

TEACHING BEYOND WALLS:

Stories of Passion, Purpose,
and Pedagogy



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Editors

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Preface

This book is a celebration of the teaching profession in all its complexity and beauty. It brings together the voices and lived experiences of teachers who have traversed through diverse pathways and remained steadfast in their commitment to shaping the lives of learners. Through their stories, readers should look beyond the customary image of teaching to discover the deeper realities that define the profession.

Teaching extends far beyond classroom walls. It is a profession rooted in service, driven by purpose, and sustained by passion. Teachers are mentors, motivators, counselors, innovators, and lifelong learners. Yet behind every lesson delivered and every student inspired are personal stories of sacrifice, resilience, growth, and hope. The chapters in this volume illuminate these realities by presenting authentic narratives that capture both the rewards and struggles experienced by teachers in various contexts. From substitute teachers aspiring for permanence, non-education graduates finding their place in the profession, and teachers navigating assignments beyond their specialization, to educators serving in remote communities and confronting emerging educational challenges, these accounts reveal the dynamic and evolving nature of teaching.

As you turn the pages of this book, may you gain a renewed appreciation for the individuals who dedicate their lives to education. May these stories encourage meaningful conversations about the realities of teaching and inspire efforts to strengthen and support the profession. Above all, may they remind us that the influence of a teacher extends far beyond the confines of a classroom, reaching into communities, shaping futures, and transforming lives.

Welcome to *Teaching Beyond Walls: Stories of Passion, Purpose, and Pedagogy*, a collection of voices that honor the heart, spirit, and enduring impact of teachers.

Acknowledgement

The completion of this book would not have been possible without the dedication and support of many individuals whose contributions enriched this scholarly work.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the contributors whose experiences, insights, and scholarly endeavors form the heart of this book. Their commitment to examining the realities of teaching and sharing meaningful stories of resilience and growth has made this volume both relevant and inspiring. Through their work, they have illuminated the diverse journeys of educators and the enduring impact of the teaching profession.

We are equally grateful to the teachers, students, school leaders, and community members who participated in the various studies featured in this collection. Their willingness to share their experiences, perspectives, and voices provided the foundation upon which these chapters were built. Their contributions offer valuable insights into the complexities, triumphs, and transformative power of education.

Special recognition is also extended to the mentors, peer reviewers, editors, and academic colleagues who provided guidance, constructive feedback, and encouragement throughout the development of this book. Their expertise and commitment to scholarly excellence helped ensure the quality, rigor, and integrity of the work presented in these pages.

We likewise acknowledge the educational institutions, research organizations, and professional communities that supported the conduct and dissemination of the studies included in this volume.

Finally, we express our deepest gratitude to all educators who continue to teach with passion, serve with purpose, and inspire future generations despite the challenges they encounter. This book is dedicated to their unwavering commitment and to the transformative influence they have on learners, communities, and society.

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Teaching as a Journey of Passion and Purpose

Teaching is often described as one of the most rewarding yet demanding professions. Beyond lesson planning, classroom management, and academic instruction lies a deeper story, one of personal commitment, resilience, and an unwavering desire to make a difference in the lives of learners. Every teacher enters the profession carrying unique experiences, aspirations, and motivations that shape their professional identity and influence how they respond to the challenges and opportunities they encounter.

This chapter presents narratives that explore the multifaceted realities of teaching. The stories reveal how teachers find joy in student success, derive meaning from their work, and remain committed despite professional pressures, workplace uncertainties, and evolving educational demands.

The narratives in this chapter validate that teaching is not merely a career but a journey of continuous growth and self-discovery. Through their experiences, readers gain insight into the emotional, social, and professional dimensions of teaching, as well as the factors that sustain educators in their pursuit of meaningful and impactful work. These stories serve as a reminder that behind every successful learner stands a teacher whose dedication extends far beyond classroom instruction.

Pleasure and Pressure in Teaching

Krizia Ann I. Retuba

Teachers were the Most Valuable Players (MVPs) at all levels of education. As a profession marked by high demand and complex challenges, teaching required individuals to assume multifaceted roles. Within the classroom, teachers functioned as coaches, psychologists, referees, curriculum implementers, evaluators, and even caregivers. In essence, they were multitaskers dedicated to shaping productive members of society. They carried the weight of professional expectations, qualifications, and ethical responsibilities, serving, alongside parents, as primary providers of knowledge and values. However, such authority also brought heightened societal expectations, which at times pressured teachers to renegotiate their professional dignity and autonomy in order to sustain a supportive and engaging learning environment.

Despite these pressures, teaching also offered meaningful sources of pleasure and fulfillment. A supportive work environment played a vital role in enhancing teachers' well-being and professional satisfaction. When teachers experienced collegial relationships, shared goals, and mutual respect, they were more likely to feel motivated and committed to their work. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) emphasized that collaborative teamwork significantly

increased motivation and job satisfaction among educators, contributing to improved retention and reduced turnover. Likewise, Maas et al. (2021) highlighted the critical role of school leaders in providing social and emotional support, which helped alleviate occupational stress. These positive interpersonal dynamics fostered a sense of belonging and purpose, allowing teachers to derive intrinsic satisfaction from their profession.

At the same time, the profession was accompanied by considerable pressures that could affect teachers' well-being. Heavy workloads, administrative demands, large class sizes, and the expectation to address diverse learner needs often led to stress and burnout. Teachers were not only expected to deliver academic content but also to manage behavioral issues, provide emotional support, and meet institutional performance standards. This constant balancing of responsibilities could create tension between professional expectations and personal capacity. Furthermore, societal expectations for teachers to consistently demonstrate patience, empathy, and competence added another layer of emotional labor. When support systems were insufficient, these pressures could diminish job satisfaction and impact teacher retention.

Pleasures Gained from the Teaching Profession

Amid the multiple demands and pressures of the profession, teaching remains deeply rewarding, offering intrinsic pleasures that sustain educators' commitment and sense of purpose. Teaching is not solely defined by its challenges but also by meaningful experiences that provide emotional fulfillment, professional identity, and personal growth. Contentment and dedication are therefore essential elements of teachers' professional lives, as they shape both job satisfaction and resilience in the face of ongoing pressures.

According to Santos (2022), teachers in the Philippines derive a profound sense of fulfillment from guiding students to become responsible and capable individuals. This sense of purpose strengthens their dedication to the profession, particularly when students achieve learning outcomes that reflect instructional goals. Such moments of success represent more than academic accomplishment; they affirm teachers' roles as agents of transformation. In this way, the pleasure of teaching is closely tied to witnessing student growth, which reinforces teachers' intrinsic motivation and provides a counterbalance to occupational stress.

Equally important are the positive interpersonal relationships that teachers build within the school community. Garcia (2021) identified supportive workplace relationships as a significant source of professional enjoyment, including collaboration with colleagues, engaging classroom interactions, and expressions of appreciation from students. These interactions foster a sense of belonging and collegiality, contributing to a positive school climate. Strong teacher–student relationships, in particular, enhance the learning process while simultaneously providing emotional rewards for teachers, reinforcing their commitment despite the demands of the profession. Positive classroom experiences also play a crucial role in shaping teachers' well-being. Reyes (2020) emphasized that successful lessons, active student participation, and observable academic progress contribute to teachers' sense of accomplishment and professional satisfaction. A supportive classroom environment not only empowers students but also encourages teachers, creating a reciprocal dynamic of motivation and engagement. These positive experiences help mitigate the negative effects of stress, demonstrating how pleasure and pressure coexist within the teaching profession.

Moreover, the emotional rewards associated with teaching often sustain educators through challenging circumstances. Villanueva (2019) noted

that although teaching is inherently stressful, characterized by extended working hours and administrative demands, it is sustained by rewarding experiences such as student recognition, gratitude, and parental appreciation. These affirmations validate teachers' efforts and reinforce their sense of purpose, enabling them to remain engaged and committed.

Lopez (2018) further highlighted that meaningful teacher–student relationships are central to the emotional and psychological benefits of teaching. These connections foster a sense of fulfillment that extends beyond instructional duties, contributing to teachers' overall well-being. In addition, peer support and mentorship within schools strengthen professional collaboration and create an environment where teachers feel valued and supported.

The Challenges and Pressures of the Teaching Profession

Challenges in the education sector have persisted over time, arising from both internal limitations and external societal demands that continuously shape, and often strain, the teaching profession. Teachers operate within environments characterized by competing expectations, limited resources, and increasing accountability (Li et al., 2025). Teachers commonly face stressors such as excessive workloads, large class sizes, extended working hours, and insufficient time for assessment and feedback (Agyapong et al., 2022). These conditions not only hinder instructional effectiveness but also diminish motivation and professional satisfaction. In the study of Amata (2023), involving 339 teachers, multiple pressure points were identified, including target-driven performance systems, heightened parental expectations, inadequate classroom resources, and unsupportive collegial environments. Such findings reinforce that teaching is not merely instructional work but a

high-pressure profession requiring emotional resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms.

The pressures intensified significantly during periods of crisis, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed systemic vulnerabilities in education. At the height of the pandemic in 2020, around 75% of public school teachers reported experiencing fear and anxiety due to the abrupt transition to online teaching (Yi et al., 2021). Stress emerged as the primary factor affecting teaching effectiveness, compounded by limited administrative and technical support (Robinson et al., 2023). This period underscored how external disruptions magnify existing pressures, forcing teachers to rapidly adjust pedagogical approaches while managing personal uncertainties. The sudden shift also expanded teachers' roles, requiring them to become technologically competent while still maintaining instructional quality, thereby intensifying cognitive and emotional demands.

Persistent structural challenges further contribute to professional pressure. Ineffective resource allocation, heavy workloads, and limited research capability among teachers restrict opportunities for professional growth and innovation. Ulla et al. (2017) emphasized the need for targeted interventions such as research training, institutional incentives, and the development of a strong research culture to empower teachers and reduce professional stagnation. Without such support, teachers may experience a sense of inefficacy, which can negatively affect both performance and long-term career commitment. In the Philippine context, David et al. (2019) highlighted how stress, compounded by politicization within public school systems, undermines teaching quality and contributes to attrition, further illustrating how systemic pressures extend beyond the classroom into organizational and sociopolitical domains.

Technological and pedagogical transitions have also introduced new layers of pressure in teaching. Gallespen (2021) identified key challenges during the shift from face-to-face to online learning, including unstable internet connectivity, limited digital competence, and insufficient social and institutional support. These barriers not only disrupted instructional delivery but also increased teachers' workload and stress levels. Similarly, Calyawa and Tampus (2023) found that in blended learning environments, teachers faced compounded pressures from leadership expectations, resource limitations, classroom management complexities, and student disengagement. Evolving teaching modalities, while offering opportunities for innovation, simultaneously demand continuous adaptation, often without adequate preparation or support.

From a broader international perspective, the pressure to integrate technology effectively into teaching has become increasingly pronounced. Kaminskienė et al. (2022) emphasized the growing importance of digital literacy as a core teaching competency, while Bećirović (2023) identified barriers such as limited access to technological resources, insufficient institutional support, and low teacher self-efficacy. These challenges illustrate that modern teaching extends beyond content delivery to include technological proficiency and instructional design, further expanding the scope of teachers' responsibilities.

The Influence of Purpose on Job Performance and Commitment

A strong sense of purpose serves as a critical driver of teachers' job performance and professional commitment (Hong et al., 2025), linking both the pleasures and pressures inherent in the teaching profession. Purpose enables teachers to navigate demanding work conditions by anchoring their efforts in meaningful goals (Gu, 2023), thereby enhancing both motivation and

resilience. Teachers who perceive their work as significant and impactful are more likely to engage deeply in their roles, resulting in improved instructional quality and sustained commitment.

Teachers' participation in professional development activities reflects this sense of purpose, as it demonstrates their willingness to grow and improve in their profession. Decano and Vallejo (2019) examined the relationship between job commitment, job satisfaction, and teaching performance in public and private secondary schools in Northern Aurora, Philippines. Their findings revealed that teachers who were both competent and committed exhibited higher levels of job satisfaction and performance. Administrative support and opportunities for professional growth were identified as essential factors in strengthening teachers' commitment, suggesting that institutional structures play a key role in nurturing purpose-driven educators.

Similarly, Cloma and Dioso (2023) explored teachers' engagement in relation to job satisfaction and performance in Nabunturan, Davao de Oro. The study found that self-motivated teachers with strong professional ethics demonstrated higher levels of commitment and effectiveness. In this context, purpose was reflected in teachers' dedication not only to their students but also to their profession, teaching practices, and the broader educational community. From a broader perspective, Bashir and Gani (2020) emphasized the positive relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction among university teachers in India. When teachers experience satisfaction in their work, their commitment to the organization strengthens, ultimately enhancing performance. This underscores the role of a supportive and conducive work environment in fostering both purpose and productivity, particularly in a profession that demands sustained emotional and cognitive investment.

Further reinforcing this connection, Wartenberg et al. (2023), through a systematic review and meta-analysis, found that teacher job satisfaction is strongly associated with positive teacher–student relationships, which in turn inspire student learning. The study also revealed that higher levels of satisfaction are linked to lower absenteeism and reduced turnover intentions. In addition, Hoque et al. (2023) reported that teachers’ participation in self-managed work teams significantly increased job satisfaction. Lopes and Oliveira (2020) further argued that teacher satisfaction is a functional requirement of effective teaching, asserting that satisfied teachers are more focused, engaged, and productive. Therefore, continuous professional development and a supportive work environment are essential in cultivating organizational commitment.

Understanding The Teaching Profession Through Self-Determination Theory

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) developed by Ryan and Deci (1985) provides a comprehensive lens for understanding teachers’ motivation, performance, and commitment within the dual context of pleasure and pressure in the profession. SDT posits that human motivation is shaped by the fulfillment of three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In teaching, these needs are not only central to professional functioning but also determine how educators experience both the rewarding and demanding aspects of their work. When these needs are fulfilled, teachers are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation, which sustains engagement even in challenging conditions.

Within the teaching profession, autonomy is reflected in teachers’ ability to exercise professional judgment, such as designing instructional strategies and adapting lessons to meet diverse learner needs. Autonomy-

supportive environments, where teachers are trusted and empowered, enhance intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction (Reyes, 2020). However, when autonomy is restricted by rigid curricula, excessive administrative control, or performance pressures, teaching becomes more burdensome, contributing to stress and reduced motivation. Thus, autonomy represents both a source of professional pleasure when supported and a point of pressure when constrained.

Competence, another core component of SDT, refers to teachers' sense of effectiveness in facilitating learning. This is reinforced when teachers observe positive student outcomes, successfully implement instructional strategies, and engage in continuous professional development (Santos, 2022; Calyawa & Tampus, 2023). Feelings of competence contribute significantly to teachers' confidence, satisfaction, and sense of accomplishment, key sources of pleasure in teaching. Conversely, limited resources, inadequate training, or rapidly changing educational demands (such as technological integration) can undermine this sense of competence, transforming teaching into a source of anxiety and professional pressure (Amata, 2023; David et al., 2019).

The third component, relatedness, emphasizes the importance of meaningful interpersonal relationships. In educational settings, this is evident in positive teacher–student interactions and supportive collegial relationships (Garcia, 2021; Lopez, 2018). These connections foster a sense of belonging and emotional fulfillment, which are essential for sustaining motivation and well-being. Relatedness represents one of the most profound sources of pleasure in teaching, as educators derive meaning from influencing students' lives and collaborating with peers. However, when social support is lacking, such as in unsupportive work environments or strained relationships, teachers may experience isolation, thereby intensifying professional pressures.

SDT also distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, offering further insight into how teachers navigate the demands of their profession. Teachers driven by intrinsic motivation, such as passion for teaching, commitment to student growth, and a sense of purpose, are more resilient in the face of challenges, including heavy workloads, time constraints, and resource limitations (Amata, 2023; David et al., 2019). In contrast, reliance on extrinsic motivators alone, such as salary or external recognition, may not sustain long-term commitment, particularly in high-pressure environments.

Empirical evidence supports this SDT-informed perspective. Decano and Vallejo (2019) demonstrated that teachers' competence and commitment are positively associated with performance, while Cloma and Dioso (2023) linked intrinsic motivation to higher job satisfaction. Similarly, Bashir and Gani (2020) and Wartenberg et al. (2023) found that supportive environments that fulfill teachers' psychological needs enhance organizational commitment, reduce turnover intentions, and improve teacher–student relationships. These findings affirm that when teachers' basic psychological needs are met, they are better equipped to transform pressures into manageable challenges and to sustain the pleasures inherent in teaching.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Life Stories of Teachers and Their Sense of Experience

This narrative inquiry explored the range of challenges teachers face in order to understand what motivates them and the obstacles they encounter in their profession. While several studies have examined teacher job satisfaction (i.e., Amata, 2023; Cloma & Dioso, 2023), the lived experiences of public school teachers in the District of Malinao have not been adequately documented. Most existing studies are quantitative, with limited qualitative

research focusing on teachers' lived and felt experiences in finding meaning in their work.

This study generated empirical narratives from public school teachers in the Malinao District, capturing how they interpret and make sense of their professional experiences. By examining themes such as pleasure, pressure, and purpose, the study provides evidence of how teachers' lived realities influence their performance and commitment. It contributes to the literature by offering context-specific insights grounded in actual teacher experiences. The study employed a qualitative narrative inquiry design (Creswell, 2013) to explore teachers' lived experiences and how they construct meaning around their professional roles. It was conducted in the rural District of Malinao, Aklan, Philippines, focusing on public elementary and secondary school teachers to capture context-specific challenges and motivations within a resource-constrained setting.

Eight teachers were selected through purposive sampling based on criteria such as having at least five years of teaching experience, representing both elementary and secondary levels, belonging to varied age groups, and residing in Malinao. This ensured the inclusion of diverse yet relevant perspectives while maintaining the depth required in narrative inquiry. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews guided by a validated interview protocol. These interviews allowed participants to share detailed accounts of their motivations, challenges, and sense of purpose. All interviews were conducted in comfortable settings, audio-recorded with participants' consent, and subjected to participant validation to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data.

The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. This involved familiarization with the data, coding, theme development, refinement, definition, and reporting. This systematic process

ensured that the themes identified were grounded in the participants' actual narratives. Ethical standards were strictly observed, including informed consent, confidentiality through pseudonyms, secure data storage, and adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Participants were treated with respect, were allowed to withdraw at any time, and were provided with a safe and supportive research environment.

The themes identified through thematic analysis reflect the actual lived experiences of teachers, highlighting how they perceive the pleasures, pressures, and sense of purpose in their profession. These findings are grounded in participants' firsthand accounts and provide insight into how their experiences influence their motivation, performance, and commitment.

Pleasures in Teaching

Empirical evidence from the participants' narratives indicates that teachers experience deep fulfillment in their profession. Several participants explicitly described moments of student improvement, such as enhanced reading skills and increased confidence in mathematics, which reinforced their sense of purpose. These accounts demonstrate that observable student progress serves as a primary source of motivation.

The findings further show that positive relationships with students and colleagues significantly contribute to teachers' well-being. Participants reported that students' expressions of appreciation and collaborative teamwork among colleagues fostered a sense of belonging and emotional support. These relational experiences emerged consistently across narratives, indicating their central role in sustaining motivation.

In addition, the data reveal that teachers' personal values and passion for teaching shape their professional commitment. Participants described teaching as aligned with their personal goals, such as inspiring curiosity and

facilitating learning, suggesting that intrinsic motivation is a key driver of satisfaction.

Pressures in Teaching

The study also generated strong empirical evidence of the pressures teachers face. Participants consistently reported time constraints and heavy workloads, particularly the challenge of balancing instructional responsibilities with administrative tasks. These accounts highlight structural demands that limit teachers' efficiency and sense of control.

Managing diverse student needs emerged as another significant challenge. Participants described difficulties in addressing varying learning levels and maintaining classroom discipline, indicating that differentiated instruction requires substantial effort and adaptability.

Emotional and psychological strain was also evident. Participants shared experiences of exhaustion, stress, and self-doubt, demonstrating that teaching involves considerable emotional labor. These findings suggest that such pressures directly affect teachers' well-being and professional performance.

Impact of Sense of Purpose on Job Performance and Commitment

The findings provide clear empirical evidence that a strong sense of purpose enhances teachers' performance and commitment. Participants reported engaging in innovative teaching practices, improving student engagement, and implementing targeted interventions for struggling learners. These actions reflect a proactive and committed approach to teaching driven by purpose.

Purpose also emerged as a critical factor in sustaining resilience. Despite the challenges they encountered, participants continued to demonstrate dedication to their roles, including pursuing professional

development and maintaining efforts to support student learning. This indicates that purpose functions as a protective factor against burnout.

Furthermore, the data show that purpose influences long-term career aspirations. Participants expressed intentions to pursue advanced roles in education and advocate for systemic improvements, suggesting that purpose extends beyond immediate job performance to shape long-term professional commitment.

Inspirational Narratives and Self-Exploration

Participants' narratives provide evidence that mentorship and role models significantly influence professional growth. Teachers identified individuals who shaped their teaching philosophies and practices, indicating the importance of social learning in professional development.

Reflective practices also emerged as a key theme. Participants described engaging in reflection to better understand their teaching roles and improve their practices, suggesting that reflection supports continuous learning and self-awareness.

Support systems, including peer collaboration and administrative assistance, were likewise identified as essential. Participants emphasized that these systems enhanced their motivation and resilience, demonstrating the importance of a supportive work environment.

Proposed Wellness Program: FIND

Based on the empirical findings, the FIND (Fostering Inspiration, Nurturing Development) Wellness Program was developed to address the challenges identified in the study. The program integrates mentorship, professional development, mental health support, and collaborative practices,

all of which are directly grounded in participants' reported experiences and needs.

Participants indicated that such a program could enhance their well-being, strengthen teamwork, and align professional growth with personal purpose. These responses suggest that structured interventions informed by empirical evidence have the potential to reduce workplace stress and sustain teacher commitment.

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Quest for Job Stability of Substitute Teachers

Pearl Rachel R. Nuevas

Substitute teachers are often regarded as the unsung heroes of the school community (Brown, 2022). Despite being an essential part of the teaching workforce, their roles and working conditions remain insufficiently recognized; their position is a marginalized sector within education (Sullivan et al., 2023). Nevertheless, substitute teachers play a critical role in maintaining continuity of instruction whenever regular teachers are absent, ensuring that learning does not come to a halt.

The role of a substitute teacher is inherently demanding and complex. Kbuffett (2017) describes substitute teaching as one of the most challenging roles in education, as it requires individuals to step into unfamiliar classrooms and immediately assume responsibility for managing instruction and student behavior. Substitute teachers are expected to meet the same professional standards as full-time teachers, yet they often do so with minimal preparation time, limited access to instructional resources, and little to no formal training or professional development. These conditions demand a high level of adaptability, resilience, and creativity, as substitutes must quickly adjust to varying classroom environments and diverse student needs.

In addition to instructional responsibilities, substitute teachers face significant challenges related to classroom management and professional integration. Entering a new classroom without established relationships with students can make it difficult to maintain discipline and foster engagement. At the same time, substitute teachers may experience a lack of inclusion within the school community, as their temporary status often limits their participation in decision-making processes and professional support systems. This can contribute to feelings of isolation and reduce opportunities for professional growth.

The temporary nature of substitute teaching further intensifies these challenges. While the role can offer moments of fulfillment, such as successfully guiding a class or building brief yet meaningful connections with students, it is often accompanied by emotional and economic uncertainty. The end of each assignment requires substitute teachers to disengage from a community they may have begun to identify with, making each transition difficult. Moreover, the absence of job security and the unpredictability of assignments can create ongoing financial stress, particularly for those who rely on substitute teaching as a primary source of income.

Navigating the Dual Realities of Substitute Teaching

From notebooks to netbooks, across both print and digital eras, substitute teachers create learning experiences that are engaging and dynamic. Substitute teaching is a demanding yet rewarding profession. Stepping into an unfamiliar classroom, guiding new learners, and witnessing their joy and inspiration can bring a deep sense of fulfillment. Shaw (2024) noted that, as guest teachers, substitutes bring diverse learning materials to life and actively engage students through various forms of educational technology.

Donofrio (2015) emphasized that exposure to a wide range of challenges, many similar to those faced by regular teachers, provides substitute teachers with valuable experience in addressing classroom issues independently. Despite limited preparation time, they carry the responsibility of delivering quality education. By the end of the day, the work can be exhausting, yet it remains deeply rewarding. However, not all experiences are positive. Hellier (2018) reflected on her years as a substitute teacher with appreciation, yet acknowledged the stress associated with the role. The constant transition into new environments, uncertainty about lesson plans, and unpredictability of student behavior contributed to this stress. The difficulty of entering unfamiliar classrooms daily, often unsure whether she would be supported with clear instructions or required to manage situations on her own.

Substitute teachers often hold onto the hope that securing a permanent position in public schools is within reach, especially as they gain experience within the system. However, obtaining a regular teaching post remains highly competitive, often described as “passing through the eye of a needle.” Each year, divisions receive hundreds to thousands of applicants aspiring to join the Department of Education (DepEd) (Sarmiento, 2022). As DepEd Assistant Secretary Jesus Mateo (2022) stated, “*Not all LET passers are qualified for the position; we will hire applicants who are most qualified.*” With the implementation of the K to 12 program, DepEd has strengthened its standards to improve school performance and student outcomes, emphasizing the need for highly qualified teachers.

Despite these justifications, concerns about the fairness of the hiring process persist. Bautista (2023) argued that applicants’ voices are often unheard and overlooked, leaving many uncertain even after undergoing a rigorous and competitive selection process. Similarly, Tolentino (2016) identified the presence of bureaucratic anomalies within DepEd. There are

reported practices, such as the alleged selling of teaching positions, the giving of donations or gifts to facilitate appointment processing, and the use of political connections, to secure permanent roles. Not all officials consistently adhere to established hiring policies, with some selectively complying while disregarding others. Empirical evidence suggests that irregularities in hiring practices are not isolated incidents but reflect deeper systemic issues within the recruitment process.

Between Uncertainty and Opportunity: Career Transitions of Substitute Teachers

While navigating the lengthy and uncertain process of securing permanent positions, many substitute teachers explore alternative career paths. Kolmar (2022) disclosed that a significant number of former substitute teachers remain in the education sector, often transitioning to roles in private schools, colleges, or universities. Others pursue related or entirely different professions, such as customer service representatives, administrative assistants, office managers, tutors, graduate assistants, billing specialists, or medical assistants. Some continue working as substitute teachers while awaiting more stable opportunities. In contrast, others leave the profession altogether, moving into fields such as office work, the cruise industry, technology, or business sectors (Logan, 2023). Even when shifting careers, many continue to apply transferable skills developed through teaching, such as communication, adaptability, and problem-solving (Hansen, 2014).

For some, the pursuit of stability leads them beyond national borders. Smith (2018) noted a growing trend of educators seeking employment abroad, reflecting the evolving dynamics of global education migration. Similarly, Arcilla et al. (2023) highlighted that teachers, including those from the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd), are driven by a combination of

personal and systemic factors. Among these, the prospect of higher earnings and improved financial security plays a significant role, offering educators better opportunities to support themselves and their families.

Substitute teachers aspire to become regular public school teachers primarily to attain the stability that permanent positions offer. This includes job security, consistent roles, and relief from frequent adjustments required by short-term assignments across varying classroom contexts. The absence of uncertainty and the opportunity to establish continuity in teaching make permanence highly desirable. A study by Arcilla et al. (2023) found that educators are motivated to join the Department of Education (DepEd) due to several key factors, including job security and compensation, a passion for teaching and making a meaningful impact, and the pursuit of personal fulfillment and long-term career aspirations.

From Temporary Roles to Desired Futures: An Aspiration Theory Perspective

Aspiration theory examines how the gap between desired goals and one's current situation influences individual well-being. It recognizes that people do not make absolute judgments; instead, they evaluate their circumstances by comparing them with their environment, past experiences, and expectations for the future, thereby shaping their aspirations (Stutzer & Henne, 2014). Aspirations are understood as the selection of goals within a given context (Lewin, 1951), influenced by the perceived value of the goal and the likelihood of achieving it. The stronger the value attached to a goal and the higher the perceived probability of attaining it, the stronger the aspiration becomes. Conversely, when the value or perceived likelihood is low, aspirations tend to weaken.

In this context, substitute teachers often hold strong aspirations to become regular public school teachers. The stability associated with permanent positions, such as job security, consistency, and a clear career path, serves as a powerful motivator. By working as substitute teachers, they gain entry into the public school system, allowing them to experience firsthand the roles and responsibilities of permanent educators. This exposure provides opportunities to demonstrate their skills and competencies while building professional relationships with teachers, school leaders, and other Department of Education personnel who may support their career progression.

Moreover, substitute teaching becomes a pathway for continuous learning and professional growth. It allows individuals to refine their abilities, expand their networks, and move closer to realizing their aspirations. Through these experiences, substitute teachers gradually transform their goals into attainable realities.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Stories of Hopes and Aspirations of Substitute Teachers

This study seeks to shed light on the experiences of substitute teachers and advocate for their recognition within the profession. As temporary replacements for regular classroom teachers, they should be acknowledged as integral members of the educational system. This study aims to explore their lived experiences, including both their moments of fulfillment and the challenges they face. It also seeks to understand their coping mechanisms and to give voice to their aspirations for stability and professional growth as they navigate their path toward becoming regular public school teachers.

The study adopted a qualitative narrative inquiry design to explore the lived experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and aspirations of substitute public school teachers. This approach was selected for its strength

in capturing rich, personal stories and giving voice to a marginalized group within the education sector. By focusing on participants' narratives, the study aimed to understand how substitute teachers make meaning of their experiences and pursue job stability. The research was conducted in the District of Nabas, Aklan, Philippines, involving eight substitute teachers who were purposively selected based on their relevant teaching experiences.

Data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews guided by a validated instrument reviewed by experts. The interviews included open-ended questions that allowed participants to freely share their stories, with follow-up questions used to deepen the discussion. Ethical procedures were strictly followed, including securing institutional permissions, obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality through pseudonyms, and creating a comfortable environment for participants. Interviews were audio-recorded and manually transcribed to ensure accuracy and completeness of the data.

The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis, which involved familiarization with the data, coding, generating themes, reviewing and refining themes, defining and naming them, and finally reporting the findings. This systematic process enabled the identification of key patterns and themes across participants' narratives. To ensure rigor and credibility, the study employed expert validation of the codes and themes.

The results of this study are summed up in themes generated from the interviews of eight participants using thematic analysis. These eight themes were classified according to the information sought for.

The narratives of substitute teachers are shaped by a blend of satisfaction, struggle, and strategic adaptation. These experiences revolve around three central themes: "It's my happiness to be with the learners again," "I don't know how I will start," and "I should prepare myself for bigger

responsibilities.” Together, these themes reflect heartwarming moments, challenging situations, and thoughtful responses that contribute to both personal growth and the enrichment of the teaching–learning community.

It’s My Happiness to be with the Learners Again

Learners are at the heart of why substitute teachers choose this path. Being surrounded by students and having the opportunity to nurture them holistically brings deep fulfillment. While substitute teachers exist to ensure student welfare, they also receive immeasurable joy in return. Teacher Ann, who served as a substitute teacher for five months, expressed her happiness: *“My happiness is to be with the kids. I can teach the kids again. That’s the beauty because you got to practice what you learned in college.”* Similarly, Teachers Cath and Farrah shared how meaningful it is to connect with their pupils.

Substitute teachers feel even more fulfilled when they experience enthusiasm and acceptance from their learners. Teacher Bia recalled a moment when she felt acknowledged by her students, while Teacher Emma, who left her job as a university clerk, shared that nothing compares to the joy of being liked as a teacher. For Teacher Hannah, simple gestures during a Teacher’s Day celebration made her feel deeply appreciated. She emphasized that nothing surpasses the fulfillment of helping students learn.

Moments of learning further deepen this sense of purpose. Teacher Dan, who previously worked in a Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) company, shared his decision to leave his job and pursue teaching. He spoke with pride about choosing his learners and the joy he experienced in guiding them. These experiences affirm that meaningful teaching extends beyond academics. The most meaningful aspects of teaching involve student

engagement, a sense of contributing to something greater, and the formation of lasting connections that fuel educators' passion.

I Don't Know How I Will Start

Despite the joy, substitute teaching comes with significant challenges. Entering a classroom at any point in the school year, often without prior training, creates uncertainty and pressure. Teacher Bia shared her struggle: "*If you entered in the middle of the school year, you wouldn't know how you'll going to start.*" She also noted the difficulty of managing student behavior, particularly among frequently absent learners.

Teacher Cath experienced similar challenges, including a lack of guidance from colleagues, which sometimes led to ineffective teaching sessions. She also struggled to address the needs of intellectually challenged students. Likewise, Teacher Farrah found the transition from teaching college students to kindergarten particularly demanding, as younger learners required more emotional support and guidance. She also faced challenges in dealing with parents, especially in situations involving conflicts among children.

Classroom management emerged as a common difficulty. Teacher Hannah admitted that while teaching content was manageable, asserting authority and maintaining discipline was far more challenging. Teacher Emma, on the other hand, struggled with teaching students in the lowest section, requiring her to adopt new strategies for learners who were non-readers and had limited foundational skills. Teacher Dan highlighted absenteeism and lack of motivation among students, prompting him to develop strategies to encourage participation.

Some experiences were particularly distressing. Teacher Ann recalled handling a learner with severe tantrums that escalated into physical aggression, situations that even school authorities and parents struggled to manage. These

experiences reflect the unpredictable nature of substitute teaching. As Ong (2024) described, stepping into a new classroom feels like “walking into the unknown,” where teachers must quickly adapt and take charge despite unfamiliarity.

I Should Prepare Myself for Bigger Responsibilities

Through the experiences, substitute teachers develop valuable insights and strategies for growth. They recognize the importance of being fully prepared, not only in lesson planning but also in managing diverse classroom scenarios and student behaviors. Teachers Ann, Bia, Cath, Dan, and Farrah emphasized the need for flexibility, patience, and readiness.

Teacher Farrah expressed her aspiration to complete her master’s degree and attend training and seminars to enhance her teaching competence. Meanwhile, Teachers Gail and Hannah highlighted the importance of building confidence and strengthening their ability to face challenges in the classroom. These experiences serve as preparation for greater responsibilities in the future. Substitute teachers continuously seek to improve their skills, decision-making, and leadership abilities. As Donofrio (2015) noted, while teaching can be exhausting, it is also deeply rewarding. Practical classroom experience bridges the gap between theory and practice, allowing teachers to apply what they have learned and prepare for the day they will lead their own classrooms.

The journey toward securing a permanent teaching position is far from easy. Substitute teachers encounter numerous obstacles that test their determination. These challenges are reflected in two themes: “There are lacking on my personal and professional aspect” and “There are inconsistencies in the system.”

There Are Gaps in My Personal and Professional Aspects

On a personal level, many substitute teachers identified shyness as a barrier to achieving their goals. Teachers Ann, Bia, Farrah, and Hannah shared that their reserved nature often prevented them from fully demonstrating their capabilities. Professionally, the lack of a master's degree emerged as a major limitation. Teachers Ann, Bia, Cath, Dan, Emma, Farrah, and Gail noted that without graduate-level qualifications, they were unable to gain sufficient ranking points for permanent positions. Financial constraints further delayed their pursuit of advanced studies. As Tolentino (2016) emphasized, teacher applicants are expected to have master's degree units aligned with their specialization, indicating that licensure alone is insufficient.

There Are Inconsistencies in The System

Systemic issues also hinder teachers' progress. All participants reported concerns regarding the lack of transparency and fairness in the hiring process. Teachers Ann and Hannah pointed out the absence of clear information about available positions, while Teachers Bia, Emma, Gail, and Hannah highlighted favoritism and the influence of "backer systems." Nepotism was also observed by Teachers Emma and Farrah.

Teacher Cath cited the lack of available teaching positions in her preferred school as a key barrier. These inconsistencies undermine trust in the system and discourage aspiring teachers. Tolentino (2016) similarly identified bureaucratic anomalies within the Department of Education, noting that some officials fail to consistently follow established hiring guidelines.

I Need to Have a Source of Income Since I'm Unemployed as of the Moment

Given the temporary nature of their contracts, substitute teachers adopt various strategies to sustain themselves. After completing their contracts,

some teachers continue teaching in alternative roles, such as Municipal School Board teachers or tutors, as seen with Teachers Ann, Cath, and Farrah. Others engage in small businesses, while some explore different careers, such as administrative or financial roles. Despite these shifts, many remain committed to teaching. As Kolmar (2022) reported, former substitute teachers often continue in education, whether in private institutions or other teaching roles. This highlights their enduring passion for the profession, even in the face of uncertainty.

Substitute teachers hold strong aspirations for stability, professional fulfillment, and fairness in the system. These are reflected in the themes: “I’m aspiring to have a permanent teaching job, not just a temporary contract” and “I hope that the Department of Education will follow the rules since everyone is at thirst to enter permanence.”

I’m Aspiring to Have a Permanent Teaching Job, Not Just a Temporary Contract

All participants expressed a strong desire for permanent positions, driven by the need for stability and the fulfillment of their vocation. Many have waited for years, Teacher Ann for seven years, Teacher Cath and Emma for eight years, and others for four to six years, holding onto hope that their efforts will eventually be rewarded. These aspirations are fueled not only by the promise of job security but also by a deep commitment to teaching. As highlighted by Arcilla et al. (2023), educators are motivated by a combination of personal fulfillment, community service, and financial stability.

I Hope the Department of Education Adheres to The Rules, As Many Are Eager to Achieve Permanence

Substitute teachers strongly advocate for transparency, fairness, and accountability in the hiring process. They call for strict adherence to DepEd

Order No. 019, s. 2022, emphasizing merit, competence, equal opportunity, and transparency.

Participants expressed concerns about unclear selection criteria, favoritism, and the lack of verification of credentials. They emphasized that hiring should be based on ranking and qualifications rather than personal connections. Their collective voice reflects a desire for a just system where effort and merit are genuinely recognized.

Conclusion

Substitute teachers stand at the crossroads of fulfillment and hardship, carrying both the joy of shaping young minds and the weight of uncertainty. Their journeys reveal not only the challenges of transition, limited preparation, and systemic barriers, but also their unwavering commitment to growth. In every classroom they enter, they learn to adapt, to reflect, and to rise, turning struggles into lessons and experiences into strength. What sustains them most is the irreplaceable moment when learning happens, when a child understands, and when their presence truly makes a difference.

Despite personal limitations and institutional challenges, these educators continue to strive for excellence. They seek to improve themselves holistically while navigating a system that often tests their patience and resilience. Their dedication reflects not only a profession but a calling that persists beyond temporary roles. Above all, they are driven by hope, the hope for stability, fairness, and the chance to fully live out their vocation. Their aspiration to become permanent public school teachers is not merely about job security, but about purpose, impact, and belonging.

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Non-Education Graduates as Public High School Teachers

Jeezreal D. Mondia

Teachers play a vital role in the Philippine educational system as they serve not only as facilitators of learning but also as role models who inspire students to pursue their dreams, aspirations, and passions. They are entrusted with the responsibility of motivating learners to reach their full potential and become productive members of society.

In the Philippines, becoming a teacher typically requires the completion of a four-year bachelor's degree in education (BEED or BSED) or a related field, followed by passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). However, due to the high demand for teachers, the promise of stable income, and associated benefits, many non-education graduates have entered the profession. This pathway has been made possible through the Certificate in Professional Education (CPE) program, introduced in 1984. The CPE is a non-degree program that offers at least eighteen (18) units of professional education courses, qualifying non-education degree holders to teach in elementary or secondary schools as required by the Department of Education (DepEd). Despite this opportunity, concerns remain regarding the preparedness and capability of non-education graduates compared to those with formal education degrees.

According to Somosot and Relox (2023), non-education graduate teachers in higher education institutions face various challenges, including managing diverse learners, handling heavy workloads, limited instructional resources, and meeting academic requirements. In response, they develop coping mechanisms to navigate these difficulties. In the District of Balete, where this study was conducted, all six public high schools employ at least one non-education graduate teacher, which highlights the relevance of this issue in the local context.

