



THE PAINS AND GAINS OF TEACHERS WITH MULTIPLE ANCILLARY SERVICES

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ABSTRACT :

This qualitative-narratological inquiry explored the experiences of five Kulaman Elementary School teachers with multiple ancillary functions. Through in-depth interview and focus group discussions, several themes emerged, such as: perseverance, determination, endurance, and risk-taking. Most of the teacher-participants gained positively from their experiences which challenged them to aspire for more self-advancement. Proper planning and time management helped teachers to improve their work performance. Imperative to planning is prioritization of the most important tasks and of the most urgent and most needed school reports. A positive mindset helped them realize that the performing ancillary functions was an opportunity for them to grow and improve professionally. With the work-demand at hand, the teachers also expect support from the school head, colleagues, friends, and families. Nevertheless, they also realized that work commitment and dedication helped them embrace whatever tasks and responsibilities are assigned and delegated to them.

Keywords: phenomenology, multiple ancillary services

Introduction :

Rationale

Teachers perceive multiple ancillary functions as a factor supporting their well-being. Combining teaching with another ancillary function appeared to help teachers step back from situations encountered at school and keep problems in perspective (Sappa, Boldrini, & Aprea, 2015). Furthermore, Parham and Gordon (2011) found that combining multiple ancillary functions had a positive impact on an individual's wellbeing.

However, in Mindanao, the study of Retubada (2014) stated that one of the problems encountered by schools in Davao Del Sur, Region XI is the multiple ancillary functions of teachers. He emphasized that teachers, while performing their main function as classroom advisers, are also given non-teaching, ancillary functions. These are extra workloads in which teachers are assigned as subject area coordinators, sports coordinators, gulayan sa paaralan coordinators, SBM coordinators, IGP coordinators, and other types of coordinator ship, resulting in poor teacher and student performance.

Meanwhile, according to DepEd Memorandum No. 291 (2008), teachers must have at least six hours of actual classroom teaching and two hours of other school-related tasks in order to complete the eight hours of work. However, in most DepEd schools, teachers go above and beyond the general guidelines to perform the various ancillary functions, leaving them overworked and exhausted.

In this frame of reference, and as a school-in-charge for several years, I was inspired to investigate the challenges and benefits of my teachers performing multiple ancillary functions. It is a good opportunity to hear their thoughts and ideas about handling ancillaries on top of their teaching job and all other instructional functions that come with it.

Research Question

What are lived experiences, the gains and pains, of teachers handling multiple ancillary services?

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

I limited this study to the teacher-participants of Kulaman Elementary School who experienced handling multiple ancillaries. I extracted the themes based on the responses of the participating teachers.

Methodology :

Research Design

I used the qualitative-narrative method. In dealing with the meaning that people have constructed based on their lived experiences and worldviews, qualitative research is used. I used methods such as participant observation and cases drawn from the narratives. My data is derived from interviews, field notes, conversations, photographs, and recordings (Silverman, 2020; Mays & Pope, 2020; Hennink et al., 2020; Flick, 2018; Darlington & Scott, 2020). I also conducted this research in a natural setting (Richards, 2020; Campbell, 2014) in order to make the interpretations clear based on the meanings.

Similarly, I did not use numerical values because the narrations of the phenomenon were crucial in the interpretation of the data. As a result, this narrative research is concerned with gathering the stories told by the teacher-participants (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Butina, 2015). Furthermore, I conducted this research with great care, making certain that I identified and recorded all of the important details of the phenomenon. In addition, based on the story that the teacher-participants shared, I described and discussed their experiences (Wiles et al., 2011). Finally, I interpreted the findings by identifying significant themes.

- This study is qualitative-narrative since this dealt with the lived stories of teachers handling multiple ancillary services.

Informants of the Study

Five (5) informants participated in my study. I chose them based on the following criteria:

1. Teachers of Kulaman Elementary School, Barangay Kulaman Valley, Arakan, Cotabato, during the time of the conduct of this study; and
2. Aside from their classroom teaching task, should be handling multiple ancillaries in the school.

