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MANAGING MULTIPLE HATS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY OF READING COORDINATORS WITH MULTIPLE ROLES

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ABSTRACT
This multiple-case study aimed to explore and understand the experiences of Elementary Reading Coordinators handling multiple roles. Three reading coordinators handling multiple roles were analyzed about their experiences. In-depth interview, observations and field notes were analyzed in the gathering of data. Using thematic analysis and cross-case analysis, major findings disclosed that reading coordinators handling multiple roles experienced in which they often juggle various responsibilities to ensure effective literacy programs, had the ability to thrive despite the challenges. Reading coordinators handling multiple roles cope the situation by cultivating mindfulness in all aspects of one's actions, emotions, and decisions, maintaining a balance of flexibility and virtue to fit in with various contexts, and remaining steadfast in the commitment to serve in the midst of challenges. The findings of this research aim to contribute to the improvement of educational programs for aspiring reading coordinator, shedding light on the specific skills, knowledge, and experiences that are crucial for success in reading coordinator. By identifying the gaps in preparation and the challenges faced by elementary education graduates, this study seeks to inform educational policymakers, institutions, and stakeholders about potential areas for enhancement in reading development programs. Ultimately, the research aims to foster the effective and efficient management of elementary schools, leading to improved educational outcomes for students and a more robust educational system overall.

KEYWORDS: *reading coordinator, multiple roles, multiple- case study, qualitative cross- case analysis, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION
An educator with expertise in teaching children literacy and reading abilities is known as a reading teacher. Their main goal is to support students in becoming proficient readers, writers, and interpreters of written language (Moats, 2020). In their employment as educators, teachers play a variety of roles and responsibilities. They frequently juggle a wide range of tasks that go well beyond classroom instruction, which greatly contributes to teacher burnout or physical and mental exhaustion (Miller, 2021).

In America, it was reported that 70% of teachers believe their school is understaffed, leading many to take on multiple roles to fill the gaps. This added responsibility often results in increased stress for some teachers, as they struggle to balance their expanded duties with their primary teaching responsibilities. Furthermore, the majority of educators claim that they do not have enough time during regular business hours to complete activities like lesson planning, grading, paperwork, and responding to emails (Lin et al., 2024).

In the Philippines, particularly in Davao del Sur, reading coordinators wear multiple hats. In some school districts, reading specialists not only analyze and enhance reading curricula but also coach teachers on how to teach reading. Together with instructors, reading coordinators are accountable for evaluating students' reading proficiency, identifying areas for improvement, and developing reading intervention plans and techniques for those kids who will get additional reading instruction. However, the constant need to balance so many responsibilities can cause a great deal of stress, which makes it challenging for teachers to stay focused and productive (David et al., 2019).

Managing several roles is becoming more and more important in the complex and demanding workplace of today. Reading coordinators who are essential in improving the students' reading skills frequently struggle to balance a variety of duties which can result in stress burnout and a decline in job satisfaction. These difficulties jeopardize not only their wellbeing but also the standard of instruction and assistance given to students. The purpose of this multiple case study is to examine reading coordinators experiences in order to identify the challenges they encounter and how those challenges affect their performance.

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These pressures often lead to stress, burnout, and diminished job satisfaction, which directly affect the quality of education and support students receive. Furthermore, findings may drive policymakers and institutions to implement targeted programs that alleviate workloads, enhance job satisfaction, and ultimately improve educational standards, ensuring that literacy education continues to empower students and promote societal progress.

In connection to this, the study focused on exploring the challenges faced by reading coordinators in elementary schools who have multiple roles. While other studies have explored the challenges of managing multiple roles in different contexts, subjects, and activities, this study's focus is unique in its specific exploration of the experiences of reading coordinators in elementary schools. For example, Kim and Shin (2020) study entitled "Understanding the Challenges of English teachers in Korean High Schools", focused on the challenges faced by English teachers in Korean High Schools, Rabaglietti (2019) " A Balancing Act During Covid-19: Teachers' Self-Efficacy, Perception of Stress in The Distance Learning Experience", examined the challenges of managing multiple roles in science teaching, and Huang et al. (2020) study entitled "Challenges of Primary School Teachers in the Context of the Curriculum Reform: The Case of China", Explored the Challenges of Managing Multiple Roles in the Context of Curriculum Implementation. While these studies provide valuable insights into the challenges of managing multiple roles, this study addresses a research gap by providing a more focused exploration of the challenges of reading coordinators with multiple roles in elementary schools.

