Olabode, 2024). School principals can best achieve these hard tasks by giving due considerations to the roles and expectations of both teachers and other members of staff. It must be noted however that only school principals and teachers that work together in all aspects of their schools will be able to achieve the expected success in the education process and encourage teachers' retention in their schools.

Teachers' motivation and retention are critical factors in determining the quality of education in Nigerian secondary schools today and in the nearest future. When a substantial number of teachers leave a school in quick succession, it disrupts the school's operations and creates chaotic environment for students. It also disrupts continuity in the school that is more likely to affect school's academic progress and students' emotional well-being. Teachers who are well motivated are more likely to prefer staying in the school, while teacher who are demotivated are not likely to invest the required energy and enthusiasm for school success. Therefore, schools with principals that encourage low motivation are likely to experience decline in their educational standard as teachers are more likely to leave very often with any opportunity that is open to them.

Turnover is the migration of teachers from one school to another, while attrition is the number of teachers leaving the teaching profession for an envisaged better profession. According to Olabode (2024), more than 250,000 teachers in Nigeria leave each year for another better school, 16% of who retire and 84% of who change to other profession or experience voluntary or involuntary professional attrition. As communities grow, schools across Nigeria struggle to keep quality teachers in their schools for better results. The fact remains that it is not unusual for skilled and experienced teachers to seek teaching positions at schools with higher-achieving students, fewer minority students, fewer disciplinary problems, and higher-income students or change to another profession outside teaching totally. Such

schools are also typically safer that present better job security and sometimes better remuneration. The task of attracting and retaining qualified teachers in schools is a solution to the loss of good hands in schools for a better result. The role of secondary school principals come to play in the retention of teachers in their schools for better results in terms of the tone of the school and students' academic performance (See et al., 2020).

Experience matters on the issue of teachers' retention. This is because when experienced teachers leave, they take their wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience to their new schools, positions or profession. Most times, they often move to post-secondary educational institutions, business, or other professions outside teaching (Ameh et al., 2024). Found that first-year teachers are not as successful in the classroom as more experienced teachers, and most vacant teaching positions are typically earmarked for first-year teachers. This is because, the more experience a teacher is, the higher his/her salary and other remuneration, all other things been equal. Quality leadership styles performed by a principal are regarded as the most important tool for achieving and determining the excellence and success of a school. Schools need principals with good leadership characteristics to play active role in piloting the school towards excellence. It has been found that getting the job done, as well required good leadership, proper management of the available resources (human and materials).

Leadership in the secondary school setting like other organisations implies that actions and interactions with persons and things in the bid to attain a specific objective. It involves the ability to plan, control, direct and coordinate the activities of the school which involves both human and materials resources for the achievement of the goals of such school. It is the functional behaviour of the leader in relation with his/her subordinates to facilitate the accomplishment of group goals. One resultant consequence of a principal's exhibition of good leadership is the willingness of the subordinates to carry out his/her command and assignments to the letter without hesitation and their willingness to stay.

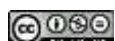
Although a lot has been learned in the area of educational leadership and teacher retention across the globe, not too much empirical studies have examined how leadership styles collectively impact on teacher retention in Nigerian secondary schools. This will be more effective in urban settings as Ibadan Metropolis, in particular, to have a first simulation of the process. It has been observed that most previous studies have focused on either a single leadership model or teacher motivation. Therefore, there is limited understanding of how multiple leadership styles can impact teacher retention. This is especially true in developing education systems, which require improving teacher retention in schools and colleges.

Even though educational leadership is receiving increasing research attention, relatively few empirical studies have explored the relationship between specific leadership styles and the retention of teachers in Nigerian secondary schools, particularly in the urban educational context of Ibadan Metropolis. There is a serious problem of teacher turnover in Nigeria. In this light, it is important to examine how principals' leadership behaviors affect teachers' commitment and intention to stay in the system.

Research Aim and Objectives

Research Aim

The aim of this research is to examine the connection between principals' leadership styles and teachers' retention in some selected public secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis.



Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are to:

1. Identify the dominant leadership styles practiced by secondary school principals.
2. Examine the relationship between principals' leadership styles and teacher retention.
3. Determine the predictive influence of different leadership styles on teacher retention.
4. Examine differences in teacher retention across leadership style categories.

Research Hypotheses

- H₀₁: Autocratic leadership has no significant relationship with teacher retention in secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria.
- H₀₂: Democratic leadership has no significant relationship with teacher retention in secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria.
- H₀₃: Transformational leadership has no significant relationship with teacher retention in secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria.
- H₀₄: Transactional leadership has no significant relationship with teacher retention in secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria.
- H₀₅: There is no significant difference in teacher retention across different leadership styles in secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The present study has been framed through Transformational Leadership Theory of Bass (1985), Organizational Commitment Theory of Meyer and Allen (1997) and Job-Satisfaction Theory. Transformational leadership emphasizes motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. It motivates teachers to perform better in the education sector. Organizational Commitment Theory indicates that strong emotional ties and supportive leaders make it more likely that employees will remain with an organization. The leadership styles of principals in schools would influence the professional motivation of teachers, working environment, organizational commitment, and retention of teachers.

Factors that Affect or Determine Teacher Retention

Teaching is considered a profession that is emotionally taxing and potentially frustrating except for a motivating environment that may encourage the individual to operate at one's maximum capacity (Cheng, 1991). This group of professionals is an essential part of any nation's future as they are responsible for preparing future individuals that will be responsible for directing each aspect of a nation's life. To teach at any level of the nation's educational institution, requires motivation, commitment, and emotional attachment. This interaction has a central role in the programme of teacher education and continuing professional development in all phases of teachers' lives.

Studies revealed that many factors influence such as teacher motivation, principal's leadership skills, teacher preparation, remuneration, working conditions, and demographic characteristics influence teacher retention.

Teacher motivation: Teacher motivation is fundamental to teaching and the learning process; however, teachers are not motivated in the same way (Han & Yin, 2016). Teacher motivation serves as one of the most fundamental concepts in school improvement. Whereas, Bennell (2023) argued teacher motivation is a compilation of all the psychological processes that influenced their behaviour toward the achievement of educational goals, and these psychological processes cannot be because of environmental challenges and organisational constraints that affect the achievement of educational goals. Among the identified motivators

of teachers are: desire to work with students; desire to make a difference; teaching as a “calling;” a love of teaching or a particular subject; the influence of others, a desire to impart knowledge; perceived benefits and/or convenience of teaching, teacher work schedule; career security and salary; perceived ease of teaching; and social status that comes along with teaching (McInerney & Putwain, 2017).

Teacher preparation: The role of teacher preparation programmes on teacher retention cannot be overemphasized. Teachers that are beginning their careers report a disconnection between their post-secondary coursework and actual teaching in the classroom. Kaufmann (2023) found out that the majority of undergraduate teaching programmes do not directly offer classes that educate teachers in-training on the skills of classroom management, problem-solving in the classroom, and collaboration between teachers and principals that are useful for their operation at school. Mendes et al. (2022) thus asserted that it is in teaching programmes that most of the pre-service teachers are taught what are not directly relevant to their needs. And so, not providing teachers with the hands-on teaching experience they need in the classroom. Darling-Hammond et al. (2002) found teachers that feel well prepared for teaching are much more likely to plan to stay in teaching than those who feel that are poorly prepared.

Remuneration: Compensation and other incentives are factors that motivate and influence teacher retention. Compensation and incentives in terms of their salaries and allowances. In Nigeria, teachers’ salaries and allowances are nothing to write home about. Therefore, many who found themselves in teaching, most times regard teaching as a stepping stone for sourcing other better offers or assumed better profession. Either at home or abroad, they are therefore fond of pulling out as soon as they have the opportunity of doing so. Those with higher qualifications, often move to post-secondary institutions or other field of human endeavors where better remuneration awaits them. Agboola & Offong (2018) concludes that teachers’ salaries have been declining since the 1990s compared to those of other professions as according to him, the devaluation of the Nigerian currency no longer make most teachers’ salary to be able to support their living a meaningful life. Many a just managing to survive.

Working conditions: Teachers working conditions do play a significant role in attracting, developing, and retaining effective teachers. Professional working conditions that allow teachers to be effective are essential and critical to teachers’ decisions whether to stay in a school or even in the profession or not. This to a large extent depends on the principal’s support, strong co-workers, and opportunities to participate in decision making process (Adelodun & Abbas, 2024). Such working conditions include the physical features of the workplace, the organisational structure, and the sociological, political and psychological and educational features for their working environment among others.

Principal’s support is essential as regards teacher working conditions. In studies conducted separately by Darling-Hammond (1997) and Ingersoll (2001) on teachers’ retention, teachers’ beliefs about their principals’ support, resources made available for teaching, and teacher input into decision making strongly influenced their decision to leave the school or the profession or not.

Demographic Characteristics: Dissatisfaction with the job, starting a family, or retirement all combine to affect and determine teacher attrition. Many studies have revealed teacher’s characteristics such as age, gender, race, or ethnicity as important factors that affect and determine individual teacher’s decision to enter teaching and to remain in the profession for a long time (Dursun et al., 2022).

Role of Principals in Teachers' Retention

The principal is an important person in creating an ideal school. His/her leadership, managerial knowledge and skills are of the highest importance for the school's educational development, and they play a significant role in the overall success of the school. Teachers who are dissatisfied with their work exhibit lower commitments and are at a higher risk of leaving the school and or the profession. Principals' leadership that is supportive creates an environment that is appealing and lessen job stress of the teachers in the school (Eyal & Roth, 2011).

Mentoring and Principal Support

Giving support is a way of retaining new teachers and reducing their feeling of isolation since new teachers need to feel they are a part of the school community (Victor et al., 2025). Strong and effective leadership can and will improve school culture and teacher engagement, instill an elevated level of teacher motivation and inspiration, and so, enhance teacher retention. Principal support is especially crucial for new teachers, who need regular constructive feedback to confirm how they are faring in terms of their classroom interactions.

Research on Principal Leadership Styles

Every leader, including school principals, in every organisation performs certain roles or tasks for the smooth operation of the organisation and monumental improvement of the organisational performance. Management style refers to the manner in which the leader performs the roles and directs the affairs of the organisation. Leadership's management styles has to do with the ways a leader leads. While some leaders are more interested in the work to be done than in the people that do the work, others pay special attention to their relationship with their subordinates than the job. Principal's leadership effort should be directed at influencing, encouraging, guiding and directing teachers, other non-teaching staff, students, parents, and related individuals to work together to achieve the set-out goals. The principal as a leader should realise the fact that the success or otherwise of the school life for which they are responsible is very much determined by their leadership behaviors.

Methodology

Research Design

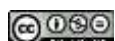
The study utilized the mixed methods design, made up of descriptive survey design complemented by qualitative case studies. This approach enabled the exploration of patterns and relationships between principals' leadership styles, and teachers' retention in secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised of principals and teachers of public secondary schools in the Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria.

Sample

The total number of participants sampled for the study was 420, made up 20 principals and 400 teachers of secondary schools from the twenty sampled schools. Four schools each were sampled from each of the five local government areas in the metropolis, making a total of twenty schools in all. And twenty teachers from each of the sampled schools, alongside each of the sampled secondary school's principal were involved in the study. The study involved a multi stage sampling technique that combined purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Four principals and a teacher each from each of the secondary school involved in the study, making a total of twenty-four were involved in oral interview to provide qualitative data to further establish the result of the quantitative data sourced through the questionnaire.



Instruments for Data Collection

Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was developed to source quantitative data. The questionnaire was titled, “Principals’ Leadership Styles and Teachers’ Retention Questionnaire” (PLSTRQ). The questionnaire has three different sections:

- Section A: Demographic Data (e.g., gender, designation, years of experience).
- Section B: Principals’ Leadership Styles (4-point Likert scale).
- Section C: Principals’ Leadership styles and Teachers’ Retention.

The questionnaire was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation with pilot test involving 15 respondents, made up of five principals and ten teachers in secondary schools that were not part of the study area to ensure its reliability. The result revealed a co efficient of 0.87. Its validity was confirmed using split half method.

Semi-Structured Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted on twenty-four participants, made up of four principals and twenty teachers to capture the qualitative data on the impact of principals’ leadership styles.

Administration of Instruments

1. Questionnaires were distributed and collected over a two-week period.
2. Interviews were conducted in person, one-on-one basis and recorded with participants’ consent. Each session lasted between 20 to 40 minutes.

Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability of the research instrument refers to the extent to which the instrument consistently measures the construct which it is intended to measure. A pilot study was conducted prior to the actual data collection in order to establish the reliability of the Principals’ Leadership Styles and Teachers’ Retention Questionnaire PLSTRQ in the study. A pilot test was conducted involving 15 respondents comprised of 5 principals and 10 teachers of a public secondary school outside the studied area. This process was undertaken to ensure that the participants in the pilot study had the same characteristics as the participants in the actual study, while preventing contamination of the final sample.

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by means of Cronbach’s Alpha. This is one of the appropriate measures for assessing the reliability of Likert-type instruments. The reliability coefficient of the analysis is 0.87, showing that there is a high level of agreement between the items. As established by the researched standards Cronbach’s Alpha of above 0.70 is acceptable for social science and above 0.80 is strong. The high reliability coefficient obtained implies that the items measuring principals’ leadership styles and teacher retention in the questionnaire are consistent. Thus, it was deemed that the instrument was reliable enough to be used in the main study to collect data.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity defines whether a study instrument measures what it is intended to measure or not. The content and face validity procedures were used to establish the validity of the PLSTRQ. In view of this, the first draft of the questionnaire was submitted to experts in educational administration, measurement and evaluation, and research methodology for their examination.

The professionals assessed the instrument to find out whether the items were relevant, clear, and suitable for measuring the constructs of principals’ leadership styles and teacher retention. The researchers additionally scrutinised the phrasing, structure and content coverage of the questionnaire items to ensure these reflected the study objectives. According to their

suggestions necessary corrections were made in this regard to enhance the clarity, relevancy and comprehensiveness of the instrument.

Through expert review, the instrument is ascertained as having adequate content validity since the experts judged the items to be representative of the dimensions of leadership styles and teacher retention. The questionnaires were validated by experts in the field of Educational Technology.

Measurement Scale

The four-point Likert scale was used to measure the constructs of principals' leadership styles and teacher retention as it enabled the respondents to indicate their agreement or otherwise on the statements designed in the questionnaire which were used for the study. The instrument was designed to collect the perceptions and experiences of teachers and principals regarding leadership practices and their impact on teacher retention in the school.

The options for responses were rated as: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree and 4= Strongly Agree. This scaling technique was adopted to encourage the respondents to opt for clear choices and eliminate the neutral mid-point well. The educational and social sciences research frequently employs the Likert scale format that provides a consistent method for quantifying attitudes, perceptions and behavioral tendencies. The use of numerical values for each category of response enabled statistical analysis (descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple regression and ANOVA) of the relationship between leadership styles and teacher retention.

Statistical Assumptions Testing

Before the execution of the inferential statistics analysis, several statistical assumptions were evaluated to ensure the efficacy of the analysis. Pearson correlation, multiple regression analysis, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) rest upon such assumptions. In order to apply these parametric statistical procedures, it is important to check that the data meet certain assumptions.

Initially, analysis of normality was done through skewness and kurtosis of data as well as visualization through histogram and normal probability plot. The outcomes showed that the data were fairly normal because besides the skewness and kurtosis values falling within acceptable range, the histogram plots were also reasonably symmetrical.

The regression model was examined for multicollinearity with the help of VIF or variance inflation factor and tolerance value. When predictor variables have high correlations with each other, it leads to multicollinearity. The VIF values were less than 10 and the tolerance values were more than 0.10. Therefore, it was concluded that multicollinearity was not an issue.

To test the assumption of homoscedasticity residuals plots as obtained from the regression analysis were standardized. The residuals scatter was randomly and equally distributed around the zero-line indicating that variance of residuals is constant at each level of explanatory variables.

Further assumptions were tested for the ANOVA test. To find out that the dependent variable was normally distributed in each group the residuals were checked for normality. Additionally, Levene's Test was used to test the homogeneity of variances. The results showed that the variances across groups were statistically homogeneous. If ANOVA shows significant difference, then Tukey's HSD post-hoc test was used to identify the groups in which significant difference occurred. The techniques applied ensured that the study's statistical analyses were sound and reliable.

Data Analysis

1. Quantitative Data Analysis:

1.1 Data from questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

1.2 Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, percentage) were used to summarize the responses of the respondents.

1.3 Inferential statistics (e.g., ANOVA, correlation) were employed to examine relationships between principals' leadership styles on teachers' retention.

2. Qualitative Data Analysis:

2.1 Interview transcripts were content analyzed.

Sampling Techniques

In the study, multi-stage sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate representation of the studied population. In the first stage purposive sampling was used to determine that Ibadan Metropolis will be the area for the study because it represents a major urban educational center in Oyo State where there are public secondary schools of high concentration and teaching personnel.

The second stage of the sampling involved stratified sampling to categorize public secondary schools based on the five Local Government Areas of Ibadan Metropolis. This stratification was done to ensure adequate representation of all administrative areas in the study.

For the purpose of the third stage, simple random sampling was used to pick four schools from each Local Government Area which amounted to a total of twenty (20) secondary schools.

In the fourth phase of data collection, 20 teachers were randomly drawn from each of the sampled schools giving a total of 400 teachers while all the school principals (20) of the sampled schools were enlisted for the study. This sampling method ensured sufficient representation of administrative and teaching perspectives in the data collected for the study.

Mathematical Model Employed

Model 1: Multiple Linear Regression Model

This model captures the predictive relationship between leadership styles and teacher retention.

General Form

$$TR_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 AL_i + \beta_2 DL_i + \beta_3 TL_i + \beta_4 TSL_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

Where:

TR_i = Teacher Retention score of respondents i

AL_i = Autocratic Leadership score

DL_i = Democratic Leadership score

TL_i = Transformational Leadership score

TSL_i = Transactional Leadership score

β_0 = Intercept

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = Regression coefficients

ε_i = Error term

Interpretation

$\beta_3 > 0$ indicates transformational leadership increases retention.

$\beta_1 < 0$ indicates autocratic leadership reduces retention.

Model fitness is assessed using:

$$R^2 = \frac{SSR}{SST} \quad (2)$$

Where: SSR = Regression Sum of Squares

SST = Total Sum of Squares



Model 2: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Model

This model supports the examination of linear relationships between leadership styles and retention.

$$r_{XY} = \frac{\sum(X_i - \bar{X})(Y_i - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum(X_i - \bar{X})^2 \sum(Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}} \quad (3)$$

Where:

r_{XY} = Correlation coefficient between leadership style (X) and retention (Y)
 X_i = Leadership score of respondents i
 Y_i = Retention score
 $\bar{X}, \bar{Y}$ = Means

Statistical Significance

$$t = \frac{r\sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}} \quad (4)$$

With:

$$df = n - 2$$

This validates the strength and direction of association used in your inferential analysis.

Model 3: One-Way ANOVA Model

This model evaluates differences in teacher retention across leadership style groups.

ANOVA Structural Equation

$$Y_{ij} = \mu + \tau_j + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (5)$$

Where:

Y_{ij} = Retention score of teachers i under leadership type j
 μ = Grand mean
 τ_j = Effect of leadership style group j
 ε_{ij} = Random error

F-Statistic

$$F = \frac{MS_{between}}{MS_{within}} \quad (6)$$

Where:

$$MS_{between} = \frac{SS_{between}}{df_{between}} \quad (7)$$

$$MS_{within} = \frac{SS_{within}}{df_{within}} \quad (8)$$

Decision rule:

If $F_{calculated} > F_{critical}$, reject H_0

Indicates significant differences in retention across leadership types.

Results**What are the common leadership styles adopted by secondary school principals in the Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria?**

This research question seeks to find out the different forms of leadership styles adopted by secondary school principals in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria. This question was analysed with frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation.

Table 1 Responses of Teachers to Principals' Leadership Styles (n = 400)

S/N	Item	SA%	A%	D%	SD %	Mean	SD
1.	He/she is a boss that does not give teachers much say in his/her management of the school	287 (63.80)	100 (22.20)	52 (11.60)	11 (2.40)	3.47	0.53
2.	He/she delegates duties	134 (29.80)	122 (27.10)	129 (28.70)	65 (14.40)	2.72	0.49
3.	He/ she allows teacher great participation in decision making	205 (45.60)	170 (37.80)	49 (10.90)	26 (5.80)	3.23	0.75
4.	He/she allows others to involved in the management of school affairs	186 (41.30)	168 (37.30)	66 (14.70)	30 (6.70)	3.13	0.67
5.	He/she is highly accountable for financial and non-financial transactions	211 (46.90)	93 (20.70)	88 (19.60)	58 (12.90)	3.02	0.83
6.	He/she relates well with both the teachers and students	194 (42.90)	161 (35.80)	64 (14.20)	28 (6.20)	2.51	0.51
7.	Creates good environment for teaching and learning	182 (27.50)	179 (39.80)	52 (11.60)	43 (9.60)	2.54	0.50
8.	Runs an open door policy for both teachers and students	188 (40.40)	168 (37.30)	60 (13.30)	29 (6.40)	2.19	0.43
9.	Do not allow some teachers to be closer to him/her than others	222 (49.30)	150 (33.30)	40 (8.90)	20 (4.40)	2.76	0.70
10.	He/she has a good sense of judgement	198 (44.00)	155 (34.40)	62 (13.80)	40 (8.90)	2.82	0.90
11.	Allows for meeting from time to time, both formal and informal	176 (39.10)	139 (30.90)	69 (15.30)	50 (11.10)	2.43	0.50
12.	Make judicious use of today's communication to pass information to teachers (using the school's WhatsApp group	192 (42.70)	108 (24.00)	89 (19.80)	30 (6.70)	2.39	0.49
13.	Allows both top down and down top modes of communication	94 (20.90)	161 (35.80)	126 (28.00)	122 (27.10)	2.18	0.61
14.	Encourages teachers' professional development through internal and external programmes	84 (18.70)	92 (20.40)	159 (35.30)	115 (25.60)	2.23	0.53
15.	Encourages maximum personal development of his/her teachers	127 (28.20)	109 (24.20)	118 (26.30)	96 (21.30)	2.45	0.63
16.	Direct the affairs of the school well to promote maximum cooperation	146 (32.40)	104 (23.10)	162 (36.00)	38 (8.50)	2.44	0.37
17.	Gives free hand to teachers to direct the affairs of their classes	200 (44.40)	107 (23.80)	81 (18.10)	62 (13.80)	2.51	0.57
18.	Provides relevant instructional resources to encourage teacher maximum performance	155 (34.40)	124 (27.60)	91 (20.20)	80 (17.80)	2.75	0.55
19.	Gives room for inter school collaboration to encourage students' learning	54 (12.00)	68 (15.10)	223 (49.60)	105 (23.30)	3.27	0.67
20.	Develop overall interest in the all-round development of the school – academic, moral and in social skills.	89 (19.80)	95 (21.10)	165 (36.70)	101 (22.40)	2.34	0.47
Weighted Average		2.67	Threshold	2.50			

Table 1a. Indicates that teachers were of the opinion that secondary school principals involved the different types of leadership traits as they interact with their teachers, other members of staff and students. And that sometimes they co mixed the major identified the different types of leadership styles in order to successfully administer their different schools. Item 1, that principal acted as boss had the highest positive response of 287 (63.80%) and 100 (22.20%) strongly and agree responses, alongside 52 (11.60%) and 11 (2.40%) disagree and strongly disagree responses respectively, and with a high mean score of 3.47. In all, the table has a weighted average of 2.67, that was above 2.50 that is the threshold indicating that the respondents supported secondary school principals' exhibition of different leadership schemes



What are the impact of principals' Leadership Styles on Teacher Retention in Secondary Schools in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria?

This research question seeks to establish the probable impact of principals' leadership/management and administrative styles on teacher motivation and retention in secondary school students in Oyo state. This question was analysed with frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation.

Table 2 Principal and Teachers' Response to the Impact of Principals' Leadership Styles on Teacher Retention (n = 420)

S/N	Item	SA%	A%	D%	SD%	Mean	S.D.
1.	He/she is trust worthy	140 (33.40)	130 (30.90)	100 (23.80)	50 (11.90)	3.60	0.53
2.	Involves effective communication	200 (47.60)	120 (28.60)	80 (19.00)	20 (4.80)	3.00	0.65
3.	Fair in his/her dealings with teachers	190 (45.20)	100 (23.80)	90 (21.40)	40 (9.60)	3.24	0.55
4.	Delegates duties to teachers	150 (35.80)	130 (30.90)	110 (26.20)	30 (7.10)	2.76	0.57
5.	Monitors and adequately supervises all duties delegated	160 (38.10)	120 (28.60)	80 (19.00)	60 (14.30)	2.67	0.60
6.	Serves as good role model in the teaching profession	170 (40.50)	110 (26.20)	90 (21.40)	50 (11.90)	3.51	0.51
7.	Leads by his/her good examples	140 (33.30)	140 (33.30)	100 (23.80)	40 (9.60)	2.54	0.50
8.	Sets high expectations for his/her teachers	110 (26.20)	140 (33.30)	100 (23.80)	70 (16.70)	3.19	0.43
9.	Encourages and motivates teachers towards good performance of their duties	150 (35.80)	100 (23.80)	90 (21.40)	80 (19.00)	2.76	0.70
10.	Influences and promotes others.	160 (38.10)	110 (26.20)	80 (19.00)	70 (16.70)	2.82	0.90
11.	Provides intellectual simulation	100 (23.80)	120 (28.60)	110 (26.20)	90 (21.40)	3.43	0.50
12.	Transparent in all his/her dealings	180 (42.90)	110 (26.20)	80 (19.00)	50 (11.90)	2.39	0.49
13.	Inspires team members to attain what is assumed as unattainable	110 (26.20)	130 (30.90)	110 (26.20)	70 (16.70)	2.18	0.61
14.	Helps others to overcome self-interests	120 (28.60)	120 (28.60)	90 (21.40)	90 (24.40)	2.23	0.53
15.	Becomes effectively involve in others joy and challenges	160 (38.10)	120 (28.60)	80 (19.00)	60 (14.30)	2.45	0.63
16.	He/she is a visionary person	110 (26.20)	130 (30.90)	100 (23.80)	80 (19.00)	3.84	0.37
17.	He/she motivates by his/her risk taking	120 (28.60)	150 (35.70)	80 (19.00)	70 (16.70)	3.81	0.40
18.	He/she is very passionate about the students	150 (35.70)	100 (23.80)	100 (23.80)	70 (16.70)	2.75	0.55
19.	He/she empowers others	120 (28.60)	130 (30.90)	80 (19.00)	90 (21.40)	3.27	0.67
20.	He/she is very much concern with the professional and personal development of everyone	100 (23.80)	120 (28.60)	120 (28.60)	80 (19.00)	2.34	0.47
Weighted Average		2.94	Threshold		2.50		

Table 2 also indicated that both principals and teachers that were respondents to this study supported the rippling effects of secondary school principals' leadership/management and administrative styles on teachers' retention in their schools. Item 2, involves effective communication, in this era of social media attracted the highest positive response. With 200



(44.00%) and 120 (26.70%) strongly agree and agree responses, as well as 80 (17.80%) and 50 (11.10%) disagree and strongly disagree responses. Items 3, fair in dealing with teachers, 10, influences and promotes others, and 18, he/she is very passionate about the students each have high positive responses. The weighted average for the table is 2.94, higher than the threshold of 2.50. Indicating that the respondents were in agreement with the fact that principals' leadership/management and administrative impact strongly on teachers' retention.

The quantitative and qualitative factors that affect teacher retention are found in Tables 3–8.

Table 3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 420)

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	196	46.70
	Female	224	53.30
Age	20–29 years	68	16.20
	30–39 years	142	33.80
	40–49 years	131	31.20
	50 years and above	79	18.80
Designation	Principal	20	4.80
	Teacher	400	95.20
Years of Experience	0–5 years	74	17.60
	6–10 years	118	28.10
	11–20 years	156	37.10
	21 years and above	72	17.10
Educational Qualification	NCE	84	20.00
	B.Ed./B.Sc.(Ed)	214	51.00
	M.Ed./M.Sc.	108	25.70
	Ph.D.	14	3.30
Local Government Area	Ibadan North	88	21.00
	Ibadan South-West	84	20.00
	Ibadan North-East	82	19.50
	Ibadan South-East	83	19.80
	Ibadan North-West	83	19.80

According to Table 3 the sample has a good distribution on the gender, age, experience, and local government areas with teachers accounting for most 95.2%. The larger proportion of mid-career teachers (11–20 years: 37.1%) among the respondents with a degree (76.7% B.Ed./B.Sc.(Ed), and higher), indicates that the findings are reflective of fairly established and professionally qualified teachers which strengthens the credibility of the results.

Table 4 Pearson Correlation Matrix Between Leadership Styles and Teacher Retention

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Autocratic Leadership	1				
2. Democratic Leadership	-0.42**	1			
3. Transformational Leadership	-0.36**	0.61**	1		
4. Transactional Leadership	0.29**	0.44**	0.52**	1	
5. Teacher Retention	-0.48**	0.63**	0.71**	0.46**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

Positive values indicate direct relationships; negative values indicate inverse relationships.

According to Table 4, there are clear and theoretically consistent relationships between leadership styles and teacher retention. According to the research, which analysed the impact of leadership style on employee turnover and retention, it was found that an autocratic style has a negative correlation with retention ($r = -0.48$, $p < 0.01$). On the other hand, democratic leadership ($r = 0.63$), transformational leadership ($r = 0.71$) and transactional leadership ($r = 0.46$) significantly correlate positively with retention. Transformational leadership correlates most strongly with retention, suggesting it plays the central role in sustaining teachers.

Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Teacher Retention

Predictor Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	0.842	0.211	—	3.99	0.000
Autocratic Leadership	-0.284	0.067	-0.241	-4.24	0.000
Democratic Leadership	0.312	0.081	0.298	3.85	0.000
Transformational Leadership	0.441	0.072	0.462	6.13	0.000
Transactional Leadership	0.158	0.059	0.149	2.68	0.008

Model Summary	
Statistic	Value
R	0.792
R ²	0.627
Adjusted R ²	0.621
F-value	173.84
Sig.	0.000

The findings displayed in Table 5 confirm patterns seen earlier, as multiple regression analysis indicates all four leadership styles are significant predictors of teacher retention. Based on the findings in the table, transformational leadership is the strongest predictor of work-life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.462$), followed by democratic leadership ($\beta = 0.298$) and transactional leadership ($\beta = 0.149$). On the other hand, autocratic leadership negatively predicts work-life satisfaction ($\beta = -0.241$). With a high R² value of 0.627, the model explains a significant amount of variance in teacher retention. This shows the practical relevance of leadership behavior.

Table 6 One-Way ANOVA Showing Differences in Teacher Retention Across Leadership Styles

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Between Groups	182.46	3	60.82	24.91	0.000
Within Groups	1014.78	416	2.44		
Total		1197.24	419		

According to Table 6, retention varies greatly based on leadership style ($F = 24.91$, $p < 0.001$), adding weight to the argument that the leadership approach influences a teacher's decision to stay put in a school.

Table 7 Comparison of Teacher Retention by Years of Experience

Years of Experience	N	Mean Retention Score	Std. Deviation	F	p-value
0–5 years	74	2.81	0.64		
6–10 years	118	3.02	0.58		
11–20 years	156	3.21	0.55		
21+ years	72	3.18	0.61	8.47	0.000

Table 7 suggests a career-stage perspective because retention appears to increase from early career to mid-career stage and then takes on a horizon throughout career stage. Thus, these results suggest increasing attachment in a professional job with age.

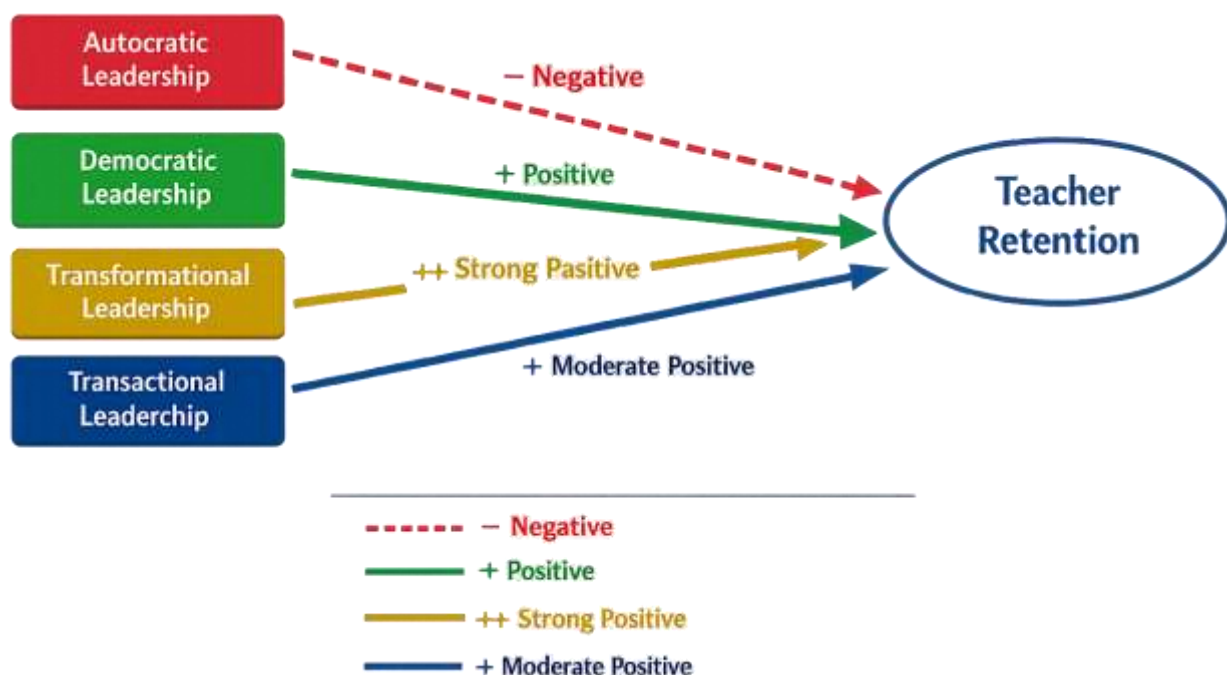
Table 8 Thematic Summary of Qualitative Interview Findings (n = 24)

Major Theme	Sub-Themes	Representative Quotation	Frequency (n)
Administrative Support	Mentoring, Supervision	“When the principal guides us and checks our progress, we feel valued and supported.”	18
Communication	Open-door policy, Feedback	“There is freedom to speak and share concerns without fear.”	20
Professional Development	Workshops, Sponsorship	“Opportunities for seminars motivate us to stay.”	16
Fairness & Transparency	Equity, Accountability	“Equal treatment builds trust among staff.”	17
Emotional Support	Encouragement, Recognition	“Recognition of effort keeps morale high.”	15
Work Environment	Collaboration, Resources	“Provision of materials makes teaching easier.”	19

Table 8 provides qualitative validation i.e., communication, administrative support, professional development, fairness, emotional support, work environment, and so on. Participation, Difference, and Transference can help explain how leadership styles influence retention and integrate and reinforce our quantitative findings.

Since the ANOVA test indicated significant differences, Tukey’s HSD post-hoc test was conducted to determine which groups differed significantly. The strong positive effect of transformational leadership on teacher retention is consistent with previous studies which indicate that supportive leadership enhances teacher commitment and job satisfaction.

Visuals

**Figure 1** Conceptual Path Model of Leadership Styles Predicting Teacher Retention

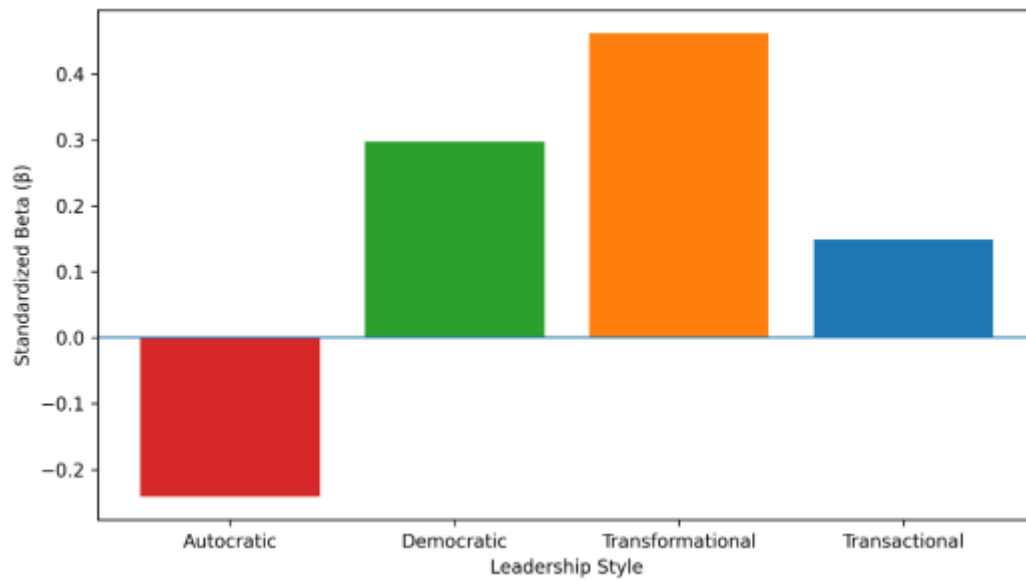


Figure 2 Standardized Effect Sizes (Beta Coefficients) Chart

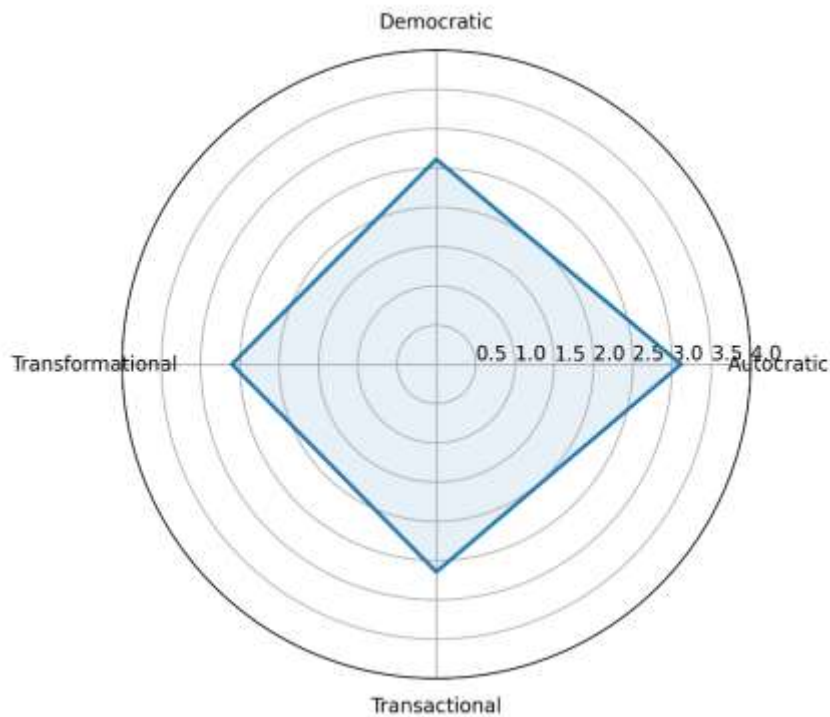


Figure 3 Leadership Style Profile Radar Chart

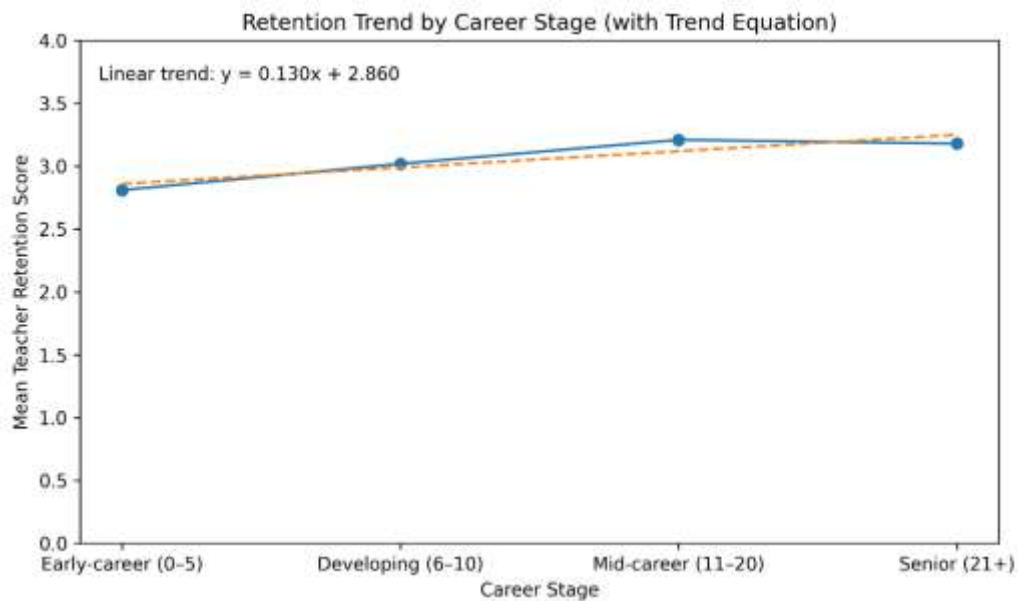


Figure 4 Retention Trend by Career Stage



Figure 5 Integrated Mixed-Methods Thematic Framework

Discussions

The first research question examined the principals' leadership styles, and the question was assessed through a questionnaire. The data showed leadership styles of principals are exhibited in different ways. In all, principals' training, leadership experiences and working environment help to determine and fashion out the best practices and the resultant effect of such traits being exhibited.

The second research question dealt with the probable impact of principals' leadership styles on teacher retention. The table revealed that principal's leadership style was a significant predictor of teacher motivation. Found a negative correlation between the behaviour of school principals and the length of time teachers remain committed to continuing to teach or wish to remain in a school.

The content analysis of the qualitative data revealed that most of those involved in the interview expressed the vital role of principal's leadership styles on teachers' motivation and retention in schools.

The study also adds to the current research on leadership styles and teacher retention. It must be noted that employees' commitment, affects and determines the success of an organisation, schools, inclusive. Principals may learn which of the identified factors do teachers perceive is critical in maintaining high levels of job satisfaction, that will motivate them and encourage their motivation to teach, which could help them adapt their style of leadership or behaviour to develop and maintain a healthy support system for their teachers. Doing so may help improve teachers' retention, particularly among early-career teachers, for whom support from administration and colleagues has been found to be particularly important.

The leadership styles of principals have a great impact on teacher retention can be interpreted from Figures 1 to 5. The Hypothesized and Empirically Supported Directions of Influence are depicted in Figure 1, the path model. The graphic illustrates how the route behind autocratic leadership is negative, while the routes for democratic leadership, transformational leadership, and transactional leadership are positive, with transformational leadership being the strongest. This diagram illustrates direction and strength that cannot be interpreted by regression output graphs.

In addition, to compare the effect size, we also present the standardized beta coefficients in Figure 2. It is clear from the graph transformational leadership causes the largest positive standardized impact. Following this, we see democratic and transactional leadership also enjoy a positive impact. However, autocratic leadership features a negative impact. Through visual comparison, the intuition given by coefficients on likelihoods gives a clear ranking of effects in magnitude.

The radar chart in Figure 3 illustrates the leadership profile of the so-called "leader" and draws attention to the need to move away from using isolated predictor variables in favor of looking at the overall pattern of behavior. When mean scores are aggregated through the dimensions of leadership these points towards the dominant and subordinating style being used by the principals. Further, it shows that the overall balance among leadership styles is more important than an item-by-item variation. This offers a sophisticated perspective of leadership practice as a composite construct.

According to Figure 4, retention scores across career stages for teachers has expanded further investigation. The line graph shows an overall enhancement from early to mid-career, and a little stabilization in the senior stage. This shows enhancement helps with retention as professionals age but may plateau at later stages. A time component adds weight to the argument.

Figure 5 showcases the mixed-methods thematic framework for qualitative and quantitative evidence. The themes obtained from interviews, communication, administration, professional development, fairness, emotional support and work environment are mapped onto the quantitative leadership dimensions and ultimately retention outcomes. This integration shows how the methods converge and the ways through which leadership behaviors impact teachers' sustained commitment. These figures demonstrate a shift in analysis from statistics to explanatory accounts of leadership and retention.

Conclusion and suggestions

A principal's job is complicated and multidimensional, and the effectiveness of principals depends, in part, on their proper management of their time across daily their responsibilities. For an organization like a school to achieve success, it must allow its teachers to operate somewhat autonomously. The findings of this study indicate that teachers are more satisfied with their jobs when their school principals exhibit transformational leadership style that has the characteristics of idealized attributes and behaviors, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Acute shortage of teachers in some

schools in Oyo State has encouraged some of those schools engaging in the employment of part time teachers or contract staff, which most times are not the most qualified hands.

It is in the best interest of schools to ensure the commitment of teachers beyond the requirements of the job. Principals need to create good atmosphere for their teachers, especially newly employed teachers, beginning with the appropriate orientation on what it takes to be a good teacher. Appropriate involvement of good leadership styles, to create enabling environment that will motivate teachers to be attracted to teaching is also important. It is further concluded from this study that teachers and principals working together collaboratively goes a long way to encourage teachers' retention in schools. Therefore, there should be positive symbiotic relationship between the two. As without teachers who are motivated to teach, the search for academic excellence in the education setting will be a great mirage.

The following recommendations were put forward by the researcher based on the findings of the study. That all principals should involve a combination of leadership styles that will motivate and attract teachers to teaching that will as such encourage their wish to remain in the profession. Moreover, principals should involve teachers the more in their daily administration of school, through delegation of duties, proper mentoring and monitoring of teachers' classroom interactions and involving good communication that will motivate them to teaching. The government through good remuneration, proper supervision of schools and the provision of good teaching learning environments should encourage and adequately take care of teachers to disabuse their mind from leaving the profession of teaching for a greener pasture.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

Qualitative findings further highlighted communication, administrative support, fairness, and professional development as key factors influencing teacher retention. The study concludes that transformational and democratic leadership practices significantly enhance teacher retention in Nigerian secondary schools.

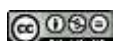
Contribution of the Study: Using a mixed-methods approach, the study contributes to literature by providing empirical evidence on how different leadership styles affect teachers' retention in Nigerian secondary schools. In contrast to earlier reports, which had mainly used the descriptive analysis approach, the present study did not only rely on descriptive statistical analysis, having used correlation, regression as well as the qualitative thematic analysis. These statistical approaches were to relate and further clarify the relationship between leadership and retention in education with the Nigerian context.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant educational authorities in Oyo State. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and all data were used solely for academic purposes.

Limitation of the Study: This study focuses on public secondary school in Ibadan Metropolis which may limit the generalization of the study to other parts of Nigeria. Additionally, the data collection method that was mainly used was self-reported questionnaire. Thus, they may dismiss it. Future studies could feature a longitudinal design with larger national samples.

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Navigating Identity and Education: A Qualitative Study of the Experiences of Muslim Learners in Philippine Public Junior High School

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(Received: 22 February 2025, Revised: 22 March 2026, Accepted: 23 March 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.279051>

Abstract

This study explored the lived experiences of Muslim learners in a public junior high school in Tanauan City, Philippines. The research examined how Muslim students navigated their cultural identity, social interactions, and learning experiences within a predominantly non-Muslim school environment. Despite increasing attention to multicultural education, limited research had examined the everyday experiences of Muslim learners in Philippine public schools, particularly outside predominantly Muslim regions. Understanding these experiences was important in a country shaped by a long history of conflict, peace-building initiatives, and ongoing efforts toward social cohesion and inclusive development.

A qualitative research design was employed to capture the participants' lived experiences. Data were gathered through face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with six Muslim students enrolled at Tanauan City Integrated High School during the 2022–2023 academic year. The data were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify patterns and meanings in the participants' narratives.

The analysis generated six major themes: cultural practices, social interactions, encountered challenges, adjustment strategies, teachers' classroom management styles, and school climate. The findings revealed that Muslim culture strongly shaped the learners' values and daily practices. At the same time, the students experienced cultural misunderstandings, language barriers, and the need to adapt to unfamiliar school norms. Despite these challenges, the learners demonstrated resilience and maintained their cultural identity while interacting with non-Muslim peers and teachers. Their experiences reflected the principles of the Salad Bowl Theory, which emphasized the coexistence of diverse cultural identities within a multicultural society.

This study contributed to the growing literature on multicultural education in the Philippine context by highlighting how minority students negotiated identity, belonging, and adaptation in mainstream school settings. The findings also underscored the role of inclusive educational practices in promoting intercultural understanding, peace, and social harmony. The study recommended peer language tutoring, teacher orientation on cultural sensitivity, and institutional support programs to better address the needs of Muslim learners.

Keywords: Multicultural education, Cultural identity, Minority students, Inclusive education, Religious diversity



Introduction

Diversity refers to differences among individuals and groups in terms of ethnicity, religion, gender, age, socioeconomic status, abilities, political beliefs, and cultural background, while inclusion emphasizes recognizing individuals' inherent dignity and fostering a sense of belonging in social and educational environments (Banks, 2004). Cultural diversity has enriched educational institutions by promoting empathy, improving problem-solving skills, and broadening perspectives among learners (Yang & Zhong, 2024). Within this context, multiculturalism describes the coexistence of different cultures, ethnicities, and social groups within a shared political and social system.

Educational institutions play a crucial role in promoting multicultural values. Public schools often serve as spaces where students encounter diversity and learn tolerance, equality, and social responsibility (Palfrey, 2017). Curricula in multicultural societies frequently integrate the histories and traditions of minority groups to foster intercultural understanding. However, these efforts have also faced criticism, as some scholars argue that multicultural initiatives may emphasize political correctness rather than meaningful intercultural engagement. Alvarez (2014) noted that while multicultural participation assumes equal access to educational and social resources, many minority groups remain excluded due to poverty, marginalization, and limited representation. Addressing these structural inequalities is therefore essential to ensure meaningful participation of minority groups in educational and social spaces.

Debates on multiculturalism have also raised questions about how societies balance diversity with shared civic values. Noreen (2019) argued that while cultural exemptions help preserve minority identities, they may also create tensions with dominant social norms. In educational settings, students from minority groups often undergo identity negotiation as they navigate environments shaped by different cultural expectations (Qumseya, 2018). These experiences may involve adaptation, selective assimilation, and the preservation of cultural practices. Theoretical models such as the melting pot and salad bowl provide useful frameworks for understanding these dynamics. While the melting pot model suggests assimilation into dominant culture, the salad bowl model emphasizes the coexistence of distinct cultural identities within a shared social environment.

The Philippines provides an important context for examining multicultural education due to its cultural and religious diversity. The country is home to more than 110 indigenous communities and approximately 170 ethnolinguistic groups (Blanco, 2024). Historical colonization and cultural exchanges have shaped Filipino society into a culturally diverse nation. The Philippine Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, and Islam is the second-largest religion, comprising approximately 5.6% of the population (Williams, 2020). Although Muslim communities are largely concentrated in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Muslim populations are also present in other regions due to migration, education, and employment opportunities.

Despite peace-building initiatives and development programs, Muslim communities in the Philippines continue to experience challenges related to marginalization, cultural misunderstanding, and unequal access to opportunities. In schools located outside Muslim-majority regions, Muslim learners may encounter cultural differences, language barriers, and limited institutional recognition of their religious practices (Chen et al., 2019). These conditions make educational settings important spaces for understanding how minority students experience inclusion, identity formation, and social integration.

Tanauan City Integrated High School represents one such multicultural learning environment where Muslim learners interact with predominantly non-Muslim peers and



teachers. Within this context, Muslim students experience both opportunities for intercultural interaction and challenges related to cultural adjustment, identity preservation, and social belonging (Jamal et al., 2023). This study therefore examined how Muslim Junior High School students experienced multicultural interactions and how they maintained their cultural identity within a diverse educational setting during the academic year 2022–2023.

Despite growing literature on multicultural education, limited studies have examined the lived experiences of Muslim learners in Philippine public schools outside Muslim-majority areas. Existing research has often focused on Muslim communities in Mindanao or on international Muslim students, leaving a gap in understanding how Muslim learners navigate identity, adaptation, and belonging in mainstream Philippine schools. This study addressed this gap by examining the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and identity negotiation of Muslim learners in a multicultural public school environment.

Objectives

This study aimed to understand and identify the lived experiences of Muslim learners at Tanauan City Integrated High School. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Describe the student life experiences of Muslim learners in a public-school environment.
2. Identify the coping mechanisms employed by Muslim learners in response to their lived experiences and challenges.
3. Determine the factors that influence and shape the identity formation of Muslim learners within the school context.

Theoretical Framework

Cultural Difference Hypothesis and Learning

The cultural difference hypothesis emphasized the importance of educators understanding the differences between students' home environments and school cultures. The theory suggested that learners raised in diverse cultural settings approached education, communication, and learning processes differently. These differences influenced classroom participation, interpretation of instructions, and interaction with peers and teachers (Aslan, 2022). As a result, educators were encouraged to recognize cultural diversity as a significant factor affecting students' educational experiences.

This perspective was supported by Piaget's learning theory, which proposed that learning involved the transfer and reconstruction of knowledge based on previous experiences. According to this view, students actively constructed new knowledge by connecting new information with their prior understanding and lived experiences. Recognizing students' cultural backgrounds and validating their prior knowledge were therefore essential in facilitating meaningful learning. Integrating culturally relevant examples into instruction helped bridge the gap between students' home environments and school expectations.

However, some scholars critiqued the cultural difference hypothesis for potentially oversimplifying cultural dynamics. Critics argued that focusing solely on cultural differences could unintentionally reinforce stereotypes or overlook structural factors such as socioeconomic inequalities and institutional practices (Gunderson, 2024). Despite these criticisms, the framework remained useful in understanding how cultural background influenced students' educational engagement.

Models of Multiculturalism: Melting Pot and Salad Bowl

Multicultural societies have been conceptualized through models explaining how different cultural groups interacted within shared environments. Halse and Kennedy (2021) described the melting pot and salad bowl models of multiculturalism.

The melting pot model suggested that individuals from different cultural backgrounds gradually assimilated into a dominant culture. In contrast, the salad bowl model described a society in which diverse cultural groups coexisted while maintaining distinct identities (Berray, 2019). Within this perspective, individuals could participate fully in social institutions while preserving their cultural heritage.

Despite their usefulness, scholars debated the limitations of these models. Critics argued that the melting pot approach often privileged dominant cultures, while the salad bowl model could risk cultural fragmentation without shared social values. Nevertheless, both models provided important insights into how minority groups navigated identity and belonging.

Relevance to the Present Study

These theoretical perspectives provided a foundation for understanding the experiences of Muslim learners in multicultural school environments. The cultural difference hypothesis explained how cultural background influenced learning behaviors and adjustment. Meanwhile, the salad bowl model helped explain how Muslim learners maintained their identity while participating in mainstream education.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative narrative inquiry design to explore and understand the lived experiences of Muslim learners in a multicultural public-school environment. Narrative inquiry focused on examining individuals' personal stories and experiences to understand how they constructed meaning within their social contexts (Butina, 2015). This approach was appropriate because the study aimed to capture the participants' experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms as Muslim learners interacting within a culturally diverse school setting.

Through narrative accounts obtained from interviews, the researchers examined how the participants described their everyday school experiences and how they negotiated their cultural identity within the broader school community. The approach allowed the participants to articulate their perspectives in their own words while enabling the researchers to interpret recurring patterns and meanings across their narratives.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The participants consisted of six Muslim learners from Grades 7 to 10 in Junior High School during the school year 2022–2023 at Tanauan City Integrated High School. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, which allowed the researchers to intentionally choose individuals who possessed relevant experiences related to the phenomenon under investigation.

The inclusion criteria required that participants:

1. were practicing Muslims or were raised in Muslim households;
2. were enrolled as Junior High School students at Tanauan City Integrated High School; and
3. had direct experiences interacting with peers and teachers within a multicultural school environment.



Some participants were born into Muslim families, while others had converted to Islam and were active adherents of the faith. These criteria ensured that the participants possessed sufficient cultural knowledge and lived experiences to provide meaningful insights into the research problem.

Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved. Saturation occurred when additional interviews no longer produced substantially new insights or themes related to the participants' experiences. After interviewing six participants, the researchers observed recurring patterns in the narratives, which indicated that the data had reached an adequate level of depth for qualitative analysis.

Data Gathering Instrument

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews using a researcher-developed interview guide. Six open-ended questions were designed to explore the participants' school experiences, cultural practices, challenges encountered, coping mechanisms, and interactions with peers and teachers.

The interview questions were developed based on the objectives of the study and were reviewed by subject experts to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research problem. Prior to formal data collection, the interview guide underwent pilot testing with a small group of students who were not included among the final participants. Feedback from the pilot test helped refine the wording and sequencing of the questions to ensure that they were understandable and culturally appropriate.

Semi-structured interviews were selected because they allowed flexibility in probing participants' responses while maintaining a consistent structure across interviews. This approach encouraged participants to share their personal experiences openly while enabling the researchers to explore emerging themes in greater depth.

Data Collection Procedure

After securing approval to conduct the study, the researchers coordinated with the school administration of Tanauan City Integrated High School to identify potential participants who met the inclusion criteria. Permission was obtained from school authorities before initiating the data collection process.

Because the participants were minors, parental consent and participant assent were obtained prior to the interviews. The purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the confidentiality measures were clearly explained to both parents and students.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in a quiet and comfortable setting within the school to ensure minimal disruption and to encourage open communication. Each interview lasted approximately 20–30 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participants' permission to ensure accuracy in data documentation. The recordings were later transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Data Analysis

The collected narratives were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis, a qualitative analytic approach that identifies patterns of meaning within textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The analysis followed a systematic process consisting of several stages:

1. Familiarization with the data through repeated reading of interview transcripts.
2. Initial coding, during which significant statements and meaningful segments of the narratives were identified.
3. Theme development, in which related codes were grouped together to form broader categories.
4. Theme refinement, where themes were reviewed and organized to ensure that they accurately represented the participants' experiences.



This analytic process enabled the researchers to identify recurring patterns across the participants' narratives, which led to the emergence of themes such as cultural practices, social interactions, challenges encountered, coping mechanisms, teachers' classroom management styles, and school climate.

Throughout the analysis, the researchers engaged in an abductive process by moving back and forth between the data and the theoretical framework to interpret the meanings embedded in the participants' experiences.

Trustworthiness and Validation of Findings

Several strategies were employed to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. First, member checking was conducted by sharing summarized interpretations of the interview responses with selected participants to verify the accuracy of the researchers' interpretations. Second, peer debriefing was conducted through discussions with academic colleagues and research advisers who reviewed the coding process and emerging themes. Third, expert consultation was sought from faculty members experienced in qualitative research to ensure methodological rigor and interpretive validity.

These procedures helped minimize researcher bias and strengthened the credibility and dependability of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the research process, particularly because the study involved minor participants and a religious minority group. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained by assigning pseudonyms to participants and removing identifying information from the transcripts. Audio recordings and transcripts were securely stored and were used solely for research purposes.

Prior to data collection, the research protocol underwent ethical review and approval by the appropriate institutional research authority to ensure that the study complied with ethical standards for research involving human participants. The researchers also ensured that the interview questions were culturally sensitive and respectful of the participants' religious beliefs and practices.

Results

This chapter of the paper presents the data gathered from 6 Muslim Learners of Tanauan City Integrated High School who participated in this research. It also provides data analysis and interpretation that has been organized in accordance with the research questions outlined in the first chapter of this paper.

1. Cultural and Social Interaction

This theme explored the cultural practices of Muslim learners and how these practices influenced their interactions with non-Muslim peers and teachers within the school environment. Two major subthemes emerged: religious-cultural practices and social interaction within a multicultural classroom.

Religious and Cultural Practices

Participants emphasized that their religious practices played an important role in shaping their daily routines and identity as Muslim learners. One participant explained the significance of Ramadan:



“Ang karaniwang kultura na ipinagdiriwang ng mga Muslim ay ang Ramadan. Ito ay ginanap at nag-umpisa noong Marso 23, 2023 hanggang Abril 23, 2023 sapagkat isang buwan ito idinaraos. Ang kumukumpleto sa pagdiriwang na ito ay ang tinatawag na fasting at kinakailangan na magawa ito sapagkat isa itong obligasyon bilang isang Muslim. Pinaghahandaan ito ng bawat pamilyang Muslim sa pamamagitan ng paglilinis ng buong bahay bilang indikasyon ng pagsalubong ng malinis at may respeto.” [P5]

English translation:

“One of the common cultural practices celebrated by Muslims is Ramadan. It began on March 23, 2023 and lasted until April 23, 2023 because it is observed for an entire month. The completion of this celebration involves fasting, which is an obligation for Muslims. Each Muslim family prepares for it by cleaning the whole house as a sign of welcoming the celebration with cleanliness and respect.”

This finding suggests that religious practices serve not only as spiritual obligations but also as cultural markers that reinforce identity. Observances such as fasting and prayer provide a shared sense of belonging among Muslim learners, even within a predominantly non-Muslim school environment.

