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A Phenomenological Study on the Experiences of Novice Teachers in Teaching through Induction Program

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe novice teachers' experiences teaching through an induction program. Utilizing a qualitative design with a phenomenological approach, the study employed purposive sampling to select 7 teachers from Sta. Ana District, Davao City as participants. A focus group discussion (FGD) facilitated participants' responses. Thematic content analysis served as a method in analyzing the data. Findings revealed that novice teachers' salient experiences during the induction program were attending school-based training, as well as collaboration with colleagues. Furthermore, the participants employed self-study and peer coaching as coping strategies to successfully apply induction to their profession. The participants' educational management insights based on their experiences continued to grow professionally, as did the importance of training, coaching, and mentoring. Additionally, given the analysis and its implications, anchored on lifelong learning principles it is recommended that educators participate in the establishment of connections or linkages with other educational line agencies in order to facilitate the exchange of information concerning trends and new methods or tactics in the field of education. School leaders should encourage teachers to pursue further education, provide resources for personal study, and facilitate relevant training.

Keywords: Teacher's induction program, novice teachers, coaching, mentoring, collaboration

INTRODUCTION

Novice teachers frequently face a variety of problems as they begin their teaching careers. Classroom management issues, navigating diverse school cultures, and dealing with the demands of curriculum planning and evaluation are some of the most typical challenges they confront. Furthermore, comprehending and responding to the different dynamics of diverse educational environments can be difficult, ranging from collaborating with colleagues to deciphering institutional standards and expectations. These problems can lead to feelings of isolation, self-doubt, and burnout among novice educators, which highlights the significance of extensive support structures and professional development opportunities to help them grow and succeed in the field.

Annually, new teachers enter the complicated, diverse, and exciting field of teaching. Unfortunately, only a few survive past their fifth year. Moreover, the first few years of a public-school teacher's career are considered extremely challenging and critical, as they enter the field with financial, physical, moral, and ethical problems. Fresh out of college with an optimistic view, they see their job as not only a source of revenue but also an opportunity to improve their newly acquired skills. Furthermore, novice teachers may feel frustrated and unproductive due to inadequate training and administration assistance. Numerous studies show that inexperienced teachers confront several challenges, highlighting the need for support. Additionally, they need assistance to be satisfied with their work and they must improve their pedagogy and content knowledge to keep learning. Hence, to address the aforementioned issue, Ingersoll (2007) recommends that it would be a more effective method to make an effort to retain and encourage active teachers, particularly novices.

Induction program is a structured process designed to welcome and acclimate new employees or members into an organization, helping them understand their roles, responsibilities, and the organizational culture. It aims to provide essential information and resources that facilitate a smooth transition and integration into the workplace. Therefore, according to Dn (2024), an effective induction program not only covers practical aspects such as job duties and organizational policies but also emphasizes the social and cultural facets,

fostering a sense of belonging and engagement among newcomers. This comprehensive approach ensures that new hires are well-prepared to contribute effectively to the organization from the outset.

Moreover, schools around the world use induction programs to assist new teachers in their initial years of teaching by improving their well-being and professional growth (Graziano, 2005). According to research, induction programs are needed to expedite new teachers' professional development, making them more effective, lowering the rate of new teacher attrition, and improving student learning (Glazerman et al., 2008). Furthermore, researchers underlined the necessity of inducting newly hired teachers in the Department of Education (DepEd) to familiarize them with the department's initiatives and projects. Additionally, the Teacher Induction Program (TIP) has a favorable impact on teacher knowledge, abilities, values, and commitment to the profession, as well as student learning outcomes.

Induction into the current learning environment for new teachers is critical for their adaptation and adjustment, whether at a central school or a remote barangay school. With societal change, the introduction of new programs in the organization, the impact of technology, and a slew of other elements influencing teaching and learning, there is no better approach to tackle teaching problems than to be appropriately trained. Additionally, induction is absolutely vital for new teachers to feel comfortable with their new assignments because it allows them to be trained and introduced to the numerous topics/tasks they must undertake. Scherer (2012) stated that it is critical for novices to have systematic mentoring in their first year. Teacher induction ensures that the beginning teacher receives weekly support and in-classroom coaching during the first year to fine-tune skills, plan lessons, and solve problems that arise in the classroom, as well as that an experienced teacher is present during critical moments of the novice teacher's first year.

