



EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES OF LEARNERS AND TEACHERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SHIFTING OF CLASSES: BASES FOR POLICY RECOMMENDATION

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative-phenomenological study was conducted to determine the experiences and challenges of learners and teachers in the implementation of shifting of classes as bases for policy recommendation. The study found that the experiences of learners and teachers include balancing time for school and personal matters and difficulty in adapting to the schedule. Numerous challenges emerged such as overlapping tasks or activities for learners, limited class time, lack of sleep, consecutive scheduling of classes, and inconsistent attendance of learners. In facing these challenges, learners and teachers adopted the following coping strategies: proper time management, having positive mindset and adapting appropriate learning and teaching strategies, and regular communication with the learners and parents. A policy recommendation titled Enhanced Implementation of Shifting of Classes with Support Systems was formulated. Suggestions were provided to improve the implementation of shifting of classes.

Keywords: *Experiences and Challenges of Learners and Teachers, Implementation, Shifting of Classes, Policy Recommendation*

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INTRODUCTION

The implementation of class shifting in many public schools across the country is a response to limited classroom space and the high number of enrolled learners. Teachers have to adjust in terms of teaching strategies in dealing with diverse learners and providing their learning needs in both shifts. Since then, the researcher has developed an interest in exploring the experiences and challenges encountered by both learners and teachers in the implementation of class shifting.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2004, titled "Adoption of Double Shift Policy in Public Schools to Address Classroom Shortage". For the school year 2004–2005, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented a double-shift system in the Philippines to accommodate the increasing number of enrollees while maximizing the use of available classrooms and facilities. In 2008, DepEd issued DO 54, s. 2008, reiterating the Policy on Double Shifting of Classes and emphasizing strict compliance, as only a small percentage of schools had adhered to the original 2004 directive. The policy aims to address persistent challenges, particularly classroom shortages and overcrowded class sizes.

A good quality education is crucial in not just improving and developing the lives of the learners and teachers but also the society they belong to. Learners and teachers play a critical role in the successful implementation of this system.

In the implementation of shifting of classes, it's hard to finish one topic in one meeting. A lot of distractions happen inside the classroom that consumes time from the forty-five-

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minute class. These distractions include misbehavior of learners, dirty and unarranged seats inside the classroom, some learners ask permission to go to the clinic or go home because of health reasons, not being able to eat their snacks, unfinished activities from the previous subject, and emergency or unannounced meetings. With these, one lesson can be finished in at least three days. The class schedule is tiring not just for the teachers but also for the learners. Eight subjects come one after another, and it goes continuously with only fifteen-minute break after the fourth subject. It's exhausting because teachers have three to four consecutive classes. Entering the next class while still running out of breath is the scenario for every day. For learners, some of them are already tired during the fifth or sixth subject. Some don't listen and are already out of focus for the class. Their fifteen-minute break is also not enough to buy food and eat inside the room. The morning shift starts very early in the morning, at 6:00 AM. First period teachers' concern is the attendance during their classes. Some learners come late or can't attend their first period classes anymore, but present on their second period classes.

With all these downsides, there are still advantages on having only half-day classes. Morning shift teachers can go home early and do their lesson plans, learning materials, activities, improve their presentations, or have time for themselves to recuperate. For learners, they can also do their assignments, activities, performances tasks or outputs, and have a nap in the afternoon. Similarly, afternoon shift teachers and learners have the whole morning to finish whatever tasks they need to do before going to school.

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Despite the advantages and disadvantages of the shifting of classes, the most important aspect remains the consistent presence of teachers and learners, who come together daily to share knowledge and engage in meaningful learning experiences.

This study aims to explore the experiences and challenges encountered by both learners and teachers in the implementation of the shifting of classes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology used in the study, including the research design, participants, data gathering procedures, research instrument, validation of the instrument, and methods of data analysis. The study aimed to explore the experiences and challenges encountered by learners and teachers in the implementation of shifting classes, which will serve as the basis for developing policy recommendations.

Research Method

This study employed a descriptive-qualitative research method using in-depth interviews. The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with the participants to obtain detailed and meaningful responses. During the interview process, a series of questions was asked to explore the experiences and challenges encountered by learners and teachers in the implementation of shifting classes. The primary objective was to gather their perspectives and personal experiences regarding the difficulties and realities associated with this system.

