

Teacher Training in Differentiated Instruction and Learners' Learning Outcomes

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Article history: Published: October 2026 Keywords: Differentiated Instruction Teacher Training Professional Development Elementary Education Academic Performance	This study examined elementary teachers' training experiences in differentiated instruction, their perceptions of training relevance, their reported application of differentiated instruction, and their learners' academic performance at Lyceum of Aparri. Using a quantitative descriptive research design, the study gathered data through a researcher-made questionnaire and learners' academic records. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze teachers' responses and the distribution of learners' general averages. The findings showed that teachers perceived their differentiated instruction training as very highly relevant, with an overall weighted mean of 4.55. They also reported consistently applying differentiated instruction strategies, obtaining an overall weighted mean of 4.59. Adjusting the difficulty of learning activities according to learners' abilities received the highest rating among the reported practices. In terms of academic performance, 83.75% of the learners obtained general averages of 85 or higher, while 2.50% obtained averages between 75 and 79. These findings indicate that the participating teachers viewed their training as relevant and reported frequent use of strategies intended to address learner diversity. However, the descriptive results do not establish a causal relationship between teacher training, instructional practices, and learners' academic performance. The study highlights the importance of practical, sustained professional development and further investigation of differentiated instruction through classroom observations and more rigorous research designs.

1. Introduction

Classrooms in the 21st century are characterized by learner diversity, with students differing in their abilities, interests, learning needs, prior experiences, and sociocultural backgrounds. These differences influence how learners engage with instruction, process information, and demonstrate their understanding of lessons. Factors such as socioeconomic circumstances, home environments, access to technology, and previous educational experiences further contribute to variations in learning readiness and performance. Moreover, inclusive education brings learners with disabilities and diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds into mainstream classrooms, requiring teachers to adopt instructional approaches that respond to a wide range of learning needs. In this context, differentiated instruction has become an important pedagogical approach for providing equitable learning opportunities and supporting the achievement of diverse learners.

Differentiated instruction (DI) refers to an approach to teaching in which teachers adapt instructional content, learning processes, assessment, and the learning environment to accommodate differences in students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. Rather than providing identical learning experiences to all students, teachers use flexible instructional strategies to make learning accessible, meaningful, and responsive to individual needs. The effective implementation of DI, however, requires more than an awareness of learner diversity. Teachers must possess the knowledge, pedagogical skills, and practical competencies necessary to identify learning needs, design appropriate activities, and assess students' progress. Consequently, teacher professional development plays an important role in preparing educators to implement differentiated instruction in diverse classroom settings.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) continues to pursue curriculum improvement and teacher professional development to strengthen the quality of basic education. The implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, which began in 2024, emphasizes essential learning competencies and the development of foundational skills, particularly literacy and numeracy. Its implementation underscores the importance of purposeful instruction that responds to learners' varying levels of readiness and learning needs. For elementary teachers, these expectations highlight the need to develop instructional competencies that enable them to adjust teaching approaches, provide appropriate learning support, and facilitate the achievement of essential competencies among learners with diverse abilities.

Teacher training and professional development provide opportunities for educators to acquire and strengthen the knowledge and skills needed to respond to these instructional demands. Through seminars, workshops, and other professional learning activities, teachers can develop their understanding of differentiated instruction, explore appropriate teaching strategies, and enhance their capacity to design responsive learning experiences. Organizations such as the Private Education Assistance Committee (PEAC) and

the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) offer professional development opportunities that support teachers' instructional and pedagogical development. These initiatives may contribute to improved classroom practice by equipping teachers with strategies for managing learner diversity, adapting instructional materials, and aligning teaching approaches with curriculum requirements. Nevertheless, participation in training does not automatically ensure that teachers will effectively apply the knowledge and skills they acquire. The extent to which training translates into classroom practice and contributes to learner outcomes therefore warrants empirical examination.