Another participant highlighted the importance of wearing the hijab:

“Kami po bilang mga babaeng Muslim, kinakailangan po naming magsuot ng hijab dahil sumisimbolo po ito sa amin bilang isang babae na iniingatan ang aming sarili at pagpapakita ng pagkamahinhin ng mga kababaihang Muslim.” [P2]

English translation:

“As Muslim women, we are required to wear the hijab because it symbolizes how we protect ourselves and demonstrate modesty as Muslim women.”

The wearing of the hijab functioned as both a religious obligation and a visible symbol of cultural identity. While it distinguished Muslim female students from their peers, participants reported that it also strengthened their sense of commitment to their religious values.

Social Interaction in a Multicultural Environment

Despite cultural differences, many participants reported positive social interactions with non-Muslim classmates and teachers. One participant shared the following experience:

“Sa aming seksyon, ako lang ang Muslim ngunit maayos akong nakikisalamuha sa kanila. Ako ang president ng aming klase. Minsan nagkakaroon ng komplikasyon halimbawa sa pagdarasal... ngunit nirerespeto nila ang religion namin.” [P5]

English translation:

“In our section, I am the only Muslim, but I interact well with my classmates. I am the class president. Sometimes there are complications, for example in prayer practices, but they respect our religion.”

This narrative highlights how Muslim learners negotiated their identity while maintaining positive relationships with peers. The ability of the participant to serve as class president suggests that cultural differences did not necessarily prevent leadership or active participation within the classroom.

However, not all experiences were positive. Some participants expressed feelings of social distance:

“Minsan nararamdaman ang pagkalayo o pagiging mag-isa dahil mas pinipiling wag na lang makipag-usap sa mga kamag-aral na hindi Muslim.” [P2]



English translation:

“Sometimes I feel distant or alone because I prefer not to talk to classmates who are not Muslim.”

This finding reveals a tension between cultural inclusion and personal withdrawal. Some students coped with cultural differences by limiting their interactions with non-Muslim peers.

Overall, the findings show that Muslim learners maintained their cultural and religious practices while interacting within a multicultural environment. These experiences reflect the principles of the Salad Bowl Theory, where individuals preserve their cultural identity while participating in a broader social community. However, the narratives also revealed moments of social hesitation and distance, suggesting that cultural integration may occur alongside feelings of isolation.

Table 1 Cultural and Social Interaction

Themes	Subthemes	Exemplar Texts
Cultural Practices	Doctrinal Practice	One of the cultural practices of Muslims is the observance of Ramadan. Muslims are required to fast during Ramadan as part of their religious practice [P5]
		Muslims read <i>Qur'an</i> and <i>bidding</i> to expand our knowledge in Islamic and Arabic Values. [P2]
	Behavioral Standards	At school setting, all Muslim learners are gathered to attend <i>aLIVE</i> or what they called <i>A Learning Islamic Values Every day</i> . [P1]
Social Interaction	Social Freedom	Wearing of <i>hijab</i> or <i>headscarf</i> for ladies is compulsory to wear every day. [P2]
	Social Restriction	Being able to lead, share, discuss, and interact with non-Muslim classmates. [P5]
		Cannot participate in some school activities since, it is prohibited by their religion. [P1]
		Awkwardness of communicating first because of distinct cultural differences. [P2]

Challenges and Coping Mechanisms

This theme examined the challenges experienced by Muslim learners in a multicultural school setting and the strategies they employed to manage these difficulties. Two subthemes emerged: challenges related to cultural diversity and cultural adjustments as coping mechanisms.

Challenges in a Multicultural Classroom

Participants described several challenges related to communication and cultural differences. One participant explained:

“*Kapag may mga pangkatang gawain nahihirapan ako na makisalamuha. Nahiihiya ako na magsalita at magbigay ng ideya dahil iba iba kami ng paniniwala at dahil iba ang aming lengguwahe.*” [P4]

English translation:

“During group activities, I sometimes find it difficult to interact. I feel shy about speaking and sharing ideas because we have different beliefs and languages.”

Language differences and unfamiliar cultural practices created barriers that affected students’ confidence and participation in classroom activities. These experiences highlight the challenges faced by minority students in navigating communication within a diverse environment.

Another participant mentioned difficulties adapting to school traditions that conflicted with Islamic practices:

“*May mga events na iniwasan po namin bilang mga Muslim dahil ipinagbabawal po ito sa aming kultura... kagaya ng Sinulog Festival kung saan may mga Santo Niño.*” [P5]



English translation:

“There are events that we avoid as Muslims because they are prohibited in our culture, such as the Sinulog Festival where the Santo Niño is involved.”

These experiences demonstrate how religious beliefs may influence students' participation in school activities. Such situations required students to carefully balance respect for their religious values with participation in school life.

Coping Mechanisms and Cultural Adjustments

Despite these challenges, participants demonstrated adaptive strategies that allowed them to remain engaged in school activities. One participant explained:

“Nagpa-participate at nakiki-cooperate pa rin po ako without disrespecting our religion... naghahanap kami ng alternative ways para magawa ko ang part ko.” [P5]

English translation:

“I still participate and cooperate without disrespecting our religion... we find alternative ways so that I can still fulfill my role.”

This response illustrates how Muslim learners actively negotiated their participation in school activities while preserving their religious identity. Instead of completely withdrawing, they sought alternative ways to contribute without violating cultural norms.

The findings reveal that Muslim learners experienced challenges related to language barriers, cultural differences, and religious restrictions. However, they developed coping strategies such as selective participation in school activities, adjustments to communication styles, and negotiation with peers and teachers. These strategies enabled them to balance cultural preservation with school engagement.

Table 2 Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Muslim Learners

Themes	Subthemes	Exemplar Texts
Cultural Diversity	Language Barriers in Classroom Communication	In a classroom setting, interacting with non-Muslim peers is difficult. [P3]
		Difficulty to give suggestions or ideas in every group activity due to language barrier [P4]
		Difficulty to adapt the school culture [P2]
	Cultural Familiarity	Difficulty to understand cultural diversity inside the classroom[P1] Managing a classroom with different cultural background of students is difficult due to unfamiliar practices of non-Muslim peers [P5]
Adjustment to Communication Styles	Communication	The student chooses to become approachable to their colleagues. [P3]
	Differing Values	Participating in different school activities without disrespecting their cultural values [P5]
		Preservation of cultural practices is highly valued. [P2]

School Factors Shaping Muslim Learners' Identity

The final theme examined the role of classroom practices and school climate in shaping the experiences and identity of Muslim learners.

Teacher Practices and Inclusive Classroom Management

Participants emphasized the role of teachers in fostering inclusive learning environments. One participant described the teacher's approach:



“Tinuturuan nya kami in a way na lahat ay makakasabay... sa isang grupo, iba’t ibang uri ng indibidwal ang kabilang para equally distributed ang lahat.” [P1]

English translation:

“She teaches in a way that everyone can follow. During group activities, different kinds of individuals are placed together so that everyone is equally distributed.”

This strategy encouraged collaboration and helped reduce social barriers between students of different backgrounds. Inclusive classroom management allowed Muslim learners to feel supported and respected within the learning environment.

School Climate and Social Support

Participants also described the importance of a positive school climate:

“Ang positibong learning environment ay kapag ang mga tao sa paligid mo ay hindi ka ibinababa sa kabila ng iyong paniniwala at pananamit.” [P4]

English translation:

“A positive learning environment is when the people around you do not belittle you because of your beliefs or clothing.”

These experiences suggest that respect and mutual understanding among students and teachers play a crucial role in fostering inclusive educational spaces.

The findings indicate that supportive teacher practices and a respectful school climate significantly influenced the identity formation and well-being of Muslim learners. Inclusive teaching strategies and culturally sensitive interactions helped create an environment where students could maintain their cultural identity while participating fully in school life.

Table 3 School Factors Shaping Muslim Learners’ Identity

Themes	Subthemes	Exemplar Texts
Classroom Management	Teacher-Student Relationship	She taught us in a way that every student could follow; she is kind and understanding. When there is a group activity, she ensures that we are equally distributed. Lastly, she always gives us awareness about the topic we are to discuss next meeting. [P5]
		When there is a group activity, the teacher always ensures that students are included to their designated group and equally divided. [P6]
	Positive Environment	She promotes inclusive education through asking her students about the beliefs, values and cultures of Muslim so that she would know what activities are suitable for them perform. [P4]
		The teacher shows respect and courtesy in handling diversified students to impart knowledge effectively. [P3] The teacher always respects and provides ways on how every individual can socialize with each other particularly during activity time without any intervention to their differences. [P1] When the teacher discusses a lesson, the teacher shows sensitivity whenever he asks or utters words. [P2]
School Climate	Open Climate	The teachers together with the principal always gives fair treatment and the school itself shows full support in every student to nurture and excel not just academically but as a whole human being. [P5]
		The setting where mutual aid is practiced; one for all and all for one community. [P1]
	Healthy School Climate	A place where everyone cooperates in all tasks has one goal and helps one another. [P6] A school-friendly environment. [P4] A community where students respect, encourage and uplift one another. [P2]



Discussions

Cultural Identity and Social Interaction in a Multicultural School Environment

The findings revealed that religious and cultural practices played a central role in shaping the identity of Muslim learners and their experiences within a multicultural school environment. Participants described practices such as Ramadan observance, Qur'an reading, participation in Islamic learning activities, and the wearing of the hijab as important expressions of their religious commitment and cultural belonging (Abo-Zena & Hassan, 2024). These practices functioned not only as religious obligations but also as identity markers that reinforced their sense of belonging to a minority cultural group.

The persistence of these practices within a predominantly non-Muslim school environment suggests that Muslim learners did not simply assimilate into the dominant culture. Instead, they maintained their religious identity while participating in the broader school community. This finding supports the Salad Bowl Theory, which proposes that individuals in multicultural environments may coexist while preserving their distinct cultural identities rather than dissolving into a dominant culture.

At the same time, the findings indicated that visible religious practices such as wearing the hijab served as both a source of identity affirmation and a marker of difference. While the hijab strengthened the participants' commitment to their religious values, it also made their minority status more visible. This dual role reflects the process of identity negotiation commonly experienced by minority students in multicultural environments, where cultural expression may simultaneously foster belonging and highlight difference (Qumsey, 2018).

Social interaction experiences further illustrated the complexity of multicultural engagement. Some participants reported positive interactions with non-Muslim classmates and teachers, suggesting that cultural diversity did not necessarily hinder participation or leadership opportunities. For instance, one participant who served as class president demonstrated that minority identity did not automatically limit social participation. This finding suggests that inclusive school environments may enable minority students to exercise leadership and social agency despite cultural differences.

However, the findings also revealed tensions within multicultural interaction. Some participants described feelings of social distance and hesitancy in initiating conversations with non-Muslim peers. These experiences suggest that inclusion may coexist with subtle forms of social separation. Rather than experiencing overt discrimination, some learners engaged in self-protective social withdrawal as a coping response to cultural differences. This pattern indicates that inclusion should not only be measured by the absence of discrimination but also by the presence of meaningful social integration.

These findings highlight the importance of fostering intercultural dialogue in schools. While tolerance was present, deeper intercultural understanding may require structured opportunities for interaction that go beyond passive coexistence.

Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Muslim Learners

The study also revealed that Muslim learners experienced several challenges related to communication, cultural differences, and participation in school activities. Language differences and unfamiliar cultural norms sometimes affected students' confidence in classroom participation, particularly during group activities. These findings suggest that communication barriers may function not only as linguistic challenges but also as psychological barriers that influence participation and self-expression.

The findings further showed that some school traditions and activities conflicted with Islamic beliefs, requiring Muslim learners to carefully navigate their participation. Rather than

completely withdrawing from school activities, participants demonstrated adaptive strategies such as selective participation in school activities and negotiation of alternative roles. This suggests that Muslim learners were not passive recipients of exclusion but were active agents in managing their participation within institutional structures.

This adaptive behavior reflects identity negotiation processes commonly discussed in multicultural education literature. Muslim learners demonstrated what may be described as selective integration, where they participated in school life while maintaining boundaries around religious practices. This finding reinforces the argument that minority students do not simply assimilate or withdraw; rather, they actively negotiate their participation in ways that allow them to maintain both belonging and identity.

An important insight emerging from the findings is the resilience demonstrated by Muslim learners. Despite structural and cultural challenges, participants developed coping strategies such as communication adjustment, peer cooperation, and value-based decision-making. These strategies indicate that minority students often develop intercultural competence as a survival strategy within diverse educational environments.

Interestingly, the findings did not strongly indicate experiences of overt discrimination, which contrasts with some international studies on Muslim learners. This absence may suggest that the school environment provided a relatively supportive context. However, it may also indicate that students normalized minor challenges or chose adaptive coping strategies instead of confrontation. This represents an important area for future investigation.

These findings suggest important implications for curriculum design. Schools may benefit from integrating multicultural education activities that explicitly address religious diversity, intercultural communication, and inclusive participation. Such initiatives may reduce communication barriers and strengthen intercultural understanding.

School Factors Shaping Muslim Learners' Identity

The findings demonstrated that teacher practices and school climate played a crucial role in shaping the educational experiences of Muslim learners. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of teachers who demonstrated fairness, cultural sensitivity, and inclusive classroom practices. These findings suggest that teacher behavior may function as a key institutional factor influencing minority student adjustment.

Inclusive classroom strategies such as mixed grouping, sensitivity to religious practices, and equitable participation opportunities appeared to reduce social barriers. These practices reflect principles of culturally responsive teaching, which emphasize understanding students' cultural backgrounds as part of effective pedagogy (Caingcoy, 2023). The findings therefore support the view that inclusive teaching is not only a pedagogical issue but also a social justice concern.

The study also revealed that a positive school climate contributed significantly to the well-being and identity development of Muslim learners. Participants described supportive environments where respect, cooperation, and fairness were practiced. Such environments appeared to allow Muslim learners to express their identity without fear of marginalization (Kutsyuruba et al., 2015).

These findings highlight the importance of institutional culture in shaping minority experiences. While individual teacher practices were important, broader school values such as fairness, respect, and cooperation appeared to reinforce inclusive experiences. This suggests that inclusion should be viewed as both a classroom practice and an institutional responsibility.

The findings also have implications for teacher development programs. Training programs that focus on cultural awareness, anti-bias education, and religious accommodation may help educators better support minority learners. Similarly, school policies that recognize religious diversity may strengthen institutional inclusivity.

Integrative Interpretation of Findings

Taken together, the findings suggest that Muslim learners experienced multicultural schooling as a process of balancing identity preservation with social participation. Their experiences reflected three interconnected processes:

1. Cultural identity preservation through religious practices
2. Adaptive coping through selective participation in school activities
3. Institutional influence through inclusive teaching and school climate

These patterns reinforce the relevance of the Salad Bowl Theory, which explains how minority students may integrate socially while maintaining cultural identity. Rather than assimilation, the findings suggest that multicultural schooling may function as a process of negotiated belonging.

The study also highlights the importance of moving beyond tolerance toward meaningful inclusion. While participants reported respectful environments, subtle barriers such as communication difficulties and social hesitation remained present. This suggests that inclusion requires not only respect but also active institutional support.

Implications for Educational Practice and Policy

The findings suggest several implications for educational institutions. First, curriculum design should incorporate multicultural education content that promotes understanding of religious diversity. Second, teacher training programs should include cultural sensitivity and anti-bias education to strengthen inclusive classroom practices. Third, schools may benefit from developing policies that allow reasonable religious accommodations for minority students.

At the institutional level, schools may consider establishing support mechanisms such as peer mentoring programs, intercultural dialogue activities, and culturally responsive guidance services. These initiatives may help minority learners strengthen their sense of belonging while maintaining their identity.

At the policy level, the findings support the importance of inclusive education frameworks that recognize religious diversity as part of educational equity. Supporting minority learners through culturally responsive education may contribute not only to academic success but also to broader goals of social cohesion and intercultural understanding.

Limitations of the Study

This study had several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study involved only six Muslim learners from a single public high school, which limited the transferability of the findings to other educational contexts. The experiences of Muslim learners in other schools or regions of the Philippines may differ due to variations in cultural environments, institutional support systems, and demographic characteristics. However, the purpose of qualitative research was to provide depth of understanding rather than statistical generalization.

Second, the study relied primarily on self-reported narratives obtained through interviews. While this approach allowed participants to describe their experiences in depth, the findings depended on the participants' ability to recall and articulate their experiences. As with most qualitative interview studies, there was also a possibility that participants may have withheld sensitive information or framed their responses in socially acceptable ways. Future research may benefit from triangulation through additional data sources such as classroom observations, document analysis, or interviews with teachers and school administrators.

Third, the study focused exclusively on the perspectives of Muslim learners and did not include the viewpoints of non-Muslim classmates, teachers, or school leaders. Including these stakeholders in future research may provide a more comprehensive understanding of



multicultural interactions and institutional responses to cultural diversity within the school environment.

Fourth, the study was conducted within a specific socio-cultural context, and the positionality of the researchers as educators may have influenced data interpretation. Although strategies such as peer review and member checking were employed to enhance credibility, researcher interpretation remained an inherent feature of qualitative analysis.

Despite these limitations, the study provided valuable insights into how Muslim learners navigated cultural identity, social interaction, and educational participation within a multicultural public school environment. The findings contributed to a deeper understanding of minority student experiences and provided a basis for future research on culturally responsive education in diverse school settings.

Conclusion and suggestions

Conclusion

Muslim learners represented a small minority within the school environment, accounting for less than one percent of the student population. Despite their limited number, they demonstrated resilience and adaptability in navigating a multicultural educational setting. Their experiences showed that cultural and religious practices remained central to their identity even within a predominantly non-Muslim environment.

The findings revealed that cultural differences sometimes created challenges in communication, social interaction, and participation in school activities. Language barriers and unfamiliar school practices occasionally resulted in misunderstandings and feelings of social distance. However, Muslim learners demonstrated adaptive coping strategies such as selective participation in school activities, respectful communication, and cultural adjustment while maintaining their religious identity.

These experiences aligned with the Salad Bowl Theory, which suggests that individuals in multicultural societies may coexist while maintaining distinct cultural identities. Rather than fully assimilating into the dominant culture, Muslim learners participated in school life while preserving their traditions and values. This finding demonstrated how multicultural educational environments could support cultural coexistence rather than cultural assimilation.

The study also highlighted the importance of supportive teachers and a positive school climate. When educators demonstrated cultural awareness and inclusive teaching practices, Muslim learners reported stronger participation and a greater sense of belonging. These findings underscored the role of schools in promoting culturally responsive education that supports both inclusion and identity preservation.

Overall, the study contributed to a deeper understanding of how Muslim learners experienced multicultural schooling in the Philippine context and emphasized the importance of inclusive educational practices in supporting minority students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen inclusive education for Muslim learners.

First, educational institutions should provide professional development programs that enhance teachers' cultural competence, particularly regarding Muslim cultural practices and religious accommodation. Training may focus on culturally responsive teaching strategies and inclusive classroom management.

Second, schools should integrate multicultural education into the curriculum to promote intercultural understanding and reduce misconceptions among students. Activities that highlight cultural diversity may help strengthen mutual respect among learners.



Third, school administrators should develop inclusive policies that recognize the religious needs of minority students, such as sensitivity in scheduling school activities and reasonable accommodation of religious practices.

Fourth, schools should promote peer tutoring and collaborative learning activities to strengthen communication between Muslim and non-Muslim learners and reduce social barriers.

Finally, future research should examine the experiences of Muslim learners in other educational contexts and include the perspectives of teachers and non-Muslim students to provide a more comprehensive understanding of multicultural interactions.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

This study contributed to a better understanding of how Muslim learners navigated cultural diversity in educational settings. The findings demonstrated how religious practices such as Ramadan and the wearing of the hijab influenced identity formation and social interaction.

The study also emphasized the importance of culturally responsive teaching and inclusive school climates in supporting minority learners. Schools that foster respect for cultural diversity may improve student engagement and promote stronger intercultural relationships.

At the societal level, the findings highlighted the need to strengthen awareness of the experiences of Muslim learners in mainstream educational institutions. By identifying barriers such as cultural misunderstandings and communication challenges, the study provided insights that may inform inclusive educational policies and programs.

Ultimately, the study suggested that inclusive educational practices may contribute to stronger social cohesion by promoting respect, intercultural understanding, and educational equity for culturally diverse learners.

Acknowledgments

The researchers would like to acknowledge and express sincerest appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to the following individuals who made valuable contributions to the success and completion of this study. First and foremost, to the Almighty God for providing the researcher with the necessary strength and wisdom. Sir Jairus P. Aguila, thesis adviser, for his ceaseless supervision and for her words that permitted us to view things from a broader perspective; it was a great privilege and honor to work and study under her guidance.

Dr. Nora V. Marasigan, the Dean of the College of Teacher Education of Batangas State University – JPLPC Malvar, The National Engineering University, for her generous time and effort spent towards accomplishing this work, her continuous support, motivation, patience, immense knowledge, help, and guidance given despite her busy schedule to make this study a realization.

The members of the panel of examiners comprised of Dr. Mary Ann C. Abril and Dr. Richard M. Bañez for their substantial suggestions in improving the content of this study.

The researcher's gratitude also extends to Mrs. Josefine J. Magpantay, the Principal III of Tanauan City Integrated High School, for allowing us the opportunity to conduct research among secondary Muslim learners.



The Secondary Muslim Learners of Tanauan City Integrated High School who served as the respondents of this study, thank you for sparing time and initiating cooperation in face-to-face interviews. The researcher's family, especially, who gave unending support and inspiration which enabled him and her to finish this study; and lastly, to all supportive friends and colleagues, particularly, for blessing her with prayers and encouragement that helped her in materializing this study.

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Assistive Technology and Mathematics for Learners with Disabilities

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(Received: 30 October 2025, Revised: 26 March 2026, Accepted: 27 March 2026)
<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.284762>

Abstract

This study explored the integration of assistive technology (AT) in mathematics instruction for learners with disabilities at Tanauan School of Fisheries during the School Year 2024–2025. It examined the common difficulties encountered by learners, the assistive technologies used by teachers, the challenges faced in implementation, and the support needed for effective integration. The research utilized a descriptive-qualitative design, involving seven mathematics teachers who participated in structured interviews. Findings indicated that learners with disabilities commonly faced challenges such as mathematics anxiety, low self-esteem, difficulty processing mathematical concepts, and sensory impairments. Teachers integrated various assistive technologies, including visual aids, interactive platforms like Kahoot and Khan Academy, and adaptive tools such as screen readers and tactile graphics. Despite their benefits, implementation was hindered by inadequate training, limited resources, and lack of institutional support. The study underscores that for AT to be effective, comprehensive support in the form of financial assistance, professional development, and strong administrative commitment is essential. It concludes that AT can significantly enhance inclusivity, engagement, and mathematical achievement when integrated systematically into instruction.

Keywords: Assistive technology, Mathematics instruction, Learners with disabilities,
Inclusive education, Teacher training



Introduction

Mathematics education has evolved significantly with the integration of technology, redefining how mathematical concepts are taught and learned. Traditional methods, such as lectures and pen-and-paper exercises, remain foundational but often fail to address the diverse learning needs of today's students. Technology, on the other hand, offers interactive and personalized approaches that enhance engagement and understanding, particularly for learners with unique challenges.

Mathematics plays a vital role in modern education, equipping students with critical skills necessary for navigating a technology-driven world (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2018). However, students with disabilities often face barriers in accessing mathematical content due to cognitive, sensory, or physical impairments. Challenges such as dyscalculia, ADHD, and visual or hearing impairments can hinder their ability to process numerical information, retain concepts, or maintain focus, impacting their academic performance and future opportunities.

Beyond academic achievement, mathematics is crucial for daily life tasks such as budgeting, decision-making, and problem-solving, all of which are essential for independent living. Students with disabilities who struggle with mathematics may face long-term consequences that affect their autonomy and quality of life. Ensuring meaningful access to mathematics instruction is vital for fostering both personal and professional success.

Assistive technologies have emerged as powerful tools for addressing these challenges. Tools such as speech-to-text software, digital manipulatives, braille displays, and adaptive learning platforms provide alternative ways for students with disabilities to engage with mathematical content. These technologies help break down barriers, creating inclusive classrooms where every student can participate meaningfully in the learning process.

Despite their potential, assistive technologies are not widely integrated into mathematics instruction. Challenges such as insufficient teacher training, limited resources, and the lack of mathematics-specific assistive tools hinder widespread adoption (Courtade et al., 2020). These obstacles underscore the need for targeted strategies and institutional support to ensure effective implementation in classrooms.

Moreover, empirical evidence on the effectiveness of assistive technologies in mathematics education remains limited. Existing tools often focus on general accessibility rather than addressing the unique cognitive demands of mathematics learning. As a result, educators and policymakers lack clear guidance on how these technologies can be effectively utilized to enhance conceptual understanding, problem-solving skills, and long-term retention of mathematical knowledge among students with disabilities (Antara et al., 2024). This limitation reveals a significant gap in research, particularly in identifying assistive technologies that are specifically designed or adapted for mathematics instruction.

The need to address this gap is further reinforced by international and national policies that advocate for inclusive education and equal access to learning opportunities. For instance, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that students with disabilities must be provided with appropriate accommodations, assistive technologies, and individualized support to ensure access to the general education curriculum. Similarly, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) emphasizes equal opportunities in education and prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in public institutions. On a global scale, the United Nations (2017) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) highlights the importance of accessible and inclusive education systems that incorporate assistive technologies to support learners with disabilities.



In the Philippine context, inclusive education is supported by the Republic Act No. 7277, which guarantees equal access to quality education and appropriate learning resources for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the Republic Act No. 11650 strengthens the implementation of inclusive education by ensuring that learners with disabilities receive appropriate educational support, including assistive technologies and accessible learning materials. Despite the existence of these legal frameworks, many educational institutions still struggle to effectively integrate assistive technologies into classroom instruction, particularly in specialized subjects such as mathematics.

Emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and machine learning hold promise for transforming mathematics instruction. These advancements can provide personalized and immersive learning experiences, particularly for students with disabilities. However, practical implementation remains challenging, especially in underserved communities where resources, infrastructure, and teacher training are insufficient. This highlights the need for research that not only explores innovative technologies but also examines practical strategies for their integration into real classroom settings.

This study aims to explore how assistive technologies can improve mathematics instruction for students with disabilities. By examining innovative tools and their impact on engagement and understanding, the researchers seek to provide educators with actionable insights. As future mathematics teachers, this research equips them with the knowledge to create accessible and inclusive classrooms, empowering all students to succeed.

Objectives

This study deals with the use of assistive technology in Mathematics for learners with disabilities in Tanauan School of Fisheries. These learners are officially enrolled during the School Year 2024-2025. Specifically, this study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the common difficulties encountered by learners with disability as perceived by teachers.
2. To determine the assistive technology integrated by teachers in response to the encountered difficulties by learners with disability.
3. To determine the challenges that teachers face in integrating assistive technology into mathematics instructions for learners with disability.
4. To identify support to effectively integrate assistive technology into mathematics instructions.
5. To propose a structured support system for learners with disabilities.

Methodology

Research Design

This section is a descriptive-qualitative method of research that deals with the effectiveness of assistive technology in learning competencies for learners with disabilities in Tanauan School of Fisheries. The study will focus on identifying the types of disabilities that impact student learning, understanding how these disabilities influence mathematical comprehension, and exploring how assistive technologies, can be leveraged to improve engagement and outcomes for these learners.

The study seeks to gather qualitative data through interviews, observations, and focus group discussions with Mathematics teachers. The data collection will focus on identifying the disabilities that affect learning, such as physical, sensory, cognitive, and learning disabilities, and their specific impact on the students' ability to grasp mathematical concepts. By understanding these challenges, the research will also explore how assistive technologies,



including educational games and interactive learning tools, can be designed to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities, making mathematics more accessible and engaging.

Respondents

The participants of this study include seven mathematics teachers from Tanauan School of Fisheries during the School Year 2024–2025. These teachers were selected based on the following criteria: 1) they must have direct experience in teaching learners with disabilities, 2) they must be actively involved in mathematics instruction, and 3) they should have experience in integrating or attempting to integrate assistive technologies into their teaching practices. Their participation is crucial in providing insights into the common difficulties encountered by learners with disabilities in mathematics, the assistive technologies used to address these challenges, and the obstacles teachers face in implementing these tools effectively.

The study took place within Tanauan School of Fisheries to ensure a controlled and familiar environment for the participants. Teachers were expected to provide valuable insights into the common difficulties encountered by learners with disabilities in mathematics, the assistive technologies they implement, and the barriers to effective integration of these tools. Their perspectives offered a comprehensive understanding of how assistive technology is currently utilized and what improvements can be made. By examining the experiences of mathematics teachers, this research aims to identify the necessary support and resources to enhance the integration of assistive technology in mathematics instruction. The findings helped develop recommendations for improving teaching strategies and ensuring that learners with disabilities receive the necessary support to succeed in their mathematical education.

Data Gathering Tool

To gather the data to materialize this research work, structured interview was utilized.

Semi-structured Interview. The interview focused on obtaining insights from educators about the integration of assistive technology in mathematics for learners with disabilities. The structured interview questions were meticulously developed based on the challenges and needs identified in teaching mathematics to this group of students. These questions addressed the types of assistive technologies used, their effectiveness, challenges faced by educators, and recommendations for improvement. Before administration, the interview guide underwent validation by experts in special education and assistive technology to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness for the target respondents. Feedback from these experts led to revisions that enhanced the tool's effectiveness in gathering meaningful data. During administration, the interviews were conducted in a comfortable and confidential setting to promote open and honest dialogue. This approach provided valuable insights into the role of assistive technology in enhancing mathematical learning for students with disabilities.

Construction. The structured interview questions were developed to explore the use of assistive technology in mathematics for learners with disabilities. Input from educators, assistive technology specialists, and experts in special education were incorporated to ensure the questions address key aspects such as the types of tools used, their effectiveness, challenges in implementation, and potential improvements. The questions were designed to be clear and focused, ensuring they are relevant and accessible to the participants.

Validation. Prior to administration, the interview guide was reviewed and validated by a panel of experts in the fields of special education, mathematics education, and assistive technology. These experts assessed the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the questions. Based on their feedback, revisions were made to improve the structure and content of the instrument, ensuring its effectiveness in eliciting detailed and accurate responses.

Administration. The structured interviews were conducted with educators and specialists who have experience using assistive technology in mathematics instruction for

learners with disabilities. The interview took place in a reserved and comfortable setting to encourage open communication. Participants were assured of confidentiality to foster honest and reflective responses. This method provided valuable insights into the impact and challenges of using assistive technology in mathematics education.

Data Collection Procedure

The researchers initiated the data collection process by preparing and submitting formal letters of request for approval to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Dean of the College of Teacher Education. These letters outlined the purpose and scope of the study, which focus on the use of assistive technology in mathematics for learners with disabilities. The researchers sought permission to conduct data collection activities.

Upon approval, the researchers sent formal invitations to the selected participants, including special education teachers and learners with disabilities. The invitations detailed the study's objectives, the importance of their participation, and how their contributions will provide valuable insights into assistive technology use in mathematics education. Participants were selected based on specific criteria such as their experience or involvement in teaching or learning mathematics using assistive technologies.

The data collection employed a combination of structured interviews and classroom observations. The structured interviews were guided by a standardized interview protocol to ensure consistency in data collection across all participants. These interviews aimed to gather detailed information on the participants' experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding the use of assistive technology in mathematics instruction.

In addition to interviews, classroom observations were conducted to document the practical application of assistive technologies, such as screen readers, tactile manipulative or specialized software. This allowed the researchers to collect contextual data and gain a deeper understanding of how these tools support mathematics learning for students with disabilities.

All interviews and observations were audio-recorded with the participants' consent to maintain accuracy and authenticity. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim for analysis. The researchers employed thematic analysis to examine the collected data and identify recurring themes related to the use of assistive technologies in mathematics instruction for learners with disabilities. First, the researchers familiarized themselves with the data by carefully reviewing and rereading the interview transcripts and written responses. Initial observations were noted to highlight significant statements related to learners' difficulties, assistive technologies used by teachers, and challenges in implementation.

Next, the data were coded by labeling meaningful segments that reflected key ideas relevant to the objectives of the study. Similar codes were then grouped to form broader themes such as common learning difficulties in mathematics, assistive technologies used in instruction, challenges in technology integration, and the support needed by teachers.

The themes were subsequently reviewed and refined to ensure that they accurately represented the participants' responses and aligned with the purpose of the study. Finally, the researchers interpreted and described the themes, using representative responses from participants to provide deeper insights into teachers' experiences in integrating assistive technologies in mathematics instruction for learners with disabilities.

To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of participants, personal identifiers were anonymized with the data securely stored with access restricted to the researchers. The findings were presented in aggregated form to prevent the identification of individual participants. Ethical research principles were strictly followed throughout the study, ensuring the participants' rights, privacy, and dignities were upheld at all times.

Conceptual Framework

To provide clarity on the study, the researchers developed their own conceptual diagram to depict the research flow. The following figure illustrates how the researchers arrived at their conclusions. Notably, the study integrates the use of assistive technology in mathematics education to support learners with disabilities.

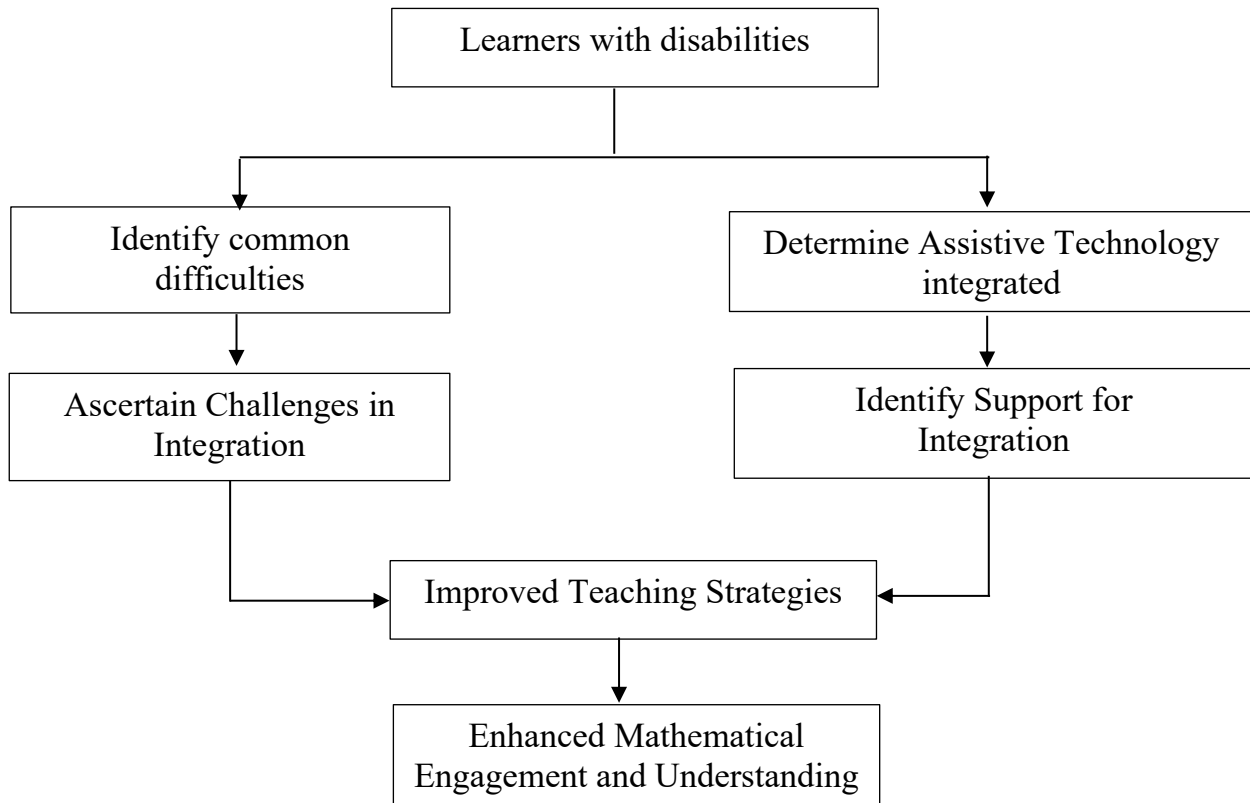


Figure 1 Research Paradigm

The figure presented illustrates the conceptual framework of the study, outlining the systematic process followed by the researchers to achieve the desired outcomes. This framework offers a structured approach to addressing the needs of learners with disabilities, focusing on the integration of assistive technology in mathematics to enhance both engagement and understanding.

The first stage of the research process centers on learners with disabilities. It emphasizes the importance of providing these learners with access to assistive technologies, ensuring equitable educational opportunities and levelling the playing field. By equipping students with the necessary tools, this stage aims to remove barriers to learning, allowing them to fully participate in mathematical education.

The second stage focuses on the integration of assistive tools to create a more inclusive and adaptive learning environment. This stage is built upon individualized teaching approaches that cater to the specific needs of learners with disabilities. By recognizing the strengths, challenges, and potential of each student, educators can develop personalized learning plans that foster both academic and personal growth. These tailored approaches ensure that each learner receives the support needed to succeed.

The final stage of the framework emphasizes improved mathematical engagement and understanding. It measures the extent to which learners achieve their educational goals, demonstrating their progress in acquiring both knowledge and skills. This stage reflects the outcomes of the integration of assistive technology and individualized instruction, highlighting the impact on learners' overall mathematical performance.

This framework underscores the importance of a holistic approach to supporting learners with disabilities. By combining assistive technology, ethical accessibility, and individualized teaching strategies, educators can cultivate an environment where all students have the opportunity to succeed academically and thrive socially.

Results

1. Common Difficulties encountered by Learners with Disabilities as Perceived by Teachers

The responses revealed that learners with disabilities (LWDs) face multiple challenges in mathematics learning. Thematic analysis identified common difficulties reflected in Table 1.

Table 1 Common Difficulties encountered by Learners with Disabilities as Perceived by Teachers

Themes	Subthemes	Exemplar Texts
Fear and Anxiety	Fear in solving math problems	"Fear in Mathematics and lack of confidence are the reasons for disliking the subject." [P5]
	Mathematics anxiety	"When they overcome their fear in solving mathematics." [P1]
Low Self-Esteem	Inconsistent learning focus	"Low self-esteem, no consistency in learning focus." [P2]
	Lack of confidence	"Lack of confidence or anxiety due to past difficulties." [P6]
Conceptual Issues	Difficulty processing concepts	"LWDs have difficulty in processing mathematical concepts." [P3]
	Struggles with problem-solving	"Learners often struggle with problem solving and understanding abstract concepts." [P4]
Sensory Impairment	Poor eyesight affects learning	"My learners suffer from poor eyesight... The primary difficulty in math is appreciating math visually." [P7]

The table shows the analysis of participants' responses in the conducted interviews, which revealed four major themes: fear and anxiety, low self-esteem, conceptual issues, and sensory impairments. A subtheme under fear and anxiety, mathematics anxiety, emerged when Participant 1 stated:

"When they overcome their fear in solving mathematics." [P1]

This statement indicates that learners with disabilities often experience anxiety when faced with mathematical problems, which affects their confidence and engagement in learning.



This fear often stems from repeated struggles, negative experiences, and difficulties in processing mathematical concepts. Over time, they may develop the belief that they are incapable of doing math, leading to avoidance and low motivation. Mathematics anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviour and a lack of motivation to participate in math-related activities. According to Smith & Johnson (2020), math anxiety is a significant factor affecting students' performance, particularly among those with learning disabilities.

Another subtheme, low self-esteem, was observed in the responses of several participants, such as:

“Lack of confidence or anxiety due to past difficulties, inconsistent concentration and focus.” [P6]

This statement suggests that prior negative experiences in mathematics may contribute to reduced self-confidence among LWDs when engaging with mathematical tasks. Learners who struggle with mathematics from an early age may develop a fixed mindset that prevents them from believing in their ability to improve. This aligns with the study of Brown and White (2019), which states that building a positive learning environment is essential in fostering confidence among students with disabilities.

A significant theme that emerged was conceptual issues. Participant 3 expressed that:

“LWDs have difficulty in processing mathematical concepts. Some struggle in calculations and problem-solving, recalling math facts and formulas.” [P3]

This response indicates that LWDs experience cognitive barriers when learning mathematics, which affects their ability to understand concepts and apply formulas correctly. These difficulties often result in slower progress and frustration. According to Rubinsten and Tannock (2010), learners with math-related learning disabilities often struggle with number processing, working memory, and abstract reasoning, key cognitive functions needed in mathematics. To address these challenges, structured learning approaches such as step-by-step instruction, visual aids, and scaffold problem-solving are essential in supporting their comprehension and helping them build confidence.

Lastly, under sensory impairment, it was noted that visual disabilities greatly impact learning in mathematics. Participant 7 stated:

“My learners suffer from poor eyesight... The primary difficulty in math is appreciating math visually.” [P7]

This emphasizes that visual impairment presents a major barrier in accessing mathematical content, particularly when instructional materials rely heavily on visual representation. According to Shahzad et al. (2026), assistive technology, such as screen magnifiers and tactile graphics, can significantly enhance mathematical learning for students with visual impairments.

2. Assistive Technology Integrated by Teachers

Table 2 shows the various difficulties that impact the integration of assistive technology in mathematics education for learners with disabilities. Several themes emerged after thorough analysis namely cognitive and emotional challenges, physical and sensory limitations, diverse needs of learners with disabilities, engagement and motivation barriers, learning gaps and instructional challenges, technology access and training limitations, and implementation and support challenges.

Table 2 Assistive Technology Integrated by Teachers

Theme	Subthemes	Exemplar Texts
Cognitive and Emotional Challenges	Math anxiety and low self-esteem	“LWDs have difficulty in processing mathematical concepts...” [P3]
	Difficulty in understanding concepts and solving problems	“Low self-esteem, no consistency in learning focus” [P2]
	Negative attitude toward mathematics	“Fear in Mathematics and lack of confidence...” [P5]
Physical and Sensory Limitations	Visual and hearing impairments	“My learners suffer from poor eyesight...” [P7]
	Writing and reading difficulties due to physical/sensory issues	“If they cannot see well, hear, walk, or not able to write well.” [P1] “Hearing impairment, difficulty in listening and communicating with the teacher and classmates.” [P5]
Diverse Needs of Learners with Disabilities	Varying challenges depending on disability type	“Each type of disability requires different [support]...” [P4]
	Emotional, social, and performance variations	“Different disabilities have unique difficulties...” [P7] “Some strive, some are not...” [P7]
Engagement and Motivation Barriers	Frustration and confusion with math tasks	“These difficulties lead to frustration...” [P3]
	Reduced motivation and attention	“It hinders the motivation and engagement...” [P2, P6] “Lower engagement as students may feel discouraged...” [P4]
Learning Gaps and Instructional Challenges	Weak foundational math skills	“Reading comprehension and writing numbers...” [P6]
	Reading and comprehension difficulties	“New concepts take time to understand...” [P5] “Difficulty in following instructions...” [P2]
Technology Access and Training Limitations	Lack of tools and unfamiliarity with assistive technology	“Limited resources and time constraints...” [P4]
	Limited training for teachers and reluctance from students	“Lack of familiarity with available tools...” [P6] “Some students were also reluctant...” [P3]
Implementation and Support Challenges	Inconsistent use of assistive technology	“Lack of support results to inconsistent implementation...” [P3] “Without proper training and institutional support...” [P4]
	Lack of institutional support and training	“If lack resources, they are less motivated...” [P2]

The table presents the analysis of participants' responses regarding the integration of assistive technology and the challenges learners with disabilities (LWDs) face in mathematics. It revealed several major themes: cognitive and emotional challenges, physical and sensory limitations, diverse learner needs, engagement and motivation barriers, learning gaps, and technology-related issues. One of the major themes is the cognitive and emotional challenges, emerged strongly from the responses. Participant 3 stated:

“LWDs have difficulty in processing mathematical concepts...” [P3]

This response indicates that students struggle with understanding and applying mathematical ideas. This cognitive strain often leads to emotional distress, such as frustration and academic burnout. Participant 2 stated:

“Low self-esteem, no consistency in learning focus.” [P2]

The low self-esteem is often rooted in repeated failure or negative experiences, which can reinforce a fixed mindset and lead to disengagement. According to Gök et al. (2019), learners with learning disabilities tend to experience higher levels of math anxiety and lower confidence, which directly correlates with their academic performance and willingness to participate in class activities. Emphasized that emotional challenges such as fear and hopelessness often serve as significant barriers to mathematical achievement among students with special needs.

Another important theme was physical and sensory limitations, where visual and hearing impairment hinder students' access to math content. Participant 7 stated:

“My learners suffer from poor eyesight...” [P7]

It emphasizes a critical barrier faced by students with visual impairment in mathematics instruction. Visual challenges limit students' ability to engage with traditional instructional materials, particularly when mathematical concepts are presented through graphs, diagrams, charts, or small-text problem sets. According to Roberts and Lewis (2020), students with visual impairment often struggle with standard print-based content, which can hinder their academic performance and confidence unless proper accommodations are in place. Research by Al-Azawei et al. (2016) support this, noting that inclusive education must employ multimodal learning resources and assistive technologies such as screen readers, tactile graphics, and text-enlarging tools to ensure meaningful participation for learners with sensory disabilities. Additionally, emphasize that without access to appropriate visual aids or technology for example large-font materials or magnifiers, visually impaired students are at a significantly higher risk of academic disengagement, particularly in visually demanding subjects like mathematics. Therefore, addressing visual impairment through targeted support and accessibility measures is essential for fostering equitable learning environments.

“Fear in Mathematics and lack of confidence...” [P5]

Sensory impairments limit learners' ability to receive instruction, especially when teaching relies heavily on auditory and visual cues. According to Al-Azawei et al. (2016), learners with sensory disabilities require adaptive technologies and multimodal resources to participate meaningfully in digital and traditional learning environments. Without proper accommodations, these students are at a higher risk of falling behind.

The diverse needs of learners with disabilities also became apparent through the interviews. Teachers acknowledged the necessity of differentiated support depending on the type and severity of each student's condition. Participant 4 stated:

“Each type of disability requires different [support]...” [P4]

This highlights the need for inclusive education practices that recognize and respond to learner variability. Participant 7 stated:

“Some strive, some are not,” [P7]

This response indicates that the wide range of academic responses among LWDs. A study by Schwab & Alnahdi (2020) emphasized that inclusive teaching must be rooted in

universal design for learning (UDL) principles to effectively cater to students with diverse learning profiles. Without tailored instruction, students with disabilities often face compounded barriers in core subjects like mathematics.

A recurring theme was engagement and motivation barriers, where frustration and confusion caused by complex tasks diminish learners' drive to participate. Participant 3 stated:

"These difficulties lead to frustration..." [P3]

"Lower engagement as students may feel discouraged..." [P4]

These experiences reflect a broader phenomenon where repeated academic difficulties result in emotional withdrawal and avoidance behavior. Kiuru et al. (2019) found that students with persistent struggles in mathematics report decreased enjoyment and increased anxiety, which significantly impacts their classroom behavior and academic outcomes. Furthermore, Kaya et al. (2022) suggested that fostering a positive emotional climate in the classroom can mitigate these motivational barriers and enhance learning outcomes for students with disabilities.

Another key issue was learning gaps and instructional challenges, particularly related to foundational skills and reading comprehension. Participant 5 stated:

"Fear in Mathematics and lack of confidence..." [P5]

This points to delayed cognitive processing that slows down the acquisition of new mathematical ideas. Participant 6 stated:

"Reading comprehension and writing numbers..." [P6]

These issues contribute to gaps that widen over time, making it difficult for learners to progress. According to Seo and Heo (2019), struggling learners often need scaffolded instruction and repeated practice to internalize key mathematical skills. Without proper interventions, these gaps may lead to cumulative academic failure. Milošević et al. (2024) further emphasized that unresolved foundational deficits in math can lead to long-term academic avoidance and poor achievement, particularly among students with learning differences.

The table also reflected technology access and training limitations, a theme underscoring systemic barriers in the implementation of assistive tools. Participant 6 stated:

"Lack of familiarity with available tools," [P6]

"Some students were also reluctant." [P3]

These insights suggest that the mere presence of assistive technology is not enough and both students and teachers must receive proper training and support to integrate these tools effectively. According to Alper & Raharinirina (2006), many teachers feel unprepared to use assistive technologies due to limited exposure during professional training. This hinders their confidence and competency in inclusive settings. Furthermore, Jwaifell and Gasaymeh (2013) highlighted that students' reluctance to use assistive technology is often tied to stigma and lack of familiarity, underscoring the need for awareness-building and positive reinforcement.

Implementation and support challenges were mentioned frequently. Participant 4 stated:

"Without proper training and institutional support..." [P4]

"If lack resources, they are less motivated." [P2]

These responses indicate that successful integration of assistive technology depends heavily on administrative backing, teacher training, and the availability of resources. According to Nelson & Hawk (2020), institutional commitment including policy alignment, funding, and on-going professional development is essential for sustaining inclusive practices and maximizing the benefits of assistive technology.

3. Challenges faced in Integrating Assistive Technology into Mathematics Instruction

Table 3 presents the various assistive technologies used by educators to support learners with disabilities (LWDs) in mathematics instruction.

The table identifies the assistive technologies commonly used by educators to support LWDs in mathematics.

Visual and hands-on tools, such as step-by-step presentations and manipulative, help students better understand mathematical concepts.

Table 3 Challenges faced in Integrating Assistive Technology into Mathematics Instruction

Themes	Subthemes	Exemplar Texts
Visual and Hands-On Tools	Use of visual-based instruction	"I integrate visual-based learning tools to support understanding." [P4]
Digital Learning Tools	Interactive math websites	"Interactive math software and learning websites such as Kahoot Khan Academy." [P3]
Accessibility Features	Text enlarging and contrast tools	"Providing activity sheets with large fonts." [P7]

Participant 4 stated:

"I integrate visual-based learning tools to support understanding," [P4]

It highlights the importance of visual aids in helping students comprehend complex topics. Integrating visual-based learning tools into mathematics instruction significantly enhances comprehension, particularly for students with learning disabilities. Visual representations, such as diagrams and models, provide concrete ways to grasp abstract mathematical concepts which facilitate better understanding. Research indicates that employing visual strategies can support memory and processing in students with learning disabilities, enabling them to engage more effectively with challenging mathematical topics (Hord et al., 2021). Similarly, interactive learning tools such as Kahoot and Khan Academy provide engaging methods for students to practice mathematical skills. As Participant 3 mentioned:

"Interactive math software and learning websites such as Kahoot, Khan Academy," [P3]

These platforms offer a gamified learning experience that increases motivation and participation. Integrating interactive mathematics software and learning platforms like Kahoot and Khan Academy into educational settings has been shown to significantly enhance student engagement and academic performance. Kahoot, a game-based learning platform, employs gamification strategies that foster motivation and active participation among students. A comprehensive meta-analysis by Özdemir (2025) indicates that Kahoot has a substantial positive effect on student motivation. The study also suggests that Kahoot can reduce student anxiety by creating a more engaging and supportive learning environment. Accessibility features also play a crucial role in supporting students with visual impairments. Participant 7 explained:

"Providing activity sheets with large fonts,"[P7]

It emphasizes how text enlargement helps visually impaired students interact with mathematical content effectively. Integrating assistive technologies improves student engagement, enhances retention, and reduces math-related anxiety. These findings indicate that a combination of visual, digital, and accessibility-focused tools can significantly enhance the learning experience for students with disabilities in mathematics education.



4. Support Needed to Effectively Integrate Assistive Technology

Table 4 shows the various forms of support needed to effectively integrate assistive technology in mathematics education for learners with disabilities.

The table presents the effectiveness of integration of assistive technology in mathematics instruction for learners with disabilities require various forms of support. Participants emphasized the need for institutional backing, financial assistance, teacher training, and collaboration among stakeholders. One of the main barriers identified was the lack of funding and institutional backing for assistive technology. Participant 1 stated:

"Financial support from the government to support these learners having disabilities."
[P1]

This indicates that without sufficient financial resources, schools struggle to provide necessary tools and accommodations for students with disabilities. Government financial support plays a crucial role in providing necessary resources and accommodations for learners with disabilities.

Table 4 Support Needed to Effectively Integrate Assistive Technology

Theme	Sub-theme	Exemplar Texts
Resource Provision	Financial Support	"Financial support from the government to support these learners having disabilities." [P1]
	Assistive Technology Tools	"Schools should provide training, access to assistive tools, and a supportive environment." [P4]
	Learning Materials	"Providing learner's activity sheet with large fonts (LAS) is most applicable..." [P7]
	Visual Aids	"For those with poor eyesight, I can enlarge my visual aids." [P1]
	Equipment Access	"Lack of familiarity and availability of the equipment." [P2]
Teacher Training & Capacity Building	Lack of Training	"Lack of familiarity with available tools... do not know how to use." [P6]
	Need for Development Programs	"The school must provide programs and strengthen them..." [P6]
	Integration Challenges	"Limited resources and time constraints make it difficult..." [P4]
Institutional and Administrative Support	School Programs	"The school must have an effective program." [P2]
	Policy and Planning	"It requires strong support... training, resources and institutional commitment." [P3]
	Administrative Commitment	"The school must provide programs and strengthen it..." [P6]
Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement	Teacher Collaboration	"Working together allows teachers to share strategies..." [P4]
	Parent and Expert Involvement	"Collaboration among teachers, administrators, parents, and technology experts..." [P6]
	Collective Decision-Making	"Conduct a meeting to talk about possible solutions..." [P1]

In the Philippines, the enactment of Republic Act No. 11650 in March 2022 underscores this commitment by mandating free public early and basic education services for learners with disabilities. This legislation also calls for the establishment of Inclusive Learning Resource

Centers in every city and municipality, aiming to enhance educational accessibility and inclusivity (Department of Education, 2022).

Furthermore, Participant 4 emphasized, "Schools should provide training, access to assistive tools, and a supportive environment," highlighting the importance of school administrations prioritizing accessibility and inclusive education. Effective integration of assistive technology in educational settings necessitates comprehensive teacher training, access to appropriate tools, and the cultivation of a supportive environment. Educators proficient in assistive technologies can tailor learning experiences to accommodate diverse student needs, enhancing engagement and academic performance. Retiro et al. (2025) emphasized that while teachers generally hold positive attitudes toward assistive technology, its successful implementation depends on increased access to specific tools and improved teacher training to ensure effective integration into inclusive and special education classrooms in the Philippines.

Educators require continuous training to effectively use assistive technology in their instruction. Participant 6 stated:

"The school must provide programs and strengthen them so that it will be beneficial to learners with special needs." [P6]

Without proper training, teachers may not fully utilize available resources or implement strategies that enhance learning for students with disabilities. A study by Jones & Smith (2019) found that professional development in assistive technology significantly improved the implementation of adaptive learning tools in classrooms. Equipping teachers with the necessary skills ensures that assistive technologies are integrated effectively into lesson planning and instruction, thereby improving student outcomes.

Collaboration between teachers, administrators, parents, and technology experts was also identified as essential for successful implementation. Participant 2 stated:

"Collaboration among teachers, administrators, and parents helps create a sustainable program for assistive technology." [P2]

This suggests that when all stakeholders work together, they can better assess student needs, secure necessary resources, and ensure the technology is used effectively. Schools that foster a collaborative environment where all stakeholders are involved in decision-making are more likely to create sustainable, long-term solutions for integrating assistive technology.

5. Proposed Structured Support System for Learners with Disabilities

To address the unique needs of learners with disabilities, the researchers propose the SMART Support Framework, a guiding model that outlines key strategies to enhance instruction, foster engagement, and ensure equitable learning opportunities for students with disabilities. Each component of SMART represents a critical element in building an effective and sustainable support system.

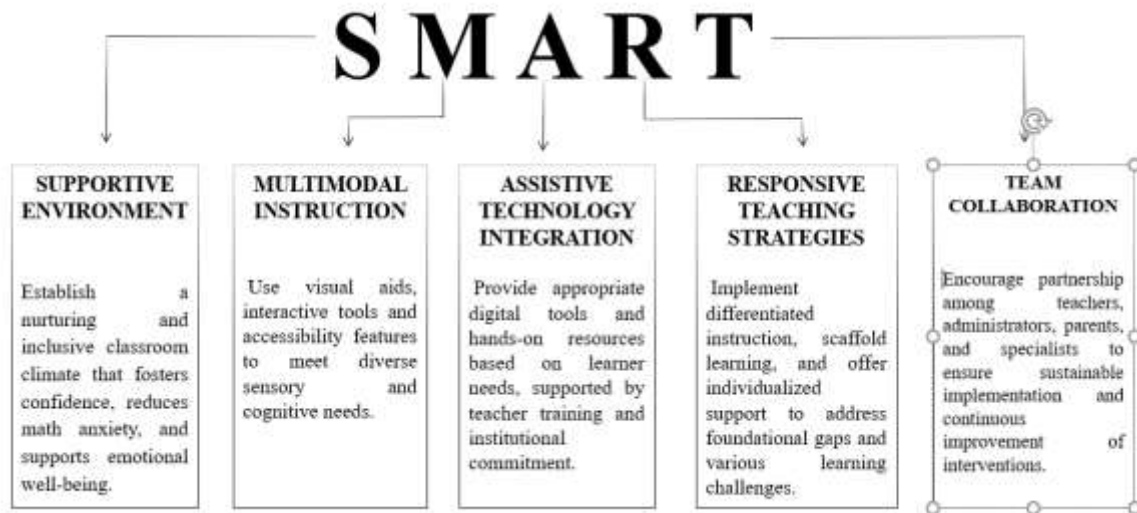


Figure 2 SMART Support Framework

The SMART Framework is a structured support system designed to help learners with disabilities succeed in mathematics by addressing their cognitive, emotional, and sensory needs. It promotes an inclusive classroom environment that reduces math anxiety, builds confidence, and encourages participation. The framework emphasizes multimodal instruction, assistive technology integration, and responsive teaching strategies such as differentiation and scaffolding. It also highlights the importance of collaboration among teachers, administrators, parents, and specialists to ensure continuous support. The SMART Framework serves as a practical guide for mathematics teachers in delivering inclusive and responsive instruction for learners with disabilities.

Discussions

After analyzing and interpreting the gathered data, the following key findings emerged:

1. Learners with disabilities face multiple challenges in mathematics education. These challenges include cognitive difficulties, where students struggle to understand abstract mathematical concepts, psychological challenges such as anxiety and lack of confidence, and sensory difficulties that hinder their ability to fully engage in lessons. Teachers reported that these challenges significantly affect student participation and learning outcomes making it essential to provide specialized instructional support.

2. Teachers integrate various forms of assistive technology to support learners with disabilities. This includes the use of visual aids such as enlarged text, graphical representations, and tactile materials to enhance comprehension. Digital tools like speech-to-text applications, screen readers, and interactive educational software are also utilized to accommodate different learning needs. These technologies help bridge learning gaps, promote inclusivity, and create a more engaging mathematics learning environment.

3. The integration of assistive technology in mathematics instruction faces multiple barriers. Teachers identified several challenges, including the lack of institutional support, insufficient financial resources, and limited access to training on assistive technology. Many educators expressed difficulties in acquiring the necessary skills to effectively implement these technologies, leading to inconsistencies in their application. Additionally, outdated school facilities and a shortage of technological resources further hinder the seamless integration of assistive technology into the curriculum.

4. There is a need for structured support systems to ensure the sustainable integration of assistive technology. Providing ongoing professional development programs for teachers, securing adequate funding for assistive tools, and fostering strong collaboration among educators, parents, and policymakers are crucial steps toward addressing the current challenges. By strengthening these support mechanisms, schools can create a more inclusive educational environment that promotes equitable learning opportunities for all students.

5. The SMART Framework offers a structured support system that addresses the cognitive, emotional, and sensory needs of learners with disabilities, helping reduce fear and anxiety in math and building a foundation for confidence and engagement. By creating a supportive environment and using inclusive strategies, it empowers learners to overcome emotional barriers and participate more actively in mathematics learning.

Conclusion and suggestions

Conclusions

Based on the above-mentioned findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Learners with disabilities require targeted interventions in mathematics education. The study revealed that without specialized instructional strategies, these students struggle with comprehension and engagement.

2. Assistive technology plays a crucial role in enhancing the learning experience of students with disabilities. The use of visual, digital, and interactive tools significantly contributes to improved comprehension, motivation, and participation among students.

3. Institutional and financial constraints limit the successful adoption of assistive technology. The lack of funding, outdated infrastructure, and insufficient teacher training are major obstacles in promoting an inclusive learning environment.

4. Sustainable implementation of assistive technology requires collaboration and continuous professional development.

5. The proposed SMART structured support by the researchers maybe used by the mathematics teachers.

Limitations

1. The study focused primarily on the perspectives of teachers regarding the difficulties encountered by learners with disabilities and the assistive technologies used in mathematics instruction. The perspectives and experiences of the learners with disabilities themselves were not directly included.

2. The study involved a limited number of participants from specific educational settings, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other schools, regions, or educational contexts with different resources and support systems.

3. The data collected were based mainly on teachers' self-reported experiences and perceptions, which may be influenced by personal biases, interpretations, or recall limitations.

4. The study specifically examined the integration of assistive technologies in mathematics instruction, and therefore the findings may not fully reflect the use and challenges of assistive technologies in other subject areas.

5. The study did not extensively examine the long-term effectiveness or impact of assistive technologies on learners' mathematical achievement and independence, as it was limited to observations and experiences within a specific time frame.

Recommendations

Considering the significant findings revealed and conclusions drawn in this study, the researchers suggested the following recommendations.

