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FROM CHALKBOARDS TO THE CLOUD: HOW TEACHERS PREPARE FOR AND RESPOND TO THE DATA PRIVACY BREACHES

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ABSTRACT

The growing penetration of digital technologies in education has heightened the need to protect students' personal and sensitive information. Grounded on Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012, this study explored the awareness, knowledge, challenges and compliance strategies in adhering to data privacy principles among public school teachers at Olango Integrated School Balo-i District. Descriptive-correlational research design was used to gather data from fourteen (14) teachers via a validated Likert-scale questionnaire. Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics, t-test analysis and cross-tabulation. The respondents were mostly mid-career educators who were in the age group of 31–40 years, with approximately equal number of participants holding bachelor's and master's degrees, able to have a teaching experience of 6–10 years. (M = 4.14) Profile of Teachers' Knowledge on Data Privacy Law and the Mobile Application The degree to which respondents were knowledgeable about their duties under DPII was high (Table 2). This holds true in managing student data, such as handling for storage (M = 4.15). Data Protection Compliance Scores were very high (M = 4.38), with the highest scoring item being securing sensitive information and reporting security breaches. Nevertheless, respondents faced moderate level of challenges (M = 3.38), attributed mainly to inadequate training and resources. Most hāwī learning around the Act was informal in nature – a result of self-directed study and colleagues giving knowledge to one another, as opposed to structured training initiatives. The study finds that teachers have high sense of awareness and compliance, but participation from those schools is needed by providing institutional support through formalized professional development and increased resources for carrying out the comprehensive and sustainable data privacy practices at all public schools.

KEY WORDS: *Awareness, Breaches, Challenges, Data Privacy, Digital Technology,*

INTRODUCTION

Accelerated digital transformation in education has increased by orders of magnitude the volume of sensitive data that schools process. When it comes to processing student records, academic performance data and health information as well as all things related to de-digital learning outputs, teachers are one who stands at the front line. The Data Privacy Act of 2012 or Republic Act No.10173 in the Philippines is a law that regulates the collection, processing, storage and disclosure of personal information. Educational institutions and staff have a responsibility to "establish reasonable administrative, physical and technical safeguards for maintaining the confidentially, integrity and availability of student information".

Even with such a statutory backdrop, questions remain about how teachers understand, prepare for and follow data privacy laws. Within an era of data-driven schools in which more digital technology is embedded into pedagogical practice (particularly in blended or technology-enhanced learning contexts), educators' roles are evolving ever further. While educators will likely understand the need for student data to be protected, access to training options and support or resources within their organization may mean they have a varying degree of awareness and practices resulting from it. Initial results of this study suggest that teachers have high level of knowledge about their role under the Data

Privacy Act, and in securing and reporting sensitive information. In addition, there are good measures in place to ensure secure storage of student data and restricted access for compliance reasons. When there are challenges, they are largely moderate and mostly related to lack of formal training and resources. Additionally, learning gains seem to depend more on self-study and peer support rather than formal educational development programs.

These results indicate the importance of researching teachers' knowledge, awareness, challenges, and coping strategies in a specific public-school setting. In this light, the study seeks to contribute with context-based findings that can help shape institutional policies, professional development programs, and foster a culture of accountability and data privacy in Philippine public schools by focusing on the teachers in Olango Integrated School.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study seeks to answer the following important questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in:
   a. Age
   b. Educational Attainment
   c. Length of service
2. How aware are the respondents of the Data Privacy Act and its guidelines?
3. How much do they know of the obligations and responsibilities under the Data Privacy Act?
4. What are the problems facing respondents in adherence to the Data Privacy Act and how do they cope with the challenges?

