



**EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS ON COACHING AND MENTORING:
BASIS FOR PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT**

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the experiences of integrated school teachers on coaching and mentoring program. The research method utilized in the study was qualitative using in-depth interview and the design was phenomenology. The study revealed that LAC session is being implemented in the integrated school, and some of the experiences of teachers on coaching and mentoring program through LAC sessions are sharing ideas, listening to speakers, attending professional development program, and learning new ideas. Some of the hindering factors experienced by teachers are delivery include the delivery of the assigned topic, teacher's attitude, lack of school support, and hectic schedules. Moreover, the facilitating factors of teachers are mentoring or coaching, facilities, and feedback making.

Coaching and mentoring through LAC Session are all part of educational training to develop people in the professions. There are several similarities and differences in the main issues involved in coaching and mentoring which they are related to the self-development, professional growth, and career development of the mentee/coachee.

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Keywords: *Coaching and mentoring, Teacher program Enhancement*

INTRODUCTION

Coaching is as a structured, sustained process for enabling the development of a specific aspect of a professional learner’s practice. Coaching involves activities which promote and enhance the development of a specific aspect of teaching and learning or leadership practice.

Mentoring is the best from of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as it allows a professional to reflect on their own practice, articulate their thinking and offer advice, models and guidance to others whilst improving and honing their own craft.

According to de Jong et al. (Feger & Arruda, 2008), one barrier to teachers being able to develop their practices, improve student learning, and support long-lasting change in school culture is the absence of opportunities for collegial and collaborative work among teachers. Such a view, however, was subsequently disproved as the teaching profession underwent significant transformation. One of these significant shifts is the growing acceptance on a global scale of the benefits of organized teacher partnerships and professional learning communities as efficient means of enhancing teaching methods and student learning outcomes (Vescio et al., 2008; Watson, 2014). Coaching and mentoring through Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions believed to be the best avenue for professional development of teachers.

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INSTABRIGHT e-GAZETTE

ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume V, Issue III

February 2024

Available online at <https://www.instabrightgazette.com>



As stated in Department of Education Order No. 35, s. 2016, Learning Action Cell (LAC) is a session conducted by group of teachers who engage in collaborative learning sessions to solve shared challenges such as learners' diversity, content and pedagogy, assessment and reporting, and ICT integration. These LAC Sessions served as school-based continuing professional development strategy for the improvement of teaching and learning. As such, this study aimed to assess the perceptions of teachers about the conduct of LAC sessions, its effects on their professional development, and the problems encountered in participating to it.

No teacher is an expert in all the elements of the curriculum; hence, insights and expertise of other teachers are needed in order to enrich one's knowledge, skill, and competence. Goddard et al. (2015) discovered that teachers who team up and collaborate reported improved attitudes towards teaching, teacher efficacy, and understanding of student learning. Recognizing such need, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued order (D.O.) 35, s. 2016, which sought the institutionalization of Learning Action Cells (LACs) as an approach to develop and support teachers by nurturing their knowledge, attitudes, and competencies in terms of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in their workstations.

Coaching and mentoring would be of great help in facilitating or helping relationship intended to achieve some change, learning, enhanced individual, and organizational effectiveness in the academe. By school-based coaching and mentoring, we will be able to explore the influence of the characteristics of mentors on teacher and learners outcomes.

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Due in large part to the way schools are set up as workplaces, the teaching profession has long been defined by isolationism, which therefore restricts opportunities for teacher cooperation, skill sharing, and teamwork (Benson, 2011).

According to de Jong et al. (2019; Feger & Arruda, 2008), one barrier to teachers being able to develop their practices, improve student learning, and support long-lasting change in school culture is the absence of opportunities for collegial and collaborative work among teachers. Such a view, however, was subsequently disproved as the teaching profession underwent significant transformation. One of these significant shifts is the broad acceptance of professional learning communities and other types of structured teacher cooperation as valuable tools for enhancing educational quality worldwide.

