

Professional Competency, Behavior of Pupils and Anxiety of Elementary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the relationship between teachers' professional competence, pupils' behavior, and teachers' anxiety among elementary teachers in one of the division Negros Island Region during the Academic Year 2025–2026. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 137 public elementary teachers selected through stratified random sampling using a standardized questionnaire. The findings revealed that teachers exhibited a very high level of professional competence, pupils demonstrated a high level of behavior, and teachers experienced a moderate level of anxiety. The results further showed a significant negative relationship between teachers' professional competence and teachers' anxiety, while no significant relationship was found between pupils' behavior and teachers' anxiety. These findings suggest that higher professional competence is associated with lower levels of teacher anxiety, whereas pupils' behavior does not significantly influence teachers' anxiety. The study recommends strengthening professional development programs and teacher support initiatives to enhance teacher competence and promote teachers' well-being.

Keywords: Professional Competence; Pupils' Behavior; Teachers' Anxiety; Elementary Teachers

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the well-being of educators has gained increasing attention, particularly concerning the impact of teacher anxiety on the educational environment. Elementary school teachers, who lay the foundational groundwork for pupils' academic and social development, often face significant pressures that can contribute to heightened anxiety levels. These pressures include managing diverse classroom behaviors, meeting rigorous academic standards, and navigating complex interpersonal relationships with pupils, parents, and colleagues (Kim et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2024).

Teacher anxiety is a multifaceted issue influenced by various factors, including the teacher's perceived professional competence and the behavior of their pupils. Professional competence, encompassing pedagogical skills, subject matter knowledge, and classroom management techniques, plays a crucial role in a teacher's ability to effectively handle classroom challenges and foster a positive learning environment (Duan et al., 2024; Zhou et al., 2024). Teachers who feel well-prepared and confident in their abilities are more likely to experience lower levels of anxiety, as they are better equipped to address the demands of their profession (Duan et al., 2024; Dreer, 2023).

Pupils' behavior is another significant factor contributing to teacher anxiety. Disruptive, defiant, or disengaged pupils can create a stressful classroom environment, leading to increased teacher anxiety and burnout. Managing challenging behaviors requires considerable time and effort, diverting attention from instructional activities and potentially undermining the teacher's sense of efficacy (Duan et al., 2024; NASUWT, 2024).

Understanding the interplay between professional competence, pupils' behavior, and teacher anxiety is essential for developing targeted interventions to support teachers' well-being and improve the overall quality of education. By identifying the specific factors that contribute to teacher anxiety, schools and policymakers

can implement strategies to enhance teachers' professional development, promote positive classroom management practices, and create a more supportive and nurturing work environment (Aziku & Zhang, 2024; Education International, 2024).

This study seeks to investigate the relationship between elementary teachers' professional competence, pupils' behavior, and teacher anxiety. By examining these factors in a holistic manner, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the complex dynamics that influence teacher well-being and to inform the development of effective interventions to support teachers in their vital role. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader goal of improving teacher retention, enhancing the quality of instruction, and fostering positive outcomes for pupils (Dreer, 2023; Zhou et al., 2024).

Moreover, student behavior and teacher anxiety appear to be closely related. Research indicates that frequent student behavior problems contribute to increased teacher stress and anxiety. Teachers who regularly manage disruptive behaviors often report emotional exhaustion, reduced job satisfaction, and psychological distress. Conversely, teachers with strong professional competencies, particularly in classroom management and emotional regulation, are better equipped to handle challenging pupil behaviors and maintain a conducive learning environment despite workplace pressures (Nguyen, N. T. L., 2023).

The relationship between professional competency and anxiety is likewise important. Competent teachers generally demonstrate greater confidence in handling classroom challenges, implementing instructional strategies, and responding to students' behavioral concerns. Such competency may serve as a protective factor against work-related anxiety by enhancing self-efficacy and professional resilience. In contrast, teachers who perceive inadequacies in their professional skills may be more vulnerable to stress and anxiety when confronted with behavioral and instructional challenges (UNESCO, 2024).

