**MULTIPLE ANCILLARY FUNCTIONS IN SCHOOLS:**

**STANCE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS**

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Abstract

*This phenomenological inquiry explored the experiences of elementary teachers having multiple ancillary functions in the school particularly in South 2 District, Panabo City Division. In exploring the experiences of the ten (10) participants, I employed the qualitative – phenomenological study of which primary instrument of data gathering was through in- depth interview. Results indicated that the on the participants experiences as elementary teachers in their multiple ancillary functions, the following three themes emerged: time management issues, risks in health, and impact on personal life. Additionally, on the coping mechanisms of elementary teachers with multiple ancillary functions, the emerging themes were practicing proper time management, dealing with academic challenges, and multi-tasking. Lastly, the derived insights drawn from the findings of the study were personal and professional growth, provision of support, and enhancing productivity.* *It implies that teachers' occupational stress is on the rise due to concerns about job safety, lengthy work hours, and low morale. These factors contributing to workplace stress have been shown to have a negative impact on the health of teachers, which in turn affects the health of students and the learning environment. Finally, it indicates additional non-teaching personnel in school. The success of a school in meeting the objectives set out by the Department of Education is dependent on the contributions made by both its teaching and non-teaching staff. In order to provide for the requirements of the students and to supplement the professional tasks and obligations of the teaching staff, schools employ a variety of non-instructional staff.*

***Keywords:*** *multiple ancillary functions, elementary teachers, phenomenology, Panabo City*

 **Introduction**

 “Teachers are expected to reach unattainable goals with inadequate tools. The miracle is that at times they accomplish this impossible task.” – Albert Mohler

The capacity to organize and perform several activities is one of the most amazing features of the human brain system. Humans have always had the ability to do many tasks simultaneously. In recent years, teachers' multitasking has gained more critical attention. Research on multitasking in the current context often identifies a variety of unfavorable results, including increased destruction, impeded learning, and diminished teachers' effectiveness and students' accomplishments.

Globally, particularly in Canada, multitasking is essential for specific professions and an undeniable fact of school and life (Zivcakova, 2015). Multitasking may be an efficient use of time, a reasonably manageable chore when required, or an excellent tool for executing educators' tasks and obligations when well-monitored and supervised (Brasel & Gipps, 2011). However, teachers struggle to manage their time because of the many tasks they need to perform in school.

According to an article from the Manila Times (2017) published in Bataan, Philippines, teachers resort to severe multitasking, even though they recognize that it is tough and confusing to manage two lessons at the same time. The worst-case scenario is when a student wanders into another room and joins in on the activities being conducted there. Since students need to pay attention, it may be challenging for teachers to juggle many responsibilities at once in the classroom. However, having combined courses is challenging for both students and teachers (Ambrocio, 2017). Similar issues were experienced by the elementary teachers in South 2 District, Division of Panabo City. Teachers admitted that they found it difficult to multitask because they experienced fatigue and stress and could hardly manage their time to complete their multiple tasks as classroom teachers and school coordinators.

To better comprehend teachers' multitasking at work, it is crucial to identify the gaps in the available study. The lack of study on multitasking in very distant regions has been noted as a need. It is necessary to do further study on multitasking in rural school communities to determine if and to what extent rural teachers influence multitasking in the workplace. Existing research also demonstrates a dearth of qualitative investigations on teachers' multitasking in modern settings. Although a substantial amount of quantitative research has been conducted on remote locations where teachers have experienced multitasking in teaching, significantly less research has been conducted on multitasking in contemporary settings, particularly in urban areas (SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2016). This research aimed to understand teachers' perspectives, experiences, and thoughts on multitasking in the workplace.

The researcher has not come across a study that dealt with the experiences of elementary teachers having multiple ancillary functions in the locality. Very little study has been conducted explicitly on teachers who multitask. The fact that teachers must have rendered only six (6) hours of actual classroom teaching and two (2) hours of work-related tasks (DO 16, s. 2009) but some teachers experienced more and heavier tasks at work suggests that more research is required to address the burdens of the majority of teachers at work.

The findings of the research were also used to enhance various mechanisms through the effective delegation of tasks to teachers. The findings of this research would benefit the officials of DepEd Division of Panabo City by giving them enough information obtained from the standpoints of the participants about the focus of this investigation.

*Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the experiences of elementary teachers having multiple ancillary functions in the school, particularly in South 2 District, Panabo City Division. This also investigated their coping mechanisms adopted as well as the insights drawn from the findings of this study. The purpose of this study was to observe, listen, and comprehend the untold stories of teachers as they narrate their experiences and how they were able to cope and stand up to the challenges they faced, how they handled their class, the steps and decisions they look forward to preventing multitasking of teachers, how they managed their time and effort, and how they were rewarded for their extra effort exerted to their students.

Research Questions

1. What are the experiences of teachers with multiple ancillary functions?

2. How do teachers cope with the challenges of having multiple ancillary functions?

3. What are the insights that can be derived from the findings of this study?

Findings of this study are beneficial especially for the following identified stakeholders.

*DepEd Officials.* The findings of this research would be of use to the officials of the DepEd since they may be used as a guide in developing intervention programs and methods to reduce the amount of multitasking that teachers are required to do in public elementary and secondary schools.

*School Administrators.* This research would assist school administrators in developing strategies and interventions to prevent teachers from engaging in multitasking so that they may be more effective and productive. Additionally, school administrators may come to recognize that teachers' multitasking might have detrimental effects on the teachers involved. Through this research, students may realize that teachers may be more effective and efficient if they are not overburdened with work and that they can be a productive person in a school learning environment with positive inputs.

