Enhancing skills and competencies of division field technical assistance composite teams and their impact on school performance in Biliran Province, Philippines

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Abstract

This study investigates the skills and competencies of 53 members of Division Field Technical Assistance Composite Teams (DFTACTs) and their influence on the performance of 143 school heads and 641 teachers in Biliran Province. Employing a mixed-method correlational research design, data were collected using modified standardized and researcher-made survey questionnaires. Statistical methods such as frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson r correlation were utilized. Findings indicate high levels of skill and competence among DFTACT members, closely aligned with school performance indicators, including a mean performance score range of 86%-95%. Additionally, the study identifies prevalent challenges faced by composite teams in implementing, monitoring, and evaluating school strategic plans. These results contribute to the understanding of skills and competencies in educational contexts.

1. Introduction

Technical assistance (TA) in education refers to the delivery of program implementation support and capacity-building activities such as mentoring and coaching. It is aimed at equipping professional teachers, school heads, and other stakeholders in the academe with the skills and knowledge necessary to address various challenges in their respective contexts. This support often includes individual or group sessions designed to answer questions and build capacity for effective and sustainable program delivery. According to Lauer et al. [1], technical assistance is considered a key component of professional development, usually provided by program developers or intermediary organizations.

In the Philippines, the significance of TA is emphasized in Republic Act No. 9155, also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, which underscores the role of local initiatives in improving the quality of basic education. Despite numerous reforms, a persistent concern of the Department of Education (DepEd) is the poor academic performance of Filipino learners. This underperformance can be attributed to a range of factors, including those within and beyond the control of technical assistance providers.

To address systemic issues in education governance and delivery, Executive Order No. 366 (2004) mandated the Rationalization Plan (RAT Plan), which led to the establishment of eight functional divisions in DepEd Regional Offices. One such division is the Field Technical Assistance Division (FTAD), whose primary goal is to support school divisions in managing their operations and achieving performance targets through relevant, timely, and appropriate technical assistance.

In the Schools Division Office (SDO) of Biliran, the Division Field Technical Assistance Composite Teams (DFTACTs) were organized to carry out these mandates. These teams are composed of members from various cross-functional divisions and are tasked with monitoring and evaluating the implementation of programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) in schools. Prior to monitoring visits, DFTACTs develop a Technical Assistance (TA) plan that outlines identified issues, proposed strategies, time frames, and target recipients. These efforts are then documented through accomplishment reports detailing the assistance rendered.

Despite the active efforts of DFTACTs, there remain pressing challenges. A significant issue is the lack of formal and adequate training among team members, which affects the quality and appropriateness of the assistance provided [2]. This raises questions about whether schools are truly benefiting from the technical support given and whether TA is effectively contributing to school performance and improvement.

While prior research acknowledges the importance of technical assistance in educational settings, there is limited empirical data on the actual skills and competencies of field-based technical assistance providers and their direct impact on school performance, particularly in localized contexts such as Biliran Province. Most available studies focus broadly on program implementation or professional development but fail to assess the technical assistance teams themselves especially in terms of their preparation, challenges, and the perceived outcomes of their work.

Given this gap, this study seeks to assess the skills and competencies of the DFTACT members in the Schools Division of Biliran and to explore their relationship with key school performance indicators. It also aims to identify the prevalent challenges encountered by these teams in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of schools' strategic plans. The findings are expected to inform policy recommendations, capability-building programs, and future research on the role of technical assistance in improving educational outcomes.

2. Framework of the Study

This study is grounded in two major theoretical underpinnings: Capacity-Building Theory and Systems Theory in education. These theories provide a comprehensive lens through which to understand the role of Division Field Technical Assistance Composite Teams (DFTACTs) in improving school performance in Biliran Province.

Capacity-Building Theory, as emphasized by Fullan [3], posits that the success of educational institutions depends largely on the continual development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of their personnel. In this study, the DFTACTs are viewed as key actors in building the capacities of school heads and teachers. Through coaching, mentoring, and strategic support, they help clients respond to local challenges and improve organizational performance. Their competencies both technical and interpersonal are therefore essential to delivering effective assistance that leads to sustained school improvement.

Complementing this is Systems Theory, which considers schools as dynamic entities that function within an interconnected educational system. According to von Bertalanffy [4], a change in one component of a system influences the performance of the entire system. Applied to this study, the DFTACTs are part of a broader mechanism that affects teaching and learning conditions. Their inputs (skills, knowledge, and strategies) flow into the technical assistance process, which in turn influences school heads and teachers the direct agents of school performance outcomes. The interplay of these elements must be managed holistically to achieve desired results.