In view of such, this research seeks to address the following questions: What is Data Privacy Act in Education? The researcher hopes that through addressing these questions, findings of the present study can contribute and offer substantive body of knowledge concerning the Data Privacy Act in Education particularly on teacher's awareness, challenges and strategies public school teachers assigned specifically at Olango Integrated School- Balo-i District were adhering on. This study is significant as it may offer a new addition to the literature related to Data Privacy Act in Education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Data Privacy in Education

The adoption of Republic Act No. 10173, the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (DPA), was a significant achievement in the Philippines' endeavor to safeguard individuals' right to privacy while promoting the free flow of information to spur innovation and development (Republic Act No. 10173, 2012). The law governs the collection, processing, storage, and disclosure of personal data in both the public and private sector, including educational institutions. The National Privacy Commission (NPC), the law's implementing body, was formed in 2016, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) provided guidance on compliance for covered entities. The DPA draws heavily from international best practices in data protection and privacy laws, particularly the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Key principles of the law include the need for data to be processed lawfully, transparency, and accountability and, most importantly, the protection of the rights of the data subjects. These rights typically include access to personal data, correction of inaccuracies, erasure of data, and protection against unauthorized disclosures (Santos, 2023).

As schools increasingly digitized their systems and began to compile information about student academic, behavior, and health data, data privacy acquired a more significant importance in the education sector. In its governance, the DPA requires schools to institute reasonable and appropriate measures of security, including the appointment of Data Protection Officers (DPOs) and the development of mechanisms for compliance (Tañada & Gonzales, 2020). Studies found educational institutions to be particularly susceptible to data breaches due to limited technical resources and high data volume (Foronda et al., 2023). Comparative studies emphasize the importance of infusing privacy aspects into institutional processes (privacy by design), ensuring privacy aspects are integrated from the onset of system development (Aljeraisy et al., 2022). Teachers are key figures in ensuring privacy law compliance because they deal with sensitive student information. Research has found a gap in teachers' knowledge and awareness of privacy laws. Buhain and Reyes (2021) found that only a handful of teachers had a comprehensive awareness of the Data Privacy Act, despite many being aware of its existence. A survey conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd, 2020) revealed that less than half of the teachers surveyed were confident that they were able to implement data privacy. Limited professional development opportunities and insufficient structured training in privacy topics in teacher education programmed adds to this lack of knowledge (Forbes, 2021). The abrupt shift to online learning due to the

COVID-19 pandemic uncovered vulnerabilities, funneling educators towards online platforms for education without adequate proficiency with privacy and cybersecurity practices (Forbes, 2021). Teachers need to understand the differences between privacy, confidentiality and security. Privacy is the students' right to control their information; confidentiality is the obligation not to divulge shared information without permission, and security encompasses the technical and organizational measures for protecting data (Foronda, 2023). Practical steps include restricting document-sharing permissions, employing "approved cloud services" (if using one), password protecting documents where relevant, and avoiding unsecure portable storage drives (Guzman, 2023). These measures are not always straightforward to implement due to vague legalistic terms, less instruction from the institute than necessary, and poor access to techniques for increasing privacy (Galang & Bautista, 2022).