In the Philippine educational context, elementary teachers face numerous challenges, including overcrowded classrooms, diverse learner needs, limited resources, and increasing administrative responsibilities. These conditions may influence pupil behavior, affect teachers' professional performance, and contribute to anxiety. Despite ongoing professional development initiatives, there remains a need to examine how pupils' behavior, professional competency, and anxiety interact among elementary teachers to better understand factors affecting their effectiveness and well-being (Agyapong, B., Brett-MacLean, P., Orimalade, A., et al., 2024).

Given these circumstances, the present study seeks to investigate the behavior of pupils, professional competency, and anxiety among elementary teachers. Understanding the relationship among these variables may provide valuable insights for school administrators, policymakers, and educators in designing interventions aimed at enhancing teacher competency, promoting teacher well-being, and improving pupil behavior. Ultimately, the findings of this study may contribute to the development of supportive educational environments that foster both teacher effectiveness and student success (Savina, E., Fulton, C., & Beaton, C, 2025).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to describe the levels of professional competency, pupils' behavior, and teachers' anxiety and to determine the relationships among these variables. The respondents were 137 public elementary school teachers for Academic Year 2025–2026, drawn from a total population of 207 teachers. The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula with a 0.05 margin of error, while stratified random sampling was employed to ensure appropriate representation across the participating schools.

Data were collected using a researcher-made 60-item questionnaire consisting of three sections that measured professional competency, pupils' behavior, and teachers' anxiety using a five-point Likert scale. Professional competency covered the relevant PPST domains, pupils' behavior included classroom participation, behavioral self-control, and social behavior, while teacher anxiety encompassed instructional anxiety, classroom management anxiety, and workload and professional anxiety. The instrument underwent content validation by five experts using Lawshe's Content Validity Ratio (CVR), with all items obtaining a CVR of 1.00. A pilot test

involving 30 comparable elementary teachers established internal consistency through Cronbach's alpha, yielding coefficients of 0.968 for professional competency, 0.765 for pupils' behavior, and 0.838 for teachers' anxiety.

Prior to data collection, formal approval was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent. The questionnaires were personally administered and retrieved with the assistance of school administrators. Respondents were informed of the purpose and significance of the study before participation, after which the completed responses were organized, tabulated, and prepared for statistical analysis.

For data analysis, mean and standard deviation were used to determine the levels of professional competency, pupils' behavior, and teachers' anxiety. Since the normality test indicated that the data were not normally distributed, the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman's rho) was employed to determine the significant relationships between professional competency and teachers' anxiety and between pupils' behavior and teachers' anxiety.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of Professional Competence among Elementary Teachers

Table 1. Level of Professional Competence among Elementary Teachers

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	4.42	0.52	Very High
1. I demonstrate mastery of the subjects that I teach.	4.5	0.59	Very High
2. I use teaching strategies that help learners understand lessons effectively.	4.59	0.55	Very High
3. I integrate appropriate technologies into classroom instruction.	4.04	0.81	High
4. I connect lesson content to real-life situations.	4.5	0.62	Very High
5. I continuously update my knowledge of curriculum content.	4.47	0.63	Very High
Learning Environment	4.39	0.54	Very High
6. I establish a safe and supportive classroom environment.	4.56	0.55	Very High
7. I create learning experiences that motivate pupils to learn.	4.46	0.63	Very High
8. I manage classroom behavior effectively.	4.12	0.78	High
9. I promote respect and positive relationships among learners.	4.46	0.61	Very High
10. I encourage active participation during classroom activities.	4.37	0.66	Very High
Diversity of Learners	4.43	0.54	Very High
11. I adjust instruction according to learners' needs and abilities.	4.4	0.64	Very High
12. I use inclusive teaching practices in my classroom.	4.4	0.6	Very High
13. I provide support to struggling learners.	4.49	0.62	Very High
14. I recognize and respect learners' diverse backgrounds.	4.5	0.62	Very High
15. I use varied instructional materials for different learning styles.	4.37	0.67	Very High
Curriculum and Planning	4.53	0.49	Very High
16. I prepare lesson plans aligned with curriculum standards.	4.65	0.55	Very High
17. I organize learning activities that meet lesson objectives.	4.55	0.56	Very High
18. I select appropriate learning resources for instruction.	4.5	0.63	Very High
19. I plan lessons that develop higher-order thinking skills.	4.42	0.64	Very High
20. I allocate sufficient time for learning activities.	4.5	0.56	Very High
Assessment and Reporting	4.46	0.51	Very High
21. I use different assessment methods to evaluate learning.	4.51	0.61	Very High