*Teachers.* This research would mostly benefit teachers who are required to multitask in the profession. This study will provide them with a greater understanding of how to deal and handle the task assigned to them, as well as what steps to take, enjoy and dwell positively on the task, and think positively that for the school to succeed and the students to be well-equipped, the teachers must work harmoniously and religiously for the students' and society's welfare.

*Future Researchers.* This study would somehow help future researchers who would conduct a study on topics related to multitasking of teachers, as this would guide them on what areas of multitasking of teachers needs further research and investigation.

The following terms were defined operationally for clarity and understanding.

*Multiple Ancillary Functions in Schools*: In this study, this refers to the various tasks of teachers aside from being classroom teachers performing various school-related roles and responsibilities like school coordinators, school planning team, subject area coordinators, and the like particularly in South 2 District, Division of Panabo City.

Review of Significant Literature

*Teachers with Ancillary Multiple Functions.* The complexity and intensity of teachers' jobs is regarded as growing. Reasons for this include social changes, reformed and expanded job tasks, and the changing moral and normative nature of teacher work, as well as teachers' experiences with multitasking and constant work-related thought. Teachers are experts at multitasking. In addition to being accountable for student learning, teachers also play the role of surrogate parent, disciplinarian, evaluation expert, and mentor administrator (Zivcakova, 2015).

Moreover, teachers are responsible for shaping human minds holistically; their duties and responsibilities do not end on preparing lesson plans, administering grading tests, and documenting learners’ progress, but most especially on propagating each human soul that lasts for a lifetime. Teachers' jobs extend beyond the four corners of the classroom, requiring them to spend more than the regular working hours and, in worse cases, demand teachers' time and resources (Marmol, 2019; Sarabia & Collantes, 2020).

Teachers are overburdened with teaching and ancillary duties such as department head, curriculum head, program coordinator, or focal person. The Department of Education (DepEd) categorized teachers into classroom teachers without ancillary functions and teachers with ancillary functions. Some teachers have six-hour teaching days and two-hour teaching and classroom-related duties. As stipulated in the Magna Carta for Teachers or the Republic Act 4670, Section 13, teachers engaged in actual classroom instruction shall not require to render more than six hours of primary teaching in a day to ensure their personal and professional welfare (Alegado, 2018; David, Albert & Vizmanos, 2019).

Ancillary services are defined as responsibilities assumed by teachers outside of the classroom for improved school performance, such as home visits, feeding programs, skill remediation, enhancement activities, coaching various contests, coordinators for multiple areas, counseling pupils, and mentoring co-teachers. However, teachers encountered problems relative to the delivery of ancillary services because of time constraints, unfinished competencies, and financial woes (Abarro, 2018).

The recurrently overworked state of public-school teachers in the Philippines is well-known as the workload is limited to teaching and other non-teaching tasks. Given this workload, actual teaching is increasingly being sidelined along with many other responsibilities and roles that teachers play. In fact, a recent study of Retubada in 2014 mentioned that teachers in Davao del Sur, Region XI, had encountered problems with multiple ancillary functions. The Department of Education vowed to lessen teachers’ workload; however, this remained unclear. On this note, teachers also experience positive gains from their experiences with ancillary functions, which challenge them to aspire more advancement for themselves (Retubada, 2014; David, Albert & Vizmanos, 2019; Mateo, 2018; Into & Gempes, 2018).

Multitasking is required of teachers, who are expected to be available and responsive to the requirements and expectations of superiors. Teachers must be productive while simulating the variety of tasks and responsibilities that result from multitasking in order to maintain the steady flow of work that results from the frequent switching of activities. According to Goodrac (2015), in the area of education, improving the capacity to swiftly switch between activities might lead teachers to acquire and hone the many abilities required to effectively manage a deluge of information and ideas. However, according to Lemar (2012), practice is essential for developing the analytic and critical thinking abilities required to prioritize and manage various activities.

As a counterargument to Procast's (2014) assertion that people cannot concentrate on numerous things at once, Tropall (2016) argues that humans are not like computers, which can perform multiple operations with the necessary concentration on each one. To perform successfully, one must be able to concentrate on the job at hand and delegate extraneous inputs to lower levels of awareness. In reality, as emphasized by Shutti (2014), attention and interventions must be given to teachers' multitasking, rather than their rapid switching of attention from one activity to another, which may be damaging to education since instructors cannot perform their best work if their concentration is elsewhere.

Thousands of teachers are evaluating their job, which includes their relationships with students, colleagues, and the community, their tools and approaches, their rights and obligations, the standards they use, their initial teacher training, and their professional development. Educators are changing themselves and their careers to better serve students (Levin, 1993; Wijetunge, 2017).

Administrators must be proactive in assisting teachers with their workloads while encouraging collaborative responsibility and ownership in order to minimize the negative effects of unneeded teacher stress (Don et al., 2017; Martin, 1992). Nevertheless, according to research performed by Sapp, Boldrini, and Aprea (2017), teachers saw a variety of ancillary jobs as a contributor to their well-being. On an emotional level, it seemed that combining teaching with another ancillary duty helped teachers maintain perspective on school circumstances and difficulties. Moreover, participation in a range of professional tasks was offered as a source of strength and a means of remaining motivated by a diversity of inputs.

However, as Tolentino (2021) emphasizes, teachers must accomplish all assigned jobs successfully and efficiently, regardless of whether they pertain to classroom activities or school-based obligations. Their knowledge and dedication to the common good will have a substantial impact on our society. Time management, motivation, empowerment, and thankfulness are all crucial components for aiding teachers in fulfilling all of their responsibilities. Positivity and a good attitude about work will help them achieve their sworn duty as shapers of the next generation.

According to Into and Gempes's (2018) research, the majority of participants obtained positive results from their experiences, which pushed them to seek further personal growth. Themes such as endurance, tenacity, risk-taking ability, and perseverance surfaced. Participants' coping techniques included good planning and time management, motivation, and positivism, maintaining a work-life balance, and inspiration and support. Despite the harsh reality of life as teachers, who often struggle to juggle several responsibilities, they stay positive, believe they can grow, and have trust in their talents.

