



Exploring the Relationship Between Teacher Competence and Classroom Management: Implications for Student Engagement in Private Tertiary Educational Institutions in Koronadal City, Philippines

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Abstract

This research explores the relationship between teachers' competence, classroom management, and student engagement in private tertiary education institutions (PTEIs) in Koronadal City, Philippines. Grounded from the Social Cognitive Theory of Teacher Efficacy (Fernandez et al., 2016) and Haim Ginott's (1965) Responsive Theory (RT), the study adopted a descriptive method and collected data from 370 educators and learners via a validated survey questionnaire utilizing a Likert scale. Statistical analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between teacher competence and classroom management ($r=0.43$, $p<.001$). However, no significant connections were identified between classroom management and student engagement and, between teacher competence and student engagement. These results challenged the traditional beliefs that teachers' competence and classroom management directly impact students' engagement. Rather, they highlight the complexity of student involvement influenced by cultural, institutional, and systemic factors. The findings emphasize the need for holistic strategies incorporating culturally relevant teaching methods, improved teacher training in social-emotional and digital skills, and robust institutional support frameworks. This research enhances the theoretical understanding of engagement as a complex concept and offers actionable insights for improving educational outcomes in private tertiary education institutions. Future research should employ longitudinal and qualitative approaches to explore the intricate dynamics of these relationships thoroughly. By addressing systemic and cultural contexts, educators and policymakers can establish teaching environments that enhance teacher competence and foster significant student engagement.

Keywords: teacher competence, classroom management, student engagement, Private tertiary education



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INTRODUCTION

The education landscape is swiftly evolving worldwide, as private schools and colleges play a growing role in shaping students' destinies. Private colleges and universities hold a significant position in higher education in the Philippines, offering students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds numerous accessible choices. These schools often have smaller class sizes, customized curricula, and a close-knit intellectual community, emphasizing instructor skill, classroom management, and student

involvement. This study explores how these three essential elements affect the quality and inclusiveness of education in private higher education institutions in Koronadal City, Philippines, a locality that reflects the unique challenges and opportunities within the nation's educational framework.

Teacher competence forms the basis of impactful education, incorporating a mix of subject knowledge, teaching skills, socio-emotional abilities, and flexibility. These skills enable educators to address the varied and evolving needs of learners, fostering

environments that promote significant learning (Moriera et al., 2022). Modern studies emphasize that teacher competence is a complex concept encompassing teaching abilities, research expertise, digital skills, and cultural sensitivity, especially in the context of today's tech-centric and diverse classrooms (Noskova et al., 2022; Shevchuk, 2023). Although global frameworks like the UNITE model highlight these aspects, their relevance to the Philippine context, particularly in private institutions, has yet to be thoroughly examined.

Classroom management, equally important, entails establishing and sustaining an environment conducive to learning, where both behavioral and emotional requirements are met. Effective classroom management is crucial for fostering student involvement and ensuring that educational goals are achieved (Harlacher & Marx, 2022). In private tertiary institutions, instructors frequently face challenges such as insufficient resources, diverse student demographics, and a growing dependence on blended and digital learning methods. These obstacles require a sophisticated approach to classroom management that blends conventional strategies with innovative techniques. For example, developing trust, setting clear expectations, and promoting a culture of mutual respect are essential elements, but their implementation must be tailored to the unique requirements of Filipino students, given that their cultural values often prioritize respect for authority and community (De Guzman et al., 2020).

Student engagement, characterized by behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions, is intricately linked to the efficacy of teachers and management within the classroom. Engaged students exhibit active participation, emotional investment, and critical thinking, all of which contribute to academic success (Kunka, 2020). However, promoting involvement in private tertiary education institutions presents distinct challenges, particularly in a location like Koronadal City, where technological infrastructure, cultural diversity, and socio-economic conditions vary

significantly. Although interactive teaching methods, project-based learning, and culturally relevant pedagogy have proven effective in enhancing engagement, their consistent implementation remains a challenge (Xu et al., 2023).

Despite the increasing amount of literature on these concepts, a considerable portion of existing research is situated in Western contexts resulting in a limited understanding of the cultural and regional subtleties in Asia, especially in Koronadal City, Philippines. This research seeks to bridge these gaps by examining the connection between teacher competence, classroom management, and student engagement in private higher education institutions in Koronadal City. By placing the research in a defined cultural and institutional context, it aims to offer insights that can enhance educational quality and inclusivity.

