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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Competencies and Challenges of out of Field Teachers Enrolled in MAED Social Science Program: Basis for Policy Formulation

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Abstract

This descriptive-correlational study aimed to examined the competencies and challenges of out-of-field teachers enrolled in the Master of Arts in Education major in Social Science Program at Isabela State University, Main Campus. Results show that Out-of-field teachers enrolled in the MAED Social Science Program generally possess adequate self-assessed competencies across all three domains. Their strongest competency domain is communication and interaction skills, reflecting their capacity to connect with and engage students effectively. Pedagogical skills were also rated highly, indicating that teachers have developed sound instructional strategies through experience and graduate study. Subject knowledge, while acceptable, remains the relatively weakest domain, highlighting the inherent challenge that out-of-field assignment poses in terms of content mastery. Professional development opportunities represent the most pressing challenge among out-of-field teachers. There is no significant correlation between the self-assessed competencies of out-of-field teachers and the challenges they encounter in teaching. It recommends that Administrators of the MAED Social Science Programs may adopt the Policy Recommendation as an output of this study. Graduate School Administrators should institutionalize a system of competency self-assessment at the point of admission and at regular intervals throughout the program Policy-level interventions should address the systemic dimension of out-of-field teaching challenges. Funding for targeted professional development programs, updated instructional resources, and technology infrastructure should be prioritized for schools where out-of-field teaching is prevalent.

Keywords: *Competencies, Challenges, Out of Field teachers, Social Science Program, Policy*

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INTRODUCTION

Teachers are the foundation of any educational system, and their competencies significantly influence student learning and complete development. As Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) argue, effective teaching extends beyond content delivery; it involves creating engaging, inclusive, and supportive learning environments that address diverse student needs. However, this ideal is increasingly difficult to achieve when teachers are assigned to subjects outside their fields of expertise a challenge known as out-of-field teaching.

This issue is particularly prevalent in the Philippines, where systemic resource constraints and teacher shortages often necessitate such assignments. In rural and underserved areas, out-of-field teaching remains a persistent concern. According to the Department of Education (DepEd, 2022), only 30% of teachers in rural regions teach subjects aligned with their academic qualifications and professional training. This misalignment has significant consequences: teachers lacking subject-specific knowledge and pedagogical expertise often struggle to deliver high-quality instruction, affecting student engagement, classroom effectiveness, and academic performance (Ingersoll, 2003; UNESCO, 2021). Additionally, out-of-field teachers frequently face barriers such as limited access to instructional resources, insufficient professional development opportunities, and challenges in managing diverse classrooms. These factors further hinder their ability to meet curriculum standards and exacerbate educational disparities.

This study sought to bridge that gap by analyzing the competencies and challenges of out-of-field teachers enrolled in the Master of Arts in Education (MAED) Social Science Program. Specifically, it examined three key domains of teacher competence pedagogical skills, subject knowledge, and communication and interaction skills as perceived by the teachers. Additionally, the study explored the challenges these teachers encountered in areas such as professional development, resource availability, and classroom management.

This study had significant implications for improving teaching quality and student outcomes, particularly in underserved regions of the Philippines. By equipping out-of-field teachers with the necessary resources, training, and support, this research contributed to broader efforts to enhance educational equity and sustainability. Ultimately, the study stressed the importance of investing in teachers as key drivers of change. Addressing the systemic challenges, they faced not only strengthened their professional growth but also ensured that all students, regardless of location or socioeconomic background, have access to high-quality education. Through actionable recommendations, this study sought to adopt a culture of continuous improvement and excellence in teaching, thereby advancing the long-term goals of the Philippine education system.

The findings of this study served as a basis for policy formulation aimed at addressing the challenges faced by out-of-field teachers and enhancing their competencies. This research sought to inform targeted interventions, resource allocation, and professional development programs that can mitigate the adverse effects of out-of-field teaching.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1. What are the key competencies of out-of-field teachers enrolled in the MAED Social Science Program, as perceived by the teachers themselves across the following domains?
   1.1. Pedagogical skills;
   1.2. Subject knowledge; and
   1.3. Communication and interaction skills?
2. What challenges do out-of-field teachers in the MAED Social Science Program encounter, particularly in

relation to the following areas:

2.1. Professional development opportunities;
2.2. Access to instructional resources; and
2.3. Classroom management strategies?