Something similar happens elsewhere. In the United States, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) entitle students to access their education records and request amendments if incorrect; it also prohibits disclosure of student educational records without consent (Forbes, 2021). Recent efforts to build a "national data security policy" have raised concerns that the student privacy statute may be "weakened due to the influence of for-profit companies" who use private-sector contracts to weaken security (Forbes, 2021). Another loophole is that FERPA does not govern how private companies that receive student data are expected to comply, which could leave them unaccountable if "potential data security and privacy risks are low," organizations do not find it unintendedly exposing large amounts of identifiable data centuries (like school schedules and menus) to the public (Forbes, 2021). In Southeast Asia, Nguyen and Le (2021) note that less than 40% of respondents from a national survey of teachers demonstrated a working knowledge of any national privacy regulation. Even in Europe, educators implementing the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) say they struggle to translate legal requirements into practice in their classrooms, as reported by Smith et al. (2022). Lack of funding, education, rapidly evolving technology and legal risks, and administrative burden (as well as the time needed to write, understand, "research, revise, and rework compliance documents" can lead to errors. Public schools in the US "struggle for resources and tend to be underfunded" making them particularly vulnerable (Foronda et al., 2023). Rapid technological advancement also comes into conflict with institutions' capacity to keep up, leading to increasing incidents of data breaches or leaks with little understanding of which laws are not followed (Singer, 2013). This raises the need for compliance. How institutions go about complying is by instituting some level of required privacy understanding for teachers in teacher education, either pre-service (Ramos et al., 2021) or in-service/faculty training. Making "privacy assessments mandatory" (Ramos et al., 2021), regular "audits" (Ramos et al., 2021), and hiring a Data Protection Officer in light of the evidence that they may "help bridge the gap between data privacy theory and practice in educational settings" (National Privacy Commission, n.d.), may arguably help follow the second letter of privacy law, however tedious it may seem. Agencies may also adopt other secure platforms such as DepEd's Learner Information System (LIS) comes highly recommended (People, 2023). To truly protect student data, the government, school administrators, teachers, technology providers and parents must work together. Rather than implement technology 'begging' not to be hacked, EdTech can look to teach kids how to act and live online, while teaching teachers and administrators how to protect student data. The industry can work with governing bodies to protect kids and schools from being hacked but we must get them on the same page about regulation. The answer is formulating a curriculum of resources and training materials for teachers and school systems that teaches them how to protect users. Having done things in a way that aligns and compliments state and country laws like Data Privacy Act of 2012 with education form a better all-around implementation of EdTech.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive-correlational design was employed in this study, to determine the teachers' level of knowledge, awareness, challenges, and compliance strategies regarding Data Privacy Act in Education in a public integrated school, descriptive survey, and correlational design. The descriptive survey method was used to gather data from all teacher-respondents using the Likert-scale questionnaire, while correlational was used to find the relationship of the demographic profile such as age, educational attainment, and length of service to the identified dependent variable. The research was conducted at Olango Integrated School of Angayen, Balo-i (approximately 29 km from Iligan City) near the Agus River, which has one (1) school head, fourteen (14) teachers, two (2) ALIVE teachers, and a total of 354 learners from kindergarten to Grade 10. The sixteen (16) respondents consisted of fourteen (14) female elementary and secondary teachers chosen from the accessible teachers and convenient method since they can quickly access Google forms and fill-out the online form and gather data using the adopted and modified 20-item questionnaire on knowledge (11 item), awareness, challenges and compliance strategies (9 items), measured using appropriate Likert scales. The instrument was pilot tested in Balo-i West District with high reliability values of, 0.816 knowledge and 0.905 awareness, challenges and compliance strategies, indicating internal consistency. Data collection involved

procuring formal permission to conduct a survey from the school authorities, providing the survey to the respondents, and consolidating their responses for analysis. Statistical treatments to be used in this research included frequencies and percentages of the finding related to demographic profile from age, educational attainment, and length of service, the mean and standard deviation to measure level of knowledge and awareness, t-test to compare level of knowledge on the profile variables, frequency distribution and cross-tabulation pertaining to challenges and strategies and the profile variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. ***Demographic Profile Respondents***

Variable	Category	f	%	Mean	SD
Age	21–30	4	28.6		
	31–40	7	50.0		
	41–50	3	21.4	**1.93**	**0.730**
Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	7	50.0		
	Master's Degree	7	50.0	**1.50**	**0.519**
Length of Service	0–5 years	4	28.6		
	6–10 years	6	42.9		
	16 years and above	4	28.6	**2.29**	**1.204**

Table 1 is a list of some basic background characteristics for the 14 teachers participating in this study. Teachers in this study ranged in age from 21–30 years old (29%) to 36–45 years old (32%) to 41–50 years old (21%). On a three-point scale, ranging from 1 (21–30), 2 (31–40), to 3 (41–50), the median was roughly 2, which means many of the teachers were in early-to-mid career stages. There wasn't a large age gap among the teachers in this study, which would allow for a high-quality rating based on age alone and in fact, the maximum possible score based on age alone would be 40, which is below the average age of the participants in this study. This mirrors a finding from EDUCAUSE (2023) that most of the work related to data privacy and cybersecurity at schools is being done by younger people because they feel more comfortable working with technology (Muscanell, 2023).