1. Develop and implement a structured support system for learners with disabilities. Schools should establish dedicated intervention programs that cater to the specific needs of students with disabilities.
2. Promote the consistent and effective use of structured support system for learners with disabilities through clear implementation guidelines, ongoing monitoring of student progress, and strong collaboration among teachers, administrators, and support staff to maintain inclusive educational practices.
3. Strengthen the integration of assistive technology by improving access to resources and training and increase institutional and financial support for assistive technology implementation.
4. Provide regular teacher training and capacity-building programs and conduct further research on the long-term impact of assistive technology on student performance.
5. Promote strong collaboration between teachers, school administrators, parents, and support staff to enhance inclusive practices and ensure the holistic development of learners with disabilities.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

This research provides new understanding about the integration of assistive technology in mathematics instruction for learners with disabilities. It shows how tools such as screen readers, tactile graphics, interactive software, and digital manipulatives improve accessibility and engagement. These technologies help students with diverse needs participate more actively in learning and promote equal opportunities in education.

The study also highlights the importance of teacher training and preparedness in using assistive technology. When teachers are equipped with the right knowledge and skills, they can adjust their teaching methods to support individual learning needs. This approach helps students become more confident, independent, and motivated to learn mathematics while reducing fear and anxiety.

In a broader sense, the study contributes to building an inclusive society that values diversity and equality. Providing access to assistive technology allows learners with disabilities to become more involved in school and community activities. It encourages cooperation, empathy, and respect among students, teachers, and families.

The findings can guide schools and policymakers in improving educational programs and creating inclusive environments. By supporting the use of assistive technology, communities can ensure that every learner has the opportunity to succeed academically and socially. This leads to stronger, more inclusive communities where education becomes a shared path toward progress and empowerment.

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Factors Influencing Consumer Trust and Buying Behavior in the Live Streaming Commerce in Thailand: A Qualitative Interview Study

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(Received: 11 March 2026, Revised: 29 April 2026, Accepted: 30 April 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.287749>

Abstract

This study explores the factors shaping consumer trust and buying behavior in the live streaming commerce in Thailand. Using a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 live shoppers and 10 live streamers who had direct experience buying or selling through Facebook Live and TikTok Live. The collected interview data were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify key themes and meaningful insights on consumer trust and buying behavior in live streaming commerce. The results identify six interrelated factors that shape trust and buying behavior: reputation, expertise, after-sales service, responsiveness, perceived price fairness, and cash on delivery (COD). These factors show that consumer trust in live streaming commerce is shaped not only by seller credibility and product knowledge, but also by real-time interaction, post-purchase support, fair pricing, and safer payment options. This study addresses a gap in the literature by providing in-depth qualitative evidence on trust formation and buying behavior, an area that remains underexplored in existing qualitative studies on live streaming commerce. The findings are valuable to local sellers and digital entrepreneurs in building consumer trust, enhancing buying behavior, and supporting the economic sustainability of live streaming commerce.

Keywords: Live streaming, Live streaming commerce, Trust, Buying behavior, Interview study



Introduction

Live streaming commerce has become an increasingly important mode of online selling and continues to gain momentum in the digital marketplace (Wang et al., 2022). It is widely viewed as a practical and relatively cost-effective way for sellers to interact with consumers in real time (Chen et al., 2022). Compared with conventional online shopping channels, live streaming creates a more interactive environment by allowing direct communication between sellers and viewers, making the shopping experience more engaging and socially connected (Wang et al., 2022; Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020; Xiong et al., 2024). In addition, live video allows consumers to examine products more clearly and receive immediate responses, which may help ease uncertainty, build trust, and encourage buying behavior (Ding et al., 2025).

Beyond its role as a commercial selling channel, live streaming commerce also offers wider value for local businesses, small entrepreneurs, and community-based sellers. By lowering entry barriers and reducing the cost of accessing digital markets, live streaming platforms allow small-scale sellers, home-based businesses, and local entrepreneurs to reach wider audiences without requiring substantial investment in physical stores or advanced e-commerce infrastructure. This, in turn, helps increase product visibility and create new income opportunities for local and rural sellers (Chen et al., 2024).

However, despite this potential to promote inclusive economic participation and the enhanced visibility and real-time interaction enabled by live streaming features, uncertainty may still remain a key concern for consumers (Senali et al., 2024). Specifically, purchasing through live streaming can still expose consumers to transaction-related problems, non-delivery, poor product quality, and opportunistic seller behavior (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). As a result, trust remains a persistent challenge in live streaming commerce and may deter consumers from making purchases (Zhang et al., 2022). Thus, further research is needed to explore how trust is developed and how buying behavior is shaped in the live streaming commerce environment.

Existing quantitative studies have examined factors influencing consumer trust and purchase behavior in the live streaming commerce. Most prior research has relied on empirical analyses focusing on central and peripheral route factors (Chen et al., 2022; Ding et al., 2025), IT affordances (Xiong et al., 2024), and perceived value (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020; Deng & Tian, 2025). However, these quantitative studies may not fully capture consumers' nuanced perceptions and lived experiences. Recent qualitative studies have also investigated how live-streaming celebrities influence economic transformation (Guan & Zhou, 2025) and how live streamer characteristics affect impulsive buying behavior (Maharani et al., 2025). Nevertheless, existing research has paid limited attention to how consumers interpret trust cues and make purchase decisions during live sessions. This study goes beyond identifying trust-related factors by offering additional insight into the underlying factors that shape consumer trust and influence buying behavior in real-time live streaming contexts through the integrated perspectives of both streamers and shoppers.

Objective

To address this gap, this study adopts a qualitative interview approach to identify and examine the key factors that shape consumer trust and buying behavior in live streaming commerce, with particular attention to how these factors may help local sellers, small entrepreneurs, and community-based businesses use live streaming effectively to increase sales in digital markets.



The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the factors that influence consumer trust and buying behavior in live streaming commerce.
2. To explore the perspectives of both streamers and viewers on how these factors shape consumer trust and buying behavior.

Literature review

Trust theory

Trust refers to a consumer's expectation that the other party in an exchange will behave in an honest, appropriate, and non-exploitative manner (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). In commercial relationships, trust is important because it helps establish stable connections between exchange partners, lowers concerns about possible harm, and supports the formation of stronger relational bonds (Deng & Tian, 2025; Xiong & Li, 2024). Prior studies also suggest that trust is grounded in perceptions of another party's trustworthiness and serves as a core basis for buyer–seller relationships (Artuğer et al., 2024; Yahia et al., 2018). As a complex concept, trust develops when consumers perceive sellers as dependable and believe they will fulfill their promises (Chen et al., 2022; Kim & Kim, 2021).

Trust is generally viewed as consisting of both cognitive and affective components (Sassenberg et al., 2026). Cognitive trust is consumers' rational assessment of whether the seller is competent and reliable (Qin et al., 2024). This dimension is commonly associated with perceptions of integrity, benevolence, and competence (Sassenberg et al., 2026). Emotional, or affective, trust, by contrast, is shaped by consumers' feelings toward the seller and their interpretation of the seller's personal qualities (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). It is strengthened when sellers are perceived as careful and responsive to customers' needs (Qin et al., 2024).

In online commerce, trust becomes especially important because consumers often interact with unfamiliar sellers and cannot physically examine products before purchase (Senali et al., 2024). Under these conditions, trust helps reduce uncertainty and perceived risk in the transaction process (Deng & Tian, 2025; Xiao et al., 2019). It also promotes favorable exchange relationships, encourages longer-term connections between buyers and sellers, and influences consumers' buying behavior (Artuğer et al., 2024; Kim & Kim, 2021; Yahia et al., 2018). Building on trust theory, this study examines the underlying elements of consumer trust and buying behavior within the context of the live streaming commerce.

Methodology

To generate detailed insights into the behavior and perspectives of live shoppers and live streamers, semi-structured interviews were conducted via video calls between May 2025 and March 2026. This interview approach is widely used in qualitative research because it facilitates a detailed understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives. Its flexible and open-ended structure also allows researchers to explore relevant issues in greater depth, clarify participants' responses, and capture unexpected insights that emerge during the interview process (Chand, 2025). This, in turn, provided a richer understanding of the dynamics shaping trust development and buying behavior in live-streaming commerce. Thailand was chosen as the geographical focus of this study due to its rapidly expanding live streaming market. Driven by rising demand for real-time interactive ecosystems, the live streaming market is projected to maintain strong momentum with an average annual growth rate of 22.8% from 2025 to 2031 (Mobility Foresights, 2025).



To obtain information-rich data, purposive sampling was employed. Participants were intentionally selected based on the research objectives and their relevant characteristics, experience, and potential to provide insight into the phenomenon under study (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2024). Accordingly, two participant groups were included: (1) live shoppers ($n = 15$) who had at least one year of experience buying through live streaming and had bought products via Facebook Live or TikTok Live at least twice per week, and (2) live streamers ($n = 10$) who had more than one year of experience selling through Facebook Live or TikTok Live and who conducted live sales at least three times per week. A critical advantage of this study lies in its qualitative design, which contributes to the live-streaming literature by incorporating the perspectives of both live streamers and shoppers. By including both groups, the study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence trust and buying behavior in live-streaming commerce. A sample of 25 participants was considered sufficient for this qualitative study. Recent methodological guidance suggests that adequacy in qualitative sampling should be judged according to the analytical purpose of the study and the type of saturation being pursued, rather than by applying a single fixed number. Thematic saturation can sometimes be achieved with about 9 interviews, while meaning saturation may require closer to 24 interviews (Wutich et al., 2024). Based on this guidance, the inclusion of 25 participants was regarded as appropriate for producing rich and meaningful qualitative insights. In addition, saturation was supported by the observation that the later interviews mainly confirmed and elaborated on the existing themes rather than generating substantially new themes. The six themes—reputation, expertise, after-sales service, responsiveness, perceived price fairness, and cash on delivery—appeared repeatedly across both shopper and streamer interviews, indicating that the data were sufficient to support the thematic analysis.

Prior to each interview, participants were provided with clear information about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their involvement, their right to withdraw at any stage, and how the information they shared would be used and protected. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before the interviews were conducted. To preserve anonymity and confidentiality, participants' real names and any personally identifiable information were excluded from the transcripts and the reporting of the findings (Nii Laryeafio & Ogbewe, 2023). All interviews were conducted in Thai, lasted approximately 30–40 minutes on average, and were audio-recorded with participants' consent. To improve the transparency and methodological clarity of the study, a semi-structured interview guide was developed. The semi-structured interview guide was developed to ensure that all participants were asked about the same core topic related to trust and buying behavior, while still allowing flexibility for participants to explain their experiences in their own words. After each interview, the audio files were transcribed in Thai and carefully checked against the original recordings to ensure that the meaning and context of participants' responses were accurately captured, consistent with Eftekhari's (2024) emphasis on verifying transcripts against audio recordings. Before coding and thematic analysis, all transcripts were anonymized by removing information that could identify participants, in line with guidance on anonymizing qualitative interview transcripts and protecting participants' confidentiality (Stam & Diaz, 2023).

Table 1 Interview Participant Profile (Live shoppers, n = 15)

Participant	Buying Experience	Platform(s) used	Purchase frequency
P1	2 years	TikTok Live	3-4 times/week
P2	1 year	TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P3	2.5 years	Facebook Live	4-6 times/week
P4	1.5 years	TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P5	3 years	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	3-4 times/week
P6	2 years	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P7	3 years	TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P8	1 year	TikTok Live	3-4 times/week
P9	2 years	TikTok Live, Facebook Live	2-3 times/week
P10	2 years	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	3-4 times/week
P11	1.5 years	TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P12	1.5 years	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P13	2 years	TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P14	1.5 years	TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P15	1 year	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	4-6 times/week

Table 2 Interview Participant Profile (Live streamers, n = 10)

Participant	Selling experience	Platform(s) used	Live sales frequency
P1	2 years	TikTok Live	3-4 times/week
P2	1.5 years	TikTok Live	4-6 times/week
P3	1.5 years	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	3-4 times/week
P4	3 years	Facebook Live	2-3 times/week
P5	2.5 years	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	4-6 times/week
P6	2 years	TikTok Live	5-6 times/week
P7	4 years	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	2-3 times/week
P8	1 year	TikTok Live	3-5 times/week
P9	3.5 years	Facebook Live, TikTok Live	4-5 times/week
P10	2 years	TikTok Live	5-6 times/week

The qualitative interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and interpret recurring patterns of meaning. Guided by Braun and Clarke's (2021) principles for quality practice in reflexive thematic analysis, the data were analyzed by first becoming familiar with the transcripts, then generating initial codes, developing and refining themes, defining and naming the themes, and finally producing the written analysis. To enhance analytical rigor and reduce potential researcher bias, member checking was conducted to validate the credibility of the study's interpretations (Birt et al., 2016). Specifically, the preliminary interpretations and findings were sent to participants so they could verify accuracy and confirm that their views had not been misinterpreted. In addition, potential researcher bias was minimized by involving multiple researchers in the analytical process and incorporating external feedback from other researchers during data interpretation, thereby enabling cross-



checking of the analysis (Lim, 2025). The analysis was further informed by Braun and Clarke's (2021) principles of quality practice in reflexive thematic analysis, helping to maintain transparency and rigor throughout the coding and theme development process. Collectively, these measures strengthened the trustworthiness of the findings and reduced the influence of individual subjectivity in data interpretation (Lim, 2025).

Results

The in-depth interviews revealed what shapes consumer trust and buying behavior in the live streaming commerce, drawing on perspectives from both live shoppers and live streamers. The results are presented in the following section. Six themes emerged from the interviews: reputation, expertise, after-sales service, responsiveness, perceived price fairness, and cash on delivery (COD).

Reputation

Perspective of live shoppers

Fourteen live shoppers emphasized that streamer reputation plays a central role in shaping trust and buying behavior. Reputable streamers were perceived as more accountable, which enhanced shoppers' sense of security, strengthened confidence in product authenticity and quality, and increased perceptions of transaction reliability. For example, one shopper indicated:

"I prefer buying from reputable streamers rather than unknown ones because their reputation signals accountability. It makes me confident that they'll be honest about the product information and won't sell fake or low-quality products. Also, I trust that the transaction will be reliable."

Perspective of live streamers

Nine streamers confirmed that a streamer's reputation is a critical asset for building customer trust and driving sales. They explained that a strong reputation helps attract larger audiences, reduces viewers' perceived risk, and signals credibility—making consumers more willing to believe product claims and complete purchases during live sessions. For example, one streamer mentioned:

"In my opinion, streamers with a good reputation have an easier time building trust. Since viewers already know them, they're more likely to tune in to their live sessions. Because of that reputation, viewers often assume the streamer has already screened the product quality and will step in to help if something goes wrong. So they feel more confident moving forward with a purchase."

Expertise

Perspective of live shoppers

Thirteen live shoppers indicated that expertise of the streamer—demonstrated through in-depth product understanding, clear explanations, and informative live demonstrations—positively shapes trust and strengthens consumers' willingness to buy. Participants explained that they value knowledgeable streamers who can answer questions promptly, provide accurate information, and present products effectively, as these qualities make the shopping experience feel more supportive and reliable. For example, one shopper shared:

"I like buying clothes and shoes through live streaming, and I usually have many questions. I prefer streamers who are knowledgeable and polite. When a streamer has expertise, they can recommend the right size and explain the product clearly, which builds my trust and makes me more willing to buy."



Perspective of live streamers

Nine live streamers emphasized that expertise in live streaming is an essential factor in strengthening customer trust and enhancing buying behavior. They described expertise as being reflected in extensive product knowledge, clear communication, and strategic planning—such as understanding audience behavior and choosing suitable times to go live. Streamers noted that these capabilities help sustain viewer engagement and enhance perceived credibility, making audiences more likely to trust product information and complete purchases. For example, one streamer explained:

“I’ve been selling shoes through live streaming for about three years, so I’ve learned about many types of shoes and how to explain them clearly. I can also recommend the right option for different customers. For instance, if someone has wider feet, I suggest sizing up for a better fit. When I can explain the product clearly and answer questions confidently, customers feel more assured and are more likely to make a purchase.”

After-sales service

Perspective of live shoppers

All live shoppers emphasized that after-sales service plays a key role in building trust and shaping buying behavior. Participants explained that post-sale support—such as being able to exchange or return products, prompt problem-solving, and a willingness to take responsibility—signals reliability and strengthens confidence in the seller. As a result, shoppers are more likely to purchase from streamers or shops that handle post-sale issues fairly and efficiently, and they are more willing to repurchase when they feel supported after the transaction. For example, one shopper shared:

“After-sales service is very important for online purchases. Once I ordered shoes that were too big and contacted the shop to exchange them. The shop allowed the exchange immediately. That experience increased my trust in the seller and made me want to buy again.”

Perspective of live streamers

All streamers indicated that after-sales service—such as promptly handling refunds, returns, exchanges, and post-purchase complaints—is a powerful driver of consumer trust and repeat purchases. They explained that effective post-sale support lowers customers’ perceived risk by demonstrating accountability and reliability, particularly when issues arise (e.g., receiving the wrong item, product defects, missing items, or shipping delays). By proactively resolving these post-purchase problems through timely responses and fair solutions, streamers strengthen customers’ confidence in the seller’s responsibility, cultivate longer-term relationships, and ultimately increase repurchase intentions. For example, one streamer explained:

“Post-purchase support is very important. I help customers solve any problem—whether they receive the wrong item, the product is defective, or the shipment is delayed. Taking responsibility for my customers helps me build trust and a long-term relationship with them, and it encourages repeat purchases.”

Responsiveness

Perspective of live shoppers

All live shoppers stated that streamer responsiveness—such as promptly answering questions, acknowledging comments, and actively engaging with viewers during the live session—is a key factor in strengthening trust and increasing buying behavior. Participants explained that when streamers are responsive to their questions and requests, shoppers feel that the streamer is attentive and reliable, the shopping experience becomes more personalized, and customers feel heard and supported. Responsiveness also signals genuine care and willingness



to assist, making shoppers more confident about completing a purchase in a fast-paced live environment. For example, one shopper shared:

“When I shop through live streaming, I often ask the streamer questions before buying—such as what material the product is made from, what sizes and colors are available, and whether it would suit me. I trust streamers who respond to my questions and requests because it gives me the answers I need and makes me feel acknowledged and valued. When a streamer is responsive, I feel more confident in them and am more likely to purchase from them.”

Perspective of live streamers

All live streamers emphasized that being responsive during live sessions strongly shapes customer trust and drives buying behavior. They noted that being responsive to customers—by paying attention to their comments and answering questions clearly and promptly—helps build trust and encourages viewers to buy. For example, one streamer shared:

“I think being responsive is very important for earning customers’ trust. During live streaming, I try to read every comment, call viewers by name, and answer their comments and inquiries as clearly as I can. When I respond quickly and provide the information customers are looking for, they trust me more and are more likely to place an order.”

Perceived price fairness

Perspective of live shoppers

Fourteen live shoppers agreed that fair pricing plays a crucial role in boosting consumer trust and buying behavior in live streaming commerce. Participants explained that it is easy to compare prices on online platforms—shoppers can simply search for the same product and immediately see prices from different online shops. When they perceive a seller’s price as reasonable, they feel the seller is being fair and not taking advantage of them. This sense of fairness strengthens trust and increases their willingness to purchase. In contrast, when prices are perceived as inflated, participants reported feeling hesitant and being more likely to leave the live session to look for better alternatives. For example, one shopper explained:

“Fair pricing really matters. Even if I really like the product, I’ll only buy it if the price feels reasonable. If it’s overpriced, I won’t buy. A fair price makes me trust the seller and the shop, and I feel more comfortable purchasing.”

Perspective of live streamers

Eight streamers noted that live shoppers are typically highly price-sensitive and often compare prices across multiple online channels. When a seller sets a price that is fair and affordable compared with the market, shoppers are more likely to trust the seller, make a purchase, and return for repeat purchases. For example, one seller shared:

“Before I set my price, I always check the market first to make sure I’m not pricing way higher than other sellers with similar products. Customers usually buy only when the price is fair. When they see a fair price, they trust my shop more—and they’re much more likely to come back and buy again.”

Cash on delivery (COD)

Perspective of live shoppers

All live shoppers indicated that cash on delivery (COD) is essential for building trust and strengthening buying behavior. Participants noted that COD is particularly important when shoppers feel uncertain about a seller’s reliability or a product’s quality. COD reduces perceived risk because customers pay only after the order arrives and they have an opportunity

to inspect the product, which makes them feel safer and more comfortable completing a purchase. For example, one shopper explained:

“COD matters a lot to me, especially when I buy from a shop for the first time. I feel more comfortable because I don’t have to pay upfront and worry about whether the seller will actually deliver. Once the parcel arrives, I can check if it looks like what I saw during the live and if the quality meets my expectations. That’s why COD makes me trust the shop more and feel more confident in proceeding with the purchase.”

Perspective of live streamers

All live streamers also emphasized that cash on delivery (COD) helps build trust and encourages purchases because it signals that the seller is reliable and will deliver the product as promised. With COD, customers do not need to pay in advance, which reduces concerns about being scammed or not receiving the order. For example, one streamer shared:

“Customers are usually afraid to transfer money because there are many online scams. COD makes them feel safer. When I offer COD, customers feel more certain that they will receive the product, so they trust the shop more and decide to purchase faster.”

Table 3 Summary of Thematic Analysis Results

Theme	Code	Role in building consumer trust	Contribution to buying behavior
Reputation	(C1) Recognition among viewers; (C2) Large customer base; (C3) Initial signal of credibility; (C4) Perceived high product quality	Acts as an initial signal of credibility, accountability, and product reliability.	Increases consumers' confidence in purchasing from the streamer.
Expertise	(C5) In-depth knowledge of products; (C6) Professional live-streaming skills; (C7) Clear product explanation and recommendation; (C8) Ability to address customer questions and problems	Demonstrates the streamer's competence, knowledge, and ability to reduce consumer uncertainty.	Helps consumers feel informed and reassured, increasing willingness to buy.
After-sales service	(C9) Exchange and return service; (C10) Refund support; (C11) Post-purchase responsibility	Signals responsibility and reliability beyond the point of purchase.	Increases consumer confidence, satisfaction, and repeat purchase intention.
Responsiveness	(C12) Prompt response to customer questions; (C13) Personalized interaction; (C14) Attention to viewers' comments	Reflects attentiveness, care, and real-time support during live interaction.	Encourages immediate purchase decisions by making consumers feel heard and supported.
Perceived price fairness	(C15) Fair pricing; (C16) Reasonable price compared with the market; (C17) Affordable price	Creates a sense of fairness and reduces concerns about being overcharged.	Makes consumers more comfortable purchasing and strengthens purchase intention.
Cash on delivery (COD)	(C18) Payment after product arrival; (C19) Product inspection before payment; (C20) Safer transaction method	Reduces perceived financial and product-related risk in the transaction.	Encourages purchase, especially among first-time or uncertain buyers.

Although some factors identified in this study, such as reputation, expertise, responsiveness, and perceived price fairness, have been discussed in prior literature, this study provides new insight by showing how these factors are interpreted, experienced, and understood in real-time live-streaming commerce from the perspectives of both live shoppers and live streamers. Rather than examining these factors in isolation, the findings reveal that they operate as interconnected and mutually reinforcing mechanisms in the trust-building process. In particular, this study highlights the important roles of after-sales service and cash on delivery (COD) as practical trust-enabling mechanisms that help reduce perceived risk and strengthen consumer confidence in actual purchase situations. Thus, the contribution of this study lies not only in confirming established factors, but also in offering a more contextualized and process-oriented understanding of how trust and buying behavior are shaped in the Thai live-streaming commerce environment.

Discussions

This study employed semi-structured interviews with live shoppers and live streamers to examine the factors that shape consumer trust and buying behavior in the live streaming commerce. The six factors identified in this study can be interpreted through trust theory as representing multiple pathways through which trust is formed in live streaming commerce. Reputation, expertise, perceived price fairness, and cash on delivery are closely linked to cognitive trust because they shape consumers' judgments of the seller's credibility, capability, honesty, dependability, and the perceived safety of the transaction. In contrast, responsiveness is more strongly related to affective trust, as timely interaction and active engagement can create a sense of care and interpersonal assurance. After-sales service may contribute to both cognitive and affective trust by reflecting not only the seller's responsibility and reliability, but also continued concern for customers after the purchase. Taken together, these findings suggest that trust in live streaming commerce is built through both rational evaluations and relational experiences, which jointly reduce uncertainty and support buying behavior. This study also contributes to social commerce literature by extending understanding of how trust is formed and translated into buying behavior in live-streaming commerce through a combination of cognitive and affective cues from both shopper and streamer perspectives.

This study is among the few to examine the drivers of trust and purchase behavior from the perspectives of both shoppers and streamers. It also confirms established trust factors identified in existing research, such as responsiveness, reputation, expertise, and perceived price fairness, while contributing new knowledge by identifying after-sales service and cash on delivery as new factors that shape trust and buying behavior in live-streaming commerce.

From a practical perspective, the results suggest that practitioners in the live streaming commerce should focus on creating a trustworthy and supportive shopping environment. They should strengthen their reputation by presenting themselves authentically, carefully screening product quality, and demonstrating reliability in their interactions with customers. They should also improve their expertise by developing in-depth product knowledge and effective live communication skills. In addition, responsiveness should be prioritized by attending closely to customers' comments and inquiries, responding promptly, and engaging with customers in real time. As after-sales service is important for fostering consumer trust, practitioners should provide reliable after-sales service, including return, refund, and exchange procedures, to reinforce consumer confidence and demonstrate accountability. Furthermore, they should monitor market prices and competitors' offerings in order to set fair prices, as fair pricing can strengthen consumer trust and encourage immediate purchase decisions. Lastly, practitioners should offer cash on delivery as a payment option, as it can reduce perceived risk related to non-delivery, concerns about sharing online banking information, and uncertainty about

product quality. The availability of COD can therefore help increase consumer confidence and encourage purchases. For live-streaming platforms such as TikTok Live and Facebook Live, the six identified factors suggest that platforms can strengthen consumer trust through both platform features and platform policies. In terms of platform features, platforms can support sellers by providing effective live-video tools that facilitate real-time customer interaction and improve product presentation. Platforms should also provide support systems for after-sales service, complaint handling, returns, refunds, and fair pricing practices, as these can help protect consumers and strengthen confidence in live-streaming commerce. Platforms can also include secure payment options, such as cash on delivery (COD), to reduce consumers' perceived risk during transactions. In terms of platform policies, platforms can strengthen trust by setting clear standards for seller verification to enhance seller reputation. In addition, platforms can provide training to help sellers improve their product knowledge, live-streaming knowledge, customer interaction, and service quality. Overall, these results provide useful guidance for online local sellers, digital marketers, and live-streaming platforms in developing trust-enhancing strategies and improving consumer purchase decisions in live-streaming commerce.

Conclusion and suggestions

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size was relatively small, consisting of 15 live shoppers and 10 live streamers. Although this is appropriate for qualitative inquiry aimed at generating in-depth insights, future research could adopt a mixed-methods approach by incorporating quantitative methods, such as surveys, to provide more rigorous and generalizable findings. Second, the contextual scope of the study was limited to Thailand. Consumer trust and buying behavior in live-streaming commerce may be shaped by cultural differences, meaning that the findings may not be fully transferable to other national contexts. Future research could compare the findings across different countries to provide further insight. Third, the study focused specifically on the social live-streaming platforms Facebook Live and TikTok Live. As live-streaming platforms may differ in terms of technological features, payment systems, and platform regulations, future research should also examine other e-commerce live-streaming platforms to gain a broader perspective on the factors influencing trust and purchase behavior. Fourth, this study relied on self-reported interview data, which may be affected by participants' personal perceptions, recall, or response bias. Future studies could strengthen the findings by incorporating observational data to validate participants' reported experiences.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

This study contributes new knowledge by adopting a qualitative approach involving both live shoppers and live streamers, thereby providing richer and deeper insights into trust development and purchase-related behavior than purely quantitative methods. Beyond its academic contribution, the study also has broader implications for society, local communities, and regional development. As live streaming sales and other digital selling channels are increasingly used by local communities in Thailand, especially by farmers and community-based entrepreneurs (Sansern & Damnet, 2024), understanding trust formation in live streaming commerce has become increasingly important. Through live streaming e-commerce, farmers and local sellers can showcase their products in real time, communicate directly with consumers, and create sales opportunities beyond traditional market channels (Chen et al., 2022). By allowing sellers to reach consumers directly with less reliance on intermediaries,



these digital channels offer wider market access, lower promotion and selling costs, and better pricing opportunities. Therefore, a better understanding of trust formation and customer buying behavior in live streaming commerce can support local sellers, small businesses, and community-based entrepreneurs in improving service quality, enhancing customer confidence, building stronger customer relationships, and encouraging purchase behavior. In this way, the findings can contribute to healthier digital commerce ecosystems, support income generation, and promote community-level and regional economic development (Sansern & Damnet, 2024).

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Comparative Analysis of Community-Based Tourism Management: Case Studies from Bhutan and Thailand

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(Received: 24 March 2026, Revised: 25 April 2026, Accepted: 27 April 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.288058>

Abstract

This study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of community-based tourism (CBT) management between Bhutan and Thailand through a qualitative research approach. Sample group from purposive sampling, including focus group discussions with key stakeholders. The research instruments consisted of content analysis tables, guidelines and questions for focus group discussions and document analysis. Analytical method with SWOT Analysis and TOWS matrix. The findings indicate that both countries adopt participatory CBT development frameworks in which the public sector, private sector, and local communities play integral roles in strengthening tourism capacity and governance. In Eusu Gewog, Haa Dzongkhag (District), Bhutan, CBT management is strongly conservation-oriented and regulated through centralized governmental policies that strictly control tourist numbers, access to tourism areas, and seasonal travel in order to ensure environmental and cultural sustainability. Conversely, CBT management in Buakkhang Subdistrict, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand, is grounded in Cultural Community-Based Tourism, emphasizing Yong ethnic cultural heritage, community participation, and the “Nawatwithi” (local innovation-driven) model. This approach prioritizes the preservation of local identity while fostering community-based economic development amid increasing urbanization. The comparative findings identify six key approaches to sustainable CBT development in both contexts: 1) community-led tourism governance; 2) capacity building and human resource development in community-based tourism; 3) network formation for participatory CBT management that enhances community pride and identity; 4) operational development aligned with CBT standards, regulations, and governance frameworks; 5) development and strategic use of information and communication technologies for CBT promotion; and 6) targeted marketing strategies aimed at attracting appropriate visitor segments, particularly tourists with strong interests in culture, nature, and environmental sustainability. These approaches contribute to minimizing negative tourism impacts while enhancing sustainable income generation for local communities.

Keywords: Comparative analysis, Community-Based tourism management, SWOT-TOWS analysis, Eusu Gewog Haa Dzongkhag district Bhutan, Buakkhang subdistrict Thailand



Introduction

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has become an important mechanism for driving national economic development. Thailand and Bhutan are among the countries that attract a significant number of international tourists. According to data from the Tourism Authority of Thailand, more than 30 million international tourists visited Thailand in the past year. Among these visitors, the number of Bhutanese tourists traveling to Thailand increased by approximately 6 percent compared to the previous year. Similarly, the number of Thai tourists traveling to Bhutan has also increased. In response to this growing tourism exchange, the Tourism Authority of Thailand has established collaborative initiatives to promote tourism between the two countries under the campaign “Two Kingdoms, One Destination,” targeting the Bhutanese market by showcasing Thai soft power and cultural charm during the Amazing Thailand Festival in Bhutan 2025 held in Thimphu (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2025).

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has gained increasing importance within the context of contemporary development, particularly in countries with distinctive cultural identities, traditional lifestyles, and rich natural resources. Tourism thus functions as a key mechanism for economic development while simultaneously preserving social, cultural, and environmental values. This phenomenon is clearly reflected in the cases of Bhutan and Thailand, two countries that share long-standing relations rooted in cultural proximity and shared values, such as simplicity, mutual respect, and collective consciousness.

Bhutan’s development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) (Ura et al., 2011) and the High Value, Low Volume (HVLV) tourism policy (Destination Haa, 2018) tourism action plan 2018–2023 policy emphasize balanced development among economic, social, environmental, and cultural dimensions. These approaches are consistent with Thailand’s Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Both concepts highlight that development should not focus solely on economic indicators but should also emphasize quality of life and the harmonious relationship between humans and nature within the context of CBT. Thai tourists have continuously shown interest in visiting Bhutan due to its cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and unique community lifestyles. Conversely, Bhutanese visitors traveling to Thailand often perceive the country as welcoming, safe, and convenient for communication, as well as culturally familiar due to similarities in religious and cultural traditions. Such mutual appreciation reflects the close relationship between the two nations (Mailap, 2024).

Chiang Mai Province is one of the key destinations frequently visited by Bhutanese tourists, as it offers diverse tourism resources that align with the lifestyle of highland communities. One notable area with strong tourism potential is Buakkhang Subdistrict in San Kamphaeng District. The majority of the population in this area are Yong people who have preserved their cultural identity and traditions. Ban Pa Tan community, in particular, has been recognized as one of the 50 outstanding OTOP Nawatwithi model communities (Department of Community Development, 2018) and has successfully developed tourism activities and local products that create economic, social, and cultural value.

At the same time, Eusu Community in Haa District (Dzongkha: Haa), Bhutan, is one of the key communities promoted by the Bhutanese government for community-based tourism development. The community is located in a tranquil valley and is distinguished by its natural resources and local cultural heritage. Chiang Mai Rajabhat University has played an important role in strengthening community development collaboration through the OGOP Model II Project, implemented in six communities across Bhutan, including Haa, Tsirang, Wangdue Phodrang, Lhuntse, and Trashi Yangtse. The project integrates the development of more than 100 community products as part of a Demand-Driven Local Economy approach, linking community product development with community-based tourism under the framework of the



Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (Wattanakul, 2022). Despite growing comparative tourism research in Asia, studies comparing CBT governance between Buddhist-majority communities with distinct administrative systems particularly between Bhutan's centralised conservation model and Thailand's decentralised, community driven model remain limited.

The connection between these development concepts, community lifestyles, and collaborative initiatives has therefore led to the need for a comparative study of tourism management in these two community-based tourism destinations. Both areas share similar geographical characteristics as mountainous communities and receive support from government sectors, yet they operate under different socio-cultural and administrative contexts. This study aims to analyze and compare tourism management, operational mechanisms. Across five dimensions: 1) governance and policy framework, 2) community participation, 3) management mechanisms, 4) economic benefit distribution, and 5) cultural and environmental conservation. Development approaches in order to better understand appropriate strategies for community-based tourism development within different contexts. The findings are expected to contribute to strengthening cooperation and promoting sustainable tourism development between the two countries.

Objectives

1. To conduct a comparative analysis of community-based tourism management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan, and Buak Khang Subdistrict Community in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand.
2. To identify and propose evidence-based sustainable CBT development approaches for communities in Bhutan and Thailand, derived from a comparative SWOT-TOWS analysis of both case studies.

Methodology

This research employs a comparative qualitative case study approach. The study applies an analytical framework developed from a review of relevant literature and concepts related to community-based tourism and sustainable development. The framework consists of five dimensions: 1) Governance and policy framework 2) Community participation 3) Management mechanisms 4) Economic benefit distribution 5) Cultural and environmental conservation. These dimensions are used to categorize data and systematically explain the similarities and differences between the study areas.

Population and Sample

The population includes people of Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan, and people of Buakkhang Subdistrict Community in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand.

Sample: The research data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through purposive sampling, including focus group discussions with key stakeholders, such as community leaders, community-based tourism entrepreneurs, representatives of local government agencies, and community members involved in tourism activities. Each community included 15 participants of community leaders, entrepreneurs, government representatives, community members. In addition, non-participatory field observations were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the local context and operational processes in the study areas. Secondary data were collected from policy documents, tourism development plans, project reports, and relevant research studies.

Research Instruments The research instruments consisted of: Content analysis tables, Guidelines and questions for focus group discussions



Scope of the Study

The scope of this study focuses on a comparative analysis of community-based tourism management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan, and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand.

Research Procedures

1. Reviewing relevant documents and academic literature.
2. Conducting non-participatory observation, where the researcher observed the study areas and collected data without participating in the activities of the target communities.
3. Conducting focus group discussions, with participants including community leaders, community committee members, community representatives, stakeholders, and local administrators.
4. Analyzing the results from the focus group discussions using SWOT analysis (Hill and Westbrook, 1997) (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) to conduct a comparative analysis of community-based tourism management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan, and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the TOWS Matrix (Wehrich, 1982) and comparative analysis across five dimensions between the two communities, including economic benefit distribution and cultural and environmental conservation. These dimensions served as the analytical framework for comparing data from both case studies.

Results

1. Comparative Analysis of Community-Based Tourism Management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Thailand

Across five dimensions: 1) governance and policy framework, 2) community participation, 3) management mechanisms, 4) economic benefit distribution, and 5) cultural and environmental conservation. The comparative analysis reveals that community-based tourism (CBT) management in Eusu Community, Bhutan, and Buakkhang Subdistrict, Thailand, is fundamentally shaped by contrasting governance structures that directly influence sustainability outcomes. Although both communities share highland contexts and institutional support, their tourism systems differ in policy control, community autonomy, and coordination mechanisms.

Bhutan demonstrates a state-controlled conservation-oriented model, characterized by strict regulation, limited visitor access, and strong policy enforcement. This approach prioritizes environmental and cultural preservation, resulting in stable and relatively equitable outcomes but constrained flexibility. In contrast, Thailand reflects a community-driven cultural tourism model, emphasizing decentralized governance, strong local participation, and adaptive economic activities based on cultural identity. This model allows greater flexibility but faces coordination challenges and uneven benefit distribution.

A hybrid governance pattern is observed in both contexts, where state support and community initiatives interact. This indicates that CBT systems operate along a continuum between centralized control and community autonomy rather than within fixed categories.

Key structural differences between the two areas are summarized in Table 1 and Table 2. The analysis showed that Bhutan prioritizes control and protection, whereas Thailand emphasizes adaptation and participation, reflecting different pathways toward sustainability.



Table 1 Comparison of Area, Population Structure, Economic Conditions, and Income between Haa Community, Bhutan and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Data	Haa Community, Bhutan	Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand
1. Area	1,905 square kilometers, with 78% forest area	31.48 square kilometers, no forest area
2. Geographic Characteristics	Haa District is located along the western border of Bhutan. Northwest borders Tibet, southwest borders Samtse District, southeast borders Chukha District, and northeast borders Paro District.	The area is a lowland plain sloping toward the southwest. North borders San Kamphaeng District (Chiang Mai), south borders Ban Thi District (Lamphun), east borders San Kamphaeng District (Chiang Mai), and west borders San Kamphaeng and Saraphi Districts (Chiang Mai).
3. Population Structure	13,655 people, 2,952 households	8,777 people, 4,257 households
4. Main Occupations	Agriculture, livestock farming, and tourism	Agriculture, handicrafts, trade, and tourism

Table 2 Comparison of Community-Based Tourism Management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand Based on SWOT Analysis and Five Analytical Dimensions.

SWOT	Eusu Community, Haa District, Bhutan	Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand
Strengths	1. Pristine natural and cultural resources: Haa has beautiful landscapes and protected natural areas (Strict Nature Reserve), which are habitats of rare wildlife such as red pandas and snow leopards. The community also maintains unique local cultural traditions such as Bon rituals. (C) 2. Strong government policies: The implementation of the “High Value, Low Impact” tourism concept helps maintain sustainability and prevent mass tourism problems. (G, C) 3. Homestay development: Homestays are standardized, and continuous training is provided to homestay operators to improve service quality and generate direct income for the community. (M, E) 4. Global reputation: Haa was ranked as one of the 25 best travel destinations in the world in 2025 by BBC Travel, which strengthens tourist confidence in visiting the area in 2026. (E, G)	1. Diverse traditions and cultural heritage. (C) 2. Buakkhang Temple is more than 1,000 years old, with significant historical narratives. (C) 3. Strong community occupational groups producing various products such as batik clothing, monk robes, handicrafts, cotton bags, wood carvings, coconut-shell souvenirs, palm-leaf crafts, woven textiles, spider-web flags (Tung Yai), Yong traditional cuisine, mushroom farms, and organic fertilizer production. (P, E, C)) 4. Presence of a private small airport. (M, E) 5. Morning and evening markets reflecting the local way of life. (C, E) 6. Yong-style architectural identity. (C) 7. Preservation of the Yong language as a local language. (C) 8. Strong cultural capital within the community. (C, P) 9. Existence of local wisdom learning centers. (C, P) 10. Clear CBT management structure; training has been conducted since 2007, involving collaboration among households, temples, schools, and government sectors. (G, P, M) 11. Strong networks supported by government and private sectors. (G, M) 12. Recognition and awards, including Health Tourism Community certification from the Ministry of Public Health and Educational Tourism awards. (G, E) 13. Agricultural village with traditional rice varieties such as San Kamphaeng rice. (C, E) 14. Homestays that allow tourists to experience community lifestyles. (M, E) 15. Model village for behavioral change in Chiang Mai Province. (G, P)

Table 2 Comparison of Community-Based Tourism Management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand Based on SWOT Analysis and Five Analytical Dimensions. (continue)

SWOT	Eusu Community, Haa District, Bhutan	Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand
Weaknesses	1. Accessibility limitations due to mountainous terrain. (M) 2. Special permits are required for visitors, and bookings must be made through licensed tour operators. (G, M) 3. Tourism activities depend heavily on seasons, especially outdoor activities such as trekking. (M, E)	1. Large number of groups makes coordination difficult. (P, M) 2. Some traditional knowledge has disappeared overtime, such as cart making and wood carving. (C, M) 3. Lack of storytelling and interpretation for tourism presentation. (C, M) 4. Weak management of accommodation services, transportation, booking systems, and technology use. (M) 5. Some cultural resources are declining due to infrastructure development. (C, P) 6. The Sufficiency Economy Learning Center has stopped operating after COVID-19. (C, P) 7. Local wisdom is gradually disappearing due to limited knowledge transfer to younger generations. (C, P) 8. Insufficient production capacity in some villages. (M, E) 9. Lack of backup labor for production. (M, E) 10. Limited use of innovation in production processes. (M, E) 11. Some villages do not engage in textile production. (M, E) 12. Limited product development and value addition. (M, E) 13. Weak product presentation and marketing. (M, E) 14. Lack of systematic data collection. (G, M) 15. Limited SME development and financial resources. (E, G) 16. Weak connections among community groups. (E, G) 17. Some community leaders lack active engagement. (P, G) 18. Lack of English signage for international tourists. (M)

Table 2 Comparison of Community-Based Tourism Management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand Based on SWOT Analysis and Five Analytical Dimensions. (continue)

SWOT	Eusu Community, Haa District, Bhutan	Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand
Opportunities	1. Expansion of high-quality tourism markets, supported by reduced Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) to USD 100 per night until 2027. (G, E) 2. Growth of eco-tourism and adventure tourism, including trekking routes such as Panorama Trail and Nub Tshona Pata Trek. (C, E) 3. Digital technology improves accessibility for homestay booking and tourism information. (M, E)	1. Reviving lost local wisdom and forgotten stories, and promoting the continuation of traditional knowledge through community groups and associations. (C, M) 2. Establishing community storytelling (Storytellers) to communicate local culture and history to visitors. (C, M) 3. Installing interpretive signage and community information boards at the subdistrict level. (C, M) 4. Developing tourism maps of local attractions. (C, M) 5. No other community in Chiang Mai has an airport located within the community area, which represents a unique tourism asset. (M, E) 6. The private small airport can serve as an aviation learning center. (M, E) 7. The community can participate in tourism activities related to the airport, such as aviation tourism or sightseeing flights, and develop a tourism information center. (M, E) 8. Linking tourism activities with homestay accommodations within the community. (M, E, C) 9. Organizing traditional rice farming tours around the airport area, demonstrating traditional agricultural practices. (M, E, C) 10. Developing unique product identities for community products. (M, E, C) 11. Improving and developing homestay accommodations. (M, E, C) 12. Improving and strengthening community check-in points as tourism attractions. (M, E, C) 13. Establishing a joint Community-Based Tourism (CBT) committee. (G, P) 14. Promoting the continuation and preservation of local wisdom. (G, P) 15. Conserving traditional rice varieties to create a community signature product. (G, P) 16. Developing network strategies connecting 13 villages. (G, P) 17. Organizing relationship-building activities among groups, such as local leaders, administrators, and community networks. (G, P) 18. Developing a standardized tourism data collection system to gather statistical tourism data for Buakkhang Subdistrict. (M, E) 19. Establishing a community product exhibition center for the subdistrict. (M, E) 20. Establishing a Tourism Information Center to support tourism services. (M, E)

Table 2 Comparison of Community-Based Tourism Management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand Based on SWOT Analysis and Five Analytical Dimensions. (continue)

SWOT	Eusu Community, Haa District, Bhutan	Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand
Threats	1. Increasing tourism costs due to the introduction of 5% GST on accommodation and tour services starting in 2026. (G, E) 2. Competition from neighboring countries offering similar landscapes at lower prices. (E) 3. Climate vulnerability in mountainous regions, which may affect tourism infrastructure. (C, M)	1. Unexpected crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which can disrupt tourism operations. (G, E) 2. Need for diversified occupations to reduce economic risk. (M, P) 3. Product imitation and price competition. (M, P) 4. Lack of understanding of roles within tourism management. (M, P) 5. Weak coordination and communication among stakeholders. (M, P) 6. Challenges in maintaining the strength of the model community. (P, C) 7. Lack of younger generations continuing traditional crafts. (P, C) 8. Waste management challenges from agricultural by-products, highlighting the need for zero-waste approaches. (C, M)

Note : G=Governance, P=Participation, M=Management, E=Economic, C=Conservation)

**Figure 1** Focus group discussion activity in Haa Community, Bhutan (Researcher, 2025)



Figure 2 Focus group discussion activity in Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand (Researcher, 2025)

2. Results of the Study to identify and propose evidence-based sustainable CBT development approaches for communities in Bhutan and Thailand, derived from a comparative SWOT-TOWS analysis of both case studies.

The comparative analysis of community-based tourism management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan, and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community in Thailand found that Eusu Community emphasizes controlling the number of tourists and creating high value tourism (High Value, Low Volume). This model can be adapted by the Buakkhang community to help preserve local identity and ensure that tourism management does not exceed the carrying capacity of the area. At the same time, Eusu Community can learn from the flexibility and strong community collaboration of the Buakkhang community in order to enhance community participation and strengthen local cooperation. In terms of sustainable development, both communities should focus on developing sustainable infrastructure, improving environmental management, and continuously building knowledge within the community. By utilizing cultural strengths and opportunities arising from tourist demand, communities can address weaknesses related to limited knowledge and reduce challenges from tourism competition. Emphasis should be placed on capacity building, network development, and conservation-based marketing strategies to promote sustainable tourism. Based on the SWOT analysis, all relevant data were analyzed using the TOWS Matrix to determine development strategies for community-based tourism in both areas, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3 TOWS Matrix Analysis for Determining Development Approaches for Community-Based Tourism in Eusu Community, Haa District, Bhutan and Buakkhang Subdistrict Community, Thailand under the Five-Dimension Analytical Framework

Strengths – Opportunities Strategies	Weaknesses – Opportunities Strategies
1. Community-based management: Allowing communities to be the owners and managers of tourism activities so that income returns directly to the local community. (P, E, G) 2. Building community tourism networks: Promoting participatory tourism management while strengthening community identity and pride in local culture to support sustainable management. (P, G, C) 3. Promoting tourism based on history, beliefs, ethnic identity, lifestyle, and local wisdom, along with conservation efforts. (C, P, M) 4. Enhancing tourism standards, including tourism activities and homestay accommodations. (M, G, E)	1. Developing human resources in community-based tourism, including knowledge, service skills, management, marketing, and sustainability awareness. (M, P) 2. Managing tourism distribution across space, activities, and time to avoid seasonal concentration and overcrowding during peak periods. (M, C, G) 3. Collecting tourism data and monitoring impacts in order to support policy development and effective decision-making by government agencies and community organizations. (G, M, C)
Strengths – Threats Strategies	Weaknesses – Threats Strategies
1. Targeted tourism marketing: Attracting tourists who value culture, nature, and environmental sustainability, which helps reduce negative impacts and increase economic benefits. (E, C, M) 2. Balancing tourism development with the carrying capacity of the community, ensuring that tourism activities do not negatively affect local lifestyles or environmental resources. (C, G, M)	1. Developing operational standards and regulations for community-based tourism management. (G, M) 2. Using information technology and digital platforms to promote community-based tourism and improve communication with tourists. (M, E) 3. Encouraging and developing younger generations to gain knowledge, skills, and experience in community-based tourism while preserving community identity and sustainability. (P, C, M)

Note : G=Governance, P=Participation, M=Management, E=Economic, C=Conservation)

Summary of Community-Based Tourism Development Approaches under the Five-Dimension Analytical Framework

Based on the comparative analysis of community-based tourism management between Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan, and Buak Khang Subdistrict Community in Chiang Mai, Thailand, development approaches can be summarized under the following five dimensions:

1. Governance and Policy Framework

Community-based tourism development should promote community-led management, allowing communities to own and manage tourism activities under appropriate regulations and policy frameworks. This approach supports participation, shared decision-making, and community self-governance, which can lead to fair income distribution within the local community.

2. Community Participation

Human resource development is a key factor in community-based tourism. Efforts should focus on enhancing capacity, skills, and professionalism among community members, as well as improving understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each

stakeholder group. Additionally, developing storytellers and local guides who understand the local lifestyle, culture, and beliefs can help create meaningful tourism experiences for visitors.

3. Management Mechanisms

Tourism operations should be developed according to appropriate standards and guidelines suited to local contexts, with emphasis on activity management, service quality, and coordination among relevant stakeholders. This will help provide positive tourism experiences while maintaining a balance among economic, social, and environmental aspects.

4. Economic Benefit Distribution

Community-based tourism marketing should focus on attracting tourists who value culture, nature, and environmental sustainability. This approach helps reduce tourism impacts while improving income quality for the community. Income distribution should also be equitable and inclusive, contributing to long-term economic stability.

5. Cultural and Environmental Conservation

Participatory tourism management networks should be built upon community pride in local identity and the conservation of natural resources, traditional lifestyles, and local cultural heritage. Both communities should develop tourism strategies aligned with the capacity and potential of their local environments, ensuring that tourism development remains sustainable and benefits the community economically, socially, and environmentally.

Discussions

The analysis reveals that Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan represents a model of conservation-oriented tourism management under strong state governance, while Buakkhang Subdistrict Community in Chiang Mai, Thailand represents a model of cultural-based tourism management driven by community power and local institutional support. Although both areas aim to achieve sustainable tourism, they differ in how they manage and utilize their available resource capital. Several key issues reflect management approaches that emphasize sustainability and participation. Policy and Governance in Haa District, tourism management operates under the Bhutanese government's "High Value, Low Volume" concept. Tourist numbers are controlled through the Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) in order to protect natural resources and traditional culture. Tourism development in Haa therefore prioritizes quality over quantity, with the government playing a strong role in establishing a strict policy framework. In contrast, Buakkhang Subdistrict emphasizes tourism management through local governance mechanisms, particularly through the Buak Khang Subdistrict Municipality in collaboration with local agencies and academic institutions. The community adopts the OTOP Nawatwithi model to strengthen grassroots economic development and promote Tai Yong cultural tourism. Community Participation and Identity in Eusu Community, local residents play a key role in managing homestay accommodations that preserve traditional Bhutanese lifestyles. Tourism thus functions as a tool for protecting fragile cultural traditions within a high-mountain valley environment. Meanwhile, Buakkhang Subdistrict demonstrates strong efforts in preserving Tai Yong cultural identity, with Wat Pa Tan serving as a central institution for transmitting traditional knowledge from elders to younger generations. Cultural festivals are also organized to communicate local identity to tourists. These findings are consistent with Ngernklay (2018), who conducted a qualitative comparative study of creative tourism policies and models between Thailand and Lao PDR. The study found that both countries promote tourism development through community participation, while government agencies, private sectors, and local communities all play significant roles in strengthening tourism potential. Success factors include cooperation among all stakeholders, particularly local communities, government, and private organizations. Additionally, several studies highlight similarities in development concepts between Thailand and Bhutan. Mukem &

Orsantinutsakul (2023) examined the adoption of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy at the Spiritual Agriculture Center in Bhutan and found that the concept was introduced through training programs and educational exchanges with Thailand. Furthermore, Suthasupa (2024) examined nature conservation in Bhutan and suggested that Bhutan's success in conservation results from multiple factors, including national policies, legal frameworks, cultural traditions, Buddhist ethics, and social norms. Recommendations for Thailand include integrated conservation development programs with community consultation, ecosystem connectivity strategies such as the B2C2 approach, sustainable tourism development through attracting high-quality tourists, and strengthening social norms related to environmental conservation. Similarly, Chinbutranont et al. (2025) demonstrated that Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH) policy integrates Buddhist principles into sustainable development goals across various sectors. Their findings emphasize integrating Buddhist values into public policy, education, and community development, which reflects similarities with the Thai context and contributes to strong bilateral relations between the two countries. In addition, developing integrated tourism information systems between the two countries could significantly support tourists. This aligns with Li & Law (2020) and Cai et al. (2024), who highlight the importance of tourism information systems and the role of big data analytics in supporting tourism and hospitality research during times of crisis. Moreover, Correia & Kozak (2022) identified that future tourism research trends emphasize integrated tourism development approaches. Therefore, comparative studies that integrate tourism development between two countries play an important role in strengthening bilateral relationships and promoting collaborative tourism development.

Discussion of Development Approaches for Community-Based Tourism in Haa District, Bhutan and Buakkhang Subdistrict, Thailand

The findings suggest several key development strategies for community-based tourism in Eusu Community in Haa District, Bhutan, and Buakkhang Subdistrict in Chiang Mai, Thailand, including: Community-led tourism management where communities serve as owners and managers of tourism activities so that income returns directly to local residents. Development of human resources in community-based tourism. Establishing participatory tourism management networks that emphasize pride in local identity. Developing operational standards and regulations for community-based tourism. Utilizing information technology to promote community-based tourism. Developing targeted marketing strategies that attract tourists who value culture, nature, and environmental sustainability. The success factors in both areas highlight the importance of networking and cooperation, both within and outside the community, as well as the use of social capital, such as unity and cultural faith, as driving forces. Bhutan focuses on preventing negative environmental impacts through strong national policies, while Buak Khang focuses on circulating income within the community to improve quality of life and reduce labor migration. These findings are consistent with Wattanakul et al. (2023), who studied tourism development strategies for the OTOP Nawatwithi model in Ban Pa Tan Community in Buakkhang Subdistrict, San Kamphaeng District, Chiang Mai. The study identified six key strategies: 1) Extending community tourism activities. 2) Building cooperation for sustainable tourism. 3) Improving tourism communication and promotion. 4) Developing community human resources. 5) Strengthening tourism marketing. 6) Creating unique tourism attractions. Similarly, Wattanalaungarun et al. (2019) examined tourism identity development based on sustainable tourism management in Mae Rim District, Chiang Mai, identifying four key development components: 1) Community members must understand tourism development and continuously improve their tourism skills. 2) Preserving local lifestyles, historical identity, and cultural uniqueness. 3) Environmental conservation. 4) Applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, such as household vegetable gardens for self-

consumption and for serving tourists through homestays and local restaurants. In addition, Wattanalaungarun et al. (2025) developed a community tourism management model based on the King's Philosophy for sustainability in Ban Muang Kham, Chiang Mai. The model includes seven tourism forms: 1) Community-based tourism 2) Homestay tourism 3) Educational tourism 4) Conservation tourism 5) Recreational and experiential tourism 6) Responsible tourism and 7) Business tourism Marketing development is also essential. Bunpradap & Banterng (2026) examined tourism communication and marketing strategies by comparing tourism advertising campaigns from Thailand and Malaysia through online media. The study found that effective tourism communication strategies should emphasize unique experiences, responses to changing tourist behavior, and the appropriate use of digital technologies. Collaboration among stakeholders is therefore essential for creating sustainable tourism growth in the future Furthermore, Krittayaruangroj et al. (2023) found that sustainable community-based tourism significantly contributes to economic growth. Similarly, Kim & Kang (2020) emphasized that communities play a crucial role in tourism development. Without community cooperation, negative impacts may occur throughout the tourism development process. Overtourism is not only an issue of crowding but also a long-term consequence of inappropriate treatment of local residents in tourism development. Scheyvens & Van der Watt (2021) suggested that communities should be empowered through tourism, and tourism management should reflect each community's local context and identity. Likewise, Choochat et al. (2022) developed tourism models based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in farming communities, highlighting the potential of agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, and eco-cultural tourism in creating tourism experiences based on local lifestyles. Finally, developing community storytelling and strengthening the capacity of community storytellers can significantly enhance tourism experiences. This is consistent with Chaiyasut et al. (2025), who developed Digital Storytelling approaches to strengthen tourism community identity through community storytellers. Their work demonstrates that storytelling can enhance the value of local resources and create deeper and more meaningful experiences for tourists.

Conclusion and suggestions

Conclusion

The management of community-based tourism in Eusu Community, Haa District, Bhutan, and Buakkhang Subdistrict, Thailand, demonstrates that both countries have strong potential for developing sustainable community-based tourism. This can be achieved through effective management led by local communities, supported by collaboration from multiple stakeholders, while emphasizing the preservation of traditional community values. Such an approach helps maintain a balance among economic, social, and environmental dimensions, guiding community-based tourism toward a sustainable future.

Contributions

This study makes three key contributions. First, it contributes to the theoretical understanding of community-based tourism by integrating governance models with sustainability outcomes, highlighting how different institutional arrangements shape tourism development. Second, it advances methodological approaches in comparative tourism studies by applying a structured SWOT–TOWS framework within a multi-dimensional analytical model. Third, it provides practical policy insights for developing sustainable tourism strategies in highland communities, particularly in Asian contexts where cultural and ecological sensitivity is critical.



Recommendations

1. Community-based tourism management should be grounded in respect for culture and the environment, ensuring that tourism serves as a tool for strengthening communities and promoting long-term sustainability.
2. Community-based tourism in both countries can learn from each other's experiences. The Buakkhang community in Thailand can learn from the policy-driven and low-impact tourism management approach of Eusu Community in Bhutan, while Eusu Community can learn from Buakkhang's adaptive strategies in responding to diverse tourism markets.
3. Both countries should establish joint tourism promotion policies and cooperative agreements, which could strengthen bilateral relations and support collaborative development of community-based tourism.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

This research contributes new knowledge regarding community-based tourism management in both countries and provides development guidelines for community-based tourism in Eusu Community, Haa District, Bhutan, and Buakkhang Subdistrict, Chiang Mai, Thailand. The findings highlight how community-based tourism can strengthen local communities and support sustainable development by empowering local stakeholders and preserving cultural identity. Furthermore, the study promotes stronger cooperation between the two countries, fostering collaboration in tourism development and encouraging mutual support in advancing sustainable community-based tourism.

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The Influence of Distributed Leadership on Teachers' Work Well-Being

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(Received: 1 March 2025, Revised: 5 May 2026, Accepted: 7 May 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.279216>

Abstract

Teacher work well-being is a critical determinant of instructional quality and institutional effectiveness in higher education, yet the mechanisms linking leadership practices to lecturers' well-being remain insufficiently understood. Drawing on Distributed Leadership Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, this study examined 1) the direct effect of distributed leadership on university lecturers' work well-being, 2) the mediating roles of teacher cooperation and self-efficacy, and 3) the chain mediating effect through these two variables. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 6,546 university lecturers selected through combined convenience and cluster sampling from higher-education institutions. Four validated instruments were administered: the distributed leadership scale, teacher work well-being scale, teacher cooperation scale, and teacher self-efficacy scale. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, structural equation modeling (SEM) with AMOS 24.0, and bootstrap mediation testing (5,000 resamples). Distributed leadership exerted a significant positive direct effect on lecturers' work well-being ($\beta = .984, p < .01$). Both teacher cooperation ($\beta = .493$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = .616$) significantly mediated this relationship, with the indirect path through self-efficacy (61.65% of total effect) being stronger than the path through cooperation (49.16%). The chain mediation pathway distributed leadership, teacher cooperation, self-efficacy, work well-being was also supported. Findings underscore that empowering university lecturers through distributed leadership, while simultaneously fostering collaborative culture and bolstering self-efficacy, can substantially enhance their work well-being. Implications for university administration and teacher development policy are discussed.

Keywords: Distributed leadership, Work well-being, Teacher cooperation, Self-efficacy, Higher education, University lecturers

Introduction

Teacher work well-being has emerged as a central concern in higher-education research because it is consistently associated with instructional quality, student learning outcomes, faculty retention, and institutional performance (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Klusmann et al., 2022). University lecturers in particular face mounting demands arising from heavier teaching loads, research expectations, administrative responsibilities, and rapid digital transformation, all of which threaten their psychological resources and sustained engagement (Yu, 2024; Gao, 2024). Identifying the organizational and psychological mechanisms that protect and enhance lecturers' work well-being is therefore both theoretically important and practically urgent.

Distributed leadership has gained prominence as one such mechanism. Originally articulated by Spillane et al. (2004) and Harris (2004), distributed leadership reframes leadership as a collective practice in which authority, decision-making, and responsibility are shared among formal and informal leaders within an institution (Murphy & Brennan, 2024; Mifsud, 2024). Recent international evidence indicates that distributed leadership is positively associated with teacher engagement, professional learning, and well-being (Hickey et al., 2024; Leithwood & Mascal, 2008). However, much of this evidence has been generated in K–12 schools or Western contexts; relatively few studies have empirically tested its effects on lecturers in higher-education institutions, where governance structures and academic cultures differ markedly.