(Vescio et al., 2008; Watson, 2014) practices and learning results. Building professional learning communities to foster greater teacher collaboration is becoming a more appealing and successful technique for improving school performance and changing school culture, according to a substantial body of literature (Williams et al., 2012). International study confirms the possibility of greater outcomes via professional learning communities. Better student learning results from developing capacities and pursuing sustainable development (Stoll et al., 2006).

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The finest type of CPD is mentoring since it enables professionals to reflect on their own work, express their ideas clearly, and help others by providing models, advice, and direction while also advancing and perfecting their own trade.

According to Weston and Clay in their excellent book "Unleashing Great Teaching," the mentor's objective is to take the mentee "from being a complete novice to attaining some level of expertise."

The journey begins with the pre-service teacher's or early career teacher's recognition of their novice status and the provision of appropriate support to help them advance to a position of higher experience.

The Carter Review providers (2015) "Excellent teachers who can both articulate and demonstrate outstanding practice" are required to serve as mentors, according to the statement. The emphasis is on modeling, advancing, and creating excellent teaching while simultaneously building a collaborative spirit. As will be detailed below, this begins in pre-service and must naturally continue throughout the career. Coaching is defined as a "structured, sustained process for enabling the development of a specific aspect of a professional learner's practice".

As stated in the definition, a coach "enables professional learners to take control of their own learning through non-judgmental questioning and support"; in this instance, the professional learner is concentrating on a specific component of their practice rather than a phase or transition.

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According to Dr. Gary Jones, coaching consists of "activities that promote and enhance the development of a particular aspect of teaching and learning or leadership practice." Instructional coaching entails a trained expert working one-on-one with teachers to support their learning

and adoption of new teaching strategies as well as to provide feedback on performance.

No two studies have yet found the same mix of demands and challenges for new teachers. However, it is believed that new instructors rely on the information and guidance they learned during their first few years of teaching to judge their teaching effectiveness for the greatness of their students.

According to Senom and Shahratol (2013), some of the top priorities for beginning teachers include classroom management, student motivation, differentiating student learning, problems and needs, assessing student progress, interaction with coworkers and parents, obtaining pertinent guidance on school culture, objectives, and instructional resources, utilizing efficient teaching techniques, and receiving emotional support.

In some situations, despite their best efforts, new teachers still feel alone and want for tailored assistance to get through the difficult early years (Lunenburg, 2011). The environment a beginning teacher is a part of affects the caliber of the teacher and the practices of the teacher, according to the literature. The culture of the classroom and the working environment serve as the foundation for the environment.

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According to a research by Frazier (2006), new teachers who received enough support, motivation, encouraging conversations, ongoing direction, and a mentor who was a good fit for them found mentoring and coaching to be helpful in their early years of teaching. When mentors had enough time, administrative assistance, more meetings with their mentees, enthusiasm in mentoring, and access to mentoring skills, mentors claimed that mentoring beginning teachers would be effective.

According to Gordon and Maxey (2000), the six environmental difficulty-related issues faced by the target group upon enrolling in a school are challenging job assignments, unclear goals, limited resource availability, being alone, role conflict, and reality shock. Other passionate novice teacher researchers have confirmed these issues when they are frequently given difficult tasks to handle even as a newcomer to the school, rookie instructors and veteran teachers are expected to provide equivalent quality work (Weasmer & Woods, 2000).

Improved student achievement, better beginning teacher quality, and overall school growth are all impacted by teacher professional development (Villani, 2002). Some common solutions include beginner teacher aid programs, office training, and job-embedded professional development programs, such as peer group talks, coaching, and mentoring that target the particular daily requirements of teachers and students.

According to a study by Brannan and Bleisten (2012) on how novice instructors perceive support, mentors' competence in mentoring and coaching abilities, such as targeted teaching and learning

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strategies, teaching aids, and logistical knowledge by colleagues or mentors, are required. Beginner instructors are brand-new to the classroom and the school as well as the profession. The many stakeholders rely on and depend on beginner teacher mentors.