The significance of this research lies in its ability to address pressing issues in higher education, such as inequalities in teacher performance and the challenges of implementing culturally responsive and flexible teaching strategies. Previous initiatives, such as competency-based training models and culturally appropriate curricula, have shown promise but often overlook the unique dynamics of private higher education institutions in the Philippines (Dharma et al., 2022; Rahayu, 2020).

If these issues remain unresolved, opportunities to enhance educational quality in private higher education institutions may be overlooked reinforcing disparities in access and outcomes. Conversely, by identifying and addressing the unique needs of private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City, this study could transform educational approaches, fostering a culture of inclusivity, flexibility, and high standards. Ultimately, this research which aims to explore the relationship between teacher competence, classroom management, and student engagement, provides a framework to guide future policies and practices in Philippine higher education.

This research is grounded from the Social Cognitive Theory of Teacher Efficacy (Fernandez et al., 2016). The theory emphasizes that a teacher's confidence in their instructional skills significantly influences their effectiveness. Successful educators demonstrate appropriate classroom behaviors, provide positive reinforcement, and encourage peer learning, thereby creating an organized learning environment. Furthermore, the study is also anchored from Haim Ginott's (1965) Responsive Theory (RT) which underscores the importance of enhancing communication to foster learning, advocating for a setting of acceptance free from punishment. Educators are encouraged to interact positively and address behaviors directly rather than targeting the student. This theory is based on the principle that communication is essential for learning and that an environment of acceptance and validation can be nurtured without punishment.

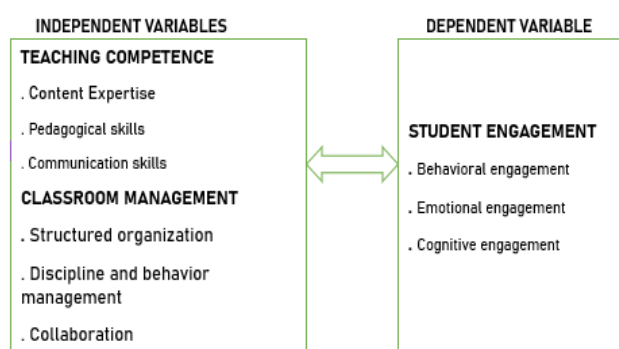


Figure 1
Conceptual Paradigm of the Study

Statement of the Problem. The primary aim of this study is to explore the relationship between teacher competence and classroom management, and to determine their effect on student engagement in private tertiary higher education institutions (PTEIs) in Koronadal City. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions.

1. What is the level of competence among teachers in private tertiary higher education institutions (PTEIs) in Koronadal City in terms of;
 - 1.1 Subject content expertise;
 - 1.2 Pedagogical skills; and,
 - 1.3 Communication skills?

2. What is the level of classroom management among teachers in PTEIs in Koronadal City in terms of;
 - 2.1 Structured organization;
 - 2.2 Discipline & behavior management; and,
 - 2.3 Collaboration?
3. To what extent is the student engagement evident among PTEIs in Koronadal City concerning;
 - 3.1 Behavioral engagement;
 - 3.2 Emotional engagement; and,
 - 3.3 Cognitive engagement?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the following paired variables:
 - 4.1 Between classroom management and teachers' competence;
 - 4.2 Between students' engagement and teachers' competence; and,
 - 4.3 Between students' engagement and classroom management?

Hypotheses. At 0.05 level of significance, the following hypothesis were tested by the study.

Ho. There is no significant relationship between the following paired variables:

1. Between classroom management and teachers' competence;
2. Between students' engagement and teachers' competence; and,
3. Between students' engagement and classroom management.

Significance of the Study. This research seeks to provide important insights into the elements affecting educational outcomes at non-sectarian private higher education institutions in Koronadal City, emphasizing teachers' skills, classroom organization, and student involvement. The objective is to help administrators, educators, and policymakers uncover opportunities for improvement in teaching strategies and student engagement systems. Furthermore, the study will aid in enhancing teaching quality by offering data-informed methods to improve educators' professional abilities. It aims to establish the foundation for targeted training initiatives that address specific needs, promoting a culture of

ongoing enhancement among educators. The results will also provide concrete examples and recommendations, assisting educators in developing classrooms that support effective management and encourage student engagement. More so, the research aims to raise awareness among students and faculty regarding their responsibilities in creating a nurturing learning atmosphere. In conclusion, by understanding these factors, private tertiary schools can adopt strategies that elevate educational quality, increase competitiveness, and enhance their image while fostering students' academic and personal growth to prepare them for a global community.