Another experience based on the findings of Leite et al. (2018) suggested that instructors are encouraged to contextualize the national curriculum in their day-to-day teaching and learning activities in order to promote academic performance and total growth among students. However, teachers identified obstacles related to the establishment of a required national curriculum that must be completed in order to sit for national examinations, as well as the length of academic programs. Despite the constraints, teachers recognized the advantages of contextualizing the curriculum, particularly in terms of raising students' motivation to study.

In the context of the Philippine educational system, the Department of Education classifies classroom teachers into two categories: teachers with multiple ancillary functions and teachers without multiple ancillary functions who are classroom advisers and non-classroom advisers. This assignment job is without any basis of their expertise handling the task, as long as he/she can execute the assigned task given. Furthermore, this means that aside from being a classroom teacher, he or she has other classroom-related functions. Some of them are designated as Grade level coordinators, Club Moderator, Guidance Counselor, Clinic in-charge, School Statistician, and Canteen manager among others. Considering their expertise handling multiple tasks, multiple ancillary functions of teachers often lead towards losing their motivation, satisfaction, and competencies, and even feeling burnout (Howard & Johnson, 2014) quoted in the study of Parham and Godon (2021).

Further, they mentioned that a person is engaged for multiple ancillary functions because of the promotion. One of the most impressive aspects of the human cognitive system is the ability to manage and execute multiple tasks. However, multiple ancillary functions of teachers have garnered increased critical attention in recent years. Research on multitasking in the contemporary setting, as stated by Alquizar (2018), asserts that a large number of unfavorable poor output outcomes exacerbated destruction, inhibited learning, and impacted the effectiveness of teachers and learners. As a result of their disappointment, Terry (2016) mentions that schools are grappling with how to meet crucial aspects that are important in improving educational quality (Jackson, Schwab & Schuler, 1986). This highlights the potential for negative effects on job satisfaction, quality of life, and work performance. Furthermore, scholars have questioned the nature and characteristics of teachers with multiple ancillary functions (Zickar et al., 2014).

In the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), the study of Retubada (2014) as cited by Gloria and Ann (2018), University of Mindanao states that multiple ancillary functions of teachers is one of the problems encountered by the schools in Davao Del Sur in Region XI particular. Likewise, in the Ministry of Basic Higher Technical Education (MBHTE) particularly, in the Division of Maguindanao-1: The teachers while performing their main function as classroom advisers are also given extra non-teaching functions that can consume most of their times. This is called "multiple ancillary functions" as their additional workloads since there is a need to assign these teachers as subject area coordinators, club moderators, cluster subject area. They are also coaches in different contests in the division, regional and even at national level without considering the expertise in the field. As a matter of fact, very limited research has been conducted specifically on multitasking teachers as mentioned by Gloria and Ann (2018). The fact that teachers must have rendered only six (6) hours of actual classroom teaching and two (2) hours work-related task as indicated in the DO 16, s. 2009.

However, teachers need to possess attitudes and skills to cope with the challenges as teachers with multiple ancillary functions to serve the school better. Schaufeli et al (2022) have stated that a person’s work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, and work-related state of mind characterized by endurance, dedication, and absorption.

However, it has been observed that teachers who the school empowered were crossing the lines into managerial roles but were not being compensated for their increased responsibilities. It was further noticed that when teachers experienced difficulties in their personal relationships, these difficulties were caused by their tiredness and a lack of energy due to multiple workloads or ancillary functions (Peters & Pearce, 2017).

Extracurricular activities are programs and events carrying no academic credits organized by the designated school moderator together with students to showcase their interests and abilities, subject to the direction and supervision of the school. The educational process is not only coined inside the classroom but also outside the school. This is truly a learning process since it is not only coined inside the classroom (Retubada, 2018). Moreover, the major aim of these activities is to stimulate and develop the habits of engaging in worthwhile personality building and leisure time experiences. They are important because they make use of innate drives and urge students by directing these free activities along educationally worthwhile channels. They also unify the school together with their colleagues and foster the spirit of cooperation (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2018).

High expectations are set for teachers in coming up with very high job performance. A country’s educational agency usually demands the quality job performance of its teachers, and it has a very high measure pertaining to loyalty, patriotism, dedication, hard work, and commitment from its teachers (Ubom & Joshua, 2018). Further, the roles and contexts of educations’ motivational methods and tools cannot be underemphasized because high motivation enhances productivity, which is naturally in the interests of all educational systems (Ololube, 2019).

Leading the way are thousands of teachers who are rethinking every part of their jobs, their relationship with students, colleagues, and the community, the tools and techniques they employ, their rights and responsibilities, the form and content of the curriculum, what standards to set and how to assess whether they are being met, their preparation as teachers, their ongoing professional development, and the very structure of the schools in which they work. In short, teachers are reinventing themselves and their occupation to better serve schools and students (Wijetunge, 2021). In order to better serve the school, teachers need to possess attitudes and skills in order to cope with the challenges as teachers with multiple ancillary functions (Schaufeli et al., 2022). A person's work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, and work-related state of mind that is characterized by endurance, dedication, and absorption.

However, the article published by Pearson et al. (2018) mentioned that teachers who were empowered by the school were crossing the lines into managerial roles but were not being compensated for their increased responsibilities. It was further revealed in the study entitled "Relationships and Resilience: A Role for School Principal" that when teachers experienced difficulties in their personal relationships, these difficulties were caused by their tiredness and a lack of energy due to multiple workload or ancillary functions (Peters & Pearce, 2017).