Job-embedded professional development strategies are becoming more and more popular and in demand when it comes to up skilling personnel. Recent initiatives within the workplace setting include programs like expert knowledge sharing, professional learning communities, coaching and mentoring, in-house trainings or seminars, peer reviews, lesson studies (in schools), on-the-job observations, and action research. The field of human resource development accords ample importance to hiring teachers, induction programs, teacher and principal assessment, and quality standards in the context of the educational platform (Fullan & Mascal, 2000). It also emphasizes training and development of educators from the pre-service to the in-service stage.

Staff maintenance, staff interactions, staff development, hiring of staff, and task performance reward are all heavily emphasized in human resource management in education (Omebe, 2014). Human resources are just as crucial to any organization's growth as are financial, technological, and other resources.

The enhancement of the overall educational institution has been found to require training and development programs for the human resources. The success of the educational system is strongly dependent on teacher quality, according to the theory of human resource management

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and development in education (Omebe, 2014). The Ministry of Education's ongoing reform measures, which prioritize teacher preparation methods and ongoing professional support for educators from the time they first enter the classroom until they retire, take this issue further.

Local studies

on teacher education are doing a great job of addressing the needs of teachers for professional learning and development in varied sociocultural situations by sharing best practices and modern classroom strategies. This concept paper examines the mentorship strategies now offered to new teachers. The evaluations and reports gathered take into account the implications of better mentor training programs for new teacher mentors in the field of classroom coaching.

The research methodology, research design, study participants, data collection techniques, research instrument, and data analysis are all covered in this chapter.

The purpose of the study was to determine the experiences of teachers on coaching and mentoring through LAC sessions as basis for program enhancement in Muyco Integrated School during the school year 2022-2023.

The research method utilized in the study was qualitative research using in-depth interviews.

The interviewer with the interviewee during the interview was allowed to sit together in a distance and to think about the series of questions about a certain issue. The aim was to get the main or the necessary views of the participants in a certain issue in a social context through the responses of the participants to the questions.

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The study used phenomenological research design. A philosophical strategy for conducting qualitative research is phenomenology. By concentrating on a person's subjective perceptions of what she encounters, phenomenology seeks to understand how others view the world and how this perspective may differ from widely accepted beliefs. Phenomenology, which is widely applied in disciplines like psychology, sociology, and social work, involves interviewing the subjects to learn about their impressions.

Phenomenology, according to Smith (2013), is the study of consciousness structures as they are perceived in the first person. As it is an experience of or about some object, the intentionality, or being oriented toward something, is the main structural component of an experience. By virtue of its content or meaning (which symbolizes the object) and the proper enabling conditions, an experience is directed toward an object.

The participants of the study were the selected 11 elementary and secondary teachers. The individuals in the study were from diverse educational background, from higher down to lower teaching positions and their number of years in service which were taken from the official number of teaching force of Muyco Integrated School for the school year 2022-2023.

The study's sampling strategy was purposive. A non-probability sample called a purposive sample is chosen based on demographic characteristics and the study's goal.

Judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling are other terms for purposeful sampling.

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview schedule.

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The interview schedule had four questions focusing on the purpose of study.

Voice and video recorders were also used for data gathering and documentation, depending upon the permission of the participants.

Prior to the determination of the validity of the interview schedule made by the researcher, the adviser, and the Dean of the Graduate School a panel of jurors was considered for their expertise in the field of research, testing, and assessment, and English were requested to validate each question for review and modification.

A researcher's conclusions must be suitable, meaningful, correct, and valuable in order to be considered valid. The content and format of content-related evidence of validity must be consistent with the definition of variables and sample of the subject to be measured, and it also aids in validating the questionnaire's items. Comments, corrections, and suggestions of the panel of validators regarding the interview schedule were considered using the appropriate form of Good and Scates

Permits from the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Office of the District Supervisors, School Heads, and individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools, community or place convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview.

Before conducting an interview with a participant, the researcher asked them to sign a consent form or waiver pertaining to the way the study would be conducted.

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Using in-depth interview, voice and video recorders were also be provided to completely capture the interviewee's words. The researcher consolidated all of the collected data after a series of interviews.

The information gathered was analyzed using a thematic approach. Before conducting an interview with a participant, the researcher asked them to sign a consent form or waiver pertaining to the way the study would be conducted. The goal of a thematic analysis, according to Maguire & Delahunt (2017), is to find themes, such as fascinating or significant patterns in the data, and then utilize those themes to discuss the research or make a point about a problem.