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Research Design

This study employed the phenomenological approach, as recommended by Fura and Negash (2020). In qualitative research, phenomenology focuses on understanding the meaning of individuals' lived experiences from their own perspectives. It seeks to explore and describe how people perceive and interpret particular phenomena, thereby revealing insights that may challenge existing assumptions or norms. The primary goal of phenomenological research is to gain a deeper understanding of the essence and meaning of lived experiences. Through this approach, researchers are able to generate meaningful insights that highlight the unique and significant aspects of the phenomenon being examined (McLeod, 2024).

Participants of the Study

The participants of this study consisted of twenty-five (25) individuals selected from five (5) secondary schools within the Schools Division of Iloilo City during the 2025–2026 school year. From each school, three (3) learners and two (2) teachers were purposefully chosen to ensure that the study captured both student and educator perspectives on the implementation of shifting of classes. This composition allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and challenges encountered by learners and teachers within the double-shift schedule.

Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was used in selecting the participants in this study. Purposive sampling refers to a group of non-probability sampling techniques in which units are selected because they have characteristics that you need in your sample. In other words, units are

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selected "on purpose" in purposive sampling (Nikolopoulou, 2023). The main selection criteria are three (3) learners and two (2) teachers, for a total of twenty-five (25) participants, in five (5) different secondary schools within Schools Division of Iloilo City.

Research Instrument

A researcher-developed interview guide served as the primary instrument for data collection in this study. The instrument was validated by a panel of experts, and all comments and recommendations provided during the validation process were carefully considered to ensure its appropriateness and clarity. The in-depth interviews were conducted through face-to-face interactions, during which a mobile phone equipped with an audio recorder and camera was used to document the proceedings. All participant responses were subsequently transcribed for analysis.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The researcher-made interview guide was validated by a panel of experts. All comments and recommendations from the validation process were carefully considered and incorporated to enhance the instrument. This validation ensured that the guide effectively elicited the information necessary to address the research questions.

Data Gathering Procedures

A formal letter requesting permission to conduct the research study was submitted to the office of the Schools Division Superintendent of Iloilo City. Upon receiving approval, the researcher presented the letter to the respective school principals for their endorsement, after which qualified learners and teachers were selected to participate in the study. Interviews

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were scheduled at times convenient for each participant. The interview process employed a combination of open-ended, semi-structured, and structured formats, all focused on eliciting responses relevant to the research questions.

Using an in-depth interview approach, all participants' responses were recorded to ensure complete and accurate capture of their input. Prior to the interviews, participants signed a consent form granting permission for audio recording. The researcher subsequently transcribed, organized, and consolidated the data in preparation for analysis.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a widely recognized method for examining qualitative information. This approach involves a careful review of textual data, such as interview transcripts, to identify recurring themes, patterns, and ideas. Through this process, the researcher systematically highlights common concepts and meanings that emerge across participants' responses, providing a comprehensive understanding of their experiences and perspectives (Caulfield, 2023).

After the interviews were conducted, the researcher transcribed the participants' responses verbatim to ensure that the original meaning was preserved. As most responses were given in Hiligaynon, the interview transcripts were first recorded in the participants' native language and subsequently translated into English for analysis.

The researcher conducted multiple thorough reviews of the transcripts to develop a deep understanding of the data. Key words, phrases, and statements relevant to the research objectives were identified and highlighted. These highlighted elements were then

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systematically organized into categories, reflecting common themes and recurring patterns that emerged across participants' responses.

The findings were presented as themes, supported by direct quotations from the participants in both the local language and their English translations. These quotations were used to illustrate the participants' experiences while maintaining strict confidentiality. The final analysis emphasized both the commonalities and variations in responses, offering a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by learners and teachers in the implementation of shifting of classes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study was conducted to determine the experiences and challenges of teachers and learners in the implementation of shifting of classes as bases for policy recommendation in five (5) different secondary schools in the Schools Division of Iloilo City during the school year 2025-2026.

In this study, descriptive-qualitative research design was used under the descriptive method.

The participants of this study consisted of twenty-five (25) individuals selected from five (5) secondary schools within the Schools Division of Iloilo City during the 2025–2026 school year. From each school, three (3) learners and two (2) teachers were purposefully chosen to ensure that the study captured both student and educator perspectives on the implementation of shifting of classes.

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

A mobile phone with audio recorder was used for data gathering and documentation depending upon the permission of the participants.

A panel of experts validated the interview guide. All comments and suggestions relative to the validation of the tool were considered.