Similarly, experiences from various parts of the world demonstrate that newly employed teachers, especially those who have undergone induction or orientation, tend to perform their assigned duties and responsibilities better (Bartell, 2004). For example, in the United States, Smith and Ingersoll (2004) explained that beginning teachers are expected to effectively manage classrooms, motivate students, address individual differences, and establish healthy relationships with colleagues. Induction programs are provided to newly appointed teachers to enhance their performance by reducing feelings of irresponsibility, isolation, and the disparities between idealistic expectations and classroom realities (Bartell, 2004).

Smith and Ingersoll (2004) further assert that newly appointed teachers who received induction programs reported higher satisfaction and felt better equipped to handle the challenges of real teaching. They were able to establish healthy classroom relationships, manage students effectively, control classroom environments, master subjects, plan engaging lessons, monitor student understanding, and contribute to school management and extracurricular activities. These outcomes have been used as indicators of the importance of induction programs for newly appointed teachers' performance (Sharp, 2007).

On the contrary, Menon (2011) contends that in Greece, beginning teachers often struggle to fulfill their responsibilities due to various administrative and organizational issues, including managing student behavior. However, induction programs have been shown to support newly employed teachers significantly, providing them with morale, motivation, and the desire to fulfill their responsibilities effectively in their jobs.

Furthermore, various scholars' research highlights the usefulness of induction programs in the field of education. For instance, Feiman-Nemser's (2001) study focuses on how induction programs help novice teachers build successful teaching techniques. This study contends that ongoing professional development and

organized support are critical for novice teachers' professional advancement. Wong (2004) agrees with this viewpoint, highlighting the value of structured induction programs in equipping new instructors with core abilities in classroom management, lesson planning, and student engagement, which eventually leads to increased teaching efficacy.

The Teacher Education Council (TEC) was established by Republic Act No. 7784 to enhance teacher education in the Philippines, leading to the nationwide implementation of a teacher induction procedure mandated by the council. Following zonal discussions with teacher education institutions and Department of Education (DepEd) offices nationwide, the TEC developed the Teacher Induction Program (TIP) during the 2013 Strategic Workshop (Redillas, 2017). The program aims to strengthen the continuum from pre-service to in-service education and training, improve teacher effectiveness—especially among beginning teachers—enhance socialization and ensure smooth school integration, and safeguard the personal and professional well-being of new teachers. Despite being implemented for more than half a decade, local literature on TIP remains scarce (Read & Atinc, 2017), prompting this study to fill the gap. Specifically focused on Davao City, the largest division in the country, this investigation aims to document actual new teacher induction practices. It will delve into the challenges faced by new teachers, the formal and informal support available to them, the duration of support provided, mentoring practices, and collaborative efforts among teachers to enhance instructional effectiveness, opportunities for professional development, and the evaluation process for new teachers throughout their induction journey.

The above articulations posit the idea that there is a need to address the experiences of novice teachers and the kind of support given to beginning teachers in an urban community with high levels of poverty. As new teachers are inducted into their schools and community, it is important to understand their perceptions of the impact of their induction process. This led

the researcher to examine the experiences, coping strategies, and learning insights of the novice teachers teaching through an induction program. Therefore, specific objectives of the study are as follows: a) to determine the experiences of the new teachers during the induction program; b) to determine the coping mechanisms that new teachers successfully apply induction into the profession; and c) to determine what educational management insights can be drawn from the findings of the study.

The study holds significant benefits for school heads, teachers, and students alike. School heads can gain valuable insights into the influence of mentoring and professional development on novice teachers, helping them understand the importance of supporting their growth as lifelong learners who utilize inquiry-based practices. This understanding is crucial for fostering a culture of continuous improvement within schools. For early-career teachers, the study offers insights and inspiration, providing guidance on how to navigate the challenges they may encounter. By aligning their initial teaching expectations with effective practices identified in the study, these teachers can enhance their teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction. Moreover, students are also direct beneficiaries of the study's findings. Teachers who are better equipped with mentoring and professional development support are more adept at keeping students on task, developing and adapting lesson plans to meet their needs, and employing effective questioning techniques. These improvements can lead to higher student achievement, increased engagement, and a more supportive and effective educational experience overall.

