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Cultural Responsiveness in Education and Academic Performance of Learners

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the extent of cultural responsiveness in education and its relationship with the academic performance of learners in selected public elementary schools in Tanay District, Schools Division Office of Rizal during the School Year 2025-2026. The schools included Alas-asin, Cuyambay, Daraetan, Laiban, Mamuyao, Monte De Tanay, and Tablon Elementary Schools. Two groups of respondents were considered: 85 teachers and 105 learners. Teachers were described by age, sex, civil status, position, educational attainment, length of service, and in-service trainings attended, while learners were described by age, sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, parents' educational attainment, occupation, and family income. Using descriptive survey research design and documentary analysis, data were gathered through researcher-made questionnaire-checklists and learners' first-quarter average grades. Findings revealed that teachers perceived the extent of cultural responsiveness as very high, whereas learners perceived it as high. Significant differences were found between teacher and learner perceptions regarding culturally responsive teaching practices, curriculum integration of diverse cultural perspectives, and inclusivity in the school environment. Learners' academic performance was significantly related to curriculum integration of diverse cultural perspectives, but not to teaching practices or inclusivity.The study concluded that teachers and learners hold differing views on cultural responsiveness in education. Teachers' perceptions did not significantly vary across their demographic profiles, while learners' perceptions of inclusivity varied significantly according to sex, fathers' education, and fathers' occupation. Recommendations include continuous advocacy of cultural responsiveness by school administrators, implementation of culturally responsive teaching practices by teachers, and the adoption of the proposed plan of action for school improvement. Further studies may explore additional variables to enhance understanding of cultural responsiveness in education..

Keywords: Cultural Responsiveness, Academic Performance, Culturally Responsive Teaching, Curriculum Integration, Inclusivity, Elementary Education

1. Introduction

Education is widely recognized as a cornerstone of individual and societal development, providing learners not only with knowledge and skills but also with identity, values, and social competence. Inclusive and meaningful learning experiences that reflect learners' backgrounds are essential in preparing students to thrive in diverse contexts. The 1987 Philippine Constitution emphasizes the state's responsibility to provide a complete, adequate, and integrated education system relevant to societal needs, while the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 empowers schools to localize and indigenize curricula to address learners' social and cultural contexts. Culturally responsive education has emerged as an effective strategy to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners by integrating their identities, experiences, and community values into instructional design, fostering engagement, inclusivity, and academic achievement. In the Philippine public elementary school setting, the growing diversity of learners necessitates culturally responsive curricula and teaching practices. However, challenges persist due to limited teacher preparedness, insufficient resources, inconsistent policy implementation, and contextual constraints.

Several studies highlight both the potential and challenges of culturally responsive education. Soufghalem (2024) found that culturally inclusive curricula enhance intercultural competence but face resource and institutional constraints, while Markey (2022) emphasized the need for proactive planning in culturally diverse environments. Gbormittah (2025) reported gaps between teachers' understanding and practical implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy, and Hamid (2024) highlighted the role of technology in improving student outcomes in multicultural curricula. Eden (2024) stressed professional development and community engagement, Foley (2024) identified barriers in policy-to-practice implementation, and Baliscao (2025) demonstrated that culturally responsive teaching enhances engagement and academic performance. Local studies support these findings in the Philippine context. Pabiona (2022) examined CRT competence

among practice teachers, Paculan (2023) documented challenges and impacts on special education learners, Mercado (2021) noted teachers' limited understanding in Indigenous Peoples' education, and Torrechante (2022) found gaps between teachers' knowledge and practice in elementary science. Padua (2022) reported limited use of contextualization strategies, Mangilaba (2020) observed weak correlations between CRT and academic performance, Salida (2023) highlighted the influence of teaching practices and cultural intelligence, Ablasa (2025) discussed CRC implementation challenges, and Dela Cruz (2025) noted institutional barriers to CRP in higher education.

Despite the growing literature, gaps remain in examining both teachers' and learners' perceptions together, particularly in Philippine public elementary schools, and in quantitatively linking culturally responsive practices to learners' academic performance. The present study addresses these gaps by determining the extent of cultural responsiveness in education and its relationship to the academic performance of learners in selected public elementary schools in Tanay District, Schools Division Office of Rizal during the School Year 2025–2026, providing insights for improving inclusive and culturally responsive educational practices.

