



UNFOLDING THE ISSUES BEHIND THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND POLICY: AN EMPIRICAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF MASS PROMOTION AND STUDENT LITERACY GAPS IN THE BISLIG CITY DIVISION

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Abstract

This study investigates the systemic implications of the "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) policy for student literacy and numeracy in public elementary schools within the Schools Division of Bislig City, Caraga Region, Philippines. Driven by the critical performance deficits of Filipino learners on international standard assessments, the research explores the lived experiences of educators as they navigate the administrative tension between educational equity and pedagogical accountability. Using a qualitative, phenomenological research design grounded in the six-phase thematic analysis framework of Braun and Clarke, primary data were collected through focus group discussions and key informant interviews with a sample of twenty public school teachers and twenty school heads. Thematic analysis reveals that a systemic misinterpretation of the NCLB mandate has normalized mass promotion and established a "barely passing culture". This structural shift has contributed to a decline in student literacy and numeracy, created profound ethical and professional dilemmas for classroom teachers, and widened learning inequalities. Although schools have designed localized remedial programs, their execution remains inconsistent due to severe funding and resource constraints. The findings highlight the need for systemic educational reforms, including the adoption of competency-based promotion, the integration of alternative and formative assessments, increased institutional support for teachers, and collaborative policy governance.

Keywords: *No Child Left Behind, mass promotion, literacy rates, educational policy, qualitative research, competency-based promotion, thematic analysis.*



Introduction

The persistent decline in student literacy and numeracy among Filipino learners has emerged as a critical educational crisis. Despite various interventions introduced by the Department of Education (DepEd), including ongoing teacher capacity-building and the localized development of learning resources, national competency levels remain low. The severity of this academic decline is highlighted by international competency indicators. According to the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results, Filipino learners scored significantly below the OECD average in mathematics, reading, and science. Only 16% of Philippine students achieved at least Level 2 proficiency in mathematics, a stark contrast to the OECD average of 69%. While over 85% of peers in Singapore, Macao, Japan, Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei, and Estonia met or exceeded this baseline, the Philippines ranked in the bottom ten among 81 participating countries across all three domains for the second consecutive assessment cycle. In science education, national outcomes show a similar pattern, with historical statistics placing the country near the bottom of global rankings.

To address these outcomes, DepEd has worked to improve instructional quality by strengthening content knowledge and pedagogical capacity (Mendoza et al., 2022). Additionally, the department has encouraged classroom-level action research to help teachers identify learning gaps and adapt to contextual classroom needs (Saro et al., 2023). Despite these efforts, basic literacy and numeracy issues persist. Perceptions among frontline educators suggest that a major driver of this decline is the unrecorded but widespread practice of promoting students to higher grade levels before they have mastered basic academic competencies.

This promotion pattern is closely linked to the local interpretation of the "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) principle. Globally, NCLB originated as a federal policy in the United States under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which mandated 100% student proficiency in reading and math within a designated timeframe through high-stakes standardized testing and district accountability. While designed to address achievement gaps among low-income and minority students, the policy was criticized for narrowing the curriculum, putting excessive pressure on teachers, and encouraging questionable administrative practices to artificially inflate test scores.

In the Philippine context, the NCLB philosophy aligns with the "Education for All" mandate and is rooted in Section 1, Article XIV of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which obligates the state to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels. This constitutional mandate led to legislative initiatives, such as Senate Bill 2366 and Senate Bill 75—collectively known as the "No Filipino Child Left Behind Act"—introduced by Senator Manny Villar to guarantee access to quality education as a basic right. Although these bills did not pass into law, their core principles were adopted by DepEd. This was done to remove administrative barriers that limit access for marginalized children, particularly those classified as Students-At-Risk-of-Dropping-Out (SARDO).

However, the local implementation of this policy has generated unintended consequences. Research indicates that a misunderstanding of the NCLB mandate has shifted the focus from "ensuring no child is left behind academically" to "ensuring no child is left behind in terms of grade progression". This misinterpretation has institutionalized a "barely passing culture" within public schools (Lumang et al., 2021). Under this paradigm, teachers feel pressured to promote students regardless of academic performance, as high student retention rates can negatively impact school performance metrics and lower a teacher's rating under the Results-based Performance Management System (RPMS).