This theoretical alignment informs the conceptual framework of the study, which focuses on the interaction between the skills and competencies of DFTACT members (independent variable), the technical assistance process (intervening variable), and school performance indicators (dependent variable). School performance is understood in terms of the implementation of school improvement plans, instructional leadership effectiveness, and student achievement.

Moreover, the framework recognizes the presence of moderating variables, namely the challenges and barriers encountered by composite teams in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of school programs. These factors may hinder the successful delivery of technical assistance and influence the extent of its impact on school outcomes.

As shown in Figure 1, the skills and competencies of DFTACT members serve as the initial input in the process. These competencies influence the effectiveness of technical assistance delivery, which subsequently impacts the capacity of school heads and teachers to implement reforms and manage performance. The cumulative effect is reflected in the school performance indicators. Surrounding this process are the challenges and barriers that act as moderating factors, potentially affecting both the delivery and the outcomes of the assistance provided.

This framework serves as a guide for examining the central research questions of the study: How competent are the DFTACT members in delivering technical assistance? How do their efforts relate to school performance? And what challenges limit the effectiveness of their interventions?
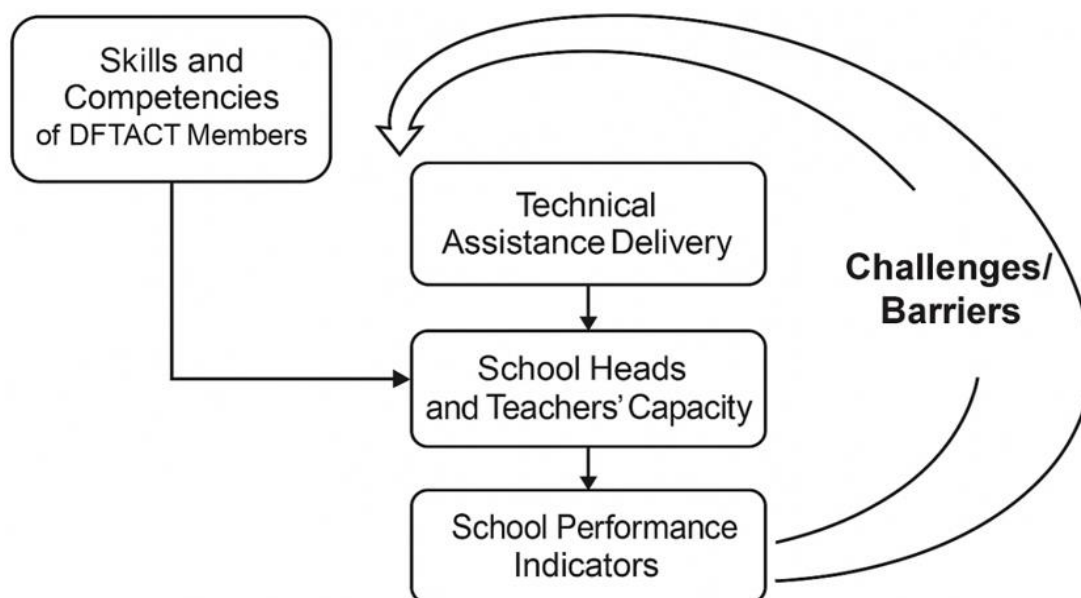
Figure 1.
Schematic diagram of the conceptual framework.

3. Review of Literature

Technical assistance (TA) in education is a vital process aimed at supporting and building the capacity of key education stakeholders such as teachers, school heads, and education leaders through mentoring, coaching, and other forms of professional development. According to the Department of Education [5], TA is a systematic approach that involves delivering timely, relevant, and responsive support to enable clients to perform their functions effectively and achieve continuous improvement. This support aligns with the overarching goals and vision of the organization and fosters a culture of collaboration and accountability.

TA providers are tasked with several interrelated roles. These include offering guidance and coaching to clients in the execution of their responsibilities, providing regular feedback and performance assessments, and supplying necessary information to help clients fulfill their functions more efficiently. Furthermore, TA providers are expected to encourage and motivate clients towards sustained improvement and utilize data to inform higher-level policy recommendations. In fulfilling these roles, they also assist in strategic planning, implementation of initiatives, monitoring of progress, and formulation of responsive recommendations based on field-based realities. The underlying belief is that individuals are capable of directing their own development, provided they are supported by an enabling environment.

The delivery of TA is founded on several core principles. First, it emphasizes people-centered development, recognizing that individuals are responsible for their own growth and goal achievement. TA serves as a facilitative mechanism that helps create the conditions necessary for this growth. Second, it highlights the importance of aligning assistance with the vision, mission, and strategic objectives of the organization, such as those articulated in School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and the Division Education Development Plan (DEDP). Third, TA is a participatory and empowering process. Clients are viewed not as passive recipients but as active partners who take ownership of decisions and actions. Finally, TA is built on mutual accountability and shared responsibility, reinforcing the idea that learning and improvement are achieved through collaboration and interactive support systems.