Challenges, Adaptation, and Professional Commitment of Nontraditional Teachers

Non-education graduates who become senior high school teachers bring with them distinct and meaningful lived experiences. Many encounter challenges in the teaching process, particularly as they navigate the demands of the profession without formal training in education (Diamas-Palo, 2025). These difficulties include technical, individual, institutional, and domestic constraints. Despite these barriers, they demonstrate adaptability by exploring various teaching strategies, enhancing their skills, and seeking support and motivation through collaboration with colleagues and co-learners. At the same time, they recognize several advantages in their transition to teaching, such as bringing diverse perspectives, practical knowledge, and innovative approaches that can enrich the learning environment. However, they also acknowledge limitations, including challenges in pedagogical knowledge, classroom management, learner engagement, time constraints, insufficient institutional support, and gaps in professional preparation.

Notwithstanding these challenges, non-education graduates who enter teaching through alternative pathways exhibit strong determination and a clear commitment to completing their professional journey. Their experiences as

nontraditional entrants into the field shape how they navigate academic and professional demands, underscoring the need for structured support systems that can enhance their success.

Similarly, Du Plessis et al. (2015) highlighted that novice out-of-field teachers often face challenges related to confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging within the school environment. Teachers are closely influenced by school leadership practices, which play a crucial role in shaping how these educators interpret their roles and integrate into the teaching profession.

Challenges Encountered by Non-Education High School Teachers

According to Somosot and Relox (2023), non-education high school teachers encounter several persistent challenges, including managing diverse learners, coping with overloaded teaching responsibilities, dealing with insufficient instructional materials, and complying with various academic requirements. Among these, handling diverse students emerges as one of the most prominent difficulties. Effective teaching requires the ability to address variations in students' backgrounds, abilities, and learning needs (Bayani & Guhao, 2017; Kin et al., 2022). However, many non-education teachers find this challenging due to limited pedagogical training. Classroom management, in particular, remains a major concern, as a teacher's competence is often reflected in their ability to maintain a safe and conducive learning environment. This challenge is further intensified by cultural and linguistic diversity in classrooms (Malgapo & Ancheta, 2020), making it more demanding for novice teachers without formal training in education (Andreasen, 2016).

In addition, non-education graduate teachers frequently experience heavy workloads. Teaching responsibilities extend beyond classroom instruction to include administrative tasks and extracurricular involvement

(Jomoad et al., 2021). As a result, these teachers must juggle multiple roles, which can be overwhelming, especially for those still adjusting to the profession. Despite these demands, such experiences may also contribute to their professional growth and adaptability.

The lack of instructional materials further complicates their teaching experience. Adequate resources are essential for effective lesson delivery and improved student learning (Bayani & Guhao, 2017). However, insufficient materials create barriers to achieving instructional goals and increase teacher stress (Wakoli, 2013). Alongside this, non-education teachers also struggle with academic requirements, including preparing syllabi, constructing assessments, and computing grades. These tasks are particularly challenging for those who lack formal training in curriculum design and assessment practices, highlighting significant gaps in preparation and the need for structured support and professional development.

Similarly, Arayan and Abapo (2024) identified key challenges faced by non-education graduate teachers during classroom observation, such as performance-related stress and burnout, gaps in knowledge and resources, logistical constraints, and uncertainties in reflective practice. Despite these difficulties, non-education teachers demonstrate resilience by using these experiences as opportunities for growth and self-improvement.

Coping Mechanism of Non-Education High School Teacher

According to the study of Somosot and Relox (2023), several key coping mechanisms emerge from the experiences of non-education high school teachers, including peer support, the use of technology-driven and creative teaching strategies, and effective time management. These strategies demonstrate how teachers actively respond to the challenges they encounter in their professional environment. One significant coping mechanism is the

integration of technology into classroom instruction. By utilizing digital tools, teachers are able to design more engaging and interactive lessons that enhance student interest and participation. Creating a stimulating learning environment not only benefits students but also supports teachers in managing classroom dynamics more effectively (Bayani & Guhao, 2017). In addition, peer support plays a crucial role in helping novice teachers adjust to the demands of teaching. Through collaboration, mentoring, and shared experiences, teachers gain practical insights into instructional strategies, student diversity, and classroom management (de Jong et al., 2022; Wijarwadi et al., 2025). Engagement in a community of practice allows novice teachers to gradually develop competence and confidence in their roles (Besar, 2018; Wang & Fan, 2025).

Administrative support further strengthens teachers' coping capacity. Supportive leadership fosters a positive working environment, promotes collaboration, and ensures the fair implementation of school policies (Ertürk, 2023). Such institutional support helps reduce stress and enables teachers to focus more effectively on their instructional responsibilities. Moreover, effective time management serves as an essential coping strategy for non-education graduate teachers (Rodriguez & Andrade, 2025). The ability to organize and prioritize tasks allows them to balance teaching responsibilities, administrative duties, and professional development activities. Effective time management reflects teachers' commitment and enhances their overall teaching effectiveness.

Despite the absence of formal pedagogical training, non-education high school teachers demonstrate resilience by adopting these coping mechanisms. Their capacity to adapt, collaborate, and continuously improve highlights their dedication to the profession. These findings emphasize the importance of institutional support, ongoing professional development, and

innovative teaching practices in enabling non-education graduate teachers to succeed and positively influence student learning outcomes.

Understanding the Complex Experiences of Non-Education Teachers Through the Situated Learning Theory

The Situated Learning Theory by Lave and Wenger (1991) posits that learning occurs through active participation in authentic contexts and social interaction. This perspective is particularly relevant in understanding both the challenges and coping mechanisms of non-education high school teachers. Since these teachers often enter the profession without formal pedagogical training, they are immediately immersed in real classroom environments where they must navigate complex teaching demands. As a result, many of the challenges they face, such as managing diverse learners, handling classroom dynamics, addressing instructional gaps, and meeting institutional expectations, stem from their initial position as peripheral participants within the teaching community.

Situated Learning Theory explains that novice teachers begin at the margins of professional practice and gradually move toward full participation as they gain experience and interact with more knowledgeable peers. For non-education teachers, this transition can be particularly demanding because they must simultaneously learn content delivery, classroom management, and assessment practices in real time. The absence of prior training intensifies these challenges, as their learning is largely experiential and context-dependent rather than formally structured. At the same time, the theory provides a strong framework for understanding how these teachers cope with such challenges. Through continuous engagement in the school environment, non-education teachers learn by doing, observing, and collaborating. Participation in a community of practice allows them to acquire practical

knowledge, refine their teaching strategies, and develop confidence over time (Besar, 2018). Peer support, mentoring, and collegial interactions become essential mechanisms through which they interpret experiences, solve problems, and adapt to classroom realities. These social interactions not only facilitate skill development but also help reduce feelings of isolation and uncertainty.

The theory highlights the importance of context in shaping teachers' coping strategies. As non-education teachers engage more deeply in their professional environment, they begin to adopt effective practices such as integrating technology, employing creative teaching approaches, and managing their time efficiently. These strategies are not learned in isolation but are developed through participation in shared activities, observation of experienced colleagues, and reflection on their own teaching experiences. Over time, this process enables them to move from basic survival in the classroom to more confident and competent teaching.

While the lack of formal training initially places them at a disadvantage, their active participation in authentic teaching contexts, combined with collaborative support, allows them to gradually build professional competence. This progression reflects the dynamic nature of teacher development, where learning is continuously shaped by experience, interaction, and engagement within the educational community (Besar, 2018).

RESEARCH FOCUS: Stories of the Non-Education Graduates as Public High School Teachers

The present study explored the experiences, emotions, challenges, support systems, and coping strategies of non-education graduate public high school teachers through a qualitative research design using narrative inquiry. This approach enabled the collection of in-depth personal stories through

interviews, allowing the researcher to understand participants' challenges and coping mechanisms within their teaching context.

The research was conducted in the municipality of Balete, Aklan, involving seven teachers selected from six public high schools. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed, expert-validated semi-structured interview guide consisting of questions on experiences, challenges, and coping strategies. Prior to data collection, permissions and informed consent were secured, and interviews were conducted individually, recorded, and transcribed for analysis.

Narrative analysis was used to interpret the data, focusing on how participants described and made sense of their experiences. The analysis examined both the content and expression of their narratives, enabling the identification of key themes and deeper insights into their professional journeys.

Positive Experiences of Non-Education Graduates as High School Teachers

Participants described their teaching experiences as both difficult and challenging, yet ultimately rewarding and fulfilling. Despite encountering various struggles, they found a deep sense of satisfaction in their new profession. One participant shared, *"It is hard and challenging but once you have a heart of a teacher, you will be happy teaching. Gradually, you can adjust and adapt to the career and profession you have chosen."* This reflects how prioritizing learners brings a sense of joy and purpose.

Another participant emphasized the dual nature of teaching: *"Challenging because you must handle diverse learners with different personalities. Rewarding in a sense that teaching has given me a sense of purpose, knowing that I have contributed to my students' learnings, and witnessing their growth, progress and seeing them succeed is truly*

rewarding.” These accounts highlight that while challenges are inevitable, fulfillment comes from witnessing students’ development and success.

Participants shared a common realization: teaching, even for non-education graduates, is both demanding and meaningful. Their experiences pushed them beyond their comfort zones, allowing them to grow, adapt, and discover their capabilities. This aligns with Ellingson et al. (2021), who emphasized that professional growth leads to improved teaching practices and better student outcomes.

A Productive Outcome

Participants also expressed fulfillment through the appreciation they received from students and parents. One teacher shared, “*The most unforgettable experiences I have in teaching were during the times that my students showed their love and appreciation of what I’m doing for them. Some of them would give me flowers and gifts during special occasions.*” Such gestures affirmed their effectiveness as educators. Similarly, Teacher Rose shared, “*One touching experience was having a student that refused to be absent simply because I am their subject teacher. Knowing that I had inspired someone learning lift me deeply flattered and fulfilled.*” Another participant added, “*As a non-education graduate teacher, it feels fulfilling when I know that my learners gained something from me not only the intellectual aspect but also from other aspect such as emotional and spiritual aspects.*”

These statements demonstrate that non-education graduate teachers possess the capability to make meaningful impacts on their students. This is supported by Somosot and Relox (2023), who found that teachers feel successful when they see their students succeed, as well as by Beteille and Evans (2019), who emphasized the role of teachers in shaping students’ knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

Participants identified several key challenges, including limited pedagogical knowledge, classroom management difficulties, adapting to a new environment, teaching outside their specialization, and lack of instructional materials.

Limited Knowledge in Teaching Pedagogy

Many participants admitted their lack of formal training in teaching methodologies and classroom management. One stated, *“I really admit that I have limited knowledge of teaching methodologies and classroom management...”* while another shared, *“I even asked myself if I am capable of being a teacher... classroom management and choosing teaching strategies were the most difficult part.”* These responses highlight the gap in pedagogical preparation among non-education graduates.

Understanding and Adjusting to the Environment

Participants also struggled to adapt to new school environments and cultures. One teacher shared, *“My most unforgettable experience being a teacher in an Indigenous People Community is that I need to adapt local customs, language and lifestyle...”* Another recalled responding to a student’s medical emergency due to their previous profession. These experiences illustrate the need for flexibility and cultural sensitivity in teaching.

Teaching Outside Specialization

Teaching subjects beyond one’s field of expertise posed another major challenge. One participant noted, *“One of the challenges... is the current subject that I am teaching which is very far from my undergraduate course.”* Another added that teaching unfamiliar subjects required *“extra time and effort”* to prepare. This reflects the common issue of out-of-field teaching

(Nakar & Du Plessis, 2023; Hobbs et al., 2026; Sengschmid et al., 2025; du Plessis et al., 2014).

Classroom Management

Managing diverse learners was consistently identified as difficult. Teachers highlighted challenges in maintaining discipline, addressing emotional needs, and minimizing disruptions. However, they also developed strategies such as setting clear expectations and establishing classroom routines.

Lack of Teaching Materials

Limited resources further complicated teaching. One participant shared, “*Not enough teaching supplies... teaching that time was not easy when you do not have enough resources.*” Another noted that the absence of materials required additional effort to deliver lessons effectively. This aligns with findings that adequate resources are essential for quality education (Bayani & Guhao, 2017).

To overcome these challenges, participants employed several coping strategies, including mentorship, continuous preparation, and the use of online resources.

Mentorship

Seeking guidance from experienced colleagues was a key strategy. One participant stated, “*Asked for the guidance and mentorship of the seasoned teachers...*” while another shared how colleagues helped them adapt and improve. This reflects the importance of peer support in professional growth.

Constant Preparation

Participants emphasized the value of continuous learning. One teacher shared, *“I did a lot of research and readings... I borrowed books from the library about teaching strategies almost every day.”* Others invested time and personal resources to prepare instructional materials, demonstrating dedication to improving their teaching practice.

Incorporation of Online Resources

The use of technology also played a significant role. Teachers accessed platforms such as YouTube, DepEd Tambayan, and other educational websites to enhance their lessons. One participant noted, *“I visit websites... for references,”* while another shared how video lessons helped improve student understanding. These strategies allowed teachers to become more creative and effective in their instruction.

Their stories showed that while non-education graduate teachers face substantial challenges, they demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and a strong commitment to their profession. Through continuous learning, collaboration, and innovation, they transform their limitations into opportunities for growth and meaningful impact in the classroom.

Conclusion

The challenges faced by non-education graduate teachers can be addressed through proper planning and stronger institutional support from the Department of Education. In response, a program on enhancing the knowledge and skills of educators through a capability enhancement initiative is highly recommended. Designed to support non-education graduate teachers in their professional development, this can improve the overall quality of their teaching.

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Middle-Aged Mothers as Teachers to Kindergarten Learners

Jephine J. Salvador

Mothers are often regarded as the light of the home, serving as primary caregivers who nurture, guide, and support their children's development. In early childhood, particularly during the kindergarten years, middle-aged mothers play a crucial role as their children's first teachers, shaping foundational skills, behaviors, and values. This role carries deep cultural and personal significance, as mothering is widely recognized as a meaningful and socially valued responsibility across societies (Kruger, 2003). However, it is also highly demanding, requiring patience, emotional sensitivity, and a strong understanding of children's developmental needs. These demands become more pronounced during the preschool years, when children may display impulsive or aggressive behaviors that require consistent guidance and effective behavioral management. At the same time, middle-aged mothers may face additional social, psychological, and biological challenges, including those associated with the menopausal transition (Thomas et al., 2018), which can influence their capacity to respond to these demands.

In this context, middle-aged mothers with kindergarten-aged children often encounter difficulties that affect both their well-being and their

effectiveness as primary educators at home. Increased physical and emotional stress is common as they attempt to balance parenting responsibilities with work and other obligations. This dual burden can lead to fatigue and burnout, which may, in turn, affect the quality of their engagement in their children's early learning experiences (Ali & Rahman, 2023). Similarly, middle-aged mothers frequently experience physical and psychological exhaustion, limiting their ability to manage multiple roles effectively and consistently support their children's developmental needs (Tornu et al., 2023).

In the District of Batan in the Philippines, many middle-aged mothers remain actively involved in supporting their children's early education, particularly during the kindergarten stage. Despite their commitment, they often struggle to balance household responsibilities with their role as facilitators of learning at home. These challenges highlight the complexities of their dual role as caregivers and educators and underscore the importance of understanding their lived experiences to better support their well-being and their children's early development.

Mothers as First Teachers: The Complex Realities of Middle-Aged Parenting in Early Education

The journey of middle-aged mothers with kindergarten learners is complex and multifaceted, shaped by the demands of parenting alongside personal and professional responsibilities. These mothers often assume dual roles as both caregivers and educators, requiring them to address not only their children's academic needs but also their emotional development (Bornstein et al., 2016). This dual responsibility involves significant emotional labor, as mothers strive to create a nurturing environment that supports both learning and well-being.

Their experiences are further influenced by societal expectations and the pressure to ensure their children's academic success. Xiaolin et al. (2025) highlighted that many mothers experience anxiety related to their children's school performance, recognizing the importance of early education in shaping future outcomes. This pressure is intensified by competitive educational environments, where comparisons with peers are common. Balancing these expectations with personal and professional responsibilities often leads to stress and feelings of being overwhelmed.

Support systems play a crucial role in shaping these experiences. Xu and Zhang (2025) found that mothers with strong support networks, such as family, friends, and community resources, tend to experience lower stress levels and greater satisfaction in their parenting roles. These networks provide both practical assistance and emotional reassurance. In contrast, limited support can lead to feelings of isolation and inadequacy, negatively affecting both maternal well-being and the ability to support children effectively.

Mothers' involvement in their children's education is influenced by their own educational backgrounds. Grolnick (2015) observed that mothers with positive educational experiences are more likely to engage actively in their children's schooling, offering guidance and motivation. Conversely, those with limited or negative experiences may feel less confident in supporting academic tasks, which can affect children's early learning outcomes.

Middle-aged mothers also face various emotional and societal challenges. The transition of children into formal schooling introduces new demands, requiring mothers to manage their own concerns while helping their children adjust to new environments (Morawska et al., 2026). At the same time, broader societal changes, such as the rise of dual-income households and the evolving involvement of fathers, are reshaping parenting roles. Nomaguchi

et al. (2017) noted that increased paternal participation can help ease the burden on mothers, fostering a more balanced and collaborative approach to supporting children's early education.

Balancing Care and Career: The Realities of Middle-Aged Motherhood

According to Thomas et al. (2018), challenges refer to experiences that demand significant physical or mental effort and test an individual's strength, skills, and abilities. For middle-aged women, a common challenge lies in managing multiple responsibilities arising from their diverse roles, as teachers to their children, daughters to aging parents, wives, mothers, and employees. These overlapping roles often create competing demands that require careful balance and resilience.

The challenges associated with middle-aged motherhood are substantial and should not be overlooked. Health-related concerns, such as fatigue and the physical demands of parenting later in life, can affect a mother's ability to actively engage in her child's education. Nomaguchi et al. (2017) noted that older mothers may struggle with these physical demands, which can limit their participation in school-related activities. At the same time, balancing career responsibilities with parenting further intensifies stress and reduces the time available for direct involvement in children's learning.

Sievert et al. (2018) emphasized that middle-aged mothers are more likely to experience stress and fatigue due to the combined demands of work, home responsibilities, and, in some cases, caregiving for elderly parents. These pressures can influence both their well-being and the level of support they provide to their children, particularly during the critical kindergarten years when parental involvement is essential.

The challenge of balancing career and parenting responsibilities shapes how middle-aged mothers interact with and prepare their children for school. Ravindranath et al. (2021) explained that although older mothers may have more resources, they often face time constraints due to demanding careers. This can limit direct engagement with their children's educational activities. Nevertheless, many middle-aged mothers demonstrate adaptability by prioritizing quality time and seeking external support, such as tutors or enrichment programs, to ensure their children's development and readiness for school.

Cultural Expectations and Maternal Coping: The Influence of Social Norms on Middle-Aged Mothers

Social support networks play a crucial role in the coping strategies of middle-aged mothers with kindergarten learners. McLeish and Redshaw (2017) found that mothers who actively build and maintain strong connections with family, friends, or parenting groups experience higher levels of well-being and lower levels of stress. These networks provide practical guidance, emotional reassurance, and a sense of belonging, all of which are essential as mothers navigate the demands of early childhood education. Moreover, sharing experiences and strategies within these groups empowers mothers, enhancing their confidence and competence in their parenting roles.

Cultural expectations and societal norms also significantly shape how middle-aged mothers cope with their responsibilities. Venard et al. (2024) argued that in societies where mothers are expected to be the primary caregivers, these expectations can intensify stress and pressure. Such norms often encourage perfectionism and self-sacrifice, which may further burden mothers. However, in cultures that promote shared parenting responsibilities,

mothers tend to report lower stress levels and greater satisfaction, highlighting the importance of more balanced caregiving roles.

The involvement of fathers and extended family members can greatly ease the pressures faced by middle-aged mothers. Nomaguchi et al. (2017) emphasized that active paternal involvement in children's early education leads to reduced maternal stress and more balanced family dynamics. Similarly, support from grandparents and other extended family members provides additional assistance in caregiving responsibilities. This collaborative approach not only supports mothers but also contributes to the overall well-being and development of the child during these formative years.

Motherhood, Well-Being, and Teaching Through the Lens of Good Enough Mother Theory

The Good Enough Mother Theory (Winnicott, 2013) emphasizes that a child does not require a perfect mother but rather one who is sufficiently responsive to support healthy development. Winnicott explained that a "good enough" mother initially meets the infant's needs in a way that fosters a sense of security, and gradually allows the child to develop independence. A mother who is overly intrusive may hinder the child's autonomy, while one who is too distant may create anxiety. In both cases, imbalance can affect the child's self-concept and ability to form meaningful relationships later in life. Schiewe-Kopyra (2023) further highlighted that effective mothering does not require perfection but consistent care, protection, and emotional presence. A devoted mother who prioritizes her child's needs while remaining attentive to her own well-being can be considered "good enough." This perspective recognizes that mothering is shaped by everyday realities, including physical changes, emotional demands, and life transitions.

This theory frames the experiences of middle-aged mothers with kindergarten learners within the context of balance, between caregiving and fostering independence, and between personal well-being and parental responsibilities. Factors such as physical fatigue, social expectations, and limited support systems may influence a mother's ability to provide "good enough" care.

RESEARCH FOCUS: The Stories of Middle-Aged Mothers with Kindergarten Learners

This study explored the narratives of middle-aged mothers with kindergarten learners, particularly in a time marked by increasing demands for practicality, flexibility, and resilience. It identified the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of middle-aged mothers with kindergarten learners in the District of Batan in the Philippines.

The study employed a qualitative narrative inquiry design as it focuses on personal stories and allows participants to share their experiences, emotions, and perspectives through open-ended interviews, providing deeper insights into their parenting roles and realities. Eight participants were purposively selected from the District of Batan based on specific criteria, including age (40–60 years old), having a kindergarten child, diverse socio-economic backgrounds, and willingness to participate. Data were collected using a researcher-developed, open-ended interview guide that underwent expert validation. Necessary permissions were secured prior to data collection, and interviews were conducted in agreed locations, with responses recorded and documented for analysis.

Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's method, which involved identifying significant statements, formulating meanings, clustering themes, and developing a comprehensive description of the phenomenon. To ensure

rigor, the study applied credibility, transferability, and confirmability through participant validation and expert review. Ethical considerations were strictly followed, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and the use of pseudonyms, with all data securely handled and disposed of after the study.

The study identified four key themes based on the participants' responses. First, middle-aged mothers highlighted the challenge of balancing multiple roles and responsibilities. They serve as primary caregivers, wives, employees, and home teachers, often feeling overwhelmed by the expectations placed upon them. Their responsibilities extend beyond household duties, as they must also support their children's academic development while fulfilling work obligations and maintaining family relationships. This constant juggling of roles requires effective time management and strong emotional resilience.

Another significant theme is the shift in identity experienced by these mothers as they navigate motherhood later in life. Despite physical limitations and age-related challenges, they continue to adapt to evolving responsibilities. They play a vital role in their children's education by providing academic support, fostering motivation, and nurturing a love for learning. However, their experiences are also shaped by socio-economic conditions and family dynamics. Many contribute financially to their households, making it necessary to balance employment and parenting. Limited financial resources often force them to prioritize essential needs, adding complexity to their daily lives.

In terms of challenges, the study revealed several recurring issues, including children's illness, difficulties in disciplining children, societal discrimination, financial stress, and physical and emotional exhaustion. Mothers expressed stress when their children became ill, as this led to additional expenses and missed workdays. They also found disciplining

children challenging, requiring patience and consistency in shaping behavior and encouraging school attendance. Some participants experienced societal judgment due to their age, making them feel out of place in certain social or school contexts. Financial constraints further intensified their struggles, as they had to carefully allocate limited resources for household and educational needs. These challenges often resulted in fatigue and emotional strain due to overlapping responsibilities.

To cope with these challenges, participants employed several strategies. Establishing routines and prioritizing tasks helped them manage their responsibilities more effectively, allowing them to balance work, household duties, and their children's education. Self-care practices also played a crucial role in maintaining their physical and mental well-being, enabling them to remain resilient in the face of challenges. Furthermore, support from family and the community provided emotional, practical, and sometimes financial assistance, helping to ease their burdens.

Conclusion

The experiences of middle-aged mothers with kindergarten learners reflect the complexity of balancing multiple roles, adapting to shifts in identity, supporting their children's development, and managing socio-economic and family-related demands. They navigate shifting identities while responding to the developmental needs of their children and the demands of their personal and professional lives. These intersecting responsibilities underscore the multifaceted nature of motherhood during this stage, where balancing time, energy, and emotional resources becomes a constant challenge.

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Out-of-Field Teaching

Marichu T. Daroy

High-quality education remains a fundamental goal of educational systems worldwide (Saini et al., 2023; Karatsiori, 2023), and its achievement depends largely on the quality and competence of teachers (Pčolinská, 2018). Teachers play a crucial role in addressing educational challenges and facilitating effective learning experiences for students (Dursun & Aykan, 2025; Kostiainen & Pöysä-Tarhonen, 2025; Levy-Feldman, 2025). Research consistently identifies teacher quality as one of the most influential factors affecting student achievement, emphasizing the importance of knowledgeable and effective educators in promoting positive learning outcomes (Teig & Nilsen, 2022; Li & Ma, 2025; Engida et al., 2024). As primary facilitators of learning, teachers are expected to provide accurate guidance, meaningful instruction, and the knowledge and skills necessary for students' future academic and career success.

Recognizing the importance of teacher quality, the Philippine educational system has established policies aimed at ensuring access to competent instruction. Batas Pambansa Blg. 232, or the Education Act of 1982, upholds students' right to quality education and qualified teachers. Similarly, educational policies emphasize the need for teachers to possess appropriate academic qualifications and subject-matter competence to support

effective teaching and learning. These standards reflect the belief that teacher expertise is essential for maintaining educational quality and improving student outcomes.

Despite the policy initiatives, challenges remain in ensuring that teachers are assigned to subjects aligned with their areas of specialization. One persistent concern is out-of-field teaching, a practice in which teachers are assigned to teach subjects outside their academic preparation and professional expertise (Nakar & du Plessis, 2023; Beutin et al., 2025; du Plessis et al., 2014). This situation is common in the Philippines and may limit teachers' mastery of the content they are expected to teach, potentially affecting instructional quality and student learning (Bayani & Guhao, 2018). Out-of-field assignments are often influenced by administrative decisions and staffing shortages, particularly in subject areas where qualified teachers are limited. This reality highlights the continuing challenge of balancing teacher deployment needs with the goal of providing students with instruction from adequately prepared subject specialists.

Out-of-Field Teaching

Out-of-field teaching significantly influences teachers' classroom practices and overall effectiveness in delivering quality education (Vo & Ho, 2026; du Plessis, 2015). When teachers are assigned to subjects beyond their area of specialization, they often encounter difficulties in mastering the content, selecting appropriate instructional strategies, and addressing students' learning needs. These challenges may limit their ability to provide meaningful learning experiences and can adversely affect both teacher performance and student achievement. Badaru and Ndlovu (2025) emphasized that out-of-field teaching has substantial implications for classroom management, behavior management, and pedagogical content knowledge. Teachers who lack

adequate subject-matter expertise may struggle to explain complex concepts, respond confidently to students' questions, and design effective assessments, which can undermine classroom engagement and learning outcomes.

The demands of teaching unfamiliar subjects often require teachers to devote additional time and effort to lesson preparation, content review, and resource development (Rebolledo et al., 2025). This increased workload may contribute to stress, anxiety, and professional burnout, particularly when teachers receive limited institutional support. The challenge extends beyond content mastery, as effective teaching requires the integration of subject knowledge with appropriate pedagogical approaches. Without sufficient preparation, teachers may rely heavily on textbooks or traditional teaching methods, reducing opportunities for innovative and learner-centered instruction.

The difficulties associated with out-of-field teaching are further intensified by inadequate professional development opportunities. According to Rivas (2025), many teachers perceived existing training programs as insufficient because they were often short-term, generic, and disconnected from the specific demands of the subjects they were required to teach. As a result, such professional development initiatives failed to address the gaps in teachers' content knowledge and instructional competencies. Teachers therefore expressed a strong need for sustained, subject-specific, and practice-oriented professional development programs that would enable them to build both content expertise and pedagogical confidence.

Moreover, the lack of targeted professional support may hinder teachers' professional identity and self-efficacy. Teachers who consistently teach outside their specialization may feel less competent and less prepared compared to their colleagues who teach within their field of expertise (Hobbs et al., 2026; Tran, 2023; Hobbs & Porsch, 2021). This can affect their

motivation, job satisfaction, and willingness to remain in the profession. Consequently, educational institutions must recognize that assigning teachers outside their specialization should be accompanied by comprehensive support systems, including mentoring, collaborative learning opportunities, access to instructional resources, and continuous professional development. Such interventions can help mitigate the negative effects of out-of-field teaching and enhance teachers' capacity to deliver effective instruction despite the challenges associated with their assignments.

Challenges Encountered by Non-Specialized Teachers

Common difficulties of out-of-field teaching include limited subject-matter knowledge, challenges in engaging students, and experiences of self-doubt or imposter syndrome (Rebolledo et al., 2025). These challenges may influence teacher retention and perceptions of professional competence, particularly in contexts where access to support and resources is limited (Hobbs et al., 2026; Hobbs & Porsch, 2021), such as rural schools.

Research in the Philippine context reflects similar concerns. Pacaña et al. (2019) found that non-social studies teachers experienced difficulties teaching the subject because of its broad content coverage and their limited disciplinary knowledge. These challenges often resulted in feelings of incompetence, low self-esteem, and uncertainty regarding instructional effectiveness. Likewise, Attia (2017) reported that inadequate subject expertise can hinder lesson preparation, reduce instructional confidence, and make it more difficult for teachers to deliver content effectively. Although these difficulties may initially constrain performance, they can also motivate teachers to acquire new knowledge and develop competencies necessary for their assigned roles.

One of the most critical concerns associated with out-of-field teaching is unfamiliarity with the subject matter. Teachers with limited content knowledge may struggle to explain concepts accurately, answer students' questions effectively, and address misconceptions that arise during instruction. Fikni et al. (2023) emphasized that insufficient or inaccurate subject knowledge may contribute to the transmission of incorrect information and the use of ineffective teaching practices. Subject mastery ensures instructional quality and strengthens the competence and confidence of out-of-field teachers.

Instructional and Pedagogical Challenges

Teachers assigned to subjects outside their area of specialization often encounter difficulties in selecting and implementing appropriate instructional strategies. Limited subject-matter knowledge can make it challenging to identify teaching approaches that effectively align with curriculum goals and learning objectives. Instructional strategies are essential tools that help teachers facilitate learning and achieve desired educational outcomes (Özdoğru, 2022; Ruiz-Martín et al., 2026; Zhang et al., 2024). When teachers are unfamiliar with the content they teach, their ability to design meaningful learning experiences and respond effectively to students' needs may be constrained.

According to Mizzi (2013), effective teaching requires not only content knowledge but also the ability to adapt to new information and evolving instructional demands. Consequently, teachers handling out-of-field subjects may struggle to adjust their teaching practices. However, it can also create valuable opportunities for professional growth and self-discovery. Teaching outside one's specialization encourages educators to broaden their knowledge base, acquire new competencies, and move beyond their comfort

zones. Through this process, teachers may develop greater resilience, flexibility, and adaptability, qualities that are essential for effective teaching in dynamic educational environments. Such experiences can transform professional challenges into opportunities for learning and career development.

Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems

Teachers employ a variety of coping mechanisms to manage the challenges associated with teaching subjects outside their area of specialization. These coping strategies involve both emotional and professional adjustments that enable teachers to adapt to unfamiliar content, strengthen their instructional practices, and fulfill their responsibilities more effectively. Through continuous learning, self-directed preparation, and the development of adaptive teaching approaches, teachers strive to overcome the difficulties associated with out-of-field teaching.

Research highlights the importance of institutional support in enhancing teachers' ability to cope with these challenges. Ingersoll (2001) identified mentoring programs, access to instructional resources, and ongoing professional development as key support mechanisms that contribute to teacher effectiveness in out-of-field assignments. These forms of support provide opportunities for teachers to strengthen their subject-matter knowledge, refine pedagogical practices, and gain confidence in delivering instruction. Effective professional development programs, in particular, help teachers acquire the competencies needed to teach unfamiliar subjects more successfully. According to Shah et al. (2019), all teachers, regardless of specialization, should be supported through targeted professional development and mentoring initiatives. By strengthening teachers' capacity to cope with out-of-field challenges, these support systems not only improve teaching

quality but also contribute to better student learning outcomes and sustained professional growth.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Lived Experiences of Junior High School Out-of-Field Teachers

This study explored the lived experiences of Junior High School teachers teaching subjects outside their specialization. The study employed a qualitative research design using narrative inquiry, which focuses on understanding how individuals construct meaning from their experiences through the stories they tell. Through participants' narratives, the study aimed to capture the personal, professional, and instructional realities associated with teaching beyond one's specialization.

The study was conducted in a public secondary school in the District of Tangalan in the Philippines during the School Year 2023–2024. Eight junior high school teachers were purposively selected based on specific criteria, including having at least two years of teaching experience and experience teaching subjects outside their area of specialization. Data were collected using a validated interview guide composed of open-ended questions that encouraged participants to freely describe their experiences. Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the research process, including obtaining the necessary permissions, securing informed consent, and ensuring participant confidentiality. Data collection was conducted through a focus group discussion, with all responses recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The transcribed data were analyzed using Colaizzi's method of qualitative analysis. This process involved repeatedly reviewing the transcripts, extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, and organizing these meanings into thematic categories. Through this systematic approach, the researcher identified recurring patterns and developed a

comprehensive description of the phenomenon under investigation. To further enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, participant validation was conducted to ensure that the interpretations accurately reflected the teachers' lived experiences.

Feeling Inadequate

Most teachers felt a sense of inadequacy when teaching subjects beyond their specialization. They described feeling uncomfortable and lacking confidence due to their limited knowledge of and exposure to the subject content. Anathalia expressed, *“I may not have enough knowledge about the subject which can impact my lesson preparation and pedagogical content knowledge which I admit that I have limited knowledge about the subject matter. I may not feel comfortable teaching the subject which can lead to low comfort level and limited preparation time. I consider these challenges as barrier for struggling teacher like me teaching certain subjects beyond my specialization. Despite these difficulties, I have developed and tried my best to overcome these things.”* A similar experience was narrated by Althea, *“Although I have some background knowledge about the topic, I need to study because there is some unfamiliar content. Aside from learning new content, I must possess profound knowledge of the teaching strategies on how to effectively deliver the daily lessons. There are also moments when I feel inadequate and stressed while working with students because teaching topics outside my scope of knowledge could affect not just my confidence but the quality of their learning.”*

A similar experience was felt by Ghella, *“At first, I was in doubt of myself regarding teaching subjects outside the area of my specialization. ... I feel ineffective and inefficient especially in lesson delivery because of insufficient exposure to the subject.”* A similar experience with Ghella was

also experienced by Lina, *“I have definitely encountered challenges while trying to explain the lesson to my students which I don’t have a background in my area of expertise. I am not confident if I can deliver my lesson well.”*

Another experience in feeling inadequacy focused on the language is expressed by Millesse, *“One thing I find difficult in teaching non-major subjects is the language used which is Filipino is quite a challenge for me and I would experience stuttering and running out of words to say. I am not sure if I am pronouncing the words correctly or I am using the exact or the proper words.”*

According to Co et al. (2021), teachers are less confident teaching subjects outside their specialization. They felt inadequate and lack the confidence in teaching the topics outside their expertise.

Extra Effort for Subject Preparation

In addition to teachers' feelings of inadequacy, another challenge experienced by most teachers teaching beyond their specialization is the need to exert extra effort in preparation. Teachers expressed that they must invest more time and effort, often working day and night, to prepare for unfamiliar concepts in subjects that are outside their area of specialization. Althea expressed, *“Teaching a subject outside my specialization is quite challenging; hence I need a lot of preparation. Although I have some background knowledge about the topic, I need to study because there is some unfamiliar content.”* A similar experience was experienced by Millesse, Lina, Jaybert, and Gab.

“During my first year of teaching subjects that are not my major, I really had a hard time. I would always do advanced research; I would sleep late at night to study my lessons.” (Millesse)

“I also need to research day and night for the topic I’m not familiar with so that I can assure that I teach the right lesson at the same time they can also gain knowledge from me.” (Lina)

“I need to study the content of the topic before I will go to the class though it is a must for us teachers to study our lesson in advance, it takes another effort for us non-specialized teacher to study the lesson to master the content of the lesson of the day.” (Jaybert)

“When I teach outside my area of specialization, I need to put in extra preparation and effort to get acquainted with the curriculum and content.” (Gab)

Some teachers experienced difficulty and had to exert greater effort and spend more time preparing lessons for subjects beyond their specialization. This situation consumes additional time and requires more energy and effort from teachers. This finding is similar to the study of Perez (2024), which revealed the increased burden placed on teachers.

Adjusting to New Teaching Strategies

Choosing and adapting to new teaching strategies is another experience encountered by teachers teaching beyond their specialization, in addition to feelings of inadequacy and the need to exert greater effort in lesson preparation. For instance, Jaybert said, *“One of the major challenges that I have encountered as non-major subject-teacher is the difficulty of choosing teaching strategies that suit to the subject matter and the difficulty of mastery of content of the subject/ topic. I have understood that teaching pedagogies took an important element in teaching the content standard of the subject. It has its unique feature that best suits or applicable where specialized teachers have only understood.”* Ghella also expressed, *“The selection of activities to*

be included in the instruction should also be considered in order the students/learners to be able to understand the concepts and lessons presented.”

Gab also expressed his difficulty adjusting to new approach of teaching subjects outside his specialization:

“I have faced challenges when teaching subjects that are not my specialization. One significant challenge is adjusting my teaching strategies. For instance, teaching Araling Panlipunan often requires different approaches than the hands-on, practical methods I typically use. It calls for tailored strategies that are distinct from my usual teaching style. Additionally, engaging students can sometimes be quite difficult. When I teach outside my area of specialization, I need to put in extra preparation and effort to get acquainted with the curriculum and content.”