Moreover, copies of study will be disseminated to the various research conferences and concerned agencies and be published in a reputable internationally indexed journal to facilitate scholarly exchange and utilization of research-based discovery. This broad sharing of the study aims to encourage a meaningful exchange of knowledge and help turn research findings into practical actions that can improve educational practices and support for student

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the experiences of an Elementary Reading coordinator with multiple roles. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of Elementary Reading coordinator with handling multiple roles?
2. How do the Elementary Reading Coordinator with multi roles cope with the challenges with their everyday work?
3. What are the insights being an Elementary Reading Coordinator and at the same time handling multiple roles?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The methodology used in this study was a qualitative case study research design. It was used in which it allowed me as the researcher to make use of analytical procedures with the goal of gathering and getting an in-depth understanding of the live experiences encountered by reading coordinators at the same time handling multiple roles; what they do; and how they cope with handling multiple roles. To justify the usage of qualitative research format in this study, related literatures coming from real-world information are presented in this section. A useful investigative strategy for examining and comprehending a major phenomenon is qualitative research (Denzin, 2009).

Participants

Given that the research on experiences of reading coordinator teachers with multiple roles incorporated into the study, There were three (3) participants and (3) informants that helped to make this study successful as part of the criterion. According to a prescribed pre-inclusion criterion that are specified, 3 (three) participants were chosen. To guarantee the acquisition of real experiences pertinent to the study, the purposive sampling method was utilized to the participants. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with all three (three) individuals, doing one-on-one or online interviews with each participant.

This number was chosen in accordance with Creswell (2013) recommendation that there should be between three (3) and five (5) participants in a case study. By incorporating this group of participants in a qualitative research study, data saturation was attained in the data gathering procedure.

The participants of this study were selected based on the following pre-inclusion criteria: they must be elementary reading coordinator at the same time handling multiple roles. All of these were done to ensure the quality of the conduct as well as the findings of the study. The following were the specified criteria for the participants that highlighted their distinctive qualities and differences in this study.

Case 1 of this study must be a elementary reading coordinator with 8 subject to teach. She must be teaching primary level grade 1 to 3 in Marsman Elementary School. The informant for this participant was a participant's colleague who also a teacher in Marsman Elementary School in order to verify the claims and responses of the participants.

Case 2 of this study consist of an elementary reading coordinator who is also a master teacher in Kimamon Elementary School. The informant for this participant was a participant's colleague who also a teacher in Kimamon Elementary School in order to verify the claims and responses of the participants.

Case 3 of this study consist of an elementary reading coordinator with 4 to 8 subjects to teach in intermediate level in Sto. Tomas Elementary School. The informant for this participant was a participant's colleague who also a teacher in Sto. Tomas Elementary School in order to verify the claims and responses of the participants

Data Collection

The research aimed to explore the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of teachers who serve as reading

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coordinators, advisers, and event organizers. Data was gathered through in-depth interviews with participants, using a set of questions designed by the researcher. The process began with submitting a revised manuscript and questionnaires to a research adviser for approval, followed by validation from three research panels. Once approved, a permission letter was written to the Division of Davao del Norte and subsequently used to seek permission from the reading coordinators.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling based on specific criteria, such as their teaching experience, the number of subjects they taught, and the level of education they handled. The researcher ensured that the selection process was unbiased and that participants were fully informed about the study's purpose. The informed consent form was optional regarding the use of their names to maintain confidentiality.

Data was collected through face-to-face interviews, recorded using a cellphone for ease of transcription and analysis. The researcher transcribed and translated the responses into English, identified themes, and ensured that participants' identities remained confidential. All research data, both in physical and digital form, was securely stored in locked files.

Data Analysis

All The researcher recorded and transcribed the interviews, then reviewed the transcripts for accuracy and content verification. The study aimed to understand the experiences of Reading Coordinator teachers with multiple roles in Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte. After the transcripts were finalized, the researcher proceeded with document analysis.

According to Lune and Berg (2017), data analysis in qualitative research involves systematically examining and organizing interview transcripts, observation notes, or other data to enhance understanding of the research topic. In line with Gibbs (2007), coding was used to identify key concepts and relationships within the data. Each participant's responses were tagged with relevant codes based on the themes they represented.

