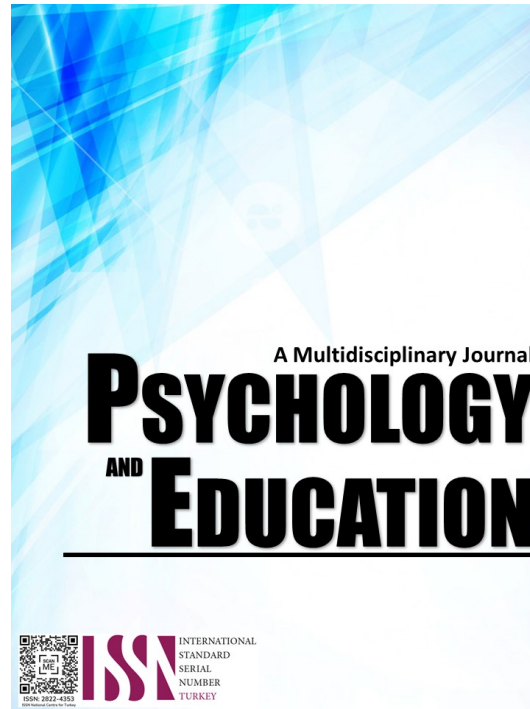


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Out-of-Field Teaching: the Endeavors of Junior High School Teachers Teaching Non-Specialized Subjects

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore and understand the endeavors of out-of-field junior high school teachers in teaching non-specialized subjects. The Husserlian descriptive phenomenology method was employed in the study. Purposive sampling was used and there were 15 conversational partners interviewed. Their responses were transcribed and analyzed thematically. The findings revealed the six themes that emerged from their responses: Mixed Impressions, Notable Reasons for Subject Assignment, Serious Challenges, Self-learning and Coping Strategies, Profound Learning Experiences, and Review of Human Resource Policies and Procedures. Based on the results of the study, the researcher found out that teachers have mixed impressions towards out-of-field teaching, but as teacher they are expected to teach and be flexible. It was revealed from their responses that they encountered struggles and felt depressed, stressed and had low self-esteem in teaching. Despite the struggles they encountered, it provided opportunity for teachers to develop innovativeness to cope with challenges in certain task. It can be concluded that self-doubt and lack of confidence of teachers in out-of-field teaching are not considered hindrances in honing the learners but an opportunity to learn outside the teachers teaching comfort zones.

Keywords: Mixed Impressions, Notable Reasons For Subject Assignment, Out-of-Field Teaching, Profound Learning Experiences, Review Of Human Resource Policies And Procedures, Self-learning And Coping Strategies, Serious Challenges

Introduction

Learning is best when the teacher has considerable knowledge and experience (Ball & Forzani, 2010). Teachers, according to Rockstroh (2013), have a direct obligation to academically educate learners, and they are one of the most significant school-based factors influencing learners' education. However, some teachers who are considered to be the most competent in their disciplines face difficulty in presenting their lessons, putting the teaching-learning process at risk (Hobbs & Törner, 2019). Various studies show that teachers are experience difficulties in teaching subjects outside of their specialization known as out-of-field teaching. Porsh and Wendt (2015) learned out that in Germany, out-of-field teaching has negative impact on teachers' self-efficacy which in turn causes negative impact on students, learning results. In addition, according to Tomas-Fulgado (2017), students who are taught by such out-of-field teachers have lower self-concept across all specializations, while students who were taught by specialized teachers outperformed those who were taught by non-specialized teachers.

Furthermore, most principals and teachers in Turkey opposed the hiring of out-of-field teachers, based on the fact that out-of-field teachers lacked subject expertise, teaching experience, and professional specialization (Cinkir & Kurum, 2015). Out-of-field teachers felt alienated because their field of study and

their field of assignment were incompatible, preventing them from applying their professional skills (Sharplin, 2014). According to Umoinyang, Akpan & Ekpo (2011), one of the reasons for students' failure in core topics like Math and Science is due use of out-of-field teachers. In the Philippine context, the problem of out-of-field teaching has not been readily responded. Out-of-field teaching is a significant, but a long-unrecognized issue in Philippine schools and education in general (Sambe, 2015; Gutowski & Rado, 2014). It has been an unprioritized concern due to the fact schools had assumed that this is not an issue but a responsibility of a teacher.

In the locality, from the remarks of the Libungan Cluster Head, in the event that there are inadequate specialized teachers, teachers who have an inclination in that specific subject will be assigned to teach regardless if the teacher has the mastery of the subject or not, as long as he/she follows the DO. No. 13 s. 1994 Guidelines for Matching Specialization in Teaching Preparation with Teaching Assignments for Public School Teachers (Apostol, 2022). Leading to the teachers forced inclination to subjects outside of their major, resulting in a mismatch between teaching load and subject expertise surged from the sentiments of some teachers in the municipality of Libungan. To validate these sentiments, this context inspires the researcher's interest to conduct a study exposing the various feelings, experiences, challenges and coping mechanisms of teachers who are involved in this

particular phenomenon.

Research Questions

This study sought to explore the endeavors of out-of-field junior high school teachers in teaching non-specialized subjects.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of the out-of-field teachers teaching subjects out of their major field of specialization?
2. What are the struggles of the teachers in teaching subjects that are not their major field of specialization and how do they cope with the struggles of teaching these subjects?
3. What are the insights of the out-of-field teachers in teaching subjects that are outside of their field of specialization?