22. I provide timely feedback to learners.	4.38	0.58	Very High
23. I use assessment results to improve instruction.	4.54	0.56	Very High
24. I maintain accurate records of learners' performance.	4.48	0.56	Very High
25. I communicate learner progress clearly to parents and stakeholders.	4.38	0.67	Very High
Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	4.45	0.49	Very High
26. I participate in school and community activities.	4.38	0.64	Very High
27. I collaborate with parents to support learners' development.	4.46	0.56	Very High
28. I work effectively with colleagues in achieving school goals.	4.54	0.56	Very High
29. I participate in professional learning activities and trainings.	4.3	0.65	Very High
30. I demonstrate professionalism in carrying out my responsibilities.	4.57	0.55	Very High
PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE	4.45	0.43	Very High
(Overall Mean)			

Legend: (4.21-5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

Table 1 presents the level of professional competence among elementary teachers. The findings indicate that elementary teachers possess a very high level of professional competence across all domains ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 0.43$) suggesting that they have developed the knowledge, skills, and professional practices necessary to meet the demands of contemporary education. The consistently high ratings imply that teacher professional development initiatives and competency-based standards are effectively supporting teachers in their instructional and professional responsibilities.

The highest rating obtained by Curriculum and Planning ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.49$) implies that teachers demonstrate strong capabilities in organizing learning experiences, aligning instruction with curriculum standards, and planning lessons that promote learner achievement. This finding supports the assertion of Nguyen (2023) that effective curriculum planning and instructional design are essential competencies that enable teachers to respond to diverse learner needs and promote meaningful learning experiences. Likewise, UNESCO (2024) emphasized that competent teachers possess the ability to design, implement, and continuously improve instruction to meet changing educational demands.

The very high level of competence in Assessment and Reporting ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.51$) indicates that teachers effectively utilize assessment information to improve learning and instructional outcomes. This finding suggests that the respondents recognize assessment not merely as a means of evaluating learners but as a tool for guiding instruction and monitoring progress. According to Black and Wiliam (2024), assessment practices that provide timely feedback and accurate information on learner performance contribute significantly to educational improvement and student achievement. Effective assessment and reporting also strengthen communication among teachers, learners, and parents, thereby enhancing accountability and instructional decision-making.

Similarly, the very high rating in Community Linkages and Professional Engagement ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 0.49$) highlights teachers' commitment to collaboration and continuous professional growth. This finding implies that teachers understand the importance of stakeholder involvement in promoting learner development and school effectiveness. Epstein (2023) emphasized that strong partnerships among schools, families, and communities create supportive learning environments that positively influence student outcomes. Furthermore, active participation in professional learning opportunities enhances teachers' instructional competence and adaptability to educational changes.

The findings further reveal that teachers demonstrate a very high level of competence in addressing Diversity of Learners ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 0.54$). This suggests that respondents can implement inclusive instructional practices and addressing learners' varied needs and backgrounds. UNESCO (2025) emphasized that inclusive education requires teachers to possess competencies that allow them to respond effectively to learner diversity

and ensure equitable access to quality education. The result therefore indicates that teachers are implementing learner-centered approaches that support inclusivity and educational equity.

