



PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES OF MULTI-GRADE TEACHERS: BASIS FOR PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research method using phenomenological research design aimed to formulate a program recommendation on the phenomenological experiences of multi-grade teachers. A researcher-made interview guide was employed to the 12 teachers in four primary schools teaching multi-grade classes in the Schools District of Banate during the school year 2022-2023. The data gathering instruments were subjected to face and content validation by a panel of experts. Thematic analysis was utilized for descriptive data analysis. The experiences of multi-grade teachers were amazing, worth remembering, challenging and inspiring although they have to show patience at all times. On the other hand, multi-grade teachers were struggling, uncertain, hesitant and doubtful. The study revealed that multi-grade teachers manage the multi-tasks and responsibilities attached to their assignment through observing time management strategies, prioritizing their work and learning teaching strategies.

Keywords: *Phenomenological Experiences, Multi-grade Teachers, Program Recommendation*

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INTRODUCTION

Teachers' phenomenological experiences in public schools can take many different forms. The data of the Department of Education for the Consolidated Individual Commitment Review Form (IPCRF) report in 2019-2020 found that the performance level was 73% yet this remains 2% less than the national goal. Several matters discussing many teachers' views, one regarding their motivations to transfer to higher grade levels, make up about 55% of the teaching staff, and the underlying reason for this was identified by looking at their actual grade-level experiences (Lariosa et al., 2022).

Bilbao (2012) stressed that multi-grade teachers should go through life's events, and each of them has developed a unique coping mechanism for handling life's hardships, which could include pressure, disappointments, low self-esteem, incompleteness, dependence, and incapacity to handle challenges in day-to-day activities.

Creative thinking has led nations all around the world to consider alternative approaches to realizing the objective of education. For the benefit of students studying at home under the guidance of their parents or para-teachers, many delivery alternatives or platforms are being designed, introduced, and made available. Likewise, in response to the issues posed by guaranteeing the welfare and well-being of students and teachers, an unprecedented period has prompted every country to design an educational intervention. (Fitria, 2020).

In the Philippines, it is preferred to discuss multi-class teaching, in which a teacher instructs students at least two grade levels in one classroom. It can also entail teaching a

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group of pupils in their mother tongues who come from different ethnic origins and ability levels. (Birch and Lally, 2005).

Teachers' disapproval of multi-grade instruction and remote schools gives them the tools and encouragement they need to go through any challenges. They ought to participate in unique training courses. (Bisnar, 2022).

As a former multi-grade teacher, the researcher believes that the study's findings would enhance the teaching of multi-grades in the schools District of Banate.

Additionally, the researcher would like to determine the multi-grade teachers' phenomenological experiences as basis for program recommendation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This section outlines the research method, research and sampling design, study participants, instruments utilized for data collection, validity of instruments, gathering data procedures, and data analysis employed in the study.

Research Method

This study used a descriptive approach with in-depth interviews as the research methodology to gather data.

According to Boyce and Neale (2006), an in-depth interview is a qualitative research method that entails speaking with a limited number of participants to learn about their viewpoints on a specific concept, development, or circumstance.

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Research Design

The study used qualitative research design using phenomenology.

Smith (2013) defined phenomenology as the study of consciousness structures perceived from the first person. An experience's primary component is its encounter with or knowledge of an item. An object's content or significance, along with the proper enabling conditions, drive an experience toward it.

Phenomenology is the study of subjective interpretations of experience with the aim of understanding how others see the world and how their perspectives may differ from popular ones. Phenomenology is widely utilized in disciplines like psychology, sociology, and social work. It involves interviewing subjects to find out their impressions (Creswell, 2009).

Participants of the Study

The study's participants were all multi-grade teachers in the four (4) identified primary schools in the Schools District of Banate during the school year 2022-2023.

Identified participating schools were Insayawan Primary School, Bobon Primary School, Dugwakan Primary School, and FS Bactung Elementary School in the schools District of Banate during the school year 2022-2023.

Sampling Design

In the study, a purposive sample design was employed. A non-probability sample chosen with the study's objectives and the population's characteristics in mind is known as a

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purposive sample. Other terms for purposeful sampling are selecting, judging, or subjective sampling.

Additionally, the choice of informants is deliberate and based on their capacity to clarify a particular theme, concept, or phenomenon (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007).

Research Instrument

The researcher drew up the interview schedule and guiding questions. This was done in an effort to compile pertinent data regarding the phenomenological experiences of multi-grade school teachers. An open-ended question was used for the interview. The interview questions were given to the participants by the researcher, who then asked pertinent follow-up questions based on their answers.