The researcher used thematic analysis to examine the data, categorizing responses into codes, words, or phrases that represented the core ideas. By analyzing the transcribed answers, the researcher identified common and differing themes across the participants' experiences, insights, and coping mechanisms, ultimately organizing the data into meaningful themes for further analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

Table 2. Lived Experiences of Reading Coordinators Handling Multiple Roles

ESSENTIAL THEMES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
Balancing Diverse Student Needs Amid Multiple Responsibilities	• *"As a reading coordinator, one of the usual challenges I face is how to address the diverse reading abilities and learning styles of the pupils. Given that I handle multiple roles, I often worry about dropping the balls I am responsible for keeping in the air. It is crucial for me to ensure that each student's needs are met while effectively managing my various responsibilities."* - (IDI01) • *"As a teacher, you should not just stick to your role as a classroom teacher, but also reach out to other roles that can be useful or beneficial to students, especially to those who are not very adept at reading. Of course, I observed that her flexibility as a teacher comes out because he handles his responsibilities properly"* – (IDI02) • *"Being a teacher means a multitask person, be it a facilitator, a mentor, a student, a friend, a coach or even a mother to the young learners. My responsibility does not end being a teacher that just to teach the curriculum, there are some other responsibility like attending meetings and trainings, submitting monthly and urgent reports and many more. It is tiring but rewarding especially when at the end of the day you realized that you have made a difference in the lives of your learners."*- (IDI05) • *"Balance among personal and professional responsibilities is essential to happiness. Some healthy habits that could balance responsibility is to organized the things you want to do and do it right away and stay focused."* – (IDI06)
Managing Multiple Accountabilities	• *"Being a reading coordinator that handling multiple roles makes me physically exhausted like all my energy were burned-out, mentally stress because of the deadlines and urgent reports and emotionally guilty because sometimes a teacher like me with much roles left my classroom just to make sure that all the reports are submitted on-time"* – (IDI01)

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	• *(As a teacher dili lang jud ka magstick sa role nimo as classroom teacher but moreach out pud sa ka sa mga roles nga useful or something makatabang ka sa mga students especially sa mga bata nga dili pajud kayo kabalo ug hawd mobasa. Of course, nakita nako dira na mogawas iyang pagkaflexible as a teacher kay ginahandle niya nga tarung iyahang mga responsibility"* – (IDI02) • *"As a reading coordinator, I have encountered significant challenges in the realm of time management. Juggling the responsibilities of both a teacher to my own student and a reading coordinator to my own clients can be demanding. Finding a balance between these roles while effectively managing my time has proven to be remarkable challenge."* - (IDI05) • *"Every day, I go to work knowing that there are some school children that are experiencing reading difficulty and thinking of some ways on what interventions suited to this kind of learners"* – (IDI06)
Handling Reading Coordination Complexity and Well-being Impact	• *"The said challenges I have mentioned somewhat affects me physically because dealing with the challenges can be stressful. It also affects me mentally, the feeling of inadequacy. Emotionally, I may felt guilty if I perceived not being able to meet the needs of the pupils. Moreover, spiritually, disheartened by the difficulties and lose hope the possibility of improvement."* – (IDI05) • *"As a teacher and the school's reading coordinator, I'm experiencing stressed, and it is having a negative impact on my health. All of this stress has taken a toll on my physical health, leaving me exhausted and worn out. Between my endless duties as a class adviser and the students for whom I am responsible, particularly those who struggle to read."* – (IDI-06) • *"Since I am new as a reading coordinator, I find the coordinatorship difficult. I am still adjusting to the work routine and the responsibility. I do not have enough experience to really manage it to an extent which I experience some physical stress particularly due to sleeping late because I have also responsibility as classroom teacher."* – (IDI01) • *I experience the same with her even though I am not a reading coordinator. Being a teacher takes a lot of work how much more if you have other underlying responsibilities."* – (IDI02)

Lived Experiences of Reading Coordinators Handling Multiple Roles. The research aimed to explore the experiences, challenges, and difficulties faced by reading coordinators handling multiple roles, revealing that their responsibilities lead to diverse experiences and perspectives in academia.