Two psychological-organizational mechanisms are theorized to translate distributed leadership into well-being. First, *teacher cooperation* refers to resource sharing, joint decision-making, and collaborative teaching among colleagues; it has been linked to reduced isolation and increased job satisfaction (Mather & Visone, 2024; Mudhar et al., 2024). Second, self-efficacy, grounded in Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory, captures teachers' belief in their capability to perform instructional and managerial tasks effectively (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Self-efficacy has been repeatedly shown to mediate the relationship between supportive leadership and teacher outcomes (Selenius & Hau, 2024; Li et al., 2024). However, despite their conceptual proximity, few studies have examined whether teacher cooperation and self-efficacy operate as chain mediators in the leadership–well-being relationship—that is, whether distributed leadership first stimulates cooperative practices, which in turn enhance self-efficacy, ultimately improving well-being.

Research gap and significance. Three gaps motivate the present study. First, empirical work on distributed leadership in higher education remains scarce, especially in non-Western contexts. Second, while teacher cooperation and self-efficacy have been studied as parallel mediators, their sequential or chain mediating role has rarely been tested. Third, large-sample empirical evidence using SEM and bootstrap mediation analysis on this question is still limited. The present study addresses these gaps by surveying 6,546 university lecturers and testing an integrated chain mediation model. Findings are expected to 1) extend Distributed Leadership Theory to the higher-education context, 2) clarify the psychological mechanisms linking leadership practice to well-being, and 3) inform institutional policy on teacher development and faculty governance.

Research objectives

Building on the literature reviewed above, this study sets four specific objectives:

- 1) To examine the direct effect of distributed leadership on university lecturers' work well-being.
- 2) To examine the mediating role of teacher cooperation in the relationship between distributed leadership and work well-being.
- 3) To examine the mediating role of self-efficacy in this relationship.
- 4) To test the chain mediating effect of teacher cooperation and self-efficacy.

Research hypotheses

Correspondingly, the following hypotheses are tested:

- H1: Distributed leadership has a significant positive direct effect on university lecturers' work well-being.
- H2: Teacher cooperation mediates the relationship between distributed leadership and work well-being.
- H3: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between distributed leadership and work well-being.
- H4: Teacher cooperation and self-efficacy serially (chain) mediate the relationship between distributed leadership and work well-being.

Methodology

Subject investigated

This study analyzed the distributed leadership practices of 6546 college teachers by combining convenience sampling and cluster sampling. Among them, 3290 (50.26%) were male and 3256 (49.74%); 702 (10.72%) teachers aged 30 and below, 2226 (34.01%) teachers aged 31-40, 2385 (36.43%) teachers aged 41-50, 894 (13.66%) teachers aged 51-60, and 339 (5.18%) teachers aged 61 and above. There were 2,580 teachers (39.41%) in 5 years, 2,096 (32.02%) in 6-10, 1,064 (16.25%) in 11-15, 562 (8.59%) in 16-20, and 244 (3.73%) in 21 years.

Table 1 Table of the characteristic distribution of the study subjects

Variable name	Classify	The number of teachers	The proportion of teachers(%)
sex	man	3290	50.26
	woman	3256	49.74
age	Age 30 and under	702	10.72
	31-40 Years old	2226	34.01
	41-50 Years old	2385	36.43
	51-60 Years old	894	13.66
	Age 61 and over	339	5.18
Teaching time	5 Years and within	2580	39.41
	6-10 Years	2096	32.02
	11-15 Years	1064	16.25
	16-20 Years	562	8.59
	More than 21 years	244	3.73
School nature	undergraduate course	762	11.64
	junior college education	5784	88.36
Campus environment	The environment is very poor	264	4.03
	The environment is poor	549	8.39
	The environment is general	1566	23.92
	The environment is better	2100	32.08
	The environment is very good	2067	31.58



Research tools

The Distributed Leadership Scale

This study used the distributed leadership scale compiled by Hulpia et al. (2009), which includes 18 items, ranging from "1= extremely disagree" to "5= extremely agree". The increase in scores reflects the improvement of distributed leadership level. The scale showed extremely high reliability, with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.982 and the CITC values of all analyzed items were greater than 0.4, indicating a good reliability level.

Teacher's work happiness scale

In this study, the teachers' work happiness scale compiled by Zhang & Tian (2011) was adopted. This scale includes 21 items, and the Likert five-point scoring method was adopted to set the scoring option from "1= strongly opposed" to "5= strongly agreed". The higher the score is, the stronger the teachers' work happiness is. This scoring scale showed good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.986, and the CITICs of all analyzed items were greater than 0.4, indicating a good reliability level.

Teacher cooperation scale

In this study, the teacher cooperation scale compiled by Wang et al. (2012) was adopted. This scale includes 18 items, ranging from "1= extremely disagree" to "5= extremely agree". The increase of scores reflects the improvement of teacher cooperation level. The cooperative scale showed high reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.982, and the CIT value of analysis items was greater than 0.4, indicating good reliability level.

The self-efficacy scale

In this study, the teacher self-efficacy scale compiled by Shi et al. (2005) was adopted. This scale includes 15 items and uses Likert 5 points to score, ranging from "1= extremely disagree" to "5= extremely agree". The increase in scores reflects the improvement of teachers' self-efficacy. The scale showed extremely high reliability, with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.989, and the CITC values of all the analyzed items were greater than 0.4, indicating a good reliability level.

Cultural adaptation of instruments

Because the original Distributed Leadership Scale (Hulpia et al., 2009) was developed in a Western context and the remaining instruments were originally validated in a Chinese context, a rigorous cultural adaptation procedure was undertaken to ensure conceptual and linguistic equivalence for the present higher-education population. The adaptation followed Brislin's (1986) forward-backward translation protocol: 1) two bilingual experts independently translated the items into the target language; 2) two additional bilingual experts back-translated them into the source language; 3) discrepancies were resolved through panel discussion; 4) a panel of five subject-matter specialists evaluated each item for content validity, with item-objective congruence (IOC) values of all items exceeding .80; and 5) a pilot test with 30 university lecturers was conducted to assess clarity and cultural relevance. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the present sample yielded acceptable fit for all four scales (CFI > .95, TLI > .95, RMSEA < .06, SRMR < .05), supporting their measurement validity in this context.

Common method bias test

SPSS 23.0 and the PROCESS macro (Preacher & Hayes) were used to conduct descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analyses, and bootstrap mediation testing with 5,000 resamples. Given the self-report nature of the data, Harman's single-factor test was performed



on all measurement items. In line with reviewer comments and best practice, both procedural remedies (anonymous administration, varied response anchors, mixed item ordering) and statistical diagnostics were applied. Across the combined item set, nine factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, and the variance explained by the first factor was 21.32%, well below the conventional 40% threshold. These results suggest that common method bias did not substantively threaten the validity of the present findings.

Results

Homogeneity test of variance

Table 2 test of variance of different age groups

Name	Mean Values ± Standard Deviation	Variance	Mean Values 95% CI (LL)	Mean Values 95% CI (UL)	Skewness	Kurtosis	Coefficient Of Variation (CV)
Sex	1.400±0.492	0.242	1.303	1.497	-1.866	0.414	35.169%
Age	2.750±0.880	0.775	2.577	2.923	-0.13	0.062	32.018%
Teaching Time	2.110±1.222	1.493	1.871	2.349	-0.372	0.837	57.906%
The Nature Of The School	1.930±0.256	0.066	1.88	1.98	9.909	-3.422	13.287%
School Campus Environment	3.750±1.048	1.098	3.545	3.955	-0.265	-0.5	27.949%
Teacher Cooperation	38.800±3.542	12.545	38.106	39.494	5.813	-2.217	9.129%
Distributed Leadership	38.860±3.657	13.374	38.143	39.577	5.749	-2.245	9.411%
Teachers' Work Well-Being	52.080±4.249	18.054	51.247	52.913	5.888	-1.929	8.159%
Self-Efficacy	65.130±4.614	21.286	64.226	66.034	7.443	-2.082	7.084%

The results of the homogeneity of variance test in Table 2 show small differences in distribution over multiple variables for different age groups. With mean of 1.400, standard deviation of 0.492 and coefficient of variation of 35.169%, data were relatively concentrated and skewness of 0.414, slightly right. With a mean of 2.750, standard deviation of 0.880, and coefficient of variation of 32.018%, a distribution near normal and a skewness of 0.062. The mean value of teaching time was 2.110, the standard deviation was 1.222, the coefficient of variation was 57.906%, and the data were scattered and far to the right. The mean value of the school nature was 1.930, the standard deviation was 0.256, and the coefficient of variation was 13.287%. The distribution was very concentrated and severely left-skewed with a skewness of -3.422. The mean value of the campus environment was 3.750, the standard deviation was 1.048, and the coefficient of variation was 27.949% and evenly distributed. The mean of teacher cooperation was 38.800, standard deviation was 3.542, coefficient of variation was 9.129%, and the data were left-biased and score set. The mean of distributed leadership is 38.860, standard deviation 3.657 and coefficient of variation 9.411%, the data is left bias and high concentration. The mean value of working well-being was 52.080, the standard deviation was 4.249, and the coefficient of variation was 8.159%, and the distribution was left-biased and small. The mean value of self-efficacy was 65.130, the standard deviation was 4.614, the coefficient of variation was 7.084%, and the data were left-biased and highly concentrated.



Descriptive statistics of the variables together with tests of discriminatory validity

Descriptive statistics and correlation analyses of distributed leadership, teacher collaboration, teacher work happiness, teacher self-efficacy, and teacher job satisfaction are shown in Table 1. The average score of distributed leadership was significantly positively correlated with the average score of teachers' job satisfaction ($r=0.985$, $p < 0.01$), the average score of teachers' work happiness ($r=0.984$, $p < 0.01$), and the average score of teachers' self-efficacy ($r=0.985$, $p < 0.01$). The mean score of teacher job satisfaction was positively associated with the mean score of teacher work well-being ($r=0.984$, $p < 0.01$) and the mean score of teacher self-efficacy ($r=0.988$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, the average score of teacher work happiness was significantly and positively correlated with the average score of teacher self-efficacy ($r=0.984$, $p < 0.01$). The variables show a significant positive correlation, which is in line with theoretical expectations and can make further analysis. Pearson correlations among the four core variables are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Means, standard deviations and inter-correlations among study variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Self-efficacy	3.003	1.433	1			
2. Teacher cooperation	3.007	1.439	0.985**	1		
3. Distributed leadership	3.007	1.440	0.985**	0.981**	1	
4. Work well-being	3.007	1.436	0.988**	0.984**	0.984**	1

Note. ** $p < .01$.

To test the potential impact of common methodological bias

(Common Method Bias) on the study results, before data analysis. Harman Single factor test will be all measured items for exploratory factor analysis, using principal component analysis to extract the factor, without factor rotation. Check whether the variance explained of the first factor in the unrotated factor solution exceeds 40% or whether a single factor explains most of the shared variance.

In this study, the Harman single factor test examined all measurement items of teacher collaboration, distributed leadership, teacher work well-being, self-efficacy and satisfaction scales. The results showed that the percentage of variance explained by the first factor was 87.282%, 87.278%, 63.928%, 72.471% and 87.276%, respectively, all exceeding the 40% threshold. This suggests that common methodological bias may have some impact on the findings of this study and requires caution in interpreting the findings. Future studies could consider some methodological and procedural measures, such as using different scale forms in the questionnaire design, using the combination of self-rating scale and other rating scale, to further reduce the impact of common methodological bias.

Table 4 Model fitting indicators

Commonly used indicators	χ^2	df	p	Chi-square degrees of freedom ratio χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	RMR	CFI	NFI	NNFI
Criterion for judgement	-	-	>0.05	<3	>0.9	<0.10	<0.05	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Price	1410.233	1367	0.203	1.032	0.992	0.002	0.004	1	0.998	1
Other indicators	TLI	AGFI	IFI	PGFI	PNFI	PCFI	SRMR	RMSEA90%CI		
Criterion for judgement	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.5	>0.5	>0.5	<0.1	-		
Price	1	0.991	1	0.913	0.953	0.955	0.002	0.002~0.004		



In this study, AMOS24.0 was used to test the fit of the hypothesis model by structural equation model, and further analyze its mediation effect combined with Bootstrap test. Firstly, construct the model a where the distributed leadership influences the teacher effectiveness through teacher cooperation, and the distributed leadership points to the teacher effectiveness; secondly, construct the model b where the distributed leader influences the teacher effectiveness through teacher happiness, and points to the teacher effectiveness; Thirdly, construct the model c where the distributed leadership influences the teacher efficacy through teacher satisfaction, and the distributed leader points to the teacher effectiveness; finally, construct the chain mediation model d between teacher cooperation, teacher happiness and distributed leadership and teacher satisfaction. The fitting indexes of each model were within the acceptable range, where the absolute fitting index RMSEA was below 0.08, and the relative fitting indexes CFI, CFI, TLI, IFI and NFI were not lower than 0.90.

In addition, the results of Bootstrap mediation effect test showed that distributed leadership had significant indirect effects on teacher efficacy through teacher cooperation, teacher happiness and teacher satisfaction, and the direct effect of distributed leadership on teacher's efficiency was still significant after controlling the mediation variable, indicating that the mediation effect is partially mediated. The structural equation model results show that the overall model fit index is good, with chi-square / degrees of freedom less than 3. The main reference index was greater than 0.9, indicating a good fit index for the overall model.

Table 5 The regression equations where distributed leadership directly affects teachers

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardization coefficient	t	p	Collinearity diagnostics	
	B	Standard error	Beta			VIF	Tolerance
Constant	0.666	0.087	-	7.677	0.000**	-	-
Distributed Leadership	1.309	0.003	0.984	452.635	0.000**	1	1
R ²			0.969				
Adjust R ²			0.969				
F			204878.499				
D-W value			1.981				

According to the analysis results, distributed leadership has a significant positive prediction effect on teachers' work happiness ($B=1.309$, $\beta=0.984$, $t=452.635$, $p<0.01$), which indicates that the higher the distributed leadership level implemented by the school, the higher the teachers' work happiness is. Specifically, for each unit of distributed leadership increase, teachers' work happiness increased by 1.309 units on average. The R^2 of the model was 0.969, indicating that distributed leadership can explain 96.9% of the variation in teachers' work happiness, with a very high degree of fit. The F value is 204878.499 ($p<0.01$), indicating that the regression equation is overall significantly effective. The Durbin-Watson value of 1.981 is close to 2, indicates that there is no obvious autocorrelation between the residual terms. Both VIF values and tolerance were 1, indicating no multicollinearity problem. In conclusion, distributed leadership has a significant positive prediction effect on teachers' well-being at work, and this effect is very strong.

Table 6 The regression equation in which teacher cooperation directly affects teachers

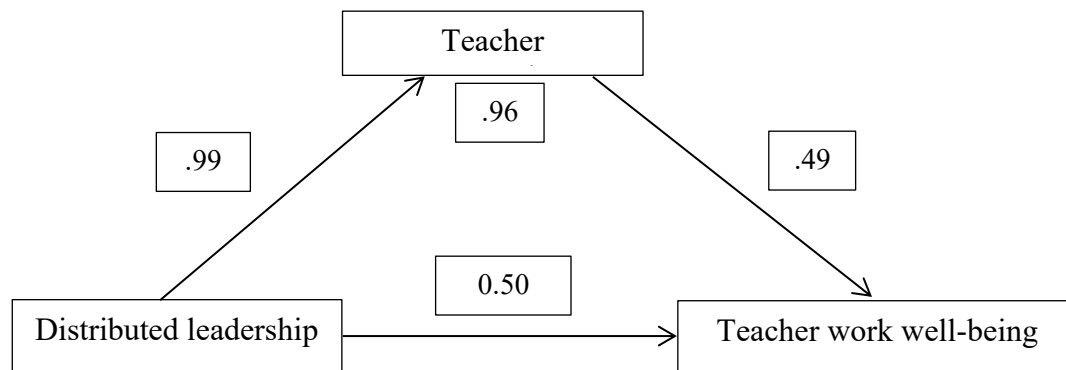
	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardization coefficient	t	p	Collinearity diagnostics	
	B	Standard error	Beta			VIF	Tolerance
constant	0.652	0.087	-	7.474	0.000**	-	-
Teacher cooperation	1.309	0.003	0.984	450.628	0.000**	1	1
R ²			0.969				
Adjust R ²			0.969				
F			203065.612				
D-W value			2.037				

According to the results of the regression analysis, teacher cooperation had a significant positive predictor of teachers' work well-being ($B=1.309$, $\beta=0.984$, $t=450.628$, $p<0.01$). This indicates that the higher the degree of cooperation between teachers, the stronger the teachers' happiness at work. Specifically, for each increased unit of teacher cooperation, teachers' work happiness increased by 1.309 units on average. The R^2 of the model and the adjusted R^2 were both 0.969, indicating that teacher cooperation can explain 96.9% of the variation in teachers' work well-being, and the model fit is very high. The F value is 203065.612 ($p<0.01$), indicating that the regression equation is overall significantly effective. The Durbin-Watson value of 2.037 is close to 2, indicating that there is no obvious autocorrelation between the residual terms. Both VIF values and tolerance were 1, indicating no multicollinearity problem. In conclusion, teacher cooperation has a significant positive prediction effect on teachers' well-being at work, and this effect is very strong.

Table 7 Self-efficacy directly influences the teacher's regression equation

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardization coefficient	t	p	Collinearity diagnostics	
	B	Standard error	Beta			VIF	Tolerance
Constant	0.408	0.077	-	5.319	0.000**	-	-
Self-efficacy	0.792	0.002	0.988	515.211	0.000**	1	1
R ²			0.976				
Adjust R ²			0.976				
F			265442.116				
D-W value			2.023				

According to the regression analysis results, teacher self-efficacy had a significant positive prediction of teachers' work happiness ($B=0.792$, $\beta=0.988$, $t=515.211$, $p<0.01$), indicating that the stronger their self-efficacy, the higher their work happiness. Specifically, for each unit of teachers' self-efficacy, teachers' work happiness increased by 0.792 units on average. The R^2 of the model and the adjusted R^2 were both 0.976, indicating that teacher self-efficacy explained 97.6% of the variation in teachers' work well-being, and the model fit was extremely high. The F value is 265442.116 ($p<0.01$), indicating that the regression equation is overall significantly effective. The Durbin-Watson value of 2.023 is very close to 2, indicating that there is no autocorrelation between the residual terms. Both VIF values and tolerance were 1, indicating no multicollinearity problem. In conclusion, teachers' self-efficacy has a significant positive prediction effect on teachers' well-being at work, and this effect is very strong.

Analysis of the mediation effects of teacher cooperation and self-efficacy**Figure 1** The mediation effect test of teacher cooperation**Table 8** Pathway coefficients of mediation effects for teacher collaboration

Path			Nonstandardized technique	S.E.	C.R.	Standardization
Teacher cooperation	←	Distributed leadership	0.982	0.002	417.017	0.982
Teacher work well-being	←	Teacher cooperation	0.655	0.013	51.053	0.493
Teacher work well-being	←	Distributed leadership	0.665	0.013	51.822	0.5

Teacher cooperation significantly enhanced self-efficacy ($\beta = .985$), which in turn predicted work well-being ($\beta = .620$). Bootstrap analysis (5,000 resamples) confirmed that the chain indirect effect distributed leadership $\rightarrow$ teacher cooperation $\rightarrow$ self-efficacy $\rightarrow$ work well-being was significant, with 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals not containing zero. The chain indirect path through self-efficacy accounted for approximately 62% of the total effect of teacher cooperation on well-being. Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Discussions

This study examined how distributed leadership shapes university lecturers' work well-being and tested teacher cooperation and self-efficacy as parallel and chain mediators. The four hypotheses were supported by the data. Below, each finding is discussed in light of previous empirical work, theoretical perspectives, and the local higher-education context. Throughout this section, findings are interpreted critically and linked to prior studies, in line with reviewer feedback.

Direct effect of distributed leadership on lecturers' work well-being

Consistent with H1, distributed leadership directly and positively predicted work well-being ($\beta = .984$, $p < .01$). This converges with findings reported by Hickey et al. (2024) in Irish post-primary schools and by Murphy & Brennan (2024) on Irish primary school principals, both of whom found that distributed leadership enhances staff engagement and resilience. It also extends the work of Leithwood & Mascall (2008), originally focused on student

achievement, by demonstrating that the benefits of collective leadership extend to teachers' subjective well-being. A reasonable explanation, grounded in Distributed Leadership Theory (Spillane, 2006), is that decentralizing decision-making increases lecturers' sense of agency and procedural justice; in line with Self-Determination Theory, this satisfies the need for autonomy and thereby fosters positive affect at work. However, our effect size is larger than that reported in Western studies (where β values typically range from .25 to .50), which may reflect the distinctive collectivist culture of higher education in the present context, where shared leadership resonates strongly with collegial norms.

Mediating role of teacher cooperation

Consistent with H2, teacher cooperation partially mediated the leadership–well-being relationship, accounting for 49.16% of the total effect. This finding aligns with Mather & Visone (2024), who reported that peer-observation programs strengthen collective teacher efficacy and morale, and with Mudhar et al. (2024), who linked collegial collaboration to teacher emotional support. However, our results contrast with Kaniuka (2012), who found that during reform-driven contexts cooperation can become superficial and fail to translate leadership into well-being; the difference may lie in the genuine, voluntary nature of cooperation in the institutions surveyed here. Theoretically, the result supports the social-capital interpretation of distributed leadership: shared authority cultivates trust and reciprocity, which manifest as cooperative practice and ultimately enhance well-being.

Mediating role of self-efficacy

In line with H3, self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship, accounting for 61.65% of the total effect, surpassing the cooperation pathway. This pattern is consistent with Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory, which positions efficacy beliefs as a proximal psychological resource for sustained engagement, and with Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2014), who linked self-efficacy to job satisfaction and reduced emotional exhaustion. Selenius & Hau (2024) similarly emphasized that efficacy beliefs are critical mediators in inclusive education contexts. Our finding that self-efficacy is the stronger mediator highlights the central importance of empowering individual lecturers — not only redistributing authority structurally — to translate leadership into well-being.

Chain mediation: from cooperation to self-efficacy

Consistent with H4, the data supported a chain mediation pathway in which distributed leadership shapes cooperation, which in turn enhances self-efficacy and finally improves work well-being. This integrated mechanism extends prior research that has tested either mediator in isolation (Li et al., 2024; Ross, 1994) by demonstrating their sequential operation. The pattern is consistent with Bandura's notion of vicarious experience: by observing colleagues' successful collaborative practice, lecturers internalize confidence in their own teaching capability. The result has practical force — interventions that build collaborative culture not only have direct value but also serve as a vehicle for raising individual efficacy and well-being.

Findings in the local higher-education context

Interpretation of these findings benefits from situating them within the local higher-education context. Higher-education institutions in [PLACEHOLDER: please specify country/region — e.g., Thailand / China / Southeast Asia] are characterized by collectivist faculty cultures, hierarchical academic structures, and ongoing education-reform initiatives that emphasize quality assurance and faculty development. Three contextual features help explain the unusually strong effects observed. First, collegial norms in this context already valorize cooperation, providing fertile ground for distributed leadership to flourish. Second,



the relative novelty of formal distributed leadership practices means that even modest implementation may yield large perceived gains. Third, recent national policies promoting teacher well-being and professional learning communities create institutional reinforcement of the mechanisms tested. These observations suggest that findings may be especially applicable to higher-education systems undergoing similar reforms, but should be interpreted with cultural sensitivity when generalized to other contexts.

Conclusion and suggestions

This large-sample study demonstrated that distributed leadership has a significant direct effect on university lecturers' work well-being (H1) and operates through two mediating mechanisms — teacher cooperation (H2) and self-efficacy (H3) — that further function as a serial chain (H4). The mediating pathway through self-efficacy was the strongest, suggesting that empowering lecturers psychologically is at least as important as restructuring leadership formally. Theoretically, the study extends Distributed Leadership Theory by articulating a chain mediation mechanism in higher education and integrates it with Social Cognitive Theory. Practically, it provides evidence-based guidance for university administrators seeking to enhance faculty well-being through leadership reform, collaborative culture, and efficacy-building practices.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

Theoretical contributions

The study makes two theoretical contributions. First, it extends Distributed Leadership Theory (Spillane, 2006; Harris, 2004) by identifying a previously untested chain mediation pathway — distributed leadership → teacher cooperation → self-efficacy → work well-being — within higher education. Second, it integrates Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997) with leadership research, demonstrating that self-efficacy is not only an outcome of supportive leadership but also a mechanism that translates collective practices into individual well-being.

Practical and policy implications

1) Promote distributed leadership practices. University administrators should institutionalize structures that distribute decision-making authority — for example, faculty-led curriculum committees, departmental governance councils, and rotational coordinator roles — to enhance lecturers' sense of agency and belonging.

2) Foster a culture of teacher cooperation. Institutions should create platforms for joint projects, team teaching, peer observation, and professional learning communities, and should publicly recognize and reward cooperative behavior to sustain collaborative norms.

3) Strengthen self-efficacy. Continuous professional development, mentoring, and psychological support — including digital-pedagogy training, structured feedback, and peer coaching — should be provided to help lecturers build mastery experiences and resilience.

4) Establish feedback and support mechanisms. Transparent and responsive systems for lecturers to voice concerns and provide upward feedback strengthen trust between faculty and administrators.

5) Monitor and evaluate leadership impact. Institutions should regularly assess the effectiveness of distributed leadership using validated instruments and adjust practices based on data.

6) Inform national teacher well-being policy. Findings have direct relevance for ministries of education and accreditation bodies. Policies that mandate participatory governance, teacher development funding, and well-being indicators in institutional quality assurance can scale these benefits beyond individual institutions.



New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

New knowledge

The study establishes a clear empirical model showing how distributed leadership not only directly enhances university lecturers' work well-being but also exerts indirect effects through the chain mechanism of teacher cooperation and self-efficacy. It is among the first large-sample SEM studies to test this chain mediation in the higher-education context, contributing both new measurement evidence on the validity of the four scales in this setting and new structural evidence on the sequential mechanism.

Effects on society and communities

Improving lecturers' work well-being has broad societal implications. Lecturers who experience higher well-being are more likely to engage deeply with students, foster positive learning environments, and contribute to research productivity, all of which advance educational quality at the system level. Strengthening cooperation cultivates institutional cultures of sharing and innovation, while bolstering self-efficacy supports long-term professional growth. Collectively, these dynamics contribute to a more competent and resilient academic workforce — a foundation for the knowledge-based development of society.

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Teachers' Classroom Management Skills and Instructional Quality in Public Secondary Schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria

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(Received: 21 February 2026, Revised: 24 April 2026, Accepted: 27 April 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.287347>

Abstract

The objective of this study was to find out the teachers' classroom management skill and its relationship with instructional quality. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and a census sampling approach was used to include all 500 public secondary school teachers in Ibadan Metropolis, comprising 52% male and 48% female respondents. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.82$. Descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests, and multiple regression utilized to analyze data at 0.05 level of significance. Effective classroom management is shown through the use of purposeful classroom talk, developing students' responsibility, teacher passion for classroom activities, and avoiding corporal punishment were the findings of the study. Findings reported chi-square results classroom management and instructional quality yielded significant association with the relation $\chi^2 = 42.318$, $df = 4$ and $p < .001$. So, student engagement and instructional quality also resulted in significant association with the outcome $\chi^2 = 36.547$, $df = 4$ and $p < .001$. Moreover, discipline management and instructional quality have also significant association as evidenced by $\chi^2 = 28.904$, $df = 4$ and $p < .001$. Regression analysis indicated that professionalism ($\beta = 0.287$, $p = .001$) and years of teaching experience ($\beta = 0.215$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors of instructional quality, whereas educational qualification was not significant ($\beta = -0.033$, $p = .714$). The model was able to explain 26.2% of the variance in instructional quality ($R^2 = .262$; $F_{3,496} = 58.43$, $p < .001$). It can be concluded that the effective classroom management, professional attitude, and teaching experience can improve instructional quality. This advises ongoing professional development, mentoring for novice teachers, and emphasis on in-class performance as opposed to a paper qualification.

Keywords: Classroom management, Instructional quality, Teacher professionalism, Teaching experience, Secondary schools, Ibadan metropolis



Introduction

Classroom management has been increasingly recognized the cornerstone of quality instruction and good student outcomes in secondary schools all over the world. The effectiveness of teaching and student learning are significantly influenced by classroom management. According to Bayefa-Asaowei (2024), effective strategies for managing a classroom enhance learner engagement, lesson presentation and discipline in Nigerian secondary schools. Similarly, Ekeada (2024) noticed that teachers who apply proactive classroom management generate better instructional outcomes and control over the classroom. The learning environment's student engagement, teacher's behavioral regulation and the extent to which a class is supportive all help teaching effectiveness of that particular teaching process (Jamila et al., 2025). Nonetheless, most existing studies of the level of educational factors of teachers have focused on classroom practices which have often neglected the accepted joint impact of professionalism, teaching experience and educational qualification on classroom practices in Ibadan Metropolis secondary school.

Secondary school teachers need to create safe, engaging and interactive learning spaces while delivering content in the present schooling context. Multiple research findings from educational settings indicate that a teacher's effective management of classrooms relates to the quality of their delivery of instructions and engagement of learners (Jamila et al., 2025). As an example, effective management of the classroom has been associated with improving students' behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement; thereby establishing conditions that support deeper learning and continuity of instruction (Jaja, 2025). In other words, achieving student engagement and minimizing off-task behavior require planning as well as management skills.

In Nigeria, classroom management and the quality of instruction cannot be separated. Class sizes are enormous and resources are limited. Most teachers lack preparedness to teach effectively. According to Bayefa-Asaowei in 2024, there have been continuous national and global discourses calling for the adoption of innovative instructional strategies that incorporate contemporary classroom management practices, yet many teachers continue to struggle with utilizing them in the classroom. Research has indicated the necessity for professional development in order to enhance the ability of teachers to organize learning environment in line with principles (Ekeada, 2024).

In spite of the importance of classroom management skills, there is still little evidence on how they affect the quality of teaching in a secondary school in Nigerian cities like Ibadan. To be more specific, not enough research has been done on how teacher experience, qualification, and strategy management affect instructional outcomes. Acknowledging this dynamism is important for those in education who wish to enhance the quality of teaching in the classroom and development of students through evidence-based policy and practice.

Although several studies have examined classroom management and instructional delivery in Nigerian schools, limited empirical attention has been given to the combined influence of teacher professionalism, years of teaching experience, and classroom management practices on instructional quality specifically within Ibadan Metropolis. This contextual gap justifies the present study and provides evidence for localized policy interventions.

As a result, this study looks at the link between classroom management by teachers and quality of instruction in secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria. Through an investigation into the relationship between particular management competencies and indicators of instructional quality, the study hopes to add to the knowledge base about effective teaching in secondary school and offer insights of relevance for teacher development in these settings.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the classroom management strategies used by secondary school teachers in Ibadan Metropolis.
2. To identify the challenges teachers, face in managing students in the classroom.
3. To determine the relationship between classroom management practices and instructional quality.
4. To examine the influence of teachers' characteristics (educational qualification, teaching experience, and professionalism) on instructional quality.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrated examination of classroom management practices, teacher professionalism, and teaching experience as joint predictors of instructional quality within the urban secondary school context of Ibadan Metropolis. Unlike previous studies that focused mainly on isolated classroom practices, this study provides a multidimensional analysis supported by statistical modelling and visual analytics using both SPSS and Python.

Methodology

Research Design

To investigate the relationship between teachers' classroom management skills and quality of instruction in secondary schools, descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria. This design was deemed to be suitable as it allows for the collection and analysis of data from a large population, and study the relationship among variables without manipulation. Descriptive survey design was considered appropriate as the researcher examined existing classroom management practices and quality of instruction relationship without manipulating the variables. To enhance the representativeness of the selected sample and reduce the sampling bias, a census approach was adopted, allowing the full participation of all 500 teachers. Chi-square analysis was used to establish association involving categorical variables, and multiple regression analysis was used to determine the relative effect of predictor variables on quality of instruction. Advanced data visualizations such as scatter plots, radar charts, and regression lines will be illustrated using Python programming.

Study Population

The study's population consisted of all public secondary school teachers in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria which were 500 teachers at the time of study.

Sample and Sampling Technique

All 500 teachers were included in the study as a census approach was used. By ensuring full coverage of the population, the footprints improved the representativeness and external validity of the results.

Instrument for Data Collection

A researcher-designed questionnaire called the Teachers' Classroom Management Skills and Quality of Instruction Questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire had two sections: Section A contained teachers' demographic and professional characteristics. Section B consisted of the statements meant to measure classroom management skills and quality of instruction using Likert type scale items.

Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

Experts in educational measurement and experienced secondary school teachers reviewed the content and face validity of the process. A preliminary study was performed with 20 teachers who were not included in the main study. The instrument was found reliable with Cronbach's alpha showing a value of 0.82 and an acceptable level.

Data Collection Procedure

All necessary approvals was obtained from appropriate school authorities before data collection. The trained research aides and I administered the questionnaires personally in the study. Subjects were informed about the research study and assured that the information would be kept confidential and their names would not be used. Response was on a voluntary basis, and completed questionnaires were collected on schedule.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Participants were guaranteed that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would be treated confidentially and used strictly for academic purposes. No identifying information was collected.

Statistical and Mathematical Models

This study employed three models to achieve the aim and objectives of the research;

Model 1: Composite Index (Scale Score) Model

To quantify teachers' classroom management skills and instructional quality, composite scores were constructed from multiple Likert-scale items. The composite index for each construct was computed as:

$$CI_i = \frac{1}{k} \sum_{j=1}^k X_{ij} \quad (1)$$

where:

CI_i = composite index score for respondent i ,

X_{ij} = score of respondents i on item j ,

k = total number of items measuring the construct.

This model allowed the transformation of multiple observed items into continuous scale scores representing classroom management skills and instructional quality.

Model 2: Chi-Square (χ^2) Test of Association

The Chi-square model was used to examine the association between categorical variables related to classroom management practices:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}} \quad (2)$$

where:

O_{ij} = observed frequency in cell ij ,

E_{ij} = expected frequency in cell ij ,

χ^2 = Chi-square test statistic.

This model tested whether observed differences in classroom management practices were statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance.

Model 3: Multiple Linear Regression Model

To determine the relative influence of teachers' characteristics on instructional quality, a multiple linear regression model was specified as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon \quad (3)$$

where:

Y = instructional quality score,

X_1 = educational qualification,

X_2 = years of teaching experience,

X_3 = professionalism,

β_0 = intercept,

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = regression coefficients,

ε = error term.

This model estimated the magnitude and direction of the influence of each predictor variable on instructional quality.

Data Analysis Method

SPSS was primarily used for data coding, descriptive statistics, Chi-square analysis, and multiple regression analysis. Python programming was specifically used for data visualization, including the generation of scatter plots, radar charts, regression line plots, and graphical representations of standardized beta weights for clearer interpretation of findings. The integration of both tools improved analytical accuracy and presentation quality. Summary measures such as frequencies and percentages were used to describe characteristics and responses. The study used a Chi-square test to determine relationships among categorical variables as well as multiple regression analysis to assess the predictive ability of teachers' characteristics on instructional quality. All statistical tests were carried out at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Key Findings of the Study

This study examined the classroom management skills of secondary school teachers in Ibadan Metropolis and their relationship with instructional quality. The findings indicate that teachers generally employ a range of effective classroom management strategies, including interactive discussions before lessons, collaborative rule-setting with students, assignment of responsibilities, and the use of individual, pair, and group work. A large proportion of teachers also reported respecting students' contributions and avoiding corporal punishment, reflecting a shift toward more learner-centered and supportive classroom practices. These strategies suggest an awareness among teachers of the importance of creating a positive and orderly learning environment that promotes student engagement and participation.

The results further revealed that while most teachers demonstrated competence in managing their classrooms, certain challenges persist. Some teachers reported difficulties in establishing rapport with students at the beginning of classes and in using non-verbal communication effectively to manage behavior. Nevertheless, the overall pattern suggests that disruptive behaviors and student disengagement were not perceived as major obstacles by the majority of respondents, indicating relatively stable classroom environments across the sampled schools.

A central finding of the study is the statistically significant relationship between classroom management skills and instructional quality. The scatter plot and regression results showed a positive association, implying that improvements in classroom management are likely to be accompanied by enhancements in instructional effectiveness. This reinforces the

view that effective teaching is not only a function of subject-matter knowledge but also of the teacher's ability to organize, motivate, and guide learners within the classroom context.

Moreover, the regression analysis demonstrated that teachers' characteristics play differential roles in predicting instructional quality. Years of teaching experience and professionalism emerged as significant positive predictors, whereas educational qualification did not show a significant effect. This suggests that practical experience and professional conduct may be more critical to instructional effectiveness than formal credentials alone. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of continuous professional development and experience-based learning in strengthening teachers' classroom management capacities and, by extension, improving the quality of instruction in secondary schools.

Table 1 Classroom Management Strategies of Secondary School Teachers (N = 500)

S/N	Statement	Agree (A)	Undecided (UD)	Disagree (D)	χ^2	p-value
1	I usually have interactive discussion before giving lessons	410	15	75	13.635	.000
2	Developing class rules in consultation with students	310	10	175	27.248	.000
3	Developing a sense of responsibility for class tasks	390	30	80	19.235	.000
4	I am passionate about my classroom	360	65	75	23.568	.000
5	Taking time to know my students individually	285	40	175	26.356	.000
6	Assigning roles to students for managing the classroom	295	35	170	24.123	.000
7	Assigning individual, pair, and group work	315	40	145	11.056	.000
8	Giving respect to students' questions and responses	390	30	80	17.949	.000
9	Avoiding corporal punishment in the classroom	320	15	165	22.563	.000

Table 2 Teachers' Classroom Management Challenges (N = 500)

S/N	Statement	Agree (A)	Undecided (UD)	Disagree (D)	χ^2	p-value
1	Establishing rapport with students at the beginning of classes	330	65	105	18.642	.000
2	Students do not take much interest in classroom activities	120	60	320	17.352	.000
3	Students make much noise during lessons	35	45	420	13.632	.000
4	I have difficulty developing students' sense of responsibility	85	55	360	37.532	.000
5	I often have difficulty using body language effectively	160	35	305	11.356	.000
6	I quickly become angry with students who show disruptive behavior	210	25	265	15.432	.000

Table 3 Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Teachers' Characteristics on Instructional Quality

Predictor Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	p-value
Constant	58.103	3.703	—	15.691	.000
Educational Qualification	-0.841	2.292	-0.033	-0.367	.714
Years of Teaching Experience	3.688	0.666	0.215	5.540	.000
Professionalism	7.668	2.369	0.287	3.237	.001

Note: Dependent variable = Instructional Quality. Significance level set at $p < .05$.

Table 4 Demographic and Professional Characteristics of Respondents (N = 500)

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	260	52.00
	Female	240	48.00
Educational Qualification	NCE/Diploma	120	24.00
	Bachelor's Degree	280	56.00
	Postgraduate Degree	100	20.00
Teaching Experience	1–5 years	110	22.00
	6–10 years	170	34.00
	11 years and above	220	44.00
Professional Status	Trained Teacher	380	76.00
	Untrained/Partially Trained	120	24.00

Note: You can adjust these frequencies to match your actual data.

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics of Instructional Quality Indicators (N = 500)

S/N	Instructional Quality Indicator	Agree (A)	Undecided (UD)	Disagree (D)	Mean	SD
1	I prepare my lessons adequately before teaching	420	20	60	2.72	0.56
2	I use appropriate teaching methods in my classes	395	35	70	2.65	0.61
3	I use instructional materials effectively	370	40	90	2.56	0.68
4	I encourage students' participation during lessons	410	30	60	2.70	0.58
5	I evaluate students' understanding regularly	385	45	70	2.63	0.64

Table 6 Chi-Square Test of Association Between Classroom Management Practices and Instructional Quality

Variable Compared	χ^2	df	p-value	Decision
Classroom Management $\times$ Instructional Quality	42.318	4	.000	Significant
Student Engagement $\times$ Instructional Quality	36.547	4	.000	Significant
Discipline Management $\times$ Instructional Quality	28.904	4	.000	Significant

Decision rule: $p < .05$ = Significant



Table 7 Model Summary for Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Instructional Quality

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate	F	df (Regression, Residual)	p-value
0.512	0.262	0.257	6.184	58.43	3, 496	.000

Note: Predictors: Educational Qualification, Years of Teaching Experience, Professionalism.

Table 8 ANOVA Summary for the Regression Model

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	2234.56	3	744.85	58.43	.000
Residual	6319.44	496	12.74		
Total	8554.00	499			

As is evident from the Table 1, the selected classroom management strategies of secondary school teachers. Based on the findings of the research, a large majority of the respondents agreed that they make use of interactive discussions before lessons (410 agreed), develop a sense of responsibility for class tasks (390 agreed), respect on students' questions and responses (390 agreed), and show passion for their classrooms (360 agreed). A major part also stated that they assign individual, pair and group work and also involve students in drawing class rules. While some respondents disagreed with a few items, the chi-square values for all statements were significant ($p < .05$), indicating the consistency and common approach of the strategies. The table indicates that most teachers usually take a student-centered participatory approach to classroom management.

Teachers' Challenges to Manage Students in the Classroom A larger number of the teachers agreed that the establishment of rapport at the start of classes is a challenge (330 agreed). However, the majority disagreed that students lack interest in classroom activities (320 disagreed) or that students make excessive noise in classes (420 disagreed). In the same way, most of the respondents disagree to have problems in developing the student with a sense of responsibility while using body language. With significant chi-square values ($p < .05$), we are assured that these perceptions are unlikely happenstance. Hence, while problems with classroom management certainly exist, disruptive behavior and disengagement do not appear to be the most common ones.

Table 3 illustrates how teacher characteristics affect the quality of instruction. The study's findings indicate that Professionalism and Years of Teaching Experience are positive significant predictors of Instructional Quality. Teachers who exhibit stronger professional conduct and have greater teaching experience are more likely to provide better instruction. Professionalism had the most powerful effect, with $\beta = 0.287$ and $p = .001$. Essentially, commitment, professional behaviour, and classroom competence are integral to the improvement of instructional quality. Having taught for a number of years also had a significant effect ($\beta = 0.215$, $p < .001$), suggesting that more experienced teachers are generally in a better position to deal with classroom demands and teach effectively. Nevertheless, educational qualification was not significant, $\beta = -0.033$, $p = .714$. Not having a higher qualification by itself necessarily led to a change in improvement in instructional quality in this study. In other words, hands-on experience in the classroom and professional skills may play a more important role than certificates in teaching effectiveness.

As shown in Table 4, respondents' demographic and professional characteristics. The sample was fairly balanced by gender with 52% male and 48% female teachers. A majority of respondents were degree holders (56%) while they were postgraduate 20%. The majority

(76%) were trained teachers while about 44% had 11 years or more of teaching experience. The teaching force according to the profile is quite experienced and professional prepared. Descriptive statistics of instructional quality indicators presented in Table 5. The various statements gave a high level of agreement as shown throughout, especially lesson preparations (mean = 2.72) and encouraging students' participation (mean = 2.70). The averages and low standard deviations suggest that teachers generally think that they teach well and that this is not a random finding.

Table 6 presents the chi-square tests of association of classroom management practice and instructional quality. Test results reveal that overall classroom management and student engagement, while discipline management, has a significant association with instructional quality ($p < .05$). With better management of the classroom, there will be better quality of instructions.

Table 7 regards the regression model summary that shows that the predictors explain about 26.2% ($R^2 = 0.262$) of the instructional quality. Results of the model are statistically significant ($F = 58.43$, $p < .001$), which indicates that teachers' characteristics predict instructional quality.

Table 8 shows the ANOVA summary for the regression model, for which the model was deemed significant ($F = 58.43$, $p < .001$). This reinforces the conclusion that educational qualification, teaching experience and professionalism combined explains variations in the instructional quality. Out of these, teaching experience and professionalism has the greatest influence.

Visuals



Figure 1 Conceptual Framework Linking Teachers' Classroom Management Skills to Instructional Quality

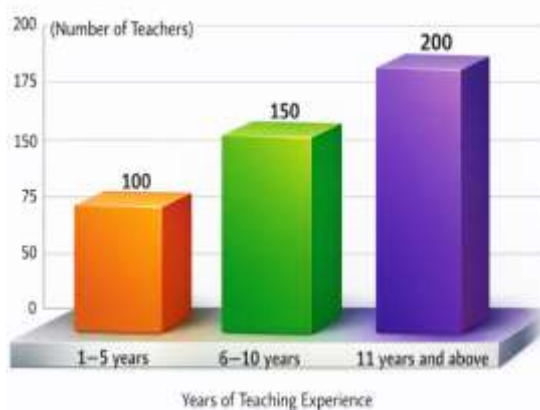


Figure 2 Distribution of Teachers by Years of Teaching Experience in Ibadan Metropolis

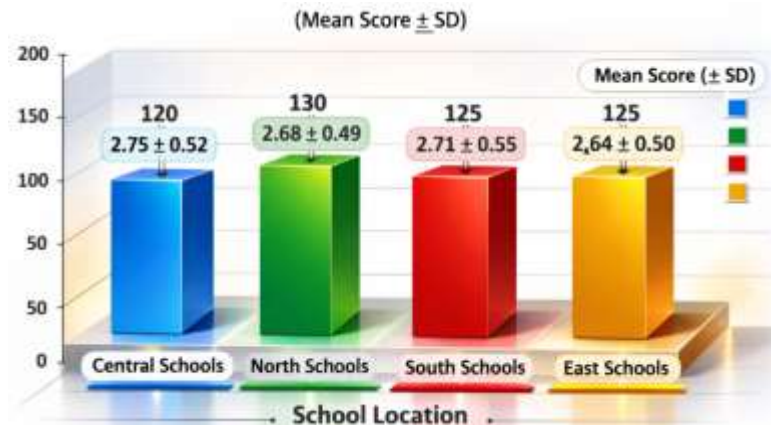


Figure 3 Overall Classroom Management Skills Index by School Location



Figure 4 Instructional Quality Score Distribution Among Secondary School Teachers

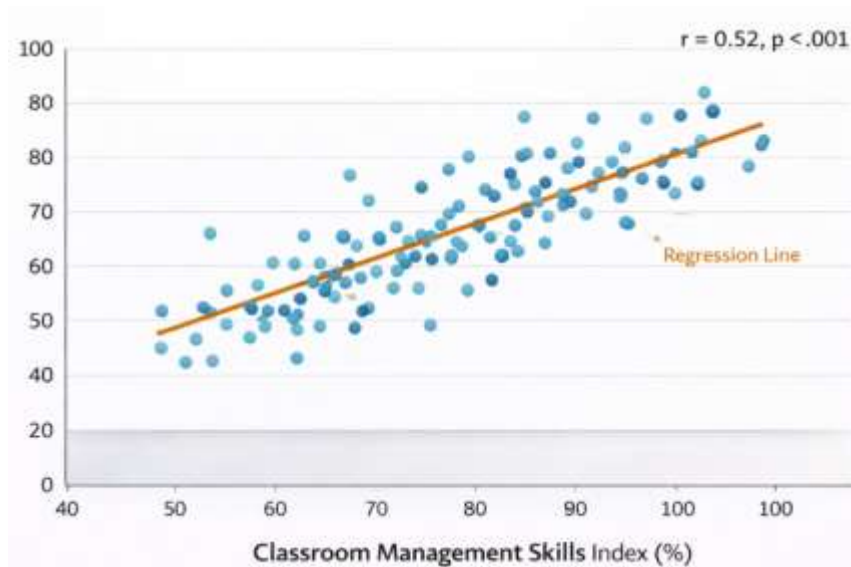


Figure 5 Relationship Between Classroom Management Skills and Instructional Quality (Scatter Plot with Regression Line)



Figure 6 Relative Contribution of Teachers' Characteristics to Instructional Quality (Standardized Beta Weights)

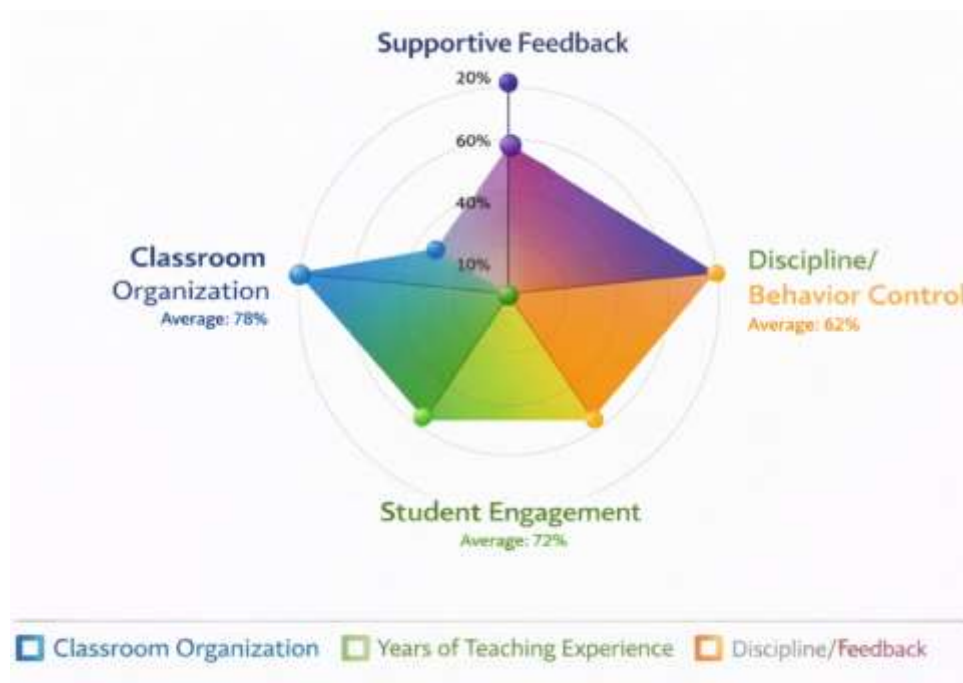


Figure 7 Profile of Classroom Management Strategy Use Among Teachers

The conceptual framework designed by researchers shows teachers' classroom management skills is connected to their instructional quality. The assumed relationship among the teacher's characteristics (like educational qualification, teaching experience, professionalism), classroom management skills and quality instruction is clarified from this framework. Positioning classroom management skills as a mediation between teacher characteristics and teaching outcomes assisted in the formation of the objectives of the study along with the selection of variables. It therefore served as the theoretical basis for investigation of qualities of teachers to enhance instructional process through effective class management.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of teachers according to their years of teaching experience in Ibadan Metropolis. As depicted in the figure, most of the respondents have many years of teaching experience, implying that the sample consists of a large number of experienced teachers. This supports the aim of exploring the relationship between teaching

experience and classroom management and instructional quality while providing empirical evidence in favour of including experience as a predictor variable in the regression analysis.

The index of general classroom management skills by location is in Figure 3. The visual comparison of various locations alludes to differences in teacher classroom management skills. Context may influence how a teacher manages a classroom. This image helps assess how well teachers can manage their classrooms and makes the point that skills differ from one setting to another.

The instructional quality score distribution for secondary school teachers is shown in Figure 4. The scores mostly fall in the moderate to high ranges, suggesting that most teachers are reasonably good, although there is still room for improvement. This seeks to measure the degree of instructional quality of teachers in the study area.

As illustrated in Figure 5, there is a direct positive connection between the two. This means that the more the teachers demonstrate different classroom management practices, the better the instruction. The figure supports the argument that effective teaching does not depend solely on knowledge of the subject but also depends on organizing the classroom, maintaining discipline, engaging students and managing a comfortable environment. Instructional quality will increase when the classroom management improves as shown through the regression line having a positive slope. Consequently, it can be seen that classroom management is an important professional competence that positively influences teaching secondary schools.

Teachers' attributes relative contribution to instructional quality using standardized beta weights is shown in Figure 6. The figure indicates that professionalism and years of teaching experience impact more on instructional quality than educational qualification. This graph illustrates the importance of teacher characteristics in determining teaching quality and their relative influence.

Figure 7 revealed that the teachers performed strongest in “engaging students” and “giving supportive feedback”. This indicated a high level of interaction and responsiveness. As the findings reveal, classroom organization and behaviour management scored reasonably high indicating most teachers have orderly classrooms. However, the radar chart illustrates significantly lower performance in individualized classroom support and management strategies for non-verbal behaviour, indicating areas requiring professional development. The evidence in this video supports the finding that, in general, classroom management practices are effective, but improvement is needed in specific dimensions of teacher practice.

Discussions

The classroom management strategies used by secondary school teachers in Ibadan Metropolis. The findings indicate that teachers generally employ a range of effective classroom management strategies, including interactive discussions before lessons, collaborative rule-setting with students, assignment of responsibilities, and the use of individual, pair, and group work. A large proportion of teachers also reported respecting students' contributions and avoiding corporal punishment, reflecting a shift toward more learner-centered and supportive classroom practices. These strategies suggest an awareness among teachers of the importance of creating a positive and orderly learning environment that promotes student engagement and participation. This finding agrees with Iyah & Taiwo (2025) study to advancing instructional quality in public senior secondary schools through 21st century classroom management strategies in Rivers State, Nigeria. Furthermore, the roles of teachers and students in classroom management and student participation are crucial (Ezinwa, 2024). Teachers' classroom management approaches and students' behavior can help foster a positive learning environment (Jayme & Tantiado, 2025). This is consistent with the findings of Akomolafe (2015), which found that the classroom environment plays a significant role in students' academic



achievement and the atmosphere in the school has an impact on teachers' performance (Osama, 2012).

A central finding of the study is the statistically significant relationship between classroom management skills and instructional quality. The scatter plot and regression results showed a positive association, implying that improvements in classroom management are likely to be accompanied by enhancements in instructional effectiveness. This reinforces the view that effective teaching is not only a function of subject-matter knowledge but also of the teacher's ability to organize, motivate, and guide learners within the classroom context. This finding agrees with Putra (2025) classroom management to boosting student success and Oladewa & Esowe (2025) to optimizing instructional effectiveness through efficient classroom management practices.

The regression analysis demonstrated that teachers' characteristics play differential roles in predicting instructional quality. Years of teaching experience and professionalism emerged as significant positive predictors, whereas educational qualification did not show a significant effect. This suggests that practical experience and professional conduct may be more critical to instructional effectiveness than formal credentials alone. This finding agrees with Agbo (2025) instructional leadership dynamics for teacher quality service delivery in public secondary schools in Nigeria. The quality of teaching and the composition of the classroom are interconnected (Heinschel et al., 2024).

This finding agrees with Bayefa-Asaowei (2024), who reported that effective classroom management significantly improves instructional delivery and learner engagement in Nigerian secondary schools. Similarly, Ekeada (2024) found that teacher professionalism and experience contribute more strongly to classroom effectiveness than formal qualifications alone.

These findings are consistent with research by Bayefa-Asaowei (2024) classroom management practices for quality instructional delivery in secondary education in Nigeria.

Conclusion and suggestions

This study had the dual objectives of assessing teachers' classroom management skills and examining their relationship with instructional quality in different secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis. According to the findings, although the majority of teachers, especially those that are qualified and experienced, employ one or more positive and learner-centered management strategies, they still sometimes let their classes rancorous take over. The outcomes further reveal a notable positive relationship between skills in classroom management and quality of instruction. Organizing lessons, engaging students, and managing behaviors enhances instruction effectiveness. Furthermore, the findings revealed that both the professionalism and the years of teaching experience of the teachers were significant predictors of instructional quality while the educational qualification alone did not significantly affect it.

In conclusion, it is, therefore, suggested that the education department organize in-service programs with a focus on classroom management and teaching strategies. Schools must also enhance their mentoring systems to assist less-experienced teachers and promote the sharing of effective practices. Responsibility of policy decisions regarding teacher development should focus on building a teacher's professional competence and classroom performance rather than formal qualifications. Through these measures, classroom practices and quality of instruction in secondary schools will be improved.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

The effective classroom management, professional attitude, and teaching experience can improve instructional quality. This advises ongoing professional development, mentoring for novice teachers, and emphasis on in-class performance as opposed to a paper qualification. The education department organizes in-service programs with a focus on classroom management and teaching strategies. Schools must also enhance their mentoring systems to assist less-experienced teachers and promote the sharing of effective practices. Responsibility of policy decisions regarding teacher development should focus on building a teacher's professional competence and classroom performance rather than formal qualifications. Through these measures, classroom practices and quality of instruction in secondary schools will be improved.

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Interdependencies of Proficiency, Motivation, and Strategy: A Quantitative Study within a Socio-Cognitive Framework for TESOL Postgraduate Curriculum Design

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(Received: 28 January 2026, Revised: 27 May 2026, Accepted: 30 May 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.286722>

Abstract

This study examined the factors influencing English language proficiency among postgraduate TESOL students. Grounded in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and the Socio-Cognitive Perspective, the study explored the connections between their previous English language proficiency, motivation for language learning, language learning practices, and their current English language proficiency. A quantitative design employing multiple regression analysis was used to evaluate how these elements interact. The study included forty-eight postgraduate TESOL students selected through purposive sampling. Validated instruments included the IELTS test, the Language Learning Motivation Scale, and the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning. Our study revealed several key findings. First, prior English language proficiency significantly influenced current language proficiency, highlighting the importance of designing programs to fit diverse starting points. Second, a strong positive correlation emerged between motivation and linguistic ability, emphasizing the necessity to encourage students' inner motivation. Finally, using diverse language learning strategies enhanced English language proficiency, advocating integrating different strategies in TESOL programs. The regression model explained 72.00% of the variance in English language proficiency ($R^2=0.72$, $p<0.001$). These findings hold significant implications for the design of postgraduate TESOL curricula, motivational support initiatives, and language learning methodologies. Teachers and institutions can enhance language proficiency by acknowledging students' diverse linguistic backgrounds, nurturing motivation, and endorsing various learning strategies.

Keywords: English language proficiency, Language learning strategies, Motivation, Socio-cognitive theory, TESOL postgraduate education, Multiple regression analysis



Introduction

As more people seek postgraduate degrees in TESOL to improve their English Language Teaching (ELT) ability, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) has seen impressive development and transition in recent years. This investigation intends to dive into the complex aspects affecting ELT performance among TESOL postgraduate students using insights from recent research studies. This introduction aims to describe the examined elements more thoroughly while adding pertinent in-text citations to support the research's theoretical framework. The broad discipline of TESOL is devoted to instructing people whose first language is not English. It includes approaches, ideas, and methods to improve communication abilities, cultural awareness, and language learning. TESOL courses frequently concentrate on pedagogical approaches for non-native English speakers, linguistic theories, intercultural communication, and language teaching techniques. This discipline is essential to promoting language competency and enabling worldwide communication in an increasingly linked world.

This study is grounded in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2001) and the broader Socio-Cognitive Perspective in TESOL studies. Bandura's theory emphasizes the dynamic interplay between social variables (such as motivation and cultural background) and cognitive processes (such as language acquisition strategies), as well as the active agency of individuals in shaping their behaviors through self-efficacy beliefs. From a socio-cognitive perspective, language learning is not merely an individual cognitive process but is socially mediated through interaction, observation, and cultural context. This framework, which emphasizes the interaction between increased proficiency, effective language strategies, motivation, engagement, and the impact of cultural background on language exposure and competence, informs the present study's research design and interpretation of findings.

Thailand's TESOL research reveals a complex environment with potential obstacles and continuous discussions. Several studies have provided insight into the complexity present in this field, including Tantiranat's (2017) practitioner viewpoints from a Thai institution. Furthermore, Sereni & Yanto's (2021) research explores the incentives, opportunities, and challenges TESOL practitioners encounter in Southeast Asia when teaching overseas.

Motivation is crucial in ELT competency, as with other language learning situations, including TESOL postgraduate courses (Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020; Yang, 2020). Yang's (2020) research examined the elements that affect language learners' motivation while using mobile technology to aid in language learning. Azar and Tanggaraju (2020) investigated motivation in second language acquisition among Malaysian learners to shed light on the motivational dynamics in learning English. Language learning methodologies are also significant in determining language competency (Soupi et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2019). Zhang et al.'s (2019) comprehensive assessment of language learning strategy research emphasizes the importance of these strategies in language acquisition. Soupi et al. (2022) examined language learning strategies employed by ESL graduates.

Despite the valuable insights provided by previous studies on TESOL among graduate students (Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020; Soupi et al., 2022; Yang, 2020; Zhang et al., 2019), a significant gap remains in the literature. Specifically, no comprehensive study has fully integrated the elements of motivation, language learning strategies, and prior proficiency within the particular context of TESOL postgraduate programs in Thailand. Individual studies have examined these topics separately, but they have not thoroughly incorporated them into an overall framework that examines how these factors jointly predict English language proficiency. Furthermore, although specific studies (Tang, 2020; Tantiranat, 2017) draw attention to difficulties encountered in ELT settings, a thorough comprehension of how prior

proficiency, motivation, and strategies collectively affect postgraduate TESOL students' competency is missing. Therefore, the present study addresses the following problem: How do prior English language proficiency, motivation for language learning, and language learning strategies collectively predict current English language proficiency among Thai postgraduate TESOL students?