While teachers encountered various challenges, they also gained valuable opportunities from teaching subjects outside their specialization. One of these opportunities was learning new knowledge and skills beyond their field of expertise. Some teachers chose to look at the positive side of the experience, viewing it as an opportunity to broaden their knowledge and deepen their understanding of concepts and lessons outside their area of specialization. For instance, Millesse, Lina and Jaybert expressed:

“Teaching non-major subjects is quite fun! I got to go out of my comfort zone and experienced something that I am not used of doing. What I learned from my experiences is that I was able to explore my other skill that is teaching subjects outside of my specialization. I consider this as a wonderful opportunity for me to explore other areas, teach and learn unfamiliar topics and have fun at the same time. The only thing which motivates me to teach non-major subjects is that I just look at the brighter side. Maybe there’s a reason why the subjects are given to me.” (Millesse)

“Teaching outside my specialization is really challenging but through exploration and exposure to some other things we can also gain knowledge and new strategies which we can apply in our daily teaching like utilizing technology, collaborate with others and know how to reflect and adapt to meet the needs of our students.” (Lina)

“It also helped me professionally to widen my understanding and knowledge to the topic or lesson. I haven’t known yet. It gives me ample opportunities to understand the concept of one thing far from my expertise with the result. It makes me equipped in other fields far from my specialization. Moreover, the significant impact with the challenges in my teaching career is the discovery of other teaching mechanism that is far from the usual technique I knew. This gives me chance to apply this discovery to use these techniques in my field of specialization.” (Jaybert)

Learning by Collaborating

Learning to seek help through collaboration with more knowledgeable teachers in the field is another perceived opportunity gained by teachers teaching beyond their specialization, aside from learning new things and becoming more flexible. Through collaboration, teachers are able to acquire subject-specific knowledge, improve their teaching practices, and receive guidance from colleagues with greater expertise in the subject area. Millesse, Gab, and Jaybert mentioned:

“I’ve learned to ask help from my colleagues who are experts on teaching those subjects. It really helped me a lot.” (Millesse)

“Teaching subjects beyond my area of expertise has helped me ... understand the value of collaboration.” (Gab)

“I have learned that learning takes place when we prepare not only ourselves as a teacher, but also the strategies we will use in teaching our

lesson with the collaboration, and constant communication to the specialized teacher, it underscored a significant impact to achieve the objectives of the lesson.” (Jaybert)

Teachers sought help from their colleagues as a coping mechanism for the challenges they encountered while teaching subjects beyond their specialization. Ghella and Millesse shared:

“It is important to surround yourself of people values your existence and who believes in your ability. Sometimes if things get out of hand or out of control, I seek the advice of my co-teacher and feel better afterwards knowing that mistakes will just be a way to improve myself. From time to time, I ask my coworker suggestions, recommendations and anything that would help for my personal growth and more specially in my work.” (Ghella)

“In overcoming the difficulties I am facing; what I did is I am asking help from my colleagues. They are sharing with me some tips, strategies and techniques which helped me in teaching the in-major subjects I am handling. Jaybert: The coping mechanism I have used to adopt to the new environment is by frequent consultation and communication to the specialized teacher. With shared experiences they have told me, and the possible teaching mechanism I have to attack to attain the objectives of the lesson, it lightens my worries and concerns to the things I am struggling of.” (Millesse)

Self-Regulation and Positive Outlook

Being able to self-regulate and maintain a positive outlook were also coping mechanisms employed by the teacher-participants, alongside seeking help from colleagues and preparing in advance when teaching subjects beyond their specialization. For instance, they mentioned:

“I prioritized effective time management, stayed flexible in my teaching methods, and viewed obstacles as opportunities for both personal and professional growth.” (Gab)

“Be positive and I told myself that I could carry all these things all by myself. Cultivate gratitude in my everyday life and through acceptance will lead me to work harder. As a teacher we need to be well-rounded individual because we are still learning on it. Keep track of how things what went well and what went wrong. I always think what I could share for the benefit of the learners.” (Anathalia)

“Whenever I faced difficulties in both personal and in my teaching profession, I always ask the guidance of our Almighty to overcome those. Ever since my teenage years, I have this attitude that even things get difficult or having difficulty to do something, I don’t say “I give up.” Yes, this has been a great help for me to cope the challenges in my teaching journey and everyday life. I always tell myself that “I can do this”, “You can do it” and that I am capable. Always believe that God is always got your back if ever you failed, despite feeling that you have given all your best, don’t expect too much in everything that we do, because expectation might limit the opportunities that will come along the way. ... I keep my mind in focus of what is my true mission and that is to impart the students learn the knowledge and skills “that they need. For the welfare of our students we fought through hardships.” (Ghella)

“Acceptance is the key. I always think positive and enjoy teaching while learning at the same time. ... Continuous learning and a willingness to adapt are crucial for success in any teaching role.” (Lina)

Teachers employed self-regulation techniques by practicing positive self-affirmations, strengthening their faith in God, and maintaining a positive outlook. In addition to learning new things, teachers became more flexible and adaptable in addressing the needs of their learners while teaching subjects

beyond their specialization. Ghella mentioned, *“Teaching subjects outside your specialization tests your flexibility and capability as a teacher. The adaptability from the changes and nature of our work is evident/ shows our passion in teaching.”* Millesse and Gab also said:

“Teaching non-major subjects made me realize that as a teacher, we need to be flexible. The most important thing is I am enjoying and learning at the same time from this experience.” (Millesse)

“It is a wonderful and humble experience to teach outside of your area of expertise. It strengthened my conviction about the values of flexibility and lifelong learning.” (Gab)

Conclusion

Teachers teaching beyond their specialization experience a complex interplay of challenges and opportunities. While they face inadequacy, increased workload, and pedagogical difficulties, they demonstrate resilience through preparation, collaboration, and positive self-regulation. At the same time, these experiences foster professional growth, adaptability, and lifelong learning. However, the reliance on individual coping mechanisms highlights systemic gaps in training, resource provision, and teacher support. Addressing these gaps is essential to improve both teacher well-being and instructional quality.

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Non-English Major Teaching English Subjects

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English plays a significant role in the Philippine educational system as one of the country's official languages and a primary medium of instruction. Its prominence stems from its historical use as a language of administration and education during the American colonial period (Santos et al., 2022). Recognizing its importance in developing learners' communication competence, the Department of Education (2016) continues to uphold standards for the integration of English within the K-12 curriculum. The use of English in basic education is intended to enhance students' language proficiency, which is considered essential for academic achievement and global competitiveness (Canilao, 2018).

To further strengthen English language instruction, Executive Order No. 210 (2013), signed by former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, promoted the use of English as a medium of instruction. The policy sought to improve the quality of English education through enhanced teacher training and the provision of adequate instructional materials and learning resources (Saraceni, 2018). These initiatives reflect the government's commitment to ensuring effective English language teaching and learning across educational levels.

Despite these efforts, challenges remain, particularly for non-English major teachers who are assigned to teach English subjects. Unlike teachers who specialize in English language education, non-specialist teachers may have lower levels of proficiency and confidence in using the language, which can affect their ability to explain complex concepts and facilitate meaningful student learning (Tuan & Lan, 2024). Even qualified teachers may experience uncertainty regarding vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, challenges that are often more pronounced among non-native or non-specialist educators (Perry, 2023). These difficulties underscore the need for continuous professional development, targeted language support, and instructional interventions to strengthen teachers' English proficiency and enhance the quality of English language instruction.

Classroom Use of English by Non-English Major Teachers

English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) offers several benefits for both teachers and students, particularly in promoting meaningful learning, improving instructional practices, and enhancing learner confidence. One of the most significant advantages of EMI is its contribution to teachers' language development (Drljača Margić & Vodopija-Krstanović, 2018; Peng & Xie, 2021). Regardless of their initial level of English proficiency, educators who regularly teach through English are exposed to continuous opportunities to strengthen their linguistic competence while delivering subject content.

For primary teachers, engagement with instructional materials in English facilitates the development of both general and specialized language skills (Thom & Thuy, 2019). Through the process of teaching content, educators refine their command of subject-specific vocabulary, functional expressions, and instructional language used in explanations, descriptions, and classroom interactions. Unlike traditional language learning approaches, EMI

provides a contextualized and practice-oriented environment in which language development occurs alongside content instruction (Yu & Kaur, 2024; Zhou et al., 2025). This dual role of teaching and language learning makes EMI a dynamic and authentic professional experience that supports continuous improvement in both pedagogical and linguistic competence.

Beyond enhancing language proficiency, EMI contributes to teachers' professional growth by increasing their confidence in using English across various instructional contexts. As teachers become more proficient and comfortable communicating in English, they are better equipped to facilitate classroom discussions, explain complex concepts, and engage learners in meaningful academic interactions. Consequently, EMI serves not only as a tool for student learning but also as a mechanism for teachers' ongoing professional and language development (Rifiyanti & Dewi, 2023).

Challenges in Teaching English Among Non-English Major Teachers

Teaching English outside one's field of specialization remains a significant concern in educational systems worldwide. Commonly referred to as out-of-field teaching, this practice occurs when teachers are assigned to teach subjects for which they lack formal qualifications, training, or expertise (Plessis, 2013; Hobbs, 2013). Despite limited preparation in the subject area, these teachers are expected to deliver quality instruction and meet the same professional standards as subject specialists.

Out-of-field teaching is often driven by practical challenges such as teacher shortages, staffing limitations, and hiring constraints, which compel schools to assign educators to subjects beyond their areas of specialization. As a result, teachers must make substantial adjustments to accommodate unfamiliar content, pedagogical approaches, and instructional demands. These

circumstances can create difficulties in lesson preparation, content delivery, and classroom instruction, potentially affecting both teacher effectiveness and student learning. Consequently, students may experience lower levels of engagement and understanding, while teachers may struggle with confidence in their ability to teach the subject effectively.

The impact of out-of-field teaching extends beyond instructional challenges. When educators are assigned to areas outside their expertise, they may experience reduced self-esteem because their specialized knowledge and competencies are not fully utilized (Tran, 2023). This mismatch between qualifications and teaching assignments can also contribute to lower job satisfaction and diminished performance (Huo, 2025). These challenges are broader systemic issues related to teacher deployment that require targeted professional development, mentoring, and institutional support to help non-specialist teachers effectively fulfill their instructional responsibilities.

Teachers' Coping Mechanisms in English-Medium Instruction

To address the challenges associated with EMI, both teachers and students employ a variety of coping strategies to facilitate effective teaching and learning. Students, in particular, utilize self-regulated learning strategies to overcome language-related difficulties and enhance comprehension. Yu et al. (2021) identified several approaches, including L1-mediated, L2-mediated, tool-mediated, and community-mediated strategies. These involve using the native language to support understanding, consulting translated materials, utilizing learning tools, and engaging in peer collaboration to navigate academic content delivered in English.

Students also adopt practical learning techniques that help them actively participate in EMI classrooms. These include asking questions, activating prior knowledge, inferring meaning from context, and using visual

aids to support comprehension. Some learners further manage their learning environment by taking detailed notes and positioning themselves strategically in the classroom to improve attention and engagement. Such strategies demonstrate students' active efforts to adapt to the linguistic demands of EMI and take responsibility for their own learning.

Despite the value of learner-initiated strategies, their effectiveness is greatly influenced by the support provided by teachers. Teachers play a critical role in helping students navigate language challenges by offering appropriate scaffolding, clarifying complex concepts, and creating opportunities for meaningful participation (Soruç & Griffiths, 2018). Consequently, successful implementation of EMI requires instructional approaches that are responsive to learners' linguistic needs and foster inclusive, supportive, and engaging learning environments. Through effective teacher support and strategic learner engagement, the challenges associated with EMI can be mitigated, leading to improved learning outcomes and greater confidence among students.

RESEARCH FOCUS: The Lived Experiences of Non-English Major Teachers in Teaching English Subjects

This study explored the lived experiences of non-English major teachers assigned to teach English subjects, with particular emphasis on how these experiences influence their personal and professional lives. Specifically, the study sought to identify the challenges they encounter, the coping strategies they employ, and the implications of these experiences for teacher development.

The study employed a qualitative research design using narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry was selected because it focuses on understanding and documenting participants' personal stories, experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms, thereby providing a deeper understanding of a particular

phenomenon (Mertova & Webster, 2019). Through this approach, the researchers captured and organized the experiences of non-English major teachers into meaningful narratives that reflected their realities of teaching English outside their field of specialization.

The study involved seven purposively selected non-English major teachers from Aklan, Philippines who had at least three years of experience teaching English subjects. Data were gathered through open-ended interviews and focus group discussions, supplemented by empirical observation. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation techniques were employed, including peer debriefing, expert validation, and the use of field notes. These procedures helped ensure the consistency, accuracy, and reliability of the collected data.

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the research process. Approval was secured from the appropriate authorities, and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Interview data were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using Colaizzi's method of phenomenological analysis, which involved extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, and organizing them into thematic categories. This systematic approach enabled a comprehensive interpretation of participants' experiences while ensuring confidentiality, credibility, and research integrity.

Experiences in Teaching English that Affected Personal Life

Time-consuming preparation. A dominant theme among participants is the extensive time required to prepare lessons and instructional materials. Teachers reported sacrificing rest and family time to meet the demands of teaching English.

"I need to exert more time to prepare my lessons especially I am teaching elementary pupils. Example, instead of sleeping early at night or

having fun with my family, I need to make more interactive learning materials such as doing power point presentations so that they can listen attentively to my lesson.” (Teacher A)

“Teaching English subject is difficult but fulfilling because I learned a lot. You need to be resourceful and patient it doing learning materials especially if you’re lesson is literature. I stay up late at night in doing learning materials that I am going to used such as doing my lesson plan, presentations, and looking up in the internet or Merriam Webster of unfamiliar words found in the reading selections so that my students could understand it better.” (Teacher B)

“One of the experiences that I encountered in teaching the English subject that affects my personal life was the time that I spent to study the lesson. There are times, I stayed up late at night to study the lesson for the next morning or the next day. I rushed with my food and doesn’t have enough sleep and I also wonder if I really give justice in teaching the subject.” (Teacher G)

Lack of self-confidence. Teaching English subjects can be daunting for non-English majors. Despite their dedication, they often struggle with confidence and preparation. Teacher B and C shared they experiences of having lack of self-confidence in teaching the subject.

“Spending time to search in the internet and review all the lessons so that I could teach or give justice to the lesson. There are times that I need to look up in the dictionary or Merriam Webster the meanings of words that I am not certain on its meanings so that I can answer correctly the questions of my students because I feel ashamed if I failed to answer their questions.” (Teacher B)

“Teaching English has profoundly influenced my personal life and shaping my mindset and skills. I was expose myself in diverse content of the subject through literature, essays, and discussions, as well as the appreciation

of different culture. Aside from that, I need to sharpened and improved my communication skills, develop my self-confidence, and vocabulary. These have helped me convey my ideas effectively and efficiently. (Teacher C)

Positive life-changing experiences. Despite of tiring process of preparing the lessons in teaching the English subject, all teacher-participants narrated positive life changing experiences in teaching the subject that inspires them to love the subject and their profession.

“Maybe it was my students that I considered as mna very slow reader because he finds difficulty in reading. Every day after class, I conducted remedial reading with him in exchange of free snacks so that he can enjoy turning back until he reads faster and it was fulfilling on my part as a teacher.” (Teacher A)

“As a teacher, we have to embrace challenges and accept whatever is given or assigned to us. This is the experience that influence me as a person or an individual. There is no room to say “no” but to always say “yes” and in this point of view help me to grow and to be versatile in work and as an individual.” (Teacher B)

“Through teaching English subject, I develop different skills such as proper pronunciation of words, proper usage of grammar, and it develop my self-confidence in speaking in front of people using the English language.” (Teacher D)

“In teaching this subject, it enhanced my resourcefulness and creativity. I found it more interesting and engaging especially in doing learning materials which I also adopt in my other subjects.” (Teacher E)

Experiences in Teaching English that Affected Professional Life

Pressure to adapt to curriculum changes. Non-English major teachers face significant challenges in adapting to curriculum changes, affecting their

competence in crafting lesson plans and other instructional materials. Majority of the teacher-participants shared their experiences of being pressured in adapting curriculum changes in teaching the subjects which brought big impact to their professional lives.

Teacher D shared that she struggled in crafting the lesson plans and preparing learning materials to meet the competencies in English, *“It was difficult to make lesson plans and other support instructional materials in English especially it is not my field of specialization. I need to cut-out pictures, make slideshows and others so that my students can understand it more and I can be able to meet the learning competencies.”* Teacher B shared that she also struggled to meet the learning competencies in teaching the English subject, *“The experience in teach English is very challenging since you don’t have the broad knowledge about the subject. Since, I have to deal with it professionally and conscientiously. I have to study to gain more knowledge in every lesson to provide effective and quality teaching-learning outcome and to meet the learning competencies in each lesson”* Teacher C revealed that it’s difficult to adapt curriculum changes. She openly stated, *“It was difficult especially in my first encountered in handling the English subject because I need to meet all the learning competencies stated in the curriculum guide especially in writing sentences, paragraphs, and essays since it has the rules in writing. It is much better that my students can gained higher learning competencies.”*

Development of creativity and resourcefulness. Despite not having specialized training in certain subjects, non-English major teachers have found ways to develop their creativity and resourcefulness. They go above and beyond by dedicating time to develop engaging and interactive materials, methods, and strategies that help make learning more effective. Majority of

the teacher-participants develop their creativity and resourcefulness in preparing the lessons in English.

“I have encountered many difficulties in crafting my lesson plans and preparing engaging activities for my lesson delivery such as what learning materials or examples should I present so that my students will be attentive. Mostly, in literature lessons I downloaded videos or movies.” (Teacher E)

“Actually, it was really hard to prepare lessons and learning materials even though there are more available downloaded learning resources online but the location of school does not have good internet connection. So, I still need to use the traditional ways of learning materials wherein I cut-out pictures, drawing, and others.” (Teacher A)

“Some of my experiences were staying up late at night to make PPT or other activities. It harnesses my technical skills and made use of the internet to look for supplemental activities. Also, I search in google and Pinterest of good and engaging activities/games about the subject.” (Teacher G)

Despite lacking formal training in the subject, these educators find innovative ways to engage their students. They dedicate time and effort to ensure that their lessons are interesting and effective, even if they are not fully equipped with specialized knowledge in English.

Enhance communication skills. Teachers who are not English majors improve their communication skills by teaching the subject. Through explaining complex ideas and interacting with students, they develop stronger and more effective ways to convey information. Most of the teacher-participants discovered that they enhanced their communication skills in teaching the English subject.

“It was fulfilling on my part as a non-English major teacher especially if my students can answer and share their ideas using English language. I am happy if they can write simple English sentences, paragraphs, or essays. It was good

to know that all my efforts are worthy in studying on how to improve and enhance my communication skills. (Teacher D)

“My main goal in teaching the English subject is to enhance my communication skills both speaking and writing. There are terms or words that I thought it was easy or correct in terms of its pronunciation or enunciation. It was difficult but the same time, I am happy because through teaching this subject, it adds my learnings which I applied to other subjects.” (Teacher C)

“Teaching English subjects has helped me improved my knowledge in English. It has improved my speaking skills. Also, being able to deliver the lesson effectively has given me a sense of fulfillment as a teacher and its build a strong relationship to my students and to my fellow teachers.” (Teacher E)

“These experiences have greatly impacted my professional development and career trajectory. These have enhanced my adaptability, allowing me to thrive in teaching subjects beyond my specialization, which reflects my versatility as an educator. Facing challenges in teaching English encouraged me to continuously learn and improve, fostering a growth mindset essential for professional advancement. Additionally, these experiences honed my communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, which are transferable to various aspects of my career. It also boosted my confidence, proving that I can succeed outside my comfort zone.” (Teacher F)

Challenges Encountered in Teaching the English Subject

Diversity of learners. Non-English major teachers often face challenges in addressing the diverse needs of their learners when teaching in English. The variety of backgrounds, learning styles, and language skills among students can make it difficult to effectively engage and support everyone in the classroom. Majority of them said that dealing with the

diversity of the learners find them more challenging in teaching the subject. Teacher F shared that it was challenging to handle different learners with different backgrounds, *“As a Math major teaching English, I faced several challenges while delivering lessons. One significant challenge was mastering the content, as English required a different skill set from my specialization. I had to relearn grammar, syntax, and effective communication strategies to confidently teach the subject. Another difficulty was creating engaging lesson plans that catered to diverse student needs, especially when I lacked prior experience in language instruction. Addressing students’ language-related misconceptions and editing their outputs were also daunting, as I needed to ensure accuracy and clarity despite my limited background in English.”* Teacher B and D have the same experiences. They were also challenged on how to deal with different students with different backgrounds and what learning styles and strategies should they employ to make their teaching meaningful. Teacher B says, *“The challenges I have faced while delivering English lessons is the diverse learning levels of the learners. It is difficult to deliver the lesson because of the different proficiency levels. Another, is the language barriers since learners struggles with complex vocabulary, grammar rules, and pronunciation and sometimes keeping the learners motivated since they find it difficult and challenging in learning English.”* On the other hand, Teacher D shares, *“In my class, there are different types of students, not all are smart, in short, I have heterogenous class. As a teacher, I need to adjust to the needs of my learners to be suited to the level of their abilities and capabilities to do the tasks given. It is needed that my activities or objectives were suited to their level of understanding.”*

Appropriateness of assessment. Teachers who are not English majors often face challenges when creating English tests. To effectively assess students' understanding, it's important to ensure that the test content and

language match the students' level and abilities. Majority of them shared that in constructing English tests, it must be appropriate to student level to ensure effectively assess student's understanding of the material.

“When constructing English tests, I make sure that it was suited to the level of understanding of the students and it was based on the learning objectives of every lesson that I had given.” (Teacher A)

“When constructing examination, I always take into consideration the use of words appropriates to the level of understanding of the learners.” (Teacher E)

“I considered the level of capabilities of my students. The given instructions and test items are clear and the grammar is correct.” (Teacher G)

“When constructing English tests, it is essential to consider several factors to effectively assess students' learning. The test should align with the specific learning objectives, ensuring that questions evaluate the skills and knowledge intended. It is also important to cover a range of language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing while balancing the difficulty level to accommodate different proficiency levels.” (Teacher F)

Student-centered approach. Non-English teachers focus on creating instructional materials that are suited to the students' level of understanding and needs. They use of localized examples and a mix of traditional and modern resources to ensure the lessons are engaging, relevant, and accessible to all students. They shared particular effective approach they have been used in preparing instructional materials to support their English lesson.

“In preparing my instructional materials, I made sure, that it should be in the level of understanding and capacity of my students. I priority more on using indigenized and localized examples and materials so that my students understand it more.” (Teacher A)

“In preparing instructional materials, I ensure that my learning materials are contextualized and indigenized by using localized examples that reasonable with learners, making the content more relatable. I incorporate a variety of traditional and modern support instructional materials (SIMs) and provide group activities to support differentiated instruction, catering to the diverse learning needs of my pupils.” (Teacher B)

“In preparing instructional materials, I choose materials that are readily available in our community. Those are the materials that are familiar to them even in giving examples.” (Teacher C)

“To prepare instructional materials that effectively support my English lessons, I started by identifying the key learning objectives and ensuring that the materials align with them. I then select appropriate resources, such as textbooks, online content, and multimedia, that can help students grasp the concepts being taught. When creating my own materials, I focus on clarity and relevance ensuring that the content is engaging and accessible to all students.” (Teacher F)

Coping Mechanisms in Dealing with the Challenges from Teaching the English Subject

Time management. Effective time management is a core strategy. They highlight how managing time wisely helps them stay on track with lesson planning, instructional materials, and meeting deadlines. By organizing their schedules and preparing in advance which avoid stress and last-minute cramming.

“Time management is one of my coping mechanisms in addressing the challenges in teaching the English subject. Through this, I met the deadlines of my lesson plans and other instructional materials needed in due time.” (Teacher A)

“The proper management of time in crafting my supported instructional materials to be used in my class to avoid stress. (Teacher C)

“To address the challenges, I see to it that I have the mastery of the lesson. In order for me to have the mastery of the lesson, I always spend time in preparing a well-structured lesson plan to provide the accurate and applicable strategies to provide an efficient and quality teaching and learning outcomes. (Teacher B)

“Before, it was stressful on my part in preparing the SIM’s needed for the subject. But I discovered that I need to manage my time wisely. During my vacant time, I prepared ahead of time these materials to avoid cramming. (Teacher D)

Self-care and well-being. Teachers use self-care and prioritize their well-being as essential coping mechanisms to manage the demands of their role. They find that taking care of their health helps reduce stress and improves their overall effectiveness in the classroom. Majority of them shared that managing their health through self-care was vital to staying effective in their roles and avoiding illness or exhaustion.

“It is effective. I make sure to take regular breaks, get enough rest, and at the same time engage myself in activities that help me relax and recharge to avoid illness. As a teacher, I need to prioritize also my health through self-care and free from stress.” (Teacher D)

“Based on my experiences, it’s a yes. Being wise in managing my time, this helps me to stay focused and maintain my well-being while facing challenges.” (Teacher E)

“Yes, based on my experiences, I believe my coping mechanisms are effective in helping me navigate the challenges I face as an educator. My resourcefulness allows me to find solutions and adapt when faced with new responsibilities, like teaching English.” (Teacher F)

“Through watching uploaded videos in teaching English lessons, I think these are effective ways. It reset myself and feel the readiness in teaching the lessons to my students.” (Teacher G)

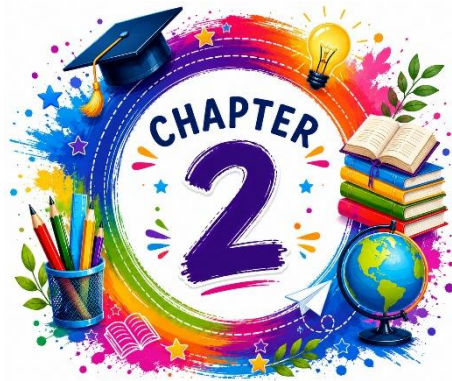
Conclusion

The non-English major teachers navigate teaching English through resilience, adaptability, and continuous learning. While they face challenges such as workload, low confidence, and diverse learner needs, they employ effective coping strategies and develop professional competencies. However, these experiences also highlight systemic gaps in training, support, and resource allocation. Addressing these gaps is essential to ensure sustainable teaching practices and improved learning outcomes.

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Navigating Challenges and Building Resilience in Education

Education operates within increasingly complex environments where teachers are expected to respond to diverse learner needs, changing policies, technological advancements, and societal expectations. These realities often place teachers in situations that test their adaptability, resourcefulness, and resilience. Yet, despite these challenges, teachers continue to find ways to persevere and fulfill their mission of educating and inspiring learners.

This chapter focuses on the challenges encountered by teachers and the strategies they employ to overcome them. They share stories of working in resource-constrained settings, balancing multiple responsibilities, and adapting to unfamiliar teaching contexts. Their narratives tell how difficulties can become opportunities for professional growth and innovation.

Through these accounts, readers will gain a deeper appreciation of the resilience required to sustain effective teaching. The stories illustrate that while challenges are inevitable, they can also become catalysts for learning, reflection, and transformation.

Teachers' Distress and Its Effect on Pedagogical Skills

Crezil M. Semaudio

Teachers play a vital role in ensuring that lessons and classroom activities are effectively delivered. Their pedagogical skills, such as instructional strategies, classroom management, and assessment practices, are essential in promoting student learning. When teachers are mentally and emotionally well, they tend to be more motivated, confident, and effective in applying these pedagogical skills (Alizadegani et al., 2014). Moreover, teachers who experience positive emotions in their profession often find greater meaning in their work (Moskowitz & Dewaele, 2021) and develop stronger self-awareness, which enhances their teaching practices and supports student learning (Wood, 2021).

However, teachers' distress has become a significant concern that can negatively affect their pedagogical skills. Teaching is a demanding profession that often exposes educators to stress, fatigue, heavy workloads, and burnout (Candeias et al., 2021; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). When distress is prolonged and not effectively managed, it can impair teachers' ability to plan lessons, engage students, and implement effective instructional strategies. In severe cases, it may lead to mental health issues such as depression, which further

diminishes teaching effectiveness and negatively impacts student outcomes. Therefore, it is important to manage distress to sustain high levels of pedagogical competence (Orlanda-Ventayen & Ventayen, 2021).

In many cases, teachers also carry multiple roles beyond the classroom, including responsibilities as parents, breadwinners, and community members. These overlapping demands, combined with challenges such as excessive workloads, students' low academic performance, and interpersonal conflicts in the school environment, can intensify their level of distress. As a result, their capacity to effectively deliver instruction, maintain classroom engagement, and adapt teaching strategies may be compromised. Therefore, understanding teachers' distress and its effects is essential in supporting and improving their pedagogical skills.

Distress Level of Public-School Teachers in the Philippines

Although many teachers in the Philippines report that they do not strongly perceive workplace stress, a significant number still experience difficulties in meeting tasks within limited time frames (Orlanda-Ventayen & Ventayen, 2022). While some studies suggest that teachers are able to manage stress effectively, other research highlights the presence of considerable stress arising from school, classroom, and home environments (Saloviita & Pakarinen, 2021). Common stressors include financial burdens, student misbehavior, low salaries, limited resources, and performance-related pressures (Pagayanan, 2016).

Stress levels also vary depending on personal and professional factors such as age, teaching position, and years of experience. Beginner teachers and those handling lower grade levels tend to experience higher levels of stress (Demjaha et al., 2015). Furthermore, mental health is closely linked to stress, influencing teachers' ability to perform effectively. Teachers with better

mental health demonstrate stronger engagement in developing instructional materials (Jimenez, 2021).

Other studies identify additional stressors, including strained relationships with stakeholders, lack of recognition, and insufficient resources, particularly among teachers aged 31–50 and those with 11–15 years of experience (Kumari & Hassan, 2018). Moreover, heavy administrative workloads and frequent changes in educational policies continue to intensify stress levels. These systemic challenges contribute to burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased teaching effectiveness among public-school teachers.

Stress Coping Styles and Pedagogical Skills of Teachers

Teachers employ various coping strategies to manage stress, commonly categorized as problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping. Problem-focused coping addresses the source of stress directly, while emotion-focused coping helps regulate emotional responses when situations cannot be changed. Many teachers use a combination of these strategies depending on the situation (Aulén et al., 2021). Although avoidant coping may provide temporary relief, prolonged use can negatively impact mental health and job performance (Boals et al., 2011). The choice of coping strategy often varies with stress intensity, with teachers shifting from avoidance to more active problem-solving as stress increases (Hussain et al., 2018). Notably, multigrade teachers tend to rely on emotion-focused strategies such as prayer, time management, and positive thinking due to the complexity of their roles (Naparan & Castañeda, 2021).

In terms of pedagogical skills, many public-school teachers in the Philippines are recognized as proficient by school leaders, reflecting their competence and dedication despite challenges (Roberto & Madrigal, 2018).

Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and employ effective teaching strategies, particularly integrative and constructivist approaches (Ereje & Ambag, 2020). Their performance is influenced by both intrinsic factors, such as self-awareness and cognitive abilities, and extrinsic factors, including income, professional development opportunities, and work environment (Aringay & Prado, 2019). Job satisfaction also plays a critical role, as teachers who feel supported and valued tend to be more motivated, innovative, and effective (Kadtong et al., 2017). Additionally, teachers' ability to create positive learning environments and foster strong community relationships contributes significantly to student success (Morales & Ventura, 2022).

Relationship Between Stress, Coping, and Teaching Performance

Workplace stress significantly influences teachers' performance. Factors such as excessive administrative tasks, unclear directives, limited resources, and frequent policy changes contribute to emotional exhaustion and burnout (Bulatevych, 2017). Long working hours and work–family conflicts further exacerbate stress, often affecting both professional performance and personal well-being (Ortega & Hechanova, 2010). Emotional stressors, including frustration, fatigue, and anxiety, are also prevalent, particularly among less experienced teachers (Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2014).

Research indicates that stress, coping strategies, and teaching performance are interrelated. Moderate levels of stress, combined with effective coping strategies such as active coping, planning, and social support, can positively influence work performance (Clipa, 2019). Conversely, negative coping strategies are associated with higher levels of burnout and poorer mental health, while positive coping strategies help reduce burnout and improve well-being (Jiang et al., 2017). However, some studies suggest that

the relationship between stress, coping, and performance may be weak or indirect, indicating that other factors also contribute to teaching effectiveness (Morales & Ventura, 2022).

Stress has a significant impact on teachers' job performance and well-being. While some studies report low to moderate stress levels among teachers, a strong relationship exists between emotional and occupational stress (Bongo & Casta, 2017). Unmanaged stress can lead to absenteeism, reduced productivity, and decreased job satisfaction (Daniel, 2019). Younger teachers tend to experience higher stress levels, highlighting the importance of effective coping strategies and institutional support (Vallejos, 2022).

Furthermore, stress directly affects job satisfaction, which in turn influences teaching performance. Teachers who experience higher job satisfaction tend to perform better, while those experiencing high stress may show reduced effectiveness (Riyadi, 2015). External factors such as gender, position, and professional development opportunities also influence performance outcomes (Sarabia & Collantes, 2020). Stress negatively impacts both individual and institutional productivity, emphasizing the need for supportive environments and effective stress management strategies.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Teachers' Assessment of Stress and Coping

Despite existing studies on teacher stress and burnout, limited research has examined the relationship between teachers' distress levels, coping styles, and pedagogical skills, particularly in rural school settings. Most studies focus on larger or well-resourced schools, leaving the experiences of teachers in smaller communities underexplored. Hence, this study addressed this gap by examining the relationship between teachers' distress levels, coping strategies, and pedagogical skills at an integrated public school in the Philippines.

The study utilized a quantitative research approach employing a descriptive-correlational design to examine teachers' distress levels, coping styles, and pedagogical skills, as well as the relationships among these variables. Descriptive analysis was used to summarize the levels of distress, coping strategies, and teaching skills, while correlational analysis determined the associations between these variables.

The research was conducted at an integrated public school in Malinao, Aklan, Philippines, involving all twenty-four (24) permanently employed teachers through total enumeration. Data were collected using three instruments: a standardized Perceived Stress Scale to measure distress levels, an adopted questionnaire to assess coping styles (problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant), and a researcher-developed tool to evaluate pedagogical skills across several domains. All instruments underwent validation to ensure reliability.

Data collection followed a structured process, including securing permissions, distributing questionnaires, and ensuring confidentiality. For data analysis, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe variables. Since the data were not normally distributed, the Spearman Rho correlation test was applied to determine the relationships among distress levels, coping styles, and pedagogical skills.

Both descriptive and correlational analyses were used in this research study to examine the distress levels, coping styles, and pedagogical skills of teachers. Descriptive analysis provided an overview of teachers' stress levels, pedagogical skills, and coping styles, while correlational analysis explored the relationships among these variables.

As shown in Table 1, the teachers are generally moderately stressed, with a mean score of 3.45 and a standard deviation of 0.63. Out of the twenty-four (24) teachers, six (25%) experienced a high level of stress, thirteen

(54.17%) experienced moderate stress, and five (20.83%) reported low stress. This indicates that most teachers experience moderate stress, with some experiencing higher levels, although stress is not overwhelming for the majority.

Table 1

Frequency count and percentage of the teachers' distress level

Distress Level	F	%
High	6	25
Moderate	13	54.17
Low	5	20.83
Very Low	0	0
Total	24	100
Overall Mean	3.45	
SD	.63	
Interpretation	Moderate	

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very High; 3.41-4.20 High; 2.61-3.40 Moderate; 1.81-2.60 Low; 1.00-1.80 Very Low

These findings are consistent with Pagayanan (2016), who reported that teachers typically experience moderate to high levels of stress. The study also identified three primary sources of stress: home, classroom, and school. The highest stress originates from home-related responsibilities, such as financial concerns and supporting extended family members. Classroom stress follows, mainly due to student misbehavior and insufficient discipline support, while school-related stress arises from low salaries, lack of teaching materials, and pressure to improve student performance. Similarly, Demjaha et al. (2015) noted that teachers generally perceive their stress as moderate, although factors such as gender, age, job position, and experience influence stress levels. These findings suggest that teacher stress originates from multiple environmental factors.

Table 2 indicates that teachers predominantly use problem-focused coping strategies, with a very highly evident mean score of 4.37 (SD = 0.58).

Emotion-focused coping is also commonly used, with a highly evident mean of 3.70 (SD = 0.53). In contrast, avoidant coping strategies are less evident, with a mean score of 2.10 (SD = 0.66).

Table 2

Mean and standard deviation of the teachers' stress coping styles

Level of Adoption	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Problem-focused style	4.37	.58	Very Highly Evident
Emotion-focused style	3.70	.53	Highly Evident
Avoidant coping style	2.10	.66	Less Evident

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very Highly Evident; 3.41-4.20 Highly Evident; 2.61-3.40 Moderately Evident; 1.81-2.60 Less Evident; 1.00-1.80 Least Evident

These results align with Aulén et al. (2021), who found that teachers often combine problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies. Hussain et al. (2018) also reported that teachers adjust their coping strategies based on the intensity of stress, initially using avoidance but shifting to problem-solving and emotional support as stress increases. In addition, Naparan and Castañeda (2021) observed that multigrade teachers frequently rely on emotion-focused coping, such as prayer, time management, and planning. Meanwhile, Saro et al. (2022) found that public school teachers commonly use problem-focused strategies, which are associated with improved teaching performance.

Table 3 reveals that teachers demonstrate high proficiency in pedagogical skills, with an overall mean of 4.14 (SD = 0.35). Classroom management skills were rated very high (M = 4.30, SD = 0.36), while communication skills (M = 3.87, SD = 2.16), assessment and evaluation skills (M = 3.47, SD = 0.45), technological proficiency (M = 4.19, SD = 0.53), critical thinking and problem-solving skills (M = 4.17, SD = 0.36), and time management skills (M = 4.18, SD = 0.49) were all rated high. These findings

indicate that teachers excel particularly in classroom management while maintaining strong performance in other teaching competencies.

Table 3

Mean and standard deviation of the teachers' pedagogical skills

Pedagogical Skills	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Classroom Management	4.30	.36	Very High
Communication Skills	3.87	2.16	High
Assessment and Evaluation Skills	3.47	.45	High
Technological Proficiency	4.19	.53	High
Critical Thinking/ Problem-solving	4.17	.36	High
Time Management Skills	4.18	.49	High
Total	4.14	.35	High

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very High; 3.41-4.20 High; 2.61-3.40 Average; 1.81-2.60 Low; 1.00-1.80 Very Low

These results are supported by Ereje and Ambag (2020), who reported that public school teachers in the Philippines demonstrate strong pedagogical performance, with students rating their effectiveness as highly satisfactory. Similarly, Aringay and Prado (2019) found that public secondary school teachers receive very high ratings in the Personal Appraisal System for Teachers (PAST). However, Bulatevych (2017) cautioned that excessive administrative demands, limited resources, and work-related pressures may negatively affect teachers' pedagogical performance and lead to burnout.

Table 4

Correlational analyses between the distress level and stress coping styles

Variables	value	ρ - value
Distress level and Problem-focused style	.651	.001*
Distress level and Emotion-focused style	.673	.000*
Distress level and Avoidant-coping style	.018	.130 ^{ns}

* $p < 0.05$, significant @ 5% alpha level

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant @ 5% alpha level

Table 4 indicates a significant relationship between distress level and coping strategies. Problem-focused coping ($\rho = .651, p = .001$) and emotion-focused coping ($\rho = .673, p = .000$) both show strong and significant correlations. In contrast, avoidant coping ($\rho = .018, p = .130$) shows no significant relationship with distress.

These findings suggest that teachers effectively manage stress through active coping strategies such as problem-solving, reflection, and social support, while avoidant coping does not contribute to stress reduction. This is consistent with Clipa (2019), who found that active coping strategies enhance stress management and teaching performance. Despite experiencing stress, teachers who utilize effective coping strategies are able to maintain professional efficiency.

Table 5

Correlational analyses between the distress level and pedagogical skills

Variables	value	$\rho - value$
Distress level and Classroom Management Skills	.004	.984 ^{ns}
Distress level and Communication Skills	.144	.502 ^{ns}
Distress level and Assessment and Evaluation Skills	.102	.352 ^{ns}
Distress level and Technological Proficiency	.105	.387 ^{ns}
Distress level and Critical and Problem-Solving Skills	.014	.136 ^{ns}
Distress level and Time Management Skills	.017	.418 ^{ns}

* $p < 0.05$, significant @ 5% alpha level

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant @ 5% alpha level

Table 5 shows no significant relationship between teachers' distress levels and their pedagogical skills. All p-values exceed the 0.05 significance level, indicating that the null hypothesis is accepted. The negligible Spearman's rho values further confirm the absence of a relationship. These findings suggest that teachers remain effective in their roles regardless of their stress levels. This contrasts with the findings of Bongo and Casta (2017) and

Daniel (2019), which suggest that stress negatively affects performance by reducing focus and motivation.

Table 6

Correlation between levels of adoption of different stress coping styles and pedagogical skills

Variables	value	ρ – value
Level of Adoption of Stress Coping Styles and Level of Pedagogical Skills	.777	.000**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 6 shows a significant and very strong relationship between coping styles and pedagogical skills ($\rho = .777$, $p = .000$). This indicates that the use of effective coping strategies is associated with improved teaching performance.

This finding supports Howard and Johnson (2014), who emphasized the importance of functional coping strategies in enhancing teaching performance. Similarly, Riyadi (2015) found that coping strategies influence job satisfaction, which in turn affects overall performance. These results suggest that when teachers select appropriate coping strategies, they are better able to manage stress and improve their effectiveness in the classroom.

Recommended Programs

STRESS CARE Training Program focuses on helping teachers manage stress effectively. It incorporates mindfulness and stress-management workshops to equip educators with techniques for relaxation and resilience. Reflective sessions provide opportunities for teachers to address challenges and develop solutions. Skills-based workshops enhance teaching practices to reduce stress, while peer mentoring and collaborative activities foster a supportive work environment. By combining emotional support with practical

skill-building, the program aims to improve teachers' well-being and classroom effectiveness simultaneously.

Elevating Pedagogical Excellence Program aims to strengthen key teaching competencies through interactive workshops that engage teachers in hands-on learning. Peer collaboration and mentorship promote professional growth through shared experiences. The integration of technology enhances instructional strategies, while ongoing reflection and self-assessment support continuous improvement. Additionally, expert-led seminars provide valuable insights from specialists. This comprehensive approach fosters a dynamic and supportive environment where teachers can develop both confidence and expertise, ultimately improving student learning outcomes.