In the study of Zickar et al. (2014), they stated “role conflict” for teachers with multiple ancillary functions happens if the primary and secondary jobs are very dissimilar. An employee is more likely to face role conflict and feel less satisfied, since more efforts are required to shift among the different roles and to adapt roles and behaviors to the different job demands. To prevent outcomes of excessive stress of teachers, administrators need to be proactive and assist in managing the workload while, at the same time, fostering collaborative responsibility and ownership (Don et al., 2016). However, on the study conducted by Sappa et al., (2015), multiple ancillary functions were perceived by the teachers as a factor supporting their well-being. At the emotional level, combining teaching with another ancillary function seemed to support teachers in stepping back from situations encountered at school and keeping problems in perspective. In addition, being engaged in different professional activities was described as a source of strength and a way to remain continuously stimulated by different inputs. At the instructional level, various advantages were associated with the opportunity to multiple ancillary functions of teaching since they experience stronger credibility in front of the students.

 Multitasking as Antecedents for Multiple Functions in School

The Department of Education is an uncommon place of employment for multitasking teachers. Given the practice of tenure and loosely connected organizational structure of academic excellence of the learners and becoming internationally competitive (Taylor, 2012), they vary from other multitasking settings in the workplace. Some contend that these businesses are especially susceptible to fostering a culture of multitasking in the workplace (Weshues, 2006).

Research reveals that DepEd discourages multitasking in the workplace (Lester, 2013), yet owing to a lack of teachers in hinterlands and isolated locations, this behavior continues to develop. DepEd's distinctive feature is that it provides extra incentives and recognizes the efforts of teachers who multitask in the workplace. There is evidence that multitasking by teachers in the workplace, if given the chance and if their efforts are recognized, may have good effects on teachers and boost their performance and students' accomplishments (Mayo, 2013).

As a consequence of corporate culture and off-putting managerial practices, teachers often multitask in the job, according to research. Incorrect and unfair allocation of teachers' work and responsibilities by school administrators may be a key aspect of the educational system. When teachers are required to multitask in the workplace, they may be unable to function and perform effectively as a consequence of their overburden. This may result in school disorder and turmoil, which reflects the quality of the school. It may be attributed to schools' lack of clarity on expectations and incentives, and these chaotic settings cause stress for teachers and administrators (Nordsdtrom, 2012).

Sandik (2012) discovered that the incidence of multitasking among teachers in the workplace was marginally more in the Philippines than in Europe, which may be attributed to the unequal allocation of tasks and responsibilities. According to Namie (2009), the prevalence of multitasking among teachers in the workplace is at least 13 percent. In contrast, second research done by Igos (2013) found that urban teachers multitask less often than their rural counterparts. There is some indication that the incidence of multitasking among teachers varies from school to school.

Teachers in rural and distant places have been recognized as multitasking in the job. An Irish survey revealed that teachers acknowledged multitasking at work (James, 2012). Despite the fact that school administrators have long been acknowledged as the source of teachers' multitasking, this is not the case. Studies on concerns of school administrators have focused mostly on the problem from the viewpoint of educators, which prompts teachers to engage in workplace multitasking (Jacobs, 2012).

School leaders can be perpetrators of teachers' multitasking in the classroom and may initiate the discouragement of teachers' multitasking, but they also have influence on teachers' multitasking in the classroom, creating and implementing prevention programs and policies to be implemented in the school system. Most school administrators do not think that teachers multitask in the classroom, which may explain why school administrators are more likely to take no action in response to reported cases of teachers multitasking in the workplace than to seek to address the matter directly (Figel, 2013).

According to study, it is preferable to finish one activity before moving on to the next. This is referred to as working in "batches" or "chunks." Multitasking has numerous negative effects: you are more likely to make mistakes, and you are less likely to notice errors when you are not giving a job your entire attention. Multitasking overloads the brain with inputs and instructions (De Vogli, 2015). This causes tension and may potentially have adverse health effects. If your brain is already overwhelmed with numerous activities, it is far less likely to absorb information that you are not actively seeking. Switching back and forth diminishes the brain's capacity to encode experiences completely, so our recollections of multitasking events become hazy.

According to Bonilla (2015), do basic activities concurrently; we have an abundance of easy tasks; thus multitasking will have little effect on our brain. To make things exciting, most of the activities we do are routine and sometimes monotonous; thus, adding an intriguing activity to a routine task may help us complete it more quickly. Helps manage turmoil; urban life is hectic and chaotic; you are often interrupted and distracted; multitasking will assist you in staying on course. Completion of numerous tasks; in addition to completing one assignment, it is always reassuring to know that all of your chores have been addressed to some level. Maintains adaptability; multitasking enables simultaneous use of several technologies, which keeps individuals of all ages adaptive, current, and employable (Bardshaw, 2012).

When individuals do many tasks simultaneously, are they more productive or waste time? Multitasking may be less effective, particularly for complex or new jobs, since it requires more time to switch mental gears between each activity. A novel model for executive mental control in which switching activities requires the brain to make two distinct preparatory judgments. The first strategy, termed goal shifting, is selecting a new task. The second, rule activation, requires the brain to deactivate the cognitive rules of the previous task and activate the cognitive rules of the current one (Brodmann, 2012).

Shillingstad and McGlamery's (2019) research on teachers navigating multiple leadership roles in the United States revealed that teachers should support and mentor their recruits by providing individualized support, modeling successful practices, and continually investing in career advancement and development. In this study, teachers were given the opportunity to share their experiences as teacher leaders, leaders, mentors, supervisors, and role models. While the findings of this study supported those of the literature review on the qualities of leaders and teacher leaders, it is necessary to triangulate the data further by studying questionnaire responses and other sources. The next step in this study will be to conduct focus group interviews with the CAs to further understand their responses.