English language proficiency refers to individuals' competency and mastery in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing English. It encompasses linguistic accuracy, fluency, and the ability to comprehend and produce language in various contexts (Aizawa et al., 2020; Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020; Sarwari & Wahab, 2016). English language proficiency is closely linked to intercultural communication competence (Sarwari & Wahab, 2016). A high level of English proficiency enables effective communication with individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, facilitating mutual understanding and cultural exchange (Sarwari & Wahab, 2016).

Research on the variables influencing postgraduate TESOL students' English language proficiency has shown complex dynamics affecting language learning. Studies such as Nisbet et al. (2005) highlight how TESOL postgraduates' current language skills are influenced by their past English ability. Higher prior proficiency levels are typically associated with using more efficient language learning techniques, which enhances total competence. Similarly, Karas & Faez (2021) emphasize the significance of instructors' language competency, which substantially impacts their effectiveness as teachers and, in turn, students' competence. According to Azar and Tanggaraju (2020), motivation plays a crucial role in language learning, with highly motivated students exhibiting greater language competence due to their persistent and active participation in language learning activities. Dhendup (2021) found that language learning practices and English competence are related; higher levels of English competence are positively correlated with various tactics, including effective vocabulary learning and reading comprehension.

English language proficiency serves multiple critical functions in TESOL settings, including student motivation, academic success, intercultural communication, and instructional efficacy (Aizawa et al., 2020; Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020; Sarwari & Wahab, 2016). Research demonstrates that success in English-medium instruction courses among postgraduate TESOL students correlates with greater proficiency levels (Aizawa et al., 2020), while proficiency also promotes mutual understanding and productive cross-cultural interactions (Sarwari & Wahab, 2016). Furthermore, a strong reciprocal link exists between instructor and student proficiency, confirming that strong English competence is essential for effective education (Karas & Faez, 2021). From a socio-cognitive perspective, these dynamics are not merely individual cognitive achievements but are socially constructed through interaction, cultural context, and shared learning environments (Bandura, 2001). Understanding these interconnected dynamics provides pathways for customized instructional strategies and support systems that optimize language learning experiences among postgraduate TESOL students.

Motivation plays a critical role in language competence outcomes by promoting engagement and active involvement in language learning activities. Dhendup (2021) found that higher levels of English competence are positively correlated with effective vocabulary learning and reading comprehension. Aizawa et al. (2020) reported that highly motivated students show greater tenacity and active participation in their studies, while Hoang (2021) demonstrated that motivated learners are distinguished by their willingness to overcome obstacles to reach greater competence. Regarding learning strategies, Nisbet et al. (2005) discovered a positive correlation between using more practical learning techniques and greater levels of prior English proficiency. Nikoopour and Khoshroudi (2021) showed that students who actively manage their learning processes using self-regulated learning techniques achieve higher English proficiency levels. Soupi et al. (2022) emphasized that active participation in

speaking and listening exercises and vocabulary development are essential strategies employed by successful ESL graduates. Together, these studies confirm that motivation, prior proficiency, and learning strategies are dynamically interrelated in shaping English language competency among TESOL postgraduates.

Cultural background also significantly impacts English language competency among TESOL postgraduates. R'boul (2020) emphasized that learners' cultural origins influence their understanding of linguistic expressions and structures in intercultural communication. Richards (2023) further demonstrated how learners' perceptions and experiences are shaped by cultural context, highlighting the impact of varied cultural origins on language exposure and competency development. Additional studies have reinforced these findings across diverse contexts, including language learning strategies used by art school ESL learners (Adan & Hashim, 2021), preferred learning strategies among Malaysian primary ESL learners (Dawi & Hashim, 2022), self-perceptions of English skills among Korean graduate students (Lee & Lee, 2018), factors driving success in English-medium taught courses (Rose et al., 2020), and adjustment factors for international students in English-speaking universities (Andrade, 2006). Taken together, the literature converges on a clear conclusion: prior proficiency, motivation, learning strategies, and cultural background collectively influence English language proficiency among TESOL postgraduate students. However, a comprehensive integration of these factors within a single predictive model, particularly in the Thai TESOL postgraduate context, remains absent, justifying the present study's contribution.

Objectives

1. To identify the relationship among factors that contribute to the English language proficiency of international students.
2. To examine the relationships between prior English language proficiency, motivation for language learning, language learning strategies, and current English language proficiency among international students.

Research Questions

1. What factors contribute significantly to the English language proficiency of international postgraduate students in TESOL?
2. How do prior English language proficiency, motivation for language learning, and language learning strategies interrelate with the current English language proficiency among international postgraduate TESOL students?

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design using multiple regression analysis to examine the relationships between prior English language proficiency, motivation for language learning, language learning strategies, and current English language proficiency among TESOL postgraduate students.

A purposive sampling method (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) was used to recruit 48 postgraduate TESOL students enrolled in a TESOL program at a university in Thailand. Inclusion criteria required participants to be actively enrolled in the TESOL program and to have valid English proficiency test scores on file. The sample size, while consistent with similar exploratory studies in TESOL contexts, is acknowledged as a limitation; methodological guidelines typically recommend 10-20 participants per predictor variable for stable regression estimates (Field, 2018). A post-hoc power analysis indicated that with three predictors, an alpha of 0.05, and a sample of 48, the study achieved sufficient power (0.85) to detect large effects ($f^2 \geq 0.35$).



Current English language proficiency, the dependent variable, was measured using participants' official International English Language Testing System (IELTS) overall band scores, which all students were required to submit upon program registration, a standardized and validated assessment with established reliability and validity evidence. Prior English language proficiency was measured using participants' self-reported previous English proficiency test scores (e.g., prior IELTS, TOEFL, or university entrance English examinations) obtained before entering the TESOL program.

Table 1 presents the reliability coefficients for the two self-report instruments used in this study. Motivation for language learning was measured using the Language Learning Motivation Scale (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), a 20-item instrument assessing integrative and instrumental motivation, with participants responding on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). As shown in Table 1, reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.86$ for this sample, indicating good internal consistency. Language learning strategies were measured using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995), as the guiding principle to design a 24-item instrument, contextualized to the local learners, assessing six strategy categories (memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies), with participants responding on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never or almost never true of me) to 5 (always or almost always true of me). Reliability analysis for the SILL yielded a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.81$ for this sample, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Table 1 Reliability Coefficients for Self-Report Instruments

Instrument	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Interpretation
Language Learning Motivation Scale (Gardner & Lambert, 1972)	20	0.86	Good internal consistency
Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL; Oxford, 1990)	50	0.81	Acceptable internal consistency

Table 2 presents the IOC (Index of Item-Objective Congruence) validity results based on expert evaluation. A panel of three TESOL and language assessment experts independently rated each item of both instruments on a three-point scale: +1 (clearly congruent with the intended objective), 0 (unclear or not clearly congruent), or -1 (clearly incongruent). The IOC scores were calculated using the formula $IOC = \Sigma R / N$, where ΣR is the sum of expert ratings and N is the number of experts. Items with IOC values of 0.50 or higher were retained, while items below 0.50 were revised or removed. As shown in Table 2, all items across both instruments yielded IOC values above the acceptable threshold, confirming content validity through expert evaluation.

Table 2 IOC Validity Results Based on Expert Evaluation (N = 3 Experts)

Instrument	Number of Items	IOC Range	Mean IOC	Interpretation
Language Learning Motivation Scale (Gardner & Lambert, 1972)	20	0.67 - 1.00	0.89	High content validity (all items ≥ 0.50)
Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL; Oxford, 1990)	50	0.67 - 1.00	0.91	High content validity (all items ≥ 0.50)

Note: IOC scores ≥ 0.50 indicate acceptable item-objective congruence. Scores were calculated based on independent ratings from three experts in TESOL and language assessment.



Data collection proceeded in 3 stages. First, participants were recruited during regular class sessions; informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Second, participants completed a paper-based questionnaire packet containing the Language Learning Motivation Scale, the SILL, and a demographic section requesting prior English proficiency test scores and cultural background information. Questionnaire administration occurred in a classroom setting and required approximately 25 minutes to complete. IELTS scores were retrieved from participants' program admission files.

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Preliminary analyses examined descriptive statistics, correlation matrices, and multicollinearity diagnostics (Variance Inflation Factor; VIF). Multiple regression analysis was conducted with current English language proficiency as the dependent variable and prior proficiency, motivation, and learning strategies as independent variables. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results

This section presents the findings of the statistical analyses conducted to address the research questions. The results are organized as follows: (1) descriptive statistics of all study variables (Table 3), (2) correlation matrix examining bivariate relationships (Table 4), (3) multicollinearity diagnostics (Table 5), and (4) multiple regression analysis results including both unstandardized and standardized coefficients (Tables 6 and 7).

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for all variables in the study. The mean score of 68.45 (SD = 7.91) for previous proficiency suggests a reasonably high level of competence before entering the TESOL program, though the standard deviation denotes some variability in participants' proficiency levels before enrollment, indicating diverse proficiency levels within the sample. Regarding motivation, the average score of 4.57 (SD = 0.82) signifies the participants' moderately strong drive for language learning, with some variability in motivation levels among individuals. Concerning learning strategies, the mean score of 3.92 (SD = 0.68) suggests a moderate application level of language learning techniques among the participants, highlighting that individuals employ diverse language learning strategies. The dependent variable, current English language proficiency, yielded a mean score of 75.20 (SD = 8.36), indicating a generally competent level of English proficiency among the sample.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
English Language Proficiency	75.20	8.36
Previous Proficiency	68.45	7.91
Motivation	4.57	0.82
Learning Strategies	3.92	0.68

Correlation Analysis

As presented in Table 4, the correlation matrix depicts the bivariate relationships among the variables under investigation. The relationship between current English language proficiency and prior English language proficiency is substantially positive ($r = 0.78$), indicating that students with higher initial English language proficiency tend to have higher current English language proficiency scores. Additionally, a positive link exists between motivation and English language ability ($r = 0.65$), suggesting that motivated students often have higher levels of language competence. The correlation coefficient between English



Language Proficiency and Learning Strategies is 0.71, indicating a positive relationship, which suggests that students employing diverse learning strategies tend to perform better in English Language Proficiency. Among the independent factors, motivation and learning techniques have a moderately positive correlation ($r = 0.51$), suggesting that students with higher motivation frequently employ more language learning techniques.

Table 4 Correlation Matrix

Variable	English Language Proficiency	Previous Proficiency	Motivation	Learning Strategies
English Language Proficiency	1.00	0.78	0.65	0.71
Previous Proficiency	0.78	1.00	0.58	0.63
Motivation	0.65	0.58	1.00	0.51
Learning Strategies	0.71	0.63	0.51	1.00

Multicollinearity Diagnostics

Prior to conducting the multiple regression analysis, multicollinearity among the predictor variables was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values. As shown in Table 5, VIF values ranged from 1.52 to 1.87, all substantially below the conventional threshold of 5.0 (or more conservatively, 10.0), indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern in this model. Tolerance values ranged from 0.53 to 0.66, all well above the 0.20 threshold. These results confirm that each predictor contributes uniquely to the regression model without excessive redundancy.

Table 5 Multicollinearity Diagnostics

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Previous Proficiency	0.58	1.72
Motivation	0.66	1.52
Learning Strategies	0.53	1.87

Note: VIF values below 5.0 and tolerance values above 0.20 indicate acceptable levels of multicollinearity.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the impact of prior proficiency, motivation, and learning strategies on English language competency among TESOL postgraduate students. The results are presented in Tables 6 and 7.

As shown in Table 6, the regression model demonstrated strong predictive power. The model's R-squared value of 0.72 indicates that the combination of the three independent variables accounts for approximately 72% of the variance in English language competency. When considering the number of predictors, the adjusted R-squared value of 0.69 suggests that this model accounts for a substantial percentage of the variability even after penalizing for model complexity. The standard error of the estimate (4.27) represents the average difference between predicted and actual English language proficiency scores; a lower value relative to the standard deviation of the dependent variable (8.36) indicates that the model fits the data reasonably well.

Table 6 Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Model	R	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.85	0.72	0.69	4.27

Note: Predictors = Previous Proficiency, Motivation, Learning Strategies



Table 7 presents the regression coefficients, which indicate the strength, direction, and statistical significance of each independent variable's influence on English language competency. Critically, both unstandardized coefficients (B) and standardized beta coefficients (β) are reported. Standardized beta coefficients (β) are essential for comparing the relative predictive contribution of each independent variable because they are expressed in standard deviation units, whereas unstandardized coefficients (B) are measured in the original units of each variable (which differ substantially: prior proficiency on a 0-100 scale, motivation on a 1-5 scale, and learning strategies on a 1-5 scale).

The constant value of 15.32 indicates the expected English language competence level when all independent variables are zero, serving as a reference point. Regarding the predictor variables:

- **Prior Proficiency** ($B = 0.74$, $\beta = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$): With all other factors held constant, a one-unit increase in prior proficiency corresponds to a 0.74-unit increase in current English language proficiency. The standardized beta ($\beta = 0.48$) indicates that prior proficiency exerts a moderately strong unique effect on current proficiency.

- **Motivation** ($B = 9.28$, $\beta = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$): With other factors constant, a one-unit increase in motivation (on the 1-5 scale) corresponds to a 9.28-unit increase in English language proficiency. The standardized beta ($\beta = 0.41$) indicates that motivation has a moderately strong unique effect, comparable in magnitude to prior proficiency. Note that the larger unstandardized coefficient (9.28 vs. 0.74) reflects the different scales of measurement (a 5-point scale versus a 100-point scale), not a substantively larger effect. The standardized coefficients ($\beta = 0.48$ for prior proficiency vs. $\beta = 0.41$ for motivation) demonstrate that the two predictors contribute relatively similarly to the model.

- **Learning Strategies** ($B = 6.45$, $\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$): Employing more learning techniques is correlated with higher English language competency. The standardized beta ($\beta = 0.38$) indicates a moderate unique contribution, slightly smaller than prior proficiency and motivation.

All three predictors were statistically significant at $p < 0.001$, confirming that prior language competency, motivation, and learning techniques each make significant unique contributions to English language success among TESOL postgraduate students after controlling for the other variables in the model.

Table 7 Regression Coefficients (Unstandardized and Standardized)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	15.32		5.83	0.001
Previous Proficiency	0.74	0.48	4.21	0.001
Motivation	9.28	0.41	6.93	0.001
Learning Strategies	6.45	0.38	5.12	0.001

Note: Dependent variable = Current English Language Proficiency (IELTS-based scale). Standardized coefficients (β) allow direct comparison of predictor importance. All predictors are significant at $p < 0.001$.

Summary of Results

To summarize, the descriptive statistics (Table 3) revealed moderate to high levels of prior proficiency, motivation, and learning strategies among the sample. The correlation matrix (Table 4) demonstrated significant positive bivariate relationships among all variables. Multicollinearity diagnostics (Table 5) confirmed that the three predictors were not excessively correlated (all VIF < 2.0). The regression model (Table 6) explained 72% of the variance in English language proficiency. Finally, the coefficients (Table 7) confirmed that all three



predictors, prior proficiency ($\beta = 0.48, p < 0.001$), motivation ($\beta = 0.41, p < 0.001$), and learning strategies ($\beta = 0.38, p < 0.001$), made significant unique contributions to current English language proficiency, with prior proficiency exerting the strongest relative effect, followed by motivation and then learning strategies.

Discussions

The present study examined the factors influencing English language proficiency among postgraduate TESOL students, specifically investigating how prior proficiency, motivation, and learning strategies collectively predict current proficiency within a socio-cognitive framework. The results yielded several statistically significant findings that warrant interpretation before turning to pedagogical implications.

Part 1: Interpretation of Statistical Findings

The regression model demonstrated that prior English language proficiency, motivation, and learning strategies together explain a substantial portion of the variance in current proficiency among TESOL postgraduate students. Among the three predictors, prior proficiency emerged as the strongest contributor. This finding aligns with previous research demonstrating that foundational language skills significantly shape subsequent proficiency development (Aizawa et al., 2020; Nisbet et al., 2005). Students entering TESOL programs with stronger linguistic foundations are better positioned to access academic content, engage with complex pedagogical materials, and build upon existing knowledge.

Motivation was the second strongest predictor, only slightly behind prior proficiency. This corroborates the work of Azar & Tanggaraju (2020) and Hoang (2021), who demonstrated that motivated learners exhibit greater persistence, active engagement, and willingness to overcome obstacles in language learning. Notably, although the unstandardized coefficient for motivation appeared substantially larger than that for prior proficiency, this difference reflects the distinct measurement scales used for each variable rather than a substantively larger effect, a distinction already clarified in the Results section.

Learning strategies, while still a significant predictor, made the smallest unique contribution among the three variables. This finding supports previous research by Dhendup (2021) and Soupi et al. (2022), who found that active use of diverse strategies enhances English competence. The relatively smaller effect size suggests that strategies may function partially as a mechanism through which motivation and prior proficiency operate, rather than operating entirely independently. The moderate correlations observed among all three predictors support this interpretation.

Part 2: Socio-Cognitive and Pedagogical Implications

The theoretical framework grounding this study, Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2001) and the broader Socio-Cognitive Perspective, emphasizes that language learning is not merely an individual cognitive process but is socially mediated through interaction, observation, and cultural context. The findings must be interpreted within this lens.

The strong predictive role of prior proficiency reflects not only individual cognitive ability but also the accumulated social and educational opportunities that shaped that proficiency, opportunities that vary systematically across cultural and socioeconomic contexts (R'boul, 2020; Richards, 2023). Similarly, motivation is not purely intrinsic but is fostered or constrained by social environments, including peer interactions, instructor support, and institutional culture (Sarwari & Wahab, 2016). Learning strategies are often acquired through observation, modeling, and collaborative learning, core mechanisms of social cognitive theory. Therefore, while the regression model quantifies individual-level predictions, the socio-

cognitive perspective reminds us that these predictors are embedded in broader social and cultural ecologies.

Implications

The finding that prior proficiency is the strongest predictor has direct implications for curriculum design. TESOL programs should implement differentiated entry pathways or modular bridging courses that accommodate students' diverse starting points (Aizawa et al., 2020). Students with lower prior proficiency could be enrolled in foundational language support modules alongside core TESOL content, while those with higher proficiency could accelerate through or receive advanced standing. Such customization can be achieved through targeted workshops, peer tutoring, or online self-access materials without requiring extensive resources.

Given motivation's strong contribution, TESOL programs should intentionally cultivate intrinsic motivation through goal-setting workshops, mentorship programs, and authentic learning tasks that connect language proficiency to professional teaching practice (Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020). Regular constructive feedback and recognition of incremental achievements can sustain motivation across the program duration.

Although learning strategies yielded the smallest contribution among the three predictors, their significant role supports explicit strategy instruction within TESOL curricula. Educators should teach not only content but also how to learn, modeling metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies (Dawi & Hashim, 2022; Nikoopour & Khoshroudi, 2021). For TESOL postgraduate students, strategy instruction serves a dual purpose: enhancing students' own proficiency while equipping them with pedagogical tools for their future teaching careers (Soupi et al., 2022).

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample size of 48 participants, while sufficient for detecting large effects (post-hoc power = 0.85 as reported in the Methods section), is considered relatively small for multiple regression analysis involving three predictor variables. Methodological guidelines generally recommend a minimum of 10 to 20 observations per predictor variable. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution. Second, self-reported prior proficiency and motivation data may introduce response bias; future studies should incorporate objective measures. Third, the cross-sectional design captures associations at a single time point but cannot establish causal ordering. Fourth, while the socio-cognitive framework was applied interpretively, social-contextual variables (e.g., peer interaction quality, institutional support) were not directly measured.

Conclusion and suggestions

This study identified three key predictors of English language proficiency among postgraduate TESOL students: prior proficiency, motivation, and learning strategies. Prior proficiency exerted the strongest influence, followed closely by motivation, with learning strategies making a smaller but still significant contribution. Together, these three factors explained approximately three-quarters of the variance in current proficiency outcomes.

Based on these findings, three specific suggestions are offered for TESOL postgraduate programs:

First, curriculum designers should implement differentiated entry pathways or modular bridging courses that accommodate students' diverse starting proficiency levels. Students with weaker foundational skills require targeted language support alongside core TESOL content.



Second, educators should intentionally cultivate intrinsic motivation through goal-setting workshops, mentorship programs, and authentic learning tasks that connect language proficiency to professional teaching practice. Regular feedback and recognition of incremental achievements help sustain motivation.

Third, explicit strategy instruction should be integrated into TESOL curricula. Educators must teach not only content but also how to learn, modeling metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies. For TESOL postgraduate students, strategy instruction serves a dual purpose: enhancing students' own proficiency while equipping them with pedagogical tools for their future teaching careers.

Future research should address the limitations of this study. First, larger and more diverse samples across multiple institutions and countries are needed to enhance generalizability. Second, future studies should employ objective measures of prior proficiency and motivation rather than relying solely on self-report data. Third, longitudinal research examining changes before, during, and after TESOL programs would clarify how the three predictors dynamically interact over time. Fourth, direct measurement of social-contextual variables, such as peer interaction quality, instructor support, and institutional culture, would allow researchers to test their mediating or moderating effects within a fully realized socio-cognitive framework.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

This study generates new empirical knowledge by demonstrating how prior language proficiency, learner motivation, and strategic learning practices jointly predict English language proficiency among TESOL postgraduate students within a socio-cognitive framework. The findings inform curriculum design by emphasizing differentiated entry-level support, motivation-sensitive pedagogy, and explicit strategy instruction, which can enhance teacher preparation and language outcomes.

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A Causal Model of Professional Key Competencies of Higher Vocational Students

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(Received: 7 March 2025, Revised: 29 May 2026, Accepted: 30 May 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.279352>

Abstract

This study aims to construct a causal model of professional key competencies for higher vocational students by examining the influence of personal, family, school, and social factors. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through a structured questionnaire from 427 higher vocational students selected by systematic random sampling from six institutions in Jiangsu, Anhui, and Henan provinces, China. Content validity was verified by five experts using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), and internal-consistency reliability was confirmed (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.809\text{--}0.936$). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to analyze causal relationships. The hypothesized model fit the empirical data well ($\chi^2/df = 1.831$, CFI = 0.909, TLI = 0.903, RMSEA = 0.044, SRMR = 0.057). The findings reveal that personal factors, including self-efficacy, learning motivation, and career planning, exert the most significant direct impact on competency development. Family, school, and social factors influence professional competencies indirectly, primarily through their effect on personal factors. Institutional support, curriculum design, and industry collaboration were identified as key areas requiring enhancement. The study highlights the importance of a multi-faceted approach to competency cultivation, integrating personal motivation, family support, structured educational programs, and strong industry partnerships. Recommendations are provided for students, families, educators, and policymakers to enhance vocational education outcomes. The study contributes an empirically validated causal model demonstrating that personal factors are the central mediator through which family, school, and social factors shape the professional key competencies of higher vocational students, providing an evidence-based foundation for vocational education reform in China.

Keywords: Professional key competencies, Higher vocational education, Influencing factors, Causal model



Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology and the rise of the knowledge economy have significantly transformed the global labor market, necessitating a shift in vocational education to meet new industry demands. Traditional vocational education models, which primarily focus on technical skills training, are increasingly insufficient in preparing students for the complexities of modern workplaces (OECD, 2018). The integration of professional key competencies—including problem-solving, adaptability, and communication skills has become crucial in vocational education to ensure graduates can effectively transition into the workforce (Rychen & Salganik, 2003).

China's vocational education system has undergone substantial reforms to address these challenges. Policies such as the National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan emphasize the need for competency-based education and stronger industry partnerships. However, research suggests that despite these policy efforts, gaps persist between vocational graduates' competencies and employer expectations, particularly in areas such as independent learning, career planning, and workplace adaptability. The cultivation of professional key competencies is influenced by multiple factors, including personal attributes, family background, school education, and broader social influences. The social-ecological system theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) provides a useful framework for examining how these factors interact to shape student competency development. Additionally, career development theories (Super, 1953; Greenhaus et al., 2010) highlight the evolving nature of professional competencies across different life and career stages. Given the importance of these competencies for employability and career progression, it is imperative to understand their development process and influencing factors. This study seeks to address these gaps by constructing a causal model of professional key competencies for higher vocational students, integrating insights from various theoretical frameworks and empirical research. By identifying the key determinants of competency development, this study aims to provide targeted recommendations for improving vocational education outcomes.

Although prior studies have examined how family, school, and social environments relate to vocational competencies, three gaps remain. First, these influences have largely been studied in isolation rather than within a single integrated causal model. Second, the mediating role of personal factors how family, school, and social conditions are translated into competencies through students' own cognition, motivation, and self-efficacy has rarely been modelled explicitly. Third, model-based evidence from China's higher vocational sector remains limited. The present study addresses these gaps by specifying and empirically testing a causal model in which personal factors mediate the effects of family, school, and social factors on professional key competencies, clarifying both the direct and the indirect pathways of competency development.

Objectives

1. To develop and validate a causal model of the factors influencing the professional key competencies of higher vocational students in China, examining the direct effects of family, school, and social factors and their indirect effects through personal factors.
2. To examine the mediating role of personal factors in the relationships between family, school, and social factors and professional key competencies, and to derive recommendations for enhancing students' competency development.



Literature Review

Research Theory

Career Development Theory (CDT), provides a foundational framework for understanding how individuals acquire and refine professional competencies over time. Super (1953) proposed that career development occurs through a series of stages—growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline—each marked by specific developmental tasks and competency requirements. This theory has been widely applied in vocational education research to analyze how students' skills and professional attributes evolve as they transition from education to employment (Super, 1980; Greenhaus et al., 2010). More recent studies have expanded upon CDT by integrating socio-cognitive and environmental factors, recognizing that career growth is influenced by both individual agency and external conditions (Savickas, 2002; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000). In the context of this study, CDT provides a theoretical lens for examining how higher vocational students develop professional competencies throughout their educational journey. The theory underscores the importance of fostering adaptability, problem-solving skills, and career planning in vocational training. By applying CDT, this research explores how personal, family, school, and social factors interact to shape students' career readiness, emphasizing the need for a structured and progressive competency cultivation model tailored to vocational students' career trajectories.

Social Ecosystem Theory (SET), introduced by Bronfenbrenner (1979), posits that individual development is shaped by interactions within multiple environmental systems, including the microsystem (family, school), mesosystem (interactions between microsystems), exosystem (external influences such as policies and industry standards), and macrosystem (cultural and societal values). This theory has been extensively applied in educational research to explore how students' learning and competency development are influenced by their broader socio-educational environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Tudge et al., 2009). In vocational education, scholars have used SET to examine how institutional structures, family background, and industry expectations collectively impact student performance and employability outcomes (Eccles, 2009; Siraj & Huang, 2020). This study employs SET to analyze the multi-layered influences on higher vocational students' professional competency development. The theory aids in understanding how family encouragement, school curriculum design, and social perceptions of vocational education create an ecosystem that either supports or constrains students' competency acquisition. By applying SET, this research highlights the necessity of a holistic approach that integrates family, educational institutions, and industry collaboration to foster well-rounded vocational graduates.

Social Cognition Theory (SCT), developed by Bandura (1986), asserts that individuals acquire and refine their skills through observational learning, social interactions, and cognitive processes. The theory emphasizes reciprocal determinism, wherein personal factors, behavioral patterns, and environmental influences continuously shape competency development (Bandura, 1998). SCT has been widely applied in educational psychology to explain self-efficacy, motivation, and skill acquisition, particularly in vocational and professional training contexts (Zimmerman, 2000; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Empirical studies have demonstrated that students with high self-efficacy and strong social learning experiences are more likely to develop professional competencies aligned with workplace expectations (Lent et al., 2019). In this study, SCT is utilized to examine the role of self-efficacy, learning motivation, and behavioral modeling in vocational competency development. The theory provides insight into how students internalize industry expectations through school training, internships, and mentorship. By incorporating SCT, this research underscores the importance of experiential learning, student engagement, and industry exposure in cultivating professional key competencies for higher vocational students.

2.2 Definition of Core Concepts



Variables Concept

Professional key competencies, refer to the essential knowledge, skills, and attributes that enable individuals to perform effectively in their professional roles. The OECD (2005) defines key competencies as those that contribute to successful participation in the labor market, social inclusion, and lifelong learning. In vocational education, key competencies have been conceptualized through various frameworks, such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and 21st-century skills models, which emphasize cognitive, technical, and social-emotional skills (Binkley et al., 2012; Voogt & Roblin, 2012). Research indicates that the integration of professional competencies in vocational curricula enhances students' employability and adaptability in dynamic labor markets (Rychen & Salganik, 2003). In this study, professional key competencies for higher vocational students are categorized into three dimensions: cultural foundation, independent development, and social participation. These encompass attributes such as problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and ethical awareness, which are critical for workforce readiness. The study aims to construct a causal model that examines how personal, family, school, and social factors influence the development of these competencies, providing an evidence-based approach to improving vocational education.

Family factors, play a crucial role in shaping students' educational aspirations, motivation, and career competencies. Studies suggest that parental education levels, socioeconomic status, and parental support significantly impact students' academic and vocational development (Eccles, 2009; Wang & Eccles, 2013). Research also highlights that family encouragement and career discussions positively influence students' self-efficacy and career decision-making (Garg et al., 2002; Lent et al., 2019). In contrast, a lack of parental involvement or negative perceptions of vocational education may hinder students' skill development and career planning (Dietrich & Kracke, 2009). This study categorizes family factors into three dimensions: parental educational awareness, family behavior, and home environment. These aspects collectively influence students' professional key competencies by shaping their learning attitudes and career expectations. The study investigates how family support functions as a direct and indirect influence on vocational students' competency development, emphasizing the need for stronger parental engagement in vocational training.

School Factors, as the primary environment for students to acquire professional competencies. Research suggests that curriculum quality, teaching methods, and institutional policies significantly impact students' skill development (Baartman & de Bruijn, 2011; Mulder, 2017). Effective vocational education programs integrate both theoretical instruction and hands-on training, allowing students to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and workplace demands (Tynjala, 2008; Billett, 2011). Studies also emphasize the role of teacher competency and instructional strategies in fostering students' professional growth. In this study, school factors are classified into three key dimensions: teaching philosophy, curriculum design, and teacher quality. These factors collectively determine how effectively vocational institutions prepare students for the labor market. The study explores how curriculum innovation, teaching effectiveness, and school-industry collaboration influence students' competency acquisition, highlighting the need for educational institutions to align their training models with industry demands.

Social factors, such as industry demands, government policies, and cultural attitudes toward vocational education significantly affect competency development. Research indicates that social perceptions of vocational education impact students' enrollment choices and career trajectories (Powell & Solga, 2011). Additionally, industry involvement in vocational training, such as apprenticeships and internships, enhances students' real-world skills and employability. Government policies also play a vital role in shaping vocational education quality by providing funding, setting competency standards, and fostering school-industry partnerships (Hanushek

et al., 2017). In this study, social factors are analyzed through three key dimensions: social culture, industry expectations, and policy support. These factors influence how vocational students perceive their career prospects and acquire necessary competencies. The study examines how external stakeholders, including policymakers and employers, contribute to the development of vocational education, advocating for stronger collaboration between educational institutions and industries to better align training with labor market needs.

Research Hypotheses

Family factors, including parental education awareness, home environment, and parental support, significantly impacts students' personal development, which in turn influences their professional key competencies. Research indicates that family factors shape students' learning attitudes, motivation, and self-efficacy, all of which contribute to their career readiness (Eccles, 1999; Fan & Chen, 2001). Parents with higher educational expectations and engagement in their children's academic and career planning tend to foster students with stronger professional adaptability (Heckman, 2006). This suggests that family influences do not act alone but operate through personal factors, shaping students' competencies indirectly. Thus, this study hypothesizes is:

H1: Family factors are indirect affecting to professional key competencies of higher vocational students through Personal factors.

Educational institutions play a vital role in shaping students' professional competencies by providing structured learning environments, skill training, and career guidance. Studies have found that well-designed curricula, engaging teaching methodologies, and a focus on competency-based education enhance students' motivation and self-efficacy, leading to stronger professional skills (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Trowler, 2010). Furthermore, school support services, including mentoring and career counseling, contribute to students' professional identity development. Given that personal factors serve as mediators between external influences and competency acquisition, this study hypothesizes is:

H2: School factors are indirect affecting to professional key competencies of higher vocational students through Personal factors.

The broader socio-economic environment, including industry needs, government policies, and public perceptions of vocational education, affects students' professional growth. Research has shown that positive societal attitudes toward vocational education can enhance students' confidence in their career paths, thereby strengthening their skill development (Billett, 2011). However, societal stigma against vocational education often leads to decreased student motivation and self-efficacy, negatively affecting competency formation. Since personal factors are closely tied to professional development, this study hypothesizes is:

H3: Social factors are indirect affecting to professional key competencies of higher vocational students through Personal factors.

Personal factors, including self-efficacy, career planning, and intrinsic motivation, are central to professional competency development. According to Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, individuals with higher self-efficacy are more likely to engage in learning behaviors that enhance professional skills (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Career development research also suggests that students with clear career goals and proactive learning strategies tend to exhibit stronger adaptability and employability (Savickas, 2002). Therefore, this study hypothesizes is:

H4: Personal factors are direct affecting to professional key competencies of higher vocational students.

Apart from their indirect effects, family factors also directly shape students' professional competencies. Research has shown that parental involvement in education, emotional support, and career discussions contribute significantly to students' career

aspirations and work readiness (Steinberg, 2001; He, 2016). Moreover, studies indicate that family socioeconomic status affects students' exposure to career opportunities and networking, further influencing their competency acquisition. Based on these findings. Therefore, this study hypothesizes is:

H5: Family factors are direct affecting to professional key competencies of higher vocational students.

Educational institutions contribute significantly to competency development by providing technical training, industry exposure, and soft skill development. Prior research has emphasized that vocational schools with strong industry linkages, competency-based curricula, and practical learning environments produce graduates with higher employability skills. Additionally, teaching quality and faculty expertise play a critical role in competency acquisition, as students learn best when instruction is aligned with industry standards (Trowler, 2010). Therefore, this study hypothesizes is:

H6: School factors are direct affecting to professional key competencies of higher vocational students.

Government policies, labor market demands, and industry expectations significantly affect vocational education outcomes. Research has demonstrated that policies promoting work-integrated learning and apprenticeship programs enhance students' practical skills and employability. Moreover, industry-academia collaboration plays a crucial role in competency formation by exposing students to real-world challenges and professional expectations (Boud & Solomon, 2001). Therefore, this study hypothesizes is:

H7: Social factors are direct affecting to professional key competencies of higher vocational students.

Conceptual Framework

The Predictor variables (independent variables) of this study are; 1) Family factors (family education awareness, family behavior, family environment); 2) School factors (teaching philosophy, teaching arrangement, teacher quality); 3) Social factors (social culture, corporate requirements, national policy). The mediator variable of this study is personal factors (personal cognition, learning motivation, self-efficacy) The Criterion variable (dependent variables) of this study is professional key competencies. (cultural foundation, independent development, social participation), structure the research framework as depicted in Figure 1.

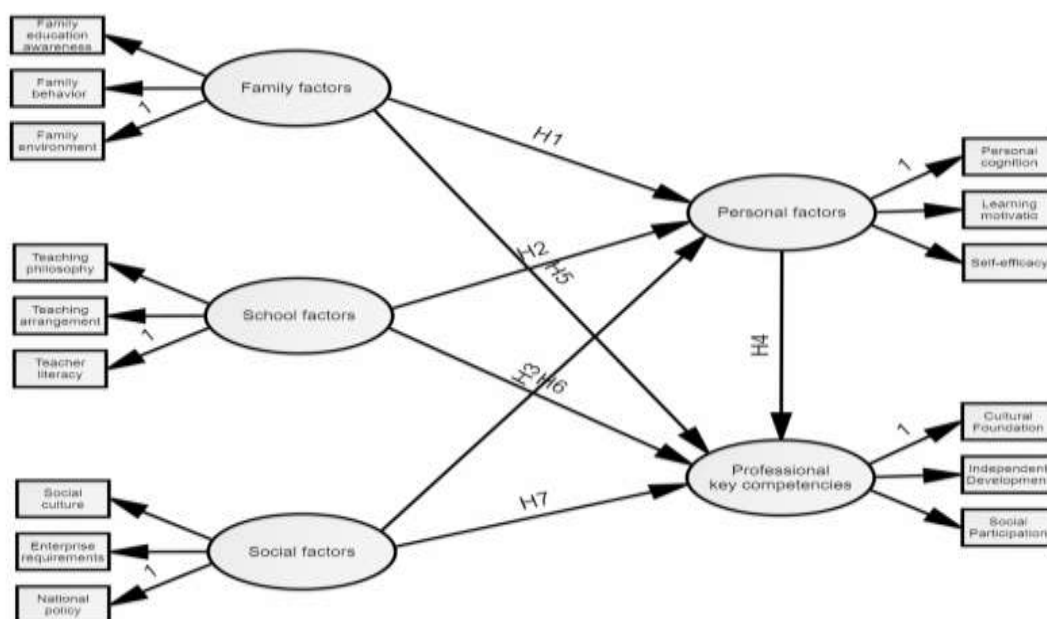


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Research Design

This research design used a quantitative research method. It examined the role of personal factors as a mediator variable. The independent variables are family factors, school factors, social factors, and the dependent variable is professional key competencies.

Sample and Procedure

The samples of this study are students from 6 higher vocational schools in Jiangsu, Anhui and Henan provinces. These three provinces were purposively selected to represent higher vocational education in eastern and central China; the study therefore targets this defined regional population and does not claim to be representative of the whole of China. The required sample size was determined a priori for structural equation modeling using Soper's a priori SEM sample-size calculator (anticipated medium effect size, statistical power = .80, $\alpha = .05$) and cross-checked against Kline's recommendation of at least 20 cases per estimated parameter; both criteria confirmed that the achieved sample of 427 was adequate. From July to September 2023, a questionnaire survey was conducted on 6 higher vocational schools. Respondents were drawn by systematic random sampling: from a sampling frame of 4,270 enrolled students, a sampling interval of 10 was applied ($4,270 \div 427$), and every tenth student was selected following a random start, yielding the final sample of 427.

Instruments

Questionnaire survey was used in this study to collect data. The questionnaire design adopted five-level Likert scale with several observation dimensions for each variable and 3-6 five-level rating scale format for each observation dimension to further explain and describe.

Professional key competence (PKC)

The latent variable of professional key competence (PKC) has three observational dimensions, namely, cultural foundation (6 observed variables), independent development (6 observed variables), and social participation (6 observed variables), with a total of 18 observable variables.

Personal factor (PF)

The latent variable of personal factor (PF) has three observational dimensions, namely, personal cognition (4 observational variables), learning motivation (4 observational variables), and self-efficacy (6 observational variables), with a total of 12 observable variables.

Family factor (FF)

The latent variable of family factor (FF) has three observational dimensions, namely, family education awareness (3 observational variables), family behavior (3 observational variables), and family environment (3 observational variables), with a total of 9 observable variables.

School factor (SCF)

The latent variable of school factor (SCF) has three observational dimensions, namely, teaching concept (3 observational variables), teaching arrangement (4 observational variables), and teacher literacy (5 observational variables), with a total of 12 observable variables.



Social factor (SOF)

The latent variable of Social factor (SOF) has three observed dimensions, namely social culture (3 observed variables), enterprise requirements (3 observed variables), and national policy (3 observed variables), with a total of 9 observable variables.

These projects were evaluated using a five-point Likert rating scale, and five experts were invited to perform an index of objective congruence (IOC) test to verify content validity. All retained items obtained IOC values at or above the 0.50 acceptance criterion, confirming the content validity of the questionnaire. In terms of reliability verification, in the formal questionnaire survey, this study conducted three tests, with samples of 60 people each time, and revised the question expression and quantity of observed variables. The results of the third test show that Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) of major key ability, personal factor, family factor, school factor, and social factor were 0.936, 0.897, 0.809, 0.923, and 0.860, respectively, all greater than 0.7. KMO values were as follows: 0.852, 0.842, 0.705, 0.840, 0.754, All are greater than 0.6. further confirming that the questionnaire has excellent reliability in measuring these factors, making it suitable for subsequent statistical analysis and research.

Data Analysis

This research utilizes jamovi 2.3.28 statistics software for composite-based structural equation modeling to estimate parameters. To examine the causal relationships between professional key competencies and influencing factors among higher vocational students, this study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as the primary analytical method. The analysis followed a multi-step approach. First, descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation analysis were conducted to explore the relationships among personal, family, school, and social factors. Next, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement model, assessing factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha (>0.70), composite reliability (CR >0.70), and average variance extracted (AVE >0.50) to ensure construct validity. Additionally, discriminant validity was tested using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT <0.85) criterion. The structural model evaluation included the examination of path coefficients ($p < 0.05$), R^2 values, and effect sizes (Cohen's f^2) to determine the significance and explanatory power of the model. Model fit was assessed using standard fit indices, including χ^2/df (<3), CFI (>0.90), TLI (>0.90), RMSEA (<0.06), and SRMR (<0.08). These analytical steps ensured the robustness and validity of the proposed model, providing empirical support for the hypothesized relationships.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis provides an overview of demographic characteristics and key variables in the study. The data were collected from 427 vocational students from six colleges and universities in Anhui, Henan and Jiangsu provinces. Among the samples, 231 (54.1%) were boys, 196 (45.9%) were girls, 174 were "under 18" (40.75%) and 171 were "19-20" (40.05%), and the major was "Information Technology". 84 students (19.67%), with the largest number of students in the first and second years (241 students (56.44%). Descriptive statistics of core variables (personal factors, family factors, school factors, social factors, and professional key competencies) including mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis were calculated to assess the normality of the data. The results show that the mean value of each observed variable ranges from 3.47 to 3.93, and the standard deviation ranges from 0.995 to 1.28. The Skewness of observable variables of the constructed equation model ranges from -1.06 to -0.411, no more than ± 2 , and the Kurtosis ranges from -0.505 to 0.665. Not more than ± 7 . It can be assumed that the data has a normal distribution. The VIF value is used to analyze



the relationship between the observed variables of the structural equation model with 60 variables, and it is found that the value is between 2.06 and 3.79, no more than 10, indicating that there is no multicollinearity problem in the model.

Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

To examine the causal relationships between personal, family, school, and social factors and their impact on professional key competencies of higher vocational students, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed. This method allows for the simultaneous estimation of multiple relationships between latent variables while accounting for measurement errors. The analysis followed a two-step approach, including the measurement model assessment and structural model evaluation.

Measurement Model Assessment

Overall Model Testing

It was found that the SRMR values of professional key competencies, personal factors, family factors, school factors and social factors were 0.049, 0.043, 0.065, 0.052 and 0.063, less than 0.08, indicating an acceptable model, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 The overall test of measurement models

Fit Index	criterion	PCK	PF	FF	SCF	SOF
χ^2	-	267	91.1	98.0	109	64.3
df	-	132	51	34	51	24
χ^2/df	< 3	2.022	1.786	2.882	2.137	2.679
CFI	> .90	0.973	0.986	0.956	0.980	0.980
TLI	> .90	0.968	0.982	0.934	0.974	0.970
SRMR	< .08	0.042	0.031	0.045	0.036	0.032
RMSEA	< .07	0.049	0.043	0.065	0.052	0.063

Measurement Model Testing

Table 2 Measurement models of latent variables

Latent variables	Observed variables	β	R 2	α	ω	AVE
PF	P1	0.817	0.667	0.861	0.863	0.613
	P2	0.784	0.615			
	P3	0.774	0.599			
	P4	0.745	0.555			
	P5	0.856	0.732			
	P6	0.768	0.59			
	P7	0.776	0.602			
	P8	0.787	0.62			
	P9	0.845	0.714			
	P10	0.774	0.599			
	P11	0.782	0.611			
	P12	0.818	0.669			
FF	F1	0.823	0.677	0.828	0.834	0.628
	F2	0.773	0.597			
	F3	0.77	0.594			
	F4	0.767	0.589			
	F5	0.757	0.573			
	F6	0.743	0.552			
	F7	0.846	0.716			
	F8	0.782	0.612			
	F9	0.71	0.504			
SCF	S1	0.84	0.706	0.833	0.841	0.642
	S2	0.783	0.613			
	S3	0.762	0.581			
	S4	0.816	0.665			
	S5	0.725	0.525			
	S6	0.753	0.567			
	S7	0.8	0.64			
	S8	0.863	0.745			
	S9	0.79	0.624			
	S10	0.776	0.601			
	S11	0.784	0.614			
	S12	0.772	0.596			
SOF	SO1	0.839	0.704	0.859	0.861	0.676
	SO2	0.818	0.669			
	SO3	0.804	0.647			
	SO4	0.881	0.776			
	SO5	0.792	0.627			
	SO6	0.797	0.634			
	SO7	0.797	0.636			
	SO8	0.749	0.561			
	SO9	0.763	0.582			
PKC	CC1	0.86	0.739	0.908	0.91	0.631
	CC2	0.757	0.573			
	CC3	0.8	0.639			
	CC4	0.757	0.573			
	CC5	0.795	0.632			
	CC6	0.77	0.592			
	CC7	0.858	0.736			
	CC8	0.769	0.591			
	CC9	0.738	0.545			
	CC10	0.825	0.68			
	CC11	0.786	0.618			
	CC12	0.811	0.657			
	CC13	0.838	0.702			
	CC14	0.76	0.578			
	CC15	0.759	0.576			
	CC16	0.742	0.551			
	CC17	0.773	0.598			
	CC18	0.782	0.611			

Reliability. Each observed variable of latent variables PKC, PF, FF, SCF and SOF has factor loadings ranging from 0.71 to 0.881, exceeding 0.5. Cronbach's alpha (α) ranges from 0.828 to 0.908, indicating high reliability for all latent variables in the model, as shown in Table 2.

Convergent Validity: Factor loadings for all observed variables ranged from 0.710 to 0.881, all above 0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values from 0.613 to 0.676, all exceeded the 0.50 criterion, confirming convergent validity.

Discriminant validity. The Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio values were below 0.85, supporting discriminant validity and demonstrating that the constructs were distinct from one another, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations

Latent variables	FF	SCF	SOF	PKC	PF
FF	1				
SCF	0.283	1			
SOF	0.302	0.297	1		
PKC	0.286	0.296	0.302	1	
PF	0.31	0.321	0.303	0.343	1

Structural Model Evaluation

The structural model was assessed using model fit indices and path analysis to verify the research hypotheses.

Model Fit Indices. The revised SEM model 2 shows an acceptable fit with the following values: $\chi^2/df = 1.831$ (acceptable if <3), CFI = 0.909, TLI = 0.903 (acceptable if >0.90), RMSEA = 0.044 (acceptable if <0.07), SRMR = 0.057 (acceptable if <0.08). These results indicate that the hypothesized model provides a good fit to the observed data, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Model conformity assessment

Fit Index	criterion	Model 1	Model 2
χ^2	-	5943	3028
df	-	1700	1653
χ^2/df	< 3	3.495	1.831
CFI	$> .90$	0.719	0.909
TLI	$> .90$	0.708	0.903
SRMR	$< .08$	0.061	0.057
RMSEA	$< .07$	0.076	0.044

Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing. The structural model tested the direct and indirect effects of independent variables on professional key competencies. The standardized path coefficients and significance levels are summarized as Figure 2:

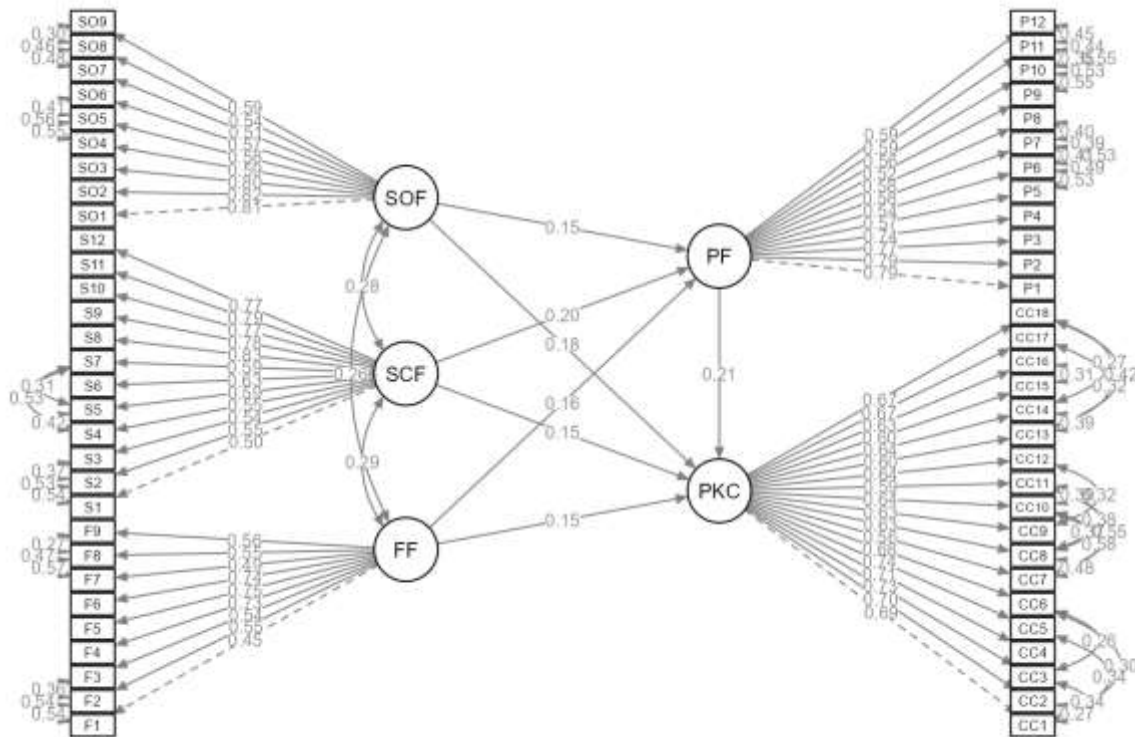


Figure 2 Causal Factors Model of professional key competencies of higher vocational students

Family factors Latent Variables (FF) Positively influence the underlying Personal factors Latent Variables (PF) Statistically significant at the level of 0.05 with a total influence of 0.16.

School factors Latent Variables (SCF) Positively influence the underlying Personal factors Latent Variables (PF) Statistically significant at the level of 0.05 with a total influence of 0.20.

Social factors Latent Variables (SOF) Positively influence the underlying Personal factors Latent Variables (PF) Statistically significant at the level of 0.05 with a total influence of 0.15.

Personal factors Latent Variables (PF) Positively influence the underlying Professional key competencies Latent Variables (PKC) Statistically significant at the level of 0.05 with a total influence of 0.21.

Family factors Latent Variables (FF) Positively influence the underlying Professional key competencies Latent Variables (PKC) Statistically significant at the level of 0.05 with a total influence of 0.15.

School factors Latent Variables (SCF) Positively influence the underlying Professional key competencies Latent Variables (PKC) Statistically significant at the level of 0.05 with a total influence of 0.15.

Social factors Latent Variables (SOF) Positively influence the underlying Professional key competencies Latent Variables (PKC) Statistically significant at the level of 0.05 with a total influence of 0.18.

Discussions

This study aimed to explore the causal relationships among personal, family, school, and social factors influencing the professional key competencies of higher vocational students. By employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), this research identified the direct and indirect effects of these variables, providing insights for vocational education reform.

Findings indicate that personal factors, including self-efficacy, learning motivation, and career planning, exert the most significant direct impact on professional key competencies. This aligns with Bandura's Social Cognition Theory, which emphasizes that individuals' beliefs about their abilities influence their learning and career trajectories (Bandura, 1998). Previous research also supports the notion that students with high self-motivation and career self-efficacy tend to develop stronger professional competencies (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The results underscore the importance of fostering student autonomy, goal-setting skills, and resilience in vocational training programs.

The finding that personal factors are the strongest predictor, and the channel through which family, school, and social factors operate, is theoretically coherent. Personal characteristics such as cognition, motivation, and self-efficacy are the most proximal determinants of competence, whereas family, school, and social conditions are more distal; their influence is therefore largely realised after being internalised as students' own beliefs and goals. This mediating pattern is consistent with the reciprocal determinism of Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) and with the nested systems of Social Ecosystem Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), in which macro- and meso-level environments act on the individual through the microsystem. In the Chinese higher vocational context, where social perceptions of vocational education and strong family expectations are especially salient, this result helps explain why interventions aimed solely at curricula or policy often underperform unless they also strengthen students' motivation and self-efficacy. The relatively modest standardised coefficients (total effects of about 0.15–0.21) are comparable to those reported in prior Chinese and international competency studies, where contextual factors typically exert small-to-moderate, largely indirect effects; this convergence supports rather than weakens the credibility of the model.

Family, school, and social factors were found to exert indirect effects on professional key competencies, primarily by influencing personal factors. Parental encouragement and a positive home environment significantly contributed to students' confidence and career aspirations, reinforcing existing studies on the role of family support in shaping educational outcomes. School-related variables, including curriculum design, teaching quality, and institutional policies, played a crucial role in fostering a learning environment conducive to competency development. These findings suggest that vocational institutions should prioritize competency-based curricula, teacher training programs, and student-centered learning methodologies. Social factors, including societal perceptions of vocational education, industry expectations, and policy support, had moderate yet significant effects on student development. Enhancing public recognition of vocational education and strengthening policy frameworks that promote vocational training alignment with labor market needs are essential for improving student outcomes.

The results highlight the importance of integrating vocational training with industry needs. School-based interventions, including work-based learning, internships, and mentorship programs, were identified as key mechanisms for enhancing professional key competencies. Prior research suggests that vocational education models that incorporate real-world industry experiences significantly improve students' job readiness and professional competencies. This

calls for closer partnerships between vocational institutions and industries to ensure alignment between educational outcomes and labor market demands.

Practical Implications

The findings offer valuable implications for students, educators, policymakers, and industry stakeholders.

For Students: Self-directed learning, career planning, and continuous professional development should be emphasized to enhance employability and career adaptability.

For Families: Parents play a crucial role in supporting students' career choices and fostering a positive attitude toward vocational education. Encouraging career awareness and professional aspirations at an early stage can significantly impact students' motivation.

For Schools: Vocational institutions should integrate competency-based curricula, enhance teacher training programs, and strengthen collaborations with industry partners to create a dynamic and effective learning environment.

For Policymakers: The development of policies that promote vocational training alignment with labor market needs, increased investment in vocational education, and incentives for industry-academic partnerships should be prioritized.

Conclusion and suggestions

This study provides empirical evidence on the factors influencing the professional key competencies of higher vocational students. By emphasizing the role of personal motivation, strengthening institutional support, and fostering closer industry linkages, vocational education can better equip students with the skills and competencies necessary for success in an increasingly competitive labor market. The integration of personal, family, school, and social influences highlights the necessity of a holistic approach to competency cultivation. Future research and policy initiatives should continue to refine vocational education strategies to ensure that students are adequately prepared to meet the evolving demands of the workforce.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite its contributions, this study has certain limitations. The research sample was drawn from six vocational institutions in three provinces, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should expand the sample to include a broader range of institutions and regional contexts. Additionally, the study relied on cross-sectional data, which provides a snapshot of competency development but does not capture long-term trends. Longitudinal research designs could offer deeper insights into how competencies evolve over time. Finally, while this study focused on general professional competencies, further research could explore industry-specific competency frameworks to tailor vocational education programs more effectively to different sectors.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

The principal new knowledge generated by this study is an empirically validated causal model of the professional key competencies of higher vocational students in China, in which personal factors—personal cognition, learning motivation, and self-efficacy—serve as the central mediator that transmits the influence of family, school, and social factors. Whereas previous research has tended to examine these influences separately, this study demonstrates that they operate largely indirectly, becoming effective only after they are internalised as students' own



motivation and beliefs. This reframes competency development as a process driven from the learner outward, and clarifies both the direct and the indirect pathways through which the surrounding environment shapes competence.

For society and communities, these findings carry several practical effects. At the level of the wider society, they provide policymakers with evidence that raising the quality of vocational graduates depends not only on curricula and funding but also on cultivating learners' motivation and self-efficacy and on improving public attitudes toward vocational education; policy that strengthens these mediating conditions is therefore likely to yield a more capable workforce and better person-job matching in the labour market. At the community and institutional level, vocational colleges and employers can use the model to target their efforts more efficiently through mentoring, career guidance, work-based learning, and school–industry collaboration that build students' confidence and self-direction rather than transmitting technical content alone. At the level of families, the results affirm the value of parental encouragement and a supportive home environment in shaping career aspirations, giving families a concrete role in their children's competency development. Collectively, the model offers an evidence-based foundation that students, families, educators, and policymakers in China's vocational education communities can apply to improve graduate employability and, in turn, local economic and social development.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the International Institute of Educational Management, Southeast Asia University, and to the Faculty of Education Administration for their academic support throughout this research. The authors are also grateful to the five experts who reviewed the research instrument for their valuable suggestions, and to the administrators of the participating higher vocational institutions for facilitating data collection.

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A Causal Model of Operational Competency of Accounting Practitioners in Thailand with Innovation Capability as the Mediator

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(Received: 2 September 2025, Revised: 19 May 2026, Accepted: 22 May 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.283316>

Abstract

This research developed and validated a causal model of the operational competency of accounting practitioners in Thailand's Bangkok metropolitan area, with innovation capability as the mediating variable. The study used a sample of 560 accounting practitioners selected via cluster and snowball sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire (Cronbach's alpha = .962) and analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM). The causal model comprised five latent variables—communication capability, personnel competency, knowledge sharing, innovation capability, and operational competency—along with 20 observed variables.

Key findings indicate that operational competency was significantly influenced by knowledge sharing ($\beta = 0.42$), personnel competency ($\beta = 0.34$), and innovation capability ($\beta = 0.13$), all at $p < .05$. Innovation capability also partially mediated the relationships between knowledge sharing, personnel competency, and communication capability with operational competency (indirect effects: 0.07, 0.02, and 0.02, respectively). The model demonstrated good empirical fit: $\chi^2(126) = 117.77$, $p = 0.687$, GFI = 0.980, AGFI = 0.966, RMSEA = 0.000. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.66$) indicates that the model explains 66% of the variance in operational competency. These results highlight the importance of developing innovation capability alongside knowledge sharing and personnel competency to enhance the performance of accounting practitioners. Findings are specific to the Bangkok metropolitan area and should be generalized to national populations with caution.

Keywords: Operational competency, Accounting practitioners, Innovation capability

Introduction

In contemporary business, organizations face significant market volatility and intense competition from both domestic and international rivals. These pressures stem from various factors, including existing rivals, the bargaining power of suppliers and customers, the threat of new entrants, and substitute products, all of which directly or indirectly impact organizational performance and profitability. Therefore, the sole path for businesses to effectively compete and achieve sustainable existence in this dynamic and ever-changing environment is through the ability to innovate (Mendoza-Silva, 2021). Organizations must embrace innovation to enhance long-term competitiveness in consistently fluctuating markets (Rehman et al., 2021). Given market fluctuations and dynamic internal and external environmental changes, organizations are urgently driven to cultivate innovation capability among their personnel—fostering new ideas, higher financial returns, improved operational performance, and enhanced competitive advantage.

The primary components of innovation include creativity, idea generation, personnel competency, decisive selection of appropriate ideas, effective implementation, and collaborative teamwork. According to Hana (2013), employees who share their knowledge, skills, and experience within the organization promote innovation. Organizations must therefore prioritize cultivating innovation, knowledge, and skills among their employees. Momeni et al. (2015) note that this endeavor is supported by two critical factors: employees' intrinsic knowledge and skills, as well as their practical operational knowledge and skills.

Despite a growing body of literature on accounting competencies grounded in the IES 3 framework (The Federation of Accounting Professions under the Royal Patronage, 2015), a critical research gap remains: prior studies have not systematically examined innovation capability as a mediating variable linking communication capability, personnel competency, and knowledge sharing to operational competency, specifically among accounting practitioners in Thailand. The professional skill requirements for accountants have also significantly evolved in the digital era, making communication capability—which enables real-time collaboration and digital knowledge transfer—an increasingly critical yet understudied antecedent of both innovation capability and operational competency (Sornsakda, 2019; Pan & Seow, 2016).

Based on the preceding discussion, this study investigates a causal model of the operational competency of accounting practitioners in Thailand, with innovation capability serving as the mediating factor. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for relevant decision-makers and executives in formulating strategies to enhance the operational competency of accounting practitioners, thereby strengthening innovation capabilities and guiding future planning in human resource development.

Objectives

1. To develop and validate a causal model illustrating the operational competency of accounting practitioners in Thailand, with innovation capability serving as a mediating variable.
2. To examine the direct, indirect, and total effects of communication capability, personnel competency, knowledge sharing, and innovation capability on the operational competency of accounting practitioners.

Note: Objective 1 addresses model development and overall fit assessment via SEM; Objective 2 provides a more specific examination of individual path effects and the mediating hypotheses (H7–H9). These objectives are theoretically grounded in the IES 3 framework (Federation of Accounting Professions under the Royal Patronage, 2015), which positions

interpersonal, cognitive, and organizational competencies as the core domains of professional accounting performance.

Literature Review

The independent variables—communication capability, personnel competency, and knowledge sharing—and the mediating variable—innovation capability—were synthesized from relevant documents and research. The dependent variable, operational competency, was examined through a comprehensive review of relevant theories, academic literature, and prior research studies.