C.O.P.E. (Coping Optimally for Positive Educators) Training Program is designed to help teachers manage distress effectively. Coping skills training provides strategies for handling stress, while mindfulness and reflective sessions promote emotional well-being. Stress-reduction activities, such as relaxation exercises, further support mental wellness. Together, these components equip teachers with practical tools to sustain motivation and maintain a healthy work–life balance.

P.A.S.S. (Pedagogical Advancement through Stress-Management Strategies) Program integrates stress management with the enhancement of pedagogical skills. Teachers participate in training that develops effective coping mechanisms to support their teaching performance. A peer mentorship component fosters a collaborative learning environment, while mindfulness and reflective practices encourage self-awareness and stress regulation. This integrated approach supports both teacher well-being and instructional effectiveness.

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Teachers' Family–Work Balance

Ma. Dennisse D. Iguiron

The increasing deployment of educators to remote areas, such as islands, mountainous regions, and distant provinces, raises important concerns about their well-being, job satisfaction, and long-term commitment to the teaching profession. Given that the quality of education is closely linked to teacher motivation and stability (Luu, 2020; Kontar et al., 2025), understanding these realities is essential. While the importance of work–life balance in education is well established (Bisht et al., 2026; Wei & Ye, 2022; Tran et al., 2025), limited attention has been given to teachers assigned away from their families. Such assignments often involve long-distance travel, higher living costs, and the psychological strain of prolonged separation from loved ones. Çobanoğlu et al. (2023) noted that job stress and work–life imbalance are significant predictors of career dissatisfaction and burnout in the education sector. These challenges are further intensified when teachers must perform their duties under difficult living and working conditions.

For teachers assigned in distant locations, family–work balance becomes particularly complex as professional responsibilities often compete directly with familial roles and obligations (Wu & Wu, 2026; Jia & Boo, 2026; Eden, 2025; Sarwar et al., 2025). The physical distance from spouses, children, and extended family members can lead to feelings of isolation, emotional

fatigue, and reduced social support. In many cases, teachers are unable to participate in important family events or provide immediate care and guidance to their children. This imbalance not only affects their personal lives but may also influence their classroom performance and overall teaching effectiveness (Galut, 2025; Kingsford-Smith et al., 2023).

Maintaining communication and connection with family members across distances requires additional time, effort, and financial resources. Frequent travel to visit family may not always be feasible due to demanding schedules and limited transportation options, further deepening the sense of disconnection. As a result, teachers may adopt coping strategies such as relying on digital communication, forming support networks with colleagues, or establishing structured routines to manage their dual roles. However, while these strategies may provide temporary relief, they do not fully address the underlying challenge of prolonged separation.

Work–Family Balance and Resilience Among Teachers in Remote Assignments

Teaching far from home presents a complex set of challenges that affect both teachers' professional effectiveness and personal well-being. Empirical evidence reveals interconnected themes related to work–life balance, systemic barriers, coping strategies, and career aspirations. For instance, a consistent theme across studies is the critical role of work–life balance in influencing teacher satisfaction and productivity (Bisht et al., 2026; Safina et al., 2025; Li & Albattat, 2025). Disruptions caused by work–family conflict negatively affect teachers' attitudes and behaviors, which may lead to reduced job satisfaction and increased absenteeism. However, Caraan et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of social support mechanisms, such as collaboration and effective communication, as essential coping resources that

help mitigate the isolation associated with remote teaching assignments. This psychosocial perspective, according to Bonifacio (2016), is normally reflected in inflexible salary policies and inadequate living conditions, which contribute to dissatisfaction and turnover.

In terms of coping mechanisms, the literature highlights a dynamic interaction between individual resilience and institutional support. Studies conducted in the Philippine context (Robosa et al., 2021; Talidong & Toquero, 2020) document teachers' innovative adaptations to changing educational demands. In contrast, Tria (2020) identified gaps in teachers' psychological preparedness for sudden instructional changes. These circumstances underscore the need for comprehensive professional development programs that address both skill enhancement and emotional resilience.

Career aspirations also emerge as a strong motivating factor that encourages teachers to persevere despite challenges. Lopez-Bonilla et al. (2012) and Schoon (2007) found that high career aspirations are positively associated with improved academic and professional outcomes. However, these aspirations are influenced by both individual self-efficacy and broader socio-institutional contexts. Pham et al. (2024) describe career aspiration as a lifelong process shaped by perceived abilities and achievements. Similarly, Bhat and Khandai (2016) emphasized that alignment between educational experiences and career goals strengthens motivation and performance.

Teachers assigned far from home are affected by a combination of personal, social, and institutional factors. Addressing their needs requires integrated policies that reduce systemic barriers, promote social and emotional well-being, and support career development. Such a holistic approach is essential to sustaining teachers' resilience and commitment, ultimately improving educational outcomes in geographically isolated areas.

A Coping Theory Perspective on Teachers' Work–Family Balance

Lazarus and Folkman's Coping Theory (1984) conceptualizes coping as a dynamic process in which individuals use cognitive and behavioral strategies to manage stressors perceived as overwhelming or beyond their control. Central to this framework are two stages of cognitive appraisal: primary appraisal, which involves evaluating whether a situation poses a threat, and secondary appraisal, which assesses the resources available to address the stressor. When individuals perceive their resources as insufficient, they tend to use emotion-focused coping strategies to regulate their emotional responses. Conversely, when they believe they have sufficient resources, they adopt problem-focused coping strategies aimed at addressing the source of stress. Coping, therefore, includes both actions and emotional responses, which may be adaptive or maladaptive depending on how well they match the demands of the situation.

This framework provides a lens for understanding how teachers assigned far from home assess and respond to the various stressors associated with geographic separation from their families and communities. It enables an exploration of how teachers evaluate their internal and external resources and select appropriate coping strategies to manage professional and personal challenges.

Additionally, Bandura's concept of self-efficacy complements this framework by emphasizing the role of personal beliefs in shaping behavior and resilience. Teachers' confidence in their abilities influences how they cope with stress and adapt to challenging environments. These theories provide a comprehensive foundation for understanding the coping mechanisms of teachers working far from home and how self-efficacy contributes to their well-being and career satisfaction.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Narratives of Teachers Assigned to Distant Areas

By providing qualitative insights into the lived experiences of teachers assigned to remote areas, this study aims to inform educational stakeholders, school administrators, and policymakers about the unique needs of this group. This study aims to navigate the challenges of balancing professional responsibilities with family life.

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore and elucidate the lived experiences of teachers assigned far from their homes. The phenomenological approach was selected to capture the depth, complexity, and meaning of these educators' experiences to provide a comprehensive understanding of how they interpret and navigate their professional roles, challenges, and coping strategies in geographically remote settings. This approach is particularly appropriate for examining significant personal and occupational phenomena from the perspectives of those directly involved.

The research was conducted in Balabag, Malay, Aklan, with a prominent educational institution on Boracay Island that serves a diverse student population as the research setting. The participants consisted of eight teachers selected through purposive sampling based on the following criteria: residency outside Boracay Island, at least one year of teaching experience, and willingness to participate in the study. The research was carried out during the 2024–2025 academic year. To ensure ethical integrity and confidentiality, pseudonyms were used in all documentation and reporting.

Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews guided by a carefully developed and expert-validated interview protocol. The interview guide consisted of two main parts: demographic and background information, and open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed narratives

about participants' lived experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and professional aspirations. Interviews were audio-recorded with informed consent and conducted in the participants' preferred language to ensure clarity, comfort, and richness of data.

For data analysis, Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step descriptive phenomenological method was rigorously applied. This process included repeated reading of transcripts, extraction of significant statements, formulation of meanings, and clustering of these meanings into emergent themes. An exhaustive description of the phenomenon was then developed, followed by the identification of its fundamental structure. To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, findings were returned to participants for validation. In addition, an inductive thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to organize data into coherent patterns and higher-order themes, thereby enhancing analytical depth.

Participation was voluntary, and ethical standards were strictly observed, including informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participant autonomy. Necessary approvals were obtained from relevant educational authorities prior to data collection.

The Story of Living Away from Home

After analyzing the data gathered from teachers assigned far from home, it was found that their lived experiences are deeply shaped by prolonged separation from their families, difficulties in accessing necessary supplies, and the ongoing struggle to balance professional responsibilities with family obligations. Participants shared that this separation leads to emotional distress and homesickness, which negatively affect their motivation, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. Many teachers reported relying on digital communication to maintain family connections, emphasizing its importance

in sustaining their emotional health. This finding aligns with Çobanoğlu et al. (2023), who highlighted that emotional well-being is closely linked to teachers' ability to maintain work–life balance despite geographic challenges. Similarly, Hershfield et al. (2013) noted that emotional strain resulting from separation can affect teacher performance and satisfaction.

Furthermore, the study revealed that teachers assigned far from home face significant logistical challenges, including limited access to essential teaching and personal supplies, high living expenses, and unreliable transportation. These difficulties hinder effective instruction and contribute to financial stress. Participants emphasized that the lack of resources requires them to be creative and resourceful in fulfilling their teaching responsibilities. These findings are consistent with Ferrer (2018), who identified resource scarcity and financial constraints as major barriers to teacher productivity in remote areas. Additionally, adverse weather conditions and long travel times further intensify these challenges, increasing anxiety and work–family conflict, as supported by Kämpfer and Mutz (2013).

Surviving The Work Away from Home

Despite the challenges, teachers demonstrated resilience by adopting various coping mechanisms to balance work and family life. Time management strategies, such as prioritizing tasks and setting boundaries, were commonly used to maximize limited personal time. Participants also emphasized the importance of maintaining regular communication with family members through digital platforms to reduce feelings of isolation. Social support from colleagues was another key factor in managing stress and fostering a sense of community within remote schools. These coping strategies align with the findings of Alwadai (2014), who emphasized that social support

and adaptive behaviors are essential for teacher retention in challenging environments.

The study also found that teachers assigned far from home remain motivated by their commitment to student success, career advancement, and the hope of eventual reassignment closer to their hometowns. Many expressed a strong desire to positively influence their students' academic and personal development despite personal hardships. This finding supports Sali and Marasigan (2020), who reported that teachers' dedication to student growth often drives perseverance in difficult conditions. Career progression and transfer opportunities were also identified as important factors in sustaining morale and long-term commitment, consistent with Marasigan (2019), who emphasized the role of professional growth in teacher retention.

Recommendations

It is essential to implement targeted interventions that address both the material and emotional needs of teachers assigned far from home. Recommended measures include improving access to teaching materials and financial support, enhancing transportation infrastructure, and developing institutional policies that promote work–life balance and career mobility. Strengthening technological infrastructure to support communication with families, as well as providing mental health services, is also critical. According to Galut (2025), resource limitations and isolation negatively affect teachers' well-being and effectiveness, necessitating comprehensive reforms. Hence, Walker (2023) suggests the need for institutional support to address transportation challenges, inadequate facilities, and resource scarcity, and recommended improved school program planning to enhance teacher performance and coping capacity in remote areas.

Conclusion

Although teachers assigned far from home play a vital role in educational delivery, their well-being and job satisfaction are at risk without adequate institutional support. Their strong desire for reassignment and professional growth suggests that many view their current placements as temporary. Therefore, sustained support for these teachers not only improves their well-being but also enhances their teaching performance and the overall quality of education. In this case, educational authorities must develop comprehensive support systems, including emotional counseling, financial assistance, healthcare services, and structured career advancement programs tailored for teachers working far from home.

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Millennial and Gen X Teachers: Generational Divide

Jerolyn A. Tabernilla

The millennial and Generation X populations comprise a substantial segment of the contemporary teaching workforce, yet their classroom practices are shaped by markedly different formative contexts. Generation X teachers developed professionally during periods characterized by more hierarchical school structures and limited technological integration (Requillo et al., 2024) and often approach teaching with a strong emphasis on autonomy, practicality, and clearly defined instructional routines (Ghamrawi et al., 2025). Their experiences foster a preference for structured lesson delivery, content mastery, and disciplined classroom management (Reyes et al., 2020). In contrast, millennial teachers entered the profession during an era of rapid digital transformation and learner-centered reforms (Kutsyuruba et al., 2025), which has influenced them to prioritize collaboration, inclusivity, and flexibility in instruction (Cruz & Barrameda, 2023). As a result, while Gen X educators may emphasize stability and consistency in pedagogical approaches (Dogan & Arslan, 2025), millennial teachers are more likely to experiment with innovative strategies and adapt their teaching to diverse and evolving student needs (Marrero Galván et al., 2023).

These generational differences are particularly evident in the integration of technology and the design of learning experiences. Millennial teachers, often described as digital natives, tend to embed technology as a central component of instruction, using interactive platforms, multimedia resources, and online collaboration tools to enhance engagement and participation (Marrero Galván et al., 2023). Their teaching frequently reflects constructivist principles (Kutsyuruba et al., 2025), where students actively co-create knowledge through discussion, exploration, and digital interaction. Conversely, Generation X teachers, although capable of using technology, are more inclined to employ it selectively and purposefully (Ghamrawi et al., 2025), ensuring that it supports rather than dominates the learning process. Their instructional strategies often reflect a balance between traditional methods (Requillo et al., 2024), such as direct instruction and guided practice, and incremental technological adoption. This divergence suggests that millennial teachers may excel in creating dynamic and technologically enriched environments (Loganathan & Hashim, 2020), whereas Gen X teachers may provide more structured and cognitively focused learning experiences (Reyes et al., 2020).

Differences in teacher efficacy and professional commitment further distinguish these two groups. Millennial teachers often report higher levels of self-efficacy in implementing new pedagogies and adapting to change (Morales, 2025). This confidence frequently translates into a willingness to take instructional risks, personalize learning, and foster supportive classroom climates that encourage student voice and participation. In contrast, Generation X teachers tend to exhibit efficacy grounded in accumulated experience, demonstrating confidence in classroom management, curriculum delivery, and long-term instructional planning (Reyes et al., 2020). Their sense of commitment is often characterized by resilience and loyalty to institutional

norms. While millennial educators may drive innovation and responsiveness, Gen X teachers often anchor educational practice in experience-based judgment. Generational differences in efficacy can shape both teaching approaches and student learning outcomes (Josephine & Jones, 2022).

Teaching Self-Efficacy

Teaching efficacy has become a central construct in school psychology due to its strong influence on instructional practices, teaching effectiveness, and student achievement (Klassen et al., 2014). It refers to teachers' beliefs in their capacity to influence student learning and produce meaningful academic outcomes (Eren et al., 2025). Rooted in Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), self-efficacy reflects the confidence teachers have in managing classroom demands, delivering instruction effectively, and addressing diverse learning needs (Bandura, 1977, as cited in Barni et al., 2019). This belief system is not merely about skill, but about perceived capability, shaping how teachers approach challenges, persist through difficulties, and ultimately impact student success (Eren et al., 2025; Karim et al., 2025).

Teacher efficacy is closely linked to individual personality traits and value systems. Drawing on the Five-Factor Model of Personality, research by Djigić et al. (2014) indicates that teachers high in openness to experience and conscientiousness tend to exhibit stronger efficacy beliefs. These traits support adaptability, creativity, and a sense of responsibility, qualities essential for effective teaching. Furthermore, Barni et al. (2019) argue that teachers' values shape their professional goals and behaviors, which in turn determine how they engage with students and navigate school environments.

Values also play a critical role in reinforcing both self-efficacy and well-being. In a study by Schwartz and Boehnke (2004), involving 227 Italian

high school teachers, conservation values, such as stability, order, and responsibility, were found to be positively associated with teacher efficacy across different motivational levels. Teachers who prioritize consistency and commitment are more likely to feel capable and effective in their roles. Deeply held values provide a stable internal framework that guides teachers' decisions, strengthens their sense of control in the classroom, and sustains their confidence when facing instructional challenges.

Personal Growth Initiatives

In the context of teacher professional development, Kostiainen and Pöysä-Tarhonen (2025) argued that teachers derive strong professional fulfillment from meaningful interactions with students and from observing student progress, particularly in academically diverse classrooms. However, the limited recognition and feedback they receive points to a gap between effort and institutional support. Opportunities for intellectually challenging tasks and collegial engagement emerge as critical drivers of growth. Hence, professional development is most effective when it is embedded in collaborative and reflective practice rather than isolated training activities.

Collaborative instruction is a mechanism for both professional satisfaction and pedagogical improvement. When teachers engage in shared practices, they are better positioned to exchange strategies, refine their approaches, and respond to diverse learner needs. This aligns with the concept of personal growth initiative, which refers to an individual's active and intentional involvement in self-improvement (Weigold et al., 2024). As outlined by Malik et al. (2015), it encompasses readiness for change, planfulness, intentional behavior, and the effective use of resources. These dimensions emphasize that teacher development is not passive but requires

deliberate effort, strategic thinking, and sustained engagement with both internal motivations and external supports.

According to Muir et al. (2021), professional experimentation fosters teacher development. For instance, the deliberate use of student assessment data enables teachers to identify learning gaps and adjust instructional strategies with greater precision. This process reinforces a cycle of reflection and adaptation that is essential for continuous improvement. Similarly, Büyükgöze (2015) suggests the inclusion of personal growth initiative in shaping teachers' developmental trajectories. Teachers' individual differences in motivation and goal orientation can significantly influence how teachers engage with professional learning opportunities.

Teaching Performance

According to Galvan et al. (2023), the entry of millennials, often labeled as “digital natives,” has intensified generational diversity within the teaching profession. There is a clear divide between digital natives and digital immigrants, particularly in how technology is understood and used in instruction. For instance, millennial teachers tend to integrate ICT more intuitively and seamlessly into their pedagogy (Onjewu et al., 2025). In contrast, Generation X teachers, often considered digital immigrants, approach technology more deliberately (Anzari et al., 2021). This distinction reflects not only differences in technological exposure but also deeper variations in instructional mindset. In terms of technology integration in teaching, millennials lean toward interactive and technology-driven learning environments while Gen X teachers emphasize structure and pedagogical control.

According to Reyes et al. (2020), generational teaching profiles often differ in competence-centered, empathetic, and innovative orientations. For

example, while competence remains a shared foundation across generations, millennial teachers are more strongly associated with empathy, while Generation X teachers are characterized by flexibility, effectively blending competence with adaptability in response to classroom demands. While millennials may prioritize relational and technologically enriched teaching, Gen X educators contribute a more balanced and experience-driven approach that integrates multiple teaching dimensions.

A Self-Determination Theory Perspective on Generational Differences in Teaching Efficacy

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1980) posits that individuals have three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These needs influence motivation, engagement, and overall well-being. Applied in the comparative generational teaching efficacy, both Millennials and Generation X individuals have been shaped by environments that emphasize autonomy and personal control. This fosters independence and decision-making, which may enhance their sense of efficacy, as individuals are more likely to believe in their capabilities when they experience ownership over their actions.

The SDT highlights the importance of self-improvement activities, such as goal setting and reflection, in promoting motivation and well-being. Millennials and Generation X individuals often engage in personal development activities, such as extracurricular involvement, social engagement, and professional experiences. These activities contribute to their sense of competence, which may positively influence their teaching performance. By recognizing the unique characteristics and needs of millennial and Generation X teachers, more effective support systems and

interventions can be designed to enhance their performance and contribute to improved learner outcomes.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Level of Efficacy, Personal Growth Initiatives and Teaching Performance of Millennial and Generation X

This study examined the levels of self-efficacy, engagement in personal growth initiatives, and teaching performance among millennial and Generation X teachers by providing insights into how these factors differ between the two groups and how they relate to teaching effectiveness and professional development.

The study was conducted at a public integrated school in in the District of Lezo, Aklan in the Philippines. Using a comparative cross-sectional research design, it involved forty-six (46) teachers equally distributed between the two generational groups. Data were gathered through questionnaires following the approval of research permissions from relevant authorities. The collected data were coded, encoded, and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

For analysis, descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe the data, while an independent samples t-test was applied to determine significant differences between groups at a 5% level of significance.

In terms of the level of teaching self-efficacy, Table 1 shows the results of the evaluation across four key areas. The data indicate that both Generation X and millennial teachers exhibit a “very high” level of teaching self-efficacy, with Generation X teachers ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.802$) and millennial teachers slightly higher ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.434$).

In school leadership and decision-making, millennial teachers report slightly higher self-efficacy ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.56$) than Generation X teachers ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.85$). This difference reflects millennials' comfort with collaborative leadership and technology, enabling them to confidently influence decisions, share ideas, and participate in school committees. This may also be attributed to their ability to use digital tools for communication and coordination. In contrast, Generation X teachers demonstrate strong leadership efficacy grounded in experience, though their approach tends to be shaped by more hierarchical systems, resulting in slightly lower confidence in shared decision-making.

Table 1

Level of teaching self-efficacy of the Generation X and Millennial teachers

Teaching Self- Efficacy	Generation X (1960-1980)			Millennials (1981- 1996)		
	Mean	Description	SD	Mean	Description	SD
School Leadership and Decision Making	4.23	Very High	0.85	4.27	Very High	0.56
Student Motivation and Academic Support	4.22	Very High	0.78	4.48	Very High	0.48
Classroom Management and Discipline	4.39	Very High	0.82	4.53	Very High	0.44
Parental Involvement and Engagement	4.33	Very High	0.91	4.58	Very High	0.54
Grand Mean	4.29	Very High	0.8	4.47	Very High	0.43

Scale: 4.21-5.00 Very High; 3.41- 4.20 High;2.61-3.40 Moderate; 1.81-2.60 Low; 1.00-1.80 Very Low

Similarly, millennial teachers' self-efficacy in student motivation and academic support ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 0.48$) is slightly higher than that of Generation X teachers ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.78$). Millennials often employ personalized, student-centered strategies and integrate technology to engage

learners, including those with limited support at home. This enhances their confidence in motivating students and supporting academic success. Generation X teachers remain highly effective; however, their reliance on more traditional approaches may not always fully address diverse student needs.

Millennial teachers also demonstrate the highest self-efficacy in classroom management and discipline ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.44$), while Generation X teachers also show a very high level ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.82$). Millennials tend to manage classroom behavior using student-centered approaches, such as positive reinforcement and technology-based tools, allowing for more flexible and dynamic discipline strategies. In contrast, Generation X teachers rely on structured routines and rule-based management, which are effective but less flexible for individual student differences.

In parental involvement and engagement, millennial teachers ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.54$) again report higher self-efficacy than Generation X teachers ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.91$). Millennials are more inclined to use digital communication tools such as social media, email, and online platforms, which enhance parent engagement and communication. Generation X teachers remain effective in engaging parents but tend to rely on more traditional methods, such as parent-teacher conferences, which may be less immediate and convenient.

Research suggests that generational cohorts differ in their approaches and attitudes toward teaching. Millennials tend to value teamwork and inclusivity (Stephens, 2021), while Generation X teachers emphasize pragmatism and stability (Edge et al., 2016). These differences may explain the slightly higher levels of parental involvement and decision-making engagement observed among millennial teachers.

In terms of the comparative personal growth initiatives of millennial and Generation X teachers presented in Table 2, the analysis covers three key areas: awareness and readiness for change, goal setting and planning, and active growth and resource utilization.

The results show that both Generation X and millennial teachers exhibit a “very high” level of personal growth initiatives, with Generation X teachers (M = 4.45, SD = 0.835) and millennial teachers (M = 4.47, SD = 0.437). These findings indicate that both groups value continuous self-improvement and professional development. However, Generation X teachers demonstrate slightly stronger tendencies in certain areas, possibly due to differences in their approaches to change, goal setting, and resource utilization.

Table 2

Level of personal growth initiatives of the Generation X and Millennial teachers

Level of Personal Growth	Generation X (1960-1980)			Millennials (1981- 1996)		
	Mean	Description	SD	Mean	Description	SD
Awareness and Readiness for Change	4.47	Very High	0.84	4.48	Very High	0.54
Goal Setting and Planning	4.33	Very High	0.88	4.37	Very High	0.48
Active Growth and Resource Utilization	4.54	Very High	0.87	4.55	Very High	0.45
Grand Mean	4.45	Very High	0.84	4.47	Very High	0.44

Scale: 4.21-5.00 Very High; 3.41- 4.20 High;2.61-3.40 Moderate; 1.81-2.60 Low; 1.00-1.80 Very Low

Among the areas examined, Generation X teachers scored highest in active growth and resource utilization (M = 4.54, SD = 0.868). This reflects their proactive attitude toward self-improvement and their ability to effectively use available resources, such as professional development programs, mentorship, and community support. Their strong performance aligns with

their generational characteristics of being self-reliant and pragmatic. However, Generation X teachers obtained relatively lower scores in awareness and readiness for change ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.908$) and goal setting and planning ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.955$). These results suggest that while they can utilize resources, they may be less inclined toward systematic planning or seeking external assistance, reflecting a preference for independence. In contrast, millennial teachers scored highest in active growth and resource utilization ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 0.549$), indicating a strong commitment to continuous learning and personal development. Millennials are often described as adaptable and open to change, which explains their proactive pursuit of growth opportunities. The relatively low standard deviations indicate consistency in responses among millennial teachers.

Millennials obtained comparatively lower scores in goal setting and planning ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.765$) and help-seeking ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.485$). Although still rated “very high,” these findings suggest a tendency toward action-oriented approaches rather than structured planning or reliance on others. This may reflect their inclination toward independence and creativity in addressing challenges.

These findings are consistent with Day and Leitch (2001) that teachers with strong personal growth initiatives are more proactive, adaptable, and effective in facilitating learning. The results confirm that both Generation X and millennial teachers demonstrate high levels of personal growth, which contribute to their professional effectiveness.

Table 3 presents the teaching performance of Generation X and millennial teachers. The results show that both groups demonstrate a “very high” level of teaching performance, with Generation X teachers ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 0.815$) and millennial teachers slightly higher ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 0.44$). These indicate that both groups are highly competent in teaching, with strong

performance across key instructional areas. The slight advantage of millennials may be attributed to their adaptability to modern teaching approaches, collaborative orientation, and integration of technology.

Table 3

Level of teaching performance of the Generation X and Millennial teachers

Level of Teaching Performance	Generation X (1960-1980)			Millennials (1981- 1996)		
	Mean	Description	SD	Mean	Description	SD
Content Knowledge, Planning and Preparation	4.57	Very High	0.8	4.63	Very High	0.45
Classroom Management	4.63	Very High	0.83	4.67	Very High	0.46
Relationship and Leadership	4.63	Very High	0.83	4.66	Very High	0.47
Grand Mean	4.61	Very High	0.82	4.65	Very High	0.44

Scale: 4.21-5.00 Very High; 3.41- 4.20 High;2.61-3.40 Moderate; 1.81-2.60 Low; 1.00-1.80 Very Low

In terms of content knowledge, planning, and preparation, both groups achieved very high ratings, with Generation X teachers ($M = 4.57$, $SD = 0.80$) and millennials ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.45$). This reflects strong mastery of subject matter and effective lesson preparation. Millennials' slight advantage may be due to their ability to integrate contemporary teaching strategies, while Generation X teachers rely on their extensive experience and established practices.

For classroom management, both groups again demonstrated very high performance, with Generation X teachers ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.83$) and millennials ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 0.46$). Millennials' use of creative and technology-driven strategies may enhance student engagement, while Generation X teachers benefit from their experience in handling diverse classroom situations.

In relationship and leadership, both groups also achieved very high ratings, with Generation X teachers ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.83$) and millennials slightly higher ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 0.47$). Millennials' collaborative and community-oriented approach may contribute to their slight advantage, while Generation X teachers demonstrate strong leadership through experience and interpersonal skills.

The findings support Lagmay and Florendo (2025) that although teaching approaches may vary across generations, both Generation X and millennial teachers demonstrate strong professional competence and commitment to improvement.

As shown in Table 4, the results indicate that there is no significant difference between Generation X and millennial teachers in terms of teaching self-efficacy [$t(48) = -0.962$, $p = 0.341$]. This suggests that both groups possess similar levels of confidence in managing classrooms, delivering instruction, and promoting student learning outcomes.

Table 4

Difference on the level teaching self-efficacy

Generational Cohort	Level of Efficacy	Df	t value	p value
Generation X (1960-1980)	4.29	48	-0.962 ^{ns}	0.341
Millennials (1981-1996)	4.47			

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant

This similarity may be attributed to shared professional experiences, continuous training, and institutional support, which contribute to comparable levels of self-efficacy regardless of generational differences. Both groups face similar teaching challenges, such as addressing diverse student needs and maintaining classroom engagement, which strengthen their confidence over time. Moreover, Generation X teachers draw on extensive experience, while

millennials leverage modern tools and innovative strategies, resulting in complementary strengths that lead to comparable efficacy levels.

As reflected in Table 5, the results show no significant difference in the level of personal growth initiatives between Generation X and millennial teachers [$t(48) = -0.091, p = 0.928$]. This indicates that both groups demonstrate similar levels of engagement in personal and professional development. This finding may be attributed to a shared institutional culture that promotes continuous learning, professional development, and adaptability. Both groups are expected to set goals, utilize resources, and respond to changes in the educational environment. Training programs, workshops, and mentorship opportunities further reinforce these practices across generations.

Table 5

Difference between the level of personal growth

Generations	Level of Personal Growth	df	t value	p value
Generation X (1960-1980)	4.45	48	-0.091 ^{ns}	0.928
Millennials (1981-1996)	4.47			

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant

The importance of lifelong learning in the teaching profession encourages both groups to pursue growth opportunities. While Generation X teachers tend to rely on experience and practicality, millennials adopt more flexible and innovative approaches. These complementary tendencies result in similar overall levels of personal growth initiatives. Studies have shown that Generation X professionals prefer structured and stable environments (Requillo et al., 2024; Ghamrawi et al., 2025; Reyes et al., 2020; Dogan & Arslan, 2025), while millennials favor inclusive and growth-oriented settings (Kutsyuruba et al., 2025; Cruz & Barrameda, 2023; Marrero Galván et al.,

2023). Despite these differences, both groups remain committed to professional development and continuous improvement.

Table 6 presents the results of the t-test on teaching performance between Generation X and millennial teachers. The findings indicate no significant difference in teaching performance [$t(48) = 2.35, p = 0.08$]. This suggests that both groups demonstrate comparable proficiency in key teaching areas, including lesson planning, classroom management, and student engagement.

Although generational differences exist in teaching styles and approaches, both groups exhibit high levels of competence. Generation X teachers bring experience and stability, while millennials contribute innovation and adaptability. These complementary strengths contribute to similar levels of teaching effectiveness.

Table 6

Differences in the teaching performance

Generations	Level of Teaching Performance	df	t value	p value
Generation X (1960-1980)	4.61	3	2.35	0.08
Millennials (1981-1996)	4.653			

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant

Both groups also benefit from formal training, professional development opportunities, and shared teaching responsibilities, which establish a common standard of competence. Despite differences in background and approach, effective teaching remains grounded in shared skills, continuous learning, and professional commitment. Teachers across generations share similar values and practices in teaching (Polat et al., 2019; Geeraerts et al., 2018).

Conclusion

The teaching profession continues to evolve, making it essential to understand how educators from different generations perform and grow within this dynamic environment. Teaching effectiveness is shaped more by individual competencies, institutional support, and professional commitment than by generational identity. Supportive environments that foster professional development and collaboration play a more critical role in enhancing teaching performance than age-based distinctions. Ultimately, effective teaching is driven by skill, support, and dedication rather than by generational categorization.

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Teachers' Financial Literacy

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Financial literacy is an essential life skill in today's complex economic environment. Teachers who possess a strong understanding of financial concepts are better equipped to manage their finances, make informed decisions, and plan for the future (Lone & Bhat, 2022; Arroyo & Bayani, 2024). Beyond individual benefits, financial literacy also contributes to community development and overall economic improvement (Ebirim et al., 2024).

Teachers often face unique financial challenges; therefore, they need a solid foundation in personal finance, including budgeting, investing, and retirement planning. These challenges are further intensified by factors such as outstanding loans, financial responsibilities to family members, and personal obligations such as bill payments, educational expenses, and children's tuition (Tagapulot & Macalisang, 2024).

Beyond personal financial well-being, there is a broad impact of financial literacy on academic educators. Financially literate teachers can model responsible financial behavior and thereby promote financial awareness among future generations (Alqam & Hamshari, 2024; Mancone et al., 2024; Negi & Jaiswal, 2024). Addressing gaps in financial education may lead to the development of training programs, financial management workshops, and

policy recommendations that enhance teachers' financial stability. By promoting continuous financial education, the education sector can also support economic stability, personal financial growth, and the development of a financially responsible educational community.

Financial Literacy Awareness of Public-School Teachers

Financial literacy refers to the ability to manage and utilize financial resources effectively and responsibly (Mandell, 2008). Financial well-being, on the other hand, results from a combination of awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors (Chetioui et al., 2025). Studies indicate that many individuals perceive themselves as financially literate, particularly pensioners and degree holders (Tagapulot & Macalisang, 2024; Dimaunahan et al., 2025; Bangco et al., 2022; Gabinete & Prado, 2026; Desello & Agner, 2023), a finding similarly observed across Asian countries (Nguyen et al., 2022). However, research suggests that teachers often have limited knowledge of financial literacy and planning. Maribao and Narido (2025) found that teachers, particularly those in education programs, demonstrated insufficient financial literacy. This issue is further compounded by the relatively low salary associated with the teaching profession, despite the increasing number of individuals pursuing teaching careers (Ghamrawi & Abu-Tineh, 2023; Singleton & Roberts, 2023).

Many teachers struggle with proper budgeting due to financial pressures and inadequate preparation. Studies show that many teachers lack a systematic approach to budgeting, leading to poor allocation of resources and financial difficulties (Tagapulot & Macalisang, 2024; Maribao & Narido, 2025). This issue is further aggravated by limited financial literacy training during their professional preparation (Cabugas & Cabugas, 2025). Teachers often experience difficulty distinguishing between needs and wants,

particularly when managing a household on a limited income. This lack of financial education can lead to stress and poor financial decision-making (Tahir, 2025; Faria et al., 2025).

Saving remains a challenge for many teachers despite its importance for financial security. Research indicates that many educators lack sufficient emergency savings, making them vulnerable to unexpected expenses (Plaza & Jamito, 2021). Limited understanding of financial products and long-term planning contributes to irregular and non-prioritized saving behaviors (Alvarado-Cáceres et al., 2025; Purwanti et al., 2025).

Investment is one of the weakest areas of financial literacy among teachers (Tornino & Ferdinez, 2025; Pinawin, 2022). Many educators are hesitant to invest due to limited knowledge, which restricts their ability to build long-term wealth and financial stability. Enhancing teachers' financial literacy is therefore crucial not only for their personal financial security but also for promoting financial awareness among future generations.

The Challenge of Teachers' Financial Literacy

Teachers face significant financial challenges that are closely linked to their level of financial literacy. One of the most pressing issues is the inadequacy of teachers' salaries in relation to the rising cost of living, particularly in urban areas (Etor, 2025; Tran & Smith, 2019). This financial strain has been associated with negative work outcomes such as absenteeism and increased turnover (Perdizo & Tantiado, 2025). The situation is even more critical for younger teachers, who often have limited savings and fewer financial resources to rely on (Admiraal, 2025).

Compounding this issue is the burden of debt, particularly student loans, which many teachers struggle to repay given their relatively low-income levels. Limited financial literacy further intensifies this challenge, as it may

lead to ineffective financial planning, poor budgeting practices, and suboptimal debt management (Tahir, 2025; Faria et al., 2025). As a result, teachers may become trapped in cycles of financial instability that are difficult to overcome. In addition to these constraints, teachers frequently incur out-of-pocket expenses for classroom materials, especially during shifts in teaching modalities. These added financial responsibilities further strain their already limited resources, reducing their capacity to build savings or invest in long-term financial security (Tagapulot & Macalisang, 2024; Dimaunahan et al., 2025).

These challenges emphasize the critical role of financial literacy in promoting financial well-being among teachers. Financial well-being is commonly understood as an individual's satisfaction with their financial condition (Mathew et al., 2024; Das, 2025; Garg et al., 2024; Mathew et al., 2024). It encompasses the ability to manage expenses, control debt, and plan effectively for future financial needs. As defined by Joo (2008), financial wellness is an active state characterized by low levels of debt, consistent savings, responsible spending, and adequate preparation for retirement. Without sufficient financial literacy, achieving this state remains a significant challenge for many teachers.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Measuring the Financial Literacy Awareness of Public School Teachers

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to examine the financial literacy awareness of teachers in the District of Kalibo II in the Philippines. It was conducted across several public elementary schools in Kalibo, Aklan, involving 178 teachers during the School Year 2023–2024, all of whom were included as participants.

Data were collected using an adopted and researcher-made questionnaire covering demographic profile, financial literacy (budgeting, spending, saving, and investing), challenges encountered, and available support systems. The instrument underwent content validation by experts and pilot testing, ensuring its validity and reliability before administration.

The data gathering process included securing necessary permissions and informed consent, followed by questionnaire distribution and data encoding. For analysis, descriptive statistical methods such as frequency distribution, summary statistics, and data visualization were used, along with established scaling systems to interpret levels of financial literacy, challenges, and resource availability.

Table 1

Level of budgeting awareness

Indicators	WM	Description
I am aware that I should manage the basic needs of my household.	4.71	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should keep a monthly household account for my basic needs.	4.66	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should not spend all my money from previous earnings before the next salary / income arrives.	4.58	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should settle the monthly bills of my household on time	4.75	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should have a well-defined budget that I follow regularly.	4.46	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should review my budget consistently to track my spending habits and financial goals.	4.40	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should involve my family members or partners in budgeting decisions.	4.53	Fully Aware
I am aware that budgeting helps me feel more in control of my finances.	4.65	Fully Aware
I am aware that sticking to my budget consistently is very challenging.	4.60	Fully Aware
I am aware that budgeting helps me save money for future needs or emergencies.	4.72	Fully Aware
Composite Mean	4.61	Fully Aware

Interpretation: 4.21-5.00 Possesses proficiency on the issue; 3.41-4.20 Can adequately understand the issue; 2.61-3.40 Can understand some aspects of the issue; 1.81-2.60 Can understand the issue only with guidance; 1.00-1.81 Can hardly understand the issue

As shown in Table 1, the results of the survey on budgeting indicate that the teachers are fully aware of the budgeting process, which are also

practiced in several occasions. The data indicate that teachers demonstrate a high level of financial literacy awareness across all domains. In budgeting, teachers achieved an overall mean of 4.61, interpreted as “Fully Aware,” reflecting strong financial responsibility. They showed the highest awareness in saving for emergencies (4.72) and paying financial obligations on time (4.75). These are indicators of disciplined financial behavior and resilience.

Table 2

Level of financial literacy on spending

Indicators	WM	Description
I am aware that I should make goals about how to spend money wisely and I discuss them with my family.	4.49	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should prepare a monthly budget plan/spending to monitor my income and spending.	4.43	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should planned and allocate specific amount on my needs and major expenses like food, fare, clothing, etc.	4.53	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should only spend within my paying capacity; which means that I don't buy/procure anything beyond my expected income for that month.	4.53	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should make sure that I can pay all my monthly financial obligations such as utility bills (electricity/water/telephone/etc.) and loan (personal, housing, car, etc.) on or before the due date to avoid penalty.	4.63	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should make an envelope or group my money for each expense category such as rent, gas, electricity, food, etc. I also label the envelope with the name of the category, the amount and the due date.	4.28	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should limit myself in buying expensive and branded clothes, trendy footwear, smartphones or eating in a fancy restaurant and other luxury habits. I don't spend much in personal necessity rather than of what I need.	4.51	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should allot extra budget for different occasions or life events like birthday parties, town fiestas, christening, among others.	4.34	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should spend money in helping my family and relatives in their financial matters and constraints but with limitations and reservations.	4.45	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should spend a little amount of money for family outing, social gatherings, family reunions or family day out. We share finances and expenses during these occasions.	4.38	Fully Aware
Composite Mean	4.46	Fully Aware

Interpretation: 4.21-5.00 Possesses proficiency on the issue; 3.41-4.20 Can adequately understand the issue; 2.61-3.40 Can understand some aspects of the issue; 1.81-2.60 Can understand the issue only with guidance; 1.00-1.81 Can hardly understand the issue

As shown in Table 2, in terms of spending, teachers also exhibited a high level of awareness, with an overall mean of 4.46 (“Fully Aware”). They

demonstrated strong financial discipline, particularly in paying obligations on time (4.63) and spending within their means (4.53). They were also aware of the importance of budgeting, planning expenses, and setting financial goals with their families, reflecting responsible financial management practices.