The participants in this study had a roughly equal split in educational attainment such as half of the participants held a bachelor's degree while the other half held a master's degree. This would place the average participant squarely in the middle of the two groups and suggests little difference between the two. Therefore, there's a mix of both teachers with advanced degrees and those without.

This is important, as teachers with graduate degrees tend to find it easier to understand issues such as data privacy compliance and regulation. Graduate degree holding educators, Mollenkamp (2023) says, generally have a greater understanding of school data privacy policy and implementation than do non-graduate degree holders.

In terms of number of years of teaching experience, approximately 43% of the participants in this study have been teaching for six to ten years. Approximately 29% of the participants have been teaching for five years or fewer. Finally, another 29% have been teaching for sixteen or more years. The overall average falls into the six-to-ten-year category, although the distribution of years of experience was wide-ranging. Participants included everything from new teacher to aging veteran. As Sloane (2023) points out, the teachers who have been teaching the longest are more likely to affect how schools address data privacy issues simply because they've worked in more environments and are better able to work within the current system. Thus, we have a group of mostly mid-career teachers with a mix of youth and established careers, as well as a significant proportion with graduate degrees. As such, they should be well positioned to describe their experiences and the challenges they face and discuss how they are able to comply with the Data Privacy Act in their respective schools.

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Table 2. ***Knowledge of Data Privacy Act***

Source of Knowledge	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Self-study (e.g., Reading Articles, Books)	0.79	0.43	Highest
Colleagues and peers	0.79	0.43	Highest
Institutional policies and principles	0.71	0.47	High
Formal training/workshops	0.21	0.43	Low
I have no knowledge about it	0.00	0.00	None
Overall Average	**0.50**	**0.23**	**Moderate**

Most respondents obtain their knowledge of the Data Privacy Act through informal and self-education sources; the two highest mean scores for how respondents obtained their knowledge are through self-educating (Mean = 0.79, Standard Deviation = 0.43) and through education via discussion with other colleagues (Mean = 0.79, Standard Deviation = 0.43). These results indicate that teachers rely heavily on their own initiative and peer support for developing an adequate understanding of the data privacy requirements. School district policies and procedures are also used by teachers as a source of information on data privacy (Mean = 0.71, Standard Deviation = 0.47); however, school district policies and procedures do not appear to be the primary or even secondary source of information regarding data privacy.

While school districts have formalized training sessions/workshops available to teachers on data privacy, there is evidence from these survey responses that teachers have little to no involvement in formalized training sessions/workshops (Mean = 0.21, Standard Deviation = 0.43). Despite the low mean score of formalized training sessions/workshops, each respondent indicated some degree of awareness of the Data Privacy Act (Mean = 0.00 for No Awareness). Therefore, it appears that no respondent had absolutely no awareness of the Data Privacy Act.

Overall, the above results indicate that while teachers can become knowledgeable of data privacy issues in an informal and collaborative manner, there is a significant need for school districts to develop formalized training programs to assist teachers with compliance of data privacy issues. While teachers do show initiative in obtaining their own knowledge, formalized training will help establish a common base of knowledge among teachers, increase the breadth of teacher's knowledge, and provide teachers with the opportunity to learn and comply with legal and regulatory standards related to data privacy. It could be beneficial for school districts to combine formalized training with teachers' current informal and collaborative methods of compliance to create a more complete and long-term method of compliance.

Table 3
The Level of Awareness of the Data Privacy Act

	Mean	SD	Qualitative Interpretation
1. Aware of responsibilities as a teacher regarding the collection, storage, and sharing of student data under the Data Privacy Act.	4.5	0.518875	Fully Aware
2. Aware of the penalties and consequences of failing to comply with the Data Privacy Act.	4.142857	0.770329	Fully Aware
3. Overall awareness about the Data Privacy Act	3.785714	0.699293	Aware
Awareness Average	4.142857	0.55028	Fully Aware

Note.