LITERATURES

Teacher Competence in Higher Education.

Teacher competence is essential in higher education, comprising a blend of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that empower educators to guide students toward meaningful learning (Moriera et al., 2022). Recent research emphasizes that teacher competence is a multifaceted concept influenced by teaching skills, personal attributes, flexibility in various environments, and awareness of cultural and institutional factors. Moriera et al. (2022) highlight that competence encompasses more than just subject knowledge, incorporating research abilities, digital skills, and socio-emotional competencies. In contrast, Dijk et al. (2020) propose the UNITE framework, outlining six essential responsibilities for educators: teaching, educational planning, assessment, leadership, research, and professional growth. These dimensions reflect the evolving role of educators, shifting from mere knowledge providers to facilitators who can adapt to dynamic educational settings.

The shift to digital and hybrid learning models has broadened the understanding of competence, incorporating digital skills as a fundamental element. Noskova et al. (2022) emphasize that digital skills are vital for engaging students in online learning environments, especially in regions where access to technology and literacy levels differ significantly. The drive for inclusivity

necessitates cultural awareness and socio-emotional abilities, enabling educators to effectively support diverse student groups (Shevchuk, 2023). These skills are particularly relevant within private higher education institutions in Koronadal City, Philippines, where teachers interact with students from varied socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

Nonetheless, discussions persist regarding the excessive focus on performance-oriented competence models, as critics argue that a narrow emphasis on quantifiable results overlooks the relational and contextual aspects of teaching (Moriera et al., 2022). Moreover, existing studies often exhibit a lack of diverse cultural perspectives since a substantial portion of the literature concentrates on Western contexts, limiting its relevance to regions such as Southeast Asia (Shin & Shim, 2021). These gaps underscore the importance of investigating teacher effectiveness in specific educational environments, such as private higher education institutions in Koronadal City.

Classroom Management and Its Role in Higher Education.

Successful classroom management is essential for creating a positive learning atmosphere, with teacher skills being a crucial factor. Classroom management encompasses techniques that foster organization, participation, and inclusivity, ensuring that educational goals are met effectively. As stated by Marzano et al. (2021), effective management involves establishing clear expectations, maintaining consistent discipline, and nurturing a supportive atmosphere. These factors are particularly important in private higher education institutions, where student numbers, available resources, and diversity among students can present distinct challenges.

In the Philippines, research indicates that classroom management techniques should align with cultural contexts, taking into account students' collective values and family ties (De Guzman et al., 2020). For example, finding a middle ground between authoritative and supportive methods may resonate effectively with Filipino students, fostering respect and

teamwork. Furthermore, incorporating technology into classroom management, such as utilizing learning management systems (LMS), has grown more significant in the digital era. Although technology can enhance classroom operations, it requires educators to possess proficient digital and organizational abilities to effectively handle both online and face-to-face classes.

Student Participation in Tertiary Education.

Student engagement is significantly linked to teacher skills and classroom management, as it reflects the active involvement, emotional connection, and commitment of students to their educational journey. Kuh (2020) highlights three aspects of engagement: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. Behavioral engagement focuses on participation in educational tasks; emotional engagement pertains to students' relationships with classmates and teachers; and cognitive engagement concerns analytical thinking and problem-solving.

In private higher education institutions, enhancing student involvement requires creative teaching methods, such as project-based learning, group activities, and culturally relevant instructional strategies. Teachers in Koronadal City need to respond to varied student requirements, tailoring approaches to sustain engagement and enthusiasm. Studies emphasize the importance of teacher-student connections in boosting engagement, highlighting the necessity for socio-emotional skills in teachers (Moriera et al., 2022).

Digital learning environments offer opportunities as well as challenges for engaging students. Although technology provides engaging platforms for learning and collaboration, it requires increased effort from educators to maintain attention and involvement. Noskova et al. (2022) highlight that successful participation in digital formats necessitates the incorporation of multimedia resources, encouragement of online dialogues, and employment of adaptive assessment techniques to accommodate diverse learning preferences.