This is summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting the data gathered and making sense of it.

The study was conducted to determine the experiences of teachers on coaching and mentoring through Learning Action Cell (LAC) as basis for program enhancement in Muyco Integrated School, Schools District of Lemery during the school year 2022-2023.

The research method utilized in the study was qualitative method, using in-depth interviews, and the research design was phenomenology.

The participants of the study were the selected 11 elementary and secondary teachers taken from the official number of Teaching Force of Muyco Integrated School for the school year 2022-2023.

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A researcher-made interview schedule was used as an instrument to gather data.

Voice and video recorders were also used for data gathering and documentation, depending upon the permission of the participants. The questionnaire underwent content validation by the Panel of Experts. The validity of the interview schedule's questions was evaluated using Fraenkel and Wallen's (2007) Criteria for the Content Validation.

The researcher considered all comments and suggestions relative to the validation of the tool. After the questionnaire had been found valid, permits were prepared to allow the researcher to start conducting the in-depth interview.

Permits from the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, School Head, and individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools, community or place convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview.

The researcher consolidated all collected data after a series of interviews. The information was then, analyzed and interpreted using thematic approach.

The following are the findings of the study:

According to the findings of the detailed interview with the teachers regarding their experiences with the coaching and mentoring program through LAC sessions, it was discovered that they had shared ideas, listened to speakers, engaged in professional development, and discovered new ideas.

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The results of the in-depth interviews revealed that teachers considered their assigned material, teacher

attitudes, lack of support from the school head, busy schedules, as difficulties encountered.

The study also found out that teachers utilized the assistance they got from their mentor or coach, facilities and feedback as their facilitating elements.

A teacher's training and workshops are proposed to address problems on the delivery of the assigned topics and teachers' attitude as identified during the interview with the participants.

A proposed provision of support program is presented to address the problem on school heads' support as mentioned by most of the teachers during the interview.

The time management system is proposed to address problems on time, especially the hectic schedules of teachers, as discussed and mentioned by most of them during the in-depth interview.

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

The coaching and mentoring or LAC session plays an important role in the teaching-learning process. It helps the teachers grow and develop professionally through learning new ideas that they can also apply in real-life situations. Effective coaching and mentoring allows teachers to focus on the needs as suggested by data,

allowing improvement efforts to target issues such as academic achievements and advocating for equity among learners.

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Teachers' attitude towards the LAC session has a great impact on the implementation of the program through the mentee's participation and mentor's successful and meaningful delivery of the topic.

Facilities such as ICT equipment and internet connectivity are important in the LAC session. These allow the session to be more meaningful and engaging as the mentees would be able to discover and learn new things.

School head's support has also a great impact in the implementation of the LAC session. The sustainability and development of the program lies upon the budget allocated from the school head. Sharing responsibility and giving in as a school head, encouraging teachers to work together and hold each other accountable for their actions will surely improve teaching and learning.

In the light of the findings and insights arrived in this study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

Teachers and other school personnel need to participate actively during the LAC session, the need for participation will greatly affect teachers' effectiveness as a classroom teacher and as the highway of learning.

The maximum the use or implementation of the time-management program should be encouraged to allow the smooth run of activities. In this way, school heads may be able to fast see and monitor changes in teachers and they could gather evidence for the improvement of student learning.

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Be considerate about what the budget can afford. This can be saddening at times as validating effort requires equal budget intended for the realization of programs.

There should be consideration on the budget allocated for programs so that equal budget is achieved and activities are realized effectively.

Open communication should be encourage in order to establish rapport between teachers and school heads which may lead to students' improved.

A copy of the remediation and enrichment programs should be given to the Schools Division Office, Regional Office, and Central office for them to approve and implement.

If a copy of this recommended remediation and enrichment programs would not be approved, school heads are encouraged to implement these in a local arrangement bases only.

A similar study is also encouraged to be conducted in the future and consider other variables not used nor mentioned in the study.

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ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume V, Issue III

February 2024

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