Existing studies provide insights into the potential contributions of teacher professional development and differentiated instruction to teaching and learning. Amemasor, et al. (2025) reported that professional development can strengthen teachers' instructional practices, particularly when learning opportunities are intensive and incorporate collaboration and feedback. Similarly, Loquias (2026) reported positive contributions of differentiated instruction to learners' academic performance and attitudes toward learning. These findings underscore the importance of developing teachers' capacity to implement instructional approaches that respond to individual learning needs. However, the benefits of professional development and differentiated instruction may depend on the relevance of training content, the opportunities teachers have to practice new strategies, and the extent to which these strategies are implemented in actual classrooms. Other studies have examined the application of differentiated instruction across educational contexts. Langelan, et al. (2024) highlighted the importance of guidance and practical experience in preparing teachers to select and implement differentiated approaches. Aspa (2026) discussed the potential of differentiated instruction to support learner achievement in Philippine mathematics classrooms through engaging tasks and flexible grouping strategies. Aribbay, et al. (2024) likewise emphasized the value of adapting instructional approaches to learners' needs to support engagement and learning retention. In the Philippine context, Talain and Mercado (2023) examined elementary teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction in English language teaching and reported frequent use of differentiated instruction dimensions alongside moderate confidence in implementation. Their findings point to the continuing need to strengthen teachers' instructional competencies through professional learning opportunities. Taken together, these studies establish the relevance of teacher preparation and differentiated pedagogy in addressing learner diversity, while also highlighting the importance of examining how professional development is translated into instructional practice. Despite these contributions, an important question remains regarding the extent to which teachers' training in differentiated instruction corresponds with learners' learning outcomes in elementary education. Studies on professional development often emphasize teachers' knowledge, confidence, or instructional practices, while research on differentiated instruction frequently focuses on its implementation and potential benefits for learners. These areas of inquiry do not necessarily establish whether differences in teachers' training experiences are associated with differences in learners' academic performance, engagement, or other measured learning outcomes. Examining this issue is particularly relevant in the context of curriculum implementation, where teachers are expected to respond to diverse learning needs while ensuring that students achieve essential competencies. Understanding this connection may also help school administrators assess the relevance of existing professional development programs and identify areas requiring further support.

In view of these considerations, the present study examines teacher training in differentiated instruction and learners' learning outcomes in the elementary department. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether teachers' training experiences, including the number of seminars or training activities attended and the perceived quality or relevance of these activities, are associated with learners' measured outcomes. It also considers the distinction between participation in professional development and the actual application of differentiated instructional strategies in the classroom. By investigating these dimensions, the study aims to provide evidence that may inform school-level decisions on teacher development, instructional support, and the implementation of differentiated instruction. The findings may contribute to efforts to strengthen professional learning opportunities and promote responsive teaching practices that address the varied needs of elementary learners.

2. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine teacher training in differentiated instruction and learners' learning outcomes in the elementary department of Lyceum of Aparri. The descriptive component characterized teachers' training experiences, including the number and duration of training activities attended, their perceived relevance, and their reported application of differentiated instruction. The correlational component aimed to examine the association between teachers' training experiences and learners' academic performance. This design was appropriate for describing existing conditions and examining associations among variables without manipulating the participants' experiences or introducing an experimental intervention.

The study involved elementary teachers from Lyceum of Aparri who met the established eligibility criteria. Given the small and manageable population, total population sampling was employed to invite all eligible teachers to participate. To qualify, participants must have been teaching at the elementary level during the conduct of the study and must have attended at least one training activity related to differentiated instruction. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school head and concerned authorities before recruitment. The purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of participation were explained to the eligible teachers, and informed consent was secured before data collection. The grade-level distribution of the participants was documented based on their actual teaching assignments.

Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire designed to address the objectives of the study. The instrument consisted of three parts. The first gathered information about teachers' training experiences in differentiated instruction, including the number and duration of training activities attended. The second assessed teachers' perceptions of the relevance of the training received and their reported application of differentiated instruction in classroom practice. The third concerned learners' academic performance, measured through general averages or other relevant academic records available from the school. The questionnaire underwent content validation by experts in education and research, and revisions were incorporated based on their recommendations to improve the clarity and relevance of the items. Following institutional approval and informed consent, the questionnaire was distributed to the participating teachers and retrieved upon completion. Clear instructions were provided, and sufficient time was