Scale	*Range*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
5	*4.1 - 5.00*	*Strongly Agree*	*Fully Aware*
4	*3.10 – 4.00*	*Agree*	*Aware*
3	*3.00 -3.99*	*Neutral*	*Neither Aware*
2	*2.00 - 2.99*	*Disagree*	*Not Aware*
1	*1.00 - 1.99*	*Strongly Disagree*	*Fully Not Aware*

Table 3 shows that there was an extremely high level of general awareness of the Data Privacy Act by all the respondents. The mean general awareness score of 4.14 (SD = 0.55) represents that participants have an extensive

amount of knowledge regarding their obligations as defined by the law, with relatively similar responses from the group.

There were several areas of significant awareness among the various groups, specifically teachers had the highest general awareness of what constitutes appropriate procedure for collecting, storing and sharing student data. Their mean awareness of appropriate procedure for collecting, storing and sharing student data was 4.5, indicating that they have a strong grasp of operational responsibilities related to managing sensitive information. Similarly, respondents indicated a good general awareness of the penalties associated with violating the Act. This is evident through their mean awareness of the penalties associated with violating the Act being 4.14. Overall, these findings show that the participants have both a good understanding of the procedural elements of the Act as well as the accountability mechanisms contained therein.

When asked to assess how familiar they were with the Data Privacy Act in its entirety, however, respondents indicated a lower average score of 3.79 compared to their familiarity with the procedural aspects of the Act. As previously mentioned, although still very positive, this finding suggests that while respondents have an excellent understanding of how to implement data protection practices based on their role or position, respondents lack a complete comprehension of the total principles and scope of the Data Privacy Act. Thus, it appears that respondents are more confident in implementing specific data protection practices than articulating the overall principles and scope of the legislation.

The finding is consistent with findings by Kulkarni (2023), which found that staff members in higher education institutions are developing an increased recognition of the significance of data privacy regulations. However, as Kulkarni (2023) pointed out, the development of the institutional understanding of data privacy regulations typically begins at the operational level before becoming an integrated understanding of the entire legislative framework.

Table 4.1. ***The Level of Challenges Encountered in Complying with the Data Privacy Act***

	Mean	SD	Qualitative Interpretation
1. Challenging myself to understand the technical language and legal terms in the Data Privacy Act.	3.142857	0.770329	Challenging
2. Lack of training and professional development on data privacy makes it difficult for me to comply with the law	3.714286	1.266647	Challenging
3. Difficulties in implementing data protection measures due to limited resources (e.g., tools, technology, or support).	3.285714	1.138729	Challenging
Challenges Average	3.380952	0.875665	Challenging

Note.

Scale	*Range*	*Description*	*interpretation*
5	*4.1 - 5.00*	*Strongly Agree*	*Very Challenging*
4	*3.10 – 4.00*	*Agree*	*Challenging*
3	*3.00 -3.99*	*Neutral*	*Moderately Challenging*
2	*2.00 - 2.99*	*Disagree*	*Slightly Challenging*
1	*1.00 - 1.99*	*Strongly Disagree*	*Not Challenging*

Table 4.1 shows that the overall mean score is 3.38, as well as an SD of 0.876, which suggests a wide range of opinions on how difficult it was to implement the Data Privacy Act, the degree of difficulty varies greatly from person-to-person and therefore falls into the "Challenging" category. Among the issues identified, the greatest concern as identified by the respondents' scores were the lack of professional development/training opportunities as well as the lack of sufficient resources to effectively follow through with the implementation of data protection policies/procedures as identified by the respondent's mean scores of 3.71 and 3.29 respectively. These findings are consistent with previously conducted research that found many educational institutions have limited resources to implement comprehensive data privacy measures (Sloane, 2023).

Respondents also indicated that they believed that technical and legal jargon utilized within the Act is the most easily understood, which received a mean score of 3.14. While the respondents indicate that they believe they can understand the concepts contained within the Act, the fact that they could not effectively implement the Act, as shown by the high levels of concern expressed regarding the lack of professional development/training opportunities and the lack of resources available to implement data protection procedures/policies, indicates that structural barriers present greater obstacles to successful compliance than the respondent's conceptual understanding of the Act. Therefore, providing adequate resources and/or training opportunities and/or professional development opportunities will help to ensure that educational institutions successfully comply with data privacy regulations.

