



UNVEILING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE NEWLY HIRED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS ON THEIR PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand the lived experience and challenges encountered of newly hired elementary teachers on their pedagogical competence in Laak District, Division of Davao de Oro. This study employed a qualitative research design using phenomenological approach. To verify the validity and reliability of the acquired data, this study featured fourteen (14) participants, seven (7) for the in-depth interview and seven (7) for focus group discussion. The data gathered during the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion was organized, transcribed, translated, and analyzed. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The results revealed newly hired elementary school teachers' experiences on their pedagogical competence to enhance teaching-learning process. The following themes emerged in the study on the experiences of newly hired elementary school teachers: using effective instructional strategies and practices; utilizing learned skills from professional seminars and personal reflection; and dealing with educational challenges. Moreover, their coping mechanisms include six (6) major themes: employing various teaching strategies in addressing learners needs; asking help through collaboration with colleagues and school heads; capacitating career growth among teachers; refining teacher skills and pedagogical competence; cultivating active and engaged learning environments for students and handling students' behavior proactively. Lastly, insights of the participants were: commitment of lifelong learning and professional growth; fostering positive and supportive relationships; embodying patience, strength, and dedication in teaching; inspiring and motivating student growth and building resilience in teaching. The findings of the study provide valuable insights into how they lived experiences of new teachers, particularly their social interactions, contribute to their pedagogical growth. It highlights the need for robust professional development programs that emphasize collaborative learning, mentorship, and access to resources. Despite challenges like adjusting teaching approaches to students' needs and levels newly hired elementary school teachers employs various teaching strategies to enhance the teaching-learning process.

KEYWORDS: Experiences, Newly Hired Elementary School Teachers, Pedagogical Competence, Davao De Oro

INTRODUCTION

Newly hired teachers filled with various experiences as they begin their careers. Steeping into the classroom for the first time, these educators embark on a transformative path that not only impacts the lives of their students but also shapes their own personal and professional development. However, when the school year starts, teachers frequently get an awakening of reality as they realize how complicated the classroom is and how difficult it is to sort through all the tasks, such handling paperwork, adjusting to new students, changing class activities, and more.

In Sweden, Çakmak et al. (2019) found that new teachers faced significant challenges, including high psychological task demands, classroom management issues, student aggression, poor school climate, strained relationships with colleagues, professional identity conflicts, instructional struggles, and difficulty meeting students' needs, including special needs. Meanwhile, in Kazakhstan, Sylvia et al. (2020) highlighted the challenge of shifting from traditional to learner-centered education, requiring higher education institutions to train

skilled specialists who not only had deep knowledge but also exhibited pedagogical competence.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Erbas (2023) investigated the culture shocks and adaptation processes of Turkish novice teachers, revealing issues like inadequate training, accommodation and transportation difficulties, and struggles with adapting to school culture.

In the Philippines, according to the study of No et al. (2022), they discover the different life experiences of the newly hired teacher in Batazara Elementary School located in Palawan. It was stated that new teachers were challenged by the different circumstances of the students and more than that their salary is insufficient to compensate for the work done and their needs.

In Davao de Oro's Division, especially in the Compostela West Districts, Caralusan (2024) highlights the challenges faced by newly hired teachers in terms of their instructional and classroom management.



PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this phenomenological inquiry was to explore and understand the lived experience and challenges encountered by newly hired elementary teachers on their pedagogical competence in Laak District, Division of Davao de Oro.

At this stage of the study, the lived experiences of newly hired teachers regarding their pedagogical competence were defined as the knowledge, skills, and abilities that teachers had to possess to facilitate a creative and critical teaching-learning process.

Research Questions

1. What are the experiences of newly hired elementary teachers in enriching their pedagogical competence?
2. How do newly hired elementary teachers cope with the challenges that they have encountered to enrich their pedagogical competence?
3. What insights can be drawn from the experiences of newly hired teachers?