3. Is there a correlation between the self-assessed competencies of out-of-field teachers and the challenges they face in teaching social science subjects?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research employed a descriptive-correlational design**,** integrating both descriptive and correlational methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of the competencies and challenges faced by out-of-field teachers enrolled in the MAED Social Science program.

The descriptive component systematically identifies and characterizes the key competencies that these teachers possess, particularly in three domains: pedagogical skills, subject knowledge, and communication skills**.** Pedagogical skills refer to their ability to effectively plan and deliver instruction, engage students, and assess learning outcomes. Subject knowledge pertains to their depth of understanding and mastery of Social Science concepts, while communication skills encompass their ability to convey ideas clearly, interact with students, and promote an inclusive learning environment.

The correlational component of this study sought to analyze the relationship between teachers' self-assessed competencies and the challenges they face in teaching Social Science subjects. This aspect is key in determining whether teachers who perceive themselves as highly competent encounter fewer obstacles, or whether certain challenges persist regardless of their self-perceived expertise.

Respondents of the Study

This study primarily involved 31 out-of-field teachers enrolled in the MAED Social Science Program who are employed in Public secondary schools in Isabela, Private schools both basic and higher education and State universities and Colleges. The respondents were identified through purposive sampling. The out-of-field teachers, who were teaching Social Science despite being trained in other subject areas, provided self-assessments of their competencies in pedagogical skills, subject knowledge, and communication.

Research Instrument

The survey questionnaire consisted of several parts; each aligned with the Statement of the Problem to ensure that the gathered data directly addressed the research objectives. The structured questionnaire was formulated and prepared by the researcher through the help and guidance of her advisers.

The researcher utilized the five-point Likert-scale in all variables presented except in the respondent's profile.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering procedure followed a systematic process to ensure accuracy and reliability. First, the survey instrument was prepared based on the research objectives and underwent expert validation to establish content validity. A pilot test was then conducted, and the results were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Afterward, permission and ethical clearance were secured from school

administrators or relevant authorities prior to data collection. The survey was then distributed through an online platform, with clear instructions provided to respondents. Responses were collected within a specified time frame, and follow-ups were conducted to ensure a sufficient response rate. Once gathered, the data were organized by checking for completeness, cleaning any inconsistencies, and preparing them for analysis. Finally, the processed data were analyzed using appropriate statistical methods to generate meaningful results.

Statistical Tools

The study employed descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics, specifically the mean, median, and standard deviation, were used to summarize and characterize the perceived key competencies and challenges of out-of-field teachers enrolled in the MAED Social Science Program. For the inferential analysis, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient (r) was utilized to examine the relationship between self-assessed competencies and the challenges experienced by out-of-field teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Pedagogical Skills

Table 1. Competencies of Out-of-Field Teachers Enrolled in the MAED Social Science Program in terms of Pedagogical Skills.

No.	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	I plan and organize my lessons effectively.	3.87	Agree
2.	I apply appropriate teaching methods for Social Science topics.	3.96	Agree
3.	I adjust my teaching strategies based on students' needs.	4.16	Agree
4.	I assess student learning using various assessment tools.	4.09	Agree
5.	I create engaging lesson plans that meet learning objectives.	4.25	Agree
6.	I encourage student participation during discussions.	4.29	Agree
7.	I evaluate my teaching methods regularly for improvement.	4.16	Agree
8.	I provide timely feedback on student performance.	4.09	Agree
9.	I integrate critical thinking activities in my teaching.	4.03	Agree
10.	I use reflective teaching practices to enhance instruction.	4.06	Agree
	Weighted Mean	**4.10**	**Agree**

Table 1 presents the self-assessed pedagogical competencies of out-of-field teachers. The results reveal that all indicators were rated within the "Agree" range (3.50–4.49), with an overall weighted mean of 4.10. The highest-rated indicator was "I encourage student participation during discussions" (M = 4.29), followed by "I create engaging lesson plans that meet learning objectives" (M = 4.25). On the other hand, the lowest-rated item was "I plan and organize my lessons effectively" (M = 3.87), though this still falls within the "Agree" category.