allotted for answering the questionnaire. Where authorized, reported academic averages were cross-checked against available school records in coordination with the concerned class advisers. The collected information was subsequently encoded, organized, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. Frequencies and percentages summarized the number and duration of training activities attended by the teachers. Weighted means summarized responses concerning the perceived relevance of training and the reported application of differentiated instruction, provided that the questionnaire used an appropriate rating scale. To examine the association between teachers' training experiences and learners' academic performance, a correlation coefficient was proposed. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient would be appropriate only if the variables, data structure, and relevant statistical assumptions supported its use. Given the small number of teacher participants, the results of inferential analyses would be interpreted cautiously. The selection of the final statistical test would depend on the measurement of the variables and the unit of analysis. Findings would be interpreted as evidence of association rather than causation.

Confidentiality and data protection procedures were observed throughout the conduct of the study. Participants were informed of the research purpose, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the intended use of the information collected. Informed consent was obtained before participation. Participant identifiers were replaced with codes in the research dataset and final report, and access to the collected information was restricted to authorized members of the research team. Physical documents were kept in secure storage, while electronic records were maintained in a secure location with restricted access. Data retention and disposal were to follow applicable institutional policies and data protection requirements. Because the study involved learners' academic records, access to and processing of these records were subject to appropriate authorization and confidentiality safeguards. The researchers observed the principles of transparency, legitimate purpose, and proportionality under Republic Act No. 10173, or the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and excluded identifiable learner information from the published results. The researchers obtained the necessary institutional permission before conducting the study and coordinated recruitment and questionnaire administration with the appropriate school authorities. Participation was voluntary, and teachers were informed that declining or withdrawing from the study would not result in any penalty or affect their professional standing. The study presented minimal anticipated risk because it primarily involved a questionnaire concerning professional training and the authorized use of existing academic records. Nevertheless, safeguards were implemented to minimize potential concerns involving privacy, confidentiality, and professional evaluation. The researchers committed to reporting the findings accurately, acknowledging sources appropriately, and avoiding fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, and misrepresentation. All procedures were to comply with applicable institutional requirements and ethical standards for research involving human participants and educational records.

3. Findings

Table 1. Teachers' Participation in Differentiated Instruction Training

Indicators	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Number of trainings attended	1–2 trainings	2	28.57%
	3–4 trainings	4	57.14%
	5–6 trainings	1	14.29%
	More than 6 trainings	0	0.00%
	Subtotal	7	100.00%
Duration of training	1 day	1	14.29%
	2–3 days	5	71.43%
	4–5 days	1	14.29%
	More than 5 days	0	0.00%
	Subtotal	7	100.00%

The results indicate that four of the seven teachers (57.14%) had attended three to four trainings on differentiated instruction, while two (28.57%) had attended one to two trainings. Only one teacher (14.29%) reported attending five to six trainings. Regarding training duration, five teachers (71.43%) reported attending training sessions lasting two to three days, while one teacher each reported a duration of one day and four to five days. No teacher reported attending more than six trainings or a training lasting more than five days. Overall, the findings show that the teachers had participated in differentiated instruction training, with most reporting three to four training experiences and training durations of two to three days. However, the number and duration of training sessions alone do not establish the extent to which teachers acquired the competencies needed to implement differentiated instruction effectively.

Table 2. Teachers' Perceived Relevance of Differentiated Instruction Training

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Description
The training enhanced my understanding of differentiated instruction.	4.71	Very Highly Relevant
The training provided strategies that I can use to address learners' diverse needs.	4.27	Very Highly Relevant
The training helped me understand how to adapt instruction to learners' readiness levels.	4.57	Very Highly Relevant
The training provided practical approaches for addressing differences in learners' abilities.	4.71	Very Highly Relevant
The training helped me select appropriate instructional materials for diverse learners.	4.43	Very Highly Relevant
The training improved my understanding of how to assess learners with different needs.	4.57	Very Highly Relevant
The training provided strategies that I can apply in my classroom.	4.57	Very Highly Relevant
Overall Weighted Mean	4.55*	Very Highly Relevant

Table 2 presents the teachers' perceived relevance of differentiated instruction training. All indicators were rated Very Highly Relevant, with weighted means ranging from 4.27 to 4.71 and an overall weighted mean of 4.55. This finding indicates that the

participating teachers generally viewed their training experiences as relevant to their instructional responsibilities, particularly in understanding differentiated instruction and identifying practical approaches to address differences in learners' abilities.