METHODS

This study followed a qualitative research design, particularly utilizing phenomenology. It involved a thorough examination of personal experiences conveyed or exchanged with the researcher, primarily through interviews. To be precise, this study employed phenomenological analysis to explore the real-life experiences of the individuals involved. Moreover, qualitative research techniques yielded profound insights, thereby enhancing comprehension of the research subject. It explored the shared importance that a collective group of individuals attributed to their lived experiences concerning a particular concept or phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

As per Creswell and Poth (2016), it was suggested that conducting interviews with fourteen (14) participants could sufficiently capture the required data for the research. The participants in this study consisted of newly hired elementary teachers, with a total of fourteen (14) individuals representing the Laak District within the Division of Davao de Oro. Among these participants, seven (7) engaged in in-depth interviews (IDI), while the remaining seven (7) participated in a focus group discussion.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Overview of Pedagogical Competence in Teaching

Pedagogical competence involves the knowledge, skills, and abilities that teachers must proficiently plan, deliver, and evaluate instruction in ways that promote student learning. In the Philippines, Article IV of the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers delineates the responsibilities and expectations for teachers and the teaching profession. It emphasizes that every teacher is obliged to maintain the highest standards of quality education, diligently prepare for their teaching career, and consistently strive for excellence in their professional practices (Code of Ethics, 1994).

In line with this, the Philippines Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994, also known as Republic Act No. 7836, reinforces

the regulation and oversight of teaching practices within the country. This act mandates that all individuals involved in teaching, supervision, and school administration at the elementary and secondary levels must successfully pass the Licensure Examination for Teachers.

Moreover, Republic Act 10533, also known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, Section 7 mandates education authorities to implement training programs aimed at ensuring that the basic education curriculum meets the demand for teachers. In response, the Department of Education (DepEd) has established a Training Induction Program, which is widely used in schools worldwide to assist new teachers during their initial years in the profession, contributing to their well-being and professional development.

Lived Experiences of Newly Hired Elementary Teachers

Newly hired elementary teachers embark on a stimulating yet demanding path as they initiate their careers. These early encounters significantly influence their professional development and have a lasting impact on the growth of young students. In Estrera's study (2019), the difficulties faced by newly hired teachers in primary and secondary schools were examined. The study revealed that teachers commonly struggled with lesson planning and assessment, regardless of their age, experience, gender, or educational credentials.

Additionally, as noted by Koni and Krull (2018), less experienced teachers often dedicate a considerable amount of time to preparing individual lessons compared to their more seasoned colleagues.

In another perspective, Wolff (2020), beginner teachers often experience various obstacles during their early years. Among the most cited challenges are those related to classroom management, student motivation, handling individual student needs, limited instructional resources, and assessing student work. These difficulties are compounded by the need to adapt teaching strategies, as the learning environment is more than just about course materials. In particular, the increasing emphasis on individualized student approaches presents new challenges for many teachers. This, in turn, draws attention to the classroom management challenges faced by more experienced educators, including problems with self-confidence, discipline, and the complex dynamics of teaching.

Coping Strategies of the Newly Hired Teachers in Reaching their Pedagogical Competence

Sustaining a positive attitude played a crucial role in the spontaneous adaptation of recently employed elementary school educators, empowering them to overcome encountered hurdles with resilience. As noted by Cherkowski (2018), the optimistic demeanor of participants motivated them to persevere in their enthusiasm and commitment to teaching, notwithstanding the challenges inherent in the circumstances faced by public elementary school teachers. Building on this idea, embarking on a journey as an elementary school teacher is both exciting and challenging.



At the heart of a thriving classroom lies the foundation of positive relationships between students and their teachers. These connections create an environment where students feel valued and seen, motivating them to exert greater effort in their studies and to interact with their peers respectfully. As a result, students experience increased happiness and are more likely to achieve academic success. Additionally, research demonstrates that a positive school climate, nurtured by these strong relationships, significantly correlates with improved student outcomes, including higher attendance rates and enhanced assessment results. Thus, fostering positive student-teacher relationships is a fundamental strategy for cultivating a learning environment where all students can flourish (CAO Central, 2021).

Insights and Future Directions on Pedagogical Competence

During the early stages of teaching, the presence of a positive school environment, favorable working conditions, and a conducive classroom atmosphere significantly contribute to retaining and nurturing teachers' professional development. However, it is imperative to address the obstacles encountered by novice educators, who frequently contend with sentiments of insecurity, apprehension, and frustration. To overcome these challenges, establishing a supportive atmosphere is essential. Of particular concern for new teachers is the prevailing school culture.

As a result of this, support programs aimed at familiarizing teachers with the school's culture, aiding them in delivering content, assessments, and classroom management, and providing peer support, have become crucial. According to Nally (2020), these programs are designed to help new educators navigate the demands of their role while providing continuous professional development during their first three years of employment.

Furthermore, Anggraini et al. (2020), mentioned that in the learning process, it is essential for new teachers to enhance their skills, acknowledge students' capabilities, and seek support from colleagues. Novice educators must engage in critical thinking to enhance their teaching practices and foster professional growth. Additionally, they emphasize the significance of comprehending professional development and strategies to improve it for new teachers.