This issue is further complicated by DepEd Order No. 73, S. 2012 (updated in 2014), which defines promotion and retention on a subject-by-subject basis rather than overall grade level. This policy creates instructional confusion at the elementary level, where classrooms are typically self-contained and managed by a single teacher. Under this order, students who fail a subject due to chronic absenteeism are expected to complete remedial classes over a single summer—a standard that is often practically unworkable. Consequently, public school teachers frequently interpret these administrative barriers as a tacit instruction for mass promotion. As noted by De Dios



(2015), promoting academically delayed students allows learners to advance with zero accountability, eroding educational quality and contributing directly to low national PISA scores.

While public school educators widely observe mass promotion, the empirical literature on the topic has remained largely silent. This study addresses this gap by investigating the lived experiences of educators in the Schools Division of Bislig City, where student outcomes mirror these systemic challenges. By analyzing the perspectives of frontline teachers and school heads, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the NCLB policy's local execution.

To investigate these systemic issues, this study addressed five research questions:

1. What are the insights of teachers and school heads regarding the implementation of the "No Child Left Behind Policy"?
2. What are the school practices in compliance with the "No Child Left Behind Policy" as experienced by teachers and school heads?
3. What are the challenges encountered by teachers relative to the incidence of mass promotion in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Policy?
4. What is the impact of the implementation of the "No Child Left Behind Policy" on the literacy of learners in reading, science, and math?
5. What inputs to the No Child Left Behind Policy can be suggested to school management based on the findings of this study?



Methods

Phenomenological Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative, phenomenological research design to investigate the lived experiences of public elementary school educators. Qualitative phenomenology is uniquely suited for this inquiry, as it focuses on describing and interpreting how individuals make sense of specific experiences within their professional and social contexts. To analyze the qualitative data systematically, the study adopted the six-phase thematic analysis framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This structured methodology guides the researcher through data familiarization, initial code generation, theme searching, theme review, theme definition, and final report production, ensuring a rigorous and auditable analytical process.

Participant Population and Stratified Sampling Frame

The study was conducted within the Schools Division of Bislig City, a public school division comprising eight administrative districts in the Caraga Region of the Philippines. The target population consisted of 557 active public elementary school teachers and 52 school heads across 51 distinct elementary institutions. To secure deep, qualitatively rich, and policy-informed perspectives, the researchers employed purposive sampling to select twenty (20) classroom teachers and twenty (20) school heads, establishing a total study sample of forty (40) key informants. This sample size conforms to qualitative sample size benchmarks for phenomenological investigations. The distribution of the target institutional population and the selected purposive sample across the districts of Bislig City is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Institutional Population and Qualitative Sample Distribution across Bislig City Division

Sub-District / Operational Zone	School Sites Included	Total Teacher Population	Total School Head Population	Selected Teacher Sample (n)	Selected School Head Sample (n)
Bislig 1A	Bislig Central ES, San Isidro ES, R. Castillo ES (Mancarogo), San Antonio ES	62	5	2	2
Bislig 1B	Balingan ES, New Bongga ES, New Jerusalem ES, Gaspar Serrano ES, Gerardo Verano ES, Pamaypayan ES	64	6	3	3
Bislig 2A	Mabog ES, San Roque CES, Mamparasan ES, Mantuyom ES, Puerto ES, Sanyata ES, San Nicolas ES, Maharlika ES	67	8	3	3
Bislig 2B	San Fernando ES, Coletto ES, SEAG ES, R Castillo ES (Baguis), Burbuanan ES, Pamanlinan ES, Sote ES, Ser-Fel Mone ES	65	8	2	2
Bislig 2C	San Vicente ES, Sta Cruz ES, Bebiano Alba ES, Bucto ES,	65	8	2	2

	P.B Duray Tumanan ES, Delot ES, Caguyao ES, Mantaban ES				
Mangagoy 1	Mangagoy Central ES, Mangagoy South ES, Mangagoy Hilltop ES, Mangagoy East ES, Mangagoy North ES, Isabelo Landeta ES, BCD SPED Center, F.C Pedraverde ES	129	8	3	3
Mangagoy 2A	Plaza Central ES, Requina ES	48	2	2	2
Mangagoy 2B	Caramcam ES, Labisma ES, Lawigan ES, Espiritu ES, Olayvar ES, P.M Clar ES, Paler-Lumayog ES	58	7	3	3
Total Division Scale (N / n)	51 distinct elementary schools	557	52	20	20

Note: Demographics compiled from official Bislig City Division educational profile records.