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study applied the descriptive method of research specifically, the survey design with documentary analysis.

2.2 Research Setting

The study was conducted in selected public elementary schools in Tanay District, Schools Division Office of Rizal. These schools include Alas Asin Elementary School, Cuyambay Elementary School, Daraetan Elementary School, Laiban Elementary School, Mamuyao Elementary School, Monte De Tanay Elementary School and Tablon Elementary School. These school offers complete elementary education from kindergarten to grade six level

2.3 Respondents

The study considered two groups of respondents. The first group included the total population of teachers in selected public elementary schools in Tanay District. This consists of 85 teachers. They were described in terms of age, sex, civil status, position title, educational attainment, length of service, and in-service trainings attended. The second group of respondents included 105 learners from the said schools. Fifteen (15) pupils in each school were chosen. Hence quota sampling was used. They were described in terms of age, sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, parents' educational attainment, parents' occupation and monthly family income.

2.4 Research Instruments

The main instrument used in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist, which consisted of two parts. Part I collected the profile of the respondents, including teachers' age, sex, civil status, position title, educational attainment, length of service, and in-service trainings attended, as well as pupils' age, sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, parents' educational attainment, occupation, and monthly family income. Part II focused on measuring the extent of cultural responsiveness in education, covering culturally responsive teaching practices, curriculum integration of diverse cultural perspectives, and inclusivity in the school environment, with ten items per aspect for a total of thirty items. Responses were scored using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 5 (Always/Very High Extent) to 1 (Never/Least Extent), while learners' academic performance was assessed using a grading scale with verbal descriptors from Outstanding (90 and above) to Did Not Meet Expectations (below 75). To ensure validity, the instrument underwent content validation through consultation with experts, including the thesis adviser, statistician, other faculty members, a master teacher, school head, and dean of the Graduate Studies Program, whose feedback and suggestions were incorporated to produce a reliable and valid research instrument.

2.5 Data Collection

The researcher adhered to a Gantt Chart of Activities to systematically conduct the study, covering the entire process from formulating the research problem to the submission of the final manuscript. After developing and validating the research instrument, permission to conduct the study was secured from the concerned authorities. The questionnaire-checklist was administered to the respondents using Google Forms for convenient and efficient data collection. To ensure confidentiality and data protection, the researcher strictly complied with the Data Privacy Act when handling the gathered information.Upon retrieval of the responses, the data were encoded and processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The interpreted data formed the basis for formulating the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Following the oral defense, the manuscript was revised based on the feedback and suggestions of the Oral Examination Committee. The study also underwent an anti-plagiarism test to verify its originality. Finally, the hardbound copies of the manuscript were submitted to the Office of the Graduate Studies Program and other relevant offices, marking the completion of the research process.

2.6 Data Analysis

The data gathered in the study were tallied, tabulated, and analyzed using various statistical tools. Frequency and percentage distribution were used to describe the profile of the two groups of respondents across selected variables. The extent of cultural responsiveness in education as perceived by teachers and learners was measured using weighted mean. To determine significant differences between the perceptions of the two groups regarding the various aspects of cultural responsiveness, an independent t-test was applied, while one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine differences in perceptions based on respondents' profiles. Learners' academic performance, as indicated by their average grades, was analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Finally, correlation analysis was employed to determine the significant relationship between the perceived extent of cultural responsiveness in education and the learners' level of academic performance.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

The study ensured the protection of the rights and welfare of all respondents. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity of all information provided were strictly maintained, and data were used solely for research purposes. The researcher ensured that the respondents were treated with respect and that no harm, whether physical, emotional, or psychological, would result from their participation in the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Profile of the Two Groups of Respondents in terms of the Selected Variables

As shown in the table 1.1., out of 85 teacher-respondents, 43.5% are 31-40 years old and 38.8% are 41-50 years old. The rest have ages 21-30 years old and 51 years old and above with 11.8% and 5.9% respectively. In terms of sex, teacher-respondents is female dominated with 76.5%. As to their civil status, most of them are married with 64.7%. With regard to their educational attainment, majority is still in their Baccalaureate degree with 51.8%. Meanwhile, most of them are Teacher I with 71.8%. In terms of length of service, most of them have been in the service for 1-10 years with 78.8%. In terms of in-service trainings attended, most of them have attended in the regional level with 50.6%.