Literature Review

Out-of-Field Teaching

Out-of-field is teaching subjects that are outside the field of mastery or not the major subject. It was generally unrecognized phenomenon until such was considered and highlighted by researchers who connected the term to those teachers allotted time to teach subjects they had less mastery, or did not match their field of specialty or training (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2011). Kimball (2011) claimed that school administrators who took into account teacher placements, professional development, teacher performance, and student outcomes were able to manage their teachers' capacity and acknowledge their strategic leadership. Additionally, Schumacher, Grigsby, and Vesey (2015) claimed that choices made in staff recruiting affect student achievement. This has drawn attention to leaders and how their in-depth knowledge of the out-of-field phenomenon affects any plans for school reform and guides leadership choices.

On the other hand, Additionally, a study by Pietsch and Williamson (2010) focused on the experiences of novice teachers who wind up in out-of-field teaching positions while trying to be proficient and productive despite not being properly certified for their particular teaching positions. Novice teachers' experience challenging adjustments when entering their first employment position, and this influences their development as teacher. Thus, according to Reid

(2011), a new teacher's ability to succeed in the classroom depends on how willing they are to explore with new pedagogies. They suggested that school leaders' preconceptions and misunderstandings affected their teaching practices and that leaders have expectations about how effective they will be. Out-of-field novice teachers are frequently not confident to take risks in unfamiliar subjects.

According to Cinkir and Kurum (2015) policymakers frequently create out-of-field teacher positions to fill the teacher shortages while this technique lessens teacher shortages in terms of quantity, it degrades educational quality. Out-of-field teaching has benefits such as filling teacher shortages, lowering unemployment, and providing various viewpoints on education. Despite these benefits, out-of-field teaching as a strategy of filling teacher shortages must be phased out. This is supported by Magano (2014) who claimed that there has continuously been a discrepancy between the number of ranking teachers in the registry of qualified applicants and the specialization of teachers needed when it comes to recruiting them. School administrators have hired teachers regardless of their specialization and there are not enough specialized teachers for certain learning areas.

Out-of-Field Teachers' Teaching Approaches

Teaching courses outside of one's specialty requires a different approach. Each subject is approached differently, and each teacher is required to lead and facilitate class discussion and activities before teaching the subject (Magdaraog and Benavides, 2018). Moreover, Bayani and Guhao, Jr. (2017) revealed that out-of-field teachers used a variety of techniques to deal with the obstacles of out-of-field teaching, including being resourceful and innovative, being diligent and conscientious, making education exciting for students, and remaining calm and composed. In addition, Ferlazzo (2012) emphasized that in order to be more effective, a Social Studies teacher must continually remember that students learn best when the teacher pays attention not only to books and other references, but also to the interests and prior knowledge of the students. Students will be more engaged in the topic if they focus on transferable goals. Role plays, simulations, group work, and demonstrations are all used to teach Social Studies effectively.

Teachers' Experiences in Teaching Subjects Outside their Expertise

Being a teacher is a challenging profession that calls

for a wide range of abilities. Teachers impart information and skills to students in the classroom in addition to converting educational philosophy. (Pelletier & Rocchi, 2016). Furthermore, according to Jadama (2014), teaching entails conveying information, skills, and attitudes to an individual. During the educational process, students' concerns and misconceptions should be resolved. However, if the teacher is mostly uneducated about a subject, misleading conceptions may be passed on. It will be incredibly difficult for a teacher to answer a variety of queries from students on a subject.

Similarly, Kathirveloo, Puteh, and Matematik (2014) pointed out that it is hard for teachers when they have nothing to teach. Effective teaching is hampered by a lack of knowledge about the subject, including the strategies and approaches utilized to teach it. Furthermore, Velciu (2017) mentioned that long term teaching of non-specialized subjects would affect their work by decreasing their work satisfaction. Du Plessis, Carroll and Gillies (2015) revealed that stress was induced by out-of-field assignments, which impacted teachers' emotional and physical stability and coping mechanisms, time management, level of empowerment, and relationships with colleagues. In addition, according to Diliberti's (2021) statement that stress was listed as the main reason why public-school teachers left their jobs. Heavy workloads, school culture, and lack of professional development opportunities are some of the causes that lead teachers to leave the field. Teachers leave the classroom for the most reason which is stress.

A study conducted by Aydın (2021) disclosed that teaching anxiety has adverse effects on teaching effectiveness, work environment, teaching behaviors, the preparation and execution of classroom activities, and real or perceived knowledge deficits in content and teaching skills. It was supported by Adbullahi, Ibrahim and Koroka (2019) who indicated that the out-of-field teacher's attitude toward teaching may be hampered by anxiety, tensions and pressures, which could lead to lack of confidence in the subject's instruction and reduce its effectiveness. The performance of the students in the subject could potentially be impacted to this. Moreover, du Plessis's (2014) statement that teachers feel anxious, incompetent and uncertain because of the pressure to perform to the standards set by the school even if they are placed in positions for which they are not qualified.

It was found out by Shann's (2010) who expressed that it is essential to have a positive outlook in order to motivate students and that the results are satisfactory.