Table 4.2. ***The Level of Compliance with Strategies under the Data Privacy Act***

	Mean	SD	Qualitative Interpretation
1. Regularly self-update on best practices for data privacy and protection.	4.071429	0.997249	Very Compliant
2. Ensure that sensitive student information is securely stored and only accessible to authorized personnel	4.714286	0.468807	Very Compliant
3. Report any data breaches or suspicious activities according to institutional protocols.	4.357143	0.744946	Very Compliant
Compliance Average	4.380952	0.468807	Very Compliant

Note.

Scale	*Range*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
5	***4.1 - 5.00***	*Strongly Agree*	*Very Compliant*
4	***3.10 – 4.00***	*Agree*	*Compliant*
3	***3.00 -3.99***	*Neutral*	*Moderately Compliant*
2	***2.00 - 2.99***	*Disagree*	*Slightly Compliant*
1	***1.00 - 1.99***	*Strongly Disagree*	*Not Compliant*

Table 4.2 demonstrates a high level of self-reported compliance with the Data Privacy Act among respondents. The overall mean compliance score of 4.38 (SD = 0.469) falls within the "Very Compliant" range, indicating strong adherence to established data protection standards. The relatively low standard deviation suggests consistency in responses, implying that compliance practices are broadly shared across participants. The highest-rated compliance behavior pertains to securing student data (M = 4.71), underscoring the priority given to safeguarding sensitive information. The finding highlights from EDUCAUSE (2022), which emphasizes that institutions handling confidential information must implement vigorous protective measures.

The respondents are also reported a high level of compliance in reporting data breaches or suspicious incidents (M = 4.36), reflecting awareness of accountability mechanisms embedded within the law. Furthermore, it has slightly lower result in terms of maintaining updated knowledge of privacy practices (M = 4.07) that remains within the "Very Compliant" range and indicating sustained efforts to remain informed about evolving standards. Overall, the findings suggests that participants demonstrate a strong commitment to data privacy in securing sensitive information and responding appropriately to potential violations.

In dealing with awareness, the combined mean score of 4.14 (SD = 0.550) shows that respondents generally understand their responsibilities under the Act. Awareness is particularly high regarding procedures for collecting, storing, and sharing student data (M = 4.50, SD = 0.519), and the consequences of non-compliance (M = 4.14, SD = 0.770). in terms of general awareness of the broader provisions of the Act, it was comparatively lower (M = 3.79, SD = 0.699), highlighting that procedural knowledge is strong, and conceptual understanding of the law's overarching framework may require further reinforcement.

Although respondents have high compliance and awareness levels, it has also several challenges. The overall mean challenge score of 3.38 (SD = 0.876) indicates that implementation remains moderately difficult for many participants since we are in a 21st century. The most significant concern is the lack of sufficient training and professional development opportunities (M = 3.71, SD = 1.267), highlighting a need for more structured capacity-building

initiatives. Limited institutional resources (M = 3.29, SD = 1.139) and the complexity of legal terminology (M = 3.14, SD = 0.770) were also identified as barriers, though to a lesser extent.

Nonetheless, respondents appear to adopt proactive strategies to address these challenges. Their overall strategy score (M = 4.38, SD = 0.469) it suggests strong engagement in mitigating compliance risks. Primary among these strategies is restricting access to student information to authorized personnel (M = 4.71, SD = 0.469), followed by the prompt reporting of suspicious activities (M = 4.36). These findings of the study are consistent with recent literature emphasizing the growing importance of transparency, institutional accountability, and strengthened privacy governance in educational settings, particularly as cybersecurity threats increase (Sloane, 2023; Chanenson, 2023). Collectively, the results underscore that while compliance levels are high, sustained investment in professional development and resource allocation is essential to ensure long-term and comprehensive adherence to data privacy regulations.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the respondents' demographic profile, their degree of familiarity and understanding of the Data Privacy Act's rules, the difficulties they face, and the tactics they use to maintain compliance.