Empirical studies reinforce the significance of TA in educational contexts. Ridenour et al. [6] found that the intensity or "dosage" of technical assistance plays a crucial role in determining its impact. Higher levels of TA support have been associated with more successful implementation of educational programs. However, the effectiveness of TA dosage is influenced by the complexity of the tasks at hand. Simple tasks may be completed with minimal assistance, whereas complex initiatives often require sustained and intensive support over time. This highlights the need for TA strategies that are adaptive and context-sensitive.

Despite growing recognition of TA's value, Le et al. [7] noted a scarcity of high-quality empirical data that directly measures the effectiveness of technical assistance, especially at the system level. Nonetheless, emerging literature suggests that the success of TA is largely dependent on how timely and tailored the support is to the unique needs of its recipients. Chilenski [8] further emphasized the importance of collaboration in the TA process. In studies involving community prevention teams, she observed that the level of collaboration between TA providers and client teams significantly influenced team effectiveness over time. Interestingly, collaboration was found to be highest during the planning phase, declined during implementation, and increased again during the sustainability phase. These findings suggest that technical assistance must evolve in response to the shifting demands of different phases in project or program implementation.

In the Philippine context, the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) underscores the role of technical assistance in strengthening school-based management. It mandates that regional and division offices provide tailored and timely support to schools to improve governance and instructional quality. TA, therefore, functions as a conduit for policy implementation, resource mobilization, and capacity-building. However, the actual competencies of TA providers

particularly at the division level remain under-examined. There is limited empirical data on how the skillsets of technical assistance teams influence educational outcomes, especially in local settings.

This gap is particularly relevant in the context of Biliran Province, where Division Field Technical Assistance Composite Teams (DFTACTs) have been deployed to provide school-level support. While previous studies have broadly acknowledged the importance of TA, few have focused on the capabilities of the TA providers themselves and the outcomes of their interventions. This study addresses that gap by assessing the competencies of DFTACT members and exploring their correlation with key school performance indicators. It also examines the common challenges encountered in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school strategic plans, with the aim of informing future policy directions and capability-building programs in the region.

4. Method

This study utilized the mixed-method research design. This design was deemed appropriate in this study, which seeks to determine the skills and competencies of DFTACTs quantitatively and explore their problems met qualitative through a focused group discussion.

The respondents of this study were 53 members of DFTACTs, 143 school heads, and 641 teachers in the fourteen (14) districts in the Schools Division of Biliran. A purposive sampling method was used for the DFTACT members, while random sampling was utilized for the school heads and teacher respondents. Focus group discussions were conducted to identify the problems faced by DFTACT members.

To gather data, the researcher used, with permission, the 5-item level of skills and level of competence. All these research instruments were prepared on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Less skilled, 2 = Slightly skilled, 3 = Skilled, 4 = Highly skilled, 5 = Very highly skilled). The researcher used descriptive statistics such as frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and rank to describe the quantitative data responses of the respondents. The relationships of variables were analyzed using Pearson's r correlation, eta correlation, and point-biserial correlation. The utilization of the correlation coefficient depends on the level of measurement of the variables.

5. Findings and Discussion

This section presents a comprehensive analysis of the data gathered to assess the competence and skills of the Division Field Technical Assistance Composite Team (DFTACT) members. It begins with the demographic and professional profile of the team, including age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position, and years of experience as technical assistance providers. Following this, the section examines the members' self-reported skills and competence levels in three key domains: professionalism, relationship building, and the technical assistance process. Additionally, the discussion explores the perceived impact of the technical assistance provided by the DFTACT on schools' key performance indicators (KPIs), specifically in the areas of access, quality, and governance. The findings are supported by descriptive statistics, mean scores, and qualitative interpretations to provide a holistic understanding of the DFTACT's role and effectiveness in enhancing school performance.

5.1. Profile of DFTACT Members

The following section outlines the demographic and professional profile of the Division Field Technical Assistance Composite Team (DFTACT) members, which includes their age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position, and experience as technical assistance providers.

Table 1.
Profile of DFTACT Members.