In Tanzania, however, Lawrent (2019) found that the government's failure to engage support staff prompted teachers to do extra duties in addition to teaching. The government's lack of commitment to remunerating instructors for teaching quality increased teachers' interest in other revenue-generating techniques. Participation in these non-teaching activities in and out of school impacted teachers' professional identities, which in turn influenced their perceptions of teaching competency. These findings imply that, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, the Tanzanian government may enhance the well-being of teachers by recruiting additional support staff to help teachers and students.

As a consequence of this, mentors fill three distinct roles: that of learner, teacher, and field-based mentor. A great deal of progress has been made. Teachers need advice on how to educate people, the responsibilities that teachers play are vital, finding alliance schools is critical, and putting teachers in professional positions strengthens the curriculum (Sanchez et al., 2017).

When teachers are tasked with bolstering a school and enhancing student performance and learning, professional development should take precedence. Teacher-leaders should be provided with training, seminars, workshops, and conventions, among other things, to boost their morale in carrying out their responsibilities as teacher-leaders. In the absence of formal training and professional development, teacher-leaders may contribute to teachers' failure to function as school leaders (Alegado, 2018).

The Department of Education (2008) as cited in Nayra (2019) explains about loads and assignments of public-school teachers. A teacher with six (6) hours of actual classroom instruction and/or similar teaching-related tasks and responsibilities must then engage in the remaining two (2) hours of work on- or off-site to complete the eight-hour workday by doing the following: 1) planning of lesson plans, action/work plans, teaching content, evaluation/assessment tools/rubrics; 2) preparation and checking of activities 3) doing research; 4) attending lectures, meetings, and related programs; 5) coaching students including home visits; 6) consultations and conferences with parents; 7) providing coordination events and recognized neighborhood social services; 8) participating in school facility and infrastructure repair and development.

 Theoretical Lens

According to the Job enlargement theory of Buhler (1990), which defines the usage of "horizontal" abilities or a variety of ancillary responsibilities requiring skills of equivalent complexity and responsibility, this is the case. In education, this may include creating additional work in addition to the normally allocated duty (Firestone, 1991). According to studies on the outcomes of work extension programs, motivation is increased when additional tasks are interdependent (Wong & Campion, 1991). Moreover, it was discovered that job extension is closely correlated with high levels of satisfaction (Campion & McClelland, 1993).

Multitasking may be described as the execution of several tasks coordinated by a serial cognitive processor and dispersed over different processing resources (Anderson et. al., 2004). The difference helps to explain the split between memory-related interference and procedural interference in multitasking, as well as how practice and learning may lead to proceduralization and a shift in cognitive resource use.

According to Bardshaw (2012), teachers who multitask are less capable of adequately managing their work habits, less productive, less creative, and more prone to get sidetracked by distractions. According to Schumacher (2011), multitasking may be the greatest hindrance to teacher efficiency in the workplace. By limiting their multitasking, instructors may not only increase their productivity but also get more awareness and insight into problem areas. When multitasking is decreased, instructors may comprehend the true state of work and notice the bottlenecks and take efforts to alleviate them (Lee, 2013).

This research is examined through the perspective of Meyer and Kieras (2000), whose study of teachers' multitasking ability dates back many decades and encompasses a wide body of material on the possibility for processing bottlenecks at different phases of perceptual, cognitive, and motor processing (Taatgen, 2007). This approach stressed the significance of diverse processes as exemplars of unique task domain resources. Further work crystallized into similar but independent ideas of processor multitasking in which processes using diverse resources may run concurrently without interference, although resource conflicts are possible (Salvucci, 2007).

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework which represents the researcher’s synthesis of literature in caricature form on how to explain a phenomenon. It maps out the actions required during the study given his previous knowledge of other researchers’ points of view and his observations about research. In this study, it speaks more on the experiences of elementary teachers having multiple ancillary functions, their coping mechanisms adopted, and the insights that can be derived from their experiences particularly at public elementary schools in South 2 District, Division of Panabo City.

**Methods**

In this chapter, I present key sections including research design, research participants, ethical considerations, the role of the researcher, data collection, data analysis, and the trustworthiness of the study.

 Philosophical Assumptions of the Study

As a qualitative researcher, my work and study were guided by a collection of viewpoints and philosophical assumptions. I actively explored these ideas in my research, focusing on examining the experiences of primary school teachers in South 2 District, Panabo City Division, who had several supplementary tasks. Prior to commencing the study, I identified the specific subject I intended to address in detail and chose to explore various theoretical concepts or methodologies related to qualitative research to enhance the precision of my endeavors.

During my qualitative investigation, I acknowledged and embraced the study's fundamental philosophical assumptions, incorporating my perspective and influencing the research trajectory. Creswell (2015) identified four philosophical assumptions:

*Ontology.* According to Creswell (2015), reality, as demonstrated by the participants of the study, was diverse and subjective. The ontological inquiry pertained to how the qualitative researcher perceived reality. In this research scenario, participants constructed reality, resulting in multiple realities, encompassing those of the researcher, the participants, and the audience or reader interpreting the study. I relied extensively on the perspectives and interpretations of the research participants, using illustrative themes and lengthy quotations that reflected their statements and provided evidence of multiple points of view.

 *Epistemology.* Citing Guba and Lincoln (1985), Creswell (2015) explained that the epistemological postulate of the researcher was to reduce the distance between the researcher and the subject of the investigation. This implied engaging in interpersonal communication, shadowing professionals, and obtaining a position of "insider status." Through this research, I developed a rapport with the instructors and, by maintaining continuous connections, comprehended their institutional experiences.

 *Axiology.* Creswell (2015), citing Guba and Lincoln (1985), emphasized the researcher's role in lessening the barrier between the researcher and the topic of inquiry and achieving "insider status" through interpersonal conversation and observation. This study allowed me to establish a connection with the teachers, gaining insights into their institutional experiences through ongoing ties.