Table 3

Level of financial literacy awareness on saving

Indicators	WM	Description
I am aware that I should keep a regular saving at home.	4.46	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should have a current account/savings account or time deposits in one or more banks and other financial institutions.	4.36	Fully Aware
I am aware that in order to save, I should follow a careful monthly budget and plan to reduce my expenditures.	4.48	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should save enough money for my basic needs and expenses.	4.56	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should set aside/save money for future needs or in the advent of emergency and incidental expenses.	4.53	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should save for long-term goals such as education, car, real estate, house construction, and property.	4.43	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should save part of my income for retirement.	4.35	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should set and regularly do reviewing and updating my savings goal.	4.35	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should reduce expenses, I and family should practice austerity measures at home such as switching off lights when not needed, using energy-saving appliances, recycling, and other practices.	4.54	Fully Aware
I am aware that instead of buying branded and/or new clothes, shoes, accessories etc., I used old ones or remodeled things that I have.	4.50	Fully Aware
Composite Mean	4.46	Fully Aware

Interpretation: 4.21-5.00 Possesses proficiency on the issue; 3.41-4.20 Can adequately understand the issue; 2.61-3.40 Can understand some aspects of the issue; 1.81-2.60 Can understand the issue only with guidance; 1.00-1.81 Can hardly understand the issue

Regarding saving, as reflected in Table 3, teachers maintained a similarly high level of awareness ($M = 4.46$), which indicates proficiency in financial planning. They showed strong commitment to cost-saving practices such as reducing expenses and practicing household austerity (4.54). However, slightly lower ratings in retirement savings and updating financial goals (4.35) suggest that while these are recognized as important, they are not consistently prioritized. In the Philippines, while the teachers are charged with mandatory contributions in Social Security and Health Insurance, there are

other available insurance companies offering combinations of investment, and health and life insurances. However, the payments are higher than the government required social and health insurances.

Table 4

Level of financial literacy awareness on investing

Indicators	WM	Description
I am aware that I should invest my money in financial institutions like savings account, time deposits and the like.	4.33	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should have an investment in life insurance.	4.26	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should invest in non-life insurance like accident insurance and vehicle insurance.	4.17	Aware
I am aware that I should invest in health insurance policies (Caritas, Phil health etc.) for future security. It also increases my ability to meet unexpected medical expenditures.	4.29	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should invest in Government Securities like GSIS or SSS for my retirement and future independence.	4.66	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should invest in educational plan to provide higher/professional education and training for myself, children or any member of the family.	4.26	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should purchase commodities like gold, silver, etc. which serves as my investment.	4.30	Fully Aware
I am aware that I should invest to a real estate and property and stock market.	4.13	Aware
I am aware that I should ask opinion of other individuals who are I assumed expert in determining investment options.	4.15	Aware
I am aware that I should personally evaluate investment options based on my idea out of reading textbooks, newspapers, YouTube, and other sources.	4.13	Aware
Composite Mean	4.27	Fully Aware

Interpretation: 4.21-5.00 Possesses proficiency on the issue; 3.41-4.20 Can adequately understand the issue; 2.61-3.40 Can understand some aspects of the issue; 1.81-2.60 Can understand the issue only with guidance; 1.00-1.81 Can hardly understand the issue

As shown in Table 4, in investing, teachers were generally “Fully Aware,” with an overall mean of 4.27. They showed the highest awareness in investing in government securities such as GSIS or SSS (4.66), reflecting an understanding of long-term financial security. They were also knowledgeable about savings accounts, insurance, and other financial instruments. However, only moderate awareness was observed in more complex investments such as stocks, real estate, and commodities, as well as in seeking expert advice and

independently evaluating investment options, indicating areas for further improvement.

Table 5

Challenges hindering teachers from improving their financial profile

Indicators	WM	Description
High workload and teaching demands significantly impact my ability to focus on personal financial matters.	3.26	Moderate
Limited professional development opportunities or growth prospects affect my chances of financial advancement.	3.40	Moderate
Insufficient knowledge or guidance on financial planning and investment options hinder my ability to improve my financial status.	3.27	Moderate
Insufficient financial literacy or education	3.19	Moderate
High cost of living in the area of employment	3.43	Moderate
Educational finances of children	3.35	Moderate
Loans from Private lending Institutions	3.53	Moderate
Limited access to professional development or promotions	3.34	Moderate
Lifestyles and buying things that are not important.	3.11	Moderate
Bread winner of the family and majority of the family members are financially dependent to me.	3.43	Moderate
Composite Mean	3.33	Moderate

Despite this high level of awareness, results in Table 5 show that teachers reported experiencing moderate financial challenges ($M = 3.33$). Major concerns included the high cost of living (3.43), loans from private lending institutions (3.53), and financial responsibilities as family breadwinners (3.43). Other challenges, such as limited financial knowledge, lack of guidance, and high workload, also moderately affected their ability to improve their financial situation.

While the indicators had a moderate impact on the financial profile of the teachers, they generally affect their financial capabilities. The fact that these challenges have a moderate effect suggests that they significantly influence teachers' ability to budget, spend, save, and invest. In the long run, these recurring challenges may hamper the financial status of teachers if they are not given proper attention.

Table 6*Availability of resources and support systems for teachers' financial literacy*

Indicators	WM	Description
I have extra work aside from teaching which helps me generate money to defray all my expenses.	2.66	Moderate
My relatives, siblings and other members of the family are financially helping me whenever I need help.	3.13	Moderate
I am operating a business which greatly helps me to augment my meager income.	2.40	Moderate
My friends are advising me to manage my finances well by prioritizing what is important and by making a financial plan on how to spend the money that I have.	3.15	Moderate
If in case I am in trouble, I have friends who are willing enough to provide for my financial needs.	3.10	Moderate
There are many financial advisors who are encouraging me to attend training and workshops on how to manage my finances well and how to spend my money wisely.	2.96	Moderate
My colleagues at school are always telling me to engage into business or to invest my money into something that would yield profit.	3.01	Moderate
Adequate financial literacy workshops or training programs are readily available and accessible for me and other teachers.	2.89	Moderate
I feel that the educational materials provided for improving financial literacy among teachers are comprehensive and easy to understand.	3.29	Moderate
Support systems (e.g., financial counseling, mentorship programs) for teachers aiming to enhance our financial knowledge and skills are available.	2.98	Moderate
Composite Mean	2.96	Moderate

As shown in Table 6, in terms of resources and support systems, teachers reported only a moderate level of availability ($M = 2.96$). While support from family and friends was somewhat accessible, formal support systems, such as financial training, advisory services, and opportunities for additional income, were limited. This indicates a need for more structured and accessible financial literacy programs and institutional support for teachers.

While resources and support systems aimed at improving teachers' financial literacy are available, they remain insufficient to mitigate the risks posed by the magnitude of challenges affecting their financial capacity. This study argues that these resources and support systems must exceed the impact of the identified challenges in order to effectively improve teachers' financial conditions. Although existing support mechanisms may provide short-term

relief, they are unlikely to fully address or offset the long-term risks associated with the financial challenges experienced by teachers.

Conclusion

While teachers demonstrate financial competence in basic areas such as budgeting and saving, many still exhibit limited knowledge and understanding of more complex financial concepts, particularly in investment planning. Although they show strong awareness of fundamental financial management principles, several constraints hinder their ability to improve their financial condition. These challenges include the high cost of living, reliance on personal loans, and financial responsibilities associated with being family breadwinners.

Moreover, limited access to structured financial literacy programs, seminars, and opportunities for additional income further constrains teachers' capacity to address their financial challenges effectively. The availability of resources and support systems remains only moderate, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to enhance both accessibility and effectiveness in improving teachers' financial literacy and overall financial well-being.

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Teachers' Locus of Control, Sense of Efficacy and Organizational Commitment

Liezel R. Tapar

Locus of control is recognized as a crucial psychological factor that can influence individuals' organizational commitment (Hamzah & Othman, 2023; Galvin et al., 2018). Teachers with a strong internal locus of control are more likely to be dedicated, committed, and satisfied with their jobs (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013; Netto & Dominic, 2026; Li et al., 2025). They tend to believe that their actions significantly influence outcomes, motivating them to actively engage in their work and contribute to their organization. In contrast, individuals with an external locus of control may perceive outcomes as beyond their control, which can lead to lower levels of organizational commitment (Suherlan et al., 2018). Similarly, self-efficacy is another important psychological determinant of organizational commitment (Hussain et al., 2026; Na-Nan et al., 2021; Opolot et al., 2024). Teachers with high self-efficacy are more willing to take on challenges and experiment with new approaches because they are confident in their ability to succeed (Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Orakçı et al., 2023). This confidence enables them to view challenges as opportunities for growth and development. As teachers

experience success and positive reinforcement, their level of commitment to the organization is strengthened.

Previous studies have shown that both locus of control and self-efficacy influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors in various occupational settings (Papoulidi & Maniadaki, 2025; Cascio et al., 2014; Nykänen et al., 2019; Di Corrado et al., 2021; Howatt, 2011). Understanding how these factors relate to teachers' organizational commitment is essential in identifying the characteristics of committed educators. This can inform strategies that enhance teacher commitment, ultimately improving job satisfaction and benefiting both teachers and students.

Locus of Control

Locus of control refers to the extent to which individuals believe that life events are determined by internal factors or external forces (Botha & Dahmann, 2023; Cascio et al., 2014). Cobb-Clark et al. (2023) highlighted its influence on personality, decision-making, social behavior, and mental health, emphasizing the need for further research on cultural differences, well-being, and interventions that strengthen locus of control.

There are two types of locus of control: internal and external. Individuals with an internal locus of control believe they can influence outcomes through their actions, while those with an external locus of control attribute outcomes to external factors such as luck or powerful others. These beliefs develop over time through reinforcement and environmental influences (Botha & Dahmann, 2023). An internal locus of control is associated with higher motivation and more positive workplace perceptions, even in structured environments (Nisula & Olander, 2025). It is also linked to proactive behaviors such as better decision-making, entrepreneurial tendencies, and effective self-regulation. Furthermore, individuals with an internal locus of

control are more likely to seek help, manage their health and finances effectively, and perform better academically. In contrast, those with an external locus of control often experience feelings of helplessness and insecurity.

Locus of control also influences self-efficacy and perceived control. Individuals with an internal orientation tend to view money as a resource to be managed efficiently, while those with an external orientation are more likely to value extrinsic rewards (Cascio et al., 2014). Generational differences also exist, as Krishna and Agrawal (2025) found that younger generations, such as Millennials and Gen Z, are more likely to attribute outcomes to external factors, whereas older generations exhibit a stronger internal locus of control. Moreover, increased reliance on technology and algorithms may reduce individuals' sense of personal agency, contributing to a more external locus of control (Yuan et al., 2025). Cultural context also plays a role, as individuals from collectivist societies with an external locus of control may experience higher levels of stress and anxiety, while those with an internal locus report better well-being (Sullivan et al., 2021).

Interventions such as cognitive-behavioral strategies that promote goal setting and empowerment have been shown to strengthen internal locus of control and improve outcomes (Mehrtak et al., 2017; Botha & Dahmann, 2023). However, scholars argue that locus of control alone cannot fully predict behavior, as it is influenced by situational factors and interactions between internal and external elements (Galvin et al., 2018; Hamzah & Othman, 2023; Gyurák Babel'ová et al., 2025). Additionally, its effects on behavior, education, and participation remain inconsistent and context-dependent (Roazzi et al., 2016; Flores et al., 2020; Chiang et al., 2019; Flores et al., 2020; Xue et al., 2020).

Sense of Efficacy

A strong sense of efficacy enables teachers to apply innovative teaching strategies that enhance student motivation, engagement, and achievement while effectively managing diverse classroom situations (Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Eren et al., 2025). Teacher efficacy is a critical motivational factor that allows educators to overcome challenges confidently and contribute to improved educational outcomes (Li, 2023; Alkan et al., 2026; Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Eren et al., 2025).

Recent studies indicate that teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to adopt technology-based instructional strategies, which enhance student engagement and performance (Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Orakçı et al., 2023). Accurate measurement of teacher self-efficacy is therefore essential in understanding its impact on instructional practices and classroom challenges. Professional development and collaboration also play a significant role in enhancing teacher efficacy. High-quality training programs and collaborative learning communities have been shown to improve both self-efficacy and teaching practices (Chong & Kong, 2012; Liu et al., 2025; Pan & Cheng, 2023).

Teacher efficacy is a key determinant of student outcomes (Eren et al., 2025; Al-Alwan & Mahasneh, 2014; Salas-Rodríguez et al., 2025; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Al-Alwan and Mahasneh (2014) emphasized its importance in developing students' attitude towards learning, while Eren et al. (2025) identified it as one of the most influential factors affecting student achievement. Differences in efficacy may also exist across demographics, as empirical evidence shows that female teachers demonstrated higher confidence with better classroom management and student engagement (Zahir et al., 2025; Wettstein et al., 2021). Additionally, personal values and traits

such as independence, conscientiousness, and openness significantly enhance teachers' self-efficacy and motivation (Barni et al., 2019).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment refers to an individual's emotional attachment, sense of obligation, and perceived cost of leaving an organization (Choi et al., 2015; Klein & Park, 2015; Chigeda et al., 2022; Mueller et al., 2023). It is important in developing a dedicated and productive workforce (Lo et al., 2024), influenced by loyalty and job satisfaction. It also contributes to improved performance, satisfaction, and employee retention (Saini, 2025; Yeh & Huang, 2025), driven by emotional connection, job stability, and social relationships within the workplace.

Human resource management practices also play a significant role in fostering commitment. Aligning organizational strategies with employee needs, such as supporting work–life balance and implementing gender-sensitive approaches, enhances job satisfaction, well-being, and organizational commitment (Chigeda et al., 2022; Choi et al., 2015; Klein & Park, 2015). However, research indicates that commitment levels may vary. For instance, Gazi et al. (2024) found that while employees may be satisfied with salary and career progression, overall commitment can remain low, particularly in interpersonal and job-related aspects. Empirical evidence shows the strong link between job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Lo et al., 2024; Lee & Kim, 2023; Cúlibrk et al., 2018).

According to Klein and Park (2015), organizational commitment develops through different dimensions. The instrumental commitment is driven by cost–benefit considerations in early career stages (Kaur & Sandhu, 2010). On the other hand, affective commitment usually emerges over time through emotional attachment (Mercurio, 2015).

RESEARCH FOCUS: Measuring Public School Teachers' Locus of Control, Sense of Efficacy and Organizational Commitment

In this study, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) was used to explain how teachers with an internal locus of control and high self-efficacy are more likely to demonstrate stronger organizational commitment. When teachers believe that their actions influence outcomes and that they are capable of succeeding, they become more engaged, motivated, and dedicated to their work. These beliefs foster greater effort, collaboration, and professional commitment, ultimately enhancing job satisfaction, performance, and overall organizational success.

The study employed a correlational research design to examine the relationships among locus of control, sense of efficacy, and organizational commitment of teachers. It was conducted at an integrated public school in the District of Lezo, Aklan, Philippines, involving 45 teachers selected from a total population of 50 using a Raosoft calculator.

Data were collected using three adopted and modified questionnaires measuring locus of control (Thomson & Handley, 1990), sense of efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), and organizational commitment (Mowday et al., 1979). The instruments underwent content validation by experts and reliability testing, yielding acceptable Cronbach's alpha values of 0.859 for Locus of Control, 0.823 for Sense of Efficacy, and 0.954 for Organizational Commitment, indicating strong reliability.

Data gathering involved securing permissions, administering questionnaires, and processing responses using SPSS. For analysis, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and Spearman rho correlation were used, with a 5% level of significance to determine relationships among variables.

The study showed interesting results with implications for educational management. For instance, as shown in Table 1, teachers' locus of control varied in degree.

Table 1

Teachers' locus of control

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
1. When my students' grades improve, it's likely because I motivated them or they put in more effort.	4.86	Very High	0.351
2. If I struggled to set up learning centers, it's probably because I lacked materials or didn't spend enough time on activities.	3.82	High	0.962
3. If my students don't benefit from individualized instruction, it's likely because I have trouble managing it or they need a more traditional approach.	3.54	High	1.014
4. When a student improves their grade, it's more likely because they put in more effort or I found better ways to teach them.	4.72	Very High	0.497
5. If my class becomes disruptive when left alone, it's likely because I didn't leave interesting work or the students were noisier than usual.	3.66	High	1.239
6. If my students fail a math test, it's more likely because they weren't attentive or I didn't use enough examples.	3.72	High	0.970
7. If learning centers work well, it's because I worked hard or my students easily adapted.	4.58	Very High	0.499
8. When a student raises their grade, it's more likely because I motivated them or they tried harder.	4.78	Very High	0.418
9. If a student struggles with a concept, it's likely because they couldn't understand it or I couldn't explain it well.	3.68	High	1.019
10. When a student does better, it's more likely because they tried harder or I encouraged them.	4.72	Very High	0.497
11. If I can't keep my class quiet, it's probably because the students are rowdier or I'm less able to settle them.	3.46	High	1.073
12. If a class play succeeds, it's likely because I put in effort or the students were exceptional performers.	4.58	Very High	0.575
13. If I have trouble keeping order, it's probably because I didn't put in extra effort or the students were more uncontrollable.	3.54	High	1.182
14. If a student can't do an assignment, it's likely because they weren't paying attention or I gave an inappropriate assignment.	3.56	High	1.264
15. If lessons on Mexico don't go well, it's likely because the students weren't interested or I didn't put enough effort into them.	3.78	High	0.975
16. If a student starts volunteering, it's more likely because they found a topic interesting or I encouraged them.	4.86	Very High	0.351
17. If a student can't stay on task, it's likely because the task is less interesting or the student can't concentrate.	3.92	High	1.007
18. If I can't devise an instructional system, it's probably because there are too many students or I lack knowledge.	3.32	Moderate	1.133
19. If students perform well on a test, it's likely because they studied or I taught well.	4.80	Very High	0.404
20. If a student's performance deteriorates, it's likely because I didn't motivate them enough or they put in less effort.	3.56	High	1.215

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
21. If a new student struggles to make friends, it's more likely because others didn't make an effort or I didn't encourage friendliness.	3.30	Moderate	1.233
22. If students perform better on a test than last year, it's likely because I put in more effort or this year's students are smarter.	4.46	Very High	0.676
23. If I reprimand a student more often, it's probably because they misbehaved more or I'm less tolerant.	3.88	High	0.872
24. If an underachiever does homework well, it's likely because they tried or I explained well.	4.58	Very High	0.538
25. If a student does better schoolwork, it's more likely because I helped them or they tried harder.	4.68	Very High	0.551
Composite Mean	4.09	High	0.510

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very High, 3.41-4.20 High, 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 1.81-2.60 Low, 1.00-1.80 Very Low

The results show that teachers exhibit a high level of locus of control ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.510$). These imply that their actions and decisions significantly influence events within the school. Teachers attribute students' success and challenges to both internal factors (e.g., teaching effectiveness, motivation, and flexibility) and external factors (e.g., student behavior and classroom conditions), reflecting a balanced and adaptive perspective. High mean scores in motivating students ($M = 4.86$) and encouraging participation ($M = 4.86$) highlight strong internal control, while lower scores in classroom management ($M = 3.46$) and instructional development ($M = 3.32$) suggest challenges related to external constraints.

The findings indicate that teachers are reflective practitioners who recognize both their influence and the limitations posed by external factors. However, areas such as classroom management, instructional differentiation, and student social development require additional support. These results align with Cascio et al. (2014), Chiang et al. (2019) and Galvin et al. (2018) that locus of control influences teachers' emotional well-being and professional effectiveness.

As indicated in Table 2, teachers demonstrated a very high level of self-efficacy ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.414$), indicating strong confidence in managing instruction and student engagement. High scores in encouraging

students' self-belief (M = 4.74), fostering appreciation for learning (M = 4.74), maintaining discipline (M = 4.60), and promoting critical thinking (M = 4.60) reflect teachers' strong instructional competence.

Table 2

Teachers' sense of self-efficacy

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
1. I can achieve a significant impact in reaching the most difficult students.	4.40	Very High	0.639
2. I can contribute significantly to help my students think critically.	4.60	Very High	0.535
3. I can effectively manage and control disruptive behavior in the classroom.	4.42	Very High	0.609
4. I can do a lot to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork.	4.52	Very High	0.580
5. I can clearly communicate my expectations about student behavior.	4.38	Very High	0.725
6. I can effectively encourage students to believe in their ability to do well in schoolwork.	4.74	Very High	0.443
7. I can respond adeptly to difficult questions from my students.	4.42	Very High	0.575
8. I can establish routines to maintain smooth-running activities.	4.56	Very High	0.501
9. I can do much to help my students value learning.	4.74	Very High	0.443
10. I can gauge student comprehension of what I have taught.	4.42	Very High	0.575
11. I can craft good questions for my students to a considerable extent.	4.52	Very High	0.505
12. I can foster student creativity through various means.	4.48	Very High	0.544
13. I can ensure that children follow classroom rules.	4.60	Very High	0.571
14. I can improve the understanding of students who are failing.	4.46	Very High	0.646
15. I can calm disruptive or noisy students effectively.	4.42	Very High	0.575
16. I can establish a classroom management system with each group of students.	4.50	Very High	0.580
17. I can adjust my lessons to the proper level for individual students.	4.58	Very High	0.575
18. I can use a variety of assessment strategies.	4.52	Very High	0.580
19. I can prevent a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson.	4.40	Very High	0.535
20. I can provide alternative explanations or examples when students are confused.	4.58	Very High	0.538
21. I can respond effectively to defiant students.	4.40	Very High	0.606
22. I can assist families in helping their children do well in school.	4.24	Very High	0.716
23. I can implement alternative strategies in my classroom.	4.56	Very High	0.541
24. I can provide appropriate challenges for every capable student.	4.50	Very High	0.505
25. I can use personalized teaching methods to cater to the diverse learning styles of challenging students, ensuring a customized and effective learning experience.	4.52	Very High	0.614
Composite Mean	4.49	Very High	0.414

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very High, 3.41-4.20 High, 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 1.81-2.60 Low, 1.00-1.80 Very Low

Although all indicators fall within the “very high” range, slightly lower scores in engaging families ($M = 4.24$), managing difficult students ($M = 4.40$), and handling disruptive behavior ($M = 4.42$) suggest areas that require further development. In this case, teachers demonstrate strong confidence in their ability to positively influence student learning and classroom dynamics.

These findings support Barni et al. (2019) that teachers’ values and motivation significantly influence their self-efficacy and professional practices. As clearly manifested in the self-assessment of the teachers, their positive values reflect on their choices. For example, encouraging students’ self-belief and fostering appreciation for learning could develop student mindsets for learning. These practices are necessary in nurturing independent learning and life-long learning attitudes of the students.

As reflected in Table 3, teachers also demonstrated a very high level of organizational commitment ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.455$), indicating strong loyalty, pride, and emotional attachment to the institution. High scores in loyalty ($M = 4.70$), pride in being part of the organization ($M = 4.62$), and willingness to exert extra effort ($M = 4.56$) reflect deep commitment and engagement. However, slightly lower scores in long-term retention ($M = 4.16$), willingness to stay under unchanged conditions, and flexibility to work in other organizations ($M = 4.30$) suggest that commitment, while strong, is not absolute. These findings indicate that teachers value their organization but remain open to alternative opportunities under certain conditions.

This aligns with Kaur and Sandhu (2010) and Mercurio (2015) that organizational commitment develops through both affective (emotional) and instrumental (practical) dimensions. While there are other factors influencing organization commitment, the results clearly indicate that the teachers were highly influenced by the organizational leaders and the system itself.

Table 3*Teachers' organizational commitment*

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.	4.56	Very High	0.577
2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.	4.48	Very High	0.505
3. I am loyal to this organization.	4.7	Very High	0.544
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.	4.34	Very High	0.658
5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.	4.42	Very High	0.609
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.	4.62	Very High	0.635
7. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar.	4.3	Very High	0.763
8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	4.56	Very High	0.541
9. It would not change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.	4.16	High	0.792
10. I am glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.	4.54	Very High	0.613
11. There's much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely.	4.38	Very High	0.602
12. I find it easy to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees.	4.44	Very High	0.675
13. I really care about the fate of this organization.	4.5	Very High	0.580
14. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.	4.44	Very High	0.611
15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite my best choice on my part.	4.42	Very High	0.810
Composite Mean	4.46	Very High	0.455

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very High, 3.41-4.20 High, 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 1.81-2.60 Low, 1.00-1.80 Very Low

Table 4 indicates no significant relationship between locus of control and organizational commitment ($r_s = 0.23$, $p = 0.108$). This suggests that teachers' beliefs about control over outcomes do not directly influence their level of commitment to the organization. Therefore, external factors such as supportive work environments, recognition, and professional development opportunities are vital in fostering commitment. This is consistent with Suherlan et al. (2018), who also found no significant relationship between locus of control and organizational commitment.

Table 4*Relationship between teachers' locus of control and organizational commitment*

Variables	rs value	p value
Level of Locus of Control* Level of Organizational Commitment	0.23 ^{ns}	0.108

^{ns}p>0.05, not significant

Table 5 shows a significant relationship between self-efficacy and organizational commitment ($r_s = 0.717$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher self-efficacy is associated with stronger commitment. Teachers who are confident in their abilities are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and dedicated to their organization.

Table 5*Relationship between the teachers' self-efficacy and organizational commitment*

Variables	rs value	p value
Level of Sense of Self-Efficacy * Level of Organizational Commitment	0.717*	<0.001

*p<0.05, significant

This finding aligns with Biçer (2023) and Wang et al. (2024) that increased self-efficacy enhances job satisfaction, resilience, and professional commitment. Teachers who feel more capable of managing classroom dynamics and promoting student learning tend to demonstrate higher levels of commitment and loyalty. Strengthening teachers' self-efficacy can enhance their engagement and dedication for a more motivated and cohesive teaching community.

Table 6*Relationship between teachers' locus of control and self-efficacy*

Variables	rs value	p value
Level of Locus of Control* Level of Sense of Self-Efficacy	0.359*	0.010

*p<0.05, significant

Results in Table 6 also show a significant relationship between locus of control and self-efficacy ($r_s = 0.359, p = 0.010$). This indicates that teachers with a stronger internal locus of control tend to have higher self-efficacy. Teachers who believe they can influence outcomes are more proactive, resilient, and motivated to improve their teaching practices. This finding is supported by Botha and Dahmann (2023) that internal locus of control enhances confidence and goal attainment.

Conclusion

Teachers' high level of locus of control can influence school outcomes. The strong sense of ownership and responsibility in their roles act as proactive agents of change that could contribute to the overall development of the school community. Similarly, the very high level of self-efficacy indicates that teachers perceive themselves as highly capable of managing classroom instruction and student engagement. In this environment, a culture of empowerment, confidence, and continuous improvement could prosper. All these factors could potentially influence the teachers' organizational commitment, which goes beyond job satisfaction. As a result, teachers exhibit enhanced performance and stronger collaboration.

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Teaching in a Far-Flung School

Jonah Mae Z. Quillano

Teaching is a noble and fulfilling profession that involves imparting knowledge, skills, and values to learners (Moreno et al., 2023). Teachers play a crucial role in shaping individuals and contributing to societal development (Becirović & Akbarov, 2015; Elbertson et al., 2025). However, the profession is also characterized by various challenges that test teachers' dedication and commitment. In the Philippine context, these challenges are more pronounced in far-flung schools, where access to quality education remains limited. Many of these schools serve marginalized and disadvantaged communities where poverty is prevalent and often evident in the classroom setting. Consequently, providing quality instruction and implementing effective learning initiatives in these areas become both essential and demanding responsibilities for teachers.

Teachers assigned to far-flung schools often encounter significant physical, social, and professional challenges (Ucag et al., 2024; Galut, 2025; Algonos et al., 2024; Callano & Bantulo, 2025). Quejada and Orale (2018) noted that teachers travel long distances, sometimes riding motorcycles for hours and walking along hazardous paths just to reach their assigned schools. In some cases, they rely on various modes of transportation, such as *baesa* and *habal-habal*, to access remote locations. These circumstances require teachers

to make substantial personal sacrifices, including spending extended periods away from their families, in order to fulfill their professional responsibilities.

Teaching as a Mission Amid Challenging Contexts

Education is a fundamental pillar of national development, and teachers play a crucial role in shaping future generations (Bulut et al., 2025; Dittrich, 2024; Niazi, 2025). This responsibility becomes more demanding in far-flung schools, where limited access to transportation, educational resources, and essential services creates significant challenges in the delivery of quality education. Teaching in these areas requires resilience, adaptability, and a strong commitment to service, as educators often travel long distances and work under physically and emotionally challenging conditions (Ucag et al., 2024; Galut, 2025; Algonos et al., 2024; Callano & Bantulo, 2025; Quejada & Orale, 2018). Environmental factors such as difficult terrain, unsafe travel routes, and adverse weather conditions further complicate teachers' daily responsibilities and may affect their ability to perform their duties effectively (Algonos et al., 2024; Callano & Bantulo, 2025; Quejada & Orale, 2018).

Beyond delivering instruction, teachers in far-flung schools are expected to motivate learners, address diverse educational needs, and serve as role models within their communities. Teaching is a demanding profession that requires the use of varied instructional strategies to engage students and facilitate meaningful learning experiences (Putri & Elizar, 2025; Langelaan et al., 2024; Goyibova et al., 2025). In resource-constrained settings, teachers must be innovative and resourceful in sustaining student interest and participation (Sepadi, 2025). Their role extends beyond academic instruction, as they also influence learners' values, attitudes, and aspirations (Feliza, 2025). Consequently, teaching in far-flung schools requires educators to balance instructional responsibilities with social and community-related roles.

Despite these challenges, many teachers willingly accept assignments in far-flung schools, demonstrating their dedication to the profession and commitment to educational equity. Their perseverance is often sustained by intrinsic motivation and a strong sense of purpose. Xu et al. (2023) emphasized that one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching is witnessing students succeed, while Javilla (2019) highlighted the fulfillment teachers gain from making a positive difference in learners' lives. Meaningful interactions with students and participation in community activities further strengthen teachers' sense of accomplishment and belonging. Trigwell (2012) found that teachers experience greater satisfaction when adopting student-centered approaches, while Zhang et al. (2025) emphasized that inspiring students contributes significantly to both learner success and teacher motivation. Furthermore, external support mechanisms such as seminars, training programs, and motivational activities can enhance teacher retention and sustain their commitment to serving in challenging environments (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012).

Challenges Encountered by Teachers

Teaching in far-flung schools is often complicated by socioeconomic and environmental conditions that significantly affect both teaching and learning. Poverty within these communities remains a major challenge, influencing students' academic performance, behavior, and access to educational opportunities (Callano & Bantulo, 2025; Quejada & Orale, 2018). Many learners come from disadvantaged families whose parents have limited educational backgrounds and are often unable to provide sufficient academic support. As a result, teachers must address not only instructional concerns but also the broader social realities that shape students' learning experiences.

Economic hardship further contributes to issues such as child labor and absenteeism. In many cases, cultural practices and financial necessities compel students to prioritize work over schooling, leading to reduced academic engagement and lower educational attainment (Guarcello et al., 2015). These circumstances place additional responsibilities on teachers, who must find ways to motivate learners and support their continued participation in education despite these barriers.

The challenges of teaching in far-flung schools are intensified by geographical isolation. Many schools are located in remote areas that are difficult and hazardous to access, requiring teachers to travel long distances under challenging conditions (Quejada & Orale, 2018). Such circumstances often result in additional financial burdens, limited access to healthcare services, and prolonged separation from family members, all of which can affect teachers' well-being and professional performance. Moreover, parental influence and community expectations play a significant role in shaping students' attitudes toward education. Callano and Bantulo (2025) noted that parents with limited educational backgrounds may place less importance on formal schooling, which can reduce students' motivation to attend classes and pursue academic success.

Coping Mechanisms of Teachers

Despite the numerous challenges associated with teaching in far-flung schools, teachers employ various coping strategies to ensure effective instruction and maintain their well-being. One of the most effective approaches is the use of contextualized instructional materials, which connect lessons to learners' real-life experiences and improve their understanding of concepts (Atondo, 2022). In resource-limited settings, this strategy enables

teachers to make learning more relevant, meaningful, and engaging by utilizing familiar contexts and locally available resources.

Teachers also provide one-on-one tutorials to address individual learning needs and support students who may struggle academically. This approach helps learners develop their intellectual, communication, and social skills while allowing teachers to provide more personalized instruction (Goyibova et al., 2025). Such practices demonstrate teachers' adaptability, creativity, and commitment to ensuring that students continue to learn despite the limitations and challenges present in far-flung schools.

Beyond instructional strategies, teachers also rely on coping mechanisms to maintain their emotional and psychological well-being. The demanding nature of teaching in remote areas requires educators to effectively manage stress and adapt to difficult circumstances. Nwoko et al. (2024) emphasized that effective coping mechanisms help teachers manage stress and reduce psychological risks associated with their profession. These coping strategies not only support teachers' well-being but also enable them to remain committed and effective in fulfilling their roles in far-flung schools.

RESEARCH FOCUS: The Lived Experiences, Challenges, and Coping Mechanisms of English Teachers Assigned in Far-Flung Schools

In the Province of Aklan, Philippines, particularly in the municipality of Madalag, several schools are situated in far-flung areas that primarily serve Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners. Teachers assigned to these schools face numerous challenges, including difficult transportation, prolonged separation from their families, adjustment to unfamiliar environments, and limited communication caused by weak internet connectivity and frequent power interruptions. Given these circumstances, this study explored the lived

experiences of English teachers assigned to far-flung schools. Specifically, it sought to understand the challenges they encounter, the coping mechanisms they employ, and how they adapt to the demands of teaching in remote communities.

The study employed a qualitative research design grounded in phenomenology and narrative inquiry. Through in-depth face-to-face interviews, the study involved five purposively selected teacher-participants assigned to far-flung schools in the District of Madalag. All participants were female and possessed varying educational backgrounds and years of teaching experience. With participants' consent, interviews were recorded, transcribed, and prepared for analysis.

Thematic analysis, following the framework of Braun and Clarke (2006), was used to identify recurring patterns and organize the data into meaningful themes. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the interview guide underwent expert validation, and participant validation was conducted to verify the accuracy of the interpretations. Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the study, including obtaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, respecting participants' autonomy, and adhering to established ethical research standards.

Teaching in a far-flung school is an experience filled with both hardships and profound rewards. Through their experiences, teachers learn to become more resourceful, adaptable, and resilient in the face of adversity.

Access/Road Going to School

The lived experiences of teachers assigned to one of the far-flung schools in the Division of Aklan revealed a multifaceted journey, particularly in dealing with the difficult roads leading to their schools. Teacher Lavender and Teacher Jasmine shared their experiences regarding the challenges they

encountered during their daily commute. According to Teacher Jasmine: *“We experienced a lot of challenges while traveling going to school and going home. There were times that we need to walk because of the very risky condition of road, especially if the weather was not good and there was a flood.”*

The long and hazardous journey to and from school became a significant part of their lives. Despite these difficulties, the experience taught them to be courageous and resilient in fulfilling their responsibilities as educators.

Teachers’ Feelings About Teaching in Far-Flung Schools

The teachers experienced a wide range of emotions while teaching in far-flung schools. Feelings of worry, stress, sadness, fear, pity, and emotional pain were common when they encountered challenges in their work environment. Nevertheless, they remained steadfast in their commitment to their profession and continued to serve their learners with dedication.

Teacher Tulip and Teacher Lilac shared their feelings about teaching in a far-flung school. According to them, the experience brought mixed emotions and required resilience, adaptability, and a deep commitment to education. Teacher Tulip stated, *“The moment I knew that I will be assign to one of the farthest schools in the District of Madalag, I felt sad because I will be far from my family and I cannot spend time with them. We were staying in our station for five days, only Saturday and Sunday were the time that we can be together with them. But despite my sadness, I am still happy because I can provide the daily needs of my family and I can buy those things that I can’t afford to but before. I am happy that I can help and teach the children there. I am sad, fear, and worried, but being happy was the prevailing emotion that I felt because I am serving the IP community.”*

A similar experience was shared by Teacher Lilac, *“It was very challenging when you were assigned at the far-flung school, especially if you were a nursing mother, it was very hard to be away to your child. You cannot spend so much time with your family. You need to sacrifice in order to perform your obligation as a teacher.”*

Individuals who are exposed to a new environment and culture often experience feelings of uncertainty, confusion, and frustration. Similarly, the teacher-participants encountered various emotional challenges while adjusting to their assigned schools. Despite these experiences, they remained determined, resilient, and committed to fulfilling their responsibilities as educators.

Adapting to the Lifestyle, Beliefs, Culture, and Traditions of the Community

Another significant experience shared by the teacher-participants was learning to adapt to the lifestyle, beliefs, culture, and traditions of the communities where they were assigned. Teacher Tulip, Teacher Lilac, and Teacher Daisy emphasized the importance of developing positive relationships with learners and community members as part of their adjustment process.

Teacher Daisy shared, *“As a teacher assigned in the far-flung school, you need to adapt the lifestyles, beliefs, culture, and tradition of the people in the community. We should be adaptable to have a good relationship with others and we should respect their culture and tradition as well. As time goes by, I adapt their lifestyle and way of living, like washing our clothes in the river, cooking vegetables that was available there, and using lamp when there was no electricity. If there was school activity like the celebration of Indigenous People’s Day, we give importance to their culture. As a highlight of the program, the IP elders and the learners perform the ‘Inagong Dance’,*

this was their traditional dance in Barangay Panipiason. This dance shows the different movements of the animals like how the monkey moves. I observed that the people in the community were kind, lovable, and helpful.”

Teacher Tulip and Teacher Lilac shared similar experiences. Over time, they learned to appreciate and respect the customs and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples community. Through continuous interaction with learners and community members, they were able to establish meaningful relationships that contributed to their successful adjustment and teaching experience in the far-flung schools.

Teaching in far-flung schools also presented several challenges as mentioned by the teachers.

Difficulty in Comprehension Due to Language Barriers

One of the challenges was the difficulty in comprehension caused by language barriers. Based on the statements of Teacher Tulip, Teacher Lilac, Teacher Daisy, Teacher Jasmine, and Teacher Lavender, language differences emerged as a significant challenge in delivering instruction. The participants collectively expressed, *“Most of our students are Indigenous People, and there are instances that we don’t have any idea what their dialect means, and this is one of the reasons why sometimes it is difficult for us to deliver instructions.”*

Communication barriers were identified as a common challenge in classroom instruction. Despite the teachers’ strong desire to teach and support their learners, language differences often made it difficult to communicate lessons and instructions effectively. Since many learners spoke a dialect unfamiliar to the teachers, misunderstandings occasionally occurred during classroom interactions. Consequently, teachers had to find ways to bridge communication gaps, including the use of translation, simplified explanations,

and other strategies to facilitate understanding and improve classroom communication.

Poverty

Poverty emerged as one of the most significant challenges encountered by teachers in far-flung schools. According to Teacher Lilac, *“One of the challenges teaching in far-flung school is poverty. This is the main problem encountered by teachers in school. Sometimes, this is the reason why they cannot focus on their studies. They are going to school with an empty stomach and without any snacks or lunch. If there are school activities that require financial matters, they cannot join because of lack of financial support. As a teacher who understands their situation, we do not give any projects or activities that require them to buy materials. Instead, we give them projects that are available in the community. Sometimes, there are instances that teachers are the ones who provide the materials if they are very important in the class.”*

Similarly, Teacher Daisy shared, *“Because of poverty, parents may not be able to provide adequate support and guidance to their children with their schoolwork. Students from impoverished families are more likely to drop out of school due to financial pressures, the need to work, or a lack of motivation.”*

The participants recognized poverty as a major factor affecting students' education. Many learners come from economically disadvantaged households where parents have limited educational backgrounds and insufficient resources to support their children's schooling. These circumstances affect students' academic performance, participation, and motivation to learn. As a result, teachers often adjust classroom requirements and provide additional support to accommodate the realities faced by their learners.

Child Labor and Absenteeism

Another challenge identified by the participants was child labor, which often contributes to absenteeism among learners. Teacher Jasmine explained: *“There are times that some of our students fail to go to school because they need to work to earn money. There are some students who ask permission because they cannot be in school for several days since they need to work in banana plantations or help harvest rice in the fields. There are also some students who work as habal-habal drivers to earn money for their daily needs and school expenses. These are some of the reasons why they are always absent and why they need to work at an early age.”*

The participants observed that economic necessity and certain cultural practices often compel students to work instead of attending school regularly. Consequently, some learners experience frequent absences or eventually discontinue their studies. These situations become additional challenges for teachers, who must continuously encourage students to remain in school while addressing learning gaps caused by prolonged absences.