LITERATURES

This section included a review of the relevant literature on induction programs for novice teachers as well as an exploration into the history of the teacher induction program and the implementation of TIP in the Philippines and its key aspects. Furthermore, the chapter discusses mentoring, support, and the

outcomes of an induction program. The main focus was on the components of induction programs, the specific roles of mentors, the responsibilities of school principals, and the impact of induction on novice teachers.

Induction Program. Induction programs serve the purpose of familiarizing newly hired personnel with the company's expectations, performance standards, and organizational culture. Grant (2003) suggests that strategically utilizing the induction process can enhance employee retention rates by ensuring a comprehensive understanding of their roles and alignment within the organizational structure.

Similarly, a teacher induction program has the potential to enhance the practice of new teachers, deepen their understanding of professional obligations, and ultimately contribute to improved student learning outcomes. Moreover, as noted by Smith and Ingersoll (2004), these initiatives provide experienced teachers with opportunities for reflective practice, fostering cohesion within the learning community as all participants work towards the shared goal of enhancing education quality.

Menon (2011) highlights the capacity of induction programs to enhance the teaching profession and cultivate a collaborative learning community among educators, leading to increased retention rates as new teachers are immersed in an environment supportive of ongoing development and achievement.

According to Kavenuke (2013), an induction program is a professional development process designed to equip new teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively manage the classroom, motivate students, address individual differences, and assess student performance. Traditionally, educational institutions such as schools or colleges, as noted by He (2010), have served as establishments dedicated to imparting formal instruction to pupils.

Teacher Induction. Teacher induction can most simply be defined as a system of support for new teachers that provides orientation, guidance, and ongoing support throughout the early years of a career. Induction programs can take many forms and purposes, depending on a district or campus's needs, priorities, and resources. Kearney (2014) has developed a comprehensive definition of induction as the primary phase in a continuum of professional development, leading to the teacher's full integration into a professional community of practice and continuing professional learning throughout their career. Teacher induction can be a bridge to the knowing-and-doing gap that new teachers face as they transition from learning about teaching to teaching for learning (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). The need for teacher induction has remained valid since the 1980s, but only in the last decade has teacher induction risen to the status of an authentic education policy issue for educators.

Colleagues in other nations also share the dilemma of teacher induction, not just in schools in the United States. Petersen (2017) conducted a study at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, where he examined the experiences of new teachers during the "limital" stage, a transition period between student teaching and entering the professional world of early grade classrooms. Teachers play a crucial role in equipping the youth for a dynamic world (Schleicher, 2016), necessitating the design of professional preparation programs that take into account the world's constant changes (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Kearney (2014) emphasizes the significance of giving novice instructors ongoing, methodical, and developmentally appropriate support. Effective induction programs should encourage professional growth, improve teaching practices, and integrate professional development throughout the company. Kearney's study looked at induction programs in eight countries and found nine best practices: one- to two-year mandatory programs, mentorship, collaborative opportunities, structured observations, reduced teaching

loads, job-embedded learning, workshops, support and networking, and systemic professional development. These aspects are critical to increasing teacher capacity and retention. Implementing multi-year programs helps new teachers overcome the problems they confront, allowing them to grow into effective and competent educators.

According to Ganser (1996), induction addresses the issue of introducing or orienting a new employee to the organization. Proper alignment can significantly lessen this problem and its associated costs. For teachers, the first few days on the job were tense and unpleasant. Teachers' attitudes are strongly influenced by how they perceive a variety of essential elements, including the organization, their personal actions both on and off the job, the nature of their work, their colleagues and employers, their role expectations, self-concepts, and needs. These issues can be avoided if newly hired staff is provided an accurate picture of their expected responsibilities.

Impact of Induction Programs to Novice Teachers. A lot of researches demonstrate that induction programs improve teachers' instructional practices. The beneficial influence benefits both the novice and mentor teachers. Danielson (1999) discovered that mentoring rookie instructors helps them improve their teaching methods through reflective activities and professional exchanges. She also claims that mentoring equates to professional development for both the mentor and the novice teacher.