Teacher career happiness is a multifaceted paradigm that is essential for teacher retention, teacher responsibility, and educational effectiveness. The study by Jeschke et al. (2021) revealed that learning opportunities for enhancing teachers' ability to use their subject-specific knowledge in instructional contexts should be appropriately prepared for the subject that will be taught. As their capacity to apply the knowledge may not transfer from their field of specialization, it is suggested that out-of-field teachers should be required to complete training in both knowledge and how to use this knowledge in another subject. Similarly, Kersting et al. (2016) which revealed in addition to understanding the principle, teachers must also possess the skills necessary to apply their knowledge in the classroom. Blomeke's (2016) supported the idea that all disciplines may share at least some of their teacher training programs. This would especially impact the preparation of out-of-field teachers because they frequently possess the capability to apply knowledge in one subject and may be able to transfer this expertise to teach another subject.

Challenges Faced by Out-of-Field Teachers

Teachers who are not expert on what they are teaching will have a hard time adjusting. They must learn to adapt to the unfamiliar content knowledge and comprehend the discipline's structure and nature. Furthermore, teacher's inadequate background about the subject results in issues in adjusting the subject and will impact the development of the teacher's pedagogical knowledge, self-confidence, and attitudes when teaching outside their field of expertise (Mizzi, 2013). In addition, Stritof (2021) noted that workaholic spouses frequently sacrifice their personal lives to get ahead to work, backed up the sad truth of being an out-of-field teacher who is committed to her job. Setting limits between work and pleasure can be challenging, but working too much can be detrimental to a marriage.

According to Adalsteinssou (2014), stated that people who have low self-esteem can lead to depression, anxiety, and inability to adapt to any situation they are in. If left unsolved, teachers would feel unsuccessful and unhappy, which trigger an indirect effect to their students. In addition, Tatossian (2013) said that sadness could be a sign of a depressive conditions, People who consistently experience a significant sense of discomfort tend to lose interest, experience less pleasure, and wavering between emotions of guilt and low self-esteem.

Teacher's Way of Coping with the Challenges

Teaching is a vital activity in which broad-scale and local changes need teachers continually obtaining new ideas and the need to adapt. Teachers view themselves in situations in which they must conduct research, learn from coworkers, and be adaptive. The ability of teachers to cope under these situations is crucial not just to their training but also to their professional differentiation (Hobbs, 2012). Furthermore, Sheshea (2017) suggested that out-of-field teachers employ specialized teachers to assist them learn academic concepts. Specialized teachers also assist these out-of-field teachers in identifying key concepts that require further emphasis. A teacher must adjust his general knowledge of the context in which he teaches to the specific needs of his students.

In addition, Villena and de Mesa (2015) who stated that there are a lot of ways to cope with the difficulties and challenging experiences. Careful planning of the subject content provides logical sequencing and pacing of lessons. It provides teachers sense of direction. This was supported by Irikefe's (2018) statement that in order to manage time, generating daily to-do lists, prioritizing tasks according to urgency, and concentrating on the fundamentals are all necessary for time management. Another way of coping with difficulty is to have a positive mindset.

Out-of-Field Teaching and Teacher Quality

The greatest impact on student learning has been identified as teacher quality. Policymakers craft competencies or standards for teacher certification and teacher education programs to guarantee that teachers are well competent (Darling-Hammond, Bearsley & Rothstein, 2012). On the other hand, Darling-Hammond (2010) who pointed out that teachers learn best by researching. Teachers' resourcefulness in researching for more resources is vital because the subject needs facts and other important information that needed great deal of readings.

Similarly, Sultonova (2022) mentioned that the use of internet as a source for knowledge and information utilized in teaching and learning is another effective educational tool that boosts students' motivation to learn, widens their areas of individual activity, and speeds up the delivery of quality material within a lesson. In addition, Bertram (2011) mentioned that teachers learn both by acquiring knowledge and skills as individuals, and by developing their competence in social settings. It was also supported by Walsh (2016) mentioned that in education, it creates a culture of reciprocity in the classroom, where students and teachers alike are expected to both teach and learn.

When teaching and learning become shared experiences, it becomes evident that is a two-way process.

According to Kelly (2016) when they are assigned to a subject that is not their major, teachers become more adaptable. A flexible attitude among teachers is vital not just for teachers' stress levels, but also for pupils' expectations that the teacher would be in charge and in command of any scenario. Teachers that constantly put students' needs first in their career demonstrate flexibility and versatility. Furthermore, it was evident in Gede and Lawenson's (2011) study that years of experience and employee work performance are significantly correlated. This relationship presumably exists because an employee performs better the more experience they gain during years of employment since they had a chance to put all of those experiences to use. Additionally, according to Baldoni (2010), teachers must possess distinct qualities that will assist them in becoming competent in teaching subjects, regardless of his or her field of specialization. Resourcefulness opens the way to greater success. A resourceful teacher, on the other hand, constantly finds a way for professional growth and development.

Methodology

This section presents the methods used in this phenomenological study specifically the research design, sampling technique, role of the researcher, conversational partners, instrumentation, data sources, data-gathering procedure, face to face interview, data analysis, trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations.

Conversational Partners

The researcher was inspired to consider fifteen junior high school teachers in the Municipality of Libungan as conversational partners selected based on the inclusion criteria of the study: (a) conversational partners had one to three years of teaching experience; (b) he or she is assigned to teach subjects that are not his/her specialization for one to three years; (c) and he or she must be capable of providing in-depth and detailed information about the phenomenon under investigation; (d) he or she is willing to participate in the study. Those who did not meet the criteria were excluded as conversational partners.