Weather Conditions

Weather conditions were also identified as a major challenge in far-flung schools. Teacher Lavender shared, *“Weather condition is one of the biggest problems encountered by the teachers teaching in the far-flung school. First is the very risky road due to flooding and landslides. We experience walking for four hours from school going home because our drivers are not able to pass the road because of the floods. Sometimes, this is the reason why teachers find themselves stranded, unable to reach the school, resulting in missed classes and disrupted learning schedules. The same scenario is also experienced by the students. They cannot go to school if there is continuous*

heavy rain that results in flooding because it is very risky for them to cross the river.”

The participants emphasized that unpredictable weather conditions significantly affect both teachers and learners. Floods, landslides, and heavy rainfall make transportation difficult and dangerous, often disrupting classes and limiting access to school. These conditions not only affect the continuity of instruction but also pose risks to the safety and well-being of both teachers and students.

Despite the challenges they encountered, the participants found inspiration in the resilience and determination of their learners.

Encouraged by the Learners’ Situation

Teacher Jasmine shared, *“Amidst the reality of economic hardship, our learners have the unwavering determination to pursue their education. We can see in them the eagerness to learn. Even without snacks or despite financial difficulties, they still pursue their education to build a brighter future.”*

The participants described how the learners’ perseverance served as a source of motivation and encouragement. Although many students face economic hardships, long travel distances, and limited resources, they continue to attend school and demonstrate a strong desire to learn. Witnessing this determination inspired teachers to remain committed to their profession and strengthened their resolve to support their learners despite the challenges of teaching in a far-flung school.

Making Contextualized Instructional Materials

The development of contextualized instructional materials emerged as another coping mechanism employed by the participants. Teacher Lavender emphasized, *“To become an effective English teacher, we need to think and*

craft different ways on how the learners can easily understand the lesson. By using available resources and contextualized materials, such as local stories, we can make lessons more meaningful and engaging.”

The participants recognized the importance of adapting instructional materials to the learners’ context. By incorporating local experiences, familiar situations, and community-based resources into lessons, teachers were able to make learning more relevant and meaningful. This approach helped improve students’ understanding and engagement, particularly in an environment where access to educational resources was limited.

Community Engagement

Community engagement also emerged as an important coping mechanism among the participants. Teacher Lilac highlighted the value of building strong relationships with community members and stakeholders. According to her, *“Community engagement is not merely a supplementary activity, but it is one way of having an effective and successful teaching and learning process in school.”*

The participants emphasized that actively engaging with the community allowed them to better understand the learners’ backgrounds, needs, and circumstances. Through participation in community activities and collaboration with parents and local leaders, teachers were able to establish trust and strengthen partnerships that supported students’ learning. These positive relationships contributed to a more effective teaching and learning environment and helped teachers successfully adapt to life and work in far-flung schools.

Conclusion

Teaching in far-flung schools is characterized by significant physical, emotional, and instructional challenges. Teachers face barriers related to accessibility, language, poverty, and environmental conditions. However, they demonstrate resilience through adaptability, cultural integration, and innovative teaching strategies. While individual coping mechanisms enable teachers to manage these challenges, there is a need for systemic support, including infrastructure development, language training, and community-based interventions. Addressing these issues is essential to ensure equitable and effective education for learners in far-flung areas.

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Building Resilience: Strengthening the Heart of Teaching

Teaching is a profession filled with both opportunities and challenges. Teachers are expected to respond to diverse learner needs, manage increasing workloads, adapt to educational reforms, and maintain high levels of professional performance. While these demands can create significant pressures, teachers do not navigate them alone. Their ability to persevere and succeed is often influenced by a combination of personal strengths, supportive relationships, and enabling institutional environments.

This chapter explores the factors that help teachers cope with the complexities of their profession. The internal resources serve as foundations that enable teachers to transform challenges into opportunities for improvement. Equally important are the interpersonal relationships that sustain teachers throughout their professional journeys. Mentorship, collegial collaboration, supportive leadership, and positive relationships with learners and stakeholders provide emotional encouragement, practical guidance, and a sense of belonging. These connections foster professional confidence and create communities of support that help teachers navigate demanding situations more effectively.

This chapter proves that resilience in teaching is not solely the product of individual determination. Rather, it emerges through the interaction of personal capabilities, meaningful relationships, and supportive institutional structures. By examining these interconnected factors, it offers valuable insights into how educators can be empowered to continue making meaningful contributions to the lives of their learners.

Influence of School Culture on Teachers' Retention and Job Satisfaction

Ma. Necole R. Nagtalon

Job satisfaction and teacher retention are critical factors affecting the overall quality of education (Cuervo, 2025; Sulaimi & Jantan, 2024; Ortan et al., 2021). In a rapidly changing educational environment, many schools face challenges in retaining their most effective teachers (Morton & Maresh, 2024; Liu & Li, 2025), which is a significant concern because experienced educators play a vital role in student success. One of the primary reasons teachers leave the profession is the lack of appreciation and support within their workplace (Martinsone et al., 2024; Pressley et al., 2026; Straková & Simonová, 2024). The overall school environment, commonly referred to as school culture, greatly influences how teachers perceive their work and whether they choose to remain in their positions or seek opportunities elsewhere (Arnoco & Prado, 2025). Teachers who experience strong institutional support tend to be more productive and are more likely to stay in their schools.

A positive and supportive school culture is strongly associated with higher levels of teacher retention and job satisfaction. According to Lanns-Isaac (2024), effective school management and the clear communication of organizational goals are essential in fostering a culture that encourages

teachers to remain in the profession. When school leaders demonstrate genuine care, implement programs that address teachers' needs, and promote collaboration among staff, teachers feel valued and connected to their institutions. Likewise, Toropova et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of positive staff relationships where supportive interactions among colleagues contribute significantly to teachers' workplace satisfaction and commitment. A supportive school culture characterized by strong leadership, effective communication, collegial relationships, and institutional support plays a crucial role in enhancing teacher retention and overall job satisfaction (Lann-Isaac, 2024; Toropova et al., 2021; Arnoco & Prado, 2025).

School Culture and Teacher Retention

Several studies have confirmed that school culture plays a significant role in teachers' decisions to remain in or leave the profession (Xu & Pang, 2024; Boudouaia et al., 2024; Räsänen et al., 2020). A positive school culture is characterized by strong leadership, collaboration, collegial support, shared goals, and positive interpersonal relationships, all of which contribute to teacher retention. Al-Majaideh (2021) examined key dimensions of school culture, including leadership teamwork, teacher collaboration, collegial support, shared goals, and learning partnerships, and found that strong collaboration between school leaders and teachers reduces the likelihood of teacher turnover. The study further highlighted that professional and collegial work environments are important factors in retaining teachers. Similarly, Wang'ombe (2023) argued that a healthy school culture, grounded in shared values, positive relationships, and effective leadership, promotes teacher retention across different contexts. Leadership approaches such as transformational and distributed leadership, together with professional development opportunities, mentorship programs, teacher autonomy, and

well-being initiatives, are critical in encouraging teachers to remain in their positions.

Supportive relationships within the school environment also play a crucial role in enhancing job satisfaction and retention. Hasselquist et al. (2017) found that perceived support from colleagues and school administrators is particularly important for beginning teachers, as it contributes significantly to their job satisfaction and commitment to the profession. The concept of job embeddedness, which refers to the factors that connect teachers to their profession and workplace, include relationships with colleagues that align with the school's culture (Shibiti, 2019). Teacher retention is positively associated with job embeddedness, especially when educators strongly identify with and feel connected to their school culture (Kaya Yıldız, 2018).

In addition to fostering commitment, school culture can influence teachers' well-being and job satisfaction. Febriantina and Aliyyah (2020) reported that school culture affects both teacher stress and job satisfaction. Their findings indicated that while stress negatively impacts job satisfaction, a positive school climate can mitigate stress, enhance satisfaction, and improve retention rates. Furthermore, Diaz (2022) noted that although demographic variables did not exhibit a statistically significant relationship with school culture, certain aspects of school culture may affect teachers differently depending on their level of experience. Empirical evidence suggests that supportive leadership, collaborative relationships, positive school climates, and strong professional connections are essential components of school culture that contribute to teacher satisfaction and long-term retention (Al-Majaideh, 2021; Wang'ombe, 2023; Hasselquist et al., 2017; Febriantina & Aliyyah, 2020; Shibiti, 2019; Diaz, 2022).

School Culture and Teacher Job Satisfaction

The relationship between school culture and teacher job satisfaction has been widely documented in the literature. A positive school culture characterized by collaboration, shared goals, supportive leadership, and strong collegial relationships contributes significantly to teachers' overall satisfaction and well-being (Arar et al., 2026; Saks et al., 2025). Al-Majaideh (2021) found that teacher collaboration and a shared sense of purpose are positively associated with job satisfaction, suggesting that teachers are more satisfied when they work in environments that promote collective responsibility and teamwork. Similarly, You et al. (2017) identified academic climate, collegial support, and principal leadership as key predictors of teacher job satisfaction. These factors not only enhance teachers' well-being but also strengthen their sense of belonging within the school community.

Support from school leaders and colleagues has also been recognized as an important contributor to teacher satisfaction. Hasselquist et al. (2017) reported that teacher efficacy is strongly influenced by the level of support provided by peers and school administrators. Likewise, Lanns-Isaac (2024) emphasized the critical role of school leaders in fostering supportive and collaborative environments. By promoting open communication, empowering teachers, and addressing their professional needs, school leaders help create workplaces where teachers feel valued and respected.

Furthermore, school culture influences job satisfaction through its impact on teacher stress and well-being. Febriantina and Aliyyah (2020) found that school culture significantly affects teacher stress levels, which subsequently influence job satisfaction. A positive school climate can reduce stress, enhance satisfaction, and ultimately contribute to greater teacher retention. Institutional factors such as a positive academic climate, supportive leadership, and collegial relationships are essential for improving teacher job

satisfaction (You et al., 2017). Literature suggests that supportive school cultures foster teacher efficacy, reduce workplace stress, strengthen professional relationships, and enhance job satisfaction, all of which contribute to greater teacher commitment and retention (Al-Majaideh, 2021; You et al., 2017; Hasselquist et al., 2017; Lanns-Isaac, 2024; Febriantina & Aliyyah, 2020).

RESEARCH FOCUS: Measuring the Influence of School Culture on Secondary School Teachers' Retention and Job Satisfaction

This study was anchored on Schein's (1985) Organizational Culture Theory, which explains how organizational culture shapes the attitudes and behaviors of individuals within an organization. Guided by this framework, the study examined the relationship between school culture, teacher retention, and job satisfaction in secondary schools in the District of Banga in the Philippines. School culture was viewed as a critical factor influencing teachers' perceptions of their work environment, their level of job satisfaction, and their decision to remain in the profession. The study also explored how various dimensions of school culture relate to teachers' personal characteristics and perceptions and sought to propose leadership-based strategies to strengthen school culture and improve teacher retention.

A mixed-methods research design was employed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. The quantitative component utilized a survey questionnaire to gather data on teachers' demographic profiles, perceptions of school culture, job satisfaction, and retention. Complementing this, the qualitative component involved in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gain deeper insights into teachers' lived experiences and perspectives regarding school culture and retention.

The study was conducted in six public secondary schools in the District of Banga, Aklan. A total of 112 teachers were selected through stratified random sampling using Slovin’s formula for the quantitative phase, while six teachers were purposively chosen for the qualitative phase based on their experience and willingness to participate. Data were collected through a validated researcher-made questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and correlation tests, whereas qualitative data were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis following the procedures outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) to identify emerging patterns and themes.

Table 1

Perceived school culture influencing teacher’s retention

Indicators	WM	Interpretation
Collaboration and Support		
1. Teachers work collaboratively to solve problems.	4.56	Very highly perceived
2. There is a strong sense of community among staff.	4.46	Very highly perceived
3. I feel supported by my colleagues.	4.49	Very highly perceived
4. The school provides ample opportunities for professional development.	4.43	Very highly perceived
5. Professional development activities are relevant and helpful.	4.43	Very highly perceived
6. I have access to resources that enhance my teaching skills.	4.34	Very highly perceived
7. School leaders communicate effectively with staff.	4.39	Very highly perceived
8. Administration is approachable and supportive.	4.46	Very highly perceived
9. Decisions are made transparently and involve input from teachers.	4.38	Very highly perceived
10. My work is recognized and appreciated by school leaders.	4.43	Very highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.44	Very highly perceived
Professional Development		
1. School provides ample opportunities for professional development.	4.32	Very highly perceived

Indicators	WM	Interpretation
2. Professional development activities are relevant to my teaching needs.	4.41	Very highly perceived
3. I have access to a variety of professional development resources.	4.18	Highly perceived
4. Professional development sessions are well-organized and effective.	4.29	Very highly perceived
5. The school invites knowledgeable and engaging presenters for professional development.	4.32	Very highly perceived
6. I feel that professional development activities enhance my teaching skills.	4.46	Very highly perceived
7. Administration encourages participation in professional development activities.	4.40	Very highly perceived
8. I receive adequate support to implement new strategies learned from professional development.	4.35	Very highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.34	Very highly perceived
Leadership		
1. School leaders clearly communicate expectations and goals.	4.28	Very highly perceived
2. Administration keeps staff informed about important decisions and changes.	4.26	Very highly perceived
3. I feel that my opinions and feedback are valued by the school leaders.	4.19	Highly perceived
4. School leaders provide the resources needed to effectively perform my job.	4.22	Very highly perceived
5. I receive adequate support from the administration to address student needs.	4.21	Very highly perceived
6. The administration actively works to reduce my workload and stress.	4.19	Highly perceived
7. The administration encourages continuous professional growth.	4.29	Very highly perceived
8. I have opportunities to take on leadership roles within the school.	4.28	Very highly perceived
9. The administration supports my participation in professional development activities	4.23	Very highly perceived
10. Teachers are involved in the decision-making processes at the school.	4.22	Very highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.24	Very highly perceived
Recognition and Appreciation		
1. The school has formal systems in place to recognize teacher's achievements.	4.31	Very highly perceived
2. Outstanding performance is acknowledged publicly within the school.	4.43	Very highly perceived
3. My efforts are recognized informally by colleagues and administration.	4.35	Very highly perceived
4. I receive positive feedback from school leaders regularly.	4.29	Very highly perceived
5. The culture of the school promotes mutual appreciation among staff.	4.29	Very highly perceived

Indicators	WM	Interpretation
6. Recognition motivates me to perform better in my role.	4.36	Very highly perceived
7. I have opportunities to recognize and appreciate the work of my colleagues.	4.38	Very highly perceived
8. School promotes a positive and supportive culture.	4.37	Very highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.35	Very highly perceived
Work Environment		
1. Classrooms are well-equipped with necessary materials and technology.	4.13	Highly perceived
2. The physical condition of the school supports a positive teaching experience.	4.23	Very highly perceived
3. There is a culture of mutual respect among staff and students	4.36	Very highly perceived
4. The school supports a healthy work-life balance for teachers.	4.28	Very highly perceived
5. I am able to manage my workload without excessive stress.	4.36	Very highly perceived
6. I feel supported by the administration in dealing with challenging situations.	4.22	Very highly perceived
7. There is a strong sense of community and camaraderie among staff.	4.29	Very highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.27	Very highly perceived

The respondents very highly perceive the collaborative and supportive aspects of their school culture ($M = 4.4384$), indicating a strong influence on teacher retention. They also highly value professional development opportunities ($M = 4.3415$), which are likewise very highly perceived. Leadership practices ($M = 4.2375$) and recognition and appreciation ($M = 4.3459$) are also rated as very highly perceived. In addition, teachers perceive their work environment ($M = 4.2679$) as very highly supportive, suggesting that the school provides a conducive and nurturing workplace.

Supportive relationships and community bond. Supportive relationships and a strong sense of community within schools are key factors influencing teacher retention. Participants consistently emphasized the

importance of camaraderie and harmonious relationships in fostering an environment where teachers feel valued, appreciated, and motivated to stay.

Participant 1 expressed this view, stating, "*Sense of belongingness and retention is the end product of being supportive to colleagues. The bond that unites the teachers makes us feel that we are a family.*" Familial bonds within the school foster emotional commitment and strengthen teachers' resolve to remain, even during challenging times. Similarly, Participant 2 elaborated, "*My interaction with my workmates so far has been okay and wholesome since we are interacting in harmony with one another. Such a positive interaction with my workmates drives the point home that I am enjoying the feeling of belongingness, that I am feeling I am part of the group.*" Harmonious relationships promote inclusivity and reduce feelings of isolation, a common factor in teacher attrition.

Participant 3 further noted, "*Close relationship with colleagues fosters a nurturing and cooperative environment, providing a sense of belongingness and common purpose. Such a relationship not only increases job satisfaction but also encourages people to remain in the school community.*" The dual benefit of strong relationships enhances both workplace climate and long-term commitment. Participant 6 added, "*Our good relationship, treating like brothers and sisters in school, makes me stay.*" The depth of emotional connection supports both professional and personal well-being, reducing stress and burnout. Finally, Participant 8 stated, "*The good camaraderie, the good values, and professionalism of teachers/colleagues influence a sense of belonging and retention.*" This integrates the role of shared values, professionalism, and camaraderie in strengthening teachers' sense of belonging and commitment to the school.

Leadership support and empowerment. The critical role of school leadership shapes a positive school culture and significantly influences

teachers' morale, trust, and decision to stay. Participants emphasized that supportive, collaborative, and empowering leadership is essential in creating a professional environment where teachers feel valued and motivated.

Participant 1 stated, "*The school heads' support has a lot of influence on the culture of the school. They give us complete support to any activities or endeavours we have.*" Strong leadership support builds trust and confidence and enables teachers to engage in professional activities with assurance that their efforts are valued. Participant 2 added, "*The support network from my school principal is one thing I quite like about the school arrangement. Our principal has been very accommodating to all of us teachers so that we get the ease of the teachers.*" This reflects the importance of an accommodating and supportive leadership style in promoting teachers' well-being and comfort in the workplace.

Participant 3 emphasized the broader impact of leadership, stating, "*The degree of support from school leadership significantly impacts trust and morale, building a culture in which teachers feel valued and empowered.*" The role of leadership fosters empowerment, increases morale, and strengthens teachers' commitment to remain in the institution. Participant 6 further noted, "*High-level support from school leaders has a positive effect on the school culture. For instance, teachers and parents' collaboration and support also rely on the level of support of the school leader.*" There is a ripple effect of leadership in strengthening not only internal relationships but also external partnerships within the school community.

Participant 7 stated, "*Effective leadership can build trust and confidence, encourage collaboration, empower teachers, provide resources and support, and cultivate a positive and inclusive atmosphere.*" Finally, Participant 8 shared, "*The leadership plays an important part in creating a positive school atmosphere. It should be important for the school head to set*

an example to influence good and lead the teachers to remain." Role modeling is important, where leaders influence teachers through professionalism and integrity.

Professional growth and positive work environment. Fostering a strong culture promotes continuous development, recognition, and a supportive workplace. These elements contribute to teacher satisfaction and retention.

Participant 2 stated, *"The school is always looking for something in teachers like us for us to professionally develop. When the school realizes that there are teachers who don't have any skills, they offer workshops, seminars, and training to make us better."* Targeted professional development opportunities enhance teachers' skills and reinforce their value within the institution. Similarly, Participant 3 noted, *"The school focus on collaborative learning enabled us to engage in peer mentoring programs, which improved my instructional strategies and confidence."* Collaborative learning and peer mentoring strengthens teaching practices and fosters a sense of shared purpose.

Participant 4 emphasized the role of policies, stating, *"A school's policies and practices are crucial in showing its commitment to creating a positive work environment for staff. Implemented effectively, they promote respect, trust, and teamwork."* Participant 6 added, *"The school practices and policies ensure there is open and transparent communication and an excellent work-life balance. The policies are used as a checklist for what we should and should not do in the workplace."* Well-structured and consistently applied policies enhance workplace satisfaction and work-life balance. Lastly, Participant 8 stated, *"When you are in an environment with a good atmosphere, it will encourage you to develop professionally, particularly if*

there is respect between students and teachers." Therefore, positive and respectful environment promotes both professional growth and motivation.

Table 2

Perceived school culture influencing teacher's job satisfaction

Indicators	WM	Interpretation
Collaboration and Support		
1. Collaboration with colleagues enhances my job satisfaction.	4.36	Very highly perceived
2. Support from my peers contributes to my overall job satisfaction.	4.37	Very highly perceived
3. I am satisfied with the opportunities for collaboration in my school.	4.36	Very highly perceived
4. The collaborative culture at my school positively impacts my teaching experience.	4.41	Very highly perceived
5. I feel more motivated and engaged in my work due to the support I receive from colleagues.	4.37	Very highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.377	Very highly perceived
Professional Development		
1. Opportunities for professional development enhance my job satisfaction.	4.38	Very highly perceived
2. I feel more confident in my teaching abilities due to professional development.	4.31	Very highly perceived
3. Professional development opportunities at my school meet my career growth needs.	4.24	Very highly perceived
4. The quality of professional development impacts my decision to stay at my current school.	4.21	Highly perceived
5. I am satisfied with the professional development support provided by my school.	4.22	Very highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.27	Very highly perceived
Leadership		
1. The support I receive from school leadership enhances my job satisfaction.	4.20	Highly perceived
2. I feel motivated and engaged in my work due to positive interactions with school leaders.	4.16	Highly perceived
3. The leadership at my school positively impacts my teaching experience.	4.15	Highly perceived
4. I am satisfied with the way school leaders handle disciplinary issues.	4.13	Highly perceived
5. The leadership at my school contributes to a positive work environment.	4.18	Highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.16	Highly perceived
Recognition and Appreciation		
1. Formal recognition enhances my job satisfaction.	4.27	Very highly perceived

Indicators	WM	Interpretation
2. Informal recognition from colleagues contributes to my overall job satisfaction.	4.24	Very highly perceived
3. I am satisfied with the appreciation shown by school leaders.	4.21	Highly perceived
4. The recognition and appreciation I receive positively impact my teaching experience.	4.26	Very highly perceived
5. I feel motivated to stay at my current school due to the recognition and appreciation I receive.	4.19	Highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.23	Very highly perceived
Work Environment		
1. The work environment at my school influences my decision to stay.	3.91	Highly perceived
2. The physical condition of the school makes me more likely to continue teaching here.	4.13	Highly perceived
3. The work-life balance provided by the school makes me feel more committed to my position.	4.24	Very highly perceived
4. I would recommend my school as a good place to work due to the positive work environment.	4.23	Very highly perceived
5. The emotional support from colleagues and administration encourages me to stay.	4.24	Very highly perceived
Grand Mean	4.15	Highly perceived

The findings show that teachers very highly perceive collaboration and support ($M = 4.3714$) as influencing job satisfaction. Professional development opportunities are also very highly perceived ($M = 4.2714$). Leadership is highly perceived ($M = 4.1625$), while recognition and appreciation are very highly perceived ($M = 4.2321$). Additionally, the work environment is highly perceived ($M = 4.15$), indicating that these factors significantly influence teachers' job satisfaction.

Supportive relationships and collaboration. The critical role of interpersonal relationships among teachers, staff, and school leaders in fostering a positive school culture enhances job satisfaction. Strong relationships with colleagues and support from administrators promote a sense of belonging, respect, and cooperation, which contribute to increased job satisfaction.

According to Participant 1, "*The relationship with colleagues and administrator, the love and support offered, the incentive to do well are just a few of the reasons why I alone am satisfied with my job.*" Emotional and professional support from peers and administrators strengthens teachers' motivation and sense of fulfillment. Participant 2 also shared, "*My school head is there behind to help me and also similarly my colleagues also there are present to offer the requisite help which I need in order to perform the teaching profession.*" A collaborative environment where both administrators and colleagues actively provide support reduces isolation and enhances job satisfaction.

Participant 3 noted, "*Support relationships with colleagues and administrators make a positive and collaborative work environment, where there is mutual respect and trust. This feeling of belonging and teamwork increases job satisfaction by making me feel valued and supported in my job.*" Participant 6 added, "*A good relationship with colleagues and administrators really helps me a lot, making me productive every day with my job.*" Trust and mutual respect fosters a strong sense of belonging and reinforces teachers' sense of value within the organization. In addition, supportive relationships contribute to productivity and motivation, enhancing overall job satisfaction.

Participant 7 emphasized, "*The relationship with staff and administrators provides job satisfaction and has a massive impact on the mental welfare of all teachers, not just on the working conditions, support framework, and public praise and acclamation.*" Participant 8 stated, "*Every day is a satisfying day if a good relationship or camaraderie exists in the workplace.*" The strong link between supportive relationships, mental well-being, and job satisfaction reinforces the importance of camaraderie in sustaining long-term job satisfaction and creating a positive work environment.

Professional development and recognition. A recurring theme across the participants' responses is the significant role of administrative support, professional development opportunities, and recognition in fostering teacher motivation, satisfaction, commitment, and retention. Teachers consistently described how supportive leadership and a culture that values their growth contribute to their willingness to remain in the institution and perform their roles effectively.

Participant 1 stated, "*The school administrators provide their encouragement and support to hone one's talent and ability and gain self-development. These school cultures lead me to commit to the school.*" Similarly, Participant 8 emphasized, "*Professional development of teachers and support from the school leader and administrator influence teachers to stay in the workplace.*" When school leaders actively invest in teachers' growth and provide continuous support, teachers develop a stronger sense of commitment and are more likely to remain in their workplace. Administrative support serves not only as a source of encouragement but also as a mechanism for strengthening teacher retention.

The importance of continuous professional learning was further highlighted by Participant 3, who noted, "*The school's focus on ongoing professional development indicates an investment in developing teachers' abilities and improvement. This emphasis on learning and support underlines a dynamic and positive atmosphere where teachers are empowered and respected.*" Likewise, Participant 6 stated, "*The school makes extra efforts to make our professional development better. It inspires me to do good and deliver my best and be a good role model at my workplace.*" Professional development initiatives create an environment where teachers feel empowered, respected, and motivated to improve their practice. Such

opportunities not only enhance professional competence but also strengthen teachers' professional identity and commitment to excellence.

In addition to professional growth, participants emphasized the value of recognition and appreciation in sustaining motivation and job satisfaction. Participant 2 shared, "*Whenever I do something, it encourages me because it is valued and appreciated. That's why I am content because you are encouraged to do something because you will be valued. You will be rewarded and praised.*" Similarly, Participant 4 added, "*The recognition and appreciation of the school towards teachers affect your motivation and satisfaction in doing the best for the recognition and appreciation given by the school. It gives courage and confidence to every teacher to perform well and work diligently.*" Acknowledgment of teachers' efforts reinforces positive behaviors, enhances morale, and increases job satisfaction. Recognition creates a sense of value and accomplishment, encouraging teachers to maintain high levels of performance and dedication.

The participants' narratives reveal that a school culture characterized by strong administrative support, meaningful professional development opportunities, and genuine recognition fosters a positive work environment. Such a culture promotes teacher empowerment, confidence, motivation, and satisfaction while strengthening organizational commitment and retention. When teachers feel supported in their growth and appreciated for their contributions, they are more likely to remain engaged, perform effectively, and sustain their commitment to the school.

Positive policies and work environment. The participants consistently mentioned that positive policies, equitable practices, and a supportive work environment play a crucial role in shaping their job satisfaction. Clear guidelines, fair treatment, and a positive organizational climate create conditions where teachers feel valued, motivated, and confident in carrying

out their responsibilities. These factors not only enhance satisfaction but also contribute to teachers' commitment to the school and their willingness to remain in the profession.

Participant 1 highlighted the direct influence of workplace conditions on satisfaction, stating, "*The school work environment, policies, and practices are the motivation in determining my overall job satisfaction.*" School policies and organizational practices play in shaping teachers' daily experiences. When policies are supportive and the work environment is conducive to professional growth, teachers are more likely to feel fulfilled and motivated in their roles.

A recurring idea among the participants was the importance of fairness, balance, and support in fostering satisfaction. Participant 3 explained, "*The school's practices and policies like equitable workload distribution and professional growth support establish balance and respectful workplace. These aspects are critical to influencing my general job satisfaction through the creation of a healthy work-life balance and sense of job purpose.*" Similarly, Participant 6 shared, "*It guides me and gives me a clear path in performing my duties and responsibilities as a teacher.*" Equitable workload distribution, opportunities for professional growth, and clearly defined expectations help teachers maintain a healthy work-life balance while providing direction in their professional responsibilities. Such practices create a respectful and organized workplace that promotes both well-being and effectiveness.

Participants also emphasized how supportive policies and a positive work environment enable teachers to remain committed despite challenges. Participant 4 stated, "*The schools' policies, practices, and work environment contribute towards the overall job satisfaction of all employees. They will enjoy and be content at doing their job in spite of the hardships and difficulties because the schools' policies, practices, and work environment are accorded*

importance." When schools prioritize the welfare of employees through supportive policies and positive workplace conditions, teachers are better equipped to manage workplace difficulties while maintaining a positive outlook toward their work.

Beyond policies and practices, participants recognized the value of a shared vision and collective commitment in creating a positive school culture. Participant 8 shared, "*When faculty, staff, and students have a shared vision and high expectations, and they deeply engage and embrace the school culture, it can have a positive impact in the school community; hence, job satisfaction is possible.*" Job satisfaction is not solely influenced by formal policies but also by the extent to which members of the school community work together toward common goals. A shared vision fosters unity, collaboration, and a sense of purpose, which further strengthens teachers' engagement and satisfaction.

The participants' narratives reveal that positive policies and a supportive work environment are essential components of teacher job satisfaction. Fair and equitable practices, clear expectations, opportunities for professional growth, and a collaborative culture create a workplace where teachers feel respected, motivated, and purposeful. When these conditions are present, teachers are more likely to experience satisfaction in their roles, remain committed to their institution, and contribute positively to educational outcomes.

Conclusion

A positive school culture, characterized by collaboration, support, effective leadership, professional development, recognition, and a conducive work environment, plays a crucial role in enhancing teacher retention and job satisfaction. However, although its influence is meaningful, it is not

statistically strong, suggesting that other factors also contribute to these outcomes. Moreover, teachers' perceptions of school culture's impact on retention and job satisfaction are consistent across demographic groups, highlighting its universal relevance.

School leaders play a critical role in cultivating a positive school climate by implementing professional development programs, recognition systems, and wellness initiatives, while maintaining open and effective communication with teachers. Likewise, DepEd stakeholders should allocate adequate resources to sustain teacher support programs and regularly assess teachers' needs to inform policies that improve working conditions.

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School Head's Coaching and Monitoring Practices

Cherel I. Mercado

Educational leadership remains central to improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools (Li et al., 2026; White et al., 2025; Edwards-Groves et al., 2026), particularly through the role of school heads or principals, who serve as both administrators and instructional leaders. School heads can influence instructional practices when they engage deliberately in mentoring, model effective teaching, and foster a reflective and responsive school culture (Toh et al., 2022; Nuis et al., 2023). Ahmad and Hamid (2021) emphasized that school heads' professional expectations and instructional leadership practices help align classroom instruction with student learning goals. Similarly, Gading (2024) highlighted that trust-based relationships between school heads and teachers promote a culture of continuous improvement, while Patrick (2022) noted that positive interactions between school heads and teachers contribute to a supportive school climate where teachers feel empowered, respected, and committed to professional growth.

One way school heads can strengthen instructional leadership is through coaching, monitoring, and other forms of professional support. Cox and Mullen (2023) identified coaching and monitoring as potential

mechanisms for enhancing professional development. However, there remains limited evidence of how these structured instructional strategies are implemented in practice. This challenge is particularly evident among novice school leaders. Arrieta and Ancho (2020) observed that novice school leaders in rural or underserved settings often struggle to develop an instructional leadership identity and establish meaningful professional relationships, which may limit their effectiveness. In the same vein, Meyer and Patuawa (2022) called for further research to support emerging school leaders, particularly in isolated contexts where leadership demands adaptability, creativity, and purposeful action.

School Head Coaching and Monitoring Diverse Teachers

As educational practices evolve, educational leaders must also adapt, particularly when managing a multigenerational teaching workforce. School heads must consider diverse perspectives shaped by generational differences in values, work commitment, and professional purpose. Day (2023) highlighted both the advantages and challenges of such diversity, including enhanced collaboration and stability (Li et al., 2021), as well as issues related to values and health (Ali & French, 2019). Generational differences may also create challenges such as miscommunication, value conflicts, and stereotyping (Garg et al., 2022; Sobrino-De Toro et al., 2019). In response, school heads must adopt inclusive leadership approaches that promote collaboration rather than authoritarian decision-making (Ashoro et al., 2012) to enable teachers from different generations to work effectively toward shared educational goals.

Within this context, mentorship serves as a critical component of educational leadership that supports both novice and experienced teachers in their professional growth (Liu et al., 2020). Johnson (2018) defined mentoring

as a two-way professional learning process that encompasses both professional and personal dimensions. In mentorship, there is intergenerational knowledge exchange (Çelik & Polat, 2022) where inclusive workplace practices foster healthier interpersonal relationships and more cohesive teams (Fiolleau et al., 2023). These benefits contribute to sustainable, collaborative, and productive school environments (Leithwood et al., 2017). Effective mentoring, however, must be intentional, reciprocal, and supported by structured interactions to maximize its impact (Hoque et al., 2020).

To sustain the positive outcomes, schools require integrated cultures that encourage collaborative mentoring and community building (Khan et al., 2020). Encouraging reflective practice enables teachers to develop professional agency and strengthen their connection to the institution (Alegado, 2018). Through reflective mentoring practices, teachers learn from experience, develop practical theories (Rahmatulla, 2016), and enhance their capacity to contribute to school improvement and student achievement. Inclusive leadership, structured mentoring, and reflective practice are essential strategies for addressing generational diversity while fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional growth.

School Head Coaching and Monitoring Practices

Coaching and mentoring are widely recognized as essential components of teacher development and instructional quality (Vikaraman et al., 2017; Luong, 2025; Thipatdee et al., 2019). Effective leadership support enables teachers to develop key competencies, including 21st-century skills (Reimers, 2020). Structured coaching is necessary for achieving high-performance standards (Lazenby, 2019), whereas insufficient support can hinder instructional effectiveness (Dobbelaer, 2019). Modern coaching frameworks differ from traditional supervision by emphasizing teacher

engagement, collaboration, and professional growth rather than evaluation alone (Magson-Niepes, 2016).

Mentoring and coaching support teachers by providing timely pedagogical guidance and continuous feedback that help refine instructional practices. Mentoring, in particular, offers ongoing support through reflective assessment and feedback, which strengthens teachers' instructional approaches (Toropova et al., 2020). Reflective assessment and teacher commitment are likewise crucial in sustaining instructional quality (Malunes & Dioso, 2020). In the Philippine context, teachers have reported that post-observation feedback significantly improves instruction, especially when delivered in a non-threatening and supportive environment (Congcong & Caingcoy, 2020; Lopez, 2016). Research further indicates that individualized coaching cycles enhance instructional capacity (Kraft et al., 2018), while trust, goal alignment, and non-evaluative feedback are critical factors for successful coaching outcomes (Irawan et al., 2018).

The effectiveness of coaching and mentoring is also influenced by the broader professional environment in which teachers work. Supportive workplaces characterized by manageable workloads, professional incentives, and opportunities for collaboration contribute significantly to teacher growth and development (Maritasari et al., 2020). Through mentoring and collaborative practices, teachers can strengthen competencies across emotional, social, technological, and pedagogical dimensions (Selvi, 2016; Roberto & Madrigal, 2018).

Despite the recognized benefits of coaching and mentoring, further research is needed to better understand the coaching process and its impact on teacher development. Peila (2020) asserts the multifaceted nature of instructional practice; hence, Kumar and Dawson (2018) recommended the use of mixed method approaches to capture the complexity of teaching.

Effective coaching characterized by reflective dialogue and goal setting has been shown to promote sustained professional learning and reduce teacher isolation (Weston & Clay, 2018; Jones, 2018). Nevertheless, gaps remain in lesson planning support and in-service training opportunities (Ampofo et al., 2019). These gaps suggest the importance of further investigating how coaching and mentoring practices can be optimized to support teacher competence and instructional excellence.

School Head Coaching and Monitoring Intervention Program

Coaching and mentoring are central to improving teaching quality and institutional development. Coaching is a collaborative process in which school heads act as both colleagues and evaluators to enhance school performance (Dina & Yusoff, 2019). Similarly, it promotes teacher reflection and improves instructional delivery (Knight, 2017) and enhances teachers' knowledge, motivation, and instructional practices (Gibson & Dambo, 2018). Coaching also contributes to leadership development and teacher efficacy, which refers to teachers' confidence in their ability to teach effectively (Nurahimah & Rafisah, 2017; Norita, 2019). Research further suggests that teaching experience is moderately to significantly related to teacher efficacy (Knobloch & Whittington, 2018; Johari et al., 2019). In particular, cognitive coaching has been shown to improve teaching performance, engagement, and classroom management.

The successful implementation of coaching and mentoring largely depends on the role of school heads as instructional leaders. School heads play a crucial role in designing, facilitating, and sustaining effective coaching and mentoring practices. When these practices are clearly defined and systematically applied, they enhance teacher supervision, instructional quality, and student outcomes (Wong & Nur, 2018; Goddard, 2015). Beyond coaching

initiatives, leadership efforts such as literacy programs and the creation of responsive learning environments further contribute to student achievement and school improvement (Day-Heggie, 2021).

Mentoring, in particular, serves as a valuable support mechanism for teachers, especially those who are new to the profession. It provides practical assistance, emotional support, and opportunities for cognitive development that help novice teachers navigate the complexities of teaching (Brannan & Bleistein, 2018; Villani, 2017). The effectiveness of mentoring programs depends on key factors such as accessibility, consistency, and structured implementation (Martinot et al., 2015; Farrell, 2016). Furthermore, sustaining effective teaching practices requires ongoing professional learning opportunities, adequate training, and strong institutional support systems (Brooks, 2019).

RESEARCH FOCUS: School Head's Coaching and Monitoring Practices Through the Lens of Teachers

This study is anchored in Transformational Leadership Theory, originally proposed by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1985). The theory explains how leaders inspire and motivate individuals to achieve higher levels of performance through vision, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation. In educational settings, transformational leadership is reflected in the role of school heads as mentors and facilitators who build trust, encourage collaboration, and support professional growth (Bashori et al., 2022). It is particularly important in strengthening professional relationships and improving school performance (Mafe, 2023), which supports the development of internal capacity, fosters collective professional learning, and promotes a shared commitment to excellence in teaching and learning (Morales, 2022; Anthony et al., 2019).

This study investigates school heads' coaching and monitoring practices in three rural elementary schools in the CAMACA Batan District in the Philippines. Guided by Lindsey et al.'s (2019) framework on coaching and monitoring, the study focuses on key elements such as trust-building, the development of collective professional norms, and the enhancement of instructional awareness and growth. It aims to inform school leaders, particularly those in the early stages of their careers, by clarifying effective coaching and monitoring practices, identifying contextual challenges, and supporting efforts toward educational equity and improved instructional quality.

The study employed a narrative inquiry approach to examine the coaching and mentoring practices of novice school heads. Grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985), the methodology conceptualized leadership as a relational and developmental process that fosters collegiality, trust, and responsiveness to professional needs (Zainal & Mohd-Matore, 2021). Narrative inquiry was particularly appropriate for uncovering the multidimensional realities of novice leaders, as it allows for the exploration of lived experiences and meaning-making processes (Blose et al., 2022). This perspective aligns with the view that leadership is inherently relational and instructional, shaped through interactions and reflective practices (Shillingstad & McGlamery, 2019).

The study involved eight purposively selected teachers from Camaligan, Talangban, Magubahay, and Caiyang who had direct mentoring and coaching interactions with novice school heads. Participants met specific inclusion criteria, including at least one year of teaching experience, engagement in professional development, and willingness to share reflective insights. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide designed to elicit in-depth narratives aligned with the study's conceptual framework.