Glazerman et al. (2008) investigated the impact of a comprehensive teacher induction program on retention and positive teacher and student outcomes. The study sample included beginning teachers from 17 school districts in 13 states who served pupils from low-income homes. They concentrated on two programs, one created by the Educational Testing Service and the other by the New Teacher Center at the University of Santa Cruz. Both programs have comparable components. Mentor instructors had at least five years of experience, were recognized as excellent teachers, and earned mentoring experience. Instructors were trained by program managers and met with the instructors on their caseload for around two hours every week.

The learning exercises that were suggested for the conversations were part of the induction program; however, mentors could replace alternate activities based on the requirements of rookie teachers. In addition, beginning teachers participated in monthly professional development workshops and witnessed instruction from their mentor teachers. The purpose of the research that Allen (2013) carried out at Trinity University was to determine whether or not the provision of additional support for novice instructors throughout their induction years has an effect on the retention and growth of teachers.

Novice Teachers' Satisfaction on Induction Program. Kim and Loadman (1994) connect teacher induction to satisfaction by identifying characteristics of satisfaction that might be incorporated into induction. Teacher induction programs can facilitate relationships with colleagues by assigning mentors or giving opportunities for collaboration. Induction can also change some aspects of working circumstances. Giving a new instructor a shortened timetable is one example of an induction approach that can improve working conditions. Induction services may provide some level of professional challenge and autonomy.

Meanwhile, Larabee (2009) found eight important characteristics in induction models that could boost job satisfaction. These variables were separated into two categories: socializing and instruction. Several items fit into both groups. The aspects associated to socialization were "the existence of a mentor, regular meetings, reflection, and new teacher orientation". The components associated with instruction were "presence of a mentor, new educator orientation, team lesson planning, observation of experienced teachers, monitoring by veteran teachers, reflection,

frequent conferences and a schedule for activities depending on relevance".

Moreover, the health and wellbeing of the teacher workforce are aided by teacher induction. One of the most stressful jobs in the country is teaching, per a Pennsylvania State University study on stress among educators. According to Stanulis et al., (2012), excessive levels of stress have a negative impact on teachers' health and wellbeing, leading to burnout, a lack of engagement, job discontent, subpar performance, and some of the highest turnover rates ever. This study emphasized the value of initiatives that aim to give novice educators social and professional support through mentorship, advice, and orientation.

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) also suggest that beginning teachers who received some type of induction had higher job satisfaction, commitment, or retention. Other positive outcomes include increased self-efficacy and enhanced instructional practices, two key factors associated with the long-term growth and job satisfaction for teachers. In order to understand their impact, it is important to review different types of induction programs that are typically offered to support novice teachers. This review begins with a focus on inductions programs and the components of each. Then the review presents research on the role that each component plays in benefiting the new teacher.

METHODOLOGY

This section deals with the methods that the researcher undertakes in the conduct of this action research study. This includes the population and sampling, instrumentation, data source, and data analysis.

Research Design. The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of individual participants. The researcher used a qualitative design to understand each participant's unique perspective on the induction program and its impact on teachers' performance. In the context of the study, the researcher identified phenomenological methodology as the best

means for this type of study. In this study, the researcher applied phenomenology to explore human perception of events from real-world experiences. Phenomenological study is an analysis of human experiences with the experience of the post positivist approaches; phenomenology is use by varied disciplines as an efficient method of exploring research questions which will lead to another way of knowledge being formed. In particular, phenomenology will become a way of knowing the gaps within the discipline and those areas which are not considered important to research before because they have lesser dealings with the patriarchal world of geography (Van Manen, 2002). This approach involves reliving participants' experiences and delving into their thoughts to identify the essence of their experiences through detailed discussions (Creswell, 2023). Moreover, phenomenology was used to describe the experiences of novice teachers in teaching through an induction program, as noted by Giorgi et al., (2017), focusing on the lived experiences of individuals. The researcher compared and contrasted the experiences of participants to understand the importance of these experiences for other teachers in similar roles.