Table 1.1: Profile of the Teacher- Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables

Age	Frequency	Percent	Rank
21-30 years old	10	11.8	3
31-40 years old	37	43.5	1
41-50 years old	33	38.8	2
51 years old and above	5	5.9	4
Total	**85**	**100.0**	
Sex			
Male	20	23.5	2
Female	65	76.5	1
Total	**85**	**100.0**	
Civil Status			
Single	29	34.1	2
Married	55	64.7	1
Separated	1	1.2	3
Total	**85**	**100.0**	
Educational Attainment			
Ph.D./Ed.D. Units	2	2.4	4
Master's Degree	13	15.3	3
Master's Degree Units	26	30.6	2
Baccalaureate Degree	44	51.8	1
Total	**85**	**100.0**	
Position Title			
Teacher III	22	25.9	2
Teacher II	2	2.4	3
Teacher I	61	71.8	1
Total	**85**	**100.0**	
Length of Service			

Below 1 Year	12	14.1	2
1-10 Years in service	67	78.8	1
11-20 Years in service	5	5.9	3
21-30 Years in service	1	1.2	4
Total	**85**	**100.0**	
In-service Trainings Attended			
Regional Level	43	50.6	1
Division Level	23	27.1	2
District Level	14	16.5	3
School Level	5	5.9	4
Total	**85**	**100.0**	

As gleaned from the table 1.2. below, out of 105 learner-respondents, most of them are 7-12years old with 77.1 %. Most of them are females with 66.7%. As to their sibling position, most of them are first born child with 55.2%. With regard to the number of children in the family, 30.5% belong to families with 2-3 number of children with 30.5% while 24.8% are only child. The rest belong to families with 4 children and above. In terms of parents' educational attainment, most of the fathers are elementary graduate and high school undergraduate with 39% and 29.5% respectively. Meanwhile, 28.6% of the mothers are college graduates and 26.7% are college undergraduates. In terms of parents' occupation, 42.9% are government employees and 24.8% are employed in private companies. As to the mothers' occupation, 49.5% are government employees while 20% are overseas workers. In terms of monthly family income, 42.9% have monthly family income of ₱10,000 - ₱14,999 and 30.5% have monthly family income of ₱10,000 and below.

Table 1.2: Profile of the Learner- Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables

Age	**Frequency**		**Percent**	**Rank**
7-12 years old	81		77.1	4
13 years old and above	24		22.9	1
Total	**105**		**100.0**	
Sex				
Male	35		33.3	2
Female	70		66.7	1
Total	**105**		**100.0**	
Sibling Position				
First	58		55.2	1
Second	29		27.6	2
Third or higher	18		17.2	3
Total	**105**		**100.0**	
Number of Children in the Family				
1	26		24.8	2
2-3	32		30.5	1
4-5	21		20.0	3
6-7	17		16.2	4
8 and above	9		8.6	5
Total	**105**		**100.0**	

Parent's Educational Attainment	**Father**			**Mother**		
	f	**%**	**R**	**f**	**%**	**R**
College Graduate	6	5.7	6	30	28.6	1
College Undergraduate	8	7.6	4.5	28	26.7	2
High School Graduate	8	7.6	4.5	13	12.4	4.5
High School Undergraduate	31	29.5	2	15	14.3	3
Elementary Graduate	41	39.0	1	13	12.4	4.5
Elementary Undergraduate	11	10.5	3	6	5.7	6
Total	105	100.0		105	100.0	
Parent's Occupation						
Government Employee	45	42.9	1	52	49.5	1
Private Employee	26	24.8	2	20	19.0	3

Self-employed	19	18.1	3	7	5.7	4
Overseas Worker	11	10.5	4	21	20.0	2
Others	4	3.8	5	5	4.8	5
Total	**105**	**100.0**		**105**	**100.0**	
Monthly Family Income						
₱20,000 and above		10		9.5		4
₱15,000 - ₱19,999		18		17.1		3
₱10,000 - ₱14,999		45		42.9		1
₱10,000 and below		32		30.5		2
Total		**105**		**100.0**		