The instrument underwent expert validation and pilot testing to ensure clarity, relevance, and trustworthiness. Interviews were conducted in familiar settings to encourage openness, incorporating both verbal responses and non-verbal cues, supported by reflective notes and audio recordings (Horsfall et al., 2021). Follow-up discussions were also conducted to clarify key points and deepen understanding of participants' experiences.

Data analysis followed a hybrid narrative and thematic approach, enabling both in-depth individual story analysis and cross-case pattern identification. Narrative analysis focused on the sequencing of experiences, emotional shifts, and reflective insights to understand the impact of coaching and mentoring on teachers' professional growth (Bamberg, 2020; Parks, 2023). Concurrently, thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns and shared meanings across narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This dual approach facilitated the integration of micro-level lived experiences into broader thematic interpretations, highlighting motivation, challenges, and professional development outcomes. The findings were further interpreted in relation to transformational leadership principles, reinforcing their relevance to teacher learning and practice improvement (Abdulaziz et al., 2021; Del Giacco et al., 2019).

Theme 1: Impact on Professional Growth

The first theme captures how the coaching and monitoring practices of school heads profoundly shaped teachers' effectiveness, confidence, and professional identity. Teachers' narratives reveal not merely improvement but transformation, an evolution nurtured through guidance, trust, and intentional support. Six interconnected sub-themes emerged from their reflections: development of professional skills, supportive leadership and mentorship,

reflective practice and self-assessment, professional confidence, ongoing learning and personal support, and leadership and modeling behaviors.

Development of professional skills. The school heads strengthened instructional practices through professional development opportunities and individualized support (Kilag & Sasan, 2020). One teacher (T1) shared with optimism, “*Coaching and monitoring practices I have benefited from have helped me and other teachers develop effective teaching practices that hopefully make us better teachers.*” This support extended to lesson planning and classroom management that reinforces continuous pedagogical growth and professional competence.

Supportive leadership and mentorship. This reflects the culture of collegiality and encouragement fostered by school heads (Squires, 2019). As one participant (T5) expressed, “*Our school head steps into a guiding and mentor role...she provides constructive feedback and practical strategies.*” Similarly, another teacher (T3) reflected, “*She pushes us to think through what we are doing, and help pushes us into transformative behavior.*” These experiences of guidance and support empowered teachers to take instructional risks, embrace innovation, and pursue continuous growth.

Reflective practice and self-assessment. It is the cornerstone of professional development. One teacher (T6) noted, “*She (school leader) gives feedback that makes me think about my practice and how I could improve.*” Such reflective opportunities enabled teachers to examine both their strengths and limitations, promoting intentional changes in practice and continuous improvement (Thompson & Thompson, 2023).

Professional confidence. It surfaced as a powerful outcome of coaching and monitoring. Teachers described a renewed belief in their abilities and professional potential (Liao et al., 2024). One participant (T1) shared, “*I have been more confident in teaching because of the encouragement from my*

school head,” while another (T3) admitted, *“Knowing that my school head has faith in what I am doing encourages me to step outside of my comfort zone.”* This trust reduced self-doubt and encouraged teachers to assume greater leadership responsibilities.

Ongoing learning and personal support. It emphasizes the value of personalized feedback and sustained professional development (Tetzlaff et al., 2021). As one teacher (T8) explained, *“My school head often gives individual attention and feedback acknowledging what is working or not working...”* Such individualized support, combined with guidance toward relevant learning opportunities, encouraged continuous growth and professional learning (Li & Li, 2024).

Leadership and modeling behaviors. It illustrates how school heads served as role models of professionalism, resilience, and commitment (Bakker et al., 2023). One teacher (T6) shared, *“My school head is a good example to follow...believing in my school head invigorates my commitment to being more confident in my practice.”* Another participant (T2) revealed the broader influence of such leadership, stating, *“When she believes in me, it pushes me to do the same for my students.”* Effective leadership practices shape teachers’ professional growth, strengthen their identities, and deepen their commitment to teaching.

Theme 2: Personal and Professional Growth

This theme reflects a deep human journey of transformation shaped by encouragement, recognition, and reflective engagement. Teachers described how the support of their school heads extended beyond instructional improvement and fundamentally reshaped how they perceived themselves as educators and leaders. Six sub-themes emerged from these narratives: professional identity and role development, recognition and motivation,

building self-confidence and resilience, reflective practice and self-discovery, self-awareness and critical reflection, and professional pride and commitment.

Professional identity and role development. Leadership opportunities transformed teachers' perceptions of their professional roles (Chamo, 2024). One participant (T6) shared, "*My school head encouraged me to take on leadership opportunities, which helped me grow... and reshape my professional identity as a teacher-leader.*" These experiences enabled teachers to view themselves not only as classroom practitioners but also as contributors to school leadership and organizational development (Noonan, 2019).

Recognition and motivation. It reveals the emotional impact of acknowledgment and appreciation (Slemp et al., 2021). One teacher (T3) expressed, "*When my school head recognized my work... it motivated me to keep working to keep improving.*" Such recognition fostered intrinsic motivation, strengthened commitment, and encouraged continued professional effort (Barksdale, 2022).

Building self-confidence and resilience. Mentoring helped teachers confront uncertainty and embrace innovation. One participant (T4) reflected, "*The support I received helped me deal with self-doubt and try new things... it allowed me to be the brave innovator I was looking to become.*" These experiences cultivated resilience and encouraged teachers to approach challenges with confidence and determination (Karagozoglu & Ozan, 2022).

Reflective practice and self-discovery. Sustained reflection deepened teachers' self-awareness and intentionality. As one participant (T6) noted, "*Reflective thinking always forced me to reconsider my teaching practices, so my plans became purposeful*". This process aligns with the literature emphasizing reflection as a catalyst for professional growth and continuous learning (Slade et al., 2019).

Self-Awareness and critical reflection. Feedback is valuable in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. One teacher (T8) explained, “*The feedback I was given helped me be more aware of my strengths and what I need to improve on.*” Through constructive feedback, teachers gained clarity regarding their professional development needs and were able to take purposeful action toward improvement (Steinert et al., 2019).

Professional pride and commitment. It captures the emotional core of teachers’ experiences. One participant (T5) expressed, “*I started to take pride in my work because my school head believed in me.*” This belief reignited teachers’ passion for their profession and reinforced their commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of their students (Lim, 2021). Growth extends beyond technical competence and is deeply rooted in trust, recognition, self-discovery, and meaningful support.

Theme 3: Strategic Program Development

This theme explains the teachers’ collective aspirations for structured, meaningful, and sustainable approaches to coaching and mentoring. Their reflections reveal a desire for systems that not only support professional growth but also nurture collaboration, consistency, and reflective practice. Four sub-themes emerged from the data: collaborative planning and teamwork, continuous learning and capacity-building, supportive leadership and mentorship, and reflective practice and professional growth.

Collaborative planning and teamwork. Shared responsibility is important in professional learning and instructional improvement. As one participant (T3) explained, “*Collaboration is key in coaching... it opens the door to share ideas and challenges.*” Another teacher (T7) reflected, “*Working in tandem while planning lessons and discussing practice cultivated a sense of community while building stronger practices.*” These shared experiences

highlight the value of collaboration in strengthening professional relationships and improving educational outcomes (Wright, 2022).

Continuous learning and capacity-building. It highlights the need for ongoing professional development opportunities that promote sustained growth. One teacher (T8) emphasized, “*Professional learning opportunities need to occur regularly and often.... we need different opportunities to connect so we can experience new learning and growth.*” Another participant (T6) linked these opportunities to leadership readiness and long-term professional advancement. Access to professional resources, networks, and learning opportunities further strengthened teachers’ capacity to improve their practice (Fairley, 2020; Bishop & Vass, 2021).

Supportive leadership and mentorship. It reaffirms the central role of sustained guidance, encouragement, and trust in professional development. One participant (T4) noted, “*The ongoing commitment from school heads offers teachers an important motivational and professional opportunity*”. Other teachers (T2; T3) emphasized how constructive feedback and trusting relationships cultivated confidence, resilience, and professional growth. These findings reinforce the importance of leadership practices that prioritize support and mentorship (Ma & Marion, 2021).

Reflective practice and professional growth. Reflection is an essential, yet often underutilized, component of teacher development. One teacher (T7) observed, “*Teachers often do not have the time for reflection and practice development. Engaging in reflection practice allowed teachers to become more self-aware while identifying areas for growth and development.*” Another participant (T4) shared, “*It pushes me to think critically about what I do, while being active about getting better.*” Reflective practice promotes self-awareness, continuous improvement, and professional learning, making it a powerful pathway for growth (Rolfe & Freshwater, 2020).

Conclusion

Effective coaching and mentoring are transformative influences on teachers' professional growth and development. Beyond enhancing instructional skills and pedagogical practices, these leadership strategies nurture teachers' sense of purpose, confidence, and professional identity. Through sustained guidance, constructive feedback, and reflective engagement, teachers become more strategic, self-aware, and intentional in their practice, leading to meaningful and lasting improvements in teaching effectiveness. The experiences shared by participants suggest that coaching and mentoring create supportive environments where teachers feel valued, encouraged, and empowered to continuously improve their professional practice.

Consistent recognition, meaningful feedback, and genuine support enable teachers to view themselves as capable, resilient, and evolving professionals. These experiences help them overcome self-doubt, embrace challenges, and remain committed to lifelong learning. As teachers gain confidence in their abilities, they develop a stronger sense of ownership of their professional growth and a deeper commitment to improving student learning outcomes.

Effective mentoring initiatives should incorporate collaborative planning, supportive leadership, ongoing professional learning opportunities, and reflective practice. When these elements are integrated into a coherent system of teacher support, mentoring becomes a powerful mechanism for fostering a culture of trust, shared learning, and continuous improvement. Ultimately, purposeful and sustainable coaching and mentoring practices contribute not only to teacher development but also to the enhancement of instructional quality and overall school effectiveness.

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Innovative Mentorship Practices

Angelyn F. Macahilos

Mentoring plays a vital role in teachers' professional growth (LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2012; Shvets et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2025; Chea, 2024), particularly in enhancing teaching effectiveness and supporting the development of newly designated educators. As noted by Klinge (2015), mentoring is a mutually beneficial and collaborative learning relationship between an experienced educator and a novice teacher. This dynamic not only facilitates knowledge transfer but also nurtures professional confidence and adaptability. Beyond the transmission of knowledge, mentoring encompasses sustained support, guidance, and constructive feedback, elements that are essential for the mentee's personal and professional development (Hudson, 2013). Research further emphasizes that effective mentoring significantly influences mentors' professional development, instructional practices, and overall job satisfaction (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Mentoring initiatives provide numerous benefits for both mentors and mentees, including improved learning retention, opportunities for professional advancement, increased self-confidence, and a broader understanding of diverse educational perspectives. According to Zepeda (2017), effective

mentoring promotes holistic teacher development and strengthens professional growth. Within the educational system, Master Teachers frequently serve as mentors and play a critical role in supporting novice educators through guidance, coaching, and evaluation. Their involvement stresses the importance of structured mentoring systems that incorporate continuous feedback, sustained support mechanisms, and accountability measures (Hobson et al., 2009).

Despite the recognized importance of mentoring, challenges persist in ensuring the consistent quality and effectiveness of mentoring programs. Professional mentoring for novice educators remains inconsistent and, at times, insufficient (Mwesigwa & Nakato, 2025; Ben-Amram & Davidovitch, 2024); Killion, 2026). Although mentoring initiatives have been implemented, variations in their quality and effectiveness continue to exist. These challenges are largely attributed to the limited training, resources, and systematic preparation provided to Master Teachers in carrying out their mentoring responsibilities. Such limitations may affect the extent to which mentors can effectively support the professional growth and development of beginning teachers.

Transformative Role of Master Teachers

The transformative influence of master teachers extends far beyond the boundaries of a single classroom (Sunico & Dela Rosa, 2025), and shapes not only teaching practices but also the culture and well-being of entire school communities. Their impact is deeply rooted in a comprehensive understanding of pedagogy that encompasses not only content knowledge but also the emotional, social, and professional dimensions of teaching. Central to their role is the cultivation of strong interpersonal relationships and the creation of supportive, collaborative professional environments. Within these spaces,

mentoring becomes more than a process of guidance; it evolves into a shared journey of growth in which educators feel valued, empowered, and inspired to continuously improve. Such environments contribute not only to instructional excellence but also to the holistic development of teachers and students who are prepared to navigate an increasingly complex educational landscape.

Master teachers challenge traditional one-size-fits-all approaches by recognizing and responding to the diverse needs of individual teachers and classroom contexts. Through flexible and responsive mentoring strategies, they provide personalized support that acknowledges each teacher's unique strengths and areas for improvement. This individualized approach transforms professional development into a meaningful and deeply human experience that addresses the needs, challenges, and aspirations of novice teachers.

By offering targeted guidance and sustained encouragement, master teachers help build teachers' confidence, competence, and professional identity. Their mentorship contributes to improved instructional practices and enhanced student outcomes while fostering long-term professional resilience and adaptability. Rather than focusing solely on immediate gains, effective mentoring establishes a foundation for lifelong learning and continuous professional growth, equipping teachers with the skills and mindset necessary to thrive throughout their careers.

Mentoring Strategies and Program Innovations

The methods employed by master teachers are both diverse and impactful, combining established mentoring theories with innovative educational practices. Co-teaching provides novice teachers with authentic classroom experiences where they learn through observation, active participation, and immediate feedback (Hudson, 2016). Likewise, peer mentoring promotes collaboration, shared responsibility, and a sense of

belonging among educators, creating supportive professional relationships that foster growth (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Reflective practice remains a cornerstone of effective mentoring, which encourages teachers to critically examine their instructional decisions and continuously refine their professional approaches (Schön, 2017). The integration of technology further enhances mentoring by facilitating ongoing communication, expands access to resources, and provides flexible learning opportunities (Richardson et al., 2021). Additionally, culturally responsive teaching practices ensure that mentoring remains inclusive and responsive to the diverse backgrounds and experiences of learners (Gay, 2018).

Innovative mentoring programs further strengthen these practices through individualized support, reflective engagement, technological integration, and collaborative learning communities (Hudson, 2013). Such programs are reinforced through continuous professional development opportunities, including workshops, peer coaching, and structured reflection activities (Graham, 2020). These initiatives not only enhance the mentoring capabilities of master teachers but also establish sustainable networks of support that encourage ongoing growth and innovation. Reflective practice, in particular, contributes to the continuous refinement of mentoring approaches and program effectiveness and ultimately improves teaching quality and reducing teacher attrition (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Through these sustained efforts, mentoring becomes a powerful mechanism for enhancing student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement while fostering a strong sense of professional belonging among educators.

Despite the many benefits associated with mentoring, significant challenges continue to affect its implementation and effectiveness. Master teachers often face heavy workloads that limit the time and attention they can devote to mentoring responsibilities. Additionally, many mentors lack access

to adequate training, resources, and professional support necessary to carry out their roles effectively. Schools and educational organizations must provide dedicated mentoring time, structured training programs, and robust evaluation mechanisms to ensure the quality and sustainability of mentoring initiatives (Zepeda, 2017). Addressing these challenges is essential for maximizing the transformative potential of mentoring and enabling master teachers to effectively support the professional growth and success of novice educators.

Mentoring as a Social and Collaborative Process of Professional Learning: A Social Learning Theory Approach

Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura (1977) posits that learning is an inherently social process that occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling. According to Bandura, learners are not passive recipients of knowledge but active participants who interpret, internalize, and apply observed behaviors. The processes of attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation influence how individuals acquire and perform new knowledge and skills. Within the context of mentoring, this theory underlines the influential role of master teachers as role models whose instructional practices, professional attitudes, and behaviors are observed and emulated by novice teachers. Through ongoing interaction, guided practice, and constructive feedback, novice educators gradually develop effective teaching competencies and professional dispositions.

The theory is further complemented by the work of Lave and Wenger (2000), who stressed learning as a process of participation within a community of practice. Their perspective suggests that professional growth occurs through active engagement in shared experiences, collaboration, and social interaction with more experienced practitioners. In mentoring relationships, novice teachers learn not only through observation but also through participation in

authentic teaching experiences, reflective dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving alongside master teachers.

A supportive, interactive, and reflective mentoring environment is where professional learning is co-constructed through meaningful engagement and shared experiences. In this context, master teachers are positioned not merely as experts who transfer knowledge but as facilitators, collaborators, and co-learners who guide, inspire, and empower novice teachers throughout their professional journey. Through modeling effective practices, providing opportunities for reflection, and fostering collaborative learning, master teachers help novice educators develop the confidence, competence, and professional identity necessary for successful teaching.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Exploring the Mentoring Practices of Master Teachers in Nabas

This study explores the mentoring practices employed by Master Teachers in Nabas and examines how these practices influence both mentors and mentees. Specifically, the study aims to understand how Master Teachers enact their mentoring roles and identify the strategies they utilize to support, guide, and develop novice teachers within the educational setting.

The study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to provide a rich and authentic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This approach was carefully chosen because it aligns with the study's goal of capturing the depth and complexity of participants' lived experiences without imposing rigid frameworks or preconceived interpretations. Descriptive qualitative research allows researchers to explore the "who," "what," "when," "where," and "how" of a situation, offering a detailed and contextualized account that brings meaning to human experiences. Rather than reducing experiences into numbers, this method

honors the voices of participants by revealing the emotions, challenges, and insights embedded in their narratives. As emphasized by Lambert (2019), such an approach enables a comprehensive yet accessible portrayal of real-life experiences. By grounding the study in participants' firsthand accounts, the research captures not only what was experienced but also how those experiences were understood and felt, providing a powerful and human-centered lens into the phenomenon.

The data-gathering process was conducted with careful attention to ethical standards, respect, and sensitivity toward participants. Prior to data collection, formal approval was obtained from the Schools Division Superintendent of Aklan and the District Supervisor of Nabas to ensure adherence to institutional protocols and ethical requirements. Each of the eight Master Teacher participants was provided with an informed consent form that clearly explained the purpose of the study, their role, and their rights, including the freedom to withdraw at any time. This process fostered trust and openness, allowing participants to share their experiences with confidence and honesty. Interviews were thoughtfully scheduled to accommodate participants' professional responsibilities. Data were collected through focus group discussions to create a dynamic and collaborative space where participants could share, reflect upon, and build on one another's experiences. This interactive setting enriched the data collection process by allowing emotions, shared struggles, and collective insights to emerge naturally.

For data analysis, the study utilized Colaizzi's method, a rigorous and systematic approach that ensures depth, accuracy, and credibility in qualitative research (Sander, 2003; Speziale & Carpenter, 2007). Each transcript was read and reread to immerse the researcher fully in the participants' experiences, and to allow subtle meanings and recurring patterns to emerge. Significant statements were carefully extracted and interpreted, with meanings formulated

in a manner that remained faithful to the participants' voices. These meanings were then organized into clusters of themes. The process culminated in a comprehensive and emotionally grounded description of the findings, presented within a phenomenological framework. To further ensure trustworthiness, member checking was conducted to enable participants to validate the interpretations and confirm that their experiences had been accurately represented. This final step reinforced the authenticity and credibility of the study and ensured that the findings were not only analytically sound but also deeply reflective of the participants' lived realities.

Theme 1: Transformative Leadership and Instructional Support

The role of master teachers extends far beyond instructional supervision; it is deeply rooted in transforming lives, shaping professional identities, and nurturing a thriving educational community. Their influence reaches across classrooms and school environments, affecting not only teaching practices and student outcomes but also the emotional and professional well-being of educators. Central to this transformative role are practices such as technical assistance and instructional monitoring, professional development and capacity building, collaborative learning, student-centered instruction, empathetic leadership and relationship building, holistic and inclusive approaches, and ongoing reflection and feedback. These interconnected practices demonstrate a profound understanding that teaching is not merely about delivering content but about cultivating relationships, inspiring growth, and building a community where both teachers and learners feel valued and empowered. Through their leadership, master teachers foster environments where collaboration flourishes, innovation is encouraged, and continuous learning becomes a shared commitment.

Theme 2: Personalized Mentoring and Professional Empowerment

A defining characteristic of effective master teachers is their ability to challenge rigid and traditional approaches to teaching by embracing the diversity and individuality present in every classroom and among every educator. Through personalized mentoring and targeted support, they recognize teachers' unique strengths while compassionately addressing areas for growth. This individualized guidance transforms professional development into a meaningful journey that acknowledges teachers' struggles, aspirations, and potential.

Constructive feedback, grounded in observation and reflection, becomes a powerful instrument for growth rather than judgment. Within mentoring relationships built on trust and mutual respect, teachers are encouraged to take risks, explore innovative strategies, and develop confidence in their professional capabilities. This process not only enhances teaching effectiveness but also fosters a renewed sense of purpose and commitment. As a result, teachers become more resilient, adaptable, and capable of responding to the evolving demands of the profession, ultimately contributing to improved student achievement and long-term professional success.

Theme 3: Collaborative Learning and Capacity Building

Equally significant is the master teacher's commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and collective professional growth. By encouraging participation in seminars, workshops, and School Learning Action Cells (LACs), master teachers create opportunities for educators to share experiences, reflect on practice, and learn collaboratively. These professional learning platforms extend beyond formal requirements and

evolve into supportive communities where teachers feel heard, valued, and inspired to improve.

Through collaborative learning, educators gain access to new perspectives, instructional strategies, and professional support systems that strengthen their practice. At the same time, master teachers promote student-centered instruction by guiding their colleagues in designing learning experiences that recognize and respond to the diverse needs of learners. This approach makes classrooms more engaging, inclusive, and responsive to individual differences. By continuously supporting teacher learning and instructional innovation, master teachers contribute significantly to the development of stronger teaching practices and more effective learning environments.

Theme 4: Empathetic Leadership, Well-Being, and Lasting Impact

Beyond instructional guidance and professional development, master teachers demonstrate empathetic leadership that strengthens relationships and creates safe spaces for open dialogue, collaboration, and mutual support. Their leadership helps break down barriers that may hinder professional growth while fostering a culture of trust and belonging. By prioritizing both the physical and emotional well-being of educators, they recognize that supported and motivated teachers are the foundation of successful learning environments.

Ultimately, the influence of master teachers is both profound and enduring. Through holistic and inclusive approaches, ongoing reflection, and a genuine commitment to growth, they cultivate a culture where excellence is inspired rather than imposed. Their mentorship shapes confident, reflective, and resilient educators who, in turn, inspire their students to reach their fullest potential. The impact of their work extends beyond individual teachers to

strengthen the entire educational ecosystem. In this way, master teachers do more than provide guidance, they serve as transformative leaders whose influence leaves a lasting mark on the profession and the lives of those they support.

Conclusion

Innovative mentoring practices play a significant role in enhancing teacher effectiveness, professional growth, and student outcomes. Mentoring is most effective when it adopts a flexible and multifaceted approach that combines continuous professional development, constructive feedback, technology integration, collaborative learning, and strong instructional leadership. These elements contribute to the creation of a positive and supportive professional environment where teachers are empowered to refine their instructional practices, develop confidence in their abilities, and engage in continuous learning. Furthermore, holistic, inclusive, and student-centered approaches, as well as the importance of reflection, collaboration, and sustained support foster meaningful professional growth.

The transformative role of master teachers in building professional learning communities nurture both teacher and student success. Through personalized mentoring, empathetic leadership, and ongoing guidance, master teachers help cultivate resilient, reflective, and competent educators who are better equipped to address the diverse needs of learners. As a result, mentoring emerges not only as a strategy for professional development but also as a powerful mechanism for strengthening educational quality and promoting a culture of continuous improvement.

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Emotional Management, Teaching Efficacy and Teacher Performance

Maryella C. Damian

Teaching efficacy remains a critical concern across educational systems worldwide because of its significant influence on teachers' effectiveness and overall school performance (Steven, 2022). In contemporary educational settings, teachers are expected to perform roles that extend beyond traditional instruction, such as fostering students' critical thinking, decision-making abilities, and emotional resilience (Elbertson et al., 2025). As these professional demands continue to expand, mastery experiences and emotional competence have become increasingly important foundations of teacher self-efficacy and professional effectiveness (Shahzad & Naureen, 2017). Teachers who possess strong beliefs in their capabilities are generally better equipped to manage classroom challenges, implement effective instructional strategies, and promote positive student learning outcomes.

Alongside teaching efficacy, emotional management has emerged as a crucial factor influencing both teacher well-being and instructional effectiveness. Emotional labor and emotional regulation are increasingly recognized as important determinants of teacher performance and student

learning outcomes (Yin et al., 2019). The emotional interactions that occur between teachers and students contribute significantly to the classroom climate and shape students' sense of safety, engagement, and willingness to participate in learning activities (Alamos & Williford, 2020). This relationship is particularly important in primary education, where teachers encounter learners with diverse emotional, behavioral, and developmental needs. Consequently, effective teaching requires not only strong pedagogical knowledge and instructional skills but also the ability to recognize, regulate, and manage emotions in professional practice.

Teaching Efficacy

Teachers' self-efficacy, defined as their confidence in their ability to influence student learning, is one of the most extensively studied aspects of the classroom environment (Miller et al., 2017). As a critical component of effective teaching, self-efficacy influences how teachers approach instructional challenges, manage classroom environments, and support student learning. Research consistently stresses the importance of the teacher–student relationship and the positive and effective interactions that enhance students' academic achievement and facilitate their adjustment to school (Liu, 2024).

Teacher self-efficacy is influenced by a variety of personal and professional factors, including subject knowledge, classroom management skills, instructional practices, students' academic adaptation, and aspects of teachers' mental well-being such as job satisfaction, commitment, and sense of achievement (Zhang et al., 2026). Because of its broad influence on teaching behavior and professional functioning, self-efficacy remains a critical determinant of teaching effectiveness. Teachers who possess strong efficacy beliefs are generally more willing to implement innovative teaching strategies,

persist through challenges, and create positive learning environments that support student success (Eren et al., 2025).

Recent studies further revealed the importance of self-efficacy in educational settings. Miraflor and Lyndon (2022) identified a positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and authentic leadership, as well as a strong association with work engagement. Likewise, Dellomos et al. (2023) underlined the challenges faced by Filipino teachers, such as adapting to new pedagogical approaches and responding to diverse learning environments. Teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to embrace challenges, demonstrate resilience, and remain committed to their professional responsibilities. In contrast, teachers with low self-efficacy tend to avoid challenging situations, experience greater fear of failure, and struggle to maintain confidence in their abilities (Marcedula et al., 2026). Therefore, strengthening teachers' self-efficacy is essential for enhancing instructional effectiveness and improving overall teaching performance.

Emotional Management

Teaching is widely recognized as a demanding profession that requires not only cognitive and pedagogical skills but also strong emotional competence (Savina et al., 2021; Valente et al., 2022). Emotional dynamics play a significant role in classroom interactions, which influence both the teaching process and student learning experiences. Research indicates that teaching at the primary level is particularly emotionally challenging because teachers must respond to the diverse developmental, social, and emotional needs of students (Stephanou & Oikonomou, 2018). Beyond delivering academic content, teachers are expected to nurture students' emotional and social development (Peliño & Tantiado, 2022). These responsibilities require competence as an essential component of effective teaching.

A growing body of research emphasizes the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing teaching effectiveness and professional performance. For instance, Boybanting and Tantiado (2023) found that teachers demonstrated high levels of emotional intelligence, particularly in self-regulation and self-management, and reported a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and teaching performance. Emotionally competent teachers are better equipped to manage classroom challenges and maintain positive learning environments. Similarly, Navas and Vijayakumar (2018) reported that employees with high emotional intelligence and job satisfaction are more likely to demonstrate superior performance.

Emotional competence is also shaped by various contextual and organizational factors. For instance, aligning instructional practices with assessment data improves teaching effectiveness (Chizhik & Chizhik, 2018). In addition, external influences such as family environment have been shown to affect teachers' emotional capabilities (Lonto et al., 2018; Shafiq & Rana, 2016). These factors demonstrate that emotional management is not solely an individual attribute but is also influenced by the broader social and professional environments in which teachers operate.

The increasing demands of educational reform further underscore the importance of emotional resilience among teachers. Initiatives such as the K–12 Basic Education Program in the Philippines require educators to adapt to changing curricular expectations and instructional approaches. Successfully navigating these challenges requires teachers to manage their emotions effectively while maintaining commitment to their professional responsibilities. Consequently, emotional management emerges as a critical factor in sustaining teaching effectiveness.

Teaching Performance

Teacher performance has long been a central focus in education because educators play a vital role in achieving national educational goals and improving student learning outcomes (Sabio & Manalo, 2020). In the Philippines, teacher performance is systematically monitored through the Individual Performance Commitment Review Form (IPCRF), which forms part of the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) implemented by the Department of Education (DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015). The IPCRF serves as a framework for planning, monitoring, and evaluating teachers' performance throughout the academic year by clearly outlining professional responsibilities and performance expectations. Through this system, teachers are assessed based on standards related to quality, efficiency, and timeliness, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement in instructional practice (Shiri et al., 2023).

Research indicates that teachers generally demonstrate satisfactory levels of performance across various professional domains (Sabio & Manalo, 2020). However, the use of self-assessment measures may sometimes limit the objectivity of performance evaluations. Cestina and Bertillo (2023) further found that teacher performance is influenced by factors such as gender, educational attainment, and teaching experience. Many teachers possess the competencies necessary to facilitate effective learning environments, however, the multifaceted nature of teacher performance and the various personal and professional factors, may contribute to its development.

Despite the strengths, several challenges continue to affect teachers' performance and instructional effectiveness. Difficulties related to student discipline, special education, and improving academic achievement remain significant concerns in many educational settings. Addressing these challenges requires continuous professional learning and the development of specialized

competencies that enable teachers to respond effectively to diverse student needs. Teachers' beliefs about students' abilities also play an important role in shaping their expectations, instructional decisions, and classroom practices (Turner et al., 2009). Consequently, fostering positive beliefs and evidence-based teaching practices is essential for promoting improved educational outcomes.

Professional development remains one of the most important strategies for enhancing teacher performance. Training opportunities help teachers strengthen their knowledge, skills, and instructional practices to adapt to evolving educational demands and improve classroom effectiveness (Castro-Rodriguez & Montoro, 2021). However, limited institutional support and restricted access to professional development opportunities may hinder teachers' participation and growth. Therefore, sustained investment in teacher training and professional learning initiatives is essential for addressing performance gaps, enhancing instructional quality, and supporting continuous professional growth.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Mediating Role of Emotional Management in the Relationship Between Teaching Efficacy and Performance

This study examines the role of emotional management as a potential mediator in the relationship between teaching efficacy and teaching performance among primary school teachers. By investigating these variables simultaneously, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the emotional processes that may influence teacher effectiveness and professional performance. To achieve this objective, the study employed a correlational predictive research design, a non-experimental approach appropriate for examining relationships among variables without manipulation. According to

Creswell (2005), this design enables researchers to determine the strength and direction of associations among variables and to predict outcomes based on those relationships. Specifically, a quantitative descriptive correlational method was utilized to examine how emotional management influences the relationship between teaching efficacy and teaching performance.

The study was conducted among primary school teachers from various barangays in the District of Balete, Aklan, Philippines. From a total population of 75 teachers, 63 respondents were selected through random sampling. The sample size was determined using the Raosoft calculator. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire composed of four sections: the demographic profile of respondents, the Teaching Efficacy Scale (Bandura, 1997), the Emotional Management Scale (Goleman, 1995), and the Teaching Performance Scale based on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Each scale consisted of 15 items designed to measure the respective constructs.

Prior to data collection, the research instrument underwent expert validation and pilot testing with 20 teachers to establish its reliability, validity, and clarity. Approval and permission to conduct the study were secured from the Schools Division Superintendent before the administration of the survey. Data were collected through both printed questionnaires and an online Google Forms link to maximize participation and accessibility. The gathered data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Jamovi software.

Throughout the research process, ethical principles were strictly observed, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality of responses, and respect for cultural sensitivity, ensuring the protection and well-being of all participants.

Table 1 shows that primary school teachers in the District of Balete demonstrate a very high level of teaching efficacy ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 0.47$), indicating strong confidence in their instructional capabilities.

Table 1

Teaching efficacy of primary school teachers

Indicators	WM	SD	Description
1. I create lesson materials to integrate them into real-world applications.	4.51	0.56	Very High
2. I demonstrate complex concepts in a way that learners understand.	4.59	0.61	Very High
3. I utilize a variety of instructional strategies to improve learning.	4.62	0.61	Very High
4. I provide learners with constructive ways to provide feedback on their holistic development.	4.52	0.64	Very High
5. I evaluate learners' understanding and consequently adjust my teaching.	4.70	0.56	Very High
6. I use a range of strategies to keep learners engaged in learning.	4.57	0.56	Very High
7. I integrate learners' interests into my lessons to improve engagement.	4.63	0.60	Very High
8. I create an inclusive classroom environment that motivates all learners to participate.	4.65	0.51	Very High
9. I use interactive activities to make learning more enjoyable.	4.68	0.53	Very High
10. I foster personal drive-in learners so they regulate their own behavior.	4.46	0.59	Very High
11. I arrange school-based programs to enrich the learners' developmental experience.	4.13	0.81	High
12. I manage disruptions in the classroom efficiently.	4.49	0.54	Very High
13. I facilitate regular discussions with learners about behavior expectations.	4.57	0.61	Very High
14. I cultivate a classroom atmosphere that supports utilizing instructional time.	4.54	0.62	Very High
15. I encourage positive reinforcement to foster good behavior.	4.65	0.51	Very High
Overall	4.55	0.47	Very High

Teachers perceive themselves as highly capable of performing the various tasks associated with effective teaching and facilitating student learning. Among the specific indicators, teachers reported particularly high competence in assessing and adjusting instruction based on learners' needs (M

= 4.70), creating inclusive learning environments (M = 4.65), integrating students' interests into classroom activities (M = 4.63), and utilizing varied instructional strategies (M = 4.62). The lowest-rated indicator, although still interpreted as high, was the organization of school-based programs (M = 4.13). This lower rating may be attributable to structural limitations, workload demands, or resource constraints rather than a lack of professional capability. It may also indicate that teachers devote more attention to instructional responsibilities than to extracurricular or administrative functions. These results support the findings of Arboiz and Aoanan (2024), who emphasized teachers' preparedness for inclusive education.

Table 2

Emotional management among primary school teachers

Indicators	WM	SD	Description
1. I critically evaluate the inclusivity of my teaching methods, allowing changes as necessary.	4.40	0.71	Very High
2. I manage my emotions when I feel my teaching performance is affected.	4.54	0.69	Very High
3. I reflect on my emotional responses to complicated situations in the classroom.	4.44	0.67	Very High
4. I accept constructive criticism towards my teaching practices.	4.62	0.58	Very High
5. I control my stress effectively while teaching.	4.44	0.71	Very High
6. I keep control over my emotions in challenging classroom situations.	4.56	0.64	Very High
7. I use strategic communication methods to resolve behavioral issues.	4.62	0.52	Very High
8. I am consistent in my responses to the learners' behavior.	4.56	0.64	Very High
9. I am keen on the emotions and needs of my learners.	4.60	0.61	Very High
10. I can recognize when a learner is struggling.	4.65	0.60	Very High
11. I listen vigorously to my learners' concerns.	4.75	0.44	Very High
12. I show compassion towards my learners' personal matters.	4.75	0.47	Very High
13. I effectively maintain positive relationships with my learners.	4.71	0.52	Very High
14. I constructively resolve conflicts among learners.	4.68	0.53	Very High
15. I facilitate a sense of community in my classroom.	4.70	0.50	Very High
Overall	4.6	0.48	Very High

Table 2 indicates that primary school teachers demonstrate a very high level of emotional management ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.48$), reflecting strong emotional awareness, interpersonal sensitivity, and emotional regulation in classroom settings. Teachers are generally capable of understanding, managing, and responding appropriately to both their own emotions and the emotional needs of their learners. Among the indicators, teachers obtained the highest ratings in listening to learners' concerns ($M = 4.75$), showing compassion toward students ($M = 4.75$), maintaining positive relationships ($M = 4.71$), and fostering a sense of classroom community ($M = 4.70$). Teachers recognize the importance of attending to students' emotional needs alongside their academic development.

Despite these strengths, several indicators received relatively lower ratings. These include evaluating inclusivity within the classroom ($M = 4.40$), managing stress effectively ($M = 4.44$), and regulating emotions during challenging situations ($M = 4.54$). Although these scores remain within the very high range, they suggest potential areas for further professional development. Strengthening teachers' capacity in stress management and emotional regulation may therefore contribute to greater resilience and sustained professional performance. These results are consistent with previous studies that emphasize the relationship between emotional competence and teaching effectiveness (Valente et al., 2024; Peliño & Tantiado, 2022; Oria et al., 2021). While teachers demonstrate a high degree of empathy and interpersonal awareness, targeted interventions focusing on stress management, emotional regulation, and reflective emotional practices may further enhance their resilience, well-being, and instructional performance. Such initiatives can help ensure that teachers remain emotionally equipped to respond effectively to the diverse and evolving demands of the teaching profession.

Table 3 reveals a very high level of teaching performance among primary school teachers ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 0.52$), indicating that they consistently meet and, in many cases, exceed established professional standards. Teachers demonstrate strong competence across various dimensions of instructional practice.

Table 3

Teaching performance of primary school teachers

Indicators	WM	SD	Description
1. I apply research-based teaching practices.	3.92	0.94	High
2. I give real-world problem-solving tasks to promote high critical thinking.	4.37	0.66	Very High
3. I can finish the lessons in a timely manner despite the time constraints.	4.06	0.91	High
4. I ensure that all learners receive fair treatment regardless of their background and abilities.	4.70	0.53	Very High
5. I give differentiated learning style to learners who have diverse needs.	4.56	0.59	Very High
6. I create opportunities for learners' experiential learning.	4.51	0.59	Very High
7. I use digital tools to demonstrate complex learning concepts.	4.25	0.74	Very High
8. I develop an action plan to improve learning outcomes.	4.13	0.79	High
9. I ensure that assessment tests align with the lesson objectives.	4.71	0.52	Very High
10. I give feedback to learners in terms of areas of improvement.	4.65	0.60	Very High
11. I organize activities involving community members.	4.19	0.84	High
12. I provide learning resources to help parents support their children's learning at home.	4.57	0.76	Very High
13. I keep myself updated with the latest teaching trends and methods.	4.59	0.64	Very High
14. I collaborate with my colleagues in professional development opportunities.	4.68	0.59	Very High
15. I innovate my teaching philosophy to enhance the pedagogical approach.	4.48	0.62	Very High
Overall	4.43	0.52	Very High

Among the highest-rated indicators were aligning assessments with learning objectives ($M = 4.71$), ensuring fairness and equity in the classroom ($M = 4.70$), engaging in professional collaboration ($M = 4.68$), and providing timely and meaningful feedback to learners ($M = 4.65$). Teachers are highly

proficient in implementing instructional practices that support student learning and development.

Despite the overall positive results, several indicators received comparatively lower ratings. These include the application of research-based practices ($M = 3.92$), effective time management ($M = 4.06$), and community engagement ($M = 4.19$). These results are consistent with the findings of Boybanting and Tantiado (2023), Adebowale (2024), and Miller et al. (2017), who emphasized the importance of feedback, inclusivity, and evidence-based instructional practices in promoting teaching effectiveness. Although teacher performance is generally very high, sustained professional development initiatives remain essential for strengthening areas that require improvement, particularly in research utilization, time management, and community involvement.

Table 4

Relationships between teaching efficacy and teaching performance

Variables	r	p
Teaching Efficacy* Teaching Performance	0.832	0.000*

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, significant@5% level of significance

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant@5% level of significance

Table 4 shows a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between teaching efficacy and teaching performance ($r = 0.832$, $p = 0.000$). Teachers who possess higher levels of confidence in their instructional abilities tend to demonstrate better teaching performance. The strength of the correlation suggests that teaching efficacy is a substantial predictor of how effectively teachers perform their professional responsibilities and achieve instructional goals. These findings support the work of Miller et al. (2017) on the significant influence of teacher beliefs on classroom practices and student

outcomes and Rodriguez (2024) on the role of self-efficacy in shaping teachers' professional behaviors and effectiveness.

Table 5 reveals a very strong positive and statistically significant relationship between teaching efficacy and emotional management ($r = 0.925$, $p = 0.000$). Teachers who possess higher levels of confidence in their teaching abilities are also more capable of effectively managing and regulating their emotions in professional settings.