Population and Sampling. The study sample population consisted of seven (7) teachers from Sta. Ana District, Davao City Division. The researcher purposefully selected the target population for this study as teachers who (a) are currently teaching at Agdao Elementary School, Manuel L. Quezon Elementary School, Sta. Ana Central Elementary School, and Zonta Elementary School, and (b) have participated in and completed the Teacher Induction Program, which involves a full year of one-on-one mentoring, during which the mentor and mentee must meet at least once a week for the first four weeks of school. The participants' teaching experience ranged from pre-K to 6th grade, consisting of general education, special education, and content-specific teachers. The researchers designed the survey with questions to identify the individual characteristics and experiences these teachers encountered during their induction programs.

Instrumentation. To gather data, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with the study subjects. The interview process was validated by a panel of five experts: three from the university's research examining committee and two external experts from other universities. During an in-depth interview (IDI) the researcher discussed three primary questions: (1) experiences of the novice teachers during the induction program; (2) coping mechanisms that helped new teachers successfully apply induction into the profession; and (3) educational management insights drawn from the findings of the study. The researcher continued to communicate with the participants after the IDI. Additionally, all interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. The researcher then employed thematic content analysis to examine the participants' responses. The audio recordings were thoroughly reviewed to ensure accuracy and completeness. These steps were taken to guarantee that the data collected and presented was precise, providing a solid foundation for significant findings and comprehensive analysis and interpretation.

Data Source. During the qualitative phase, the researcher meticulously ensured comprehensive data collection to capture the richness of participants' experiences. The following steps were taken: First, the researcher requested permission to conduct the study from the Dean of the Graduate School of The Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc., and the Office of the Division Superintendent. After receiving approval, the researcher presented the letter to the teacher-respondents. Follow-ups were conducted to ensure the respondents fully understood the study's objectives and to obtain their informed consent. An expert panel from the Rizal Memorial College, Inc. validated the content of the interview guide, evaluating the questions using a validation sheet in a face-to-face setting, where they provided their signatures, responses, and comments.

The researcher then conducted face-to-face interviews with the respondents in a quiet, conducive environment in the respective schools of each teacher-participants in Sta. Ana District, Division of Davao City to build rapport.

Each individual interview lasted approximately an hour and a half. Clear instructions and reassurances about confidentiality were provided beforehand to encourage open and candid responses. The interviews were conducted using a validated interview protocol, with follow-up questions to ensure answer saturation. Participants were informed about the recording process, and their responses were recorded with their permission and saved on a flash drive. The researcher analyzed the results using thematic content analysis to ensure robustness and reliability in the interpretation of findings, providing a comprehensive understanding of the data.

Data Analysis. The data will be systematically organized, coded, and analyzed using Thematic Content Analysis (TCA). Anderson (2007) describes TCA as a method for presenting qualitative data descriptively, typically using interview transcripts or other texts that reflect on the study's topic. Moreover, Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasized the need to recognize multiple meanings in a text and distinguished between "category" and "plot," with meanings expressed through themes and subthemes. The initial step involved reading and re-reading the transcripts to understand and interpret the data, followed by coding key ideas. These codes formed categories and clusters, identifying patterns that addressed research questions. The responses were analyzed to gain a detailed understanding of human dignity, with themes produced from the document and interview data.

RESULTS

This part highlighted the results of the study. Themes were extracted based on participants' responses to each question. Experiences of the new teachers during the induction program, coping mechanisms that helped new teachers successfully apply induction into the profession, and educational management insights acquired were presented and discussed below.
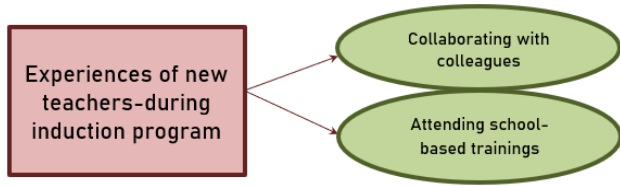
Figure 1
Experiences of the new teachers during the induction program