The findings imply that out-of-field teachers perceive themselves as possessing adequate pedagogical

competencies, particularly in encouraging student engagement and participation of learners during class discussions and providing an engaging lesson plans in order to meet the desired learning outcomes in their day-to-day teaching. The low mean scores of the out of field teachers also indicates that the out of field teachers are not confident enough in organizing their lessons effectively and if they apply appropriate teaching methods for social science topics. Although the findings still rated by the respondents under "Agree" range.

This is consistent with Molapo and Malatji (2024), who emphasized that effective pedagogical practices, including the use of varied instructional strategies and student-centered approaches, are hallmarks of competent social science educators. The positive self-assessment in this domain may be partly attributed to the professional enrichment that graduate study provides, as teachers gain exposure to contemporary pedagogical frameworks and reflective teaching models.

B. Subject Knowledge

Table 2. Competencies of Out-of-Field Teachers Enrolled in the MAED Social Science Program in Terms of Subject Knowledge.

No.	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	I have a solid understanding of key concepts in Social Science.	3.83	Agree
2.	I can explain Social Science theories accurately and confidently.	3.67	Agree
3.	I can relate Social Science topics to real-world issues.	4.03	Agree
4.	I am familiar with the curriculum content of Social Science.	3.51	Agree
5.	I stay updated on recent developments in Social Science education.	3.61	Agree
6.	I can design learning activities grounded in Social Science principles.	3.70	Agree
7.	I am confident when answering student questions about the subject.	3.90	Agree
8.	I use reliable references and academic sources when preparing lessons.	4.12	Agree
9.	I can clearly differentiate between various social science disciplines.	3.83	Agree
10.	I feel prepared to teach core topics in the Social Science program.	3.83	Agree
	Weighted Mean	**3.80**	**Agree**

Table 2 shows the self-assessed subject knowledge competencies of out-of-field teachers. The overall weighted mean of 3.80, which falls under the "Agree" category, indicates that teachers perceive themselves as having a satisfactory level of understanding of Social Science content. The highest-rated item was "I use reliable references and academic sources when preparing lessons" (M = 4.12), followed by "I can relate Social Science topics to real-world issues" (M = 4.03). In contrast, the lowest-rated indicator was "I am familiar with the curriculum content of Social Science" (M = 3.51), which, while still within the Agree range, points to a relative area of uncertainty.

The weighted mean for subject knowledge (3.80) was noticeably lower compared to pedagogical skills (4.10) and communication skills (4.11), which reflects the inherent challenge that out-of-field teachers face in

terms of content mastery. The findings explained that in term of subject knowledge of the out of field teachers. They use reliable academic sources or references in preparing lessons in order to relate social science topics to real world issues. They also stay updated on recent developments in social science education and always make themselves familiar with the curriculum content of social science discipline.

This finding underscores the program's role in bridging content knowledge gaps, as argued by Sánchez-Ibáñez et al. (2021), who advocated for graduate programs that incorporate disciplinary content alongside pedagogical training.

C. Communication and Interaction Skills

Table 3. Competencies of Out-of-Field Teachers Enrolled in the MAED Social Science Program in Terms of Communication and Interaction Skills.

No.	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	I communicate my lessons clearly and effectively.	4.03	Agree
2.	I use simple and understandable language when teaching complex ideas.	4.16	Agree
3.	I encourage open communication in the classroom.	4.09	Agree
4.	I listen attentively to students' concerns and questions.	4.22	Agree
5.	I maintain respectful interactions with students.	4.09	Agree
6.	I facilitate meaningful classroom discussions.	4.09	Agree
7.	I motivate students to express their opinions.	4.06	Agree
8.	I create a positive and inclusive classroom environment.	4.16	Agree
9.	I provide clear instructions during class activities.	4.09	Agree
10.	I handle conflicts or misunderstandings with professionalism.	4.09	Agree
	Weighted Mean	**4.11**	**Agree**

Table 3 reveals that communication and interaction skills registered the highest overall weighted mean among the three competency domains at 4.11, still within the "Agree" range. The highest-rated indicator was "I listen attentively to students' concerns and questions" (M = 4.22), followed by "I use simple and understandable language when teaching complex ideas" (M = 4.16) and "I create a positive and inclusive classroom environment" (M = 4.16). The lowest-rated item was "I communicate my lessons clearly and effectively" (M = 4.03), though this remains strongly within the "Agree" category.