Data Collection Instruments and Validation Protocols

The primary data collection tool was a researcher-designed, open-ended interview guide structured around the study's five research questions. The guide was formulated to elicit detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences with the NCLB policy, school retention practices, and student literacy outcomes. To establish construct and face validity, the instrument underwent a rigorous evaluation process. It was first reviewed by the division panel and academic research advisers, then validated by three external qualitative research experts. The feedback was integrated to refine prompt clarity, eliminate leading language, and ensure compliance with ethical protocols.

Data Collection and Ethical Protocols

Data collection followed formal administrative and ethical channels. First, the researchers obtained written authorization from the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS), Gemma A. De Paz, and the Assistant Schools Division Superintendent (ASDS), Glorian B. Ederosas. Upon receiving division-level approval, formal invitations were sent to Public Schools District Supervisors and school principals to schedule the data collection sessions.

Data collection was conducted through face-to-face Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with classroom teachers and semi-structured Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with school heads. Sessions were scheduled at times and quiet school locations that minimized instructional disruption. Before beginning, participants read and signed informed consent documents. Participants were informed that their participation was completely voluntary, that they could withdraw at any time, and that the discussions would be audio-recorded solely for academic transcription. Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, anonymized, and cleaned of identifying details to protect participant confidentiality.



Project Logistics and Operational Resource Allocation

To ensure the academic integrity, administrative feasibility, and transparency of the inquiry, the project's operational costs were monitored. The direct operational expenses associated with materials procurement, report generation, and data archival are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2

Operational Budget and Project Resource Allocation

Item No.	Unit Type	Quantity	Material Description	Unit Price (Php)	Total Resource Price (Php)
1	Reams	10	A4 sized bond paper (subs 20, 70 gsm)	350.00	3,500.00
2	Sets	2	Printer ink cartridge sets (high yield)	1,400.00	4,200.00
3	Pieces	1	External hard drive (1TB backup system)	3,500.00	3,300.00
TOTAL			Project Operational Expenditure		11,000.00

Note: Budget allocations adapted from the approved project proposal of the Bislig City Division terminal report.

Results

Qualitative Thematic Matrix

The qualitative coding of transcripts from focus group discussions and key informant interviews yielded six major themes. These themes represent the operational challenges, administrative pressures, and educational consequences of the NCLB policy in the Bislig City Division. A synthesis of these themes, paired with representative thematic statements from teachers and school heads, is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Themes and Core Ideas from the Teachers and School Heads on NCLB Implementation

Major Qualitative Themes	Key Core Ideas and Qualitative Thematic Statements
Theme 1: Understanding of the NCLB Policy	• "Ensure that all learners have access to inclusive and equitable education." • "Every child should have the opportunity to learn, regardless of background or ability."



	• <i>"NCLB focuses on accountability and standardized testing to measure student progress."</i> • <i>"The main goal is to guarantee that no child is left behind, but implementation is key."</i>
Theme 2: School Practices in Compliance with NCLB	• <i>"Learners undergo thorough assessment and remediation before promotion."</i> • <i>"Intervention programs are strengthened to support struggling students."</i> • <i>"Mass promotion is practiced in some cases to comply with the policy."</i> • <i>"Teachers conduct additional remedial lessons to help students catch up."</i>
Theme 3: Influence on Decision-Making in Learner Promotion	• <i>"Rather than simply retaining struggling students, interventions are implemented."</i> • <i>"Failing a student who doesn't meet expectations is difficult due to policy constraints."</i> • <i>"Some students are passed despite low competency due to policy compliance."</i> • <i>"Promotional criteria have become more flexible to accommodate all learners."</i>