3.2. Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education as Perceived by the Two Groups of Respondents with Respect to the Different Aspects

As gleaned from the table, as perceived by teachers, the overall weighted mean obtained is 4.70 interpreted Very High Extent. First and second in ranks are "Inclusivity in the School Environment" and "Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices "with composite weighted means of 4.97 and 4.71 respectively. Last in rank is "Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives" with a composite weighted mean of 4.41 interpreted High Extent. On the other hand, as perceived by the learner-respondents, the overall weighted mean obtained is 4.47 interpreted High Extent. The aspect "Inclusivity in the School Environment" is first in rank with a composite weighted mean of 4.84 interpreted Very High Extent. The aspects "Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives" and "Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices" are both interpreted High Extent with composite weighted means of 4.29 and 4.27 respectively.It could be deduced from the results that as perceived by teachers, cultural responsiveness in education is of very high extent. On the other hand, as perceived by learners, there is a high extent of cultural responsiveness in public elementary schools. Findings indicate that teachers feel that they are fully demonstrating cultural responsiveness in the teaching -learning process.Findings imply that teachers and learners are respectful of everyone's backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledge, lifestyle and social behaviors. Cultural responsiveness helps provide culturally appropriate care and support. Cultural responsiveness involves continuous learning, self-exploration and reflection. This is in relation with the ideas of Alardhi (2024) that cultural responsiveness is the practice of understanding and appropriately responding to the cultural variables and diversity an individual or group brings to interactions. It involves incorporating cultural values into practices, such as teaching or healthcare, to make them more relevant and effective for diverse populations by building on their strengths, experiences, and knowledge. Key components include valuing diversity, continuously seeking cultural knowledge, and adapting strategies to better serve different communities.

Table 2:*Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education as Perceived by the Two Groups of Respondents with Respect to the Different Aspects*

Aspects	Teachers			Learners		
	wx	VI	R	wx	VI	R
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	4.71	Very High Extent	2	4.27	High Extent	3
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	4.41	High Extent	3	4.29	High Extent	2
Inclusivity in the School Environment	4.97	Very High Extent	1	4.84	Very High Extent	1
Overall Mean	**4.70**	**Very High Extent**		**4.47**	**High Extent**	

3.3. Significant Difference Between the Perception of the Two Groups of Respondents on the Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education with Respect to the Different Aspects

The results indicate that the null hypothesis can be rejected not only at the 5% but also at the 1% level of significance, as the F-values are accompanied by p-values below 0.01. This leads to the conclusion that there is a significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and learners regarding the extent of cultural responsiveness in education, specifically in terms of culturally responsive teaching practices, curriculum integration of diverse cultural perspectives, and inclusivity in the school environment. These findings show that teachers' views on the implementation of cultural

responsiveness in public elementary schools differ from the experiences and perceptions of learners. This suggests that while teachers act as facilitators of culturally responsive classrooms, their observations may not fully capture how learners perceive the integration of culture, language, and experiences into learning. It highlights the teacher's role in connecting students' cultural backgrounds to instruction by reflecting on personal biases, understanding learners' contexts, and incorporating diverse perspectives into both curriculum and teaching strategies. These results align with Bulaong (2022), who emphasized that students are more engaged and develop critical thinking skills when their culture and experiences are reflected in classroom learning. Integrating students' backgrounds not only strengthens understanding and retention of concepts but also validates their identities, boosting confidence and fostering a more inclusive learning environment

Table 3: *Significant Difference Between the Perception of the Two Groups of Respondents on the Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education with Respect to the Different Aspects*

Aspects	t-value	p-value	Ho	Verbal Interpretation
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	12.381	0.000	Rejected	Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	4.448	0.000	Rejected	Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	8.433	0.000	Rejected	Significant

3.4. Significant Difference on the Perception of the Two Groups of Respondents on the Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education with Respect to the Different Aspects in Terms of Their Profile