The relatively high self-assessment in communication and interaction skills confirmed that out-of-field teachers are particularly confident in their ability to engage and connect with students by listening attentively to students concerns and questions through using simple and understandable language when teaching complex ideas and they provide a positive and inclusive classroom environment. Out of field teachers also agreed that they communicate and deliver their lessons clearly and effectively.

This finding aligns with Lozano-Peña et al. (2021) and Rodríguez et al. (2020), who found that teachers with strong social-emotional competencies can effectively manage classroom interactions and foster meaningful learning relationships, even when subject knowledge may be limited.

II. Challenges Encountered by Out-of-Field Teachers in the MAED Social Science Program

A. Professional Development Opportunities

Table 4. Challenges of Out-of-Field Teachers in the MAED Social Science Program in Terms of Professional Development Opportunities.

No.	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	I have limited access to subject-specific training or workshops.	3.74	Agree
2.	I lack mentorship or support from experts in Social Science.	3.58	Agree
3.	I find it difficult to attend professional development due to schedule conflicts.	3.38	Neutral
4.	The training I receive is not tailored for out-of-field teachers.	3.22	Neutral
5.	I need more opportunities for classroom observation or peer coaching.	3.64	Agree
6.	I rarely receive feedback on how to improve my Social Science teaching.	3.35	Neutral
7.	Professional development programs offered do not meet my actual needs.	3.19	Neutral
8.	I find it hard to afford additional training or certification.	3.16	Neutral
9.	I am unaware of training opportunities specific to my situation.	3.12	Neutral
10.	I feel isolated from professional learning communities related to Social Science.	3.16	Neutral
	Weighted Mean	**3.35**	**Neutral**

Table 4 presents the challenges related to professional development opportunities as perceived by out-of-field teachers. The overall weighted mean of 3.35 falls under the "Neutral" category, indicating that teachers moderately perceive professional development as a challenge. However, two indicators crossed into the "Agree" threshold: "I have limited access to subject-specific training or workshops" (M = 3.74) and "I lack mentorship or support from experts in Social Science" (M = 3.58), as well as "I need more opportunities for classroom observation or peer coaching" (M = 3.64).

These results imply that out of field teachers consider limited access or training workshop in social science education and inadequate opportunities for classroom observations and peer coaching are considered most challenging among the teachers. They confirmed professional development as an overwhelming challenge, the specific trainings for Social Science and expert mentorship remains a notable concern.

The neutral overall rating may also reflect a degree of resignation or limited awareness among teachers regarding available professional development resources, as reflected in the item "I am unaware of training opportunities specific to my situation" (M = 3.12). This highlights an institutional communication gap that the MAED program and school administrators need to address, consistent with recommendations by Bautista and Ocampo (2020) on the need to actively connect teachers with professional learning communities.

B. Access to Instructional Resources

Table 5. Challenges of Out-of-Field Teachers in the MAED Social Science Program in Terms of Access to Instructional Resources.

No.	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	I do not have enough teaching materials for Social Science subjects.	3.32	Neutral
2.	I struggle to find appropriate online resources.	3.12	Neutral
3.	The school does not provide updated textbooks for Social Science.	3.35	Neutral
4.	I lack access to multimedia tools for interactive teaching.	2.87	Neutral
5.	I often spend my own money on supplementary materials.	3.29	Neutral
6.	I have difficulty accessing research journals related to Social Science.	2.96	Neutral
7.	I am unfamiliar with technology tools that can enhance my teaching.	2.83	Neutral
8.	The learning resources available are not aligned with the curriculum.	2.96	Neutral
9.	I lack support in designing instructional materials.	2.80	Neutral
10.	There are limited local resources contextualized for my learners.	3.19	Neutral
	Weighted Mean	**3.07**	**Neutral**

Table 5 shows that challenges related to access to instructional resources posted an overall weighted mean of 3.07, which falls within the "Neutral" range. All the ten indicators were rated as "Neutral", suggesting that teachers do not strongly perceive resource access as a significant barrier. The highest-rated item was "The school does not provide updated textbooks for Social Science" (M = 3.35), while the lowest was "I lack support in designing instructional materials" (M = 2.80).

The findings imply that in term of Access to Instructional Resources, even though the overall perception is "Neutral", the results still signal a quiet but persistent concern about the adequacy of instructional materials, particularly updated textbooks in social science education and the availability of multimedia and technological tools that can enhance their teaching capacity.