Integration and Shortcomings in the Literature

The relationship among teacher competence, classroom management, and student engagement is clear in higher education, with each aspect affecting the overall learning experience. Nonetheless, a significant portion of the current research focuses on Western environments and relies heavily on self-reported information, which limits its applicability to non-Western contexts like the Philippines (Shin & Shim, 2021). Additionally, limited research specifically explores how these factors interrelate in private higher education institutions, where the objectives of the institution and the characteristics of the student body may vary greatly compared to public or larger educational systems.

METHODS

Research Design. This study employed a descriptive-correlation research design. This design was used to describe and examine the influence of teacher competence and classroom management on student engagement of selected private tertiary education institutions (PTEIs) in Koronadal City. A structured Likert Scale survey questionnaire was adopted to collect data from a large sample of private school teachers and students from two (2) colleges in Koronadal City.

Population and Sampling. This study was conducted and limited to two (2) private tertiary colleges located in Koronadal City, South Cotabato, Region XII, Philippines. This focus allows for an in-depth understanding of the economic and educational contexts influencing teacher competence, effective classroom management, and student engagement within these specific colleges. A random sampling method was utilized to gather respondents, ensuring that more teachers and students who participated in the specified schools were included in the sample. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive representation of the population, minimizing sampling bias and allowing for a thorough exploration of the study's focus areas. There were three hundred seventy (370) respondents in total, with one hundred ninety-three (193) students and thirty

(30) teachers from Green Valley College Foundation Inc., and one hundred twenty-one (121) students and twenty-six (26) teachers from RM College. These figures provided a sufficiently diverse representation of both students and teachers throughout the study.

Instrumentation. The study utilized a validated five-point (5) Likert scale (Pimentel, 2010) survey questionnaire tailored towards the context of the research. The survey measured three primary aspects:

1. *Teacher Competence.* Questions assessed the perceived teacher competence in subject content expertise, pedagogical skills, and communication skills.
2. *Classroom Management.* Questions evaluated the teacher classroom management in structured organization, discipline and behavior management, and collaboration.
3. *Student Engagement.* This part of the survey gauges the level of engagement among students within the institution including behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement.

Table 1
Five-Point Likert Scale, (Pimentel, 2010).

Legend:	Qualitative Interpretation
1.00-1.79	Strongly Disagree
1.80-2.59	Disagree
2.60-3.39	Neither Agree nor Disagree
3.40-4.19	Agree
4.20-5.00	Strongly Agree

Data Analysis. Appropriate statistical tools were utilized to analyze the collected data. The mean and standard deviation were employed to quantify teacher competence levels in areas such as content expertise, pedagogical skills, communication skills, and classroom management (including structured organization, discipline and behavior management, and collaboration). Similarly, these tools were also used to quantify the

extent of student engagement in terms of behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. Correlation analysis using Kendall's Tau-b was conducted to examine the relationships between teacher competence, classroom management, and student engagement.

RESULTS

Table 2
Mean Distribution of teachers' competence levels in terms of subject content expertise.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. The teacher demonstrates a thorough understanding of the subject material.	4.77	0.467	Strongly Agree
Q2. The teacher is able to explain complex concepts in a clear and understandable manner.	4.48	0.603	Strongly Agree
Q3. The teacher incorporates recent research findings relevant to the subject.	4.55	0.658	Strongly Agree
Q4. The teacher demonstrates an understanding of current trends and advancements in the field.	4.70	0.502	Strongly Agree
Q5. The teacher shares industry trends that are relevant to the course content.	4.50	0.661	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.60	0.456	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to evaluate the level of teachers' competence in terms of subject content expertise among teachers at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City. The analysis revealed a grand mean of 4.60 (SD = 0.456), which falls under the interpretation of "strongly agree." This indicates that, on average, respondents strongly agreed with statements reflecting their subject matter expertise, demonstrating a high level of perceived competence in this area.

Table 3
Mean Distribution of teachers' competence levels in terms of pedagogical skills.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. The teacher designs the curriculum to meet the course's learning objectives.	4.50	0.661	Strongly Agree
Q2. The teacher includes a balanced curriculum mix of foundational and advanced topics.	4.48	0.603	Strongly Agree
Q3. The teacher is well-prepared and organized for each class session.	4.50	0.572	Strongly Agree
Q4. The teacher uses assessments that reflect the course content accurately.	4.48	0.603	Strongly Agree
Q5. The teacher provides clear instructions and criteria for each assessment.	4.48	0.572	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.55	0.454	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to assess the level of teachers' competence in terms of pedagogical skills among teachers at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City.