The study revealed that reading coordinators, while **balancing diverse student needs amid multiple responsibilities**, effectively address student challenges and improve reading performance by understanding individual needs and developing tailored strategies. Fauza (2020) emphasized that reading coordinators effectively manage multiple duties, with their leadership potential growing through the support and trust of school administrators, which fosters their enthusiasm and dedication. Estrella et al. (2020) highlighted that teachers' ability to handle stress and maintain teaching effectiveness plays a critical role in balancing student needs and multiple obligations, although it may lead to burnout under increased productivity pressures.

The second theme, **managing multiple accountabilities**, explored how reading coordinators navigate challenges in their later academic careers, often driven by determination, life experience, and strong time management. Luthra & Lahiri (2017) stressed the complexity of teachers' roles, noting that educators handle a wide range of responsibilities beyond teaching, including mentorship, planning, and supervision. Owis (2021) discussed the essential role of teachers as mentors, who provide individualized support and foster positive learning environments, while also tracking academic progress and offering emotional guidance.

The study also revealed that **handling multiple roles impacts the well-being** of reading coordinators, underlining the importance of maintaining physical and mental health to sustain resilience and job satisfaction. Gierk et al. (2018) noted the stress and physical strain educators experience due to heavy workloads, which can affect their ability to teach and reduce their quality of life. Awej (2020) highlighted the challenges teachers face in managing multiple obligations, with job ambiguity and the pressure to meet learning objectives contributing to feelings of overload.

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Table 3. Coping Mechanisms of Reading Coordinators with Multiple Roles

ESSENTIAL THEMES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
Fostering a Positive Mindset and Attitude	• *"Establishing transparent communication by encouraging my colleagues to share the ideas and perspective with regards to my coordinatorship."* – (IDI01) • *"Ang naga-inspire sa ako sarili ug naka encourage sa akoa is ang situation sa mga bata wher naa ko karon u gang passion sa teaching kay dili ko mahimong inspiration sa uban kung dili ko inspired nga macope-up sa mga challenges as reading program coordinator"* (IDI-03) • *"She is clearly passionate about teaching because no matter how difficult it is to teach a child, she is persistent in ensuring that the child learns because she is concerned about the child's future, thinking that maybe the parents do not know how to read, let alone the child. So she really strives for it"* (IDI-04) • *"I stop what I do. Breathe. Walk. Talk to my co-teachers for some advise, play with some of my students, and lastly pray for added strength then I Continue my work."* – (IDI02)
Engaging in Self-Care Practices	• *"When bombarded with challenges, I engage myself to the activities that help me relax, recharge, and reduce stress such as listening to music, spending time in nature and my family."* – (IDI01) • *"Boosting myself with self-confidence by encouraging, reminding my capabilities and directing focus towards the positive aspects of my work. It is the only positive distraction I can do to maintain my peace of mind and through this it goes in a good way."* – (IDI03) • *"Time a management and organizational skills helps me in accomplishing task in a shorter period of time, helps me focus better , makes me more productive and makes me stress free thus I can achieve bigger goals."* – (IDI03)

Coping Mechanisms of Reading Coordinators with Multiple Roles. The researcher asked the participants about the challenges they faced as reading coordinators handling multiple roles, leading to the identification of three major themes: thinking motivations and future aspirations, employing strategies for academic success, and professional growth.

First, **fostering a positive mindset and attitude** is essential for reading coordinators to perform effectively in their roles. Having a positive outlook helps them manage responsibilities and stay motivated to pursue their degree, which supports their role as reading coordinators. In relation, Saucedo et al. (2019) found that job-related difficulties affect teachers' efficiency. However, this study's results show that participants actively foster a positive mindset, which enables them to stay optimistic despite challenges. In contrast, Kaminskienė et al. (2021) highlighted that maintaining an optimistic outlook not only helps educators accomplish tasks but also builds resilience and adaptability, allowing them to meet their personal and professional goals while supporting their students' welfare.

Second, **engaging in self-care practices** is another key coping mechanism. Participants prioritize their health to maintain physical fitness for teaching and reading coordination, utilizing strategies to reduce stress and increase productivity. Bliese et al. (2017) found that by prioritizing health and stress reduction, reading coordinators can improve resilience, job satisfaction, and student learning outcomes, especially by seeking stress management professional development opportunities. Liu et al. (2021) similarly noted that burnout is a significant issue for educators, but many teachers engage in self-care, such as setting boundaries and seeking support, to enhance resilience and manage stress effectively.