Age	f	%
60 years old and above (Senior Citizen)	3	5.7
46 to 59 years old (Old Age)	18	34.0
22 to 45 years old (Middle Age)	32	60.3
21 years old and below (Young Age)	0	0.0
Total	53	100.0
Sex	f	%
Male	25	47.2
Female	28	52.8
Total	53	100.0
Civil Status	f	%
Single	7	13.2
Married	46	86.8
Total	53	100.0
Educational Attainment	f	%
Doctorate Degree Holder	12	22.6
With Doctoral Units	11	20.8
Master's Degree Holder	8	15.1
With Master's Units	18	34.0

Bachelor's Degree Holder	4	7.5
Total	53	100.0
Position	f	%
District/Division Supervisor	24	45.3
Planning Officer	1	1.9
Accountant	2	3.8
Budget Officer	1	1.9
PDO	3	5.7
SEPS	4	7.6
EPS II	5	9.4
Administrative Officer	4	7.6
Nurses	7	16.9
Dentists	2	3.8
Total	53	100.0
Experience as Technical Assistance Provider	f	%
Expert (More than 15 years)	24	45.3
Experienced (11 to 15 years)	18	34.0
Novice (10 years and below)	11	20.7
Total	53	100.0

Age: Table 1 shows the age distribution of the DFTACT members. The majority of the respondents, 32 (60.3%), are categorized as middle-aged, ranging from 22 to 45 years old. A significant portion, 18 (34%), falls under the old age category of 46 to 59 years, while 3 (5.7%) are 60 years old and above, classified as senior citizens. Interestingly, no respondents were in the 21 years old and below category, which suggests that the team is primarily composed of experienced professionals in their middle to later stages of their career. This implies that the DFTACT team's overall composition is largely middle-aged, with considerable professional experience.

Sex: As shown in Table 2, the sex distribution is fairly balanced, with 28 (52.8%) females and 25 (47.2%) males. This gender balance indicates that both men and women are equally represented within the team, promoting diversity and varied perspectives within the group.

Civil Status: Table 3 indicates that the vast majority of DFTACT members, 46 (86.8%), are married, with only 7 (13.2%) being single. This suggests that the team is predominantly composed of individuals who have settled familial lives, which may influence their approach to professional responsibilities and teamwork.

Educational Attainment: According to Table 4, the educational background of the DFTACT members is diverse. Twelve members (22.6%) hold a Doctorate degree, and 11 (20.8%) have completed doctoral units. A significant number, 18 (34%), hold master's degrees, while 8 (15.1%) have completed master's units. Four members (7.5%) possess a bachelor's degree. This wide range of academic qualifications implies that the team has a strong foundation in higher education, which likely contributes to their expertise in providing technical assistance.

Position: The distribution of positions within the DFTACT is presented in Table 5. The majority of members, 24 (45.3%), hold the role of district/division supervisors, followed by 7 (13.2%) who are nurses, and 5 (9.4%) serving as education program specialists II. Other roles include administrative officers, planning development officers, accountants, and dentists. This varied distribution highlights the multidisciplinary composition of the team, which is crucial for providing comprehensive technical assistance across different fields.

Experience as Technical Assistance Providers: Table 6 reflects the experience of DFTACT members in providing technical assistance. A significant portion, 24 (45.3%), are experts with more than 15 years of experience, while 18 (34%) are experienced with 11 to 15 years of service. The remaining 11 (20.7%) are relatively novice, with 10 years or fewer of experience. This suggests that while the team includes some less experienced members, the majority possess extensive experience, ensuring a high level of competence and skill in delivering technical assistance.

Skills of Division Field of Technical Assistance Composite Team (DFTACT): Table 2 presents the skills of the DFTACT members in terms of professionalism.

5.2. Skills of DFTACT in Terms of Professionalism

The skills of DFTACT in terms of professionalism are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2.
Skills of DFTACT in terms of Professionalism.

Statement	M	Description
Identifies the professional codes of ethics for making professional decisions.	4.19	Highly Skilled
Recognizes the importance of knowing one's own personal values, beliefs, and bias and how these can affect the TA process.	4.19	Highly Skilled
Understand the role, responsibilities and boundaries of a TA professional.	4.16	Highly Skilled
Understand the TA professional's role as a change Agent.	4.15	Highly Skilled
Is aware of a maintains a professional demeanor and appropriate conduct in different venues (face-to-face, online and through social media) and settings.	4.11	Highly Skilled
Has the content knowledge and skills needed to support the TA partner, including core knowledge in child development and developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) as well as the knowledge and skills within their own discipline and/or area of expertise.	3.96	Highly Skilled
Is aware of the knowledge and skills needed by TA professionals to implement the TA process.	4.00	Highly Skilled
Recognizes the importance of establishing their own goals and a professional development plan.	4.15	Highly Skilled
Identifies when TA partners may need support to advocate for their needs.	4.03	Highly Skilled
Is aware of the resources available to support TA partners in their advocacy efforts.	4.00	Highly Skilled
AM	4.09	Highly Skilled

It is clear from the results that all indicators were rated as highly skilled by the school heads and teachers. The average mean score (AM) of 4.09, ranging from 3.96 to 4.19, signifies that DFTACT members excel in identifying professional codes of ethics, understanding the impact of personal values on the TA process, recognizing the role of TA professionals as change agents, and maintaining a professional demeanor across various settings. Their competence is particularly evident in their ability to maintain professionalism in diverse environments, from face-to-face interactions to online engagements, further enhancing their ability to build trust with partners.