Figure 1 showed the experiences of new teachers during the induction program, emphasizing the significance of attending school-based training as well as collaborating with colleagues. Attending school-based training provided new teachers with essential knowledge and skills, fostering their pedagogical competence and keeping them abreast of educational advancements. Meanwhile, collaborative engagement with colleagues facilitated information sharing, simplified complex content, and created a supportive environment for mutual learning and growth. Together, these experiences formed a comprehensive support system, enhancing the confidence and competence of new teachers and laying a strong foundation for their teaching careers.
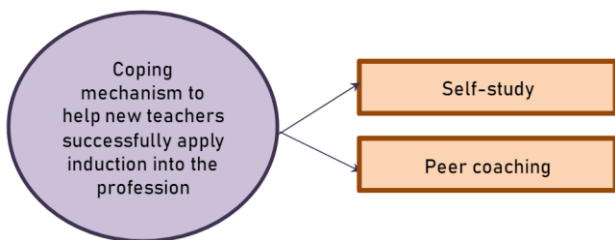

Figure 2
Coping mechanisms that helped new teachers successfully apply induction into the profession

Figure 2 highlighted the coping mechanisms that helped new teachers to successfully apply the induction into the profession, identifying self-study and peer coaching as critical strategies. Self-study involves teachers independently engaging with content or processes from programs and activities to enhance their skills, demonstrating their proactive efforts to overcome challenges in understanding modules and acquiring teaching skills. At the same time, peer coaching, which entailed interactions where a more knowledgeable teacher provided guidance and

assistance, facilitated skill development through collaborative learning. These mechanisms collectively empowered new teachers to navigate the complexities of their roles, ensuring they could apply their induction experiences successfully and grow professionally despite initial difficulties.
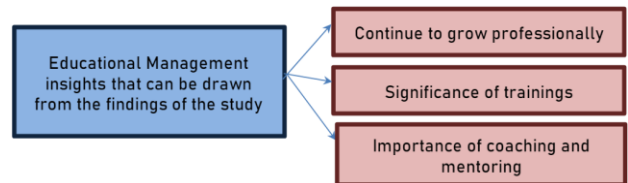

Figure 3
Educational Management insights that can be drawn from the findings of the study

Figure 3 depicted the educational management insights that teachers gained, emphasizing continuing to grow professionally, the significance of training, and the importance of coaching and mentoring. Most teachers acquired essential knowledge and skills through activities that fostered their professional development, which was crucial for developing 21st-century teaching competencies. Further, the significance of training was evident as teachers recognized and appreciated the value of the training sessions they attended, which enhanced their instructional practices. Moreover, coaching and mentoring emerged as vital, with expert teachers playing a significant role in facilitating discussions and providing guidance, thereby supporting their co-teachers' professional growth. With this, these insights collectively underscored the multifaceted approach to professional development, highlighting the interplay between ongoing learning, structured training, and collaborative mentorship in fostering effective teaching practices.

DISCUSSION

This section presented discussions based on the study's findings. The purpose of this study was to shed light on the experiences of new teachers during the induction program, the coping mechanisms that helped new teachers successfully apply induction into the profession,

and the educational management insights that could be drawn from the study's findings.

On the experiences of new teachers during the induction program: (1) attending school-based training, and (2) collaborating with co-workers. In line with attending school-based training, most participants shared similar experiences regarding skill acquisition, noting that skills were acquired through seminars provided by the school, particularly through TIP sessions and school-based training with other teachers. It is evident that participation in such school-based training and seminars enables new teachers to acquire relevant information for their growth and development. Specifically, understanding the Key Result Areas (KRA) of DepEd requires engagement in seminars to acquire knowledge about the program. These findings align with Kearney's (2016) emphasis on the significant role of teachers in developing 21st-century teaching skills and Felipe's (2013) highlighting of the Department of Education's goal for every teacher to become effective and efficient. To advance mentors' skills in schools, numerous training and seminars are being conducted, as the Department recognizes teachers' pivotal role in prioritizing learning for every student.

Moreover, in terms of collaborating with co-workers, the participants revealed that the acquisition of skills cannot be done by the teacher alone. Since teachers' competence varies, others need assistance and guidance; hence, collaborating with colleagues is a good indication of helping one teacher understand the process and content. Collaboration seems to be helpful in the learning environment. The sharing of information and doing the same things right will enable teachers to function effectively and efficiently. Collaborating with fellow teachers to understand challenging content is crucial for achieving reliable information and a deeper understanding. This aligns with Ledward and Hirata's (2011) idea that individuals must possess not only content knowledge and technological skills but also the ability to work collaboratively to solve complex problems and generate innovative ideas using various technologies.