Molnar and Kobarg (2021) underscored that digital learning platforms and online resources have become critical support mechanisms for out-of-field teachers, yet items like "I struggle to find appropriate online resources" (M = 3.12) and "I am unfamiliar with technology tools that can enhance my teaching" (M = 2.83) suggest that technology integration remains underdeveloped.

C. Classroom Management Strategies

Table 6. Challenges of Out-of-Field Teachers in the MAED Social Science Program in Terms of Classroom Management Strategies.

No.	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent

1.	I find it hard to manage student behavior during Social Science classes.	3.00	Neutral
2.	I struggle to maintain student attention throughout the lesson.	2.93	Neutral
3.	I lack strategies for handling disruptive students.	2.74	Neutral
4.	I find it difficult to establish routines and discipline procedures.	2.90	Neutral
5.	I feel unprepared when unexpected classroom issues arise.	2.80	Neutral
6.	I have trouble keeping students motivated in Social Science subjects.	2.83	Neutral
7.	I am unsure how to handle large and diverse classes.	2.77	Neutral
8.	I find it hard to create a structured and respectful environment.	2.83	Neutral
9.	My classroom management skills are not suited for teaching out-of-field.	2.77	Neutral
10.	I feel overwhelmed when dealing with multiple behavioral issues.	3.16	Neutral
	Weighted Mean	**2.87**	**Neutral**

Table 6 reveals that classroom management challenges were perceived with the lowest weighted mean among the three challenge domains at 2.87, which falls in the "Neutral" range. The highest-rated item was "I feel overwhelmed when dealing with multiple behavioral issues" (M = 3.16), while the lowest was "I lack strategies for handling disruptive students" (M = 2.74) and "I am unsure how to handle large and diverse classes" (M = 2.77).

The relatively low ratings in classroom management strategies challenges suggest that out-of-field teachers do not regard classroom management as their most pressing concern. This may be explained by the fact that most respondents are experienced educators who have already developed general classroom management skills in their respective original fields of specialization. However, out of field teachers confirmed that they feel overwhelmed when dealing with multiple behavior issues and they find it hard to manage students' behavior in their social science classes. While still under "neutral" category out of field teachers still struggle to maintain student's attention throughout the lesson and find it difficult to establish routines and discipline procedures.

Milenković et al. (2024) similarly found that classroom management becomes more taxing when teachers are uncertain about their subject knowledge, as cognitive load and anxiety may reduce their capacity to respond effectively to behavioral challenges.

III. Relationship Between the Self-Assessed Competencies and Challenges of Out of-Field Teachers

Table 7. Relationship Between the Competencies of Out-of-Field Teachers and the Challenges They Faced in Teaching Social Science Subjects.

Competencies of Out-of-Field Teachers	Challenges of Out-of-Field Teachers					
	Professional Development Opportunities		Access to Instructional Resources		Classroom Management Strategies	
	r-value	p-value	r-value	p-value	r-value	p-value
Pedagogical Skills	.21ns	.23	-.02ns	.91	-.33ns	.06
Subject Knowledge	.12ns	.49	-.06ns	.72	-.35ns	.06
Communication and Interaction Skills	.22ns	.21	.01ns	.98	-.30ns	.10

Legend: ns = not significant at 0.05 level

Table 7 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients between the self-assessed competencies of out-of-field teachers and the challenges they encounter across three domains: professional development opportunities, access to instructional resources, and classroom management strategies.

The results show that none of the competency-challenge pairings yielded a statistically significant correlation at the 0.05 significance level. Pedagogical skills showed a small positive correlation with professional development challenges ($r = .21$, $p = .23$) and a small negative correlation with classroom management challenges ($r = -.33$, $p = .06$). Subject knowledge showed similar patterns. A small positive link with professional development ($r = .12$, $p = .49$) and a small negative link with classroom management ($r = -.35$, $p = .06$). Communication and interaction skills also followed this direction, with a small positive association with professional development ($r = .22$, $p = .21$) and a slight negative trend with classroom management ($r = -.30$, $p = .10$). All correlations with access to instructional resources were negligible across all three competency domains.

The null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between the self-assessed competencies of out-of-field teachers and the challenges they face is therefore accepted. This means that teachers who rate themselves as more competent do not necessarily encounter fewer challenges, and vice versa.