 *Rhetoric.* Creswell (2015) explained that Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that the investigator employed distinctive language and personal, literary anecdotes during the investigation. Consequently, I used terms like "credibility," "transferability," "dependability," and "confirmability" instead of "external validity," "generalizability," "internal validity," and "objectivity" when writing the texts for this research in my own voice. Additionally, I imposed restrictions on the quantity of words used, employing qualitative terminology like "explore" in composing objective statements and research inquiries.

 Qualitative Assumptions

In this research, a phenomenological methodology was utilized. According to Gupeteo (2014) and Husserl (1970), the objective of phenomenological research is to describe phenomena rather than provide explanations, operating from fundamental principles devoid of preconceived notions or preconceptions. Phenomenologists investigate the consequences of a condition or event by analyzing how individuals interpret them based on personal experiences, examining occurrences through the perspectives of those directly involved. Willis (2007), as cited by Bound (2011), asserts that phenomenology prioritizes understanding individuals' self-perceptions and their surroundings.

This research investigated the experiences of elementary school educators fulfilling various ancillary roles within the institution. The primary objective was to elicit the insights, challenges, and learning experiences of public-sector elementary school instructors in the Panabo City Division.

Research Design

Utilizing qualitative phenomenological research, this investigation aimed to reveal the unique viewpoints of individuals who experienced identical concepts or occurrences. Following Creswell's (2013) guidance, I formulated a study design to conceptualize the phenomenon effectively. To provide a comprehensive understanding, I included tables elaborating on the scope of data gathering and the obstacles educators faced while juggling multiple supplementary responsibilities. Personal anecdotes were also included in the concluding epilogue to provide insights beneficial to public school teachers, school administrators, and the Department of Education.

Research Participants

Participants were selected based on specific criteria: (1) holding a permanent teaching position as Teacher I at the elementary level, (2) handling two or more school coordinatorships, and (3) having experienced challenges related to multiple ancillary functions. Both male and female participants willing to participate in this study were included. The number of participants was sufficient to provide information for identifying and generating themes characterized by narrative research.

 Ethical Considerations

This study aimed to investigate the experiences of elementary school instructors in South 2 District, Panabo City Division, who held multiple ancillary responsibilities within the school. I gained valuable lessons and insights regarding the performance and understanding of instructors' behaviors through their experiences. Ensuring the safety of participants and practicing confidentiality regarding their identities and responses was of the utmost priority. Ethical considerations adhered to principles stated in the 1979 Belmont Report: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

*Respect for Persons.* This entailed ensuring all individuals could exercise independent decision-making and receive the utmost regard from others. Participants were informed about the research aims and objectives, ensuring transparency and voluntary participation. Sensitive information was handled with care, and participants had the option to withdraw at any time.

*Beneficence.* This principle involved positively treating individuals by honoring their decisions, ensuring no harm, and protecting their overall welfare. I aimed to mitigate potential hazards or damage and maximize the study's anticipated advantages. Participants were educated on enhanced educational strategies and assured of utmost care and security.

 *Justice.* Ensuring equitable treatment and appropriate recognition of participants' contributions was paramount. Efforts were made to avoid exploiting vulnerable individuals, and interviews were conducted with respect to participants' convenience and comfort. Participants received a token of appreciation and support for participation-related expenses.

 Role of the Researcher

As an investigator, I assumed various responsibilities, including ensuring ethical rigor, establishing trust with participants, recording and transcribing interviews, translating responses, and analyzing data. Ethical dilemmas such as privacy concerns, establishing transparent relationships, and preventing misrepresentation were addressed throughout the research process.

Data Collection

Data were gathered through virtual interviews, adhering to IATF guidelines during limited in-person interaction. Authorization was obtained from relevant authorities, and participants were recruited using purposive sampling. Virtual orientation sessions emphasized the significance of participation, and a validated interview guide was employed to collect insights and opinions. The researcher moderated interviews, transcribed responses, and ensured data accuracy through continuous review.

 Data Analysis

The analysis involved handling, reading, coding, describing, classifying, analyzing, and representing data. Thematic analysis was employed, moving from broad to specific categories, with themes identified based on similar fundamental concepts. Environmental triangulation ensured the validity of findings by assessing environmental factors that might have influenced the data.

 Analytical Framework

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), qualitative data analysis methodologies were divided into two categories: methods driven by an epistemological or theoretical position and methods independent of theory and epistemology, such as thematic analysis. I transcribed data, took notes, and created thematic grids to capture significant spoken words and identify themes.

The thematic analysis method consisted of six phases:

1. Familiarizing with data,

2. Generating initial codes,

3. Searching for themes,

4. Reviewing themes,

5. Defining and naming themes,

6. Writing the report.

 Trustworthiness of the Study

To prove the reliability of the research, I ensured compliance with its theoretical framework and provided a comprehensive explanation of data collection and analysis steps. The study adhered to criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

*Credibility.* This was addressed through verification of experiences, in-depth interviews, and collecting multiple layers of data from each participant to produce comprehensive and trustworthy data.

*Transferability.* Detailed descriptions of the research process and background information ensured that findings could be replicated in different contexts.

*Dependability.* Comprehensive descriptions of methodology and results, along with the depth and breadth of data from interviews and observations, ensured consistency and repeatability of findings.

 *Confirmability.* Objectivity was maintained by focusing on participants' responses and implementing an audit trail for data verification. Triangulation, transcription, and member verification further validated the study's outcomes.

**Results**

This chapter presents the exploration regarding the stance of elementary teachers in their multiple ancillary functions in schools. A qualitative framework was utilized to design this study, employing methods common to phenomenological research for data collection and analysis. The outcomes reflect the elementary teachers’ experiences and insights into their lived experiences.