All permits especially from the individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools to conduct the interview.

Using the in-depth interview, a mobile phone with audio recorder was provided to completely capture the interviewee's words. The researcher consolidated all of the collected data after series of interviews.

The information gathered was analyzed using thematic approach.

Based on the results of the in-depth interview, it was found out that the following are the experiences of learners and teachers in the implementation of shifting of classes: (1) balancing time for school and personal matters, and (2) difficulty in adapting to the schedule. While the challenges encountered are (1) overlapping tasks or activities, (2) limited class time, (3) lack of sleep, (4) consecutive scheduling of classes, and (5) inconsistent attendance of learners.

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With the challenges mentioned above, learners and teachers coping strategies are (1) proper time management, (2) positive mindset and adapting appropriate learning and teaching strategies, and (3) and regular communication with the learners and parents.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

The experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of both learners and teachers play a vital role in the effective implementation of shifting of classes. The findings of this study reveal that the process of adapting to new learning arrangements is not only shaped by policies but also by the real-life situations of those directly involved. It highlights the need to focus on human experiences during educational changes, since policies alone cannot capture everyday challenges of academic life.

Learners and teachers demonstrated parallel experiences and challenges in the implementation of shifting of classes. Both groups discovered the advantage of shifting of classes and learn to balance school and personal time, but both struggled in adapting to the schedule. On the other hand, learners faced challenges such as overlapping tasks and inadequate sleep. Teachers, meanwhile, struggle with the irregular attendance of learners. Both groups, however, share common difficulties, particularly the constraints of limited class time. These highlight that the impact of shifting of classes is not confined to one group but an issue affecting the entire community, influencing not only in academic performance but also overall well-being.

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Despite the difficulties faced by both learners and teachers, they applied aligned coping strategies that reflect resilience and adaptability. Proper time management, maintaining a positive mindset, and adapting appropriate learning and teaching strategies emerged as key adaptive mechanisms. In addition, teachers emphasized the importance of regular communication with the learners and parents emerged as adaptive mechanisms. These strategies reflect a collective effort to manage disrupted schedules and keep productivity going through tough times.



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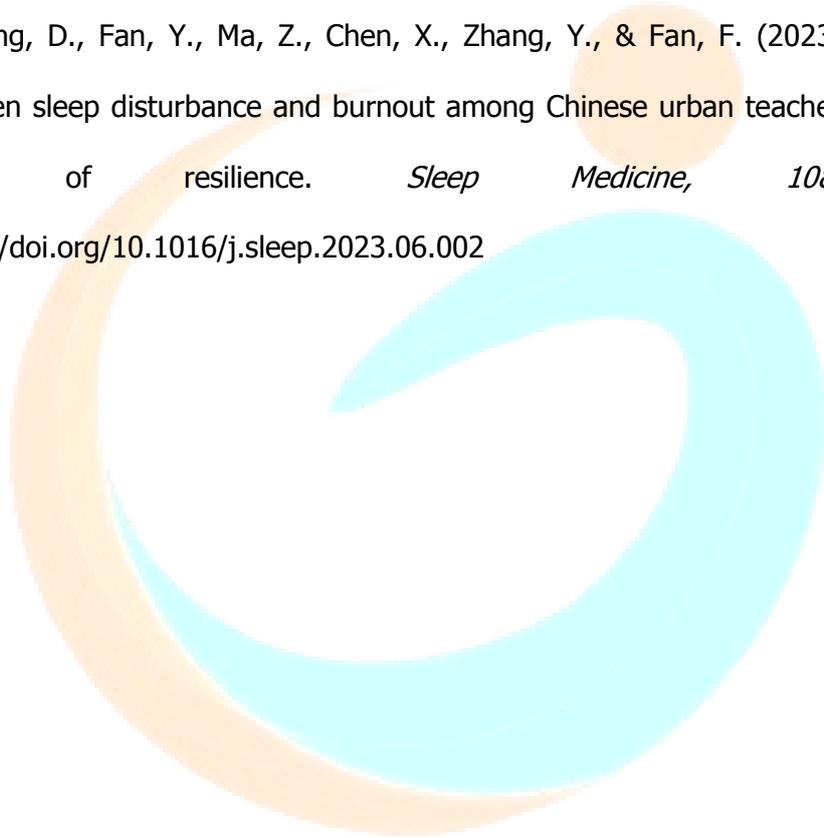
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