The results showed that the respondents are primarily mid-career teachers, with the majority falling between the ages of 31 and 40, having a balanced distribution of educational backgrounds between bachelor's and master's degrees, and having a majority of 6–10 years of teaching experience. Given their demographic makeup, it appears that the participants have the professional background and educational background necessary to offer trustworthy opinions on data privacy procedures in educational institutions. Regarding respondents' familiarity with the Data Privacy Act, the findings show that they are typically knowledgeable of the law, mostly through own research and cooperation with colleagues rather than through official training courses. The low attendance at organized workshops indicates a lack of systematic professional development, even though institutional policies are also a valuable source of information. This shows that even while professors are knowledgeable, most people acquire knowledge in an informal way that may not be thorough or consistent among people.

The respondents showed a high degree of understanding regarding their rights and obligations under the Data Privacy Act, especially regarding the gathering, storing, and sharing of student data as well as the consequences of non-compliance. Teachers understand their responsibility to protect sensitive information, as seen by the total awareness rating falling into the "Fully Aware" category. However, somewhat lower scores for overall understanding of the Act's more comprehensive provisions point to the necessity of ongoing legal requirements clarification and strengthening. Regarding compliance issues, participants stated that following the Data Privacy Act is generally "Difficult," with the absence of possibilities for professional growth and training being the biggest obstacle. Barriers to compliance can also be caused by a lack of resources and the difficulty of understanding some legal and technical jargon. Although teachers are eager to comply, these findings suggest that institutional support systems might need to be strengthened to make implementation easier.

The respondents showed a relatively high degree of adherence to data privacy strategies despite these obstacles. They continuously make sure that sensitive data is stored securely, disclose breaches in accordance with institutional procedures, and keep up with best practices. Despite structural and training-related limitations, the high compliance rating shows a proactive and responsible attitude to data protection. Although respondents demonstrate solid compliance procedures, high awareness, and sufficient knowledge of the Data Privacy Act, the study's overall findings indicate that more formal training programs and institutional support are still required. By filling in these gaps, educators will be more capable and confident in their ability to adequately apply data privacy laws in classrooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following study recommendation is put forth considering the findings about instructors' awareness, knowledge, difficulties, and compliance tactics regarding the Data Privacy Act in education:

1. **Focus on Developing Comprehensive Training Programs**: A significant weakness in guaranteeing efficient adherence to the Data Privacy Act is highlighted by the reported problem of a lack of professional development and training. The creation of organized, continuous training programs for educators, administrators, and other school staff should be the subject of future studies. These courses should cover both the legal and practical, real-world uses of data privacy in educational contexts.

2. **Evaluating the Effectiveness of Self-Study Methods**: Despite the widespread use of self-study techniques including reading books, articles, and participating in peer learning, it is crucial to examine how well these approaches provide a thorough grasp of data privacy concerns. Studies could investigate if organized learning—possibly combined with peer collaborations—can improve knowledge retention and the Data Privacy Act's practical use.
3. **Examining the Role of Technological Tools in Ensuring Compliance**: Further research should evaluate the impact of technology, such as data encryption tools, secure databases, and privacy-centric software, in assisting teachers in achieving compliance standards, as the highest-rated compliance plan entails securely storing sensitive student information. The effectiveness, price, and accessibility of these tools in educational contexts may be the main topics of this study.
4. **Exploring the Impact of Peer Learning on Compliance Strategies**: Examining how collaborative, peer-to-peer learning reinforces data privacy practices could be beneficial because learning from peers and coworkers was a common source of information. Research can examine the potential effects of peer-led seminars, mentorship, or cooperative groups in schools on teachers' capacity to establish and uphold privacy policies.
5. **Longitudinal Study of Compliance Strategies**: A longitudinal study could monitor the changes in compliance tactics over time, particularly as data privacy laws and technology advance. Trends, best practices, and possible areas for additional instructor compliance with the Data Privacy Act may be found in this study.
6. Future studies could improve the education sector's compliance with data privacy rules and increase teachers' readiness to handle sensitive student information responsibly by concentrating on these areas.

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