 *Experiences of Elementary Teachers in Multiple Ancillary Functions in Schools*

After analyzing the responses of the participants about their experiences as elementary teachers with multiple ancillary functions, three themes emerged: time management issues, health risks, and impact on personal life.

 Time Management Issues

Participants revealed that managing their time is one of their main challenges in performing multiple ancillary functions. These responsibilities demand more time, making it difficult for them to manage their time well.

IDI-01 expressed concerns about time management:

(For me, my experience as an elementary teacher having multiple ancillary functions especially at first was really memorable since I really had a hard time adjusting, but since there is a need for you to perform your duties and functions, you have no choice but to adjust.)

IDI-03 highlighted the effort required:

“Lack of time management because sometimes we should make more effort and take time to perform and facilitate our different responsibilities for us to catch up since there are other tasks also.”

IDI-06 emphasized the difficulty of balancing teaching and ancillary functions:

(What was most difficult was time management since you have to teach also aside from the various ancillary functions.)

These statements illustrate the significant struggle teachers face in managing their time to complete various tasks associated with their ancillary functions.

Supporting Literature:

Marmol (2019) and Sarabia & Collantes (2020) highlighted the extensive responsibilities of teachers, which go beyond the classroom and require additional time and resources.

Abarro (2018) discussed the challenges teachers face in delivering ancillary services due to time constraints and other issues.

Health Risks

Participants also reported that their health was affected by the stress of managing multiple tasks. The physical toll was evident in their responses.

IDI-05 noted:

(Because of stress, we cannot get away with getting sick or experience an increase in blood pressure as a result of working hard to complete all tasks.)

IDI-01 shared:

(Sometimes, you will not be able to sleep on time since you are trying to complete your work which makes it possible for you to become sick.)

IDI-03 mentioned:

(Sometimes because of being busy, I forget to eat on time because of the number of work to be done.)

These accounts reveal the adverse health effects experienced by teachers due to their workload, including lack of sleep and missed meals.

Supporting Literature:

De Vogli (2015) discussed the negative effects of multitasking, including increased mistakes and stress, potentially leading to adverse health outcomes.

Into and Gempes (2018) noted that participants in their study developed coping mechanisms such as good planning and time management to deal with the challenges of multitasking.

Impact on Personal Life

Participants expressed how their personal lives were affected by the multitude of tasks they needed to perform due to their ancillary functions.

IDI-02 shared:

“Before I was given multiple ancillary functions, I have a lot of time to spend with my kids, but now my personal life and my personal time is used to finish these responsibilities.”

IDI-03 stated:

 (There are times that instead of sleeping and spending your own time to pamper yourself, you spend it instead in finishing your tasks.)

IDI-04 added:

(You are required to finish your reports since it is your responsibility as your ancillary function therefore, you really need to finish it even during weekends.)

These statements indicate that teachers’ personal lives are significantly impacted, with personal time often sacrificed to meet work obligations.

Supporting Literature:

Peters & Pearce (2017) highlighted that increased responsibilities without proper compensation can lead to difficulties in personal relationships and increased stress.

Pearson et al. (2018) emphasized that teachers empowered with additional roles often face challenges in balancing personal and professional lives due to the lack of adequate support and compensation.

Coping Mechanisms of Elementary Teachers in Their Multiple Ancillary Functions

The analysis revealed three themes about how elementary teachers cope with multiple ancillary functions: practicing proper time management, dealing with academic challenges, and multi-tasking.

Practicing Proper Time Management

Participants managed their time well to cope with their responsibilities, such as submitting reports on time and waking up early.

IDI-01 stated:

“I manage my time, I wake up early and also being responsible in all the tasks and reports given to me so that I can pass it on time.”

IDI-03 added:

(In order to cope, I budget my time so that my time will not be wasted and I can work on a lot of things in a short period of time.)

IDI-04 emphasized:

 (I swear it is not easy that is why you really need to manage your time properly.) These responses indicate that managing time properly is a crucial coping mechanism for teachers handling multiple responsibilities.

Supporting Literature:

Tolentino (2021) emphasized the importance of time management, motivation, empowerment, and thankfulness for teachers to fulfill their responsibilities effectively. Retubada (2018) noted that extracurricular activities, which require proper time management, play a significant role in the overall educational process.

Dealing with Academic Challenges

Participants coped by ensuring they were prepared to face academic challenges, often through continuous learning and attending relevant seminars.

IDI-05 shared:

 (What I do is that I study about my coordinatorship so that if there is a need to submit a report, I can be ready as soon as possible.)

IDI-03 added:

(If there are seminars related to my ancillary functions, I try my best to attend to that seminar for me to be able to learn something so that I can use it to make sure that what I am doing is right in my ancillary functions.)

These responses show that continuous learning and professional development are key strategies for teachers to cope with their responsibilities.

Supporting Literature:

Wijetunge (2021) emphasized the importance of continuous professional development for teachers to better serve schools and students.

Schaufeli et al. (2022) highlighted that a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind characterized by dedication and absorption is crucial for teachers to cope with challenges effectively.

Multi-tasking

Participants highlighted the importance of multitasking as a coping mechanism to manage their responsibilities efficiently.

IDI-01 stated:

 (Being able to multitask is really a big help because you will be able to do a lot of tasks in a short period of time.)

IDI-05 emphasized:

(If you are multitasking, you will be able to maximize your time and you will be able to do a lot of tasks but you also need to make sure that you will be able to do your tasks well even if you are multitasking.)

IDI-03 noted:

 (At the start, it is not easy to multitask especially if you are not used to it but eventually you will be able to do it right.) These responses illustrate that multitasking, although challenging initially, becomes a crucial skill for managing multiple tasks effectively.