Instrumentation

In order to answer the objectives of the study, a semi-

structured interview guide for the in-depth interview was prepared by the researcher. The interview guide consists of three parts. Part I is the orientation of the informant and was followed by the preliminary questions that included the start of the interview proper. Part II was composed of three main questions with 12 sub-questions. Part III is one wrap-up question that gave time for the participants to add or share something that was not asked in the interview.

Data Gathering Procedure

In conducting this study, the researcher asked permission from the Dean of Graduate School of Notre Dame of Midsayap College and from the District Heads by sending a letter duly noted by the Dean of Graduate School of Notre Dame of Midsayap College and sought approval for the interview of the participants who are junior high school teachers. Then, the researcher personally communicated with the conversational partners for their approval before conducting the face-to-face interviews and explained comprehensively to them the content of the informed consent. The researcher went to the conversational partners and informed them about the study's objectives. Most of the conversational partners were adequately communicated with the letter duly signed by the Schools Division Superintendent, District Head, and respective administrators. The researcher sought their approval to record the interviews using an audio recorder after clearly explaining the consent form.

The researcher used a self-made interview guide that was validated by the members of the board of validators. The researcher asked the conversational partners' permission to record the interview and personally read the guide questions for them to answer. However, their names were not mentioned in the study as part of the confidentiality clause. The data were transcribed and verified by the conversational partners. The conversational partners were given a certificate of verification, and by affixing their signature, they confirmed that their answers were appropriately transcribed.

Ethical Considerations

This study required conversational partners verbally expressing their encounters with the phenomenon. The conversational partners were expected to share their feelings and insights. Hence, ethical considerations were required. The researcher let the conversational partners sign the consent of agreement to inform the participants to guarantee ethical appropriateness. To keep their identity and the confidentiality of their

statements, conversational partners were informed about the study's goal and how it was conducted. The Belmont Report, issued in 1979, is a valuable source of existing research ethical knowledge which includes:

Respect for Persons. Conversational partners are autonomous being and so therefore treated with courtesy and respect by protecting their autonomy. The conversational partners were free to make choice and decisions whether they participate or not in the study. Therefore, informed consent was essential in this study. The researcher made sure the voluntariness of the conversational partners was not forced so if they were unwilling to participate.

Beneficence. The researcher served as the confidante of the conversational partners therefore the researcher would not harm the identity of the conversational partners by disclosing its responses without their permissions. The researcher bears in mind that conducting this study was risky due to exploring sensitive experiences of the conversational partners. It was very essential for the researcher to have permission from the office of the Department of Education, from the dean of Graduate School, from the principals of the school involved, from the conversational partners. The decision of the conversational partners to participate was respected and efforts were made only by the researcher to keep the conversational partners' identity confidential.

Justice. The principle promoted fairness and equal distribution of risk and benefits of the research. The researcher did not manipulate the conversational partners of the study and made sure that the conversational partners met the criteria of the study.

Confidentiality. The identity and the responses of the conversational partners were confidentially kept by the researcher as stated by the law and was only used for this study purpose only. To protect the rights and welfare of any known information drawn in this study remained confidential. In addition, the researcher did not reveal any information without the consent of the conversational partner regarding the publications or discussion of the research findings. Lastly, the researcher abided by the Data Privacy Act of 2012, Republic of the Philippines (Republic Act 10173, 2012).

Anonymity Clause. The sensitivity of the study requires that the interviews were conducted with confidentiality and privacy. After the conversational partners were chosen, the date and time for the interview were established. The researcher assured the

conversational partners anonymity by using pseudonyms. Moreover, the conversational partners were asked not to provide information that would reveal their identities in any way. Adherence to anonymity is indicated in the Informed Consent Form.

Result

This section specifies the result of the qualitative analysis. The emergent themes, core ideas, and categorization are presented based on the responses of the conversational partners.

Profile of the Conversational Partners

The researcher considered 15 junior out-of-field teachers as conversational partners based on the criteria of this study. Exploring into their endeavors towards this phenomenon is given certain attention. Furthermore, their challenges and coping mechanisms are discussed. Matrix 1 presents the profile of the conversational partners who were involved in the in-depth interview.

Matrix 1. *Profile of the Conversational Partners*

Code	Age	Length of Service	Field of Specialization	Non-specialized subject/s taught	Years of teaching non-specialized subject/s
OPkaCher 1	40	12 years	TLE	Filipino	2 years
OPkaCher 2	42	7 years	English	MAPEH	3 years
OPkaCher 3	28	6 years	English	MAPEH	3 years
OPkaCher 4	24	3 years	AP	TLE & ESP	3 years
OPkaCher 5	30	8 years	Science	Math, English, MAPEH	3 years
OPkaCher 6	42	6 years	Science	Filipino, AP, MAPEH	3 years
OPkaCher 7	30	7 years	Science	MAPEH	3 years
OPkaCher 8	33	10 years	Science	MAPEH	3 years
OPkaCher 9	41	8 years	Science	MAPEH	2 years
OPkaCher 10	29	7 years	English	Filipino	3 years
OPkaCher 11	35	9 years	Math	English	3 years
OPkaCher 12	42	7 years	AP	Filipino, ESP	3 years
OPkaCher 13	45	8 years	AP	ESP, Filipino, MAPEH	3 years
OPkaCher 14	45	8 years	English	Filipino	1 year
OPkaCher 15	29	7 years	Science	English, MAPEH, ESP, AP	3 years

Figure 1. .