Likewise, the very high rating in Content Knowledge and Pedagogy ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.52$) implies that teachers possess adequate mastery of subject matter and employ effective teaching strategies in delivering instruction. The findings support the study of Nguyen (2023), who reported that teachers with strong pedagogical and content competencies demonstrate greater effectiveness in facilitating learning and adapting instruction to meet learners' needs. UNESCO (2024) likewise noted that mastery of content and pedagogy remains one of the most significant determinants of teaching quality and learner achievement.

Although Learning Environment ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.54$) obtained the lowest mean among the six domains, it remained within the very high category. This finding suggests that teachers are generally successful in creating safe, supportive, and engaging learning environments. However, the comparatively lower mean may indicate the need for continued enhancement of classroom management strategies and learner engagement practices. According to Ormrod (2024), a positive learning environment promotes learner motivation, participation, and academic success while reducing behavioral concerns and instructional difficulties.

Overall, the findings imply that elementary teachers are highly prepared to perform their professional responsibilities and adapt to contemporary educational challenges. The very high ratings across all domains suggest that competency-based professional development programs and the implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) are contributing positively to teacher effectiveness. Moreover, strong professional competence may serve as a protective factor against occupational stress and anxiety. Klassen and Kim (2024) reported that teachers who perceive themselves as competent tend to exhibit greater self-efficacy, resilience, and psychological well-being. Therefore, maintaining and strengthening teacher competency through continuous professional development remains essential for sustaining instructional quality and promoting teacher well-being.

Level of Pupil Behavior

Table 2. Level of Pupil Behavior as a Whole and in terms of Classroom Participation, Behavioral Self Control, and Social Behavior.

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Classroom Participation	4.05	0.60	High
1. Pupils actively participate during classroom discussions.	3.89	0.82	High
2. Pupils complete assigned tasks on time.	3.92	0.69	High
3. Pupils follow classroom rules and procedures.	4.23	0.56	Very High
4. Pupils cooperate with classmates during group activities.	4.22	0.58	Very High
5. Pupils pay attention during lessons.	3.97	0.69	High
Behavioral Self-Control	3.80	0.68	High
6. Pupils can control their emotions when corrected.	3.64	0.78	High
7. Pupils remain calm during classroom activities.	4.00	0.80	High
8. Pupils resolve conflicts peacefully with classmates.	3.55	0.83	High
9. Pupils demonstrate respect toward teachers and peers.	4.20	0.64	High
10. Pupils accept responsibilities for their actions.	3.62	0.86	High
Social Behavior	3.96	0.74	High
11. Pupils interact positively with classmates.	3.99	0.78	High
12. Pupils show kindness and consideration toward others.	4.01	0.84	High
13. Pupils willingly help classmates when needed.	3.82	0.79	High
14. Pupils demonstrate good manners in school.	3.99	0.85	High
15. Pupils participate appropriately in school activities.	3.99	0.77	High
PUPILS BEHAVIOR (Overall Mean)	3.94	0.55	High

Legend: (4.21-5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

Table 2 presents the level of pupils' behavior as perceived by the teacher-respondents. The pupils demonstrated a high level of positive behavior ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.55$), indicating that learners generally exhibit desirable classroom behaviors that contribute to an effective learning environment. The relatively low standard deviation further suggests consistency in teachers' perceptions regarding learners' behavior. This finding implies that the respondents' schools have been successful in promoting behavioral practices that encourage learner engagement, cooperation, and social responsibility.