Supporting Literature:

Goodrac (2015) noted that improving the capacity to swiftly switch between activities can help teachers manage multiple responsibilities effectively.

Schaufeli et al. (2022) emphasized that teachers need to develop attitudes and skills to cope with multiple ancillary functions effectively.

Insights of Elementary Teachers Drawn from the Findings of the Study

The analysis revealed three themes regarding the insights of elementary teachers drawn from the study: personal and professional growth, provision of support, and enhancing productivity.

Personal and Professional Growth

Participants shared that having multiple ancillary functions contributed to their personal and professional growth.

IDI-02 stated:

 (If you have various ancillary functions, you have a lot of learnings which can help you as a teacher.)

IDI-04 highlighted:

 (The ancillary functions of a teacher can help especially in promotion because it can give points for your promotion.)

IDI-06 added:

 (Those things that you did not learn from school can be learned because of your ancillary functions.) These statements indicate that multiple ancillary functions provide opportunities for teachers' personal and professional development.

Supporting Literature:

Leite et al. (2018) suggested that engaging in various ancillary functions encourages personal growth and enhances professional capabilities.

Alegado (2018) emphasized that teachers with ancillary functions have opportunities for professional advancement and personal growth.

Provision of Support

Participants emphasized the importance of support from colleagues and school administration to successfully manage their ancillary functions.

IDI-05 stated:

 (In line with your various ancillary functions, you really need to ask help and support from your co-teachers and from the school administration in order for the projects and programs in school to be a success.)

IDI-01 added:

 (No matter how good you are, you still need to ask help and support from your colleagues and superiors.) These responses highlight the need for collaborative support to ensure the success of school programs and projects.

Supporting Literature:

Shillingstad and McGlamery (2019) highlighted the importance of mentoring and support for teachers navigating multiple leadership roles.

Lawrent (2019) emphasized the need for support staff to assist teachers in managing additional responsibilities effectively.

Enhancing Productivity

Participants shared that managing multiple ancillary functions improved their productivity.

IDI-01 noted:

(Eventually, because of your various ancillary functions, you will be able to finish more tasks in a short period of time.)

IDI-06 emphasized:

 (Because you will be used to having a lot of tasks to do, you will eventually develop your love for constantly working.)

IDI-03 stated:

 (Because you have a lot of ancillary functions, you also have a lot of things to work on, so you need to make sure that you are really productive.) These responses indicate that managing multiple ancillary functions enhances teachers' productivity.

Supporting Literature:

- Ubom & Joshua (2018) highlighted the high expectations for teachers' job performance and the importance of motivation and dedication in enhancing productivity.

- Ololube (2019) emphasized that high motivation enhances productivity, benefiting educational systems.

Conclusion

The study revealed that elementary teachers with multiple ancillary functions face significant challenges related to time management, health risks, and impacts on personal life. However, they employ effective coping mechanisms such as practicing proper time management, dealing with academic challenges, and multitasking. These strategies, along with the insights gained from their experiences, contribute to their personal and professional growth, provision of support, and enhanced productivity. The findings underscore the importance of support from colleagues and school administration in managing ancillary functions and ensuring the success of school programs and projects.

**Discussions**

This chapter summarizes the study and draws implications for future directions. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the experiences of elementary teachers regarding their multiple ancillary functions. Data was collected and analyzed using qualitative-phenomenological methods, focusing on the participants' descriptions and interpretations of their experiences.

The study revealed the following key themes:

*Experiences of Elementary Teachers:* Time management issues, health risks, and impacts on personal life.

*Coping Mechanisms:* Practicing proper time management, dealing with academic challenges, and multitasking.

*Insights Drawn from Findings:* Personal and professional growth, provision of support, and enhancing productivity.

Implications

The analysis and discussion of the results led to several implications:

Occupational Stress and Health

*Rising Occupational Stress:* The increasing stress among teachers due to job security concerns, long working hours, and low morale negatively impacts their health, which in turn affects the students and the learning environment.

*Memory Impairments:* Excessive multitasking can impair both working and long-term memory, leading to attention deficits and forgetfulness, ultimately reducing classroom productivity.

Professional Development

*Personal and Professional Growth:* Participation in professional development seminars helps teachers improve their time management and organizational skills, leading to increased efficiency and more focus on student learning.

*Provision of Technical Support:* The role of technical support staff, including mentoring and coaching by master teachers, is crucial for teachers needing assistance.

Non-Teaching Personnel

*Additional Non-Teaching Staff:* The success of schools in meeting educational objectives depends on the contributions of both teaching and non-teaching staff. Employing more non-instructional staff can help meet student needs and support teaching staff in their professional duties.

Future Directions of the Study

Ancillary services, including home visits, feeding programs, skill remediation, and coaching, are vital for improving school performance. Despite the challenges, the study found that teachers handling multiple ancillary functions are inspired to strive for greater professional development and personal growth. Understanding their difficulties adds to the education knowledge base and highlights the importance of resilience in the teaching profession.

 Policy and Guidelines

 Institutional Policies: The Panabo City Division could institute policies to support teachers with ancillary functions. Reducing additional school-related tasks and hiring more non-teaching personnel can allow teachers to focus more on classroom instruction.

 Professional Development

Targeted Professional Development: Professional development programs should be tailored to the specific needs of teachers with multiple ancillary functions. Feedback and reflection platforms can help monitor and adjust teaching strategies and delivery.

 Future Research

Public Accessibility and Contextual Understanding: This study makes the experiences and perspectives of teachers with multiple ancillary roles accessible to the public, providing a basis for future research on ancillary duties in education.

*Focus Group Discussions:* Future studies could employ focus group discussions to gain more accurate and valid findings about the experiences of elementary school teachers with multiple ancillary functions.

By addressing these implications and exploring future directions, educational institutions can better support teachers with multiple ancillary functions, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of education.

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