After the in-depth interviews were conducted, the audio tape exchanges were transcribed, translated and analyzed as shown in Matrix 2. The presentation of information in matrix form was patterned and conformed after the study of Amparo (as cited by Nacario, 2019), which made use of three classifications: the general, the typical and variant.

The first classification of the response of the CPs is

General which at least 50 percent of the CPs mentioned the item in their response during interview; Typical meaning 26 to 49 percent of the CPs mentioned the item, and for Variant less than 25 percent mentioned the item.

In categorizing the core ideas, the themes were formulated based on the research question and referred to as major themes. Opposite to the major themes are the core ideas from the responses of the CPs. Another column was included in the table showing the classification as general, typical and variant depending on the frequency of the item being mentioned. The third step involved the drawing of conclusion and verification, that point in the study according to Miles and Huberman (as cited by Nacario, 2019). In this stage the preliminary ideas and patterns about the findings are developed.

As shown in Matrix 2, there are six themes that emerged from the subjective experiences of the conversational partners. Specifically, the lived experiences of junior out-of-field teachers, their coping with the challenges of teaching subject outside their major field of specialization and their insights as expressed in the subject's verbalization were noted and identified.

Matrix 2. *Themes and Core Ideas on The Lived Experiences, Struggles and Insights of Junior High School Out-of-Field Teachers*

Major Themes	Core Ideas	Classifications of Responses
Mixed Impressions	Anxious	General
	Burdened	Typical
	Happy and confident	General
Notable Reasons for Subject Assignment	Capability to handle the subject	Typical
	New faculty in the school	Variant
	Lack of teachers	Typical
Serious Challenges	Misunderstanding in the family	Variant
	Depression	Typical
	Stress	Typical
	Limited knowledge of the subjects	General
Self-learning and Coping Strategies	Positive Mindset	General
	Time management	Variant
	Sourcing out of new knowledge and information	General
	Collaboration with more experienced teachers	General
	Students' involvement	Typical
Profound Learning Experience	New knowledge gained	General
	Teaching skills developed	Typical
Review of Human Resource Policies and Procedures	Consideration to the teacher's length of service	Variant
	Assignment of subject related to the field of specialization	Typical
	Review of the hiring policies and procedures	Variant

Figure 2. .

The themes that emerged from the stories are: Mixed Impressions, Notable Reasons for Subject Assignment,

Serious Challenges, Self-learning and Coping Strategies, Profound Learning Experience, Review of Human Resource Policies and Procedures.

Discussion

This section provides discussion of the themes from the analyzed data. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the observable manifestations of the endeavors of junior high school teachers in teaching non-specialized subjects. The data acquired for this study, the researcher had identified the conversational partners who fit to the given criteria. Their responses were transcribed and categorized into themes based on the core ideas they have expressed. The themes formulated include mixed impressions, notable reason for subject assignment, serious challenges, self-learning and coping strategies, profound learning experiences, and review of human resource policies and procedures.

Mixed Impressions. An out-of-field teacher has been experiencing mixed impressions on the teaching path they had been directed which leads them to a diverse thought and experiences. Mixed impressions talked about the different reactions and thoughts of the conversational partners when they were assigned to manage things outside of their major field of specialization by the school head. This reveals their negative feelings as well as their lived experiences in preparing things about which they have limited understanding or competence. Most of the CPs were anxious on accepting the assigned subject area due to lack of knowledge and experience. OPkaCher9 shared a mixed tone of worrisome and sadness when assigned to teach a non-specialized subject, which could affect their effectiveness in teaching. This could lead to lower self-esteem and burnout. The results support Du Plessis's (2014) statement that teachers feel anxious, incompetent and uncertain to perform to the standards set by the school for which they are not qualified. Further, it is in line with the findings of the study by Adbullahi et al. (2019) which indicated that the out-of-field teacher's attitude toward teaching may be hampered by anxiety, tensions and pressures, which could lead to lack of confidence in the subject's instruction and reduce its effectiveness.

Out-of-field teaching requires extensive reading and research, which takes time and money to incorporate different teaching strategies that make them felt burdened. OPkaCher12 is having discomfort in teaching unmastered subjects due to her academic preparation not related to the subjects she was teaching. Present finding is congruent to the result of

the study by Mizzi (2013) who found out that teachers who are not expert on what they are teaching will have a hard time adjusting. Teachers' inadequate background about the subject results in issues in adjusting the subject and will impact the development of the teachers' pedagogical knowledge, self-confidence, and attitudes when teaching outside their field of expertise. Similarly, the finding back up Kathirveloo, Puteh, and Matematik (2014) finding that it is hard for teachers when they have nothing to teach. Effective teaching is hampered by the lack of knowledge about the subject, including the strategies and approaches utilized to teach it. However, some CPs expressed their positive impression towards teaching subject outside their major field of specialization. They are happy and confident at the same time. OPkaCher6 expressed her positive impression of teaching subjects outside their major field of specialization. They were confident in their work and confidently transferred learning to the students, improving their well-being and productivity. The finding showed a significant factor that affects the teacher's performance which was similar to the previous finding by Shann (2010) who pointed out that it is essential to have a positive outlook in order to motivate students and that the results are satisfactory. Teaching career happiness is a multifaceted paradigm that is essential for teacher retention, teacher responsibility, and educational effectiveness.

