

Lived Experiences of Teachers Teaching Intermediate Mathematics in Far Flung Areas

¹Amancio I. Basister Jr. & ²Rhett H. Motus

Abstract

This phenomenological study examined the journey and reflections of intermediate mathematics teachers in far flung areas of the District of Malinao, Aklan. Specifically, it aimed to document and analyze the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of intermediate mathematics teachers. To know their insights about these themes, nine (9) teachers from three (3) far-flung were selected based on the data gathered from the District Office. The data were gathered through a researcher-made interview guide that was validated by the jury composed of four experts, one school head, one teacher major in English for the grammar, one Mathematics District coordinator and the researcher's thesis adviser. After the data gathering, the transcribed and analyzed data revealed that teachers in far flung schools need help to ease the problems they encountered in teaching due to limited resources, distance, and poor level of macro-skills in learners. Because of these findings, an upskilling program for teachers in far flung areas was recommended to help in the teaching-learning process. The proposal is a five-day program focused on how to help the teachers in far-flung areas on the difficulties they encounter. This includes education for all, teaching strategies in intermediate mathematics, contextualized teaching, instructional materials in intermediate mathematics, and tapping the LGU and NGO for help.

Keywords: *Lived Experiences, Intermediate Mathematics, Upskilling Program, Far flung Areas*

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About the authors:

¹Corresponding author. Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Management, Head Teacher II, Sugnod, Elementary School, Sugnod, Malinao, Aklan, 5606 Philippines'

²Doctor of Education, Senior High School Master Teacher II in the Department of Education, Division of Aklan.

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Introduction

Teaching experiences is not a one size fits all situation; each teacher has their own dilemma that they need to address to deliver a holistic education for their students. Teaching in far-flung schools is indeed a difficult case for teachers have to endure the struggles to face every day. The District of Malinao is located in the hilly part of the province of Aklan does most schools that are located in the far-flung barangays struggles to teach intermediate Mathematics due to lack of resources, its accessibility and poor macro-skills. Towards this end, identifying the problems and challenges of these teachers can be used as a basis to make an upskilling program to help them overcome the struggles they have to go through,

The goal of this study was to examine the journey and reflections of teachers teaching intermediate mathematics in far flung areas of the District of Malinao, Aklan. Specifically, it aims to document and analyze the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of intermediate mathematics teachers in far flung areas of Malinao.

Methodology

This study utilized Phenomenological Research Design. Phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. The fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

It was conducted at the far flung schools in the District of Malinao. These schools are known as the Sugnod Elementary School, Angeles Ibardolasa Elementary School and Osman Elementary School where the identified participants were the 9 intermediate Mathematics teacher of the said school.

It utilized a researcher-made interview guide as a measurement device. This instrument was used to know the personal experiences of teachers which was composed of three parts: lived experiences in teaching intermediate mathematics, challenges they encounter as intermediate mathematics teachers in far flung schools, and coping mechanism of teachers.

The instrument in this study underwent a content validation by a jury composed of four members who were selected for their expertise.

The researcher ensured the anonymity of the participants by using pseudonyms to conceal their real identity. All the information disclosed by the participants were treated with utmost confidentiality by strictly adhering to the provisions of Republic Act 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Findings

The lived experiences of teachers in the far flung schools of Malinao is far more different from teachers in the central schools. They have different challenges and coping mechanism.

In terms of the challenges encountered by the teacher-key informants, two problems emerged. First is that there is little to no resources present in the schools in far – flung schools. Second, due to pandemic and other factors, the learners have poor level of macro-skills.

In terms of the coping mechanisms adapted by the teachers, 3 of them said that to engage the learners in the lesson, the key informants use multi-media while others use different visual aids. Also, drills are constantly given to learners to prove understanding of the lesson.

Based on the problems encountered by the key informants, the researcher has come up with a five - days upskilling program that focuses on the following topics:

- A. Education for All
- B. Teaching strategies in Intermediate Mathematics
- C. Contextualized Teaching
- D. Instructional Materials in Intermediate Mathematics
- E. Tapping the LGU and NGO for help.

Conclusion

Teachers teaching in far flung areas has the drive to teach even though their station is far from home. With little resources, they can be creative and strategic in delivering their lessons. Multimedia is of great help in teaching mathematics especially to children. With it, the learners are more engaged and excited to learn.

Not only did distance made the teaching and learning process hard, but also, the pandemic caused learners to develop poor macro-skills that hinders continuous learning which give frustrations to the teachers. Bridging the gap in terms of macro-skills is more complicated because of different factors like quality of education due to absences and lack of resources.

To ease the problems mentioned above, proper leadership and training is needed by the teachers in far flung areas.

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