Table 5

Relationships between teaching efficacy and emotional management

Variables	r	p
Teaching Efficacy* Emotional Management	0.925	0.000*

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, significant@5% level of significance

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant@5% level of significance

The strength of the correlation suggests that teaching efficacy and emotional management are closely interconnected, with efficacy beliefs potentially influencing how teachers respond to challenges, stressors, and emotional demands within the classroom. These findings support the work of Brunzell et al. (2022) on the importance of emotional awareness and regulation in fostering teacher resilience and effective classroom practice and Tang and Jin (2024) on the role of emotional competence in helping teachers navigate professional demands.

Table 6

Relationships between emotional management and teaching performance

Variables	r	p
Emotional Management* Teaching Performance	0.814	0.000*

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, significant@5% level of significance

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant@5% level of significance

Table 6 indicates a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between emotional management and teaching performance ($r = 0.814, p = 0.000$). This finding suggests that teachers who are more capable of managing and regulating their emotions tend to demonstrate higher levels of teaching performance. Emotional awareness allows educators to recognize and address both their own emotional responses and the emotional needs of students. These findings are consistent with the studies of Shafiq and Rana (2016), Boybanting and Tantiado (2023), and Cestina and Bertillo (2023), which identified emotional intelligence and emotional competence as significant contributors to teaching effectiveness.

Table 7

Path estimates analysis of emotional management mediating the relationship between teaching efficacy and teaching performance

Variables	Label	B	SE	Z	p
Teaching Efficacy → Emotional Management	a	0.938	0.049	19.12	0.000*
Emotional Management → Teaching Performance	b	0.332	0.196	1.67	0.095 ^{ns}
Teaching Efficacy → Teaching Performance	c	0.606	0.1987	3.07	0.002*

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, significant@5% level of significance

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant@5% level of significance

Table 7 presents the results of the path analysis examining the relationships among teaching efficacy, emotional management, and teaching performance. The findings reveal that teaching efficacy significantly predicts emotional management ($B = 0.938, p = 0.000$), indicating that teachers who possess stronger confidence in their instructional abilities are more likely to

demonstrate effective emotional regulation and management. The analysis further shows that teaching efficacy has a significant direct effect on teaching performance ($B = 0.606, p = 0.002$). In contrast, emotional management does not significantly predict teaching performance ($B = 0.332, p = 0.095$). Although emotional management is positively associated with teaching performance, its influence is not statistically strong enough to independently explain variations in performance outcomes.

The findings indicate that teaching efficacy remains the more influential factor in predicting teaching performance. While emotionally competent teachers may be better equipped to manage classroom challenges and maintain positive learning environments, their effectiveness appears to depend more substantially on their confidence in their instructional capabilities. Consequently, emotional management may function as a supportive or complementary factor rather than a direct driver of teaching performance.

Table 8

Mediation estimates analysis of the direct, indirect, and total effect of teaching efficacy on teaching performance, with emotional management as a potential mediator

Effect	Label	B	SE	Z	p	%
Indirect	$a \times b$	0.117	0.1845	1.70	0.090 ^{ns}	33.5
Direct	c	0.606	0.1978	3.07	0.002*	66.5
Total	$c + a \times b$	0.918	0.0771	11.91	0.000*	100.0

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, significant@5% level of significance

^{ns} $p > 0.05$, not significant@5% level of significance

Table 8 presents the mediation analysis results and further confirms that the indirect effect of teaching efficacy on teaching performance through emotional management is not statistically significant ($B = 0.117, p = 0.090$).

Although emotional management contributes to the relationship between teaching efficacy and teaching performance, its mediating influence is insufficient to reach statistical significance. The indirect effect accounts for only 33.5% of the total effect, suggesting that emotional management explains a relatively limited portion of the relationship between the two variables. In contrast, the direct effect of teaching efficacy on teaching performance remains statistically significant ($B = 0.606$, $p = 0.002$), accounting for 66.5% of the total effect. This finding indicates that teaching efficacy exerts a substantial and independent influence on teaching performance, even when emotional management is included in the model. Furthermore, the total effect of teaching efficacy on teaching performance is also significant ($B = 0.918$, $p = 0.000$), highlighting the dominant role of efficacy beliefs in shaping teachers' professional performance and instructional effectiveness.

Based on the mediation analysis, the null hypothesis regarding the mediating role of emotional management is only partially rejected. Significant direct and total effects were observed; however, the indirect effect was not statistically significant, indicating that mediation is not supported. Therefore, emotional management does not serve as a significant mechanism through which teaching efficacy influences teaching performance.

Emotional management does not function as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between teaching efficacy and teaching performance. While emotional management contributes positively to teachers' overall professional functioning and may support classroom interactions, its influence is secondary to the direct impact of teaching efficacy. These results are consistent with the findings of Yin et al. (2017) and Burić and Kim (2020), who emphasized the stronger influence of efficacy beliefs on instructional quality. While emotional management may not directly drive teaching

performance, it remains an important factor in supporting teachers' overall effectiveness and professional sustainability.

Conclusion

Primary school teachers in the District of Balete demonstrate very high levels of teaching efficacy, emotional management, and teaching performance. They possess strong confidence in their instructional capabilities, effectively manage their emotions in professional settings, and consistently perform at high levels in meeting educational standards and responsibilities. There are significant positive relationships among teaching efficacy, emotional management, and teaching performance. Teaching efficacy exhibited the strongest relationship with both emotional management and teaching performance, indicating that teachers who possess greater confidence in their professional abilities are more likely to regulate their emotions effectively and achieve higher levels of performance. However, the mediation analysis showed that emotional management did not significantly mediate the relationship between teaching efficacy and teaching performance. Although emotional management was positively associated with both teaching efficacy and teaching performance, its indirect effect was not statistically significant. Teaching efficacy influences teaching performance primarily through a direct pathway rather than through emotional management. While emotional management contributes to teachers' overall functioning, it does not independently determine performance outcomes when compared with the stronger influence of teaching efficacy.

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Teachers' Subjective Well-Being and Occupational Resilience

Chona C. Meneses

Teachers perform a wide range of roles and responsibilities that extend beyond classroom instruction (Siddiqui & Ahamed, 2020; Keiler, 2018; Miller, 2021). These include delivering educational and training activities, adhering to civil service regulations, maintaining regular class attendance, fulfilling professional duties, communicating with school stakeholders, carrying out tasks assigned by the state, and adapting to ongoing changes in the educational environment. In the course of performing these responsibilities, teachers inevitably encounter various challenges that influence both their work performance and overall health (Oliveira et al., 2025). While some teachers remain motivated and resilient despite these difficulties, others may experience reduced energy, diminished confidence, and a sense of powerlessness. Such differences in responses may be attributed to individual factors such as past experiences and personality traits, which shape how teachers perceive and cope with professional demands. These variations stress the importance of understanding the concepts of occupational

resilience and subjective well-being (SWB), as both reflect how individuals evaluate and respond to their professional and personal experiences.

Although extensive research has examined teacher stress in the workplace (Jayman, 2026; Li et al., 2026; Sharma & Chand, 2025; Collie & Mansfield, 2022; Bidi et al., 2024), studies on teacher occupational resilience have only gained attention in recent years (Beltman et al., 2011). Occupational resilience is defined as a teacher's ability to adapt to changing conditions, overcome challenges, and sustain commitment to the profession (Baatz & Wirzberger, 2025). This concept is closely linked to SWB, which reflects teachers' overall life satisfaction and emotional state. These constructs provide a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers maintain effectiveness and stability in demanding educational contexts.

Given the increasing demands placed on educators, particularly in alternative education settings, it is essential to examine the occupational resilience and SWB of teachers. Understanding the relationship between these variables is crucial for improving teacher effectiveness and enhancing the quality of education.

Teachers' Subjective Well-Being

SWB is commonly used interchangeably with the concept of happiness in the literature (Liang et al., 2021; Vittersø, 2025; Diener et al., 2003; Khalil, 2025). It is also associated with related constructs such as well-being (Escaron et al., 2023; Turner et al., 2022), personal well-being (Mussonne & Changizi, 2023; Morales et al., 2025), psychological well-being (Joshnloo, 2019; Moreta-Herrera et al., 2023; Stuart-Edwards, 2025), spiritual well-being (González-González et al., 2025; El Abiddine et al., 2025; Villani et al., 2019), emotional well-being (Morales et al., 2025), life satisfaction (Veenhoven, 2012; Simões et al., 2021), and quality of life (Skevington & Böhnke, 2018;

Liu et al., 2023). Although these concepts are not identical, they are interconnected and collectively reflect an individual's sense of happiness and life evaluation. SWB is treated as an umbrella concept encompassing different dimensions as an individual's overall self-appraisal of life (Krueger et al., 2009). Proctor (2014) described it as a person's global judgment of life satisfaction and framed it as both cognitive and affective evaluations of life experiences.

SWB consists of three core components: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect (Myers & Diener, 1995). Life satisfaction represents the cognitive dimension, reflecting how individuals evaluate their lives as a whole (Vittersø, 2025). In contrast, positive and negative affect represent the emotional dimension, encompassing the frequency of pleasant and unpleasant emotional experiences (Diener, 1985). Positive affect includes emotions such as joy and enthusiasm, which support meaningful relationships and goal-directed behavior (Garg et al., 2026), while negative affect includes emotions such as sadness, fear, and anger (Leung & Lee, 2014). A higher prevalence of positive emotions relative to negative emotions indicates higher SWB (Das et al., 2020). Conversely, persistent negative affect can diminish overall well-being and hinder personal functioning (Gautam et al., 2024).

SWB among teachers is shaped by a range of demographic, psychological, and socio-cultural factors (Kurrle & Warwas, 2025). The influence of these factors varies across individuals and educational contexts because of differences in culture, social environments, and geographical settings (Smith & Bond, 2019). High levels of SWB enable teachers to maintain better physical and mental health, enhance productivity, and foster positive relationships within the school community (Dreer, 2023). In contrast, low SWB can negatively affect teachers' personal functioning, job satisfaction, and professional performance (Assaf & Antoun, 2024).

The importance of teachers' SWB extends beyond individual welfare to educational effectiveness. Teachers who experience higher levels of well-being are more likely to engage positively with students and contribute to a supportive learning environment (Karakasidou et al., 2025; Prananto et al., 2025; Wang & Jin, 2025). Conversely, those who struggle to cope with professional challenges may experience declining performance, reduced job satisfaction, or even leave the profession (Oliveira et al., 2025). Therefore, promoting and maintaining teachers' SWB is essential for supporting teacher retention, strengthening teacher–student relationships, and improving the overall quality of education.

Determinants and Correlates of Subjective Well-Being

Theoretical and empirical studies have identified various determinants and correlates of SWB (Das et al., 2020; Tamberg et al., 2026), although relatively few empirical studies fully align with theoretical models. Most research focuses on how these determinants influence evaluative (EVA) and emotional (EMO) dimensions of SWB. These determinants can be grouped into seven categories (Azizan & Mahmud, 2018; Salameh et al., 2022; Ngamaba, 2017; Ba, 2020; Nanor et al., 2021; Pontarollo et al., 2020; Tamberg et al., 2026): (1) basic demographics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity), (2) socioeconomic status (e.g., income, education, employment), (3) health and functioning (e.g., physical and mental health, disability), (4) personality traits (e.g., self-efficacy, optimism, self-esteem), (5) social support (e.g., relationships and social satisfaction), (6) religion and culture (e.g., religiosity and cultural context), and (7) geography and infrastructure (e.g., living conditions and access to resources).

However, variability in conceptualization, measurement tools, study design, and sample characteristics limits comparability across studies.

Differences in SWB dimensions, measurement instruments, and research design, particularly between cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, affect the interpretation of findings. Additionally, cultural and contextual differences influence how SWB is understood and measured, further complicating generalization. Therefore, consistent frameworks and methodologies are necessary to improve comparability and strengthen the evidence base.

Occupational Resilience

In the context of rapid societal and professional change, occupational resilience has become increasingly important for coping with workplace challenges. Psychological resilience in professional life is often associated with three key attitudes: commitment, control, and challenge (Prisăcaru, 2025). Individuals who value their profession and believe in their competence are more likely to adapt to change and view difficulties as opportunities for growth rather than threats (Liu & Tong, 2022). Harland et al. (2005) further identified resilience factors such as external support (e.g., role models and family), internal strengths (e.g., optimism and empathy), and interpersonal problem-solving skills.

Teacher resilience, specifically, has gained attention only in recent years despite long-standing research on teacher stress (Beltman et al., 2011). It is defined as the ability to adapt to changing conditions, overcome challenges, and sustain commitment to the profession (Salvo-Garrido et al., 2025). Resilient teachers are characterized by attributes such as optimism, flexibility, problem-solving skills, emotional intelligence, and strong interpersonal relationships (Beltman et al., 2011). These qualities enable teachers to cope effectively with stress, maintain instructional quality, and support student development.

Empirical studies indicate that occupational resilience is positively associated with job satisfaction and negatively associated with burnout (Askaripoor et al., 2024; Piotrowski et al., 2022; Ibrahim & Hussein, 2024). Resilient teachers are more likely to remain committed to the profession and effectively address students' academic and emotional needs (Salvo-Garrido et al., 2025). However, resilience may decline over time due to prolonged exposure to stress (Brouskeli et al., 2018). Hence, occupational resilience sustains teacher performance and well-being .

Relationship Between Teachers' Subjective Well-Being and Occupational Resilience

Teachers' SWB is closely associated with their ability to adapt to and overcome professional challenges. Research indicates that teachers with higher levels of SWB tend to exhibit greater resilience and cope more effectively with workplace demands and stressors (Beltman et al., 2011). This relationship is further strengthened by social and emotional support, as teachers with strong support networks report higher levels of well-being and enhanced resilience (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

The positive effects of subjective well-being extend to teachers' professional satisfaction and commitment. Resilience has been identified as a key mechanism linking SWB and job satisfaction, as teachers with greater well-being are better equipped to manage occupational stress and remain committed to their profession (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Consequently, teachers who possess both high well-being and resilience are more likely to sustain long-term performance and remain in the teaching profession (Roeser & Eccles, 2015).

Beyond its impact on teachers themselves, subjective well-being also influences educational outcomes. Teachers who are emotionally healthy and

resilient create more positive classroom environments, foster stronger teacher–student relationships, and contribute to improved student outcomes (Çetin et al., 2025). Thus, the interconnected relationship between subjective well-being and occupational resilience plays a vital role in promoting teacher effectiveness, professional longevity, and overall educational quality.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Occupational Resilience and Subjective Well-Being of Teachers in the Alternative Learning System

This study assessed the levels of Alternative Learning System (ALS) teachers' occupational resilience and SWB and examined the relationship between them. Using descriptive–correlational research design, descriptive research was used to systematically gather, analyze, and interpret data on existing conditions and practices while correlational research determined the degree of relationship between variables and allowed for predictive analysis. This design was appropriate for identifying how SWB relates to occupational resilience and how this relationship varies according to factors such as sex, age, educational qualification, and years of service.

The participants consisted of 46 ALS teachers, selected as the entire study group and categorized based on demographic variables. Data were collected using two instruments: the Teacher Well-being Questionnaire (TWQ) and the Occupational Resilience Scale (ORS), along with a personal information sheet. The TWQ, a Likert-scale instrument with 75 items, measured various dimensions of teachers' well-being, while the ORS, composed of 17 items, assessed teachers' occupational resilience. Both instruments used scaled responses, and mean scores were computed and interpreted using established descriptive categories. Data analysis involved computing weighted means to determine levels of well-being and resilience, followed by statistical procedures to examine relationships between variables.

The results in Table 1 indicate that ALS teachers demonstrate a good level of SWB overall ($M = 3.70$, $SD = .46$). Across the three dimensions, teachers reported good levels in physical and environmental health ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .46$), mental and emotional health ($M = 3.71$, $SD = .47$), and spiritual and social health ($M = 4.03$, $SD = .50$), with the latter obtaining the highest mean. The consistently low standard deviation values suggest minimal variability, indicating that responses are closely clustered and relatively uniform across participants.

Table 1

Level of ALS teachers' subjective well-being as an entire group

Teachers' wellbeing	Mean	SD	Description
Physical and environmental health	3.38	.46	Good
Mental and emotional health	3.71	.47	Good
Spiritual and social health	4.03	.50	Good
Over-all Mean	3.70	.46	Good

Legend: 0.00-0.83 Very poor; 0.84-1.67 Poor; 1.68-2.50 Fair; 2.51-3.33 Moderate; 3.34-4.17 Good; 4.18-5.00 Very good

The ALS teachers generally maintain a positive outlook, balanced work-life conditions, and stable emotional and social functioning. However, the comparatively lower mean in physical and environmental health suggests that while overall well-being is favorable, environmental and physical factors may still pose moderate challenges. While ALS teachers demonstrate generally positive well-being, sustaining this level requires continuous institutional support and attention to physical and environmental conditions.

When categorized by sex, both male ($M = 3.68$, $SD = .49$) and female ($M = 3.72$, $SD = .42$) teachers exhibited similarly good levels of SWB. Female teachers showed slightly higher mean scores across all dimensions, although

the differences were minimal and not practically significant. In both groups, spiritual and social health remained the strongest dimension, indicating that relational and value-based factors are central to teachers' well-being. The negligible variation between groups suggests that SWB is not strongly influenced by sex, but rather by shared professional experiences and working conditions.

Table 2

Level of occupational resilience of ALS teachers

Variables	Mean	SD	Description
Entire group	3.01	.29	Good
Sex			
Male	2.98	.29	Good
Female	3.04	.29	Good
Educational Attainment			
Bachelors	3.00	.29	Good
Masters	3.08	.27	Good
Age			
Young	3.05	.33	Good
Middle	3.02	.32	Good
Old	2.97	.22	Good
Length of Experience			
Short	2.98	.27	Good
Average	3.00	.35	Good
Long	3.09	.18	Good

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Very poor; 1.76-2.50 Poor; 2.51-3.25 Good; 3.26-4.00 Very good

Table 2 shows that ALS teachers possess a good level of occupational resilience ($M = 3.01$, $SD = .29$), indicating their ability to adapt to challenges and manage stress. Across all demographic variables, sex, educational attainment, age, and length of experience, resilience levels remained consistently “good,” with only slight variations. Teachers with longer experience showed marginally higher resilience ($M = 3.09$), suggesting that experience may contribute to coping skills, although not to a statistically

significant extent. The low standard deviation values across all groups further indicate consistency in responses.

ALS teachers are generally capable of navigating workplace demands, recovering from setbacks, and maintaining functionality under pressure. However, the “good” level, rather than “very good,” indicates room for further development, particularly in strengthening coping strategies and adaptive capacity. Resilience is not solely dependent on demographic factors but is shaped by professional context and support systems. Teachers’ ability to persist despite challenges reflects both individual competence and the demands of the ALS environment.

Table 3

t-test results of the difference in occupational resilience according to variables

Variables	Mean	t-value	df	Sig level
Sex				
Male	2.98	-.678	44	.502
Female	3.04			
Educational attainment				
Bachelors	3.00	.727	44	.471
Masters	3.08			

As shown in Table 3, statistical analysis using t-test, and Table 4. ANOVA, revealed no significant differences in occupational resilience across sex ($t(44) = -0.678, p > 0.05$), educational attainment ($t(44) = 0.727, p > 0.05$), age ($F(2,43) = 0.229, p > 0.05$), and length of experience ($F(2,43) = 0.381, p > 0.05$). These findings indicate that occupational resilience is relatively uniform among ALS teachers, regardless of demographic characteristics. Resilience is more strongly influenced by shared professional conditions rather than individual background factors.

Table 4*ANOVA in the occupational resilience according to variables*

Variables		Sum Squares	of Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. level
Age	Between Groups	.040	2	.020	.229	.796
	Within Groups	3.728	43	.087		
	Total	3.767	45			
Length of experience	Between Groups	.066	2	.033	.381	.685
	Within Groups	3.702	43	.086		
	Total	3.767	45			

The results are consistent with Francisco and Buri (2024), which similarly found no significant demographic differences in resilience. Additionally, findings by Beltman et al. (2011), Patan et al. (2025), and Tachado and Tumarong (2024) support the absence of variation based on experience. Critically, this uniformity highlights that resilience development may require systemic interventions rather than targeted demographic-based strategies.

Table 5*Linear regression analysis on the predictors of teachers' occupational resilience*

ALS teachers' subjective well being	Coefficients Unstandardized Beta	Standard Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
Physical & environmental health	-1.687	.203	-2.680	-8.315**	.000
Mental & emotional health	1.543	.208	2.511	7.403**	.000
Spiritual & social health	.070	.103	.122	.676	.503

As shown in Table 5, regression analysis revealed that physical and environmental health ($t = -8.315, p = .000$) and mental and emotional health ($t = 7.403, p = .000$) significantly predict ALS teachers' occupational resilience. This indicates that teachers' physical conditions, work environment, and

emotional stability directly influence their ability to cope with professional challenges. In contrast, spiritual and social health ($t = 0.676, p = .503$) was not found to be a significant predictor, suggesting that while it contributes to overall well-being, it does not directly enhance resilience in measurable terms.

These findings align with Beltman et al. (2011), who emphasized the link between well-being and resilience, and with Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), who highlighted the role of emotional and social support in enhancing coping capacity. Furthermore, Zee and Koomen (2016) and Roeser and Eccles (2015) noted that well-being strengthens resilience and job satisfaction, while Cetin et al. (2025) emphasized its impact on classroom outcomes. However, the non-significance of spiritual and social health suggests a more complex relationship, where these factors may function indirectly or interact with other variables. Improving teachers' physical, environmental, and emotional conditions is critical for strengthening occupational resilience and sustaining effective teaching performance.

Conclusion

ALS teachers generally demonstrate a good level of subjective well-being, reflected in their satisfaction with both personal and professional life. This contributes to positive outcomes such as improved health, productivity, and meaningful relationships within the school and community. They are also capable of effectively managing challenges and adapting to the demands of the ALS context. Moreover, physical and environmental health, as well as mental and emotional health, significantly influence teachers' occupational resilience. Strengthening teachers' well-being is essential for enhancing their capacity to cope with challenges and sustain effective performance.

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Teachers' Additional Ancillary Duties and Responsibilities

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In the contemporary educational landscape, public school teachers play a pivotal role in shaping students' intellectual and personal development (Elbertson et al., 2025; da Silva Pinho et al., 2025). Beyond imparting academic knowledge, teachers cultivate essential skills, values, and behaviors necessary for holistic growth. However, their responsibilities extend far beyond classroom instruction, encompassing tasks such as lesson planning, assessment, and student support. Increasingly, teachers are also required to assume ancillary roles, including department heads, curriculum coordinators, coaches, and guidance advocates, which further intensify their workload and professional demands (Marmol, 2019; Sarabia & Collantes, 2020).

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) acknowledges the heavy workload borne by teachers, which is often associated with heightened stress and burnout. The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers (Republic Act 4670) mandates a maximum of six hours of daily classroom teaching. Despite this provision, many teachers exceed the prescribed workload due to additional ancillary responsibilities (Algar et al., 2025). The remaining hours are allocated for ancillary duties, including advisorships and special assignments. These responsibilities, such as serving

as grade-level coordinators, class advisers, school paper advisers, and property custodians, are considered part of the teacher's overall workload. This imbalance raises critical concerns regarding the sustainability of teachers' mental health and overall well-being as they manage increasingly complex professional roles (Alegado, 2018; David et al., 2019).

While additional ancillary roles may contribute to school effectiveness and leadership development, they may also exacerbate workload pressures and diminish work-life balance if not properly managed. Understanding this dynamic is crucial in informing policies and institutional practices that support teachers to ensure that expanded responsibilities do not come at the expense of their health, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness.

Experience of Teachers with Ancillary Services

Managing ancillary roles in addition to regular teaching responsibilities is a significant source of stress among public school teachers. Beyond classroom instruction, teachers are expected to perform numerous supplementary duties that intensify their professional demands and contribute to workload overload. Yazon and Ang-Manaig (2019) reported that 233 teachers strongly perceived their workload as excessive, noting that they are often compelled to multitask. Similarly, Ancho and Bongco (2019) identified that teaching encompasses a wide range of responsibilities, including school-related tasks such as programs and activities, seasonal duties such as coordination, reporting, training, parent communication, and meetings, as well as regular curricular functions including lesson planning, material preparation, assessment, checking, and record keeping.

The accumulation of these responsibilities places substantial demands on teachers' time and energy, often exceeding the resources available to effectively manage them. As a result, teachers may experience increased

stress, fatigue, and difficulty balancing their professional and personal commitments. Research consistently demonstrates that work overload is closely associated with higher levels of teacher stress and emotional strain (Creagh et al., 2025; Kariou et al., 2021; Magtalas & Eduvala, 2024). These findings suggest that the growing burden of ancillary services represents a major occupational challenge that can adversely affect teachers' well-being, job satisfaction, and effectiveness in carrying out their educational responsibilities.

Stress Appraisal and Coping Mechanisms

The experience of stress among teachers can be better understood through Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress. This model posits that stress is not solely caused by external demands but is mediated by an individual's cognitive appraisal of a situation (Peacock & Wong, 1990). It emphasizes the dynamic interaction between the individual and the environment, where stress arises from how situations are evaluated in relation to available resources and constraints (Lazarus, 1993). Consequently, teachers exposed to similar workplace demands may experience different levels of stress depending on how they perceive and interpret these challenges.

Differences in stress appraisal influence the coping mechanisms that teachers employ. Coping is defined as continuously changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage internal or external demands perceived as taxing (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Two primary coping strategies are commonly identified: problem-focused coping, which seeks to address the source of stress, and emotion-focused coping, which aims to regulate emotional responses. Effective coping depends on the alignment between situational appraisal and the coping strategy adopted. This explains why teachers facing

similar stressors may respond differently and adopt varying coping approaches (Pagayanan, 2016).

One significant source of stress among teachers is role conflict resulting from multiple responsibilities (Huang et al., 2024). Teachers who perform both primary teaching duties and additional roles may encounter competing expectations that require different behaviors and commitments. Such conflicts can increase stress levels and reduce job satisfaction, particularly when teachers perceive that the demands placed upon them exceed their available resources. Given the transactional nature of stress, the negative effects of role conflict may be alleviated when teachers have access to adequate support systems and effective coping strategies (Pogere et al., 2019; Thakur et al., 2018). Therefore, school administrators play a critical role in reducing stress by implementing proactive measures such as workload management, fostering shared responsibility, and promoting collaboration among staff. These interventions can help teachers manage professional demands more effectively and maintain higher levels of well-being and job satisfaction.

Positive Contributions of Ancillary Roles

While ancillary roles may increase workload and contribute to stress, they can also provide meaningful benefits that support teachers' professional and personal well-being. Engaging in multiple roles allows teachers to expand their professional experiences beyond routine classroom responsibilities, creating opportunities for growth, learning, and increased job satisfaction. Sappa et al. (2015) found that involvement in diverse roles enables teachers to gain emotional distance from daily classroom demands, maintain a broader professional perspective, and derive motivation from varied work experiences.

These additional responsibilities can therefore serve as sources of professional enrichment rather than merely additional burdens.

Multiple roles may also enhance teachers' effectiveness and relationships within the school community (Toñacao & Oliva, 2023; Rosenblatt, 2001). At the instructional level, teachers who engage in various school functions may gain greater credibility among students, strengthening their influence and effectiveness in the classroom. Furthermore, strong interpersonal relationships and social support systems are essential in helping teachers manage professional challenges (Smala et al., 2026), as individuals with supportive relational networks are better equipped to cope with stress and maintain positive well-being. Teachers likewise perceive multiple responsibilities as opportunities to contribute to school improvement and professional development. The successful management of these roles is further facilitated by trust, which fosters collaborative leadership, positive working relationships, and shared responsibility within the school community.

Role of Extracurricular and School Engagement

Extracurricular activities, which are non-academic programs conducted under school supervision, constitute an important component of teachers' ancillary responsibilities. These activities provide students with opportunities to develop skills, interests, and personal qualities beyond the formal curriculum, contributing to their holistic development (Retubada, 2014). Teachers recognize the value of extracurricular involvement in promoting the productive use of students' leisure time while supporting their social, emotional, and personal growth.

Beyond their benefits for students, extracurricular and other ancillary responsibilities can positively influence teachers' professional experiences. Participation in these activities encourages collaboration among teachers and

fosters a culture of teamwork, collegiality, and shared commitment within the school community. Through collaborative engagement, teachers become more actively involved in decision-making processes, working together to address organizational challenges and improve educational outcomes. In addition, teachers often assume mentoring roles for novice educators and contribute to the exploration and implementation of innovative educational practices. These opportunities for leadership, collaboration, and professional contribution can enhance teachers' sense of purpose while supporting the continuous improvement of the education system.

Coping Strategies and Stress Management

Teachers employ a variety of coping strategies to manage work-related stress, with coping approaches generally categorized as either problem-focused or emotion-focused (Wang et al., 2022; Nwoko et al., 2024). Teacher coping refers to the ways educators respond to the daily challenges and demands of their profession. According to Lazarus and Folkman's framework, effective coping can reduce perceived stress by minimizing the impact of stressors and helping individuals adapt to challenging situations. Consequently, the choice of coping strategy plays a crucial role in maintaining teachers' well-being and professional effectiveness.

The nature of teachers' coping responses is often shaped by the challenges they encounter. Teachers, particularly those new to the profession, face both intrapersonal challenges, such as self-doubt, boundary-setting, and emotional regulation, and interpersonal challenges involving students, parents, and colleagues (Yangdon, 2026; El Masry & Alzaanin, 2021). To manage these demands, teachers utilize strategies such as autonomy, collaboration, compliance, and influence. These approaches enable teachers to navigate

complex professional environments while maintaining their ability to fulfill multiple responsibilities.

Research further suggests that constructive coping strategies are associated with more positive outcomes. Naczenski et al. (2017) identified physical activity, relaxation techniques, and engagement in hobbies as effective coping mechanisms linked to lower levels of burnout. In contrast, studies in the Philippine context indicate that teachers commonly rely on passive activities such as watching television, going to the movies, and window shopping to relieve stress (Rabago-Mingoa, 2017). Although these activities may provide temporary relief, they are largely sedentary and may not adequately address the long-term effects of occupational stress. Overall, teachers employ diverse coping strategies based on their appraisal of stressful situations, with the effectiveness of these strategies influencing their capacity to manage stress and maintain their overall well-being.

Motivation and Work Performance

Motivation plays a critical role in teachers' work performance and their ability to manage multiple responsibilities effectively (Kontar et al., 2025; Wang & Shakibaei, 2025; Layek & Koodamara, 2024). According to Maslow (1993), motivation is the driving force that directs individuals toward achieving specific goals by organizing behavior to satisfy needs and aspirations. In the teaching profession, motivation influences not only job performance but also teachers' willingness to engage in additional responsibilities, adapt to challenges, and sustain commitment to their work.

Teacher motivation is shaped by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic motivation arises from personal needs, professional goals, and the satisfaction derived from teaching, while extrinsic motivation is influenced by external factors such as salary, promotion, recognition, and working

conditions. Intrinsic motivation is evident when teachers perform their duties out of genuine interest and fulfillment, whereas extrinsic motivation is driven by the pursuit of external rewards and incentives (Maslow, 1993). Workplace conditions also play an important role in shaping motivation levels, with factors such as professional development opportunities, workload, class size, and teacher rank influencing teachers' enthusiasm and engagement in their work.

Research suggests that higher levels of motivation are associated with positive work-related behaviors and outcomes (Vo et al., 2022; Lee & Raschke, 2016). Increased motivation has been linked to improved attendance, greater productivity, and enhanced service delivery (Halim & Mansyur, 2023). Furthermore, incentives such as competitive compensation, housing benefits, allowances, and healthcare support can strengthen teachers' motivation and commitment to the profession (Maslow, 1993). Recognizing the importance of motivation in promoting teacher effectiveness, regional initiatives such as those of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) advocate strategies including competitive compensation and performance-based promotion systems (Reyes, 2023). Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation support teachers in fulfilling their diverse professional responsibilities and maintaining high levels of performance.

RESEARCH FOCUS: Lived Experiences of Public School Teachers Performing Ancillary Tasks

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of public-school teachers performing ancillary services. Phenomenology was chosen because it facilitates an in-depth understanding of participants' perspectives, interpretations, and personal realities. By focusing on teachers' firsthand experiences, the study sought to

capture the challenges they encounter, the coping strategies they employ, and the professional growth they derive from carrying out additional responsibilities, thereby generating rich insights that may inform educational policy and practice.

The study involved five purposively selected public-school teachers from the Division of Aklan, Philippines who were actively performing ancillary roles alongside their regular teaching duties. Participants were selected based on the following criteria: engagement in ancillary responsibilities, willingness to share their experiences, and use of coping strategies in managing their roles. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed unstructured interview guide consisting of three key areas: lived experiences, challenges encountered, and coping mechanisms. Prior to implementation, the instrument underwent expert validation. Ethical considerations were also strictly observed, including informed consent, confidentiality, and approval from the appropriate educational authorities.

Data collection was conducted through a combination of focus group discussions and individual interviews, depending on participants' availability. All interviews were documented, transcribed, and analyzed using Colaizzi's method of phenomenological analysis. The process involved extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, organizing meanings into thematic clusters, and developing an exhaustive description of the phenomenon under investigation. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, member checking was conducted by returning the results to the participants for validation, ensuring that the interpretations accurately represented their lived experiences.

Personal and Professional Growth

Engagement in ancillary services contributes significantly to teachers' personal and professional growth. By assuming responsibilities beyond classroom instruction, teachers develop essential competencies such as communication, leadership, program management, and instructional material preparation. These roles serve as practical avenues for skill enhancement and confidence-building.

Poca described how these responsibilities shaped her development:

"The accomplishment and success of a particular task assignment that I was given is the most memorable yet beneficial experience I have had. It made me understand the value of diligence and tenacity, and all of a sudden, it made me enjoy my work."

Similarly, Deliciousness shared:

"Being selected as one of the resource presenters for the Parent Teaching Parenting Style was the most memorable and beneficial experience I have had while providing ancillary services. It was an amazing opportunity. Additionally, I was selected as a Gender and Development Program demonstration instructor. All of these memorable experiences were beneficial since I improved my knowledge of how to create materials and PowerPoint presentations. Additionally, I developed my communication abilities and conquered my phobia of public speaking."

These accounts affirm that ancillary services, despite increasing workload, provide meaningful opportunities for professional development. They enable teachers to acquire broader competencies beyond traditional teaching roles, thereby strengthening self-efficacy and adaptability. Moreover, such experiences enhance career readiness and contribute to the development of well-rounded educators. However, this growth is not without trade-offs. While ancillary roles foster competence, they simultaneously demand

additional time and effort, suggesting that professional development through these roles must be balanced with manageable workload conditions.

Challenges and Stress Management

Despite their benefits, ancillary services introduce substantial challenges that intensify teachers' workload and stress. Teachers struggle with time constraints, task overload, and limited resources while balancing instructional and administrative responsibilities.

Cardie highlighted the pressure of deadlines and technological limitations:

"Tight deadlines to complete assignments and reports, particularly when they were to be turned in as soon as possible, were the difficulties and issues I faced. Another major obstacle was not having network access or a bad internet connection."

Bethany Gail emphasized logistical challenges in rural settings:

"Since my station is in a rural place and we rely on habal-habal as a mode of transportation, it was difficult for me to submit urgent reports, which caused me to miss some of my lessons."

Georgette added:

"As a teacher, the challenges or problems I have encountered in performing these additional ancillary services include a lack of funds, the need for active participation from parents and learners, and difficulties in managing time and preparation."

These findings highlight systemic constraints, such as inadequate infrastructure, financial limitations, and contextual barriers, that exacerbate teachers' workload. Beyond logistical issues, ancillary services also negatively affect teachers' well-being.

Poca stated:

"My experiences have shown that these supplementary services have a negative impact on my physical health by increasing my levels of stress and exhaustion. I also experienced anxiety when creating reports and activity regimens."

These results align with the Transactional Model of Stress, which posits that stress arises from the interaction between environmental demands and perceived coping resources (Peacock & Wong, 1990). Critically, while teachers attempt to manage stress through individual coping strategies, the persistence of structural challenges indicates that coping alone is insufficient. Institutional interventions, such as workload redistribution, improved infrastructure, and realistic deadlines, are necessary to prevent chronic stress and burnout.

Sense of Fulfillment and Motivation

Despite the challenges, teachers derive a strong sense of fulfillment and motivation from performing ancillary services. Their contributions to students' development and school improvement serve as powerful intrinsic motivators.

Cardie shared:

"As a teacher, performing ancillary services sometimes made me feel exhausted, but it also has positive gains. It develops and enhances my skills while helping students acquire experiences and learnings, which I think is one of the best prizes a teacher can have."

Deliciousness reflected:

"Teaching is the most rewarding job on earth. Teachers exert extra time and effort to provide the best and highest quality education for learners. These ancillary services enlightened me, as they served as a door of

opportunities and learning. Although sometimes I felt stressed, they helped me become more dynamic, accountable, and responsible."

Georgette added:

"The attitudes I developed in performing additional ancillary services as a public-school teacher include resilience, flexibility, patience, and leadership."

These narratives demonstrate that ancillary services reinforce teachers' professional identity and commitment. The opportunity to make meaningful contributions strengthens motivation and sustains engagement despite challenges, supporting Bongco and Ancho's (2019) assertion that teachers' dedication extends beyond classroom instruction. However, this intrinsic motivation presents a critical paradox. While it sustains performance, it may also lead teachers to tolerate excessive workloads, potentially normalizing overwork. Therefore, motivation should be supported by institutional safeguards to ensure sustainable teaching practices.

Unforgettable and Traumatic Experiences

The study also reveals that some ancillary-related experiences are physically and emotionally taxing, with serious implications for teachers' well-being. Participants reported extreme fatigue, health issues, and high-pressure demands. Poca recounted:

"The most unforgettable and traumatic experience I have encountered in performing ancillary services was preparing my innovation to be presented in the district. I experienced sleepless nights and fatigue while preparing my proposal, which led me to sickness. I was also a COVID patient before, due to excessive anxiety that weakened my immune system."

Bethany Gail shared: *"The most unforgettable experience I had was spending late nights preparing reports, specifically during the pandemic, while I was a patient in the hospital."*

There are severe consequences of excessive workload, including burnout, illness, and emotional distress. Teachers often prioritize professional responsibilities over personal well-being, leading to long-term health risks. Critically, there is an urgent need for work–life balance policies, mental health support, and institutional safeguards to protect teachers from the detrimental effects of prolonged stress.

Institutional and Community Support Interventions

In response to these challenges, participants proposed several intervention programs aimed at improving teachers' well-being: Partner Kita Mga Maestra, Mga Maestra Handa, Maestra ag Maestro sa Among Kumunidad, Suporta Ko, Ka Ma'am, and Pasidungog. These initiatives emphasize collaboration, resource provision, community engagement, and recognition.

Poca emphasized supportive leadership and collaboration:

"The school should create a positive atmosphere where teachers feel valued and respected; teachers should listen to school heads and seek their advice for the success of assigned tasks; teachers and school heads should support and help each other technically; and teachers should be given incentives and recognition to keep them motivated to complete their work."

Deliciousness highlighted collaborative planning:

"Teachers need to plan ahead of time alongside the school head and their colleagues. Forming committees can help distribute workload effectively..."

Cardie stressed community involvement:

"Teachers need to build strong relationships with external stakeholders to gain support from the community..."

Bethany Gail underscored government support:

"The government needs to assist teachers by providing essential resources such as free Wi-Fi, laptops, learning materials, and incentives..."

Georgette emphasized recognition:

"Teachers are important implementers of curriculum and social values, and as such, they should be recognized and rewarded by parents, students, and the community."

Teacher well-being is a shared responsibility requiring coordinated efforts from schools, communities, and government institutions. Institutional support, resource provision, and recognition enhance both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Furthermore, motivation strategies such as compensation, professional development, and career advancement are critical in improving teacher performance and educational outcomes. Sustainable solutions must move beyond individual coping and address systemic issues affecting teachers' work conditions.

Conclusion

This study reveals a complex interplay between growth, stress, motivation, and well-being. While ancillary services provide valuable opportunities for development and fulfillment, they also impose significant demands that require comprehensive institutional support to ensure sustainability. There is a need to strengthen teachers' resilience, emotional regulation, and overall well-being while reducing the risk of burnout by fostering a collaborative and supportive environment.

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