The highest mean was obtained by Classroom Participation ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.60$), indicating that pupils actively engage in classroom activities, follow rules, cooperate with peers, and pay attention during lessons. This finding suggests that learners are motivated to participate in instructional activities and are responsive to teacher guidance. According to the United Nations (2023), active learner participation is a key component of learner-centered education because it promotes engagement, motivation, and academic achievement. Likewise, Collie, Shapka, and Perry (2022) emphasized that pupils who actively participate in classroom discussions and collaborative learning activities tend to develop stronger academic and social competencies. Therefore, the high level of classroom participation observed in the study may contribute positively to learners' academic performance and classroom engagement.

The dimension of Social Behavior ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 0.74$) likewise received a high rating, suggesting that pupils generally demonstrate positive interactions with classmates, kindness, cooperation, and respect. These findings imply that learners are developing interpersonal skills necessary for positive peer relationships and social adjustment. According to UNICEF (2024), positive social behavior among learners promotes inclusive and supportive classroom environments that enhance both academic and socio-emotional development. Similarly, Savina, Fulton, and Beaton (2025) emphasized that social competence and positive peer interactions are important predictors of successful learning experiences and emotional development among children.

Although still interpreted as High, Behavioral Self-Control ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.68$) obtained the lowest mean among the three dimensions. This finding suggests that some learners may occasionally experience difficulties in regulating emotions, accepting corrections, resolving conflicts, and taking responsibility for their actions. The result implies a need for teachers and schools to strengthen interventions related to self-discipline, emotional regulation, and conflict management. According to Zimmerman (2023), self-regulation is a crucial factor influencing learners' academic achievement, social competence, and behavioral adjustment. Learners who possess higher levels of self-control are generally better equipped to manage classroom expectations and maintain positive relationships with others.

The overall findings suggest that while pupils already demonstrate positive classroom participation and social behaviors, schools may further enhance behavioral self-control through programs that develop emotional intelligence, self-regulation, and responsible decision-making. Teachers may implement social-emotional learning (SEL) activities, classroom behavior reinforcement strategies, and character education programs to strengthen these skills. Research by Durlak and Mahoney (2022) found that social-emotional learning interventions significantly improve students' self-management, social skills, and behavioral outcomes, thereby promoting positive educational experiences.

Overall, the results indicate that pupils' behavior contributes positively to the classroom environment and supports effective teaching and learning processes. Positive pupil behavior helps minimize classroom disruptions, foster cooperative learning, and promote healthy relationships among learners. Consequently, maintaining and strengthening these behaviors can contribute to improved educational outcomes and a more conducive learning environment.

The findings indicate that schools should continue fostering learner participation and positive social interactions while strengthening programs that enhance behavioral self-control. Developing learners' emotional regulation and responsible behavior can further improve classroom management, academic engagement, and overall school climate.

Level of Teacher Anxiety

Table 3. Level of Anxiety among Teachers as a Whole and in terms of Instructional Anxiety, Classroom Management, and Workload and Professional Anxiety.

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Instructional Anxiety	3.03	0.84	Moderate
1. I feel anxious when preparing my lesson plans.	2.57	0.98	Low
2. I worry that I may not deliver my lesson effectively.	2.95	0.8	Moderate
3. I feel nervous when teaching difficult topics.	3.15	0.96	Moderate
4. I become stressed when pupils do not understand my lesson.	3.61	0.97	High
5. I feel anxious when I am observed while teaching.	2.85	1.17	Moderate
Classroom Management Anxiety	3.25	1.02	Moderate
6. I feel anxious when pupils become noisy or disruptive.	3.48	1.13	High
7. I worry about managing pupil behavior effectively.	3	1.03	Moderate
8. I feel stressed when I lose control of classroom discipline.	2.99	1.05	Moderate
9. I become nervous when handling difficult pupil behavior.	3.36	1.09	Moderate
10. I feel anxious when conflicts arise among pupils in class.	3.4	1.19	Moderate
Workload and Professional Anxiety	3.61	1	High
11. I feel stressed due to heavy teaching workload.	3.91	1.04	High
12. I worry about completing school requirements on time.	3.45	1.12	High
13. I feel anxious about administrative tasks assigned to me.	3.3	0.93	Moderate
14. I feel pressured by performance expectations from school.	3.7	1.09	High
15. I feel overwhelmed by multiple responsibilities as a teacher.	3.68	1.22	High
TEACHERS' ANXIETY (Overall Mean)	3.29	0.86	Moderate