The coping mechanisms for new teachers include self-study and peer coaching. Self-directed learning, akin to a modular approach, emphasizes personal understanding of seminar content, allowing teachers to review and reinforce information independently. While self-study offers benefits, such as personalized learning, it may lead to varied interpretations of content. Self-paced activities minimize the need for direct guidance during sessions, enabling teachers to learn autonomously. Additionally, teachers utilize provided resources like modules and guides to guide classroom implementation, prioritizing strategies aligned with their reference materials. This approach aligns with Cha and Kim's (2014) idea that adults exhibit diverse learning styles, with self-paced self-study packets catering to individual needs and motivating learners to address knowledge gaps independently.

Further, in peer coaching, it was revealed that acquiring information during seminar sessions is challenging in one setting. But peer coaching can help by enabling teachers to seek clarification from knowledgeable colleagues, improving understanding. This aligns with the idea that mentoring relationships benefit workplace learning (Hodkinson, 2006), emphasizing the importance of fostering environments for such relationships, like emerging learning networks. Formal mentoring processes for new teachers provide support initially but often evolve into informal interactions with experienced colleagues as teachers progress in their careers (Carter & Francis, 2001).

Regarding the educational management insights of teachers, three themes emerged: continuing professional growth, the significance of training, and the importance of coaching and mentoring. Continuing professional growth involves engaging in activities that enhance teachers' knowledge and skills. Enrolling in graduate studies and pursuing skill acquisition endeavors are significant for teachers' development. Teachers should not rely solely on DepEd's training or seminars but should take personal initiative to acquire relevant skills. Learning is a continuous process, and teachers

must constantly update their skills and avoid complacency. Amanulla and Aruna (2014) emphasize that professional development involves activities designed to advance teachers' knowledge and understanding, including formal experiences like attending courses and workshops, as well as informal experiences like reading professional publications and writing articles.

Moreover, in terms of the significance of training, it was revealed that participation in training enhances teachers' competence, yet not all teachers have equal access to such opportunities, creating a significant gap. To address this, school heads can facilitate re-echo sessions to disseminate seminar points and ensure constant communication. Teachers highly value training, highlighting the need for rigorous training to acquire 21st-century skills. Rahman et al. (2011) emphasize that teacher training provides knowledge, skills, and abilities relevant to professional life, reshaping attitudes, and habits. Pre-service and in-service training are essential, with pre-service training focusing on professional growth and positive attitudes towards education. Various training programs, including diplomas in education and advanced courses, are available through institutions and universities to meet teachers' needs at different levels of expertise.

Lastly, in line with the importance of coaching and mentoring, participants have shared that peer interaction plays a vital role in supporting teachers, particularly in addressing each other's difficulties. Through peer-to-peer discussions, effective problem-solving occurs, leading to meaningful outcomes and a sense of satisfaction. This aligns with Gottesman's (2000) notion that peer coaching fosters teachers' professional development while reducing their isolation in schools. Peer coaching activities also enhance teachers' reflective and analytical capabilities, resulting in benefits such as improved ability to analyze classes, enhanced teacher performance, expanded instructional strategies, stronger professional connections, and a positive school climate, ultimately leading to better student outcomes (Becker, 2001).

Considering the analysis above and the implications it may bring, anchored on the principles of lifelong learning, it is imperative to employ judicious training assessment, regular evaluation of teachers' performance, and provision of technical assistance. These mechanisms are fundamental in cultivating better teachers, enhancing their qualifications, skills, and knowledge, and fostering professional engagement essential for effectively implementing the K–12 program. School heads should incentivize teachers to pursue graduate or postgraduate courses to augment their professional competence, while also providing resources for personal study relevant to their development. Further, teachers should actively engage in relevant training to enhance their instructional competence and establish peer networks for collaborative learning and support. Moreover, fostering connections with teachers from other schools facilitates the sharing of innovative approaches and strategies to enhance teaching performance. Encouraging teachers to conduct school-based action research on the impact of training on student performance is crucial, while future researchers should conduct quantitative analyses to measure the effectiveness of teachers' induction programs. Lastly, replication of this study in other contexts is essential to validate its findings.

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