Table 4.1. results show very low F-values with p-values exceeding 0.05, indicating that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for all aspects in relation to teachers' profiles. Consequently, there is no significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the extent of cultural responsiveness in education—covering culturally responsive teaching practices, curriculum integration of diverse cultural perspectives, and inclusivity in the school environment—based on age, sex, civil status, position title, educational attainment, length of service, or in-service trainings attended. These findings suggest that teachers' personal attributes do not influence their perceptions of cultural responsiveness in education, meaning that regardless of maturity, gender, marital status, professional experience, rank, or educational attainment, teachers implement culturally responsive practices as required. This implies that teachers consistently create safe and supportive learning environments, maintain high expectations for all students, collaborate with families, and adapt communication styles to ensure student success. Moreover, teachers make learning relevant by connecting the curriculum to students' lives and leveraging their own experiences to introduce new concepts. These results are supported by Paculan (2023), who found that teachers effectively incorporated students' cultural backgrounds into instruction, adapted approaches to meet diverse needs, and collaborated with families and communities, highlighting the importance of professional development, adequate resources, and administrative support in enhancing culturally responsive teaching practices.

Table 4.1.: *Results of the F-test on the Significant Difference on the Perception of the Teacher-Respondents on the Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education with Respect to the Different Aspectsin Terms of Their Profile*

Variables/Aspects	F-value	p-value	Null Hypothesis	Verbal Interpretation
Age				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	1.452	0.234	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.207	0.891	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	0.108	0.955	Accepted	Not Significant
Sex				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	1.317	0.254	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	1.353	0.248	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	0.439	0.510	Accepted	Not Significant
Civil Status				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.872	0.422	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.459	0.633	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	1.183	0.311	Accepted	Not Significant
Educational Attainment				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	1.432	0.240	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.059	0.981	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	2.237	0.090	Accepted	Not Significant
Position Title				

Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.729	0.485	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	2.928	0.059	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	0.390	0.679	Accepted	Not Significant
Length of Service				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.552	0.649	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.360	0.782	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	1.471	0.229	Accepted	Not Significant
Inservice Trainings Attended				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	1.846	0.145	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.400	0.753	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	0.624	0.601	Accepted	Not Significant

Table 4.2. results indicate that the computed p-values for learners' perceptions of inclusivity in the school environment, when grouped by sex, sibling position, and father's education and occupation, are all below 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. For all other aspects and profile characteristics, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This suggests that learners' perceptions of cultural responsiveness in education, specifically regarding inclusivity in the school environment, vary according to sex, sibling position, and father's educational attainment and occupation. Conversely, no significant differences were found in learners' perceptions with respect to culturally responsive teaching practices, curriculum integration of diverse cultural perspectives, and other profile characteristics such as age, number of children in the family, mother's education and occupation, and monthly family income. These findings imply that certain family and demographic factors influence how learners perceive inclusivity in their learning environment. This aligns with Alonzo (2021), who emphasized that culturally responsive classrooms grounded in high expectations and strong teacher-student relationships foster a safe space for students to take risks, express themselves, and engage deeply in learning. Connecting lessons to students' lived experiences enhances engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving, as learners can relate academic content to real-world contexts.

Table 4.2.: *Results of the F-test on the Significant Difference on the Perception of the Learner-Respondents on the Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education with Respect to the Different Aspectsin Terms of Their Profile*

Variables /Aspects	**F-value**	**p-value**	**Null Hypothesis**	**Verbal Interpretation**
Age				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.157	0.693	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	1.444	0.232	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	0.075	0.785	Accepted	Not Significant
Sex				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.389	0.534	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.261	0.610	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	4.512	0.036	Rejected	Significant
Sibling Position				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.470	0.757	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	1.038	0.392	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	3.079	0.019	Rejected	Significant
Number of Children in the Family				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.916	0.458	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	1.901	0.116	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	2.366	0.058	Accepted	Not Significant
Father's Educational Attainment				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	1.509	0.194	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.603	0.698	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	2.547	0.033	Rejected	Significant
Mother's Educational Attainment				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	1.839	0.112	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.539	0.746	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	1.340	0.254	Accepted	Not Significant
Father's Occupation				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.869	0.505	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.479	0.791	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	2.558	0.032	Rejected	Significant
Mother's Occupation				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	1.874	0.106	Accepted	Not Significant

Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.805	0.549	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	1.355	0.248	Accepted	Not Significant
Monthly Family Income				
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	1.077	0.362	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.246	0.864	Accepted	Not Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	0.530	0.663	Accepted	Not Significant