Notable Reasons for Subject Assignment. Results of the study revealed that teachers have different perceptions or reasons why they are chosen to teach subjects outside of their specialization. Basically, in small to medium schools where number of students outweigh the number of teachers. They are forced to teach non-specialized subjects to cater the needs of the students. Out-of-field teaching really exists in schools that have insufficient number of specialized teachers. School heads have to address the need of the school and often asks the teacher to teach subjects that are in line to their specialization. In the event of out-of-field teaching, the school heads still have to scrutinize the qualification of the teachers. The CPs were chosen to teach the subjects based on their potential and capability to handle the subjects based on their qualifications and capability to deliver the lesson well. OPkaCher4 shared that he thought that he was chosen to teach TLE based on his credentials because he has undergone NCII trainings particularly in ICT. The present finding supports the previous finding of Jeschke et al. (2021) which revealed that learning opportunities for enhancing teachers' ability to use their subject-specific knowledge in instructional contexts should be appropriately prepared for the

subject that will be taught. The finding is congruent to the findings of Kersting et al. (2016) which revealed in addition to understanding the principle, teachers must also possess the skills necessary to apply their knowledge in the classroom.

Out-of-field subjects are given to the new faculty of the school, making them vulnerable to adverse outcomes in their confidence, self-esteem and job satisfaction. This has become part of the schooling experience, as pioneering teachers can choose subject loads that they could teach, preferably their major field of specialization. OPkaCher7 shared the reason why she taught subjects outside her field of specialization, as the school is already overpopulated with science teachers but they do not have enough MAPEH teachers. This difficult situation supports Pietsch and Williamson's (2010) study as they mentioned that when entering the teaching profession, new teachers have to make difficult adjustments, which has an impact on how they develop as teachers. Moreover, according to Reid (2011) that a new teacher's ability to succeed in the classroom depends on how willing they are to explore with the new pedagogies

Lack of teachers emerged as one of the notable reasons for subject assignment of out-of-field teachers. The CPs expressed that teaching subjects that are outside their specialization cannot be avoided especially in the small schools. Based on the in-depth interview, OPkaCher2 said that due to the number of students outweighs the number of teachers, it is not possible to teach only the major subjects. Out-of-field teaching is caused by a shortage of teachers in small schools due to the number of students outweighing the number of teachers. The finding backs up Magano's (2014) claim that there has been a continuous discrepancy between the number of ranking teachers in the registry of qualified applicants and the specialization of teachers needed when it comes to recruiting them. School administrators have hired teachers regardless of their specialization and there are not enough specialized teachers for certain learning areas.

Serious Challenges. This theme arises when conversational partners emphasized their difficulty dealing with out-of-field teaching. Different serious challenges in their task that makes out-of-field teaching tiring. There were situations wherein out-of-field teachers have difficulty in understanding the concepts due to unfamiliarity of the nature of assigned subjects. In addition, the challenges of out-of-field teachers caused their claims that they lack expertise and competence of the assigned subject. They felt that they are ineffective in teaching the subject due to lack

of knowledge and fear of committing mistakes in explaining the topics.

One of the challenges encountered by the out-of-field teacher is misunderstanding in the family. As a teacher who wants to give his best in teaching could also jeopardize his relationship and time spent with the family. The family experienced divided time and attention due to fulfillment of duties and responsibilities as a teacher. OPkaCher1 sadly shared her story during the interview that she really struggled a lot when handling Filipino subject. Her lesson preparations caused misunderstanding between her and her husband and she opted to sleep separately not to disturb her family while she is preparing her lessons. She is teary eyed as she narrated that her family did not understand her feelings and struggles in teaching out-of-field subjects. The finding supports the statement of Stritof (2021), who stated that workaholic spouses frequently sacrifice their personal lives to get ahead to work, backed up the sad truth of being an out-of-field teacher who is committed to her job.

Out-of-field teachers experience depression due to unfamiliarity of the field, which can lead to dissatisfaction with the task given and a lack of self-esteem. This can lead to negative feelings and emotions on their job, which can lead to depression and unfulfillment. OPkaCher2 took a long pause before she answered the question, she said that teaching music and arts is not her passion and at the end of the day, she felt empty. It is not self-fulfilling that she teaches the subject because she needs to teach it. The discussed challenges agree to the statement of Adalsteinsson (2014) which said that people who have low self-esteem can lead to depression, anxiety, and the inability to adapt to any situation they are in. If left unsolved, teachers would feel unsuccessful and unhappy, which triggers an indirect effect to their students. In addition, the findings agree to Tatossian's (2013) statement that sadness could be a sign of a depressive conditions. People who consistently experience a significant sense of discomfort tend to lose interest, experience less pleasure, and wavering between emotions of guilt and low self-esteem.