Legend: (4.21-5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

Table 3 presents the level of anxiety among elementary teachers. The findings revealed that elementary teachers experienced a moderate level of anxiety ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.86$). This suggests that while teachers are generally capable of managing their instructional responsibilities and classroom demands, they continue to experience stress arising from various professional obligations. The result implies that teacher anxiety remains a concern that requires institutional attention because prolonged anxiety may negatively affect teacher performance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being.

Among the three dimensions, Workload and Professional Anxiety obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.00$), interpreted as high. This finding indicates that teachers are primarily affected by heavy teaching loads, administrative tasks, deadlines, performance expectations, and multiple professional responsibilities. The result implies that organizational and workload-related factors contribute substantially to teachers' anxiety. This finding is consistent with the study of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2023), who found that increasing workload demands and accountability requirements are among the strongest predictors of teacher stress and emotional exhaustion. Similarly, Agyapong et al. (2024) reported that excessive workload, role overload, and professional pressures significantly contribute to anxiety and mental health concerns among educators. The finding suggests that schools should consider implementing workload-management strategies and wellness programs to reduce stress and promote teacher well-being.

The results further showed that Classroom Management Anxiety ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.02$) was also experienced at a moderate level. This indicates that some teachers experience anxiety when handling disruptive behavior, maintaining discipline, and resolving classroom conflicts. The relatively higher variability of responses suggests that teachers differ in their confidence and effectiveness in classroom management. This finding supports Kyriacou (2023), who emphasized that classroom discipline and student behavior management remain significant sources of occupational stress among teachers. Likewise, Velez and Cruz (2024) found that challenges associated with classroom discipline and learner behavior contribute to teachers' emotional strain,

particularly when support systems are limited. The result implies the need for continuous professional development programs that strengthen classroom management skills and behavior intervention strategies.

Meanwhile, Instructional Anxiety obtained the lowest mean ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 0.84$), although it remained within the moderate category. This finding suggests that teachers generally feel more confident in instructional responsibilities such as lesson planning and lesson delivery compared to managing workload and professional pressures. The low rating of the item related to lesson planning further indicates that most respondents feel competent in preparing instructional materials and organizing learning experiences. This finding supports Klassen and Kim (2024), who reported that teachers with strong instructional competence and professional self efficacy generally experience lower levels of instructional anxiety. Similarly, Nguyen (2023) emphasized that professional competence enhances teachers' confidence in instructional delivery and reduces concerns associated with teaching responsibilities.

The item with the highest mean under Instructional Anxiety was "I become stressed when pupils do not understand my lesson" ($M = 3.61$), indicating that teachers are highly concerned about learners' academic progress and understanding. This finding suggests that teachers are committed to student learning and may experience emotional pressure when desired learning outcomes are not achieved. According to Savina, Fulton, and Beaton (2025), emotionally responsive teachers are more likely to experience stress when learners encounter academic difficulties because they perceive student success as a reflection of their instructional effectiveness.

Overall, the findings imply that while teachers possess the competence necessary for effective instruction, anxiety continues to arise primarily from workload demands rather than instructional responsibilities. This suggests that interventions should focus not only on improving teacher competencies but also on addressing workplace conditions that contribute to stress. Schools may implement teacher wellness programs, counseling services, stress-management workshops, and policies that reduce excessive administrative requirements. Supporting teachers' mental health is essential because teacher well-being is closely linked to instructional effectiveness, job satisfaction, and learner outcomes.