3.5. Level of Academic Performance of the Learner-Respondents as Revealed in Their Average Grade for the First Quarter

The table shows that the average grade of learner-respondents for the first quarter is 85.7, indicating a Very Satisfactory performance, with the highest grade of 95 also interpreted as Very Satisfactory and the lowest grade of 76 as Fairly Satisfactory. The standard deviation of 4.062 reflects the average dispersion of the learners' grades. Findings indicate that, on average, learners are performing well in the first quarter, with most pupils achieving at the Very Satisfactory level, a substantial number at the Satisfactory level, some attaining Outstanding performance, and only a few at the Fairly Satisfactory level. These results suggest that top-performing pupils may benefit from more challenging activities to sustain their performance and serve as motivation for peers, while learners with lower performance may require additional support and guidance to develop effective study habits and improve outcomes. This aligns with Choudhury (2023), who emphasized that academic performance in culturally diverse settings is significantly influenced by cultural practices, as students' cultural backgrounds shape their learning behaviors, perceptions of school, social and emotional well-being, all of which ultimately affect their performance.

Table 5: *Level of Academic Performance of the Learner-Respondents as Revealed in Their Average Grade for the First Quarter*

Grade	Verbal Interpretation	Frequency	Percent	Rank
90 and above	Outstanding	18	17.1	3
85 – 89	Very Satisfactory	46	43.8	1
80 – 84	Satisfactory	34	32.4	2
75 – 79	Fairly Satisfactory	7	6.7	4
Below 75	Did Not Meet Expectation	-	-	
Total		105	100.0	
Highest Grade = 95		Mean = 85.7 (Very Satisfactory)		
Lowest Grade = 76		Standard Dev. = 4.062		

3.6. Significant Relationship Between the Perceived Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education and the Learners' Level of Academic Performance

The results indicate that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for the relationship between learners' academic performance and their perceptions of cultural responsiveness in terms of culturally responsive teaching practices and inclusivity in the school environment, as the p-values of 0.387 and 0.675 exceed 0.05. However, for curriculum integration of diverse cultural perspectives, the p-value of 0.022 is below 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This demonstrates a significant positive correlation between learners' perceptions of cultural responsiveness in curriculum integration and their academic performance. These findings suggest that incorporating diverse cultural perspectives into the curriculum can enhance academic outcomes by fostering critical thinking, engagement, and a stronger sense of belonging. When students see their own cultural backgrounds reflected in their studies, it can boost confidence, motivation, and learning outcomes, although the impact may depend on teacher preparedness and inclusive curriculum design. This aligns with Mangilaba (2020), whose study found that while pupils exhibited high levels of affective, behavioral, and cognitive engagement, there was no significant correlation between teachers' culturally responsive teaching practices and pupils' engagement or academic performance, highlighting the nuanced relationship between teaching practices, curriculum integration, and student achievement.

Table 6: *Significant Relationship Between the Perceived Extent of Cultural Responsiveness in Education and the Learners' Level of Academic Performance*

Cultural Responsiveness and Academic Performance	r coefficient	p-value	Null Hypothesis	Verbal Interpretation
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	0.085	0.387	Accepted	Not Significant
Curriculum Integration of Diverse Cultural Perspectives	0.223	0.022	Rejected	Significant
Inclusivity in the School Environment	0.041	0.675	Accepted	Not Significant

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that teachers and learners perceive the extent of cultural responsiveness in education differently, particularly in terms of culturally responsive teaching practices, curriculum integration of diverse cultural perspectives, and inclusivity in the school environment. Teachers' perceptions do not significantly vary according to their personal and professional profiles, while learners' perceptions on inclusivity differ significantly based on sex, fathers' educational attainment, and fathers' occupation. Additionally, learners' academic performance is positively associated with the integration of diverse cultural perspectives into the curriculum, highlighting the importance of culturally relevant instruction in enhancing learning outcomes.

In light of these conclusions, it is recommended that school administrators actively advocate for cultural responsiveness to strengthen teacher-student relationships and improve pupil performance. Teachers should consistently implement culturally responsive teaching practices to support student engagement and achievement. The proposed plan of action should be adopted to guide these efforts, and future research may explore additional variables to further understand the impact of cultural responsiveness in education.

Compliance with ethical standards

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