Locale of the Study

I carried-out this study at Kulaman Elementary School, located at Barangay Kulaman Valley, Arakan, Cotabato. This basic education institution serves the educational needs of diverse learners from various cultures, customs, and traditions, all with the common goal of living a peaceful life to the fullest.

Data Gathering Procedure

I observed to the following research protocols. It was my responsibility to notify the District Supervisor of Arakan North District that basic research would be conducted at Kulaman Elementary School. I sent another set of letters to the respective informants after receiving approval. Most importantly, I obtained their consent to participate via a form that clearly articulated their rights to participate or withdraw. I asked them to sign to confirm their full participation in the study.

Similarly, I never forced my informants to take part. Instead, I invited them to take part based on their willingness. Prior to the interview, I politely informed them that they could choose the date and time that worked best for them. I always treated their availability as a top priority. I did not use intimidation or anything else that could disrupt the flow of the study.

I used the interview guide and focus group discussion as research instruments in data collection to answer the questions. I interviewed five teachers and recorded all of their responses using guide questions. I also gathered them all and led a focus group discussion in which I recorded and listed all of their responses.

Data Analysis

Participants in the interview shared their experiences managing multiple ancillary services in addition to their teacher jobs. Following that, I conducted a thematic analysis in which I extracted significant themes based on their narratives as my informants.

Ethical Consideration

As a researcher, I made sure to follow and maintain ethical considerations in this study (Halai, 2006), where I obtained informed consent from the participants so that they feel respected and are not forced to participate in the study, and they have full access to all information prior to the study's conduct. I also explained to my participants the purpose, procedures, time period, risks, and benefits of the research. I put up a sign at the location where I interviewed the teachers. Most importantly, I informed them that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they could opt out at any time. I meticulously planned this study to avoid problems along the way; safeguarded the collected information for confidentiality; and accepted responsibility for protecting the participants to avoid any discomfort in their participation in the research process. I made certain that this study would not harm them and that the participants' and their responses' privacy would be protected. To protect their privacy, I properly stored and disposed of all collected information.

Results and Discussions :

Teachers' experiences of having multiple ancillary services

Teacher's lived experience with multiple ancillary services.

Perseverance. This emerged as a major theme among teachers who perform multiple ancillary functions. Teachers' perseverance was tested when they worked hard but were not compensated and their efforts were not recognized. Most of them had sleepless nights in order to comply with and complete the tasks assigned to them. They have sometimes neglected their personal needs in order to meet the demands of the school system. In fact, they always burn the midnight candle to comply and submit reports because there are no other schedules during the day when they face their learners either on-site or online. These teachers were undeniably stressed and concerned that they would be unable to meet the system's expectations.

During the interview, the teachers shared:

"I experienced sleepless nights just to comply and beat the deadlines but I am still happy that I finished my task on or before the due date." (P2)

"I always feel pressured for having multiple ancillary functions but I am proud that I could contribute something good for our school." (P1)

"Well, I religiously burn midnight candles just to submit reports on scheduled time. I felt proud that I managed to comply the tasks on time." (P3)

The findings were supported by the research of Into and Gempes (2018), who stated that despite the rigors of life as teachers with multiple ancillary functions, they shared positive insights about their experiences on commitment and dedication, being positive, prospects for growth and development, and as a testament of faith and trust in one's abilities. However, Pearson et al. (1994) also stated that many teachers go above and beyond to complete their assigned tasks, but they are not compensated in return.

Teachers' struggle of having multiple work load

Determination. Teachers have given up time and left their families to attend seminars and trainings. These trainings were critical in helping them improve their leadership style and become more creative and strategic in carrying out their ancillary tasks. These also provided opportunities for professional advancement and could be used to advance one's career. They had the opportunity to become speakers and facilitators of various programs and activities in the schools once they had completed their training.