The analysis yielded a grand mean of 4.55 (SD = 0.454), which is interpreted as "strongly agree." This indicates that respondents strongly agreed with statements reflecting their pedagogical skills, suggesting a high level of perceived competence in this area.

Table 4
Mean Distribution of teachers' competence levels in terms of communication skills.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. The teacher explains complex concepts in a way that is easy to understand.	4.66	0.514	Strongly Agree
Q2. The teacher breaks down complicated ideas into simpler, manageable parts.	4.57	0.535	Strongly Agree
Q3. The teacher listens attentively to students' questions and concerns.	4.54	0.538	Strongly Agree
Q4. The teacher encourages students to share their thoughts and opinions during class.	4.55	0.601	Strongly Agree
Q5. The teacher's verbal communication is clear and easy to follow.	4.70	0.537	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.61	0.412	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to evaluate the level of teachers' competence in terms of communication skills among teachers at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City. The analysis produced a grand mean of 4.61 (SD = 0.412), which is interpreted as "strongly agree." This suggests that respondents strongly agreed with statements related to their communication skills, reflecting a high level of perceived competence in effectively conveying information.

Table 5
Mean Distribution of teachers' levels of classroom management in terms of structured organization.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. The teacher effectively used digital tools (e.g., slides, videos) to enhance learning.	4.64	0.586	Strongly Agree
Q2. The teacher is proficient in using the learning management system (e.g., Moodle, Blackboard).	4.64	0.554	Strongly Agree
Q3. The teacher has created a well-structured and interactive online learning environment	4.52	0.632	Strongly Agree
Q4. The teacher effectively used online tools (e.g., quizzes, discussion boards) to encourage participation	4.54	0.631	Strongly Agree
Q5. The teacher introduced and integrates relevant new tools or software into the course.	4.59	0.565	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.59	0.440	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to assess the levels of classroom management in terms of structured organization among teachers at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City. The results revealed a grand mean of 4.59 (SD = 0.440), interpreted as "strongly agree." This indicates that

respondents strongly agreed with statements regarding their ability to maintain structured organization in the classroom, demonstrating a high level of competence in this aspect of classroom management.

Table 6
Mean Distribution of teachers' levels of classroom management in terms of discipline and behavior management.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. The teacher feels confident managing student behavior in my classroom.	4.71	0.49	Strongly Agree
Q2. The teacher effectively addresses student misbehavior using strategies such as verbal warnings, positive reinforcement, or redirection.	4.66	0.514	Strongly Agree
Q3. The behavioral issues I encounter (e.g., disruptions, disrespect, bullying) significantly impact my ability to teach effectively.	4.61	0.562	Strongly Agree
Q4. The teacher feels supported by the school administration when addressing student behavioral issues.	4.64	0.554	Strongly Agree
Q5. The teacher has access to adequate resources (e.g., training, counseling support) to manage classroom discipline effectively.	4.66	0.514	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.59	0.377	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the levels of classroom management in terms of discipline and behavior management among teachers at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City. The analysis resulted in a grand mean of 4.66 (SD = 0.377), which is interpreted as "strongly agree." This indicates that respondents strongly agreed with statements related to their ability to manage discipline and student behavior effectively, reflecting a high level of competence in this aspect of classroom management.

Table 7
Mean Distribution of teachers' levels of classroom management in terms of collaboration

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. The teacher is approachable and willing to discuss academic or personal challenges students may face.	4.68	0.543	Strongly Agree
Q2. The teacher demonstrates empathy towards students and their individual learning needs.	4.57	0.568	Strongly Agree
Q3. The teacher encourages students to think critically about the subject material.	4.59	0.532	Strongly Agree
Q4. The teacher promotes discussions that allow students to explore different viewpoints.	4.63	0.558	Strongly Agree
Q5. The teacher demonstrates sensitivity to the diverse cultural backgrounds of students.	4.75	0.477	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.64	0.396	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to assess the classroom management levels in terms of collaboration among teachers at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City. The

analysis revealed a grand mean of 4.64 (SD = 0.396), which is interpreted as "strongly agree." This suggests that respondents strongly agreed with statements reflecting their ability to foster collaboration and maintain effective communication, demonstrating a high level of competence in this aspect of classroom management.