Theme 4: Ethical and Professional Dilemmas	• <i>"Teachers face a dilemma between fairness in grading and compliance with mass promotion."</i> • <i>"The fear of receiving poor performance ratings affects grading decisions."</i> • <i>"Teachers are sometimes forced to pass students who did not meet competencies."</i> • <i>"Following mass promotion directives sometimes leads to unprepared learners advancing."</i>
Theme 5: Mass Promotion and Perceived Effects on Literacy	• <i>"Students are being promoted despite struggling with basic literacy skills."</i> • <i>"Mass promotion significantly contributes to poor literacy in reading, math, and science."</i> • <i>"There is an observable decline in reading comprehension levels among promoted students."</i> • <i>"Some students lose interest in learning because they know they will be promoted anyway."</i>
Theme 6: Systemic Issues and Reform Needs	• <i>"There is a need for policy revisions to balance student competency with promotion requirements."</i> • <i>"The current system needs to prioritize student mastery rather than just completion."</i>



- *"A more flexible approach to retention should be considered for struggling learners."*
- *"Stakeholders should collaborate in policy-making to ensure practical and effective solutions."*

Note: Thematic framework extracted from qualitative transcripts of Bislig City public school educators.

Theme 1: Understanding of the No Child Left Behind Policy

The participants understood that the NCLB policy aims to guarantee inclusive, fair, and equitable access to quality basic education. Both school heads and classroom teachers viewed the policy as a framework for protecting a child's fundamental right to education, reducing dropout rates, and closing historical socio-economic achievement gaps.

However, many participants noted a disconnect between the policy's goals and its implementation. Six out of twenty participants expressed concern that the pressure to ensure that "no child is left behind" often compromises academic standards. While the policy aims for inclusion, its heavy reliance on standardized testing was seen as a major limitation. Several teachers argued that this standardized focus overlooks the diverse learning styles, developmental paces, and individual needs of children in the classroom.

Theme 2: School Practices in Compliance with NCLB

To comply with the NCLB directive, schools in the Bislig City Division have implemented a variety of academic and administrative practices. These include differentiated classroom instruction, competency-based assessments, parent-teacher collaboration, home visitations, and remedial reading and math programs.

Despite these interventions, participants reported that resource limitations often undermine their effectiveness. Under pressure to meet division performance benchmarks, many schools resort to mass promotion. Teachers admitted that when remediation programs fail to help a student reach the required competency level, the student is often promoted anyway to comply with administrative expectations. This practice allows struggling learners to advance to the next grade level without mastering foundational skills.

Theme 3: Influence on Decision-Making in Learner Promotion

The decision-making process for student promotion is heavily influenced by the administrative requirements of the NCLB policy. Teachers explained that failing a student is difficult due to institutional rules and the pressure to maintain positive school performance metrics.

School promotion decisions are often adjusted to align with broader DepEd directives and divisional targets. Consequently, teachers are expected to exhaust all possible interventions before even considering retention. Because the retention process is administratively complex and socially discouraged, teachers frequently feel pressured to pass students who exhibit clear learning deficits. This environment shifts the focus of promotion decisions from a student's actual academic readiness to systemic policy compliance.



Theme 4: Ethical and Professional Dilemmas

This compliance-driven environment creates significant ethical and professional conflicts for classroom teachers. Educators reported feeling caught between professional grading integrity and the institutional demand for high promotion rates.

A major source of stress is the fear of receiving poor performance evaluations. Under the current system, student failures are often attributed directly to teacher ineffectiveness rather than to external factors such as chronic truancy or a lack of parental support. To avoid negative performance ratings under the RPMS, many teachers choose to award the minimum passing grade of 75. This compromise demotivates educators, as they feel forced to pass unprepared students and are unable to maintain strict, objective grading standards in their classrooms.

Theme 5: Mass Promotion and Perceived Effects on Literacy

Participants identified mass promotion as a primary driver of the decline in student literacy and numeracy within the division. Promoting students who have not mastered foundational reading and math skills makes it difficult for them to engage with more advanced, complex subject matter in higher grade levels.

Educators reported a noticeable decline in reading comprehension, mathematical computation, and scientific literacy among promoted students. Furthermore, automatic promotion has been observed to lower student motivation. When students realize they will advance to the next grade regardless of effort or performance, they are less likely to actively engage in their schoolwork. This dynamic compounds learning gaps over time and contributes to the low performance of Filipino students on national and international standardized tests.