In supporting new educators is not solely the responsibility of mentors; administrators play a pivotal role as well. As suggested by Abrams (2018), administrators should take proactive measures from very moment individuals sign their contracts. Abrams underscores the importance for administrators to promptly connect with new teachers, especially considering the millennial generation's accustomed preference for rapid and convenient access to information. Starting a teaching career is depicted as a complex endeavor, as demonstrated by Baguley (2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1

Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Experiences of Newly Hired Elementary School in Enriching their Pedagogical Competence

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Using Effective Instructional Strategies and Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining lesson flow and consistency • creating practical and relevant learning activities • innovating teaching strategies • aligning lessons for combination grade level • using storytelling to stimulate creativity and critical thinking • using hands-on activities to enhance learning • providing guided instruction • providing reading materials • incorporating multimedia resources in lessons • using technology in the classroom • adapting teaching methods to suit students' needs • knowing students' family background and learning style
Utilizing Learned Skills from Professional Seminars and Trainings and Personal Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflecting on teaching experiences • applying newly learned knowledge and skills to teaching practices • applying new knowledge and skills learned from training and seminars • attending seminars and workshops • attending professional development workshops/sessions • attending online seminars and webinars
Dealing with Educational Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • handling disruptive behavior during lessons • dealing with students' behavioral issues • managing large class sizes • teaching in a classroom without walls • teaching in a non-conducive classroom environment • catching students' attention • difficulty of students in using Bisaya language



Using Effective Instructional Strategies and Practices

I am concerned about how to maintain the flow or consistency of my lesson when learners exhibit disruptive behavior during my discussion. IDI 02

I believe what helped me improve my skills since my undergraduate study was my ability to innovate. I was able to innovate my teaching strategies, especially because some students require additional support. Therefore, I had to increase my effort to teach them and develop strategies to make them more engaged and participative. IDI 07

The lived experiences also revealed that teachers faced challenges in classroom management and resource limitations, which they navigated through collaborative problem-solving and seeking mentorship.

Effective instructional strategies are vital for fostering an engaging and supportive learning environment that drives student success. These strategies work to enhance the learning experience by addressing students' diverse needs, while encouraging critical thinking, problem-solving, and knowledge retention.

As educational practices evolve, the integration of modern technology has become indispensable. Ghory and Ghafory's (2021) study examined the significant impact of technology on the teaching and learning process. Technology enhances interaction and collaboration, overcomes geographical barriers, and creates dynamic learning environments. Through real-time communication, digital resources, and interactive tools, it increases efficiency and engagement.

To fully leverage the benefits of technology in education, it is crucial to address teacher training and professional development. De Vera et al. (2021) investigated how new teachers rely on educational technology for lesson planning and aligning their methods with professional ICT standards. To support this, teacher training programs must prioritize technological skill development. Ample time, mentorship,

Utilizing Learned Skills from Professional Seminars and Trainings and Personal Reflection

The experiences I had as a newly hired elementary school teacher helped me improve my teaching skills. Specifically, attending training and workshops, especially those focused on teaching children in practical settings, was most beneficial. FGD3

I learn valuable aspects from other teachers, as well as through seminars and similar professional development activities. IDI 5

Participants said that new teachers improve a lot when they take time to think about their teaching and keep trying to get better. They explained that by looking at what works well and what could be improved, teachers can plan better lessons and manage their classes more effectively. In simple words, regularly reflecting on their work and making changes helps new teachers become more skilled and confident in the classroom.

As Zhao et al. (2019) noted, professional development allows teachers to continuously learn, refine their skills, and stay informed about new educational trends and best practices. Actively participating in training, workshops, and seminars enhances teaching methods and provides fresh insights. Furthermore, as highlighted by Hammond and Harvey (2018), professional development plays a key role in boosting teachers' confidence and job satisfaction. Acquiring new strategies and innovative approaches makes educators more adaptable and better equipped to address diverse student needs.

Building upon the foundational development of new teachers, Mulryan-Kyne (2021) highlighted the pivotal role of reflection in teaching. Reflection acts as a bridge between theory and practice, enhancing instructional effectiveness. It encourages educators to analyze their methods, assess challenges, and refine their approaches, leading to deeper understanding and improved classroom strategies.