Table 8
Mean Distribution of student engagement levels in terms of behavioral engagement.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. I attend my classes regularly and actively participate in classroom activities.	4.43	0.708	Strongly Agree
Q2. I complete and submit my assignments on time.	4.33	0.752	Strongly Agree
Q3. I ask questions in class to clarify my understanding of the course material.	4.01	0.863	Agree
Q4. I engage in group activities and collaborate well with my classmates.	4.44	0.744	Strongly Agree
Q5. I put effort into doing additional academic work beyond what is required.	4.20	0.783	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.28	0.590	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to evaluate the extent to which student engagement is evident in terms of behavioral engagement at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City. The analysis produced a grand mean of 4.28 (SD = 0.590), which is interpreted as "strongly agree." This suggests that, overall, respondents strongly agreed with statements regarding students' behavioral engagement; however, some variability in responses was observed, as indicated by the standard deviation.

Table 9
Mean Distribution of students' engagement levels in terms of emotional engagement.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. I feel excited and motivated to learn new things in my courses.	4.24	0.713	Strongly Agree
Q2. I enjoy participating in discussions and classroom activities.	4.24	0.766	Strongly Agree
Q3. I feel connected to my classmates and feel like I belong in the academic environment.	4.36	0.734	Strongly Agree
Q4. I feel supported and encouraged by my teachers and institution.	4.35	0.714	Strongly Agree
Q5. I am proud to be part of this academic institution.	4.36	0.828	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.31	0.535	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which student engagement is evident in terms of emotional engagement at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City. The results

revealed a grand mean of 4.31 (SD = 0.535), which is interpreted as "strongly agree." This indicates that respondents strongly agreed with statements reflecting students' emotional engagement, suggesting a positive perception of their emotional connection and participation in the learning environment.

Table 10
Mean Distribution of the students' engagement levels in terms of cognitive engagement.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Q1. I make an effort to understand complex ideas presented in my classes.	4.24	0.762	Strongly Agree
Q2. I reflect on the course material and think about how it applies to real life.	4.24	0.762	Strongly Agree
Q3. I try to connect what I learn in different subjects to get a deeper understanding.	4.36	0.767	Strongly Agree
Q4. I seek additional resources (e.g., books, online materials) to enhance my understanding of the subject.	4.35	0.856	Strongly Agree
Q5. I am willing to take on challenging academic tasks to improve my knowledge and skills.	4.36	0.595	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.31	0.762	Strongly Agree

A descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which student engagement is evident in terms of cognitive engagement at private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City. The analysis resulted in a grand mean of 4.25 (SD = 0.595), which is interpreted as "strongly agree." This suggests that respondents strongly agreed with statements related to students' cognitive engagement, indicating a high level of perceived effort and investment in their academic tasks and learning processes.

Table 11
Correlation analysis between teachers' competence, classroom management, and students' engagement

	Teachers' Competence	Classroom Management	Students' Engagement
Teachers' Competence	Kendall's Tau B p-value	— —	—
Classroom Management	Kendall's Tau B p-value	0.430 < .001	—
Students' Engagement	Kendall's Tau B p-value	-0.062 0.521	0.082 0.396

A Kendall's Tau-b correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between teachers' competence, classroom management, and students' engagement. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between teachers' competence and classroom management ($\tau_b=0.43$, $p<.001$), indicating that higher levels of teacher

competence were associated with more effective classroom management. This means that the hypothesis rejected. There is a significant relationship between teachers' competence and classroom management.

In contrast, the correlation between teachers' competence and students' engagement is not statistically significant ($\tau_b = -0.062$, $p = 0.521$). This suggests that there is no evidence of a meaningful relationship between these two variables in the sample. Similarly, the correlation between classroom management and students' engagement is also not statistically significant ($\tau_b = 0.082$, $p = 0.396$), indicating that there is no substantial association between these variables. This means that the hypotheses are accepted. There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and students' engagement, as well as no significant relationship between classroom management and students' engagement.

Overall, the findings highlight a significant link between teachers' competence and classroom management, while no significant relationships were observed concerning students' engagement.

DISCUSSION

This research investigated the connections between teacher competence, classroom management, and student engagement in private tertiary education institutions in Koronadal City, Philippines. There was a positive correlation ($\tau_b = 0.43$, $p < .001$), emphasizing that effective teachers are the single most important factor contributing to successful classroom management. In contrast, there were limited associations between classroom management and student engagement ($\tau_b = 0.082$, $p = .396$) and between teachers' competence and students' engagement ($\tau_b = -0.062$, $p = .521$), reflecting the complex and context-sensitive nature of engagement. These results challenge long-held views and highlight the necessity of using more integrative and multifaceted approaches to understand and target student engagement. Furthermore, while

educators have consistently worked to enhance learning outcomes, these findings potentially question traditional conventions and underscore the importance of adopting more valid and descriptive methods to better understand and improve student engagement.