Theme 6: Systemic Issues and Reform Needs

To resolve these challenges, participants emphasized the need for comprehensive systemic reforms. They recommended transitioning from a status-based promotion model to a competency-based promotion framework. Under such a system, student progression would depend on the demonstrated mastery of key academic skills rather than policy mandates.

Additionally, participants called for the development of alternative, formative assessment tools to replace high-stakes standardized tests. They also highlighted the need for increased instructional resources, targeted teacher training in differentiated instruction, and active community and parental engagement. To ensure these reforms are realistic and responsive, educators advised that policy-making should be participatory, actively involving classroom teachers and school administrators in the design process.



Discussion

Comparative Analysis of Educational Accountability

The systemic challenges identified in the Bislig City Division highlight a significant gap between the theoretical goals of the NCLB policy and the operational realities of public school classrooms. Comparing these local findings with international research on accountability reforms reveals a key contrast. In the United States, an empirical analysis of the 2001 NCLB Act using four waves of nationally representative Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) data from 1994 to 2008 showed mixed effects on teachers' work environments. Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty, and Harrington (2014) found that while NCLB high-stakes testing increased stress, it did not significantly damage teacher job satisfaction or their commitment to remain in the profession. In fact, US teachers reported positive trends in administrator support and surprisingly higher feelings of classroom control.

In contrast, public school teachers in the Philippines experience high-stakes accountability as a source of professional disempowerment. Rather than enhancing classroom control, local compliance pressures undermine teachers' professional autonomy. Bislig City educators reported feeling forced to pass students who had not met basic standards, directly compromising their professional judgment and authority.

This difference in outcomes is closely tied to resource allocation. While Western accountability policies are often accompanied by federal funding, such as Title I and Reading First grants to support targeted remediation, schools in the Bislig City Division face severe resource constraints. Without adequate digital tools, learning materials, and specialized reading interventionists, local schools struggle to implement effective remedial programs. As noted by Bernados et al. (2023), public school teachers often struggle to meet policy requirements due to insufficient administrative support and financial resources. Consequently, when actual remediation is not feasible due to resource deficits, mass promotion becomes the only practical way for schools to meet administrative expectations.

The RPMS Appraisal System and Classroom Control

This study highlights how teacher performance evaluations are tied to student passing rates. Under the Results-based Performance Management System (RPMS), student retention is often interpreted as a sign of instructional failure. This system places the responsibility for a student's failure entirely on the teacher, regardless of external challenges like student truancy, poverty, or lack of support at home.

This dynamic creates a perverse incentive structure. Instead of driving instructional improvement, the pressure to meet performance targets leads to grade inflation. Teachers find themselves forced to award a passing grade of 75 to avoid the professional penalties, administrative paperwork, and remedial burdens associated with retaining a student. This pattern supports the findings of Mertler (2010), who observed that the pressure to perform under high-stakes testing regimes can compromise classroom assessment integrity and encourage unethical grading practices. In the Philippines, this "barely passing culture" has turned grade progression into an administrative exercise rather than a reflection of actual academic achievement.

Strategic Remediation Barriers and the Gatcho 2024 Framework

The challenges of NCLB compliance in Bislig City align with the critical analysis of Gatcho, Manuel, and Hajan (2024), who evaluated the policy's impact on literacy education in the Philippines. Gatcho et al. (2024) argued that while the NCLB framework aims to provide equal access to quality literacy education, its execution is hindered by socioeconomic disparities, declining parental involvement, and an overemphasis on standardized testing.

To address these limitations, Gatcho et al. (2024) proposed the Holistic Literacy Enhancement Program (HLEP), which emphasizes three core interventions: equitable resource allocation, parent-community workshops, and culturally and linguistically relevant assessment tools. The experiences of Bislig City educators support the need



for these measures. Participants noted that while localized remedial and tutoring programs are designed, their effectiveness varies significantly due to a lack of teaching resources, large class sizes, and inconsistent parental engagement at home. Without a structured support system like the HLEP, remediation remains superficial, and mass promotion continues to serve as an administrative workaround for deep-seated learning gaps.