With that, the teacher-informants explained:

"Having so many ancillary functions become an opportunity for me for professional advancement" (P3)

"Multiple work load gave me the confidence and the happiness for having contributed to the school operation" (P4)

"It made me tough, especially in dealing with complex situations" (P2)

Sappa et al. (2015) emphasized that at the cognitive level, teachers' multiple ancillary functions assist teachers in analyzing problems and using different interventions to cope with difficult experiences.

Teachers challenges encountered of having multiple ancillary

Endurance. This third theme emerged as a result of several instances in which teachers were frustrated by a lack of support from their co-teachers who were unconcerned about the situation. In fact, they had to sleep late at night to prepare for the learning activities while also completing the ancillary tasks assigned to them. True, they had to divide their time between family and work, but they were still unable to manage and balance their schedules. The reality is that they must work even on weekends to meet the various report deadlines. The participants mentioned that:

"I work behind school hours but the good things I realized that I learned so many things related to my teaching profession. (P3)

"I sleep late at night to prepared my lesson and to comply my ancillary work load but it helps me to upgrade my skills to become a better teacher. (P4)

As expressed by Schaufeli et al. (2002), a person's work involvement means optimism, completing assigned tasks, and being output-oriented, which breeds endurance, dedication, and absorption.

The effect of multiple ancillary to teachers' services

The fourth theme for the experiences of teachers with multiple ancillary loads was **risk-taking**. It became apparent when they needed to assign students with seat work to attend meetings, seminars, and orientations, prioritizing ancillary function over class. Although this should not be the case, it did train the teachers to be effective and responsible individuals. It helped them mature in dealing with critical situations and become innovative and strategic in dealing with real-life problems like the ones mentioned above. The teachers shared:

"Having multiple ancillary works trained me to become innovative, creative and strategic to handle the tasks delegated to me." (P3)

“Well, this ancillary services trained me to become a responsible and an effective teacher.”(P2)

“I had to leave my class to attend to seminars, trainings, meetings, and conferences. But I ensured that I designated activities to my learners before leaving my post.” (P1)

In this regard, Zickar et al. (2004) reported "role conflict" for teachers with multiple ancillary functions, stating that if the primary and secondary jobs are very dissimilar, an employee is more likely to face role conflict and feels less satisfied because more effort is required to shift among the different roles and adapt roles and behaviors to the different job's demands.

Implications for Practice

With the previously mentioned experiences of teachers managing multiple ancillary services. I believe it is appropriate to assign these tasks based on their interests and areas of expertise.

Furthermore, as long as it is possible under the COA and DBM rules, they should be given appropriate rewards and incentives such as overtime pay and honoraria. Otherwise, they may be "subject-deloaded," as they would normally spend some extra time on non-teaching related tasks.

Finally, proper training may be provided to teachers so that they can perform ancillary services properly, and this training may include proper time management between their teaching and non-teaching responsibilities. By doing so, they are not jeopardizing other aspects of their lives, such as their mental and physical well-being.

Implications for Future Research

School leaders play the vital role in delegating equally the different ancillary services to all teachers to ensure that all teachers are given chances and opportunities to grow and established positive relationship, encounter resilience in one's life, and greater adaptability to cope with life difficult experiences.

Thus this study suggested that the future researchers should have to apply the phenomenological approach by adding more participants coming from the different schools in order to get more stories from different participants handling multiple ancillary services.

Moreover, this study will address appropriate intervention for the betterment of life and services of the teachers handling multiple ancillary services.

Concluding Remarks

The lived experiences of teachers with multiple ancillary functions were gathered from the findings of this study, which revealed that the majority of the participants experienced positive gains from their experience, which challenged them to aspire more advancement to become better educators despite the rigors of life.

The study's findings revealed that teachers with multiple ancillary functions are even more motivated, despite the various challenges they have faced in their lives. As a researcher, I discovered that teachers with multiple ancillary functions exhibit exemplar attitudes, skills, and values that distinguish them from other teachers.

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doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/s0001-8791\(03\)00047-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0001-8791(03)00047-2)