Out-of-field teaching is an exhausting job that requires a lot of time in lesson preparation, which can be physically and mentally draining. Interventions are needed to prevent out-of-field teaching and increase the well-being of teachers and reduce stress. OPkaCher15 narrated that out-of-field teaching is challenging on her part because she really wants to meet the competencies that is why she spends a lot of time in preparing the lesson. The finding backs up the

study's findings that stress was listed as the main reason why public-school teachers left their jobs. The heavy workloads, school culture, and lack of professional development opportunities are some of the causes that led teachers to leave the field (Diliberti, 2021). The experiences of the out-of-field teacher confirm the statement of Du Plessis, Carroll and Gillies (2015) who stated that out-of-field teaching assignment caused stress, impacting on teachers' emotional and physical stability and coping mechanisms, time management, and level of empowerment and relationship to colleagues.

Out-of-field teachers face a challenge of limited knowledge of the subject, which can affect their teaching performance. OPkaCher5 shared that concepts in the book are difficult to grasp and it is difficult to find the exact answer from the internet. Improved knowledge of teachers is important as learners have high expectations from them. The finding of the study is in line with the study of Jadama (2014) which revealed that teaching involves imparting knowledge, skills, and attitudes to an individual. However, if the teacher has little knowledge about the subject matter, he can pass false ideas. A teacher will find it extremely difficult to answer varied questions from the students about the subject matter.

Self-learning and Coping Strategies. The conversational partners realized that out-of-field teaching is also beneficial to them in a way that they learn another area of discipline. Out-of-field teaching is not all about burdens and hardships but somehow, they have gained new learnings. In order to meet the individual needs of the diverse students, the implementation of creative and innovative teaching strategies and approaches are required. The employment of varied instructional strategies suits best the students' nature and capacity are very important. Majority of the conversational partners maintained the harmonious working relationship with colleagues and seeking advice from the specialized teachers as they are not expert of what they are teaching.

One way of overcoming the obstacle on out-of-field teaching is to take it as an avenue to develop personally and professionally. Most of the CPs embrace the challenges they encountered through positive mindset. OPkaCher4 expressed his positive views by developing his intrinsic motivation while teaching non-specialized subjects. The experiences of the out-of-field teacher confirm the statement of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) on their Coping Theory stated that coping is the cognitive and behavioral

efforts person employs to manage stress. Coping mechanism is a set of action taken in an effort to control stress circumstances.

On the other hand, time management is also very important for the out-of-field teacher. Managing time properly helps the teachers prioritize better and increase the productivity. It also helps maximize strength and plan the work efficiently. OPkaCher12 verbalized her thoughts by saying that managing the time is important to plan and achieve the task even easier. The finding is congruent to the statement of Villena and de Mesa (2015) who stated that there are a lot of ways to cope with the difficulties and challenging experiences. Careful planning of the subject content provides logical sequencing and pacing of lessons.

In addition, technology helped lessen the burdens of the teachers considering that most of them rely on the use of internet. Through sourcing out of new knowledge and information from the internet, can strengthen their knowledge on the different lessons. They have to utilize their resourcefulness and competencies to learn the subject. OPkaCher15 said that she does search from the internet for more exciting activities especially in YouTube. The statement is congruent to the statement of Darling-Hammond (2010) who pointed out that teachers learn best by researching. Teachers' resourcefulness in researching for more resources is vital because the subject needs facts and other important information that needed great deal of readings.

Teachers do not learn by themselves; they also learn from others. Majority of out-of-field teachers observe collaboration with more experienced teachers. They often ask the help of expert teachers whenever they are confused and need assistance. OPkaCher8 shared during the interview that she went to her co-teacher who teaches MAPEH for a long time and asked for help. The result of this study confirms the findings of the study of Sheshea (2017) who revealed that out-of-field teachers make use of specialized teachers to help them understand concepts in the subject. Specialized teachers also help these out-of-field teachers in identifying essential concepts that need special attention.

Student involvement can help other students to learn from each other. Peer tutoring is an effective method that enhances the academic performance of students by encouraging them to participate in activities and assuming responsibility for their own learning. OPkaCher8 used peer tutoring to teach her peers how

to play a guitar. The finding supports Ferlazzo's (2012) statement that students learn best when the teacher does not only pay attention to books and other references but also to the interests and prior knowledge of the students. Students will be more engaged in the topic if they focus on transferable goals.

Profound Learning Experiences. Teaching non-specialized subjects challenged the teachers to expound their knowledge, skills and values to comprehend the important concepts of the subjects and this could be an avenue for learning and opportunity for professional growth. Out-of-field teaching provided them with reflective learning experiences that allowed them to gain a wider scope of teaching experience and learn information from their experiences. Teacher's potentiality is improved by the experience of out-of-field teaching. It is advantageous for them to hone their competence in other subjects and broaden their knowledge and perspective in terms of teaching strategies.

As the years of experience, teachers had to adapt from the changes and challenges that comes along the way of teaching subjects out of their field and they call it as new knowledge gained which gives them a better and wider grasp on the lessons they are going to prepare for the learners. OPkaCher4 shared that teachers need to be equipped with new knowledge and skills in order to develop their teaching performance and professional growth. Bertram (2011) stated that teachers learn both by acquiring knowledge and skills as individuals, and by developing their competence in social settings.

The CPs believed that in order to face the challenges of out-of-field teaching, they have to be versatile and their teaching skills developed. Teachers must be creative and innovative to meet the individual needs of students, and be resourceful to find additional information about the context. OPkaCher9 said that everything is searchable in the internet, the teacher just has to be resourceful in looking for additional information about the context. The finding agrees with the study of Kelly (2016) who mentioned that teachers get to be flexible and versatile when assigned to with subject not their major by being in charge and take control of the situation as the students expect them. In addition, finding also supports the statement of Baldoni (2010) who stated that teachers possess distinct qualities that will assist them in becoming competent in teaching subjects, regardless of his or her field of specialization.