5.3. Skills of DEFTACT Members in Terms of Building Relationships
The skills of DFTACT members in terms of building relationships is illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3.
Skills of DFTACT in terms of building relationships.

STATEMENT	M	Description
1. Understands the importance of and factors that contribute to building positive relationships as a foundation for effective TA.	4.14	Highly Skilled
2. Understands the components of a strength-based approach.	3.91	Highly Skilled
3. Determines with the TA partner the guidelines for providing TA, including leadership involvement, participants, as well as the duration and delivery mode (onsite, telephonic, email/video conferencing, etc.)	3.87	Highly Skilled
4. Identifies the decisions to be made and who will be responsible	4.06	Highly Skilled
5. Describes a collaborative problem-solving approach.	3.95	Highly Skilled
6. Knows appropriate conflict resolution strategies.	3.85	Highly Skilled
7. Is aware of the process for providing effective feedback.	3.98	Highly Skilled
8. understands effective communication techniques including active listening, powerful questioning and direct communication.	4.01	Highly Skilled
9. Recognizes how the use of reflective questions promotes problem-solving, understanding points of view, analysis and planning.	3.89	Highly Skilled
AM	3.96	Highly Skilled

As illustrated in Table 3, DFTACT members also demonstrate a high level of competence in building relationships. With an average mean of 3.96, the team excels in understanding the importance of positive relationships as a foundation for effective technical assistance. Key skills include understanding the strength-based approach, employing collaborative problem-solving, and utilizing effective conflict resolution strategies. Their ability to engage in active listening, powerful questioning, and direct communication also contributes to a productive and professional relationship with their partners.

5.4. Skills of DEFTACT in Terms of Technical Assistance Prowess
The skills of DEFTACT in terms of the technical assistance process are shown in Table 4.

Table 4.
Skills of DFTACT in terms of the Technical Assistance Process.

STATEMENT	M	Description
1. Understands how to organize and share data collected with the TA partner.	3.90	Highly Skilled
2. Understands the sequence of tasks and resources needed to develop shared goals and prioritize action steps.	3.81	Highly Skilled
3. Is aware of the essential components of a TA plan and how to develop a plan that is relevant to the specific TA strategy implemented.	3.83	Highly Skilled
4. Understands the range of implementation methods that can be provided by the TA professional, including problem-solving, skill development, modeling, reflecting, facilitating, and providing feedback.	3.86	Highly Skilled
5. Understands the difference among and appropriate uses of mentoring, coaching and consulting strategies, peer-to-peer networks, including communities of practice (CoP) and professional learning communities (PLC)	3.97	Highly Skilled
6. Identifies when TA support is needed to increase an individual TA partner's professional growth.	4.00	Highly Skilled
7. Understands that coaching is a TA approach led by a TA professional with particular expertise or specialized knowledge and skills.	3.88	Highly Skilled
8. Identifies effective facilitation skills and can describe how facilitation differs from training.	3.98	Highly Skilled
9. Understands the importance of evaluating the TA plan.	3.86	Highly Skilled
10. Is aware of resources to support the TA partner to track TA progress and outcomes.	3.86	Highly Skilled
AM	3.90	Highly Skilled

Table 4 outlines the skills of DFTACT members in managing the technical assistance process. The team shows a strong command over organizing and sharing data, developing shared goals, and utilizing various implementation methods, such as mentoring, coaching, and consulting. Their understanding of the technical assistance process is comprehensive, with all indicators being rated as highly skilled. The average mean score of 3.90 reflects their proficiency in coordinating tasks, facilitating feedback, and evaluating the progress of the TA plan, which is essential for ensuring the success of their initiatives.

5.5. Competence of Division Field Assistance Composite Team
   Table 5 discloses the competence of DFTACT.

Table 5.
Competence of DFTACT in terms of professionalism.