The findings suggest that skilled teaching is essential for effective classroom management. Educators possessing robust subject knowledge, teaching abilities, and emotional intelligence are better equipped to create organized, inclusive, and stimulating classroom settings. These findings align with current studies that emphasize the significance of teacher proficiency in establishing structured and vibrant classrooms that facilitate learning (Moriera et al., 2022; Noskova et al., 2022). Professional development programs emphasizing socio-emotional intelligence, lesson planning, and behavior management are crucial for preparing educators to handle diverse and evolving educational environments.

Although there is a notable connection between teacher competence and classroom management, this research found no direct correlation between classroom management and student engagement. This outcome indicates that while proficient classroom management establishes a foundation for positive learning experiences, engagement requires more than merely organized settings. Engagement, which encompasses behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects, is significantly influenced by factors outside the classroom, including personal motivation, family and community influences, and systemic resources (Rahayu, 2020). The narrow classroom management perspective for predicting engagement in this context further reinforces the need for interventions that target broader systemic and cultural factors. Student engagement extends well beyond the current traditional concepts of classroom management and pedagogy. Engagement encompasses profound cultural, emotional, and institutional factors that affect students' motivation and active involvement (Xu et al., 2023). In the Filipino environment, cultural values such as collectivism and a focus on family may have a

substantial impact on student involvement, requiring culturally sensitive teaching approaches. These techniques should incorporate indigenous practices, beliefs, experiences, values, and life lessons into the curriculum, creating a sense of belonging and relevance for students.

The findings enhance the theoretical understanding of engagement by emphasizing its complexity and dependence on contextual factors. Although the Social Cognitive Theory of Teacher Efficacy highlights the importance of competence in influencing classroom interactions, this research suggests that engagement goes beyond merely teacher competence and classroom management. The results align with emerging perspectives that engagement is shaped by a broader range of factors, such as institutional culture, systemic inequities, and the socio-emotional contexts of students (Garcia & Pantao, 2021).

The study highlights several methodological limitations that require acknowledgment. Initially, reliance on self-reported surveys can lead to biases, as respondents may exaggerate their skills or involvement. Secondly, the cross-sectional design limits causal conclusions, preventing any exploration of the temporal dynamics between competence, management, and engagement. Thirdly, the research focused on two private colleges, restricting the applicability of the results to other educational settings. Ultimately, the engagement metrics used may fail to adequately convey culturally specific nuances, including the influence of family or community on student behaviors.

To build on these results, future research should utilize longitudinal designs to examine the time-varying links between teacher ability, classroom management, and student involvement. Furthermore, qualitative approaches such as interviews and focus groups may provide deeper insights into the experiences of students and instructors, resulting in a more nuanced understanding of involvement in particular circumstances. Comparative studies across cultural and institutional settings might help us better

understand how systemic and cultural elements combine to impact these processes.

This research underscores the vital importance of teacher skills in fostering effective classroom management while also highlighting the complex and contextually based aspects of student engagement. The results challenge oversimplified views of linear connections and advocate for holistic approaches that consider cultural, systemic, and institutional elements. By addressing these challenges, educators and policymakers can create impactful interventions that improve teaching effectiveness, classroom interactions, and student involvement. These initiatives can enable private tertiary institutions in Koronadal City to cultivate empowered and active learners who are prepared to succeed in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

The study emphasizes essential considerations for educators, administrators, and policymakers to enhance educational outcomes in private tertiary institutions. Key recommendations stress the need for a multifaceted strategy addressing student engagement and the academic climate. Revamping teacher training programs is crucial, focusing on digital fluency, cultural awareness, and socio-emotional intelligence to effectively support diverse students. Culturally responsive teaching in Koronadal City is vital, integrating local cultural elements to boost students' sense of belonging and motivation. Additionally, developing comprehensive measures of student engagement is necessary, as traditional metrics often overlook factors influencing involvement. Finally, enhancing institutional support through investments in digital infrastructure, professional development, and student services is critical to fostering dynamic learning. Collectively, these strategies promote a collaborative approach to cultivating engaged students who are prepared for success.

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