Operational Competency of Accounting Practitioners

The operational competency of accounting practitioners is a multifaceted construct, crucial for effective and ethical performance within a dynamic accounting environment. The Federation of Accounting Professions under the Royal Patronage (2015) identifies four core domains of professional skills in the International Education Standard (IES 3): cognitive ability (critical evaluation, analysis, professional judgment, and innovative problem-solving), interpersonal and communication skills (teamwork, cross-cultural communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution), self-management (lifelong learning, self-monitoring, time and resource management, and adaptability), and organizational management (task completion, quality compliance, human resource management, technology utilization, and informed decision-making). Nuanla-ong (2019) characterizes accounting competency through the application of professional standards, dedicated practice, and continuous acquisition of knowledge and expertise. Poonyawitroj et al. (2020) synthesized professional skills into nine key areas including cognitive skills, organizational management skills, professional ethics, technological skills, and interpersonal and communication skills. Based on a synthesis of relevant literature, operational competency of accounting practitioners comprises four key components: cognitive ability, interpersonal and communication skills, self-management, and organizational management.

Communication capability

Communication capability encompasses a diverse range of skills essential for effective interaction and exchange of information in contemporary professional settings. Sornsakda (2019) highlights that communication capability in modern accounting involves multifaceted communication to keep pace with current trends, fostering collaborative teamwork to ensure consistent information flow. The Federation of Accounting Professions under . The Federation of Accounting Professions under the Royal Patronage (2015) specifies that accounting practitioners must possess strong interpersonal and communication skills, enabling them to work effectively in diverse cultural environments, collaborate in teams, and efficiently present, listen, speak, read, write, and report. In the digital era, these skills have expanded to include proficient use of digital communication tools, virtual collaboration platforms, and data-presentation technologies (Pan & Seow, 2016). Communication capability is summarized as comprising the capacity to convey and exchange knowledge, collaborate effectively in teams, engage in active listening, and deliver strong presentations.

Personnel Competency

Personnel competency encompasses a multifaceted set of knowledge, skills, and attributes essential for effective performance in professional contexts. Sornsakda (2019) emphasizes that personnel competency in the digital era involves not only relevant knowledge and abilities but also the continuous application of critical thinking, analysis, and ongoing learning to achieve organizational goals. Accounting practitioners' desirable attributes in



information technology play a critical role in determining operational success, effective resource management, and stakeholder satisfaction. Based on a review of relevant literature, four key components of personnel competency can be identified: 1) professional foundational knowledge, encompassing abilities in presentation and information application; 2) performance and goal attainment, involving initiative in problem-solving, collaboration, and ethical decision-making; 3) continuous professional development (CPD), including performance evaluation; and 4) technological literacy.

Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing is a crucial component of knowledge management, facilitating the development of innovation capabilities within organizations. Ologbo et al. (2015) define knowledge sharing as a process where employees utilize their resources to achieve work objectives, ultimately benefiting the organization. This process involves the exchange of know-how, expertise, information, and experiences through various channels such as email, meetings, or social media. Key components of knowledge sharing include knowledge collection and knowledge donation, both of which are vital for building employees' innovation capabilities (Liao et al., 2007). Management plays a significant role in encouraging this exchange, with incentives and a supportive organizational culture being crucial for successful implementation (Kumaraswamy & Chitale, 2012). Based on the review of relevant literature, knowledge sharing components include: 1) knowledge collection, 2) knowledge exchange, 3) knowledge donation, and 4) collaborative learning.

Innovation Capability

Innovation capability refers to the ability of individuals and organizations to integrate existing resources, skills, knowledge, expertise, technologies, and competencies to generate new ideas, methods, or processes (Palabut, 2020). Based on a synthesis of literature, four key dimensions of innovative capability have been consistently identified: 1) creative thinking—the capacity to generate novel, useful ideas through divergent and convergent thinking (Peterson & Pattie, 2022); 2) problem-solving ability—systematic planning, refinement, and enhancement of ideas into applicable innovations 3) diverse ideas—the practical application of creative ideas into products, services, or processes that offer organizational value (Peterson & Pattie, 2022); and 4) idea generation—continual improvement through exploration of knowledge resources, imitation, observation, and hands-on practice.

Innovation capability is influenced by three critical factors in this study: communication capability, personnel competency, and knowledge sharing. This is supported by evidence that factors influencing innovation capability are broadly categorized into structural, personnel, and operational aspects (Momeni et al., 2015), alongside knowledge management, motivation, and organizational support (Chimthongdee & Kamkate, 2015). Knowledge sharing and absorptive capacity also directly influence innovation capability (Liao et al., 2007). Critically, innovation capability serves as a mediator in this model because it represents the mechanism through which competency inputs are converted into higher-level operational performance outcomes—a theoretically coherent linkage given that practitioners who communicate effectively, share knowledge, and apply strong personal competencies are more likely to develop creative problem-solving and idea-generation skills that directly elevate their operational effectiveness.

Research Hypotheses

H1: Communication capability has a positive effect on innovation capability.

H2: Personnel competency has a positive effect on innovation capability.

H3: Personnel competency has a positive impact on the operational competency of accounting practitioners.

H4: Knowledge sharing has a positive effect on innovation capability.

H5: Knowledge sharing has a positive impact on the operational competency of accounting practitioners.

H6: Innovation capability has a positive effect on the operational competency of accounting practitioners.

H7: Innovation capability mediates the relationship between communication capability and operational competency. The theoretical rationale is that effective communication builds shared mental models and collaborative networks, which stimulate creative ideation; this innovativeness, in turn, translates into improved operational performance.

H8: Innovation capability mediates the relationship between personnel competency and operational competency. Highly competent practitioners can leverage their knowledge and skills to generate innovative solutions, which subsequently enhances their operational effectiveness.

H9: Innovation capability mediates the relationship between knowledge sharing and operational competency. Active knowledge exchange creates a resource pool of ideas and best practices that fuels innovative thinking, ultimately improving operational outcomes.

The researcher proposes a conceptual framework for a causal model of the operational competency of accounting practitioners, with innovation capability as the mediator, as shown in Figure 1.

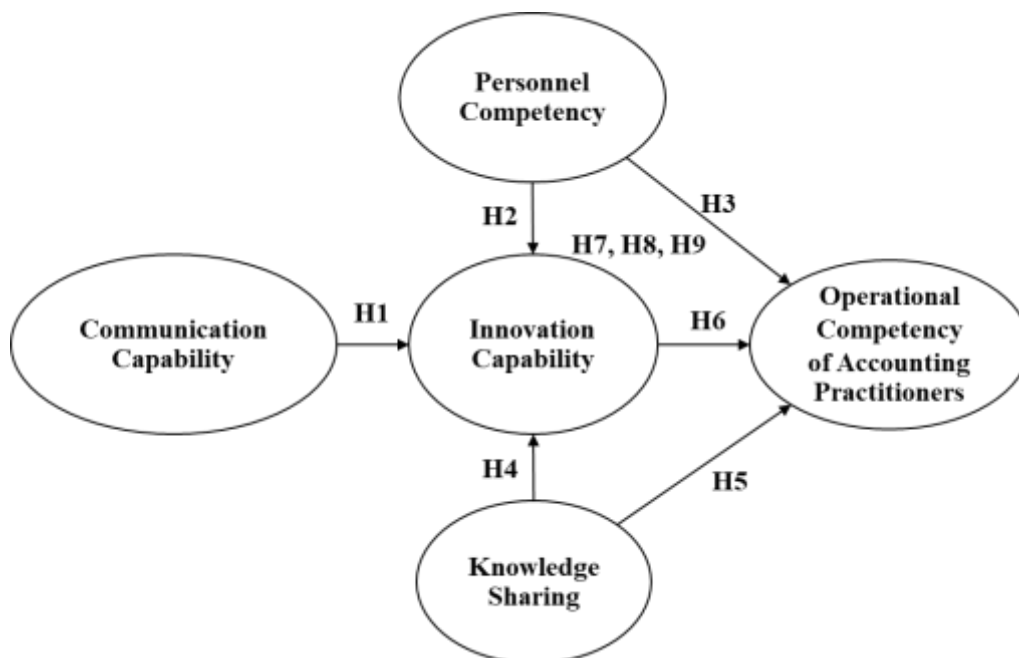


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of This Research

Methodology

Population and Sampling

The population consisted of accounting practitioners working within the framework of the Federation of Accounting Professions under the Royal Patronage, specifically those employed in accounting and finance departments in Thailand-based offices. Although a precise national census figure for this population was not available at the time of data collection, this study followed the power-analysis approach recommended by Faul et al. (2007) and Hair et al. (2010) for determining sample size in SEM research. Using G*Power 3.1.9.2, the minimum sample size was calculated as 560, based on a medium effect size (0.3), a significance level (α) of 0.05, a power of test of 0.80, and 20 observed variables with 48 estimated parameters.

To compensate for potential non-responses and incomplete data, the number of questionnaires distributed was increased by 10%, resulting in a total of 622 questionnaires distributed. The sampling process was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, cluster sampling was used to select accounting practitioners from the Bangkok metropolitan area. Bangkok was selected because it constitutes the largest concentration of registered accounting practitioners in Thailand and serves as the primary center of accounting professional activity. However, it is acknowledged that restricting the sample to Bangkok may limit the generalizability of the findings to accounting practitioners in other regions of Thailand; this limitation is explicitly discussed in the Discussion section. In the second stage, a snowball sampling technique was employed to reach the desired number of respondents (Silpjaru, 2012). A total of 560 valid questionnaires were returned and used in the analysis.

Research Instrument

A questionnaire was developed to collect data on all study variables. The instrument was structured into three clearly delineated parts:

Part 1: Demographic Information. This section collected general background information from respondents, including gender, age, education level, occupation, and work experience, using a checklist format.

Part 2: Measurement of Operational Competency. This section measured the operational competency of accounting practitioners using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very low to 5 = very high). The four components measured were: cognitive ability, interpersonal and communication skills, self-management, and organizational management, which are derived from the IES 3 framework.

Part 3: Measurement of Innovation Capability and Antecedent Variables. This section assessed innovation capability and its antecedents (communication capability, personnel competency, and knowledge sharing) using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very low to 5 = very high). Each construct was measured by distinct indicators: innovation capability by creative thinking, problem-solving, diverse ideas, and idea generation; communication capability by knowledge transfer, teamwork, active listening, and presentation; personnel competency by foundational knowledge, goal performance, CPD, and technological literacy; and knowledge sharing by knowledge collection, exchange, donation, and collaborative learning.

To ensure validity and reliability, the instrument was first subjected to a content validity review by three experts. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was calculated for each item; items with an IOC value exceeding 0.50 were retained. The revised questionnaire was then piloted with 30 accounting practitioners with characteristics similar to the target sample, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of .962, indicating high internal consistency.

Construct validity was assessed using CFA. Model fit was evaluated using the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and chi-square ratio (χ^2/df). Convergent validity was confirmed by Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeding 0.50 and Composite Reliability (CR) values exceeding 0.70 for all constructs. Discriminant validity was confirmed as the square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its inter-construct correlations (Hair et al., 2010).

Data Collection

Primary data were gathered from 560 accounting practitioners in the Bangkok metropolitan area through a closed-ended questionnaire. Data were collected between January 2024 and April 2024. Of the 622 questionnaires distributed, 560 were valid and complete, yielding a response rate of approximately 90%.

Statistical Analyses

Data analysis was conducted using statistical software (SPSS and AMOS), beginning with descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) to characterize the sample and the distributions of the observed variables. Normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis values; all values were within acceptable ranges ($|\text{skewness}| < 2$, $|\text{kurtosis}| < 7$), supporting the use of maximum likelihood estimation. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients were used to explore relationships among observed variables. To address multicollinearity, variables with intercorrelations exceeding 0.90 were examined; where severe collinearity was detected (e.g., CRT.ICA and IDG.ICA, $r = 0.991$), these pairs were merged into composite indicators before SEM analysis to ensure model stability and interpretability. Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs) were also computed, and all retained variables had VIFs below 5.0, indicating acceptable multicollinearity. Finally, SEM was employed to test the causal model, estimating direct, indirect, and total effects.

Results

The data analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage examined sample characteristics and relationships among observed variables. The second stage tested the structural model's fit with empirical data.

Sample Characteristics

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 560 respondents. The majority were female (64.60%), aged 30–39 years (38.40%), held a bachelor's degree (67.50%), and had 5–10 years of work experience (38.90%).

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 560)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n = 560)
Gender	Male	198 (35.4%)
	Female	362 (64.6%)
Age	Under 30 years	182 (32.5%)
	30–39 years	215 (38.4%)
	40 years and above	163 (29.1%)
Education Level	Bachelor's degree	378 (67.5%)
	Master's degree or higher	182 (32.5%)
Work Experience	Less than 5 years	197 (35.2%)
	5–10 years	218 (38.9%)
	More than 10 years	145 (25.9%)

Analysis of Observed Variables

The Pearson correlation analysis of 20 observed variables revealed statistically significant positive correlations ($p < 0.05$), ranging from 0.021 to 0.991. Notably, the creative thinking variable (CRT.ICA) and the idea generation variable (IDG.ICA) exhibited the highest correlation ($r = 0.991$), as did knowledge transfer (KTF.COM) and active listening (ACC.COM) ($r = 0.991$). Due to the risk of multicollinearity arising from these near-perfect correlations, these pairs were examined further. To mitigate potential bias, these highly redundant items were merged into composite indicators before the structural analysis. Following this adjustment, all retained latent variables in the final structural model exhibited Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) well below the threshold of 5.0, ranging from 1.24 to 2.77, confirming that multicollinearity is not a significant concern. The next strongest correlations were CRT.ICA with PSV.ICA ($r = 0.983$) and PSV.ICA with IDG.ICA ($r = 0.972$). The weakest correlation was between CON.ICA and PEM.SKL ($r = 0.021$).

Before performing factor analysis, the suitability of the data was assessed. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was highly significant ($\chi^2 \approx 20,796.25$, $p < .001$), indicating that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy yielded a value of .902, confirming the data were well-suited for factor analysis (Hair et al., 2010).

Model Fit and Hypothesis Testing

The initial model estimation revealed an inadequate fit to the empirical data $\chi^2(161) = 834.293$, $p < .001$; $\chi^2/\text{df} = 5.182$; GFI = 0.882; AGFI = 0.846; RMSEA = 0.086). Based on modification indices and theoretical justification, the model was revised by allowing error terms of items capturing overlapping subdimensions to correlate. The revised model subsequently demonstrated an excellent fit: $\chi^2(126) = 117.770$, $p = 0.687$; $\chi^2/\text{df} = 0.935$; GFI = 0.980; AGFI = 0.966; RMSEA = 0.000. These indices provide robust evidence that the proposed causal model is empirically well-aligned with the data (Arbuckle, 2011; Hair et al., 2010; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). Table 2 presents the statistical analysis of latent variable effects.

Regarding predictive power, the operational competency (SKL) latent variable had an $R^2 = 0.66$, indicating that the four predictor variables jointly explained 66% of its variance. Innovation capability (ICA) had an $R^2 = 0.50$, indicating that communication capability, personnel competency, and knowledge sharing accounted for 50% of its variance.

Hypothesis testing results are as follows. Communication capability (COM) had a significant positive effect on innovation capability ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < .05$), supporting H1. Personnel competency (CAP) exerted significant positive effects on both innovation capability ($\beta = 0.13$, $p < .05$) and operational competency ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < .05$), supporting H2 and H3. Knowledge sharing (SHA) demonstrated significant positive effects on innovation capability ($\beta = 0.54$, $p < .05$) and operational competency ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < .05$), supporting H4 and H5. Innovation capability (ICA) positively influenced operational competency ($\beta = 0.13$, $p < .05$), supporting H6. Mediation analyses revealed that innovation capability partially mediated the relationships between: communication capability and operational competency ($\beta = 0.02$, $p < .05$), supporting H7; personnel competency and operational competency ($\beta = 0.02$, $p < .05$), supporting H8; and knowledge sharing and operational competency ($\beta = 0.07$, $p < .05$), supporting H9.

It is important to note that while all mediated (indirect) effects were statistically significant, their effect sizes were small (0.02–0.07). This indicates that innovation capability functions as a partial mediator, meaning direct effects of knowledge sharing and personnel competency on operational competency remain stronger pathways. The practical significance of the mediation pathway through innovation capability, though statistically confirmed, is limited, and organizations should not rely solely on innovation capability as the mechanism for improving operational performance.

Table 2 Statistical Analysis of Effects Among Latent Variables in the Causal Model

Dependent variable	ICA			SKL		
Independent variable	TE	IE	DE	TE	IE	DE
SHA	0.54**	-	0.54**	0.49**	0.07	0.42**
CAP	0.13**	-	0.13**	0.36**	0.02	0.34**
COM	0.14**	-	0.14**	0.02	0.02	-
ICA	-	-	-	0.13**	-	0.13**
Statistical value: $\chi^2 = 117.70$, df = 126, p (p-value) = 0.69, CMIN/df = 0.94, GFI = 0.98, AGFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.00						
Note: Total Effect (TE), Indirect Effect (IE), Direct Effect (DE)						
Structural equation of the variables (R-squared)						
	ICA	SKL				
R-squared	0.50	0.66				
Correlation matrix of the latent variables						
	SHA	CAP	COM	ICA	SKL	
SHA	1.00					
CAP	0.74	1.00				
COM	0.36	0.44	1.00			
ICA	0.68	0.59	0.39	1.00		
SKL	0.77	0.73	0.35	0.62	1.00	

Discussions

The findings provide empirical support for the proposed causal model of operational competency among accounting practitioners in the Bangkok metropolitan area, with innovation capability serving as a partial mediator. The following section explains the main findings and relates them to the Thai accounting profession and past research.

Consistent with past Thai research, personnel competency significantly and directly impacts both innovation capability ($\beta = 0.13$) and operational competency ($\beta = 0.34$) (Sornsakda, 2019; Tunjararuck et al., 2024). This aligns with the IES 3 framework's emphasis on continuous professional development and the application of core competencies such as expertise, integrity, and teamwork (Prathumchan, 2014). The strong direct effect of personnel competency on operational competency suggests that Thai accounting organizations should prioritize a structured competency development program, particularly in digital accounting tools and professional ethics. These domains have evolved substantially due to Thailand's rapid digital transformation.

Communication capability showed a significant positive effect on innovation capability ($\beta = 0.14$), but its direct effect on operational competency was not statistically significant. The finding that COM→SKL was not a significant direct path (as shown in Table 2) indicates that communication capability primarily influences operational competency indirectly, through its role in enhancing innovation capability (indirect effect = 0.02). Theoretically, effective communication improves operational performance by fostering knowledge exchange and creative problem-solving. However, these findings demonstrate that communication competence alone, absent from the innovation it stimulates, cannot directly enhance the operational outcomes of Thai accounting practitioners.

Knowledge sharing was the strongest predictor of both innovation capability ($\beta = 0.54$) and operational competency ($\beta = 0.42$), consistent with findings from Ologbo et al. (2015) and Kumaraswamy and Chitale (2012). This strong relationship likely reflects the collaborative nature of accounting work in Thailand, where sharing tax regulations, financial reporting standards, and institutional knowledge is critical for maintaining accuracy and compliance. Organizations should therefore invest in structured knowledge-sharing platforms, formal mentoring programs, and community-of-practice events to maximize these effects.

Innovation capability partially mediated all three antecedent-to-outcome relationships. However, the indirect effect sizes were small (0.02–0.07), which requires careful interpretation. While these effects are statistically significant, they account for a relatively minor portion of the total effect. The small coefficient may be attributed to the traditional nature of accounting work in Thailand, where operational competence depends primarily on technical knowledge and regulatory compliance, both of which are less susceptible to the direct influence of creative innovation. This finding suggests that for Thai accounting practitioners, innovation capability is an emerging but not yet dominant performance driver. Organizations should view innovation capability development as a long-term investment rather than a short-term performance. Future studies should examine whether this mediation effect strengthens as the profession increasingly adopts digital and AI-driven accounting technologies.

These findings extend prior research by Nuanla-ong (2023) and Chaivet, & Thanachitchai (2026), confirming the theoretical relevance of the IES 3 framework for modeling competency in Thai accounting contexts while also identifying the boundary conditions of innovation capability's mediating role.

Conclusion and suggestions

This study investigated the causal influence of communication capability, personnel competency, and knowledge sharing on the operational competency of accounting practitioners in Bangkok, Thailand, with innovation capability as a mediating variable. The developed causal model demonstrated good empirical fit ($\chi^2(126) = 117.770$, $p = 0.687$; GFI = 0.980; AGFI = 0.966; RMSEA = 0.000) and strong explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.66$).

The results confirm that knowledge sharing, personnel competency, and innovation capability are the primary direct drivers of operational competency among Bangkok-based accounting practitioners. Innovation capability partially mediates the relationships between each antecedent variable and operational competency, although with small effect sizes (0.02–0.07). These findings carry several practical implications for organizational policy and practitioner development:

- **Knowledge sharing:** Organizations should implement structured knowledge management systems, including peer learning networks, mentoring programs, and digital collaboration platforms, to facilitate regular knowledge exchange among accounting practitioners.
- **Personnel competency:** Organizations should support targeted training in digital accounting tools, data analytics, AI-assisted auditing, and continuous professional development aligned with IES 3 standards.
- **Communication capability:** Training programs should incorporate digital communication, cross-functional teamwork, and presentation skills to strengthen the indirect pathway through innovation capability.
- Based on the small yet statistically significant mediation effects, organizations should treat innovation capability as a complementary development priority. This can be achieved by establishing innovation labs, idea competitions, and cross-disciplinary projects to foster creative thinking and problem-solving skills among accounting professionals.

For future research, adopting a mixed-methods approach is recommended to provide richer insights into the determinants of operational competency among Thai accountants. Future investigations should also integrate external influences such as organizational culture, motivational drivers, and regional differences across Thailand. Expanding the scope to include certified public accountants or practitioners in other provinces would improve generalizability. Additionally, longitudinal designs could examine whether the mediating role of innovation capability strengthens over time as digital transformation accelerates in the Thai accounting profession.

It should be noted that the findings of this study are based on a sample of accounting practitioners from the Bangkok metropolitan area only. Although Bangkok represents the largest concentration of accounting professionals in Thailand, readers are cautioned against generalizing these results to all accounting practitioners nationwide without further verification.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

This study extends the current literature by providing empirical evidence of the partial mediating effect of innovation capability on the relationship between competencies and operational performance. It provides new insights into professional relationships that have not yet been examined in the Thai accounting context. While research on accounting competency based on the IES 3 framework is well-established, this study offers a more nuanced contribution by: 1) integrating innovation capability as a mediating construct in a Thai accounting context;



2) empirically quantifying the relative strength of each antecedent pathway; and 3) identifying the boundary conditions of innovation capability's influence (i.e., its mediation effects are statistically significant but small in magnitude).

The practical implications for society and the accounting profession are grounded in these findings rather than extrapolated beyond the evidence. For educational institutions, curricula and training programs should be revised to emphasize innovation skills and digital communication alongside traditional accounting knowledge. For accounting practitioners, the shift toward innovation-oriented practice means that accountants can increasingly serve as strategic partners for management—providing data-driven insights rather than merely recording transactions. For professional organizations, encouraging knowledge-sharing platforms and collaborative learning communities will strengthen the profession's collective capacity to adapt to digital disruption.

Regarding macroeconomic impact, while this study suggests that developing innovation capability and operational competency among accounting practitioners may contribute to organizational competitiveness and efficiency, claims of direct impact on national economic growth are beyond the scope of this study's evidence and should not be overstated. Future research employing national-scale samples and longitudinal designs would be needed to establish such broader claims.

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Determinants of Continuance Intentions Toward Global OTT Video Streaming Service Platforms Among Thai Gen Y and Gen Z in Chiang Mai

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(Received: 23 August 2025, Revised: 24 May 2026, Accepted: 1 June 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.283094>

Abstract

This study examines factors influencing continuance intentions toward global Over-the-Top (OTT) video streaming services among Thai Generation Y and Generation Z consumers in Chiang Mai. It focuses on five service-related determinants, including content quality, pricing, accessibility, entertainment, and social interaction. Survey data from 450 respondents were analyzed using exploratory factor analysis, multiple regression, and an independent samples t-test. The results indicate that all five factors significantly and positively affect continuance intentions, with social interaction exerting the strongest influence, followed by accessibility, while content quality, pricing, and entertainment also support continued OTT usage. No significant differences were found between Generation Y and Generation Z, suggesting that younger Thai cohorts share similar motivations for ongoing OTT consumption in Chiang Mai. Theoretically, the study extends OTT continuance research by highlighting social interaction as a central determinant and by providing empirical evidence from a major regional urban center beyond Bangkok. Practically, the findings underscore the need for global OTT providers to strengthen social features, ensure seamless cross-device access, deliver diverse high-quality content, and design flexible pricing options to improve user retention among Thai Gen Y and Gen Z consumers.

Keywords: Over-the-top (OTT), Video streaming service, Continuance intention

Introduction

The rapid expansion of Over-the-Top (OTT) video streaming has reshaped global media consumption patterns, as audiences increasingly shift from linear broadcasting to on-demand, internet-based content. This transformation has been enabled by widespread smartphone adoption, the proliferation of connected devices, and improved broadband infrastructure, which collectively facilitate anytime-anywhere access to video services. In emerging and developed markets alike, OTT platforms have become central to everyday entertainment, intensifying competition among both global and regional providers.

In Thailand, this broader trend is reflected in the strong presence of major international platforms such as Netflix, Disney+ Hotstar, Amazon Prime Video, HBO Go, Apple TV+, VIU, WeTV, and iQIYI, alongside an expanding set of local services. As the market becomes increasingly crowded and switching costs remain relatively low, user acquisition and, more importantly, user retention have emerged as critical strategic priorities for OTT service providers (Chang & Chiu, 2023).

In response to this shift, accumulating academic research has examined the factors that shape users' adoption and ongoing use of OTT and video streaming services. A growing number of works identifies content- and service-related attributes as central to explaining why users continue to engage with specific platforms over time. Such factors as content quality—encompassing variety, originality, and perceived relevance—have been shown to play an important role in sustaining engagement with streaming services (Walsh & Singh, 2022; Lo et al., 2024). At the same time, other factors have also been identified as key drivers of users' adoption. They include accessibility factors such as ease of use, cross-device availability, and interface design, along with perceived monetary value, influence users' evaluations of OTT services and their willingness to maintain or upgrade subscriptions (Walsh & Singh, 2022; Jia et al., 2023).

Recently, there have been an increasing number of works on continuance intention, conceptualized as the user's willingness to continue using an OTT or video streaming service over time (Jia et al., 2023). According to Walsh and Singh (2022), continuance intention is shaped not only by functional and economic assessments, but also by affective and self-expressive benefits. Based on the framework of the technology acceptance model, their findings highlight that ease of use, convenience value, monetary value, emotional value, and identity salience are positively associated with Millennials' intentions to maintain or increase their use of video streaming services. Extending this perspective, Lo et al. (2024) apply the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) model to Malaysian OTT users and show that content quality and accessibility act as stimuli that influence perceived hedonic value and user attitudes, which in turn affect satisfaction and continuance usage intention. Collectively, these studies underscore the need to understand continuance as a multi-dimensional outcome, driven by content, service experience, and psychological gratifications.

Despite this emerging literature, empirical evidence focusing specifically on continuance intentions among younger audiences—Generation Y and Generation Z—remains relatively limited. Many existing studies examine adoption or initial subscription decisions, or focus on a single generational group, often without explicitly analyzing sustained usage (Koul et al., 2020; Walsh & Singh, 2022). Even when both groups of audiences are included, much of the emphasis has been on adoption and early usage stages, leaving the determinants of longer-term continuance underexplored (Bhattacharyya et al., 2021). This gap is notable because industry and academic evidence consistently identify Generation Y and Generation Z as key drivers of video-on-demand and OTT consumption. Having grown up with digital technologies and internet-based media, these generations tend to consume more streaming

content and display a higher propensity to pay for premium services than older generations (Choudhary et al., 2024; Walsh & Singh, 2022). Understanding what sustains their engagement is therefore essential for both theory and practice.

To examine the drivers for continuance usage among Generation Y and Generation Z, this study focuses on Chiang Mai, Thailand for two main reasons. Firstly, prior empirical work on OTT and related digital media services has largely focused on factors influencing subscription decisions, satisfaction, and adoption within Bangkok and its surrounding metropolitan areas (Phaowijarn, 2019; Dananansuk & Tubtiang, 2020). Although these studies provide valuable insights into urban Thai consumers' responses to streaming services, they offer limited evidence on continuance intentions. Secondly, the strong concentration on the capital city ignores Thailand's pronounced regional diversity. Several communication research indicates that Generation Y's media uses and gratifications differ between Bangkok and upcountry areas (Chaihanchanchai & Anantachart, 2024). In particular, users outside Bangkok have been found to exhibit more communal and interconnected social patterns. Such characteristics may influence how they engage with and derive gratifications from digital platforms (Chaihanchanchai & Anantachart, 2024).

As a major regional urban hub in Northern Thailand, Chiang Mai combines a sizable youth and student population with growing digital infrastructure, while retaining distinctive regional cultural characteristics. This makes it a suitable focus for this research. According to prior work on Thai media audiences, regional users may place greater emphasis on shared viewing, social interaction, and community-oriented activities than the audiences from the capital (Chaihanchanchai & Anantachart, 2024). These patterns imply that the determinants of continuance intention among younger users in Chiang Mai may not fully mirror those observed in Bangkok, particularly with respect to socially oriented gratifications and local lifestyle factors.

Therefore, this study investigates how service-related factors—content quality, pricing, accessibility, entertainment, and social interaction—influence continuance intention among Gen Y and Gen Z in Chiang Mai. By integrating insights from the continuance-intention literature (Jia et al., 2023; Lo et al., 2024; Walsh & Singh, 2022) with evidence on Thai regional media behavior (Chaihanchanchai & Anantachart, 2024), the study addresses three interrelated gaps. First, it contributes to OTT continuance research by focusing explicitly on younger audiences, rather than treating them as a residual category within broader samples. Second, it extends the geographical scope of Thai OTT research beyond the capital to a major regional city, thereby including socio-cultural variation into the analysis of continuance intention. Third, by combining social interaction with content, price, accessibility, and entertainment, the study explores whether social and communal dimensions play a particularly salient role in sustaining OTT usage among Thai Generation Y and Generation Z in a regional urban environment.

The findings are expected to offer theoretical insights into the role of service-related and social factors in shaping continuance intentions and to provide practical implications for global OTT providers seeking to retain younger users in Thailand's regional markets.

Objectives

1. To identify the key determinants influencing continuance intentions toward global OTT video streaming service platforms among Thai Generation Y and Generation Z consumers in Chiang Mai.
2. To examine whether there are significant differences in continuance intentions between Thai Generation Y and Generation Z consumers.
3. To propose practical implications for global OTT service providers to enhance user retention and sustained engagement among younger consumer cohorts in Thailand.



Literature Review

Recent research on OTT and video streaming services identifies several service-related factors that shape user retention and continuance intention, including content quality, pricing, accessibility, entertainment, and social dimensions. Studies conducted in the last five years highlight that these factors jointly influence satisfaction, perceived value, and intentions to maintain or increase OTT usage over time (Walsh & Singh, 2022; Sahu, Gaur, & Singh, 2021; Lo et al., 2024; Chavadi et al., 2025). This section reviews recent empirical evidence for each construct and its expected relationship with continuance intention.

Content Quality

Content quality is defined as the attributes of content created by specific professionals or communities, such as OTT service providers, intended for use by a large audience. In OTT services, values are broadly segmented into ‘content’ and ‘user experience’. Focusing on the ‘content segment’, multiple dimensions such as the variety and amount of content, the quality of original content, and the quality of all other content have been found to play a role in shaping consumer perceptions of value (Langston Co., 2019). Recent studies provided evidence on the positive influence of the diverse range of content on OTT platforms, customized to suit viewer preferences towards purchase decisions (Chopra, 2021). Therefore, content quality is hypothesized to have a positive impact on continuance intention.

Pricing

Pricing is rooted in the economic theory of exchange, where the set price forms a critical component of the transactional exchange for goods or services (Safari & Albaum, 2019). This pricing consequently provides perceived benefits to the purchasers (Aruan & Felicia, 2019). Additionally, a customer's willingness to pay for a subscription may fluctuate based on different perceptions, as the act of paying the subscription fee represents a financial commitment. The concept of willingness to pay acts as a valuable metric to determine the estimated financial value of goods and services and is widely recognized as a method to capture customer evaluations of these goods or services and their perceived values (Park & Park, 2014). In the context of OTT services, monetary factors influence customer decisions regarding the continuation of the service (Walsh & Singh, 2022). Therefore, it is hypothesized that pricing plays a crucial role in influencing the continuance intention among OTT service users.

Accessibility

Accessibility, understood as perceived ease of access and use across devices and contexts, has emerged as a key predictor of OTT adoption and ongoing use in recent studies. Venkatesh et al. (2012) identified ease of effort as a key aspect of the simplicity associated with using technological systems, which is a fundamental component of accessibility. Greer & Ferguson (2015) further observed that devices like PCs, smartphones, tablets, and iPads enhanced flexibility and mobility, which in turn contributes to perceived ease of access and time savings, thereby creating hedonic value for users. Extending this notion, Bhattacharyya et al. (2021) posited that the ease of use of OTT services, by enhancing their accessibility, increased the likelihood of consumer adoption of these platforms. Additionally, accessibility encompasses the convenience that allows users to access OTT video streaming content from anywhere at any time (Sahu, Gaur, & Singh, 2021). Unlike traditional TV networks that adhere to fixed programming schedules, OTT platforms offer continuous series marathons, allowing viewers to consume content at their convenience and thus fostering a positive attitude towards these platforms (Lu et al., 2017; Le & Wang, 2022). Consequently, accessibility is hypothesized to have a positive impact on continuance intention.

Entertainment

In the context of hedonic digital services, perceived enjoyment and entertainment remain central drivers of continued use. Recent OTT studies consistently find that entertainment gratifications—such as relaxation, escapism, and enjoyment—are strongly associated with positive attitudes and ongoing engagement. Sahu et al. (2021) show that entertainment and relaxation motivations significantly shape users' affinity with OTT platforms and their willingness to cut the cable cord, highlighting the importance of intrinsic enjoyment for subscription and retention. Lo et al. (2024) provide complementary evidence by demonstrating that hedonic value, derived from enjoyable content experiences, has a direct positive effect on continuance usage intention among OTT viewers. Additional research on OTT viewing patterns indicates that users who perceive streaming as a primary source of entertainment exhibit stronger loyalty and higher intentions to maintain subscriptions (Chavadi et al., 2025; Choudhary et al., 2024). Given that OTT platforms are primarily hedonic services, entertainment is expected to exert a positive effect on continuance intention.

Social Interaction

Social and communal dimensions of OTT use have gained increased attention in recent years as platforms incorporate more sharing and co-viewing features. Sahu et al. (2021) identify social gratifications, including community connection and shared viewing experiences, as meaningful predictors of OTT affinity and satisfaction, suggesting that users value the ability to discuss and experience content with others. Recent work on OTT habit and continuous usage further indicates that social viewing practices—such as watching series with friends or family and engaging in online discussions—can reinforce engagement and encourage recurrent platform use (Bhattacharyya et al., 2021). Chavadi et al. (2025) also find that engagement and experiential factors, which include social elements, are related to continuance and recommendation behaviors in OTT settings. These findings imply that social interaction around OTT content may enhance perceived value and attachment to platforms, thereby supporting long-term retention. Hence, social interaction is hypothesized to positively influence continuance intention on OTT platforms.

Continual Subscription Intent

Recent digital-service research conceptualizes continuance intention and repurchase intention as key indicators of users' propensity to maintain their relationship with a subscription service. In streaming and OTT contexts, continuance intention typically refers to the intention to renew or maintain subscriptions and to continue using a platform regularly. Jia et al. (2023) show that confirmation of expectations, perceived value, and satisfaction jointly drive continuance intention in short-form video platforms. OTT-specific studies similarly report that content quality, price value, accessibility, entertainment, and social gratifications operate through satisfaction and perceived benefits to influence users' intentions to continue or intensify their use (Walsh & Singh, 2022; Lo et al., 2024; Sahu et al., 2021; Chavadi et al., 2025). In line with this recent evidence, the present study conceptualizes continual subscription intent as users' continuance intention toward global OTT platforms and posits that content quality (CQ), pricing (PC), accessibility (AC), entertainment (ET), and social interaction (SI) exert positive effects on this outcome.

Theoretical Framework

With the preceding literature as a foundation, the theoretical framework for this study was adapted from Lo et al.'s (2024) Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) model of OTT continuance, which specifies content quality, accessibility, and entertainment as stimuli shaping hedonic value, attitude, satisfaction, and continuance usage intention.



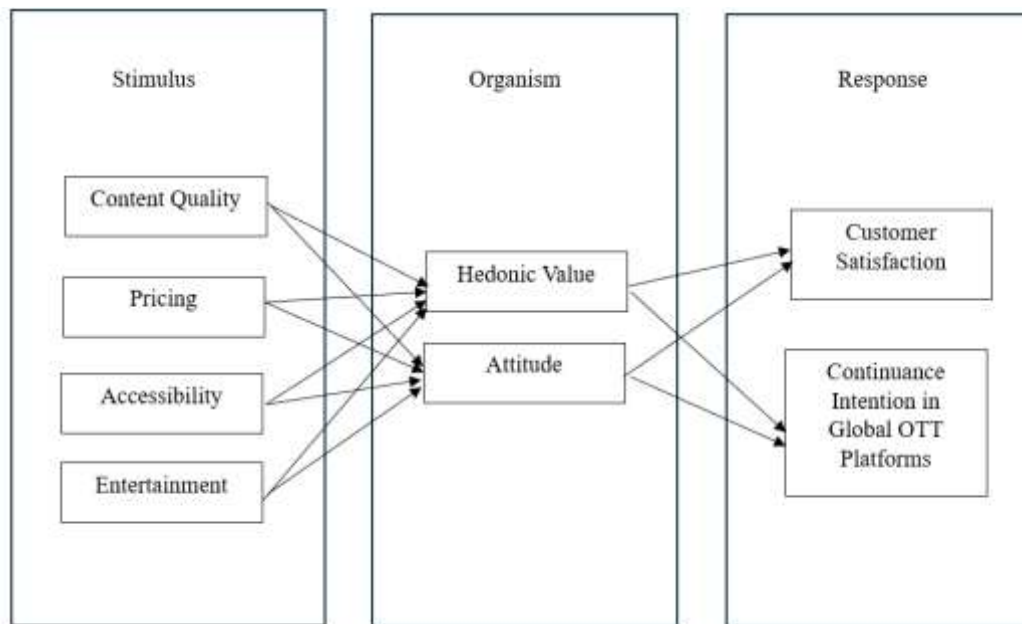


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

Methodology

Population and Sampling

The target population for this study comprises Thai individuals from Generation Y (27–42 years in 2025) and Generation Z (11–26 years in 2025) who are current or former users of global OTT video streaming service platforms and reside in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand. Given that the total population size is unknown, the minimum sample size was estimated using Cochran's (1953) formula for large populations, assuming a 5 percent margin of error and a 95 percent confidence level. The calculation yielded a required sample of approximately 384 respondents, which was rounded up to 450 to enhance statistical precision and reduce sampling error. The final sample was stratified by cohort, with 250 respondents from Generation Y and 200 from Generation Z. Due to resource constraints, convenience sampling was used. A dual-data collection both online and paper-based questionnaires was used to maximize coverage and facilitate participation among diverse respondent groups. It is important to note that the non-probability nature of this sampling approach limits the extent to which the findings can be generalized beyond the sampled population.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The instrument, used in this study, consisted of four sections: 1) respondents' demographic characteristics, 2) usage and viewing behavior related to global OTT video streaming platforms, 3) measures of the factors influencing continuance intentions toward global OTT services among Thai Generation Y and Generation Z consumers, and 4) an open section for additional comments and suggestions. Items in the third section were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). To ensure comprehensibility and cultural appropriateness, the questionnaire scale items were adapted from established English-language instruments in prior OTT and digital-service studies and then translated into Thai. A translation–back-translation procedure was employed to ensure semantic equivalence. The complete instrument was subsequently reviewed by the co-authors to verify content relevance, clarity, and alignment with the research objectives before field administration.

Reliability

A pilot test was conducted on 26 December 2024 with 30 respondents from the target population to evaluate the reliability of the instrument prior to the main data collection. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency reliability for the multi-item scales (CQ, PC, AC, ET, HV, AT, CS, and CT). As a measure of the extent to which items within a construct are inter-correlated and consistently capture the same underlying concept, values of 0.70 or higher are generally acceptable. Following Hair et al., 2019, values above 0.60 may be regarded as adequate in exploratory research, especially when constructs are examined in new cultural or contextual settings.

The pilot results showed that most constructs met or exceeded the 0.70 threshold: Pricing (PC) ($\alpha = 0.767$), Accessibility (AC) ($\alpha = 0.801$), Hedonic Value (HV) ($\alpha = 0.825$), Attitude (AT) ($\alpha = 0.701$), Customer Satisfaction (CS) ($\alpha = 0.923$), and Continuance Intention (CT) ($\alpha = 0.866$). Content Quality (CQ) ($\alpha = 0.665$) and Entertainment (ET) ($\alpha = 0.698$) yielded coefficients slightly below 0.70 but above 0.60, which falls within the acceptable range for exploratory work.

Given the exploratory focus on continuance intentions toward global OTT platforms in a regional Thai context, the CQ and ET scales were retained. This decision was guided by their theoretical importance in the proposed framework and their satisfactory item loadings and factor structure in subsequent analyses, rather than by alpha values alone.

The somewhat lower reliability coefficients for CQ and ET are acknowledged as a limitation and indicate that future studies could further refine these scales to improve internal consistency.

Table 1 Reliability of coefficients of the constructs

Construct	Code	No. of items retained	Cronbach's alpha
Content Quality	CQ	6	0.665
Pricing	PC	5	0.767
Accessibility	AC	7	0.801
Entertainment	ET	6	0.698
Hedonic Value	HV	5	0.825
Attitude	AT	4	0.701
Customer Satisfaction	CS	4	0.923
Continuance Intention	CT	4	0.866

Data Collection

In this study, data were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. First, the primary data were collected through questionnaires distributed to Thai individuals from Generation Y and Generation Z, who are current or former users of global OTT video streaming service platforms. Data were gathered both in hardcopy format and online. Second, the secondary data were utilized from sources such as articles, journals, and previous research to construct the theoretical framework, develop hypotheses, determine the sample size, and perform data analysis.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to understand the respondents' demographics, along with usage behavior of the global OTT platforms.

Prior to conducting the main statistical analyses, data screening procedures were performed to assess response validity and ensure data quality. The dataset was examined for missing values and incomplete responses. Potential outliers were inspected, and no evidence of substantial distortion was identified. The normality of the data distribution was evaluated



using skewness and kurtosis statistics. Although some variables exhibited moderate deviations, no severe violations of normality were detected. Given the relatively large sample size ($n = 450$), the data were considered appropriate for subsequent parametric analyses.

Then, the Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed to verify the suitability of the data for the model, after which the Multiple Regression Analysis was used to determine the influence of various factors on the continuance intentions of global OTT video streaming service platforms among Thai Generation Y and Generation Z consumers. Finally, an Independent Samples t-test was used to assess differences between Generation Y and Generation Z. For all these steps, SPSS was used to support quantitative analysis.

Results

Descriptive statistics

The demographic profile indicates that the sample was mainly female, single, and university educated, with a large proportion of respondents identifying as students and reporting a monthly income of 10,000 Baht or less. Detailed demographic characteristics are presented in Table 2.

Regarding OTT usage, Netflix was the most frequently preferred platform among both Generation Y and Generation Z respondents, followed by WeTV, iQIYI and Disney+ Hotstar. Romance was the most favored genre, followed by fantasy/science fiction and comedy, and most respondents preferred series over movies. South Korean content emerged as the most popular, ahead of Western, Chinese and Thai productions, and the majority of respondents subscribed as single users rather than via shared or family packages (Table 3).

Table 2 Descriptive statistics of demographic profile

Variable	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	135	30.00
	Female	280	62.20
	LGBTQ	35	7.80
Status	Single	380	84.40
	Married	69	15.30
	Divorced	1	0.20
Education	Less than Bachelor's Degree	127	28.20
	Bachelor's Degree	292	64.90
	Higher than Bachelor's Degree	31	6.90
Occupation	Student	198	44.00
	Government employee/Public servant	41	9.10
	Private sector employee	90	20.00
	Freelancer (Self-employed)	56	12.40
	Entrepreneur	54	12.00
	Others	11	2.40
Income	Less than or equal to 10,000 Baht	194	43.10
	10,001 - 20,000 Baht	128	28.40
	20,001 - 30,000 Baht	81	18.00
	30,001 – 40,000 Baht	22	4.90
	40,001 – 50,000 Baht	9	2.00
	More than 50,001 Baht	16	3.60

Table 3 Descriptive statistics of usage behavior

Variable	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Favorite Global OTT Platforms	Netflix	307	68.20
	Disney+ Hotstar	34	7.60
	Amazon Prime Video	2	0.40
	HBO Go	2	0.40
	Apple TV+	5	1.10
	VIU	9	2.00
	WeTV	49	10.90
	iQIYI	42	9.30
Favorite OTT Content Genre Rankings	1st: Romance	87	19.30
	2nd: Fantasy/Sci-Fi	66	14.70
	3rd: Comedy	63	14.00
Favorite OTT Content Category	Movies	180	40.00
	Series	241	53.60
	Entertainment/Variety Shows	23	5.10
	Others	6	1.30
Favorite OTT Content Country	Thailand	89	19.80
	South Korea	129	28.70
	China	100	22.20
	Western countries	121	26.90
	Others	11	2.40
Subscription Types	Family Package for use by the entire family	108	24.00
	Family Package and share the subscription cost and usage with friends	101	22.40
	Single User	234	52.00
	Others	7	1.60

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis using principal component extraction with Varimax rotation was undertaken to examine the dimensionality of the measurement items. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value was 0.957, indicating superb sampling adequacy, and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 12,218.815$, $df = 820$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis (Table 4). Items with primary loadings of at least 0.50 and without problematic cross-loadings were retained. Six components with eigenvalues greater than one were extracted. Items initially assigned to Attitude, Customer Satisfaction and Continuance Intention loaded on a single factor capturing respondents’ overall commitment to continued OTT use; this factor was therefore conceptualized as Continual Subscription Intent (CSI). Items reflecting shared viewing experiences and interpersonal engagement—originally drawn from the Entertainment, Attitude and Hedonic Value scales—loaded together on a distinct factor and were re-specified as Social Interaction (SI). Items failing to meet loading criteria or exhibiting substantial cross-loadings were removed. The retained constructs, items and loading ranges are shown in Table 5, and the resulting research model is depicted in Figure 2.

Table 4 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.957
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	12218.815
	df	820
	Sig.	0.000

Table 5 Measurement model results

Constructs	No. of items	Items	Loading
Content quality	5	CQ1	0.668
		CQ2	0.645
		CQ3	0.533
		CQ4	0.504
		CQ5	0.503
Pricing	5	PC1	0.573
		PC2	0.749
		PC3	0.781
		PC4	0.805
		PC5	0.752
Accessibility	4	AC1	0.722
		AC2	0.753
		AC3	0.678
		AC4	0.733
Entertainment	2	ET1	0.650
		ET2	0.649
Social Interaction	5	SI1	0.700
		SI2	0.718
		SI3	0.669
		SI4	0.649
		SI5	0.708
Continual Subscription Intent	8	CSI1	0.525
		CSI2	0.649
		CSI3	0.627
		CSI4	0.534
		CSI5	0.779
		CSI6	0.796
		CSI7	0.747
		CSI8	0.618

Figure 2 presents the research model, adjusted from the theoretical framework based on the results of the EFA. This revised model identifies the key factors, and their interrelationships hypothesized to influence continuance intentions, laying the groundwork for further examination through multiple regression analysis.

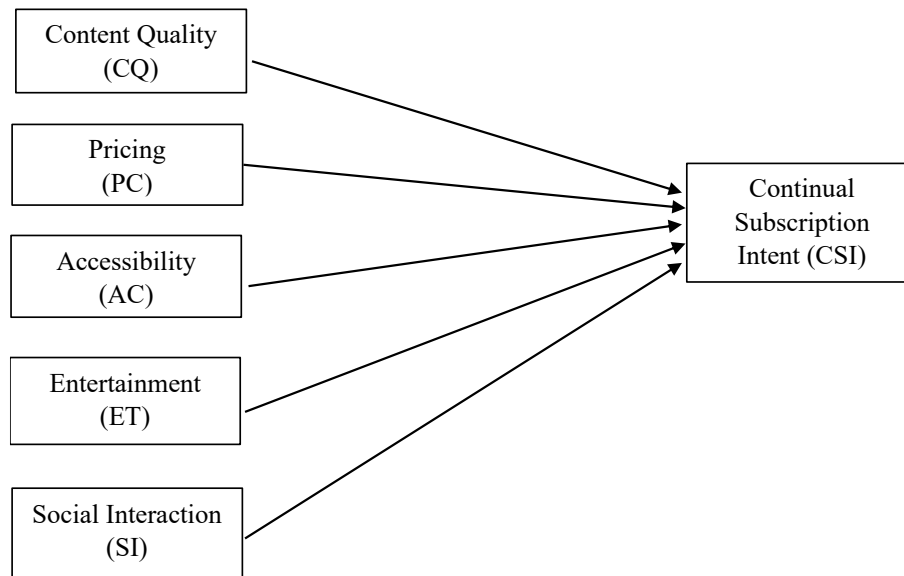


Fig 2 Conceptual Framework (Research Model)

Multiple regression analysis

Regression assumptions were examined prior to hypothesis testing. The histogram and normal probability (P–P) plot of standardized residuals indicated approximate normality. The scatterplot of standardized residuals against standardized predicted values showed no clear pattern, suggesting homoscedasticity. Variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.367 to 2.054, well below 10, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern.

Multiple regression analysis was then used to assess the effects of Content Quality (CQ), Pricing (PC), Accessibility (AC), Entertainment (ET) and Social Interaction (SI) on CSI. The overall model was significant ($F = 134.993$, $p < 0.001$), with an R^2 of 0.603 (adjusted $R^2 = 0.599$), indicating that the predictors jointly explained 60.3% of the variance in CSI (Table 6). All hypothesized paths were supported: SI ($\beta = 0.307$, $t = 7.760$, $p < 0.001$), AC ($\beta = 0.284$, $t = 7.021$, $p < 0.001$), CQ ($\beta = 0.168$, $t = 3.912$, $p < 0.001$), PC ($\beta = 0.147$, $t = 4.216$, $p < 0.001$) and ET ($\beta = 0.096$, $t = 2.362$, $p = 0.019$) exerted significant positive effects on CSI.

Table 6 Regression model results

Hypotheses	Hypothesized paths	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Hypothesis supported?
H1	CQ $\rightarrow$ CSI	0.168	3.912	< 0.001	Yes
H2	PC $\rightarrow$ CSI	0.147	4.216	< 0.001	Yes
H3	AC $\rightarrow$ CSI	0.284	7.021	< 0.001	Yes
H4	ET $\rightarrow$ CSI	0.096	2.362	0.019	Yes
H5	SI $\rightarrow$ CSI	0.307	7.760	< 0.001	Yes
Observation	450				
F-statistic	134.993				
R Square	0.603				
Adjusted R2	0.599				
Standard Error	0.427				

To check whether there was a difference between the two groups, an independent samples t-test was conducted. The results showed that Generation Y respondents ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.75$) and Generation Z respondents ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.56$) reported similar levels of continuance subscription intention. The difference between the two groups was not statistically significant ($t = 1.552$, $df = 446.533$, $p = 0.121$, Cohen's $d = 0.14$). The small effect size indicates a negligible difference between Generation Y and Generation Z. These findings suggest that the intention to continue subscriptions to global OTT platforms does not differ significantly between Generation Y and Generation Z consumers in Chiang Mai.

Discussions

This study finds that Accessibility, Social Interaction, Content Quality, Pricing and Entertainment are all significant, positive predictors of Continual Subscription Intent (CSI) toward global OTT video streaming platforms among Thai Generation Y and Generation Z consumers in Chiang Mai. The results are broadly consistent with recent OTT continuance research, while highlighting the particularly strong role of social interaction in this regional urban context.

First, Social Interaction (SI) was the strongest predictor of CSI, indicating that interpersonal engagement around OTT content is particularly salient for younger users in Chiang Mai. This extends recent OTT studies which suggest that social and communal dimensions—such as shared viewing, discussion of series and peer recommendations—can reinforce engagement and encourage continued use (Sahu et al., 2021; Chavadi et al., 2025). The EFA-derived SI construct, capturing shared leisure activities and opinion exchange, underscores that OTT consumption in this setting is embedded in social relationships rather than being purely individual. Given prior evidence of communal orientations among regional Thai audiences, the prominence of SI suggests that social motives may be a distinctive feature of OTT continuance in Chiang Mai.

Second, accessibility emerged as a key determinant of CSI, confirming that convenient, cross-device access and ease of use are central to sustaining OTT usage. This aligns with evidence that “convenient navigability” and enhanced viewing experiences are important gratifications driving OTT affinity, satisfaction and cord-cutting intentions (Sahu et al., 2021; Lo et al., 2024). In line with this literature, respondents who perceived global OTT platforms as easy to use and accessible via multiple devices reported stronger intentions to continue subscribing.

Third, Content Quality (CQ) also exerted a significant positive effect on CSI, supporting findings that content richness, relevance and perceived quality are central to sustained engagement with streaming services (Walsh & Singh, 2022; Lo et al., 2024). Respondents who perceived global OTT platforms as offering diverse, high-quality content were more likely to maintain their subscriptions, reinforcing the notion that content remains a foundational driver of continuance, even when social and accessibility factors are strong.

Fourth, Pricing (PC) had a significant, albeit more moderate, positive effect on CSI. This is consistent with recent work showing that perceived monetary value and affordability influence renewal and continued usage decisions in subscription markets (Walsh & Singh, 2022; Nazir et al., 2023). The findings suggest that respondents' evaluations of whether subscription fees are reasonable relative to the benefits received contribute meaningfully to continuance intention.

Finally, Entertainment (ET) also positively influenced CSI, consistent with the view of OTT platforms as hedonic services and with studies linking entertainment gratifications and hedonic value to positive attitudes and continuance intentions (Sahu et al., 2021; Lo et al., 2024; Chavadi et al., 2025). The comparatively smaller coefficient for ET suggests that while

entertainment is an important intrinsic motivator, it may form part of a broader value package in which social interaction and accessibility differentiate higher from lower levels of continuance intention among younger users in Chiang Mai.

It is important to note that there is no significant difference in CSI between Generation Y and Generation Z. It implies that both cohorts share broadly similar motivations for continued OTT use in this context. This is consistent with research identifying both groups as core OTT user segments with high levels of digital familiarity and streaming engagement. For practitioners, this suggests that retention strategies focused on convenience, social features, content quality and value for money are likely to be effective across both age groups.

Conclusion and suggestions

The study contributes to the OTT continuance literature by examining determinants of Continual Subscription Intent among Generation Y and Generation Z users in a major regional Thai city. The findings show that Social Interaction and Accessibility are the strongest predictors of CSI, followed by Content Quality, Pricing and Entertainment, and that continuance intention does not differ significantly between the two generations.

For global OTT providers, several implications emerge. First, ensuring seamless accessibility across devices and network conditions should be a priority, as convenience and ease of use are strongly associated with continuance intention. Second, maintaining a diverse and high-quality content portfolio, aligned with local preferences such as romance and fantasy/science fiction series, can reinforce perceived value. Third, pricing strategies that communicate clear value for money and offer flexible options for single-user and shared subscriptions may support retention in segments with relatively modest incomes. Finally, given the central role of Social Interaction, platforms may benefit from enhancing social features (e.g., shared viewing, social recommendations, engagement tools) and positioning OTT consumption as both an individual leisure activity and a shared social experience.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

By identifying Social Interaction as the strongest driver of continuance intention, this study offers novel evidence that global OTT platforms function as socially embedded digital spaces for younger users in Chiang Mai, rather than solely as individual entertainment services. This extends prior work that has focused primarily on content, convenience or price by demonstrating the importance of social motives in sustaining OTT usage in a regional Thai context.

The lack of significant generational differences further suggests that shared social motivations toward OTT consumption operate similarly across Generation Y and Generation Z in this setting. In a context where family ties, peer networks and community-oriented lifestyles remain salient, OTT viewing appears to facilitate shared experiences, interpersonal communication and everyday social connection, including when users are physically apart. These findings imply that global OTT platforms have implications not only for individual media consumption but also for local social dynamics, through practices of discussion, recommendation and shared viewing within families and peer groups.

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Reframing Social Development for Equity and Leaving No One Behind in a Changing Society

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(Received: 12 January 2026, Revised: 27 March 2026, Accepted: 6 April 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.286349>

Abstract

This study examines contemporary approaches to social development that promote equity and operationalize the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) in the context of rapid global transformations. Increasing socioeconomic inequality, technological disruption, and demographic change have intensified the need for inclusive development strategies that ensure equitable access to opportunities and resources. To address this issue, the study employs a mixed-methods research design integrating quantitative structural equation modeling (SEM) with qualitative insights from community development practitioners.

The quantitative component involved a survey of approximately 400 community stakeholders selected through stratified random sampling. Structural equation modeling results indicate that the proposed model demonstrates acceptable goodness-of-fit (CFI > 0.90; RMSEA < 0.08). The analysis reveals that inclusive governance ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < .001$), social capital ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < .01$), and community participation ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < .01$) exert significant positive effects on equitable social development outcomes. Furthermore, institutional capacity was found to significantly mediate the relationship between community participation and equity outcomes (indirect effect $\beta = 0.18$, $p < .01$), indicating that participatory processes achieve stronger equity outcomes when supported by effective institutional mechanisms.

The qualitative findings reinforce and contextualize these statistical results. Interviews with community leaders and development practitioners highlight that inclusive decision-making processes, trust-based community networks, and responsive institutional systems are critical factors enabling participatory development initiatives to translate into tangible improvements in social inclusion and equitable access to services. The qualitative evidence thus strengthens the interpretation of the quantitative model by illustrating how governance practices and institutional arrangements operate in real community contexts.

This study contributes to the literature by proposing and empirically validating an integrative social development model that links governance, social capital, community participation, and institutional capacity to equity and LNOB outcomes. The findings offer both theoretical and practical implications for policymakers, local governments, and development organizations seeking to design inclusive and sustainable social development strategies in rapidly changing societies.

Keywords: Social development, Equity, Leaving no one behind, Inclusive governance, Community participation, Institutional capacity



Introduction

Contemporary societies are experiencing rapid and multidimensional transformations driven by globalization, technological advancement, demographic transition, and economic restructuring. While these dynamics have expanded economic opportunities and improved access to knowledge and resources, they have also intensified structural inequalities and social exclusion in many parts of the world. Disparities in income distribution, access to quality education, healthcare services, social protection systems, and participation in decision-making processes remain persistent challenges, particularly in developing countries where institutional capacity and governance systems are still evolving (United Nations, 2015).

Social development has long been conceptualized as a process of planned social change aimed at enhancing human well-being, promoting social justice, and ensuring inclusive participation in development processes (Midgley, 2014). From this perspective, development must go beyond economic growth to address social inequalities and institutional barriers that prevent individuals and communities from realizing their full potential. The concept of equity is therefore central to social development discourse. Equity emphasizes fairness in the distribution of opportunities, resources, and capabilities rather than simple equality of outcomes (Sen, 1999). Achieving equitable development requires integrated approaches that combine participatory governance, social cohesion, and effective institutional mechanisms capable of translating collective aspirations into sustainable development outcomes.

In the global development agenda, the principle of “Leaving No One Behind” (LNOB) has emerged as a central commitment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. LNOB calls for development processes that actively identify and address the needs of marginalized, vulnerable, and socially excluded populations to ensure that development benefits are shared equitably across society (United Nations Development Programme, 2018). Despite its strong normative and policy significance, much of the existing discussion on LNOB remains concentrated at the international policy level. Empirical studies examining how the LNOB principle can be operationalized and measured within community-level development processes remain relatively limited. As a result, there is still insufficient empirical evidence explaining how local governance systems, social networks, and institutional arrangements interact to produce inclusive development outcomes in real community contexts.

Previous studies have identified several key factors that contribute to inclusive and equitable social development. Inclusive governance has been widely recognized as a critical mechanism for promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in public decision-making processes. Social capital, reflected in networks of trust, reciprocity, and collective action, enhances community resilience and facilitates collaborative problem-solving (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 2001). Community participation enables citizens to actively engage in planning, implementing, and monitoring development initiatives, thereby strengthening democratic governance and improving the responsiveness of development policies. Furthermore, institutional capacity plays a crucial role in determining whether participatory inputs can be translated into effective public policies, services, and development programs.

However, despite the recognition of these factors, the existing literature reveals several important research gaps. First, many prior studies have examined inclusive governance, social capital, community participation, and institutional capacity as independent variables rather than as components of an integrated structural system that collectively influences equitable social development outcomes. Consequently, the complex interactions and mediating mechanisms among these variables remain insufficiently understood. Second, empirical studies employing advanced analytical approaches such as structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine these relationships simultaneously are still relatively rare, particularly in developing country contexts

where institutional structures, governance dynamics, and social capital configurations differ substantially from those observed in developed societies. The absence of such integrative empirical models limits the ability of researchers and policymakers to understand how different social and institutional factors interact to promote equitable development.