STATEMENT	M	Description
1. Follows established professional, ethical, and legal standards, including maintaining confidentiality of children, families, and TA partners at all times.	4.08	Highly Competent
2. Uses professional codes of ethics to guide decision-making when a situation involves competing professional values and/or has more than one possible solution.	4.21	Highly Competent
3. Presents sensitive information fairly, acknowledging the validity of contrasting perspectives.	4.20	Highly Competent
4. Establishes clear expectations and sets boundaries regarding appropriate roles and relationships.	4.16	Highly Competent
5. Works as a partner without asserting self as an expert.	4.02	Highly Competent
6. Models and promotes positive self-care practices.	4.14	Highly Competent
7. Maintains professionalism by being on time, organized and prepared for each TA session.	4.14	Highly Competent
8. Maintains accurate records to document TA contacts, goals, activities, progress and next steps.	4.04	Highly Competent
9. Records, manually or electronically, the needed documentation at the established intervals.	4.07	Highly Competent
10. Submits reports and data that are accurate, grammatically correct and error-free.	3.98	Highly Competent
11. Assess TA partner's readiness for change.	3.98	Highly Competent
12. Works with the TA partner to plan for change.	4.02	Highly Competent
13. Supports TA partner "where they are" in implementing change.	4.03	Highly Competent
14. Engages in self-reflection as a tool for growth and enhancement of knowledge and skills.	4.08	Highly Competent

15. Applies the content knowledge and skills needed to support the TA partner, including knowledge of child development and Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP), as well as the knowledge and skills within their own discipline and/or area of expertise.	4.12	Highly Competent
AM	4.08	Highly Competent

Table 5 reveals that DFTACT members are highly competent in maintaining ethical, legal, and professional standards. With an average mean score (AM) of 4.08, members demonstrate exceptional skills in maintaining confidentiality, using professional ethics to guide decision-making, and promoting positive self-care practices. Their ability to work without asserting themselves as experts while still maintaining a professional and organized approach enhances the overall effectiveness of their technical assistance.

5.6. Competencies of DFTACT in Terms of Building Relationships
The competencies of DFTACT in terms of building relationships is reflected in Table 6.

Table 6.
Competencies of DFTACT in terms of Building Relationships.

STATEMENT	M	Description
1. Takes adequate time to develop reciprocal relationships through sharing experiences, exploring expectations and clarifying roles, while maintaining appropriate boundaries.	4.08	Highly Competent
2. Demonstrates personal integrity, honesty and sincerity throughout the TA process.	4.21	Highly Competent
3. Ensures the TA partner understands that information shared will be kept confidential	4.20	Highly Competent
4. Asks permission prior to sharing ideas and new approaches.	4.16	Highly Competent
5. Creates a mutual agreement such as a memorandum of understanding (MOU), that includes defining roles in the TA process.	4.02	Highly Competent
6. Follows through on agreed-upon plans and commitments.	4.14	Highly Competent
7. Demonstrates a balance between building rapport and getting the work done.	4.14	Highly Competent
8. Engages the TA partner to explore alternative ideas and solutions, evaluate options and make Decisions when barriers to progress are identified.	4.04	Highly Competent
9. Uses strategies to encourage participation and generate ideas	4.07	Highly Competent
10. Models the steps in an intentional collaborative problem-solving process.	3.98	Highly Competent
11. Provides verbal and written feedback in the context of agreed-upon expectations.	3.98	Highly Competent
12. Provides feedback that is clear, data-driven and delivered in a timely manner.	4.02	Highly Competent
13. Uses effective communication strategies including active listening, powerful questioning and direct communication.	4.03	Highly Competent
14. Uses a variety of questions with the TA partner that promote problem-solving, understanding points of view, analysis and planning.	3.97	Highly Competent
AM	4.07	Highly Competent

The competence of DFTACT members in building relationships, as shown in Table 6, is also highly rated. Their ability to establish reciprocal relationships, maintain personal integrity, and ensure confidentiality, combined with skills in collaborative problem-solving and providing clear, data-driven feedback, contributes to their high competence. The team received an average mean score of 4.07, indicating that they excel in maintaining strong professional relationships with their partners while also being effective in their roles.

5.7. Competencies of DFTACT in Terms of Technical Assistance Process
The competencies of DFTACT members in terms of the technical assistance process is depicted in Table 7.

Table 7.
Competencies of DFTACT in terms of the Technical Assistance Process.

STATEMENT	M	Description
1. Jointly develops a TA plan and uses it to review progress and set goals.	3.91	Highly Competent
2. Uses coaching strategies to support the TA partner's self-efficacy (confidence and competence	3.92	Highly Competent
3. Discuss with the TA partner the initial focus of the consultation using assessment data.	3.93	Highly Competent
4. Jointly develops a TA plan and uses it to review progress and set goals.	3.89	Highly Competent
5. Uses consultation strategies to address the activities on the TA plan.	3.91	Highly Competent
6. Uses supportive adult learning groups such as Communities of Practice and Professional Learning Communities when peer learning and networking are needed.	3.90	Highly Competent
7. Jointly develops a TA plan and uses it to review progress and set goals.	3.88	Highly Competent
8. Jointly reviews the TA plan and goals.	3.91	Highly Competent
9. Engages in a planned conclusion of the TA.	3.91	Highly Competent
AM	3.91	Highly Competent

As presented in Table 7, the DFTACT members demonstrate high competence in their technical assistance (TA) processes. With mean scores ranging from 3.88 to 3.92, the team is highly skilled in various TA activities such as jointly developing TA plans, using coaching strategies to enhance self-efficacy, and effectively engaging with school heads and teachers through data-driven discussions. The overall mean of 3.91 underscores the proficiency of DFTACT members in facilitating TA processes that aim to improve school performance.