The findings highlight the importance of creating supportive school environments that prioritize teacher well-being. School administrators and policymakers should consider reducing unnecessary administrative burdens, strengthening mental health support services, and promoting work-life balance among teachers. By addressing workload-related stressors, schools can improve teachers' psychological well-being, enhance instructional effectiveness, and ultimately contribute to improved learner achievement.

Relationship between Professional Competence and Teacher Anxiety

Table 4. Relationship between Professional Competence and Teacher Anxiety

Variable	Test Statistics (r_s)	p-value	Decision for H_0	Interpretation
Professional Competence vs. Teachers' Anxiety	-0.159*	0.024	Reject H_0	Significant

Table 4 presents the relationship between professional competence and teachers' anxiety. The results revealed a significant negative relationship between the two variables, with a Spearman's rho coefficient of -0.159 and a p-value of 0.024, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that as teachers' professional competence increases, their level of anxiety tends to decrease, although the relationship is weak. The findings imply that enhancing teachers' professional competence may contribute to reducing their anxiety in carrying out their teaching responsibilities.

The significant negative relationship between professional competence and teachers' anxiety is supported by literature emphasizing the protective role of teacher competence on psychological well-being. According to the OECD (2023), teachers who possess strong instructional knowledge, classroom management skills, and professional expertise are more confident in performing their responsibilities and are therefore less likely to experience anxiety. Similarly, the literature review highlighted that professional competence enhances self-

efficacy, preparedness, and confidence, enabling teachers to manage instructional challenges more effectively. The negative correlation found in the study suggests that teachers who are more competent tend to experience lower levels of anxiety because they feel better prepared to handle classroom demands and professional responsibilities.

Relationship between Pupil Behavior and Teacher Anxiety

Table 5. Relationship between Pupil Behavior and Teacher Anxiety

Variable	Test Statistics (r_s)	p-value	Decision for H_0	Interpretation
Pupils' Behavior vs. Teachers' Anxiety	-0.049	0.492	Fail to Reject H_0	Not Significant

Table 5 presents the relationship between pupils' behavior and teachers' anxiety. The results showed a very weak negative relationship ($r_s = -0.049$) with a p-value of 0.492, indicating that the relationship was not statistically significant; therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This suggests that pupils' behavior did not have a significant influence on the anxiety experienced by teachers in the present study. The findings imply that other factors, such as workload, professional responsibilities, and organizational demands, may have a greater impact on teachers' anxiety than pupils' behavior.

The finding that pupils' behavior was not significantly related to teachers' anxiety partially differs from the literature reviewed. Previous studies cited in the review suggested that disruptive pupil behavior may increase teacher stress and anxiety because it affects classroom management and instructional effectiveness. UNICEF (2024) noted that learner behavior influences classroom climate and teacher experiences, while UNESCO (2025) emphasized that positive learner behavior contributes to favorable educational environments. However, the present findings indicate that pupils' behavior did not significantly influence teachers' anxiety. This may be explained by the generally high level of positive behavior exhibited by pupils, which minimized behavioral concerns. Furthermore, the moderate level of teacher anxiety appears to be more strongly associated with workload, administrative demands, and professional responsibilities rather than learner behavior. Therefore, organizational and work-related factors may have a greater impact on teachers' anxiety than classroom behavioral issues in the current context.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Elementary teachers demonstrated a very high level of professional competency, reflecting their effectiveness in instruction, classroom management, assessment, curriculum implementation, and professional engagement.

Pupils exhibited a high level of positive behavior, particularly in classroom participation and social interaction, indicating generally favorable learning and social behaviors.

Elementary teachers experienced a moderate level of anxiety, with workload and professional responsibilities identified as the primary sources of stress.

Higher levels of professional competency were associated with lower levels of teacher anxiety, suggesting that competent teachers are better able to cope with professional demands.

Pupils' behavior was not significantly related to teachers' anxiety, indicating that teachers' anxiety is influenced more by professional and workload-related factors than by learner behavior.

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