Moreover, while the LNOB principle emphasizes inclusive participation and social justice, there remains a significant gap in empirical research demonstrating how community-level governance mechanisms, social capital networks, and institutional capacities work together to operationalize LNOB in practice. Without empirical evidence linking these elements, the LNOB framework risks remaining largely a policy aspiration rather than an actionable model for guiding local development interventions.

To address these research gaps, this study proposes and empirically tests an integrative conceptual model that examines the structural relationships among four key determinants of equitable social development: inclusive governance, social capital, community participation, and institutional capacity. Conceptually, inclusive governance, social capital, and community participation are expected to function as primary drivers of equitable development outcomes. Institutional capacity, in turn, is hypothesized to act as a mediating mechanism that strengthens the translation of participatory processes into effective and inclusive development outcomes.

Figure 1 conceptually illustrates the proposed structural model guiding this research. In this model, inclusive governance, social capital, and community participation directly influence equitable social development outcomes, while institutional capacity mediates the relationship between community participation and equity outcomes. This conceptual structure provides a theoretical foundation for empirically examining how governance systems, social relationships, and institutional mechanisms interact to advance the principle of Leaving No One Behind at the community level.

By integrating quantitative structural equation modeling with qualitative insights from community leaders and development practitioners, this study aims to generate a comprehensive understanding of how these interrelated factors contribute to equitable social development. The findings are expected to provide both theoretical contributions to the field of social development and practical implications for policymakers, development practitioners, and community organizations seeking to design more inclusive and sustainable development strategies.

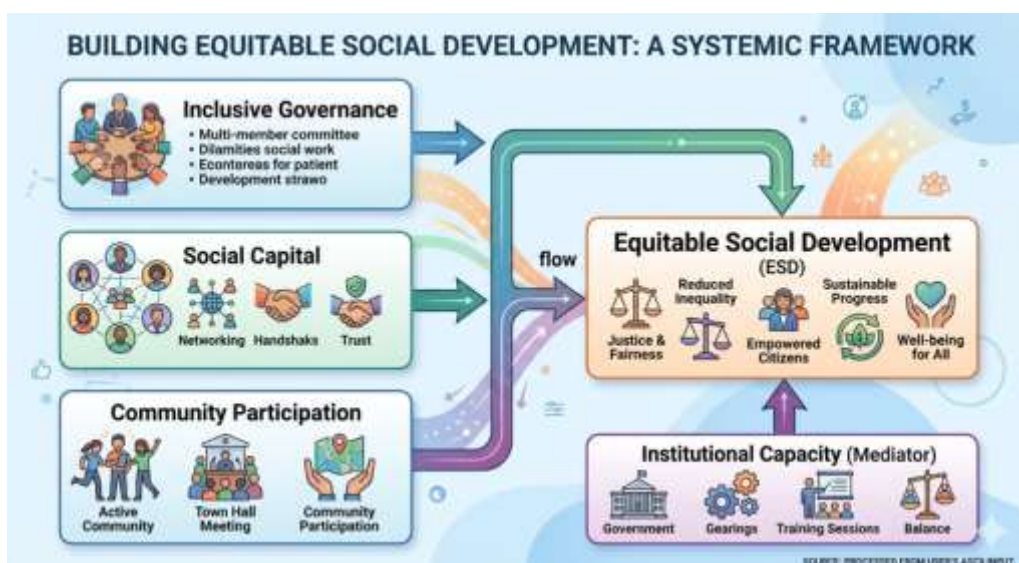


Figure 1 Systemic framework

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of social development processes related to equity and the implementation of the Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) principle. Mixed-methods research is particularly appropriate for examining complex social phenomena because it allows researchers to combine statistical analysis of structural relationships with contextual interpretations of social experiences and institutional practices. Recent methodological scholarship emphasizes that mixed-methods approaches enhance the robustness of social research by linking quantitative generalizability with qualitative contextual depth (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2021).

Specifically, this research employs a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, in which quantitative data collection and analysis are conducted in the first phase, followed by qualitative inquiry to interpret and explain the quantitative findings. This design is widely used in social development research because it allows researchers to first identify significant statistical relationships among key variables and subsequently explore the contextual and institutional mechanisms underlying these relationships at the community level (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The quantitative component focuses on examining the structural relationships among the key constructs of the study, including inclusive governance, social capital, community participation, institutional capacity, and equitable social development outcomes. These constructs are widely recognized as critical drivers of inclusive and equitable development, particularly in the context of localizing the Sustainable Development Goals and the LNOB principle (UNDP, 2020; OECD, 2021). The constructs were operationalized using multiple observable indicators derived from existing literature on governance, participation, and inclusive development (Hickey, 2020).

Measurement items were assessed using a structured questionnaire with Likert-scale responses. Quantitative data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which enables the simultaneous estimation of relationships among latent variables within a theoretically grounded framework. SEM is particularly appropriate for testing complex causal relationships and mediation effects among multiple constructs (Hair et al., 2019). The analysis included evaluation of the measurement model through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and assessment of structural relationships within the proposed conceptual framework.

The qualitative component complements the quantitative analysis by providing deeper insights into the contextual dynamics, governance practices, and institutional arrangements that influence social development outcomes. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including community leaders, local administrators, and development practitioners who are directly involved in community development initiatives. Such qualitative approaches are particularly valuable for understanding how participatory governance and institutional mechanisms operate in practice within local development contexts (Mansuri & Rao, 2019).

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, allowing for the systematic identification and interpretation of patterns and themes emerging from the interview data. Thematic analysis is widely used in social research for exploring perceptions, experiences, and institutional practices that shape development outcomes. To ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of the qualitative findings, several strategies were applied, including careful transcription of interviews, transparent documentation of coding procedures, and triangulation with quantitative findings. These practices enhance credibility, dependability, and confirmability in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2021).



The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings was conducted during the interpretation stage. Qualitative insights were used to contextualize and explain the statistical relationships identified through SEM analysis, particularly in understanding how governance structures, community participation, and institutional capacity interact to influence equitable social development outcomes. Such methodological triangulation strengthens the validity and explanatory depth of the research and is increasingly recommended in studies examining complex development challenges (UNDP, 2020; OECD, 2021).

Overall, the mixed-methods design employed in this study provides a robust methodological foundation for examining the multidimensional processes that shape inclusive and equitable social development. By combining statistical modeling with contextual qualitative insights, the study generates empirically grounded and policy-relevant knowledge that contributes to a better understanding of how the LNOB principle can be operationalized in community-level development contexts.

Population and Sample

The target population of the quantitative component consists of community residents, local leaders, and key stakeholders who are directly involved in or affected by social development initiatives at the community level. These groups were selected to capture diverse perspectives on governance practices, community participation, and institutional processes that influence equitable social development outcomes. Including multiple stakeholder groups is particularly important in studies of inclusive and equitable development, as it enables researchers to capture the interactions among social actors involved in community-level governance and development processes (Hickey, Sen, & Bukenya, 2015; Gupta, Pouw, & Ros-Tonen, 2015).

A sample size of approximately 400 respondents was determined for the quantitative phase of the study. This sample size is considered appropriate for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which generally requires relatively large samples to produce stable parameter estimates and sufficient statistical power when analyzing complex structural relationships among latent variables (Hair et al., 2019; Kline, 2016). Methodological guidelines for SEM-based research commonly recommend sample sizes ranging from 200 to 400 cases when testing models that include multiple constructs and observed indicators. Therefore, the selected sample size was sufficient to support the statistical analysis and ensure reliable estimation of the structural model.

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to select respondents from the population. Stratification was applied to ensure proportional representation across key demographic and social characteristics such as gender, age, occupation, and community roles. This approach improves sample representativeness by reducing sampling bias and ensuring that different subgroups within the population are adequately represented in the dataset. Stratified sampling is widely recommended in community-based development research because social diversity often shapes individuals' experiences and perceptions of development outcomes (OECD, 2021).

For the qualitative component, purposive sampling was used to select key informants who possess in-depth knowledge and practical experience in community governance and development initiatives. The qualitative participants included community leaders, local administrators, and social development practitioners who are actively involved in planning, implementing, and monitoring local development programs. These participants were selected as information-rich cases capable of providing detailed insights into governance mechanisms, participation processes, and institutional coordination at the community level (Mansuri & Rao, 2019).



The combination of stratified random sampling in the quantitative phase and purposive sampling in the qualitative phase strengthens the overall research design by enabling both breadth and depth of analysis. While the quantitative survey provides generalizable evidence regarding the relationships among governance, participation, institutional capacity, and equitable development outcomes, the qualitative interviews provide contextual explanations that help interpret these statistical relationships. This sampling strategy supports methodological triangulation, thereby enhancing the credibility, validity, and explanatory power of the study's findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Results

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 400 respondents participated in the quantitative survey. The respondents consisted of community residents, community leaders, and stakeholders involved in community-level social development initiatives. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

The results indicate that 53.00% of the respondents were female and 47.00% were male. In terms of age distribution, the largest group was between 31–45 years (37.00%), followed by 46–60 years (27.50%) and 18–30 years (24.00%). Regarding educational background, 39% had completed secondary education, while 33.50% held a bachelor's degree. In terms of occupation, the largest proportion of respondents worked in the agricultural sector (26.00%), followed by the private sector (24.00%) and government employment (19.50%).

This distribution reflects the diversity of community stakeholders and enhances the representativeness of the data for examining social development processes at the community level (OECD, 2021; UNDP, 2020).

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Characteristics	Characteristics	Characteristics
Gender	Male	188	47.00
	Female	212	53.00
Age	18–30 years	96	24.00
	31–45 years	148	37.00
	46–60 years	110	27.50
	Above 60	46	11.50
Education	Primary school	72	18.00
	Secondary school	156	39.00
	Bachelor's degree	134	33.50
	Postgraduate	38	9.50
Occupation	Agriculture	104	26.00
	Private sector	96	24.00
	Government	78	19.50
	Self-employed	72	18.00
	Others	50	12.50
Community Role	Resident	246	61.50
	Community leader	84	21.00
	Development practitioner	70	17.50

Measurement Model Results (Confirmatory Factor Analysis)

Prior to testing the structural model, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement model. The evaluation criteria included factor loading, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE).

All observed variables demonstrated factor loadings greater than 0.60, indicating adequate indicator reliability. Furthermore, all constructs achieved CR values above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50, which meet the recommended thresholds for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 2 Measurement Model Assessment

Construct	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Inclusive Governance	0.68 – 0.84	0.89	0.62
Social Capital	0.65 – 0.83	0.88	0.59
Community Participation	0.70 – 0.87	0.91	0.66
Institutional Capacity	0.69 – 0.85	0.90	0.63
Equitable Social Development	0.71 – 0.88	0.92	0.67

The measurement model also demonstrated acceptable model fit, as indicated by the following goodness-of-fit indices.

Table 3 Measurement Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Recommended Value
χ^2/df	2.31	<3.00
CFI	0.95	>0.90
TLI	0.94	>0.90
RMSEA	0.056	<0.08
SRMR	0.048	<0.08

These results indicate that the measurement model provides a satisfactory representation of the latent constructs used in this study.

Structural Model Results

After confirming the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural relationships among the constructs were examined using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

The analysis revealed that inclusive governance, social capital, and community participation significantly influence institutional capacity, which in turn contributes to equitable social development outcomes.

Table 4 Structural Path Analysis

Hypothesis	Path	β	SE	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	Inclusive Governance → Institutional Capacity	0.42	0.06	6.98	<0.001	Supported
H2	Social Capital → Institutional Capacity	0.36	0.07	5.74	<0.001	Supported
H3	Community Participation → Institutional Capacity	0.39	0.05	7.22	<0.001	Supported
H4	Institutional Capacity → Equitable Social Development	0.53	0.06	8.91	<0.001	Supported

The results indicate that the structural model explains 58% of the variance in institutional capacity ($R^2 = 0.58$) and 46% of the variance in equitable social development ($R^2 = 0.46$). These findings suggest that governance quality, civic engagement, and social capital collectively play an important role in strengthening institutional capacity and promoting equitable development outcomes (Gupta, 2015; Hickey, 2015).

Mediation Analysis

To examine the mediating role of institutional capacity, mediation analysis was conducted using the bootstrapping technique with 5,000 resamples, which is widely recommended for assessing indirect effects in SEM.

Table 5 Mediation Effects

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	95% CI	Mediation
Inclusive Governance → Social Development	0.18	0.22	0.40	0.12 – 0.32	Partial
Social Capital → Social Development	0.14	0.19	0.33	0.10 – 0.29	Partial
Community Participation → Social Development	0.17	0.21	0.38	0.11 – 0.31	Partial

The results indicate that the indirect effects are statistically significant, and the confidence intervals do not include zero. Therefore, institutional capacity partially mediates the relationships between governance, social capital, participation, and equitable social development outcomes. These findings highlight the critical role of institutional systems in translating participatory governance mechanisms into effective development outcomes (Mansuri, 2019; OECD, 2021).

Qualitative Findings

To complement the quantitative analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 key informants, including community leaders, local administrators, and development practitioners.

The qualitative analysis identified three major themes:

Participatory Governance and Social Trust

Participants emphasized that transparent governance and inclusive decision-making processes strengthen community trust and enhance collective engagement in development initiatives.

The Role of Social Capital in Community Collaboration

Interviewees highlighted that social networks, community relationships, and mutual trust play a crucial role in facilitating cooperation and collective action within communities.

Institutional Capacity for Sustainable Development

Respondents indicated that effective institutions, administrative competence, and coordination mechanisms are essential for ensuring that participatory processes lead to tangible development outcomes.

These qualitative findings support the quantitative results, confirming that institutional capacity serves as a key mechanism linking governance, participation, and social development outcomes.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

This study examined the relationships among inclusive governance, social capital, community participation, institutional capacity, and equitable social development using a mixed-methods approach. The quantitative findings indicate that inclusive governance, social capital, and community participation significantly influence institutional capacity, which in turn contributes to equitable social development outcomes. These results highlight the importance of institutional mechanisms in translating participatory governance processes into tangible development outcomes (Mansuri, 2019; OECD, 2021; UNDP, 2020).

A key contribution of this study lies in its integrative framework that connects governance, participation, and social capital with institutional capacity and development outcomes. While previous studies often examined these factors separately, this study demonstrates that institutional capacity plays a mediating role that links participatory governance processes with equitable development results. This perspective contributes to the social development literature by emphasizing the institutional processes that enable inclusive development in complex social contexts (Hickey, 2015; Gupta, 2015).

The qualitative findings provide additional insights by highlighting the importance of transparency, community trust, and collaboration in strengthening institutional effectiveness. Participants emphasized that strong community networks and inclusive decision-making processes enhance cooperation among stakeholders and improve the implementation of development initiatives. These findings support the quantitative results and reinforce the role of institutional capacity as a critical mechanism for achieving equitable development outcomes.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study relies on cross-sectional data, which limits the ability to examine changes in governance and institutional processes over time. In addition, the study focuses on a specific community context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could employ longitudinal or comparative studies to further examine institutional dynamics across different contexts.

From a policy perspective, the findings suggest that promoting equitable social development requires strengthening inclusive governance, supporting community participation, and enhancing institutional capacity. Policymakers and development

practitioners should focus on improving institutional effectiveness, transparency, and coordination mechanisms to ensure that participatory development initiatives produce sustainable and inclusive outcomes.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of integrating governance reforms, community engagement, and institutional strengthening strategies to support equitable social development in rapidly changing societies.

Results Instruments

Measurement Model

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement model. The results indicate that all factor loadings ranged from 0.65 to 0.88, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.60. Composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.88 to 0.92, while average variance extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.59 to 0.67, confirming adequate reliability and convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021).

The measurement model also demonstrated acceptable goodness-of-fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was 0.95, the Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI) was 0.94, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.056, indicating a satisfactory fit between the model and the observed data.

Structural Model Results

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the hypothesized relationships. The results show that inclusive governance ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < .001$), social capital ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < .001$), and community participation ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < .001$) significantly influence institutional capacity. In turn, institutional capacity significantly affects equitable social development outcomes ($\beta = 0.53$, $p < .001$).

The model explains 58% of the variance in institutional capacity ($R^2 = 0.58$) and 46% of the variance in equitable social development outcomes ($R^2 = 0.46$), indicating substantial explanatory power. These findings highlight the importance of governance, participation, and social capital in strengthening institutional capacity and promoting equitable development (Hickey, 2015; Gupta, 2015).

Mediation Analysis

The mediating role of institutional capacity was tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. The results show that institutional capacity significantly mediates the relationship between community participation and equitable social development outcomes, with indirect effects that are statistically significant and confidence intervals that exclude zero.

This finding suggests that the impact of community participation on equitable development is strengthened when supported by effective institutional systems, reinforcing the importance of institutional capacity in achieving inclusive development outcomes (Mansuri, 2019; OECD, 2021).

Discussions

The findings reinforce key perspectives in social development theory by demonstrating that equity-oriented development is multidimensional and strongly shaped by governance structures, social relations, and institutional capacities. Consistent with Sen's (1999) capability approach and Midgley's (2014) social development framework, the results indicate that equitable development outcomes depend not only on economic conditions but also on inclusive institutions that expand people's opportunities and capabilities.



The positive effects of inclusive governance and social capital on equitable development are consistent with prior research emphasizing the roles of transparency, trust, and collective action in reducing social exclusion and inequality (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Inclusive governance ensures representation of diverse community voices in decision-making processes, while social capital facilitates cooperation and mutual support within communities, thereby strengthening resilience and promoting fairer development outcomes.

Importantly, the findings highlight the mediating role of institutional capacity in translating community participation into tangible equity outcomes. While participation is widely recognized as a key element of social development, the results suggest that participatory processes alone are insufficient. Effective participation must be supported by responsive and capable institutions that can transform citizen engagement into policies and services. This finding aligns with institutional development theories emphasizing that weak institutional systems often limit the effectiveness of participatory initiatives (North, 1990; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012).

Overall, the study contributes to the literature by integrating governance, social capital, participation, and institutional capacity into a coherent framework for explaining equitable social development. The findings suggest that achieving inclusive development and the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) requires coordinated interactions between social processes and institutional systems, rather than relying on participation or social cohesion alone.

Conclusion and suggestions

This study concludes that reframing social development for equity and the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) necessitates an integrated and systemic approach that goes beyond fragmented or sectoral interventions. The empirical findings confirm that equitable social development is not the product of a single factor, but rather emerges from the dynamic interaction among inclusive governance, social capital, community participation, and institutional capacity. These components function synergistically to enhance access to opportunities, reduce structural inequalities, and strengthen social inclusion in communities undergoing rapid social and economic change.

Inclusive governance was found to be a critical foundation for equity-oriented development, as it ensures transparency, accountability, and meaningful representation of diverse social groups, particularly marginalized populations. Social capital further reinforces development outcomes by fostering trust, cooperation, and collective problem-solving, which are essential for sustaining community-based initiatives. However, the study underscores that community participation alone is insufficient to achieve equitable outcomes unless it is supported by capable and responsive institutions. Institutional capacity plays a pivotal role in translating participatory inputs into effective policies, programs, and services, thereby enabling long-term and inclusive development outcomes.

Based on these findings, several policy and practical implications can be drawn. First, policymakers should prioritize the strengthening of participatory governance structures at the local level, ensuring that decision-making processes are inclusive, deliberative, and responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups. Second, development practitioners should invest in institutional capacity-building, including administrative competence, inter-organizational coordination, and accountability mechanisms, to support the effective implementation of participatory development initiatives. Third, targeted inclusion strategies should be designed to address the specific barriers faced by marginalized populations, in alignment with the global

LNOB agenda and national social development priorities (United Nations, 2015; UNDP, 2018).

In terms of future research, further empirical validation of the proposed model across diverse socio-cultural and institutional contexts is recommended to enhance its generalizability. Comparative studies across regions or countries may provide deeper insights into contextual variations in governance, participation, and institutional effectiveness. Additionally, longitudinal research designs should be employed to examine the long-term impacts of integrated social development strategies on equity, social inclusion, and community resilience. Such approaches would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how social development interventions can sustainably advance equity and ensure that no one is left behind in changing societies

Conclusion

This study examined the relationships among inclusive governance, social capital, community participation, institutional capacity, and equitable social development using a mixed-methods approach. The findings indicate that inclusive governance, social capital, and community participation significantly strengthen institutional capacity, which in turn contributes to equitable social development outcomes. The results highlight the importance of institutional systems in translating participatory governance processes into tangible development outcomes that support the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB).

Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to the social development literature by integrating governance, social capital, community participation, and institutional capacity into a comprehensive explanatory framework of equitable social development. The findings demonstrate that institutional capacity plays a critical mediating role in connecting participatory governance mechanisms with development outcomes. This integrative perspective advances existing social development theories by emphasizing that equitable development is shaped by the interaction between social processes and institutional structures.

Methodological Contributions

Methodologically, the study contributes by employing a mixed-methods design that combines structural equation modeling (SEM) with qualitative insights from key informant interviews. This approach provides both statistical validation and contextual understanding of the relationships among governance, participation, and institutional capacity. The integration of quantitative and qualitative evidence strengthens the reliability and explanatory depth of the proposed conceptual model.

Practical and Policy Implications

The findings provide several practical implications for policymakers and development practitioners. First, strengthening inclusive governance mechanisms is essential to ensure that diverse community voices are represented in development decision-making processes. Second, policies that support social capital development and community participation can enhance cooperation and collective action at the local level. Third, and most importantly, governments should prioritize institutional capacity building, including improving administrative effectiveness, coordination mechanisms, and policy implementation systems. Strengthening institutional systems will enable participatory governance initiatives to generate more equitable and sustainable development outcomes.



Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations. The use of cross-sectional data limits the ability to capture changes in governance and institutional dynamics over time. In addition, the study focuses on a specific community context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could employ longitudinal designs or comparative studies across different regions to further examine the role of institutional capacity in inclusive development.

Conceptual Model Contribution

Based on the empirical findings, this study proposes an integrative conceptual model illustrating the relationships among inclusive governance, social capital, community participation, institutional capacity, and equitable social development. The model highlights institutional capacity as a key mediating mechanism linking participatory governance processes with equitable development outcomes. A visual representation of this conceptual framework is presented to clarify the relationships among the study variables and to provide a foundation for future empirical research.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

This study contributes new knowledge to the field of social development by proposing and empirically validating an integrative community-level model that operationalizes the principle of *Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)* through measurable and interrelated constructs, namely inclusive governance, social capital, community participation, and institutional capacity. Unlike prior studies that often examine these dimensions in isolation, this research demonstrates their systemic and mediating relationships, thereby advancing a more holistic understanding of how equity-oriented development outcomes are generated in practice.

From a theoretical perspective, the study extends social development theory by bridging Midgley's (2014) planned social change framework with Sen's (1999) capability approach and contemporary governance theory. The empirical evidence confirms that institutional capacity functions as a critical mechanism that translates participatory processes and social capital into equitable development outcomes. This finding refines existing conceptualizations of participation by emphasizing that inclusion must be institutionally embedded to be effective and sustainable, thereby contributing to ongoing debates on participatory development and institutional effectiveness (Woolcock, 2001; UNDP, 2018).

In terms of societal and community-level effects, the proposed model provides actionable insights for local governments, community organizations, and development practitioners. By offering a structured framework for diagnosing strengths and gaps in governance, participation, and institutional arrangements, the model enables stakeholders to design more targeted and evidence-based interventions to reduce inequality and social exclusion. Its application can enhance policy coherence, strengthen community empowerment, and improve access to social services for marginalized and vulnerable populations.

Moreover, the model supports the localization of global development agendas, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by translating abstract principles of equity and LNOB into context-sensitive community practices. At the community level, this can foster greater social cohesion, trust, and collective efficacy, while at the societal level, it can contribute to more inclusive development pathways and resilient social systems. Ultimately, the new knowledge generated by this study underscores that equitable social development is not only a normative aspiration but also an achievable outcome when supported by integrated governance and institutional frameworks.





Figure 2 Conceptual knowledge model

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An Assessment of Samae Dam Chicken (*Gallus gallus*) Production and Technology Transfer for Community Economic Development

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(Received: 27 March 2025, Revised: 24 March 2026, Accepted: 27 March 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.279768>

Abstract

The objectives of this study were to evaluate the production performance of Samae Dam chickens during 0–8 weeks of age, compare production efficiency between farmers participating and not participating in the technology transfer program, determine the physical and chemical composition of Samae Dam chicken meat, and promote technology transfer for Samae Dam chicken production to support community economic development in Uthai Thani Province, Thailand. The methodology comprised two parts: secondary data collection and field research. Participants included 20 farmers in the technology transfer program and 10 farmers in a non-participating comparison group. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, participatory observation, and on-farm records. Statistical analysis, including Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Generalized Linear Models (GLM) via SAS software, was used to compare production efficiency between the two groups. The production performance of approximately 200 Samae Dam (*Gallus gallus*) chickens aged 0–8 weeks was evaluated based on average daily gain (ADG), feed conversion ratio (FCR), feed intake, and body weight gain. For males and females, respectively, the ADG at ages 0–3, 3–6, 6–8, and 0–8 weeks were 12.22 and 11.11 g/d, 32.22 and 20.00 g/d, 35.00 and 33.33 g/d, and 14.58 and 13.33 g/d. The corresponding FCR values for males and females at 0–3, 3–6, 6–8, and 0–8 weeks were 2.45 and 2.70, 1.24 and 2.00, 1.40 and 1.50, and 3.42 and 3.75, respectively. Feed intake for males and females at 0–3, 3–6, 6–8, and 0–8 weeks was 30, 40, 50, and 120 g/d, respectively. Body weight gain for males and females at 0–3, 3–6, 6–8, and 0–8 weeks was 1,100 and 1,000 g/head, 1,900 and 1,800 g/head, 2,100 and 2,000 g/head, and 3,500 and 3,200 g/head, respectively. Chemical analysis of the meat revealed high protein (29.50–32.27%) and low fat content (2.43–10.42%). Regarding farming efficiency, no statistically significant differences ($P>0.05$) were found in ADG, FCR, or feed intake between participating and non-participating farmers. The study concludes that Samae Dam (*Gallus gallus*) chickens possess strong production potential and desirable meat quality. Furthermore, technology transfer and training programs can enhance farmers' knowledge and efficiency, fostering increased income and sustainable community economic development.

Keywords: Development, Community, Technology transfer, Samae Dam (*Gallus gallus*) Chicken



Introduction

Thai Native chickens are generally raised in rural villages, where they forage naturally. There are not many of these chickens in the entire province, approximately 1,000 of them, located locally (Abdelqader, 2007; Bett et al., 2014). Consequently, these chickens develop high physical endurance and integrity from birth. Chicks typically follow their mothers to scavenge for food and adapt well to their environment. As a result, they are kept by almost every household in humid tropical regions. The distinguishing feature of this breed is its completely black coloration, from the beak and legs to the claws, and its glossy, silk-like feathers. Furthermore, Demeke (2003) and Javed et al. (2003) found that native chickens can withstand stress and various diseases. Nevertheless, epidemics typically occur during two periods: March to May and the 'late rainy season' between October and November, particularly involving hemorrhagic diseases. Epidemics in poultry typically occur during two primary periods: March to May and October to November. Specifically, hemorrhagic diseases often peak during the "late rainy season" around October. (Abdelqader, 2007; Henning et al., 2006; Das, 2010) In the past, training farmers to raise indigenous Samae Dam chickens has successfully boosted local incomes. However, Mapiye & Sibanda (2005) observed a decline in chicken size due to traditional breeding practices: farmers often consume or sell the larger birds and keep smaller ones for breeding, leading to inbreeding and reduced physical stature. To address this, there is a significant need to promote Samae Dam chicken farming as a primary occupation for economic development. The Samae Dam breed is highly valued for its distinctive characteristics, including tender meat, black plumage, and black legs, as well as its long history and premium market price (Ahlers et al., 2009; Dana et al., 2010). Therefore, research into developing Samae Dam hybrid breeds is essential. This includes technology transfer, career promotion, and the establishment of learning networks to strengthen Community Enterprises for long-term sustainability (Chantong & Kaneene, 2011; Cabarles, 2013). Previous studies on indigenous chicken breeds in Thailand have highlighted their adaptability, disease resistance, and suitability for smallholder farming systems (FAO, 2014; Kong et al., 2006). In addition, research on native chicken production systems has emphasized the importance of improved feeding strategies, genetic selection, and management practices in enhancing growth performance and economic returns (Magothe et al 2010; Chankong & Chuaychu-noo, 2021). However, limited studies have specifically focused on the production performance, meat quality, and economic potential of Samae Dam chickens in a community-based development context. (Dorji et al. 2011; Frankham & Briscoe, 2002; Okeno et al 2013) Therefore, this study aims to address this research gap by integrating production, economic, and social dimensions. Data will be collected on chicken growth performance, including average daily gain (ADG), feed conversion ratio (FCR), feed intake, and body weight gain, as well as meat quality characteristics. In addition, information on farming practices will be gathered from farmers through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations

This research aims to transfer technology and promote the production of Samae Dam chicken breeds to enhance economic development and community income in Uthai Thani Province.





Figure 1 Shows the location of Thailand.



Figure 2 Shows the location of Uthai Thani province of Thailand

Methodology

This study was conducted in Uthai Thani Province, located in the lower northern region of Thailand. The research area consisted of 10 villages where local farmers commonly raise indigenous Samae Dam chickens. The study population consisted of small-scale farmers raising Samae Dam chickens in the selected villages. A total of 30 farmers were included in the study. Among them, 20 farmers participated in the technology transfer program, while 10 farmers who did not participate served as a comparison group. Farmers were selected using purposive sampling based on their experience in raising Samae Dam chickens and their willingness to participate in the research project. In addition, approximately 200 Samae Dam chickens aged 0–8 weeks were evaluated to determine production performance, including average daily gain (ADG), feed conversion ratio (FCR), feed intake, and body weight gain.

This trial was reviewed through funding and animal ethics and conducted by a committee for scientific work experimentation with NSRUIACUC No 202006 Certificate, subject : Technology Transfer and Promotion of Samae Dam Chicken (*Gallus gallus*) Production for Development Community Income. Technology transfer of Samae Dam breeding chickens to promote a career in Samae Dam breeding chicken production continuously promotes people's self-reliance ability in the community. Bring the knowledge gained to be transferred and disseminated to achieve sustainable benefits for themselves and the earth. Network users and interested parties can exchange knowledge and continuously and sustainably expand the project's research results.

Operation procedure

Study area

This study was conducted in Uthai Thani Province, Thailand. A total of 30 farmers from 10 villages who raised Samae Dam chickens were included in the study. Among them, 20 farmers participated in the technology transfer program, and 10 farmers did not participate, serving as a comparison group. The production performance of approximately 200 Samae Dam



chickens aged 0–8 weeks was evaluated, including average daily gain, feed conversion ratio, feed intake, and body weight gain.

They met with community leaders to assess the need for promoting Samae Dam chicken production as a livelihood activity. The project will recruit farmers interested in participating in the project. Preparation and training of farmers to execute and monitor projects. Researchers will monitor and conduct consultations for local farmers throughout the project period. Organizing other technology transfer training that can extend from raising chickens and establishing a learning resource group and a network of chicken breeders of Samae Dam, the selection farmers are already raising Samae Dam chicken breeds, and collecting information. Before conducting research using questionnaires and interviews, arrange training on follow-up on-farm improvements according to the requirements. Visit the project network farms with network farmers every two months. Records are used for comparative analysis of the farming efficiency of participants and non-participating farmers of raising the Samae Dam chicken breeding career.

Sampling procedure

Farmers were selected using purposive sampling from communities that raise Samae Dam chickens in Uthai Thani Province. The selection criteria included farmers with experience in raising indigenous chickens and a willingness to participate in the research project.

Feeding and management

Samae Dam chickens were raised under a semi-intensive management system by local farmers. During the starter period (0–3 weeks), chicks were fed a commercial starter diet containing approximately 20–22% crude protein. During the grower period (3–8 weeks), chickens received grower feed containing about 18–20% crude protein. Feed and clean drinking water were provided ad libitum. The chickens were housed in simple poultry houses with natural ventilation and litter flooring. Routine management practices included sanitation, disease prevention, and regular monitoring of health and growth performance.

Calculation formula

$$\text{Dressing percentage (\%)} = \frac{(\text{Carcass weight} / \text{Live body weight}) \times 100}{\text{Net return}}$$

$$\text{Net return} = \text{Total revenue} - \text{Total production cost}$$

$$\text{Benefit–Cost Ratio (BCR)} = \text{Total revenue} / \text{Total production cost}$$

Research instruments

The research instruments included structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The questionnaire was developed based on the research objectives and relevant literature. Before data collection, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a small group of farmers to ensure clarity and reliability. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. In addition, consumer acceptance of Samae Dam chicken meat (breast and thigh) was evaluated through a sensory test conducted by untrained consumers (n = 200) who were regular chicken consumers. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their consumption experience. A 9-point hedonic scale (1 = dislike extremely, 9 = like extremely) was used to assess sensory attributes, including appearance, color, texture, flavor, and overall acceptability. Samples were coded and randomly presented under controlled conditions to minimize bias.

Data collection

Doing this research to get the most comprehensive and complete information, the research team has set the procedures and methods of data collection into two parts: 1) Secondary Data Collection (Secondary Data), which collects information from various



documents. 2) Collecting field data (Field Research), including qualitative data collection. This research used in-depth interviews and focus group meetings, complete and complete.

Impact Assessment Framework

Impact assessment was conducted across three dimensions:

1. Economic impact: income generation, production cost reduction, and market access
2. Social impact: community participation, knowledge transfer, and network development
3. Environmental impact: utilization of local resources, waste management, and sustainability practices

Each dimension was evaluated using Likert-scale questionnaires and supplemented by qualitative data from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

Data analysis

Statistical evaluation was performed using the SPSS statistical software (SPSS, 1999). Analyze the general information of the interviewees by frequency distribution and percentage for data analysis using all types of information obtained from in-depth interviews and small group meetings on career opinions and career promotion guidelines. In addition, qualitative research was used to study and collect data on academic documents and textbooks, and to collect field study data. The study tool was in-depth interviews, group discussion, Participatory Observation, Educational Population Descriptive methods, and content analysis. Data collection from in-depth interviews. Participant observation and a sample conversation analysis are the primary triangulation methods for qualitative data analysis, including a systematic research process to build the study's credibility. Statistical evaluation was performed using the SAS statistical software (Statistical Analysis System, v 9.4; SAS Institute, Cary, NC, USA). Analysis of variance and generalized linear models were used in evaluating the individual effects (Influence of participating groups and non-participating groups on the production efficiency of Samae Dam chicken breeds) Subsequently, the following indicators were calculated and evaluated: least-squares means, standard deviations, standard errors of the means (SEM), and P-value (while setting statistical significance at $\alpha = 0.05$).

Results

Technology transfer and production efficiency of Samae Dam chicken breeds in Uthai Thani province revealed that Samae Dam chicken production efficiency in terms of average daily gain male and female, age ranges 0-3, 3-6, 6-8 and 0-8 weeks were 12.22 and 11.11 g/d, 32.22 and 20 g/d, 35.00 and 33.33 g/d, 14.58 and 13.33 g/ respectively in terms of feed conversion ratio male and female, aged 0-3, 3-6, 6-8 and 0-8 weeks were 2.45 and 2.70, 1.24 and 2, 1.40 and 1.50, 3.42 and 3.75, respectively. Males and females, age ranges 0-3, 3-6, 6-8 and 0-8 weeks are 30 and 30 g/d, 40 and 40 g/d, 50 and 50 g/d, 120 and 120 g/ respectively, in terms of body weight gain male and female, age ranges 0-3, 3-6, 6-8 and 0-8 weeks are 1,100 and 1,000 g/head/day, 1,900 and 1,800 g/head/day, 2,100 and 2,000 g/head/day, 3,500 and 3,200 g/head/day respectively, as shown in Table 1

Comparison of sex characteristics to physical characteristics and chemical composition of meat of Samae Dam breed chickens, physical characteristics found that L*(Lightness) was 42.152 - 48.734, a*(Redness) was -(1.218) - 3.022, b*(Yellowness) was 2.814-7.946, and the meat's water content was 23.342-107.845. The average texture of chicken meat was 2.007-5.920 for the chemical composition of the meat of have protein levels 29.502-32.265 % and low fat 2.43-10.42% as in Table 2 Promotion of Samae Dam Chicken Production Occupation in Uthai Thani Province to promote the body of knowledge to increase the efficiency of

development and create a career to grow income add value to products knowledge enhancement. There is a context suitable for the problems and needs of each area—the local resource database system. The community has expanded the availability of products to sell more. There is a career, and income in the community is concentrated. To strengthen the community, gets the poverty must be resolved. The community has a shared sense of being a local community, love, solidarity, and understanding of rights. There is a good network and relationship between universities, communities, and related agencies. The development of local economies achievement through family income products that live according to the Sufficiency Economic Philosophy. Utilizing local resource activities to promote community careers. Local resource activities to promote community careers. For the farming efficiency of the farmers who participated and did not participate in the project, the average daily gain, feed conversion ratio, and feed intake difference were not statistically significant ($P > 0.05$). However, the study of participants in the project farmers showed a statistically significant difference in body weight gain compared to those who did not participate in the program ($P < 0.05$), as shown in Table 3.

Table 1 Shows the comparison of sex characteristics to the average daily gain (ADG: g/h/d), feed conversion ratio (FCR), feed intake (FI: g/h/d), and body weight gain (BWG: g/h/d) of the Samae Dam chicken breed

Age/Month	ADG: g/h/d		FCR		FI: g/h/d		BWG: g/h/d	
	Cock	Hen	Cock	Hen	Cock	Hen	Cock	Hen
0-3	12.22	11.11	2.45	2.70	30	30	1,100	1,000
3-6	32.22	20.00	1.24	2.00	40	40	1,900	1,800
6-8	35.00	33.33	1.40	1.50	50	50	2,100	2,000
0-8	14.58	13.33	3.42	3.75	120	120	3,500	3,200

Note: The comparison of means showed no statistically significant difference at $P > 0.05$.

Table 2 Presents a comparison of sex characteristics, physical characteristics, and chemical composition of the meat of the Samae Dam chicken

Item	Cock		Hen	
	Breast	Loin	Breast	Loin
Physical appearance				
L*(Lightness)	44.548	42.152	48.432	48.734
a*(Redness)	-0.306	3.022	-1.218	2.78
b*(Yellowness)	5.92	4.186	7.946	2.814
Holding capacity of the meat	31.170	23.342	82.831	107.845
Texture of the chicken meat				
Hardness	6.042	5.164	4.375	4.002
Springiness	0.828	0.732	0.770	0.852
Cohesiveness	0.453	0.542	0.429	0.517
Chewiness	2.521	1.682	1.384	1.857
Average	2.425	2.007	5.920	5.824
Chemical composition of meat (%)				
moisture	9.15	9.11	9.06	9.03
protein	31.228	30.032	32.265	29.502
fat	2.43	10.42	2.16	9.14

Note: The comparison of means showed no statistically significant difference at $P > 0.05$.



Figure 3 Shows the atmosphere of technology transfer and promotion



Figure 4 Shows the members who participated in the Samae Dam chicken breeding career promotion project



Figure 5 Shows the visit to evaluate the farmer's raising efficiency of Samae Dam chickens.



Figure 6 Shows the condition of raising Samae Dam chickens by farmers.

Table 3 Shows the efficiency of raising Samae Dam breed chickens at the age of 0-8 months of farmers who participated and didn't participate in the technology transfer project, and Samae Dam chicken production performance in Uthai Thani province

Average Performance	Group not Participating				Join Group				P-value
	Mean	Min	Mix	SEM	Mean	Min	Mix	SEM	
Average Daily Gain (g/h/d)	12.00	10.0	14.00	1.30	14.0	13.33	14.58	0.74	0.083
Feed Conversion Ratio	3.80	3.6	4.00	0.25	3.50	3.42	3.75	0.03	0.221
Feed Intake (g/h/d)	100.00	80.0	120.00	25.90	120.00	115.00	125.00	17.21	0.570
Body Weight Gain (g/h/d)	3,000 ^b	2,80	3,200	30.08	3,300 ^a	3,200	3,500	29.05	0.033

Note: ^{a-b} effects were considered significant at $P < 0.05$, SEM = Standard Error of the Mean

Discussions

Technology transfer and production efficiency of Samae Dam chicken breeds in Uthai Thani Province are closely associated with community development processes. Community development refers to the process of enhancing the capacity of individuals and groups within a community to work collaboratively in improving their livelihoods in accordance with established plans and projects (Mekchay et al., 2014). This process involves both internal community empowerment and external support (Moreki et al., 2010). Norris et al. (1997) emphasized that a key goal of community development is to improve individuals' quality of life and well-being, as reflected in their ability to perform tasks effectively and efficiently, maintain good health, and demonstrate ethical behavior. According to Wiratsudakul et al., (2014) successful community development is guided by the principle known as "TERMS," which consists of Technology (appropriate local tools), Economy (stable income and livelihood), Resources (balanced and sustainable natural resources), Mental (strong physical and mental health), and Socio-cultural (unity, shared values, and cooperation). Regarding farming efficiency, no statistically significant differences were observed between participating and non-participating farmers in terms of average daily gain, feed conversion ratio, and feed intake ($P > 0.05$). However, body weight gain was significantly higher among farmers who participated in the project ($P < 0.05$), as shown in Table 3. Traditional chicken farming practices are commonly based on the use of food scraps or agricultural residues, which are typically low in nutritional value. This results in slower growth rates and leads farmers to



perceive native chicken farming as economically unviable, prompting them to shift to other occupations with quicker returns. In addition, marketing systems are largely dependent on middlemen, as farmers tend to sell chickens only when traders visit the community, without accessing external markets. This results in price suppression and reduced profitability (Javed et al., 2003; Pakarat, 2018; Dana et al., 2010). Similarly, Badubi (2006) reported that indigenous chicken production in Phayao Province faced challenges related to feed and marketing management. Most farmers practiced semi-intensive systems, using locally available feed resources such as corn and paddy without proper formulation. Marketing channels were limited, with a large proportion of farmers selling chickens to intermediaries. Technology transfer plays a crucial role in improving production efficiency. Training programs conducted by the government and related agencies provide farmers with knowledge on breeding selection, feeding management, supplementation, sanitation, and disease prevention. The use of simple, accessible manuals further enhances the ability of farmers to apply these practices in their local context (Plaengkaew et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2022). The promotion of Samae Dam chicken farming in Uthai Thani Province has encouraged farmers to utilize local feed resources, thereby reducing production costs. This approach also improves meat quality and creates opportunities for value-added products and access to higher-value markets (Bungsrisawat, 2018; Cabarles, 2013). Furthermore, integrating local wisdom with modern agricultural technologies strengthens community-based economic development and supports long-term sustainability (Rizzi et al., 2013; Sittivongsa, 2024). Previous studies, Henning et al (2006); Tadelles et al. (2003), indicated that major constraints in native chicken farming include limited knowledge in breeding, feeding, and disease management. Therefore, capacity-building programs and market development at the provincial level are essential for improving production systems and enhancing farmer income. Selection and conservation of native chicken breeds, together with Good Farming Management (GFM) practices, are key success factors in improving productivity and income. Integrating local knowledge with modern technology enables farmers to transition from traditional free-range systems to semi-intensive systems, combining locally available feed with commercial feed to improve growth performance and profitability (Tompić et al 2011; Tongsiri et al 2019; Van der Werf, 2022). When compared with other indigenous chicken breeds reported in previous studies, Samae Dam chickens exhibit comparable growth performance and adaptability under semi-intensive production systems. For example, Siriwardene et al. (2023) reported lower average daily gain and less efficient feed conversion under traditional systems, suggesting that improved feeding strategies in the present study contributed to better performance. In terms of economic analysis, the cost–return structure observed in this study is consistent with (Suwanasopee et al., 2019; Suyatno et al., 2023), who found that profitability depends heavily on feed cost management and market access. However, the integration of technology transfer in this study appears to enhance economic efficiency and income stability among participating farmers. Regarding carcass and meat quality, Samae Dam chickens demonstrated high protein content and relatively low fat levels, which are comparable to or better than those of other native breeds. These characteristics may provide a competitive advantage in niche markets that demand lean and high-quality meat (Jaturasitha et al., 2008; Kong et al., 2006). In terms of consumer acceptance, previous studies indicate that indigenous chicken meat is preferred for its texture and flavor. The results of this study suggest that Samae Dam chicken has strong potential to meet consumer expectations. Overall, Samae Dam chickens show strong potential for further development. Key strengths include adaptability, meat quality, and suitability for community-based production systems. However, limitations such as variability in growth performance and dependence on local markets remain. Future development strategies should focus on genetic improvement, optimized feeding programs, and strengthened market linkages.

Conclusion and suggestions

Samae Dam (*Gallus gallus*) chicken in Uthai Thani Province, Thailand. In terms of average daily gain male and female, age ranges 0-3, 3-6, 6-8, and 0-8 weeks were 12.22 and 11.11 g/d, 32.22 and 20 g/d, 35.00 and 33.33 g/d, 14.58 and 13.33 g/ respectively in terms of feed conversion ratio male and female, aged 0-3, 3-6, 6-8 and 0-8 weeks were 2.45 and 2.70, 1.24 and 2, 1.40 and 1.50, 3.42 and 3.75, respectively. In terms of feed intake, males and females, age ranges 0-3, 3-6, 6-8, and 0-8 weeks are 30 and 30 g/d, 40 and 40 g/d, 50 and 50 g/d, 120 and 120 g/d, respectively. In terms of body weight gain and female, age ranges 0-3, 3-6, 6-8, and 0-8 weeks are 1,100 and 1,000 g/head, 1,900 and 1,800 g/head, 2,100 and 2,000 g/head, 3,500 and 3,200 g/head as for the comparison of sex characteristics to physical characteristics and chemical composition of meat of black macaque chickens. Physical characteristics found that L*(Lightness) was 42.152 - 48.734, a*(Redness) was -(1.218) - 3.022, b*(Yellowness) was 2.814-7.946, and the meat's water content was 23.342-107.845. The average texture of chicken meat was 2.007-5.920 for the chemical composition of the meat of Samae Dam breed chickens. The average daily gain, feed conversion ratio, and feed intake difference were not statistically significant ($P > 0.05$). However, the study of participants in the project farmers showed a statistically significant difference in body weight gain compared to those who did not participate in the program ($P < 0.05$). This study not only provides empirical data on production performance and economic returns but also offers practical recommendations and transferable technologies that can be directly applied by farmers to improve productivity and sustainability in indigenous chicken farming systems.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

The results indicate that a rearing period of 0–8 weeks is economically appropriate under the current production system. However, profitability is sensitive to market price fluctuations. Identifying an optimal selling price range is therefore essential for maximizing returns and supporting farmer decision-making. The findings of this study provide practical guidelines and applicable technologies for farmers, including semi-intensive production systems, improved feeding strategies using local and commercial feed, and regular health monitoring. In addition, the study highlights the effectiveness of technology transfer approaches, such as farmer training, on-farm demonstrations, and knowledge-sharing networks, in improving production efficiency and income. These approaches can be adapted and applied in other rural communities to support sustainable poultry production.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the Research and Development Institute, Nakhon Sawan Rajabhat University, Nakhon Sawan Province, and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, Thailand, which provides funding and animal ethics, and runs a scientific committee that allows it.



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Creative Textile Product Development from Spent Coffee Grounds: Integrating Natural Dyeing and Local Wisdom for Community Development

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(Received: 20 June 2025, Revised: 27 May 2026, Accepted: 30 May 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.281602>

Abstract

This applied research aimed to explore the potential of spent coffee grounds (SCG) derived from Arabica collected from local coffee shop in Chom Tong District, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand, as a natural dye source and their application in the development of creative textile products reflecting the local identity of Chiang Mai Province. The study integrated local wisdom with modern textile techniques and community base-design approach. The dye was extracted by boiling SCG and applied to cotton yarn using both natural mordants including wood ash, tamarind, and acacia pods and a synthetic mordants for comparison. The dyed yarns were analyzed using the CIELAB and Munsell color systems and tested for wash fastness according to ISO 105 C06 standards. Results revealed a wide range of earthy shades, with the highest lightness value recorded at L^* at 71.24 ± 2.09 and good to excellent fastness levels (grades 4–5), especially with natural mordants. The developed prototypes, designed as tote bags, received positive evaluations from 3 experts and 50 consumers, with an average satisfaction score of 4.42 ± 0.43 out of 5. A community workshop involving 40 purposively selected members of local women's groups in Chom Thong District, Chiang Mai Province, whose occupations and local resources were closely associated with the availability and utilization of SCG, was conducted, achieving a high satisfaction level of 4.38 ± 0.66 . The study demonstrates that SCG can be transformed into a valuable renewable resource, promoting grassroots economic development, cultural sustainability, and eco-friendly textile innovation within communities.

Keywords: Spent coffee grounds, Natural dye, Creative textiles, Sustainability, Local wisdom

Introduction

Chiang Mai is widely recognized as one of Thailand's premier tourist destinations and serves as the economic and cultural center of the northern region. With annual tourism revenues exceeding 40 billion baht (Pongwiriththon & Sayers, 2016), the province attracts millions of domestic and international visitors each year due to its distinctive combination of cultural heritage, ecological diversity, and contemporary lifestyle attractions. In recent years, Chiang Mai has also emerged as one of Thailand's most prominent coffee culture destinations, particularly in urban areas where cafés and specialty coffee shops have rapidly expanded in response to growing consumer demand for high-quality beverages and aesthetic experiences (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2025). According to Chiangmaiwecare (2021), the province



contains approximately 2,700 coffee shops, with more than 1,000 located in Mueang Chiang Mai District alone. While this rapid growth has stimulated local economic activity and tourism-related businesses, it has simultaneously generated a substantial amount of spent coffee grounds (SCG), a by-product produced in nearly equal volume to the roasted coffee used in beverage preparation.

The increasing accumulation of spent coffee grounds (SCG) has become an important environmental concern in many urban communities. SCG contains approximately 10–20% oil by weight (Sirimongkolchai et al., 2021) and is commonly discarded through landfill disposal without proper separation or treatment (Tangmankongvorakul & Preedasuriyachai, 2015). Such disposal practices not only waste a potentially valuable renewable resource but also contribute to environmental degradation and sustainability challenges. In addition, SCG contains bioactive organic compounds, antioxidants, and antimicrobial substances, while its decomposition may release methane gas with a global warming potential significantly higher than carbon dioxide (Hong, 2018). These environmental implications have encouraged researchers and entrepreneurs to explore sustainable approaches for transforming SCG into value-added materials and environmentally friendly products within a circular economy framework.

Beyond environmental concerns, the growing global interest in sustainable fashion and eco-friendly materials has encouraged researchers to explore alternative natural dye sources for textile applications. Several studies have demonstrated the potential of spent coffee grounds (SCG) as a sustainable material in products such as cosmetics, fertilizers, natural insect repellents, and textile dyes (Selanok et al., 2018). In textile applications, SCG extracts can be obtained through simple boiling processes or mild alkaline extraction methods and subsequently applied to natural fibers such as cotton and wool (Charoenlarp et al., 2017). Depending on dye concentration and mordanting techniques, SCG typically produces a variety of warm brown and earth-tone shades that are compatible with contemporary sustainable textile design trends. Furthermore, SCG-dyed textiles have demonstrated additional functional properties, including antioxidant and antibacterial activity, particularly against gram-positive bacteria (Hong, 2018). Recent international studies have further highlighted the importance of utilizing SCG as a value-added resource for sustainable products, including biofuels, bioplastics, compost, and environmentally friendly textile dyes (Ahmed et al., 2024). These developments reflect the growing role of waste valorization and eco-conscious material innovation in promoting environmental sustainability and circular economy practices.

In addition to material innovation, the integration of local wisdom with contemporary textile techniques has become increasingly important in the development of community-based creative textile products. Previous studies have demonstrated that combining indigenous knowledge with modern design approaches can strengthen cultural identity, improve product competitiveness, and support sustainable community development. For example, Inpakdee & Soodsang (2025) developed commercial textile prototypes from banana fiber blends through community-centered innovation, while Komonsirichok et al. (2024) enhanced handwoven textile patterns using natural dyes derived from local resources in northern Thailand. These studies illustrate how traditional craftsmanship and local knowledge can be effectively combined with contemporary textile design to create products that are both culturally meaningful and economically viable. In northern Thailand, tie-dye and handcrafted textile practices are also closely associated with local cultural identity and community-based creative traditions, particularly through the use of natural materials and earth-tone color palettes that reflect regional aesthetics and traditional lifestyles.

Several community enterprises and academic initiatives have also explored the use of spent coffee grounds (SCG) as a natural dye source for textile applications. For example, students at Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon developed SCG-based dye

powders through a simplified extraction and drying process for textile printing and scarf production (Dailynews Online, 2023). Similarly, the Mae Ing Shibori Community Enterprise in Phayao Province successfully incorporated SCG into Japanese shibori dyeing techniques, generating local income and increasing market interest in environmentally friendly textile products (Banmuang, 2019). These examples demonstrate the growing potential of SCG as a sustainable material for community-based creative industries and environmentally conscious textile production. However, although previous studies have explored SCG in natural dyeing and textile applications, most research has primarily focused on dye extraction efficiency, material experimentation, or laboratory-scale product development. Limited studies have integrated SCG-based natural dyeing with community-based textile innovation, local wisdom, participatory design approaches, and knowledge transfer processes aimed at sustainable community development. In the context of Chiang Mai Province, where coffee culture and local textile traditions coexist, there remains substantial potential to transform SCG into value-added textile products that simultaneously promote environmental sustainability, cultural identity, and grassroots economic opportunities.

Building upon these previous studies and local community contexts, the present research aims to develop creative textile products using spent coffee grounds (SCG) derived from Arabica coffee collected from local coffee shops in Chom Thong District, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand. The study integrates natural dyeing techniques, local wisdom, and community-based design approaches to create sustainable textile prototypes reflecting the cultural identity of northern Thailand. In addition to examining the color characteristics and wash fastness properties of SCG-dyed textiles, the research also emphasizes community participation and knowledge transfer processes to encourage circular economy practices, cultural sustainability, and grassroots economic development through eco-friendly textile innovation.

Objective

This study aims to explore the potential of spent coffee grounds (SCG) as a natural dye source through the integration of local wisdom, community-based textile practices, and sustainable product development in Chiang Mai Province. By transforming coffee waste into value-added textile materials, the research is expected to support environmentally sustainable practices, strengthen local cultural identity, and create opportunities for community-based economic development through eco-friendly textile innovation and community participation. Therefore, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To investigate the dyeing properties of cotton yarn dyed with spent coffee grounds (SCG) extract using natural and synthetic mordants.
2. To develop creative textile products from cotton fabrics and yarns dyed with spent coffee grounds (SCG) extract that reflect local cultural identity and sustainable textile design concepts.
3. To transfer knowledge on the creation of textile products from spent coffee grounds (SCG)-based natural dyes to local communities through community-based learning and participatory activities.

Methodology

This study employed an experimental research design to examine the feasibility of utilizing spent coffee grounds (SCG) as a natural dye for the development of creative textile products. The outcomes of yarn dyeing with SCG were applied to both the design and prototyping stages. A variety of natural mordants were used to produce a wide range of color shades, which were systematically classified and paired to align with the aesthetic and



functional aspects of the prototype designs. Cotton fabric was dyed using a tie-dye technique to create distinctive surface patterns under optimized dyeing conditions identified through preliminary testing. Additionally, the dyed fabrics underwent wash fastness testing to ensure that the resulting prototypes met acceptable standards of quality and durability for further development and practical application. The research was structured into three main phases: 1) textile dyeing, 2) prototype development, and 3) community-based knowledge transfer. Each phase was designed to integrate material experimentation with design thinking and community engagement, contributing to the sustainable development of local textile innovation.

Phases 1: Textile dyeing

1. Yarn preparation: Cotton yarn was scoured in a sodium hydroxide and detergent solution at 90°C for 60 minutes, rinsed thoroughly, and shade-dried. The yarn was then bleached using hydrogen peroxide, alkali, and a wetting agent under the same treatment conditions before being rinsed and dried in preparation for dyeing.

2. Coffee Dye Extraction: Dried SCG was boiled in 6 liters of water at 80°C for 1 hour using three concentration ratios: 1, 2, and 3 kg of SCG per 6 liters of water. The extract was cooled for 30 minutes, filtered, refrigerated, and measured for pH.

3. Mordant Preparation: Three natural mordants, namely tamarind, acacia, and wood ash, together with one synthetic mordant (ferrous sulfate), were prepared at a concentration of 5% w/v for use as dye-fixing agents in the dyeing process. The natural mordants were soaked in water for 24 hours prior to filtration and storage, while the ferrous sulfate solution was freshly prepared before use.

4. Dyeing Methods: Three dyeing techniques were employed using cotton yarn samples (7 g per skein). In the pre-mordanting method, the yarn was first soaked in the prepared mordant solutions for 30 minutes at room temperature before being dyed in heated SCG extract at approximately 60°C for 30 minutes under controlled laboratory conditions that reflect dye bath practices commonly used in community-based natural dyeing. In simultaneous mordanting, the yarn was dyed in a single bath containing both SCG extract and mordant solution. For post-mordanting, the yarn was dyed in SCG extract prior to treatment with the mordant solution. All samples were rinsed and dried at room temperature for 24 hours. The liquor-to-material ratio was maintained at 75:1.

In addition to mordant-assisted dyeing, a control dyeing process using only SCG extract was also conducted. Pre-scoured and bleached cotton yarn (7 g per skein) was dyed in heated SCG extract at approximately 60°C for 30 minutes under the same controlled laboratory conditions and liquor-to-material ratio using three extract concentrations. Each condition was carried out in triplicate. The dyed samples were rinsed and air-dried at room temperature for 24 hours.

Wash fastness testing was performed according to ISO 105-C06 standards under simulated household laundering conditions using a standard detergent solution (5 g/L) at 50°C for 50 minutes in a domestic washing machine. Multifiber adjacent fabric specified by the ISO testing method was used for staining assessment. The dyed yarn samples were evaluated based on CIELAB color values (L^* , a^* , b^*) and compared with unwashed samples using the gray scale for color change and staining assessment. Color characteristics were also examined using the Munsell color system to identify hue, value, and chroma with reference to The Munsell Book of Color. Each dyeing condition was carried out in triplicate, and the obtained data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and reported as mean $\pm$ standard deviation.

Phases 2: Prototype Development

The color evaluation results obtained in Phase 1, including CIELAB and Munsell color data, were used to guide the selection of dyed yarns and fabrics for prototype development. Particular attention was given to earth-tone shades and samples with satisfactory wash fastness



in order to reflect the local aesthetic character of northern Thai textile crafts and sustainable textile design concepts.

1. Translating Dyeing Results into Design Concepts: A creative design approach was employed using cotton yarns dyed with SCG and traditional mordants. Resulting shades reddish-brown, grayish-brown, and deep brown were selected based on color harmony and contrast principles, forming the visual foundation for the textile prototypes.

2. Community Co-Design and Surface Pattern Development: Handmade cotton bags were co-designed with local artisans through participatory sessions that emphasized community identity and feasibility. Designs incorporated simple yet distinct tie-dye patterns and decorative hand-stitching with SCG-dyed threads. This combination enhanced visual appeal and showcased the integration of traditional craftsmanship with contemporary aesthetics.

3. Prototype Evaluation and Consumer Acceptance: Three textile prototypes were developed and evaluated by design experts in terms of visual appeal, color durability, and cultural appropriateness. Following the expert evaluation, the prototypes further refined before being assessed for consumer acceptance. Questionnaire data were collected from 50 purposively selected participants who were interested in community-based textile products and familiar with local handicrafts and sustainable product concepts. The evaluation results provided insights into perceived value, market relevance, and potential of the products for community-based creative textile development.

Phases 3: Community-based knowledge transfer

To ensure sustainable impact and practical adoption, the project implemented a structured knowledge transfer process targeting community members and local entrepreneurs. The process comprised the following stages:

1. Preparation and Engagement: Participants were recruited from local women's groups in Chom Thong District, Chiang Mai Province, through purposive selection. The selection focused on individuals who were interested in local handicrafts, textile-related community activities, and sustainable product development. Preference was also given to participants with prior experience in textile crafts, natural dyeing, or community product activities in order to encourage active participation and support effective knowledge transfer throughout the workshop process.

2. Capacity-Building Workshop: A two-day hands-on workshop introduced participants to SCG-based natural dyeing, including extraction, yarn preparation, mordanting, and tie-dye techniques. Design principles and prototyping basics were also covered, emphasizing the use of local resources, simple tools, and eco-friendly processes.

3. Evaluation of Participant Satisfaction: Participant satisfaction was assessed using a structured questionnaire consisting of four sections: 1) Trainer's Performance Section, 2) Venue, Duration, and Catering Section, 3) Participant Knowledge and Understanding, and 4) Application of Knowledge. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, together with qualitative feedback obtained from participants.

Results

This section presents the research outcomes corresponding to the experimental framework described in the methodology. Findings are reported across three phases textile dyeing, prototype development, and community-based knowledge transfer highlighting material performance, design innovation, and practical impact on local engagement and knowledge adoption



1. Color Outcomes and Fastness from SCG-Based Textile Dyeing

The pH of SCG extracts differed by concentration: Condition 1 (1:6) had the highest pH (4.97), followed by Condition 2 (4.64), and Condition 3 (4.40). These findings reveal that higher SCG concentrations result in greater acidity, with all extracts exhibiting acidic properties. Visually, extract colors ranged from yellow-orange in Condition 1 to dark brown in Condition 3, reflecting deeper hues with increasing SCG concentration.