With the participants' consent, voice and video recorders were also employed for data collection and recording.

A thematic analysis was employed to synthesize the study's findings.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Before the researcher established the legitimacy of the interview date, the adviser, Graduate School dean, and group of experts who were chosen based on their qualifications in research, evaluation, and English— reviewed and modified the research instrument to determine its validity.

The appropriateness, meaningfulness, accuracy, and utility of the conclusions a researcher draws are all considered aspects of validity. The substance and manner of content-

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related evidence of validity must be in line with the specification of variables, a sample of participants to be measured, and help validate the instrument's questions.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher identified the respondents and those who directly participated in this study after receiving consent to conduct the research from the dean of the graduate school. A formal request was issued to the heads of the several schools within the Schools District of Banate, requesting that the study be conducted. Using the interview instructions, the researcher herself carried out the interview. Information was gathered through in-person, in-depth interviews.

Prior to the interview, participants had to sign a waiver or consent form allowing the researcher to carry out the research. Every response and piece of information was noted, gathered, and examined. The data collected throughout the study's conduct were handled with the highest confidentiality and utilized only for this investigation due to ethical concerns.

Data Analyses

The information gathered in the study was properly analyzed using a thematic approach. The themes of the multi-grade teachers' phenomenological experiences as research participants were found using this analytic technique.

The researcher carried out a study using phenomenology that searches for the fundamental elements of a particular occurrence through in-depth interviews with several people who have witnessed the phenomenon. From each participant's explanation of the

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phenomenon, the researcher selects statements that, in his or her opinion, are pertinent and groups them into themes. After that, he or she incorporates these ideas into a story that describes the phenomenon (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The qualitative research study using the phenomenological research design aimed to formulate a program recommendation on the experiences of multi-grade teachers in the Schools District of Banate during the school year 2022-2023.

The study's objective aimed to determine the phenomenological experience of multi-grade teachers as basis for program recommendation.

The study included in-depth interviews and was descriptive in nature. Throughout the interview, the interviewer was given permission to take a seat a good distance away and contemplate the questions that focused on a particular topic. Through the participants' answers to the questions, the primary or essential points of view of the participants on a particular subject in a social context were to be obtained.

The study used phenomenology under qualitative research design. One philosophical method for conducting qualitative research is phenomenology. Phenomenology is commonly used in the social work, sociology, and psychology professions. It involves interviewing subjects to gather their impressions (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2007).

The participants in the study were all teachers teaching multi-grade classes.

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An interview guide created by the researcher was the research tool used in the study. With the participants' consent, voice and video recorders were utilized for data collection and documentation.

An expert group validated the content of the data gathering tools. Thematic analysis was used for descriptive data analysis.

The researcher was able to carry out the research with permission from the subjects. The researcher went directly to the participant's preferred location—the neighborhood, school, or another setting—to conduct the interview.

The following are the findings of the study.

Based on the results of the information gathered during an in-depth interview, the experiences of multi-grade teachers were amazing and worth remembering, patient at all times and challenging and inspiring.

As to the feelings of participants being assigned as multi-grade teachers were struggling, uncertain, hesitant, and doubtful as they're assigned to teach multi-grade levels.

As to how multi-grade teachers manage the multi-tasks and responsibilities attached to their assignment were observing time management strategies, prioritizing their work and learning teaching strategies.

The following conclusions were reached in light of the study's findings:

Multi-grade teachers' experiences in teaching multi-grade classes are flexible. It is the most important thing that a teacher should do. Teachers take measures to properly manage

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everything inside the classroom. Teaching multi-grade classes is both difficult and gratifying.

However, it is immensely fulfilling to support young children in their learning and development.

Teachers' feelings provide support and explanations to the needs of the children. They feel happiness, excitement, exhilaration, and profound satisfaction as a result of being met at a pace that meets their needs and managing the challenging demands of teaching with awareness and fluid adaptability.

Multi-grade teachers require an opportunity to build a strong commitment and dedication to the community who are always there inside the four walls of the classroom waiting for their help and concern for them.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's results, the following recommendations have been made.

Convey the teachers' classroom experience with the learners, giving others the idea of how the learners are likely to perform. Within two years of receiving their training, multi-grade teachers must try to avoid being moved to another school.

Teachers should be adaptable and use a variety of tactics to ensure that all multi-grade learners in the classroom, regardless of any individual differences amongst them, have meaningful and productive learning experiences.

Teachers may also continue to guide and engage each learner around their grade level curriculum while enticing them to collaborate and exchange knowledge.

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The study may be replicated in other school's district in the schools Division of Iloilo to collaborate with the results obtained in the present investigation.



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