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Table 4. Insights of Reading Coordinators with Multiple Roles

ESSENTIAL THEMES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
Appreciate Personal Successes and Impact on Students' Lives	• *"The most rewarding aspect as reading coordinator is to witness their achievement and development. Seeing them grow and have passion in reading can bring me satisfaction and fulfilling."* – (IDI05) • *I've witnessed Ma'am being very expressive with her students who can now read. She is really happy to see them progress and feels excited that they've gone from not knowing to developing"* – (IDI06) • *"Being a Kindergarten teacher is not easy because I am the learner's firsthand experience. At the time when I teach the sound of the letter to the blending of 2 to 3 letter sound, that is considered as rewarding and fulfilling. If I can make one Kindergarten able to read then it is a challenge to all teachers to make their non-readers read that is why being a reading coordinator gives me an opportunity to make a difference on the life of a non-reader and frustration level reader."* – (IDI01) • *"It feels really good when you have children to help who are not very good at reading, and when you feel like you're fulfilling your work as a teacher. It s not just about being paid to teach, but beyond that, it is the feeling that what you're doing is truly for the benefit of the students."* – (IDI02) • *"Acknowledging one's achievements is one of the techniques I used in maintaining good attitude. By recognizing the progress I have made it boost my motivation and strengthen positive mindset"* - (IDI03)
Enjoy Tasks While Staying Productive	• *"Handling few coordinatorships is a big task and make our responsibility heavier. Just focus on your work, manage your time and do your work with a happy heart. Anyone can make a difference in the lives of our learners just be goal oriented and stay focused"* – (IDI01) • *"In handling multiple roles while being a reading coordinator is fun yet challenging one and I am still learning while enjoying the fruit of both positive and negative outcome of this responsibility"* – (IDI01) • *"By offering an environment where students can learn the required skills and knowledge. Every coordinator has different characteristics based on its purpose and mission. Likewise, each school has a unique culture. The school culture is one of the factors which can impact school effectiveness. it is considered to be one of the impact I influence"* – (IDI02)
Set Boundaries Between Work and Personal Life	• *"Limit boundaries between work- related aspects and personal sphere. Set specific period for work and time for personal life. There was a day when I always think about my duties I left in my house that made my entire day worried and my worksheet were never touched so always set a different to do list to manage duties between school and at home"* – (IDI05) • *"My recommendation to other teacher with multiple roles is to cultivate a positive mindset and embrace challenges as opportunities for personal growth and development."* – (IDI03)

Insights of Reading Coordinators with Multiple Roles. The first theme that emerges is they **appreciate personal successes and impact on students' lives**. Reeve and Shin (2020) stated that by appreciating personal successes and reflecting on the impact of their education, students enhance their academic achievements and develop a deeper understanding of their own capabilities, ultimately shaping their lives beyond the classroom. Triarisanti & Purnawarman (2019) emphasized that students are inspired to aim for higher achievements when milestones are acknowledged, which fosters a positive learning environment and strengthens the teacher-student bond.

The second theme that emerges is they **enjoy tasks while staying productive**. Estrella et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of preserving cognitive load in the face of task complexity and lesson management issues, but the study found that productivity can be influenced by the enjoyment teachers have in teaching. Christie & Lingard (2020) noted that when teachers find joy in their daily tasks, they create a more upbeat and dynamic learning environment, benefiting both student success and teacher well-being.

The third theme that emerges is they **set boundaries between work and personal life**. Rubilar & Oros (2021) found that teachers who set clear boundaries can better manage their time

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and energy, reducing the risk of burnout and improving their overall well-being. Keay et al. (2019) confirmed that establishing boundaries helps teachers maintain a healthy work-life balance, ensuring sustained productivity while preserving their mental and emotional well-being.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, the participants shared their experiences of managing multiple duties as reading coordinators, highlighting the need for institutional adjustments to improve working conditions for those in similar roles. The study is significant as it enhances our understanding of teacher professionalism and how they address classroom challenges. The researcher found the study personally meaningful, as it reflected many of their own experiences and provided valuable insights through interviews and analysis. The academic journey was fulfilling, offering opportunities for career advancement and personal growth, and the researcher hopes their work encourages other students to strive for excellence. The researcher also advocates for more support from higher authorities, such as DEPED, to help returning students continue their academic pursuits. Ultimately, the researcher expressed pride in completing the study and achieving a deep level of comprehension and insight despite the challenges faced.

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