Review of Human Resource Policies and Procedures. To address the problem of out-of-field

teaching, the conversational partners gave their insights regarding on the following matter. First, was on the consideration of the length of service rendered by the teacher on the non-specialized subject. Moreso, school heads should assign teachers on subjects related to their specialization of field of interest to be relatable as they teach. More importantly, a review on the hiring policies and procedures.

Out-of-field teachers did not complain when they were tasked to teach non-specialized subjects. However, they hoped that school heads must have consideration to the teacher's length of service of teaching non-specialized subjects and let them focus in teaching their major field of specialization. OPkaCher7 mentioned that school heads should give chance to the teachers to focus on their major field of specialization and give the non-specialized subjects to the newly hired teachers. The result backs the findings of Velciu (2017) who mentioned that long term teaching of non-specialized subjects would affect their work by decreasing their work satisfaction. The finding disagrees with Gede and Lawanson's (2011) study which revealed that years of experience and employee work performance are significantly correlated, this relationship presumably exists because an employee performs better the more experience they gain during years of employment since they had a chance to put all of those experiences to use.

On the other hand, assignment of subject related to the field of specialization, arised as one of the insights revealed during the interview. Since out-of-field teaching could not be avoided due to the shortage of specialized teachers, the CPs expressed their thoughts about handling of non-specialized subjects that are in line with their field of specialization so that they will not really struggle in understanding the concepts. OPkaCher11 hoped that school heads would assess the teacher's capabilities before assigning them to teach non-specialized subjects, allowing them to relate the new curriculum. The finding back up Blomeke's (2016) statement that teacher training programs might be the same for all disciplines. Since they typically have the ability to apply knowledge in one subject and may be able to transfer this skill to teach another subject, this would particularly affect the training of out-of-field teachers.

School administrators must review hiring policies and procedures to ensure the specialization of hired teachers matches the position and need of the school. OPkaCher2 and OPkaCher3 suggest reviewing the School Implementation Plan, strengthening the hiring committee, and reviewing the process of hiring

teachers to address out-of-field teaching. The findings support Kimball's (2011) claim that school administrators who took into account teacher placements, professional development, teacher performance, and student outcomes were able to manage their teachers' capacity and acknowledge their strategic leadership. Additionally, the finding back up the finding of Schumacher, Grigsby, and Vesey's (2015) investigation who claimed that choices made in staff recruiting affect student achievement. This has drawn attention to leaders and how their in-depth knowledge of the out-of-field phenomenon affects any plans for school reform and guides leadership choices.

Conclusion

It is difficult to assign teachers' workload when it does not correspond to their field of specialization. It challenges the teachers that have undergone difficult situations on their teaching experiences, while at the same time presenting opportunities for teachers to learn. Based on the results and generated themes from the study, the following are the implications:

The lived experiences of out-of-field teachers bring to light how teachers must gradually adjust to the lessons about which they are unfamiliar and how great planning was needed for topics to be covered, including in-depth reading and research about the subject and the sudden shifting of the medium of instruction. This implies that out-of-field teachers were uncomfortable with the teaching arrangements, which cause them to be reluctant, fearful and anxious. This implication may have an impact on the teacher's ability to teach because they may wonder at the end of the day whether the students learned what they needed to. Due to this fact, teachers should look and develop certain strategies that can be employed in teaching subjects out of their fields which is meaningful and relevant to learning.

The school heads have notable reasons for choosing teachers who are capable to handle subjects outside their major field of specialization. The school heads should carefully analyze the qualifications of the teachers who will teach the subject based on their possessed skills and knowledge. The novice out-of-field teachers have a lot of adjustments for these unexpected circumstances on their teaching preparedness for the out-of-field assignments. Teachers felt depressed, stressed and their self-esteem lowered in teaching which implies that out-of-field teachers could not focus in giving efficient concepts that make the teaching-learning weak as the teachers have

difficulty in the content knowledge. However, at the same time, it provided opportunity for the teachers to learn and in the process become versatile, and broaden their horizons in teaching.

Teachers developed the capacity to cope with the challenges encountered in teaching non-specialized subjects. This implies that self-learning and appropriate coping strategies could enable teachers to cope with out-of-field teaching. Teachers have to strengthen their abilities in choosing the right teaching strategies to give meaningful teaching-learning experiences to students. Teachers see this experience as a chance to develop both personally and professionally while achieving and strengthening the competencies of teaching. This implies that teachers could assess their strengths and weaknesses. Finding their weaknesses could help them make progress. This implies that being adaptive to changes could lead to improvement in teaching. They can give the students more learning opportunities as they continue with their teaching.

The results of the study can be integrated to review the human resource policies and procedures to minimize the growth of the out-of-field teaching in their schools. In order to reduce the number of out-of-field cases, school administrators have to consider it top priority when hiring teachers. They must hire new teachers and place them in their areas of specialization based on the needs of the school. To meet their demand and fully utilize their knowledge and abilities, adequate resources should be made. The hiring committee must meet with the school administration to examine the issue and make plans for a solution. This may lead to unsatisfactory performance if not taken into action or given intervention and supervision from the leaders of the institution or even by the experts regarding the matter.

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