The highest weighted means were obtained by the indicators concerning the enhancement of teachers' understanding of differentiated instruction and the provision of practical approaches for addressing differences in learners' abilities, both with a mean of 4.71. These results suggest that the training was perceived as valuable in developing teachers' conceptual understanding and providing approaches they could potentially use in responding to learner diversity. The findings are consistent with Kahmann, Droop, and Lazonder (2022), whose meta-analysis of 27 studies found that professional development programs in differentiated instruction had a moderate positive effect on teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Their analysis also indicated that professional development focused on a specific subject domain was more effective in improving teachers' differentiation practices than general programs. This supports the importance of training that connects instructional principles with the practical demands of classroom teaching. The indicators concerning adaptation of instruction to learners' readiness levels, assessment of learners with different needs, and the availability of strategies applicable in the classroom each obtained a weighted mean of 4.57. These ratings suggest that teachers also considered the training relevant to planning instruction, assessing learner needs, and applying differentiated approaches. Such aspects are important because differentiated instruction requires teachers to make instructional decisions based on learners' varying readiness, abilities, and learning needs rather than relying exclusively on uniform teaching strategies. In a study of professional development for differentiated instruction in primary mathematics, Deunk (2023) reported positive effects on student achievement growth during the first year of implementation, although significant effects were not demonstrated in the second year. This finding illustrates that professional development may support differentiated teaching, but its effects can vary across implementation periods and contexts.

The provision of strategies for addressing learners' diverse needs received the lowest weighted mean of 4.27, although it remained within the Very Highly Relevant category. This comparatively lower rating may indicate that teachers see room for further development in translating general principles into specific instructional responses for learners with different needs. Kahmann et al. (2022) similarly emphasized that improvements in teachers' knowledge and practices do not automatically lead to measurable improvements in student learning. Their meta-analysis found no statistically significant overall effect of differentiated instruction professional development on student learning outcomes. Thus, although the present teachers viewed their training positively, the ratings should not be interpreted as evidence that the training necessarily improved their classroom implementation or their learners' academic performance.

Table 3. Teachers' Application of Differentiated Instruction

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Description
I adjust instructional activities to accommodate learners' different abilities.	4.43	Always
I provide varied learning activities based on learners' needs.	4.29	Always
I modify teaching strategies to address differences in learners' readiness levels.	4.43	Always
I use different instructional materials to support diverse learners.	4.57	Always
I provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate their understanding in different ways.	4.71	Always
I adjust the level of difficulty of activities according to learners' abilities.	4.86	Always
I provide appropriate support to learners who experience difficulties.	4.71	Always
I use assessment results to identify learners' learning needs.	4.57	Always
I modify instruction based on learners' progress.	4.71	Always
Overall Weighted Mean	4.59	Always

Table 3 presents the teachers' reported application of differentiated instruction in their classrooms. The overall weighted mean of 4.59, interpreted as Always, indicates that the participating teachers reported regularly using instructional practices intended to address differences in learners' abilities, readiness, and learning needs. The item means ranged from 4.29 to 4.86, suggesting consistently high self-reported application across the indicators.

The highest weighted mean was recorded for adjusting the difficulty of learning activities according to learners' abilities (4.86). This was followed by providing opportunities for learners to demonstrate their understanding in different ways, providing appropriate support to learners experiencing difficulties, and modifying instruction based on learners' progress, each with a mean of 4.71. These results suggest that the teachers placed particular emphasis on adjusting learning tasks, providing support, and responding to learners' progress. Such practices are central to differentiated instruction because they allow teachers to adapt instruction rather than expect all learners to respond to the same tasks and teaching approaches in the same way.

The findings are consistent with the work of Tomlinson (2014), who explained that differentiated instruction involves proactively adapting content, process, product, and the learning environment in response to learners' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. From this perspective, adjusting task difficulty and providing different ways for learners to demonstrate understanding are relevant instructional practices. However, effective differentiation requires purposeful planning based on learners' needs, rather than simply offering different activities without clear instructional objectives. A similar pattern was reported by Kahmann et al. (2022), whose meta-analysis of 27 studies found that professional development in differentiated instruction had a moderate positive effect on teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices. The authors also found that training connected to a specific subject area was more effective in improving differentiation practices than general training. This supports the importance of providing teachers with opportunities to apply differentiated instruction within the subjects they teach.