When cotton yarn was dyed without mordants, color values varied across the three conditions. Lightness (L^*) was highest in Condition 3 (66.32), followed by Condition 2 (64.24) and Condition 1 (60.93), indicating lighter shades with higher extract concentrations. All yarns exhibited red hues (positive a^*), with the highest red intensity in Condition 1 ($a^* = 17.83$), decreasing to 11.50 and 10.51 in Conditions 2 and 3, respectively. Yellow values (b^*) followed the same trend, decreasing from 24.46 to 15.39. Based on brightness and chromaticity, Condition 1's extract was selected for further mordant-assisted dyeing, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Color outcomes from SCG-based cotton yarn dyeing

Type of Mordant	Method (mordanting)	CIELAB values ($\bar{X} \pm S.D.$)			Dyed sample	Munsell Color Sample	
		L^*	a^*	b^*		Picture	Name
-	1:6	60.93 $\pm$ 1.85	17.83 $\pm$ 0.82	24.46 $\pm$ 0.76			5YR 6/8 Raw Sienna
-	2:6	64.24 $\pm$ 1.95	11.50 $\pm$ 0.52	19.47 $\pm$ 0.44			5YR 7/6 Tumbleweed
-	3:6	66.32 $\pm$ 1.53	10.51 $\pm$ 0.36	15.39 $\pm$ 0.70			5YR 8/4 Mandys Pink
Wood ash	Pre	64.71 $\pm$ 1.68	9.00 $\pm$ 0.83	14.38 $\pm$ 1.04			7.5YR 6/4 Sandal
	Simultaneous	64.55 $\pm$ 1.60	9.87 $\pm$ 0.33	15.04 $\pm$ 0.46			7.5YR 7/4 Tan
	Post	68.47 $\pm$ 1.33	7.35 $\pm$ 0.33	13.79 $\pm$ 0.50			7.5YR 8/2 Akaroa
Tamarind	Pre	65.15 $\pm$ 1.77	6.13 $\pm$ 0.35	12.35 $\pm$ 0.91			7.5YR 5/2 Sand Dune
	Simultaneous	69.31 $\pm$ 0.83	5.18 $\pm$ 0.02	13.65 $\pm$ 0.06			7.5YR 6/2 Pharlap
	Post	65.39 $\pm$ 0.92	4.06 $\pm$ 0.16	9.50 $\pm$ 0.41			10RY 5/1 Makara
Acacia pod	Pre	64.76 $\pm$ 1.61	6.20 $\pm$ 0.39	11.10 $\pm$ 0.47			2.5YR 4/2 Russett
	Simultaneous	67.74 $\pm$ 1.17	7.21 $\pm$ 0.68	14.24 $\pm$ 1.15			2.5YR 5/2 Almond Frost
	Post	66.87 $\pm$ 1.04	6.33 $\pm$ 0.38	10.37 $\pm$ 0.28			2.5YR 6/2 Pharlap
Ferrous sulfate	Pre	67.41 $\pm$ 3.78	8.19 $\pm$ 0.27	11.53 $\pm$ 0.41			2.5YR 8/2 Dust Storm
	Simultaneous	71.24 $\pm$ 2.09	7.83 $\pm$ 0.25	11.09 $\pm$ 0.53			2.5YR 9/2 Albescent White
	Post	60.54 $\pm$ 0.34	5.52 $\pm$ 0.10	8.94 $\pm$ 0.52			2.5YR 7/2 Malta

Note: 1. All dyeing processes under each experimental condition were performed in triplicate to ensure reproducibility.
2. The L^* , a^* , and b^* values were obtained from the three replicates and subsequently analyzed to determine the mean and standard deviation using statistical analysis software.



Introducing mordants, both natural (wood ash, tamarind, acacia pod) and synthetic (ferrous sulfate) further diversified the resulting color range. Among natural mordants, wood ash produced warm, earthy browns. Pre-mordanting with wood ash yielded a tone classified as 7.5YR 6/4 “Sandal,” while post-mordanting gave the lightest hue in the group, 7.5YR 8/2 “Akaroa.” Tamarind, on the other hand, led to softer, more muted shades, especially in the post-mordanting method, which resulted in the lowest a^* (4.06) and b^* (9.50) values producing a grayish tone identified as 10YR 5/1 “Makara.” Mordants derived from acacia pods yielded mid-range saturated hues. The simultaneous mordanting method produced the deepest brown, 2.5YR 5/2 “Almond Frost,” while post-mordanting resulted in a slightly lighter brown, 2.5YR 6/2 “Pharlap,” with reduced chroma. The synthetic mordant, ferrous sulfate, behaved differently from the natural mordants. Its simultaneous application resulted in the brightest shade observed ($L^* = 71.24$), categorized as 2.5YR 9/2 “Albescent White,” whereas post-mordanting yielded a darker, less chromatic color ($L^* = 60.54$). Overall, both CIELAB and Munsell data confirmed that mordanting had a significant impact on the hue, saturation, and warmth of the dyed yarns. Natural mordants tended to produce earth-toned, culturally resonant colors, while the synthetic mordant offered brighter, more neutral tones with less depth. These findings provided a useful basis for selecting mordants tailored to both aesthetic and functional goals—particularly in subsequent product design and wash fastness testing. In addition, the earth-tone shades obtained from SCG dyeing demonstrate strong potential for further application in fashion and textile design, particularly through future adaptation to commercial color communication systems such as Pantone for product development and market-oriented design applications.

Table 2 Color Fastness to Washing According to ISO 105 C06 of Cotton Yarns Dyed with Spent Coffee Grounds Extract Using Simultaneous Mordanting Method

type of mordant	Color stain						Color change
	acetate	cotton	nylon	PET	acrylic	wool	
No mordant (1:6)	3	3-4	3	3	3	3	3
No mordant (2:6)	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3	3	3-4
No mordant (3:6)	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3	3	3-4
wood ash	4-5	5	5	5	4-5	4-5	5
tamarind	4-5	4-5	4-5	5	4-5	3	4-5
Acacia pod	4-5	4-5	5	5	4-5	3	4-5
ferrous sulfate	4-5	3-4	3	4-5	3	3	3-4

Note: grey scale rating: 5 = no color staining, 4 = slightly color staining, 3 = noticeable color staining, 2 = considerable color staining, 1 = excessive color staining

Wash fastness tests conducted under ISO 105 C06 standards revealed that cotton yarns dyed solely with spent coffee ground (SCG) extracts exhibited moderate color change, with gray scale ratings ranging from 3 to 5. Among the three dye concentrations tested, the 1:6 ratio demonstrated the highest resistance to color fading, whereas the 2:6 and 3:6 ratios showed better performance in minimizing staining, particularly on PET, nylon, and acetate fibers. When mordants were introduced, overall wash durability improved significantly. Notably, wood ash proved to be the most effective, achieving a gray scale rating of 5 for color change and preventing staining entirely on cotton, nylon, and PET, while showing only slight staining on other fibers. Tamarind and acacia also enhanced fastness, both yielding minimal color change (4–5) and slight staining, though wool exhibited more noticeable transfer (rating 3). In contrast, ferrous sulfate offered only moderate improvement, with ratings of 3–4 for both color change and staining, and performed less consistently across fiber types. Taken together, these results highlight the superior performance of natural mordants especially wood ash in improving both color retention and resistance to staining, reinforcing their potential for

sustainable and community-based textile applications using SCG dyes. It can therefore be concluded that wood ash mordant provided the most satisfactory balance between color stability and wash durability, making it particularly suitable for community-based textile production and sustainable craft applications.

2. Prototype Development and Evaluation

Based on the diverse color outcomes and high wash fastness of SCG-based dyeing, the most stable and appealing shades were selected for prototype development. Materials included handwoven cotton yarns and fabrics dyed with natural colorants extracted from spent coffee grounds and locally sourced mordants, promoting low-impact, chemical-free processes. Guided by the concept of *Creative Textile Product Development from Spent Coffee Grounds: Integrating Natural Dyeing and Local Wisdom for Community Development*, three bag prototypes were designed using computer-aided software. Tie-dye techniques were used to create surface patterns in a brown-orange palette, complemented by hand embroidery with SCG-dyed threads and decorative tassels for added texture. Tie-dye techniques were selected because they create distinctive and non-repetitive surface patterns that reflect the natural character and handcrafted aesthetic of the dyeing process. Hand embroidery was also incorporated to enhance the cultural value and artisanal identity of the textile products while highlighting the use of SCG-dyed yarns as decorative elements. The combination of these techniques helped strengthen the connection between contemporary textile design, local wisdom, and community-based craft practices.



Figure 1 Design draft of the creative textile bag

From Figure 1, three distinct bag prototypes were developed to reflect the integration of functional design and natural dye aesthetics using spent coffee grounds (SCG). The first design (a) features a square-base drawstring bag measuring 10 inches by 10 inches. It includes short hand straps and an inner lining to enhance structure and durability. The second design (b) is a rectangular tote with a 5 × 15-inch base and a height of 20 inches. It incorporates both handheld and shoulder-carry functionality, reinforced with an internal lining for added strength. The third design (c) resembles a soft, fabric-based shopping bag with integrated handles that extend directly from the body of the bag. It measures 12 inches at the base and 15 inches in height and is intended solely for hand-carry use. The prototypes were evaluated by three textile and fashion design experts based on criteria including aesthetic appeal, color harmony, functional usability, craftsmanship, cultural appropriateness, and suitability for contemporary lifestyle applications. Overall, the experts agreed that the prototypes effectively reflected the integration of natural dyeing, local identity, and sustainable textile design. Suggestions from the evaluation primarily focused on enhancing focal points within the tie-dye compositions and improving decorative details to further strengthen product distinctiveness and visual balance. As detailed in Table 3, the designs exemplify a sustainable, locally inspired approach to creative textile innovation.

Table 3 Summary of Color Selection Concepts for Prototype Bags

Prototype	Color design concept	Tie-Dyed Fabric (Color and Method)	Embroidery Thread (Color and Method)	Design rationale
 (a)	Light-dark contrast	2.5YR5/2 (Almond Frost), SCG with acacia pod, Simultaneous mordanting	2.5YR 4/2 (Russett), SCG with acacia pod, Pre mordanting	High contrast enhances embroidery visibility and defines the focal point of the design.
 (b)	Dark-dark Harmony	7.5YR 7/4 (Tan), SCG with wood ash, Simultaneous mordanting	2.5YR 4/2 (Russett), SCG with acacia pod, Pre-mordanting	Similar tones create visual unity and a grounded, earthy appeal.
 (c)	Light-light Harmony	5YR 8/4 (Mandy's Pink), SCG only (3:6), No mordant	7.5YR 8/2 (Akaroa), SCG with wood ash, Post-mordanting	Soft tones express simplicity, warmth, and natural calmness.

From Table 3, the color selection of the three prototype bags reflects both aesthetic intent and conceptual alignment. Each prototype utilized tones derived from spent coffee grounds (SCG), applied through different mordanting techniques to achieve visual depth and ensure wash fastness. The design emphasized how tonal variation from deep browns to soft beiges could express emotion and functional elegance. Prototype Bag 1 featured a light-toned tie-dyed fabric (2.5YR 5/2 “Almond Frost”) paired with a darker thread (2.5YR 4/2 “Russett”), creating a light–dark contrast that emphasized craftsmanship and surface texture. Bag 2 combined a rich brown base (7.5YR 7/4 “Tan”) with a similarly deep thread, resulting in a dark–dark harmony that evoked warmth and cohesion. Bag 3 used a pale base (5YR 8/4 “Mandy’s Pink”) with a soft-toned thread (7.5YR 8/2 “Akaroa”), forming a light–light combination that conveyed serenity and minimalism. This careful integration of natural dyeing and color theory enhanced each prototype’s character and reinforced the project’s goal of developing eco-conscious textile products rooted in local cultural identity. Overall, the findings demonstrate that SCG-dyed textiles can be effectively transformed into aesthetically appealing and culturally meaningful products with potential for sustainable community-based creative industries.

Table 4 Summary of Consumer Satisfaction Evaluation for Creative Textile Product Prototypes Using SCG-Based Natural Dyeing

Description	$\bar{X} \pm S.D.$	Level
Design and Aesthetic Appeal Section		
1. The overall visual design of the bag is appealing	4.47 $\pm$ 0.37	High
2. The color combination between the tie-dyed fabric and the embroidery thread is well balanced.	4.39 $\pm$ 0.50	High
3. The handcrafted surface pattern enhances the uniqueness of the product	4.44 $\pm$ 0.44	High
4. The design reflects current trends in lifestyle and fashion.	4.50 $\pm$ 0.44	High
Total	4.45$\pm$0.42	High
Material and Functional Quality Section		
5. The fabric feels pleasant to the touch and appears durable.	4.37 $\pm$ 0.44	High
6. The shape and size of the bag are suitable for everyday use.	4.40 $\pm$ 0.44	High
7. The stitching and finishing details are neat and professionally done.	4.43 $\pm$ 0.42	High
8. The bag is practical and convenient to carry or use.	4.30 $\pm$ 0.50	High
Total	4.38$\pm$0.45	High
Cultural and Environmental Value Section		
9. The product expresses a connection to local culture and identity.	4.44 $\pm$ 0.46	High
10. The use of natural dye from spent coffee grounds reflects environmental consciousness.	4.44 $\pm$ 0.43	High
11. The prototype promotes awareness of sustainable textile innovation.	4.37 $\pm$ 0.40	High
Total	4.42$\pm$0.43	High
Overall Satisfaction Section		
12. I am satisfied with the prototype as a whole.	4.45 $\pm$ 0.47	High
13. I would consider purchasing or recommending this product.	4.47 $\pm$ 0.36	High
14. I am interested in learning more about products created using spent coffee grounds.	4.41 $\pm$ 0.45	High
15. I believe this product has market potential both locally and internationally.	4.46 $\pm$ 0.48	High
Total	4.45$\pm$0.44	High
Overall Score	4.42$\pm$0.43	High

Based on Table 4, the consumer satisfaction survey involving 50 purposively selected participants in Chiang Mai revealed a high overall satisfaction level ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.43$). All evaluated dimensions were rated at a high level. The design and aesthetic appeal section and overall satisfaction section received the highest mean scores ($M = 4.45$), reflecting positive perceptions toward the visual appearance, craftsmanship, and market potential of the products. Cultural and environmental value also received a high rating ($M = 4.42$), indicating appreciation for the use of natural dyes from spent coffee grounds and sustainable textile innovation. In addition, the material and functional quality section achieved a high mean score ($M = 4.38$), suggesting that the products were considered suitable for practical use. Overall, the findings demonstrate strong consumer acceptance of SCG-based textile product prototypes for sustainable community-based textile development.

3. Community-Based Knowledge Transfer and Participant Feedback

The knowledge transfer activity was conducted with a purposively selected group of 40 participants, primarily consisting of members from the “Ruamjai Khuaeng Pao” women’s group in Moo 9, Khuaeng Pao Subdistrict, Chom Thong District, Chiang Mai Province.

Table 5 Community Knowledge Transfer Summary

Evaluation Aspect	$\bar{X} \pm S.D.$	Level
Trainer's Performance Section		
1. Clarity of knowledge delivery	4.35±0.76	High
2. Explanation ability	4.47±0.45	High
3. Content integration	4.56±1.02	Very High
4. Completeness of training content	4.12±1.04	High
5. Time management	4.23±0.55	High
6. Responsiveness to questions	4.58±0.57	Very High
Total	4.39±0.63	High
Venue, Duration, and Catering Section		
7. Cleanliness and suitability of venue	4.76±0.64	Very High
8. Availability of audiovisual equipment	4.66±0.58	Very High
9. Appropriate training duration	4.76±0.45	Very High
10. Appropriateness of meals	4.43±0.59	High
Total	4.65±0.57	Very High
Participant Knowledge & Understanding		
11. Before training (self-assessed)	3.35±0.34	Moderate
12. After training (self-assessed)	4.65±0.48	Very High
Total	4.00±0.41	High
Application of Knowledge		
13. Ability to apply acquired knowledge	4.56±0.97	Very High
14. Confidence in practical application	4.43±0.47	High
15. Ability to disseminate acquired knowledge	4.48±0.53	High
Total	4.49±0.66	High
Overall Score	4.38±0.66	High

A satisfaction survey administered after the workshop revealed that 92.5% of participants were female, with the majority (25%) aged between 50 and 54 years, and 60% identifying as housewives. The training focused on natural dyeing techniques using spent coffee grounds (SCG) and bio-based mordants, as well as the construction of textile products from SCG-dyed cotton fabrics. As summarized in Table 5, participants expressed high satisfaction with all aspects of the community-based knowledge transfer program. Trainer performance received consistently positive evaluations, particularly in areas such as content integration ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 1.02$) and responsiveness to questions ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.57$), resulting in an overall average of 4.39 ($SD = 0.63$). Logistical components including venue cleanliness, training duration, and catering were rated highest among all dimensions, with mean scores reaching 4.76 for both venue and time suitability, contributing to an overall score of 4.65 ($SD = 0.57$). Knowledge acquisition improved markedly, with participants reporting a moderate level of understanding prior to the training ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.34$), which rose to a very high level post-training ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 0.48$), yielding an average score of 4.00 ($SD = 0.41$). Furthermore, participants showed high confidence in applying the knowledge gained ($M = 4.56$), using it in practice ($M = 4.43$), and sharing it within their communities ($M = 4.48$), with this category averaging 4.49 ($SD = 0.66$). Collectively, these findings reflect a strong endorsement of the program's effectiveness in delivering practical, culturally relevant knowledge, as evidenced by an overall satisfaction score of 4.38 ($SD = 0.66$), affirming its value in supporting sustainable, community-driven learning.

Participants also provided qualitative feedback, expressing strong appreciation for the activity. They commended the facilitators both instructors and student assistants for their clear and practical teaching methods, which enabled participants to easily apply the knowledge to their own practices. Many participants suggested expanding the program to cover additional dyeing techniques using SCG for both yarns and fabrics, as well as diversifying product design and construction for income generation. They also recommended continued workshops

featuring both theoretical knowledge and hands-on demonstrations, allowing for deeper skill development in the future.

Figure 2 presents an overview of the research process and key outcomes of the study, highlighting the integration of SCG-based natural dyeing, creative textile product development, and community-based learning activities aimed at promoting sustainable textile innovation and local community development.



Figure 2 Conceptual summary of SCG-based natural dyeing, creative textile development, and community knowledge transfer processes

Discussions

The findings of this study demonstrate the effective application of spent coffee grounds (SCG) as a natural dye for the development of creative textile products, supporting the research objective of promoting environmentally friendly textile design integrated with local wisdom. SCG dye extracts produced a wide range of brown hues when applied to cotton yarns. Yarn dyed without mordants resulted in the darkest shades, as reflected by the lowest L* values and the highest a* and b* values indicating stronger red and yellow tonal characteristics. These shades were visually characterized within the yellow-red (YR) hue range, corresponding with the color characteristics observed in the CIELAB measurements. However, the wash fastness of unmordanted samples remained at a moderate level. This finding is consistent with the study of Choomchit & Peksri (2023), who similarly reported high color intensity but only moderate wash durability in cotton fabrics dyed with sappanwood extracts without mordant treatment. Variations in color intensity and staining behavior between the present study and previous findings may be influenced by differences in mordant type, SCG extract concentration, and dyeing techniques. Different mordanting conditions can affect dye absorption, shade

development, and color retention on cotton fibers, resulting in variations in overall color appearance and wash fastness performance. Similar observations were reported by Setthayanond et al. (2025), who found that SCG-derived natural dyes provided satisfactory color characteristics and wash fastness performance on cotton fabrics when applied through environmentally friendly dyeing processes. Their findings further support the potential of SCG as a sustainable natural dye source for textile applications and are consistent with the present study's emphasis on eco-conscious textile development and community-based innovation. In a related study, Bae & Hong (2019) demonstrated that spent coffee extracts could be effectively applied as natural dyes for textile materials through environmentally friendly dyeing processes. Their study also reported satisfactory color characteristics and wash fastness performance in SCG-dyed fabrics, supporting the potential of spent coffee grounds as a sustainable natural dye source for textile and fashion applications.

Introducing mordants into the dyeing process improved the lightness (L^*) and reduced the red and yellow values across all conditions. This led to less saturated but more wash-resistant shades, achieving good to very good fastness. This result is consistent with Becker et al. (2024), who found that using mordants especially through the pre-mordanting method with acetic acid enhanced wash durability of nylon fabrics dyed with SCG. Similarly, Melaku et al. (2023) highlighted that pre-mordanting cotton fabric with natural dye extracted from spent coffee grounds, combined with the use of bio-mordants derived from mango bark, significantly enhanced fastness properties achieving results ranging from good to excellent, while also improving dye uptake and color stability, particularly for warm brown shades. Tehrani et al., (2023) demonstrated that using eco-friendly mordants from lemon peel and pinecone in SCG silk dyeing significantly improved color fastness while advancing sustainable textile practices. These findings reinforce the present study's conclusion that natural mordants such as wood ash, tamarind and acacia pod contribute effectively to both aesthetic outcomes and functional performance in eco-conscious textile production.

In terms of product development, the dyed materials were successfully used to create three distinctive handmade cotton bags. Each design applied carefully selected color pairings to ensure both visual harmony and durability. Tie-dye techniques and hand embroidery with SCG-dyed yarns executed without synthetic chemicals contributed to products that reflected contemporary design sensibilities while retaining the charm of traditional craftsmanship. Consumer evaluations confirmed high levels of satisfaction regarding aesthetics, sustainability, and cultural identity, suggesting that the developed textile products were positively perceived not only in terms of design and functionality but also in their potential to support community participation, local identity, and socially sustainable craft practices. Such responses reflect the important role of community-based textile innovation in strengthening cultural continuity and encouraging environmentally conscious livelihood opportunities within local communities, echoing the findings of Inpakdee & Soodsang (2025), who utilized local materials such as banana fibers to promote community-based textile design. The results also align with the work of Melles (2020), who emphasized that participatory design approaches rooted in local engagement can significantly enhance the sustainability of grassroots innovations. Furthermore, recent reviews of SCG valorization highlight its potential as a sustainable feedstock for textile dyeing. Johnson et al. (2022) reported that SCG-derived dyes exhibit improved colorfastness, high UV-blocking activity, and antioxidant properties when applied to cotton and wool fabrics, thereby validating their environmental and functional advantages. These findings strongly support the present study's outcomes, demonstrating that SCG-based dyes not only produce visually appealing and culturally meaningful textile products but also reinforce the role of eco-conscious innovation in advancing sustainable, community-driven design practices.

The knowledge transfer activities also received strong positive responses. Participants demonstrated clear learning gains, enhanced understanding, and confidence in applying and sharing the knowledge gained. These outcomes reflect the effectiveness of participatory learning models and hands-on training for community empowerment. This aligns with the work of Komonsirichok et al. (2024), who reported positive impacts of cultural workshops on community awareness and empowerment, and Boonnam & Nawakitphaitoon (2022), who emphasized that experiential learning rooted in local contexts significantly enhances the value of indigenous knowledge. Additionally, Ratten et al. (2019) noted, fostering “communities of practice” through collaborative networks and participatory engagement plays a crucial role in supporting long-term innovation that is closely aligned with local cultural and economic contexts. The present project’s integration of SCG-based dyeing techniques with participatory design and community-focused training demonstrates how such learning-centered approaches can effectively stimulate grassroots innovation while promoting cultural relevance and environmental sustainability. These findings suggest that participatory workshops and hands-on learning activities can effectively enhance community understanding, confidence, and practical application of SCG-based natural dyeing for sustainable local product development. The project also demonstrates the potential for establishing collaborative networks among local producers to support the continued development and marketing of SCG-dyed textile products within community-based and creative economy contexts. Future follow-up activities may further help evaluate the long-term application of knowledge, continuity of product development, and the sustainability of local economic opportunities generated through the knowledge transfer process.

Conclusion and suggestions

This study confirmed the feasibility and value of utilizing spent coffee grounds (SCG) as a natural dye source for creative textile product development. The research successfully met its objectives by demonstrating how environmentally friendly dyeing practices integrated with local wisdom can yield diverse and aesthetically appealing color outcomes. SCG extracts produced a broad range of brown shades with good to very good wash fastness, particularly when paired with natural mordants such as wood ash and tamarind. These results reinforce the importance of material experimentation in developing sustainable dyeing techniques that minimize chemical use while maintaining functional performance. Furthermore, the development of three textile prototypes showcased the practical application of SCG-dyed materials in creating culturally inspired, eco-conscious products. Consumer feedback indicated strong appreciation for the products' design quality, sustainability, and cultural relevance. In parallel, community-based knowledge transfer activities were well-received, enhancing participants' understanding and confidence in applying SCG-based dyeing techniques. This demonstrates the effectiveness of participatory learning approaches in fostering local innovation and sustainable practice. To build on these findings, future research should explore long-term durability, expand product types, and examine market potential across broader demographics. Continued collaboration with communities is also recommended to ensure that design innovations remain grounded in cultural identity and promote inclusive, locally driven economic development. Overall, this study contributes both theoretical and practical insights into sustainable textile innovation that bridges environmental, cultural, and community dimensions.

Future research should include long-term follow-up with community participants to better understand how the acquired knowledge is applied in real-life contexts, particularly in relation to the continuation of SCG-based textile activities and possible income-generating opportunities. Such follow-up would provide valuable insight into the sustainability of community-based learning processes and the broader social and economic benefits of environmentally conscious textile innovation.



New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

1. Innovation in Natural Dyeing from Agricultural Waste: This study established a sustainable method for extracting natural dyes from spent coffee grounds (SCG), demonstrating that agricultural waste can be transformed into value-added textile materials with stable color characteristics and satisfactory wash fastness. The process also highlights the potential of integrating agricultural waste utilization into sustainable textile supply chains and community-based product development.

2. Blending Local Wisdom with Scientific Methods: The integration of traditional mordants such as wood ash, tamarind, and acacia pods with standardized dyeing techniques created new knowledge applicable to both artisanal and academic contexts.

3. Eco-conscious Design and Product Development: The research extended the application of spent coffee ground (SCG)-based natural dyeing beyond laboratory experimentation by developing creative textile products that combined aesthetic value, functionality, and environmentally friendly design. The resulting prototypes demonstrated the practical potential of transforming agricultural waste into marketable community-based textile products that could support local production and income generation.

4. Capacity Building and Knowledge Empowerment: Community-based workshops enhanced participants' understanding of natural dyeing, boosting their confidence to apply and share knowledge, and reinforcing the value of participatory learning in grassroots innovation.

5. Cultural and Economic Impact at the Local Level: The project contributed to cultural revitalization and cultural sustainability by encouraging the continued use of traditional practices and local wisdom in textile creation. At the same time, the development of environmentally friendly and marketable textile products helped create opportunities for community-based entrepreneurship and supported the local creative economy.

Acknowledgments

The researcher would like to express sincere appreciation to all individuals and institutions involved in supporting and advising throughout the research process. Special thanks are extended to the Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI) for providing funding support under the 2022 fiscal year, which played a vital role in facilitating the successful completion of this study.

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Development and Validation of a Digital Competency Evaluation Model for Teachers in the Faculty of Education at Higher Education Institutions in Yunnan Province, China

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(Received: 8 March 2026, Revised: 2 June 2026, Accepted: 3 June 2026)

<https://doi.org/10.57260/csdj.2026.287669>

Abstract

This study focuses on Yunnan Province, China, aiming to construct and validate a scientific, systematic, contextualized model for assessing the digital competency of teachers in the Faculties of Education within universities. The study followed the logic of "theoretical construction - tool development - empirical verification". First, based on literature analysis, a theoretical model covering five dimensions digital awareness, digital skills, digital application, digital ethics and responsibility, and professional development - was proposed and localized in light of the multi-ethnic and multi-geomorphic regional characteristics of Yunnan Province. Finally, an evaluation model was established using the Delphi expert consultation method, which included five first-level indicators, eleven second-level indicators, and twenty-two third-level indicators (specific observation points). Based on this, the "digital competency Assessment Questionnaire for Teachers of the School of Education, Yunnan University" (51 items in total) was developed. Subsequently, the content validity was ensured through expert review (IOC value ≥ 0.8 for all items). The finalized scale was then administered to a sample of 302 teachers from Faculties of Education in Yunnan universities, selected through stratified cluster sampling, and the empirical data were analyzed to verify the psychometric properties of the model.

The research result was found that: 1) the psychometric properties of the developed assessment tool were excellent, exhibiting high content validity (all items IOC ≥ 0.8), good item differentiation ($p < 0.001$ for all items) and a clear five-factor structure (cumulative variance explained 62.105%) that is fully aligned with the theoretical model; 2) the overall reliability of the scale was extremely high (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.961$) with sub-dimension α coefficients ranging from 0.840 to 0.972, indicating excellent internal consistency; 3) consequently, this study successfully constructed and validated a reliable, valid, and contextually sensitive assessment model and tool, providing a robust 'measuring rod' for the precise diagnosis and targeted support of digital competency development among faculty in the Faculties of Education within universities in the Yunnan Province.

Keywords: Digital competency, Evaluation model, University of education, University teachers



Introduction

Since the 21st century, digital technologies represented by artificial intelligence, big data and cloud computing have been penetrating all areas of the economy and society at an unprecedented speed and breadth, and the education system is at the core of this profound transformation (UNESCO, 2022). The importance of digital competency assessment for educators is increasingly recognized in the field of educational research (Rodriguez-Garcia et al., 2019). Several teacher digital competency frameworks have been introduced at the international, European and national levels (Munoz-Repiso et al., 2020), while organizations such as the OECD have emphasized the strategic height of digital transformation in education (OECD, 2022). China has explicitly implemented the Education Digitalization strategy action in policies such as the Education Informatization 2.0 Action Plan. In this context, the success or failure of the digital transformation of higher education, which is a high ground for cultivating innovative talents, largely depends on the transformation and improvement of the digital capabilities of the teaching staff (Basilotta-Gómez-Pablos et al., 2022). Teachers' digital capabilities are an important "catalyst" for the digital transformation of education (Caena & Redecker, 2019). Research shows that teachers with high levels of digital competency can help students learn more efficiently in a digital environment (Caena & Redecker, 2019). For higher education institutions, their teachers have a special mission to cultivate future basic education teachers. Their digital capabilities not only affect their own teaching and research capabilities, but also profoundly influence the digital literacy foundation of future teachers through the transmission mechanism of "teachers training teachers" (Basantes-Andrade et al., 2020).

However, existing research and practice have shown that the assessment of teachers' digital competency faces challenges. First, most digital competency frameworks were originally designed for the compulsory education stage (Falloon, 2020), paying insufficient attention to the complexity, academic nature of higher education teaching and the professional role of teachers as researchers (Zhao et al., 2021). Secondly, the assessment often focuses on universal skills and neglects the need for adaptation to specific contexts such as regional and cultural ones. For example, in a multi-ethnic and frontier region like Yunnan Province, the digital competency framework for teachers in the Faculties of Education within universities should take into account unique issues such as how to use digital technology to promote ethnic educational equity and protect and develop ethnic cultures. Furthermore, the pandemic has accelerated the profound transformation of technology application and digitalization in global higher education (Krishnamurthy, 2020), and teaching methods have rapidly shifted from offline to online (Mishra et al., 2020). This "great online transformation" (Scherer et al., 2021) has shifted most higher education to online and hybrid teaching models (Zarei & Mohammadi, 2022), highlighting the importance of teachers' ability to use digital tools (OECD, 2022). And it forces teachers to rethink their role in teaching in a digital environment. Research shows that there is diversity in the readiness of teachers from different countries around the world to apply teaching technology (Scherer et al., 2021), and teachers still face challenges when implementing information and communication technology (ICT) in practice and transitioning to digital distance learning (Pozas & Letzel, 2021).

Therefore, drawing on the established core dimensions of digital literacy (Ilomäki et al., 2016; Oberländer et al., 2020), it is of great theoretical value and practical urgency to develop a teacher digital competency assessment model that is deeply integrated with China's higher education policies and the regional characteristics of Yunnan Province, and to conduct rigorous psychometric tests on it. In sum, a clear research gap remains: no existing instrument simultaneously accounts for the academic and research roles of higher-education teachers, the multi-ethnic and border characteristics of a frontier region such as Yunnan, and China's



national digital-literacy policy within a single empirically validated model. Addressing this gap is precisely what makes the present study necessary. This study aims to respond directly to this demand. Its core objective is not to simply transplant the existing framework, but to "tailor" a set of scientific, reliable and operable "competency scales" for the teacher group in Yunnan's Faculties of Education through systematic model construction, tool development and empirical verification.

Objectives

The core objective of this study is to construct and validate a digital competency assessment model applicable to teachers in the Faculties of Education of universities in Yunnan Province. The specific objectives are broken down as follows:

1. To construct a multi-dimensional, multi-level, and actionable theoretical model of teachers' digital competency for the Faculties of Education of Yunnan universities, by integrating the core elements of authoritative international frameworks (DigCompEdu and the ISTE standards) and China's "Teacher Digital Literacy" standard with the individual–environment interaction perspective of social learning theory, while accounting for the particularity of higher education and the multi-ethnic, border characteristics of Yunnan Province.

2. To develop the theoretical model into a practical measurement tool with high content validity the "Digital Competency Assessment Scale for Teachers in Faculties of Education" through rigorous Delphi expert consultation, with multiple rounds of optimization and content-validity verification of the model's dimensions, observation points, and items to ensure its scientific quality and relevance to the target population.

3. To validate the model by conducting a sample survey of teachers in the Faculties of Education of Yunnan universities and analyzing the resulting empirical data — using item analysis, reliability testing, and validity testing to verify the internal consistency, structural validity, and content validity of the questionnaire and to establish a digital competency assessment model supported by empirical evidence.

Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative design and was carried out in phases to ensure the systematicness and scientific nature of the research process.

The 1st Step: Theoretical origin and initial model construction

The core task of this stage is to lay the theoretical foundation and draft the model. The research team conducted a systematic review of relevant literature at home and abroad, with a focus on the following aspects: 1) International mainstream frameworks: such as the EU's DigCompEdu (emphasizing six areas including professional engagement of educators, teaching and learning, and student empowerment) and the US ISTE standards for educators (focusing on roles such as learners, leaders, and citizens). 2) Chinese national Standard: The industry standard "Teacher Digital Literacy" issued by the Ministry of Education of China in 2022 has significant local guiding value in its five-dimensional structure of digital awareness, knowledge and skills, digital application, social responsibility, and professional development. 3) Related theory: The social learning theory emphasizes the interaction among individual cognition, behavior and environment, which provides a theoretical perspective for understanding how teachers' digital capabilities develop under the influence of internal and external factors. Based on this, we have initially constructed a five-dimensional theoretical model: Digital awareness (value recognition, risk awareness, intrinsic motivation), digital technology (tool knowledge and operational skills), digital teaching application (technology integration in design, implementation, and evaluation), digital ethics and responsibility



(security, privacy, rule of law, cultural sensitivity), professional development (using technology for self-directed learning, collaborative research and innovation). Based on this, a theoretical model covering five dimensions digital awareness, digital skills, digital application, digital ethics and responsibility, and professional development - was initially constructed.

The 2nd Step: Delphi Expert Consultation to refine the model

To ensure the scientific nature of the model and its suitability in the context of Yunnan Institute of Education, we formed a consultation group consisting of 20 experts. The composition of the expert group was diverse and authoritative, including: professors in the field of educational technology (6 people), deans or teaching directors of higher education institutions (4 people), experts in ethnic education research (3 people), provincial-level or above teaching masters or winners of information technology teaching competitions in Yunnan Province (5 front-line practice experts), and scholars in higher education policy research (2 people). Experts were selected according to the following inclusion criteria: (a) holding a senior professional title or an equivalent position of standing in their field; (b) at least ten years of experience in higher education, educational technology, ethnic education, or education policy; and (c) direct familiarity with the higher-education context of Yunnan Province. Two rounds of Delphi consultation were strictly implemented. In the first round, the experts were provided with a preliminary model and a detailed description, and were asked to rate, on a five-point scale, the importance, clarity, and relevance of each dimension and indicator, and to provide open-ended opinions on "how to reflect the characteristics of the role of teachers in the education institute of Yunnan's multi-ethnic and border areas". Based on the feedback from the first round, the model was revised, for example, by strengthening "ethical awareness of cross-cultural digital communication" in "Digital Ethics and Responsibility" and adding relevant expressions such as "teaching design ability using digital technology to display or incorporate local ethnic cultural elements" in "Digital teaching Applications". In the second round, the revised model and the statistical summary of the first round were fed back to the experts for re-evaluation. Consensus was operationally defined as the point at which an indicator obtained a high mean importance rating together with a low coefficient of variation across experts and attracted no further substantive revisions; indicators that did not meet these criteria were revised or removed. After two rounds, experts reached a high degree of consensus and finally determined the evaluation index system consisting of 5 first-level indicators, 11 second-level indicators, and 22 observation points.

The 3rd Step: Questionnaire development and structure design

Based on the final determined index system, specific Likert 5-point scoring items were written (1= completely inconsistent, 5= completely consistent). The initial scale consists of 51 items. To ensure the authenticity of the answers, the questionnaire instructions emphasize answering based on the "real situation", and the item descriptions strive to be specific and contextualized.

The 4th Step: Formal survey and data collection

The formal survey was conducted using stratified cluster sampling. First, stratify by type of institution (public/private). Then, within each layer, randomly cluster and select all full-time teachers from the Faculties of Education (or teacher-education colleges) of 1-2 universities as the subjects of the survey. The target population comprised full-time teachers in the Faculties of Education of universities in Yunnan Province. With respect to sample-size adequacy, the recommended minimum subject-to-item ratio for factor analysis is at least 5:1; for the 51-item scale this implies a minimum of about 255 respondents. The 302 valid questionnaires obtained therefore exceeded this requirement, and the high value of the sampling adequacy index ($KMO = 0.960$) confirmed that the sample size was sufficient for the planned analyses. The formal scale was distributed through a professional online questionnaire platform. Informed consent and screening questions are set at the front end of the questionnaire.

The study was conducted in accordance with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki and received approval from the research ethics committee of the host institution; all participants provided informed consent before participating, and their responses were collected and stored anonymously. The survey period was four weeks, during which the recovery rate was increased through reminders and other means, and 302 valid questionnaires were retrieved.

The 5th Step: Data Analysis and Model validation

Data analysis was conducted using statistical software. Item analysis: The critical ratio method was used to test the discrimination of each item. Content validity: Tested by the IOC values derived from expert review. Structural validity: Tested by KMO and Bartlett spherical tests, as well as exploratory factor analysis. Reliability analysis: Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for the total scale and for each dimension.

Results

For the 1st objective "model construction" : A multi-dimensional, multi-level, and operational theoretical model of teachers' digital competency was successfully constructed and localized, which includes 5 first-level dimensions, 11 second-level indicators, and 22 observation points. The study successfully integrated the international framework (DigCompEdu, ISTE), the Chinese industry standard (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2022), and the perspective of social learning theory, and through Delphi expert consultation, deeply integrated the characteristics of Yunnan Province's multi-ethnic and border areas and the professional mission of the Education Institute to "cultivate future teachers" into the model. The definitive model consists of five core dimensions: From intrinsic value-driven Digital Awareness, to fundamental Digital Skills, to comprehensive Digital Application, and regulated by Digital Ethics and Responsibility, ultimately pointing to the continuous growth and influence of Professional Development. This achieves a theoretical integration of global consensus, national standards and regional characteristics, forming a specific and actionable system of assessment indicators.

For the 2nd objective, "tool development" : successfully developed the "digital competency Assessment Questionnaire for Teachers of the School of Education, Yunnan University" with high content validity. Based on the above theoretical model, an initial scale consisting of 51 items was developed. The indicators and items were repeatedly optimized and validated through rigorous two rounds of Delphi expert consultations. The results of the expert content validity Index (IOC) test showed that the IOC value of all items was ≥ 0.8 , indicating that the final evaluation questionnaire (51 questions in total) had excellent content validity. The development process of the tool ensured its scientific nature and was well adapted to the characteristics of the teaching staff at Yunnan Institute of Education.

For the 3rd objective, "model establishment" : a numerical assessment model with excellent psychometric attributes and supported by validity and reliability tests was successfully established through large sample empirical data verification. Systematic statistical tests of 302 retrieved valid questionnaires are as follows: Content validity and discrimination: The critical ratio (CR) analysis for all 51 items reached an extremely significant level ($p < 0.001$), indicating good discrimination for the items and further supporting the content validity of the tool. Structural validity: Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) indicated that the data were well-suited for factor analysis ($KMO = 0.960$, Bartlett's sphericity test $p < 0.001$). The analysis extracted five common factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, and the cumulative variance interpretation rate was 62.105%. The component matrix after the pivot clearly shows that all items belong to five factors respectively and correspond exactly to the five dimensions of the theoretical presupposition, digital application, digital awareness, professional development, digital ethics and responsibility, and digital skills, strongly confirming that the



model has good construct validity. Reliability analysis: The Cronbach α coefficient of the total scale is 0.961. The alpha coefficients for each dimension were: digital awareness 0.930, digital skills 0.840, digital application 0.972, digital ethics and responsibility 0.857, Professional development 0.909. All the reliability coefficients indicated that the scale had extremely high internal consistency and stability. The sampling-adequacy and factor-analysis indices are summarized in Table 2, and the reliability coefficients for the total scale and each dimension are presented in Table 3. In the rotated component matrix, every item loaded most strongly on its theoretically intended factor, confirming the five-dimensional structure. In conclusion, the empirical data fully support the reliability and validity of the theoretical model, marking the formal establishment of the assessment model.

Table 1 Digital Competency Assessment Model

Primary Indicator	Secondary Indicator	Tertiary Indicator
Digital Awareness	Digital Cognition and Understanding Digital Emotions and Attitudes	Digital-Related Concepts
		Digital Norms and Policies
		Digital Ethical Sentiments
		Digital Critical Thinking
		Confidence in Digital Technology Application
Digital Skills	Digital Technology Knowledge and Skills	Mastery and Application of Digital Tools
Digital Application	Digital Teaching	Digital Instructional Design Implementation of Digital Teaching
	Digital Resources	Selection and Use of Digital Resources
		Creation of Digital Resources
	Digital Collaboration and Communication	Digital Communication and Collaboration Construction of Learning Communities Academic Exchange and Dissemination
	Digital Education Exploration and Innovation	Data-Driven Teaching and Decision-Making Digital Teaching Research and Innovation
Digital Ethics and Responsibility	Digital Security and Privacy Protection	Maintenance of Digital Security
	Digital Ethics and Norms	Ethical Application of Technology Digital Citizenship Literacy
Professional Development	Empowering Students	Digital Learning Ability Cultivation of Students' Digital Competency
	Teacher Professional Growth	Digital Learning and Professional Development
		Digital Leadership

Table 2 Sampling Adequacy and Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

Index	Value
Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy	0.960
Bartlett's test of sphericity	$p < 0.001$
Number of factors extracted (eigenvalue > 1)	5
Cumulative variance explained	62.105%

Table 3 Reliability Coefficients (Cronbach's α) by Dimension

Dimension	Cronbach's α
Digital awareness	0.930
Digital skills	0.840
Digital application	0.972
Digital ethics and responsibility	0.857
Professional development	0.909
Total scale	0.961



Discussions

This study, through theoretical construction and empirical testing, systematically responded to the pre-set research objectives and successfully developed and validated an assessment model that was both scientific and contextually appropriate.

For the 1st "model construction objective", this study did not simply transplant the international framework DigCompEdu or the Chinese standard (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2022), but achieved a localized innovation with a theoretical foundation. Guided by the perspective of the "individual - behavior - environment" interaction in social learning theory, through Delphi expert consultation, we deeply integrated key contextual elements such as the higher education ecosystem in Yunnan Province's multi-ethnic and border areas and the professional mission of the Institute of Education to "cultivate future teachers" into the model metrics. This is in line with the idea advocated by Caena & Redecker (2019) of aligning the teacher competency framework with specific challenges. The final established five-dimensional structure of "digital awareness - digital skills - digital application - digital ethics and responsibility - professional development" also corroborates the concept proposed by Ilomaki et al. (2016) that digital competency is the boundary of integrating knowledge, skills and attitudes, providing a new theoretical lens for understanding the digital competency of teachers in specific regional Universities and universities.

For the 2nd "tool development objective", this study followed a strict scale development paradigm. The initial items based on the theoretical model were optimized and verified for content validity through multiple rounds of Delphi expert consultation ($IOC \geq 0.8$) to ensure the scientific nature and suitability for the target group of the items in the "digital competency Assessment Questionnaire for Teachers of the School of Education, Yunnan University". This process fills the gap pointed out by Zhao et al. (2021) that existing assessment tools are insufficiently adapted in the context of higher education.

For the 3rd "model establishment objective", this study validated the reliability of the model using empirical data from 302 teachers through systematic psychometric analysis. The excellent reliability coefficient (total scale $\alpha = 0.961$) and the clear five-factor structure (cumulative interpretation variance 62.105%) suggest that the model is an internally consistent and structurally stable measurement tool. The results of the exploratory factor analysis strongly supported the theoretical conception, transforming the model from a theoretical hypothesis to an actionable framework supported by empirical data. This rigorous validation process responds to Lin & Johnson (2021)'s call for direct research applicable to specific situations and provides a methodological reference for regional teacher competence assessment.

In a practical sense, this model and its scales can be directly applied to multiple aspects of teacher professional development: as a self-assessment tool to facilitate teacher reflection; As an institutional diagnostic tool to identify the shortcomings of group capabilities; It can also provide a data base for regional policy-making. Subsequent studies could use this model to conduct status quo analysis, which may reveal characteristics such as "strong technology, weak application, and need to enhance ethical awareness", will help to shift teacher training from mere skill practice to the cultivation of higher-order abilities that are deeply integrated with ethical practice.

Beyond confirming prior frameworks, the present model is theoretically distinct from both DigCompEdu and the Ministry of Education of China's "Teacher Digital Literacy" (2022) standard in three respects. First, whereas DigCompEdu was developed primarily for the European general-education context and the national standard is pitched at all Chinese teachers, the present model is explicitly tailored to the dual role of higher-education teacher educators—who are simultaneously researchers and trainers of future teachers. Second, unlike either



reference framework, it embeds the multi-ethnic and border characteristics of Yunnan Province directly into its indicators (for example, cross-cultural digital communication ethics and the use of digital tools to present local ethnic cultural elements). Third, it is not only a conceptual framework but an empirically validated measurement instrument. These distinctions extend, rather than replicate, the work of Caena & Redecker (2019) and Zhao et al. (2021), and they explain why a context-specific model was required rather than a direct adoption of an existing one.

The model also carries specific implications for educational equity in multi-ethnic and border communities. Because indicators relating to cross-cultural communication and the digital presentation of ethnic cultural content are built into the instrument, the tool can help institutions identify whether teachers are equipped to use digital technology in ways that widen, rather than narrow, access for students from ethnic-minority backgrounds. In practical terms, diagnosing weaknesses on these indicators can guide targeted professional development that supports inclusive teaching, the preservation and digital dissemination of local ethnic cultures, and more equitable educational outcomes across Yunnan's diverse student population.

Conclusion and suggestions

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the structural validity of the model was established through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) only; confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on an independent sample was not conducted, so the factor structure should be cross-validated in future work before strong claims of measurement invariance are made. Second, the sample ($n = 302$) was drawn from a limited number of institutions within a single province, which constrains the generalizability of the findings to other regions and educational systems. Third, the data were based on teacher self-report, which may be subject to social-desirability and common-method bias. Finally, the study is cross-sectional and therefore cannot capture how teachers' digital competency develops over time. These limitations point directly to the future-research directions outlined below.

Conclusion

To sum up, this study systematically completed the development of the digital competency assessment model for teachers in education Universities of Yunnan universities. By integrating international perspectives, national norms and local context, the study constructed a theoretical model with five dimensions and multi-level indicators, and based on this, developed an assessment questionnaire with good content validity. Through empirical analysis of 302 valid samples, the study confirmed that the model had excellent discrimination, structural validity and internal consistency reliability, marking the successful establishment of the model.

The core contribution of this study lies in providing a scientific, reliable and contextualized digital competency "yardstick" for the group of teachers in higher education Universities in Yunnan Province, a specific multi-ethnic border area. The model not only enriches the theory of teacher competency evaluation in the context of the digital transformation of higher education, but also lays a solid tool foundation for the subsequent precise diagnosis of teacher competency status, assessment of development needs, and formulation of effective intervention strategies.

Suggestions

1. Recommendations for policy and practice

1.1 Policy recommendations. Based on the research result of the 1st objective: The model constructed in this study successfully integrates the international framework, national standards and the local context of Yunnan, providing a systematic analytical tool for evaluating the digital competency of teachers in local Universities and universities. Therefore, it is recommended that educational administrative departments and university administrators in Yunnan Province adopt or refer to this model as the theoretical framework for formulating university-level standards for the development of digital literacy of teachers. The flexible approach of "core standards + professional modules" can be adopted, with the five first-level dimensions of this model, digital awareness, digital skills, digital application, digital ethics and responsibility, and professional development as the core, and local adjustments can be made in combination with the educational levels and disciplinary and professional characteristics of different institutions to form standardized school-level standards to promote the "standardized" development of teachers' digital literacy.

1.2 Practice recommendations. Based on the 2nd tool development and the 3rd model objective: The "digital competency Assessment Questionnaire for Teachers of Yunnan University School of Education" developed by this research institute has been proven to have good reliability and validity. It is recommended to use it as a core diagnostic tool and embed it into the teacher professional development support system. Specifically, a closed-loop improvement path of "diagnosis - planning - intervention - internalization" can be implemented. First, use the questionnaire to conduct a baseline diagnosis of teachers' digital abilities, generate personal ability profiles, and precisely identify their strengths and weaknesses in each dimension. Secondly, based on the diagnosis results, personalized "learning, application, research, creation" training programs are developed for teachers at different stages of development and with different competency profiles. For example, for teachers who are weak in the "digital application" dimension, the focus should be on organizing practical workshops on topics such as blended curriculum design and data-driven teaching, rather than repetitive basic skills training.

2. Recommendations for future research

The focus of this study is on the development and validation of the model, laying the groundwork for more in-depth and extensive research in the future. In light of the current research trends and limitations in the field, we propose the following future research directions:

2.1 It is recommended to conduct dynamic tracking and stage model research. Future research should conduct longitudinal tracking to explore the dynamic development trajectory and key transition nodes of teachers' digital competency from "technological adaptation" to "teaching innovation" and even "ethical leadership".

2.2 It is suggested that the evaluation results of this model be correlated with classroom teaching behavior data, online teaching platform interaction data, student academic growth data, etc., to shift the evaluation from summative to developmental and truly empower teachers' professional growth.

2.3 It can be applied to the group of university teachers in other multi-ethnic regions in China or along the Belt and Road Initiative to conduct cross-regional and cross-cultural comparative studies.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

This study contributes new knowledge in two main ways. Theoretically, it produces the first empirically validated digital-competency model that integrates international frameworks (DigCompEdu, ISTE), China's national "Teacher Digital Literacy" standard, and social learning theory while embedding the multi-ethnic, border characteristics of Yunnan Province. It thereby reframes teacher digital competency as a context-dependent construct rather than a universal checklist, adding a regionally grounded perspective to the literature on teacher educators in higher education.

For society and local communities, the validated instrument offers a practical "measuring rod" with direct benefits. At the institutional level it enables evidence-based diagnosis of teachers' strengths and weaknesses and the design of targeted professional development. At the regional level it gives education authorities in Yunnan a common reference for policy-making and for monitoring the digital transformation of higher education. Most importantly, because the model explicitly values cross-cultural and ethnic-cultural dimensions, its adoption can help protect and digitally disseminate local ethnic cultures and promote more equitable, inclusive education for students in multi-ethnic and frontier communities effects that extend beyond the university to the wider society it serves.

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Issued 3 : September - December

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Research Articles: Present a brief report on a specific research result or a major problem. Social Sciences, Business, Management and Accounting Each article must clearly present the research question, detailed methodology, study content, results, discussion, conclusion and suggestions, new knowledge and the effects on society and communities.

Language : English

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Community and Social Development Journal : History of journal for research to community. Aim and scope to publish english articles that are beneficial to society or localities in social sciences. Launched in 1999 with the support of Institute of Research and Development, Chiang Mai Rajabhat University, the inaugural volume focused on research articles, in subject area social sciences, business, management and accounting.

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Community and Social Development Journal : CSDJ (Formerly known as : Rajabhat Chiang Mai Research Journal)

Name of the journal (new): Community and Social Development Journal

ISSN 3027-7493 (Online)

ISSN 3027-7485 (Print)

From Vol 25 No 1 January - April 2024 onwards.

Name of the journal (formerly): Rajabhat Chiang Mai Research Journal

ISSN 2651-2068 (Online)

ISSN 1513-8410 (Print)

From Vol 1 No 1 1999 - Vol 24 No 3 2023

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Write a summary of the main points of the research whether it corrects to the objective or not, by focusing on the problems or argument in the main points including useful suggestions.

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Write a summary of the new knowledge that happened, and the effects on the society, local and communities.

Acknowledgement: Text (Times New Roman, 12 pt, Tab 0.8 cm)

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Courtney, T. K. (1965). *Physical Fitness and Dynamic Health*. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.

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Magyar, C. E. (2014). *The discourse of tourism and national heritage: A contrastive study from a cultural perspective*. (Doctoral's thesis, University of Madrid).

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Surname. (Year of publication). Title. Retrieved from the title of website

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Publication Ethics in the Community and Social Development Journal :

Ethics Role: Authors, Reviewers, Editors, Publisher

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Process for dealing with research misconduct

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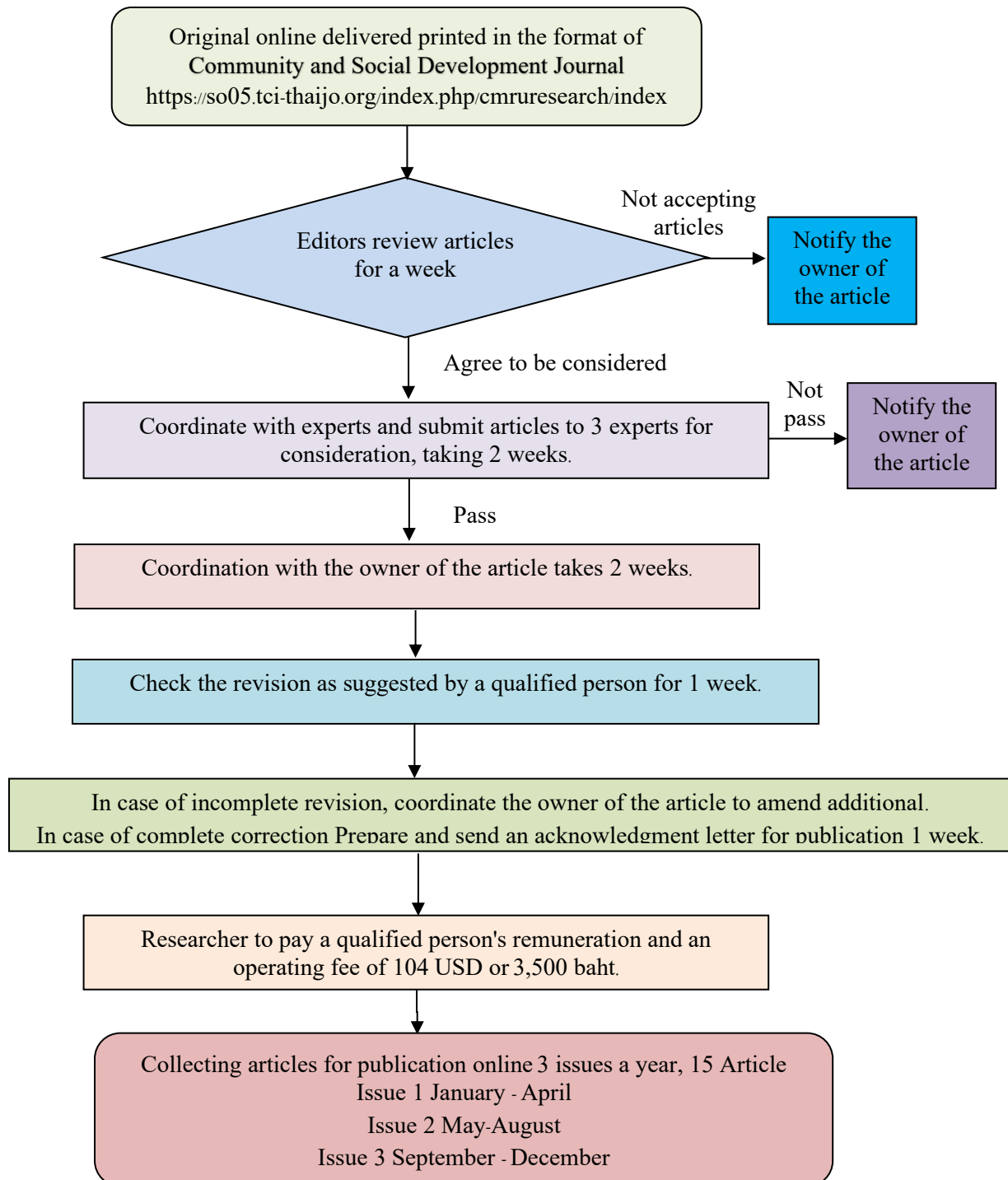
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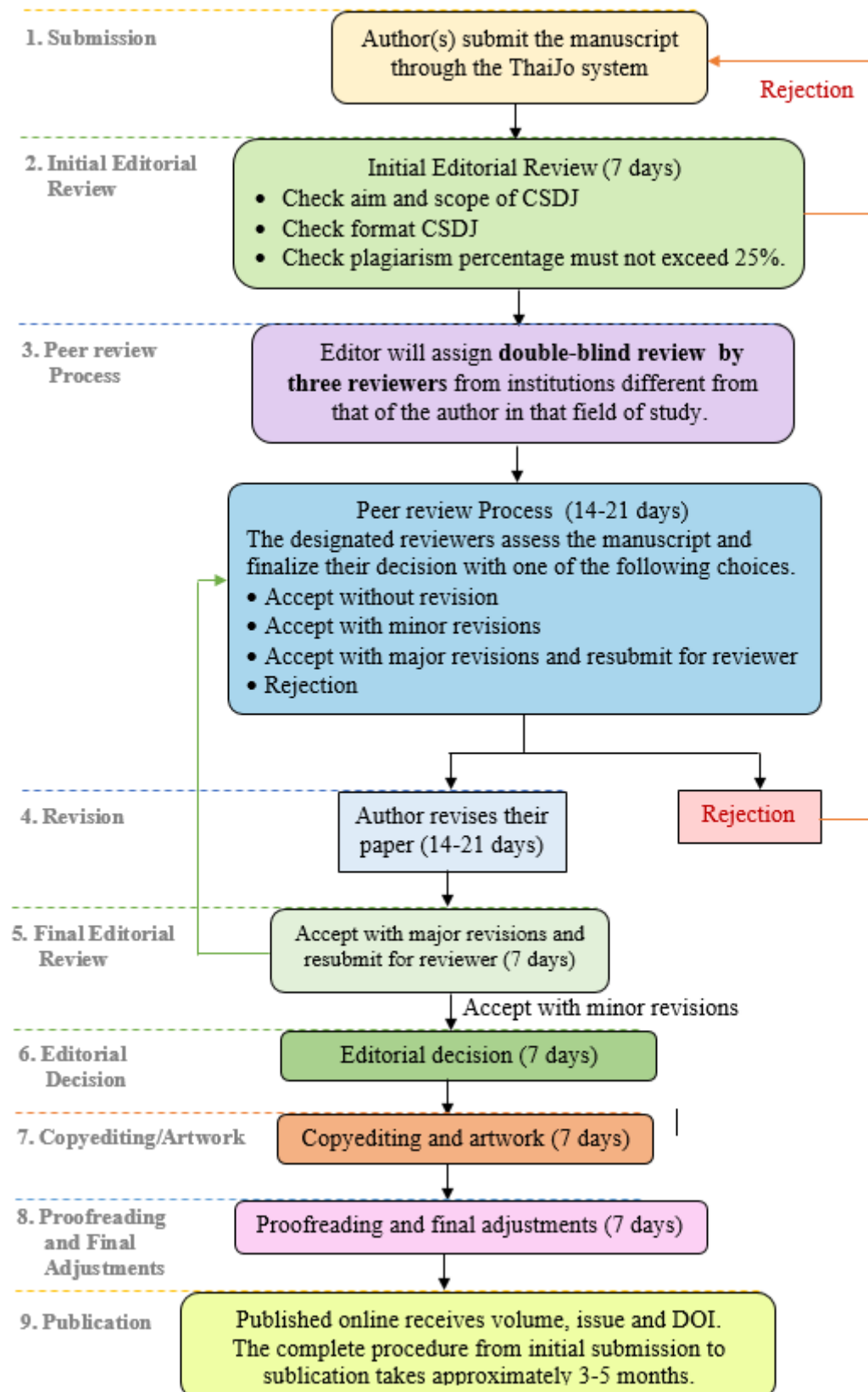
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