This finding is noteworthy and challenges the assumption that higher perceived competence would translate to fewer difficulties. One plausible explanation is that teachers who are more self-aware and reflective about their competencies a disposition likely fostered by graduate-level study may also be more acutely aware of their professional challenges. As Hermoso and Brobo (2023) observed, teachers with higher professional competencies are often better positioned to identify and articulate the systemic obstacles they face, which may inflate their challenge scores relative to their competency scores.

Another interpretation is that the challenges associated with out-of-field teaching are largely structural and systemic in nature shaped by institutional factors such as the availability of professional development programs, the adequacy of resources, and school-level support systems rather than by teachers' individual competency levels. This view is supported by Ingersoll (2003) and Hobbs and Porsch (2021), who argued that the difficulties of out-of-field teaching stem primarily from organizational and policy contexts rather than from individual teacher capability. Thus, regardless of how competent a teacher perceives herself to be, the systemic barriers remain constant and significant.

Summary

With respect to competencies, out-of-field teachers rated themselves positively across all three domains, with all weighted means falling within the "Agree" range. Communication and interaction skills obtained the

highest overall weighted mean, followed closely by pedagogical skills. Subject knowledge, while still rated as "Agree", registered the lowest weighted mean among the three domains, indicating a relative gap in content mastery compared to the other competency areas.

With regards to challenges, the professional development domain registered the highest overall weighted mean among the three challenge areas, with specific items on limited access to subject-specific training, lack of mentorship from Social Science experts, and insufficient opportunities for peer coaching rated within the "Agree" range. Access to instructional resources posted a weighted mean of 3.07, while classroom management strategies recorded the lowest challenge. All challenge domains fell within the "Neutral" range overall, though specific items in professional development crossed into the "Agree" threshold.

With respect to the correlation analysis, none of the competency-challenge pairings yielded a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 level of significance. Pearson's r values ranged from negligible to small in magnitude, with the most notable trends being weak negative correlations between competencies particularly pedagogical skills and subject knowledge and classroom management challenges, both with p-values of .06, approaching but not reaching statistical significance.

CONCLUSION

Out-of-field teachers enrolled in the MAED Social Science Program generally possess adequate self-assessed competencies across all three domains. Their strongest competency domain is communication and interaction skills, reflecting their capacity to connect with and engage students effectively. Pedagogical skills were also rated highly, indicating that teachers have developed sound instructional strategies through experience and graduate study. Subject knowledge, while acceptable, remains the relatively weakest domain, highlighting the inherent challenge that out-of-field assignment poses in terms of content mastery.

Professional development opportunities represent the most pressing challenge among out-of-field teachers in the MAED Social Science Program, particularly the lack of subject-specific training, expert mentorship, and peer coaching. Challenges related to instructional resource access and classroom management, while present, are perceived at a moderate level, with most concerns falling within the Neutral range. This suggests that while systemic gaps exist, teachers have developed coping mechanisms that somewhat mitigate their impact.

There is no significant correlation between the self-assessed competencies of out-of-field teachers and the challenges they encounter in teaching Social Science subjects. This finding indicates that the challenges faced by out-of-field teachers are largely structural and systemic in nature, independent of individual competency levels. Teachers who perceive themselves as more competent do not necessarily face fewer challenges, pointing to the need for institutional and policy-level interventions rather than exclusively individual-centered solutions.

RECOMMENDATION

In light of the findings, the following are recommended:

1. Administrators of the MAED Social Science Programs may adopt the Policy Recommendation as an output of this study.
2. Graduate School Administrators should institutionalize a system of competency self-assessment at the point of admission and at regular intervals throughout the program to track the development of out-of-field teacher-scholars. This data should be used to inform curriculum review and resource allocation decisions.
3. School administrators should strengthen the dissemination of professional development opportunities to out-

of-field teachers, addressing the identified gap in awareness of available training programs

4. Policymakers and DepEd Officials. Policy-level interventions should address the systemic dimension of out-of-field teaching challenges. Funding for targeted professional development programs, updated instructional resources, and technology infrastructure should be prioritized for schools where out-of-field teaching is prevalent.
5. Future researchers may expand the scope of the study to include a larger and more diverse sample drawn from multiple graduate programs and institutions across Cagayan Valley or the broader Luzon region to enhance the generalizability of findings.

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