Despite the high overall rating, providing varied learning activities based on learners' needs received the lowest weighted mean of 4.29, followed by adjusting instructional activities to accommodate different abilities and modifying teaching strategies according to readiness levels, both with a mean of 4.43. These results suggest that, although teachers reported frequent use of differentiated instruction, the development of varied learning activities may warrant further attention. Teachers may benefit from professional

development that includes designing differentiated lesson plans, preparing materials for different readiness levels, and using assessment information to guide instructional adjustments.

The findings should nevertheless be interpreted in light of the study's reliance on self-reported practices. Teachers' responses indicate how frequently they believe they apply differentiated instruction, but they do not independently confirm the quality or consistency of classroom implementation. Furthermore, research findings on the effects of differentiated instruction training on student achievement are mixed. Maskos, et al. (2026) found a small positive effect on primary students' mathematics achievement during the first year of a teacher professional development program, but no significant effect during the second year. In contrast, Geletu and Mihiretie (2022) found no statistically significant overall effect of differentiated instruction professional development on student learning outcomes.

Taken together, the findings indicate that teachers reported frequent application of differentiated instruction, particularly in adjusting task difficulty and providing varied opportunities and support for learners. The results also point to the value of continued, practice-oriented professional development. However, the present findings describe teachers' reported practices and should not be interpreted as evidence that these practices caused higher academic performance among their learners.

Table 4. Distribution of Learners According to Academic Performance

General Average	Frequency	Percentage
90–100	41	51.25%
85–89	26	32.50%
80–84	11	13.75%
75–79	2	2.50%
Total	80	100.00%

Table 4 presents the distribution of learners according to their general averages. Of the 80 learners included in the study, 41 (51.25%) obtained averages ranging from 90 to 100, while 26 (32.50%) obtained averages between 85 and 89. Meanwhile, 11 learners (13.75%) received averages between 80 and 84, and only two (2.50%) obtained averages between 75 and 79. The distribution shows that 67 learners, representing 83.75% of the total, obtained general averages of 85 or higher. In contrast, 13 learners (16.25%) had averages below 85. These results indicate that most learners were concentrated in the higher grade ranges, while a smaller proportion fell within the lower categories.

These results may be considered alongside research on differentiated instruction and academic achievement. Kara and Tekindur (2025) found a small positive effect of a teacher professional development program on mathematics achievement during the first year, although the effect was not significant in the second year. This suggests that differentiated instruction has the potential to support learning, but its effects may depend on how instructional strategies are implemented and sustained.

Similarly, Slim, et al. (2026) found that professional development in differentiated instruction improved teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices, but did not produce a statistically significant overall effect on student learning outcomes. These findings are important when interpreting the present results: although most learners in the study obtained averages of 85 or higher, the grade distribution alone cannot establish that differentiated instruction training or classroom practices contributed to their performance.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Differentiated instruction requires more than teachers' participation in training; it calls for the consistent translation of professional learning into responsive classroom practices. The findings of this study underscore the importance of professional development that equips elementary teachers to recognize learner diversity and make informed instructional decisions. While the teachers perceived their training as highly relevant and reported frequent application of differentiated instruction, these practices should be continually strengthened through classroom-based support, reflective teaching, and opportunities to develop and evaluate differentiated learning activities.

The academic performance results provide a description of learners recorded achievement but do not establish the contribution of teacher training or differentiated instruction to these outcomes. Accordingly, the study highlights the need to move beyond positive perceptions and self-reported practices toward evidence of actual classroom implementation and its relationship with learner progress. Schools and teacher education providers may use these findings to inform professional development initiatives that emphasize practical application, assessment-informed instruction, and responsiveness to diverse learning needs. Further research using classroom observations, broader samples, and appropriate analytical methods is necessary to establish more clearly how differentiated instruction practices relate to learners' academic achievement.

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