5.8. Schools' Key Performance Indicators with Technical Assistance Provision

The impact of TA provision on schools is examined through several key performance indicators (KPIs) across access, quality, and governance dimensions. The key performance indicators of the schools with TA provision are reflected in Tables 8 - 10. Table 8 presents the key performance indicator in terms of access.

Table 8.
Schools' Key Performance Indicators on Access with TA Provision.

School	Enrolment	Promotion Rate	Cohort Survival Rate	Drop-out Rate	Completion Rate	Failure Rate	Retention Rate
1	162	100	74.1	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
2	133	100	76.6	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
3	215	100	93.2	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
4	150	100	87.3	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
5	163	100	84.8	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
6	145	100	78.2	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
7	148	100	68.6	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
8	142	100	90.2	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
9	521	100	78.6	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
10	302	100	81.5	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
11	144	100	79.8	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
12	132	100	86.3	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
13	165	100	94.2	0.0	100	0.0	0.0
14	180	100	88.3	0.0	100	0.0	0.0

As shown in Table 8, all the schools with TA provision exhibit 100% promotion and completion rates, with zero dropout, retention, and failure rates. While the cohort survival rate varies across schools, from a high of 94.2% to a low of 68.6%, the overall trend suggests that the DFTACT's interventions significantly contribute to maintaining student enrolment and supporting student progression.

5.9. Performance Indicators of the School with TA Provision in Terms of Quality

The performance indicator of the school with TA provision in terms of quality is disclosed in Table 9.

Table 9.
Performance Indicators of the School with TA Provision in terms of Quality.

MPS RANGE	f	Description
96-100	0	Mastered
86-95	0	Closely approximating mastery
66-85	0	Moving towards mastery
35-65	0	Average mastery
15-34	0	Low
5-4	0	Very Low
0-4	0	Absolutely no mastery
Total		

Table 9 indicates that most of the schools with TA provision had an MPS (Mean Percentage Score) ranging from 66-85, categorized as "moving towards mastery." This highlights the improvement in the academic performance of the schools post-intervention, although they still fall short of the MPS standard set by the Schools Division Office. These findings affirm that TA has a positive impact on academic outcomes, even though further improvements are necessary.

5.10. Performance Indicators of the School with TA Provision in Terms of Governance
The performance indicators of the school under TA in terms of governance are shown in Table 10.

Table 10.
Performance Indicators of the School With TA Provision in Terms of Governance.

School	Number of Teachers Provided with Technical Assistance				Number of Instructional Supervisions
	Classroom Management Implementation	Curriculum Implementation	Teaching-learning Assessment	Access to LRMDS	
1	3	4	3	0	49
2	3	5	5	0	25
3	4	4	4	4	28
4	6	7	6	7	28
5	7	7	7	7	32
6	5	5	5	0	29
7	9	9	9	0	38
8	5	5	5	2	34
9	12	12	12	3	49
10	4	4	4	4	32
11	5	5	5	0	36
12	4	4	4	5	36
13	6	6	6	6	28
14	5	5	5	2	42

Table 10 illustrates that DFTACTs and school heads provided extensive support to teachers through technical assistance in areas like classroom management, curriculum implementation, and teaching-learning assessment. Additionally, the number of instructional supervisions conducted indicates a comprehensive approach to governance, as school heads and DFTACTs played a key role in guiding teachers and ensuring the effective implementation of educational strategies.

5.11. Problems Met By DFTACT
The problems encountered by DFTACT are illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11.
Problems Met By DFTACT.

Problems Met	Rank
No coordination among the team members. Some members are not present during the DFTACTs deployment due to overlapping of schedules and/or activities	3
Strategic options of School Heads are incongruent with their issues and concerns raised	4
Some findings and suggestions of the DFTACTs are not followed properly by the School Heads and Teachers.	2
School's strategic plan of interventions was not properly implemented, monitored and evaluated as mentored by the DFTACTs during their quarterly Focused Group Discussion (FGD)	1

The challenges faced by the DFTACT, as depicted in Table 11, highlight several key issues in the deployment and execution of TA. The primary issue, ranked first, was the lack of proper implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school strategic plans. This problem underscores the need for stronger accountability mechanisms and continuous support for the

schools in executing intervention strategies. Other challenges, such as a lack of coordination among team members and non-compliance with suggestions made by DFTACTs, suggest that there are still areas for improvement in communication and collaboration within the team and with school heads and teachers.