Structural Ambiguities of DepEd Order No. 73 and Cumulative Deficits

The practice of mass promotion has created a cumulative academic deficit within the public school system. When students are promoted from early grades without mastering basic phonetic and mathematical skills, they are ill-equipped to handle the more complex curricula of higher grade levels. This cumulative deficit directly explains the poor performance of Filipino learners on international assessments like the PISA. By the time students reach age 15 (the PISA testing cohort), their reading comprehension, mathematical competency, and scientific literacy are severely delayed.

This structural issue is further complicated by the ambiguity of DepEd Order No. 73, S. 2012, which mandates subject-based rather than grade-level promotion. This policy is difficult to apply in elementary schools, where classrooms are typically self-contained and managed by a single teacher. The requirement that a student who fails multiple subjects must remediate those deficiencies over a single summer is often unworkable, particularly when student failure is driven by chronic absenteeism. Summer programs rarely address the root causes of truancy, such as family poverty or geographic isolation. Consequently, teachers are left with little guidance on how to manage retained students within the school's structural limits. This lack of clarity leads educators to interpret the policy as a mandate for mass promotion, ensuring administrative compliance at the expense of student learning.

Limitations of the Inquiry

This research has certain limitations. Because this is a qualitative phenomenological study, the findings are based on the experiences of 40 educators in public elementary schools within the Bislig City Division. Consequently, these results may not be directly generalizable to private schools or other public school divisions with different socioeconomic profiles and resource levels.

Additionally, the reliance on self-reported qualitative data introduces the potential for social desirability bias, as participants may be hesitant to discuss the full extent of mass promotion practices due to concerns over administrative repercussions. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable, localized insights into the structural challenges of implementing the NCLB policy in the Philippines.



Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The findings of this study show that while the "No Child Left Behind" policy is grounded in principles of educational equity and inclusion, its local implementation has been compromised by high-stakes administrative pressures. In the Bislig City Division, the systemic pressure to meet high promotion targets and avoid professional penalties under the RPMS has turned the policy into an instrument of mass promotion. This focus on compliance has diluted classroom assessment standards and normalized a "barely passing culture" that undermines basic literacy and numeracy.

By prioritizing grade-level progression over actual competency, the current system has created a cumulative academic deficit. This deficit is a key driver of the low performance of Filipino students on international standardized tests like the PISA. To address these challenges and ensure that public education truly serves learners' needs, educational authorities must move away from compliance-driven promotion and focus on supporting genuine student mastery and pedagogical integrity.

Recommendations

To address these issues and improve the implementation of educational policies in the public school system, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Transition to a Competency-Based Promotion Framework:** Educational policymakers should revise current promotion guidelines to ensure that student advancement is based on the demonstrated mastery of core academic competencies rather than policy directives.
2. **Decouple Teacher Evaluation from Student Passing Rates:** DepEd should reform the RPMS guidelines to separate classroom teachers' professional evaluations from raw student passing rates. This change is necessary to protect objective grading standards and restore pedagogical authority.
3. **Adopt Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Formative Assessments:** Schools should supplement high-stakes standardized tests with diverse formative assessment tools, such as performance tasks and portfolio evaluations. This approach aligns with the Holistic Literacy Enhancement Program (HLEP) to capture a more complete picture of student progress.
4. **Strengthen Remedial Reading and Math Infrastructure:** School divisions must allocate adequate funding to secure instructional materials, digital tools, and dedicated remedial teachers. This support is critical to ensure that intervention programs can effectively address learning gaps before promotion is considered.
5. **Clarify and Simplify Grade Retention Policies:** DepEd Order No. 73 should be revised to provide clear, practical guidelines for grade retention and summer remediation that are workable at the elementary school level.
6. **Formulate Participatory Policy-Making Structures:** Future educational reforms should be developed in consultation with classroom teachers and school administrators to ensure that policies are realistic and responsive to classroom conditions.
7. **Execute Division-Wide Dissemination and Advocacy Plans:** The findings of this research should be shared through local Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, professional learning communities, and school-based seminars to foster dialogue on assessment reform and ethical promotion practices. Additionally, a Stakeholder's Summit involving parents, policymakers, and community leaders should be organized to build support for systemic policy adjustments.



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