5.12. Relationship of Variables
    The relationship of variables is presented in Tables 12 to 14.

Table 12.
Relationship Between the Profile of the DFTACT and Key Performance of the School with TA Provision.

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Decision
Age	0.016	0.305	Failed to reject Ho
Sex	0.101	0.095	Failed to reject Ho
Civil Status	0.094	0.226	Failed to reject Ho
Educational Attainment	0.113	0.063	Failed to reject Ho
Position	0.103	0.214	Failed to reject Ho
Experience as a Technical Assistance Provider	0.026	0.321	Failed to reject Ho

    The analysis of the relationship between the profile of DFTACT members and the key performance of schools with TA provision (Table 12) reveals no significant linear associations. Factors like age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position, and experience as a TA provider do not appear to influence the performance of schools in terms of access, quality, or governance. This suggests that the effectiveness of TA is not contingent on these demographic or professional characteristics of DFTACT members.
    The relationship between the skills of DFTACT and the key performance of the schools with TA provision is illustrated in Table 13.

Table 13.
Relationship Between Skills of DFTACT and Key Performance of the School with TA Provision.

Variable	r-value	p-value	Decision
Access	0.231	0.059	Failed to reject Ho
Quality	0.319	0.006	Ho is rejected
Governance	0.264	0.015	Ho is Rejected

    On the other hand, when analyzing the relationship between DFTACT skills and school performance (Table 13), significant correlations were found with quality ($r=0.319$, $p=0.006$) and governance ($r=0.264$, $p=0.015$). This indicates that improvements in DFTACT members' skills positively impact school performance in these areas. However, no significant relationship was found with the access indicator ($r=0.231$, $p=0.059$), suggesting that while skill development enhances certain aspects of school performance, it does not necessarily affect access.
    The relationship between the competence of DFTACT and the key performance of the school with TA provision is revealed in Table 14.

Table 14.
Relationship Between Competencies of DFTACT and Key Performance of the School with TA Provision.

Variable	r-value	p-value	Decision
Access	0.158	0.096	Failed to reject Ho
Quality	0.325	0.000	Ho is rejected
Governance	0.287	0.028	Ho is rejected

    The relationship between the competence of DFTACT members and school performance (Table 14) further supports the importance of competence in influencing the quality ($r=0.325$, $p=0.000$) and governance ($r=0.287$, $p=0.028$) of schools. This reinforces the notion that higher competence among DFTACT members contributes significantly to improving the quality of education and governance in schools with TA provision. However, there is no significant relationship between competence and access ($r=0.158$, $p=0.096$), suggesting that other factors may influence access performance more directly.
    The data suggest that while the skills and competencies of DFTACT members have a clear and positive impact on the quality and governance aspects of school performance, factors related to access may not be as closely linked to these variables. The findings also indicate that while there are challenges, the TA interventions are overall effective in fostering significant improvements in school performance, particularly in the areas of academic quality and governance.

6. Conclusion
    The findings of this study reveal that members of the Division Field Technical Assistance Composite Team (DFTACT) are both highly skilled and highly competent in delivering technical assistance to schools. Their interventions have significantly contributed to the improvement of schools' key performance indicators, particularly in the areas of quality and governance. Schools receiving TA demonstrated MPS (Mean Percentage Score) values ranging from 86% to 95%, indicating

performance that is closely approximating mastery. Furthermore, instructional supervision by both school-based and division-level TA providers was conducted regularly and sufficiently. The significant relationships between the DFTACT members' skills and competencies and the schools' performance affirm the vital role of TA in enhancing the delivery of basic education services.

7. Recommendation

In view of the findings, it is strongly recommended that regular professional collaboration be institutionalized among DFTACT members to facilitate the sharing of best practices and innovative strategies. These sessions will also serve as mentoring opportunities for novice TA providers, allowing them to benchmark and learn from experienced colleagues. Orientation, re-orientation, and continuous capability-building activities for TA providers should be consistently included in the Division's Technical Assistance Plan and Annual Implementation Plan, with corresponding funding support to ensure implementation. Moreover, there is a need for systematic and regular monitoring and evaluation of schools that have received technical assistance to track improvements and identify areas requiring further support. To enhance stakeholder involvement, focused group discussions should be conducted with school heads, concerned teachers, and TA providers to ensure that all parties are well-informed and actively involved in addressing the issues and concerns identified in schools. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies on a wider scale across different divisions or regions to allow for broader insights and more generalizable conclusions regarding the impact of technical assistance on school performance.

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