Dealing with Educational Challenges

The hardest part of teaching I've experienced in the last six months is teaching kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2, which are merged into one classroom with 55 students. The most difficult aspect is that when teachers discuss kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 topics simultaneously, there is a lack of understanding, and we cannot hear each other. Additionally, with so many students, it is difficult to teach them effectively. FGD-1

The hardest part of teaching I have experienced since arriving at Datu Davao Elementary School is the lack of a classroom. For me, this is one of the most difficult experiences I have ever had. Since I handle grade 2, the children are young, and my classroom has no walls. This makes it hard because the children go outside, distracting other students

Participants indicated that newly hired teachers face challenges in managing classrooms and engaging students while balancing authority and rapport. They must handle disruptions, set clear expectations, and cater to diverse learning styles.

To understand the multifaceted nature of teaching, it's essential to begin with the broad spectrum of challenges educators face. Peria and Torres (2019) emphasized that teaching, while rewarding, presents numerous difficulties. These include managing diverse learning needs, navigating instructional limitations, and addressing classroom management. Balancing different learning styles, abilities, and behavioral dynamics within a single classroom requires significant effort. Furthermore, limitations such as a lack of resources, time constraints, and curriculum demands hinder the implementation of innovative teaching strategies. Classroom management, with its need for a structured, respectful, and inclusive environment, is also a critical hurdle. Despite these challenges, teachers continuously strive to refine their methods and create meaningful learning experiences.



Table 2
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Coping Mechanisms of Newly Hired Elementary Teachers in Enriching their Pedagogical Skills

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Employing Various Teaching Strategies in Addressing Learners Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adjusting teaching approaches to students' needs and levels • searching for activities that fit diverse learning styles • promoting think-pair-share strategy • pairing students to share learning with peers • considering strategies suitable for learners
Asking Help Through Collaboration with Colleagues and School Heads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeking advice from colleagues and superiors • sharing insights with peers to tackle challenges • collaborating with teachers and school head • engaging with experienced colleagues • fostering a culture of openness in seeking help
Capacitating Career Growth among Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing ongoing professional development and training opportunities • attending seminars for professional growth • emphasizing that continuous training supports pedagogical skills • conducting LAC sessions in school • joining in-service trainings
Refining Teacher Skills and Pedagogical Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing pedagogical competency • illustrating professional development boosts teaching efficiency • improving pedagogical competence to gain more knowledge • teaching without partialities or subjectivity • fostering flexibility when students experience difficulties
Cultivating Active and Engaged Learning Environments for Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering excitement in students' learning • starting over to ensure students stay engaged • promoting critical thinking • applying differentiated instructions to accommodate diversity • employing learning by doing
Handling the Behaviour of Students Proactively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using positive reinforcement (rewards) • applying negative reinforcement • getting students' attention all at once • encouraging perfect attendance

Employing Various Teaching Strategies in Addressing Learners Needs

I adapt my teaching approach based on their learning *abilities and environment*. This adjustment significantly impacts my pedagogical effectiveness, as I observe that it leads to greater comprehension among the students. IDI-05

One effective strategy I employ is the "think-pair-share" method. This technique significantly benefits students, particularly those who excel at analysis and verbal expression. It challenges them and their group member to actively participate. To ensure engagement, I pose questions that require input from all group members, rather than relying solely on a single student. Traditionally, group work often resulted in only the leader completing the tasks, rendering the strategy ineffective.

*Therefore, it is crucial to select activities that involve all group members in the task. This ensures a tangible outcome from the applied strategy. By observing a positive or highly positive outcome, you can effectively assess the strategy's efficacy.*FGD-06

To ensure that all students receive a meaningful and effective education, educators must employ a variety of teaching strategies that cater to their diverse needs. Every learner is unique, possessing different learning styles, strengths, challenges, and backgrounds. By utilizing a combination of instructional methods, teachers can create an inclusive and engaging learning environment that promotes understanding, retention, and active participation. Participants shared their experiences about the importance of employing various teaching strategies in addressing learners' needs.

As Ekere (2019) highlights, educators must cultivate structured, engaging, and inclusive learning spaces, providing appropriate resources and fostering an atmosphere that encourages active participation and skill development. This extends beyond academic instruction, encompassing the development of strong, trusting relationships that support a positive learning experience.

Building upon this foundation, Davis and Davis (2022) emphasize the critical role of a positive learning environment in fostering happiness, productivity, and motivation. Teachers shape such spaces through an optimistic mindset, inclusive practices, and collaborative activities. To achieve this, a holistic



approach is essential. This involves integrating respectful interactions, effective management, and adequate resources to support diverse learning needs. Clear expectations and proactive measures are crucial for maintaining a safe, welcoming atmosphere where students feel valued and empowered. By fostering inclusivity, critical thinking, and personal growth, teachers create classrooms that inspire and prepare students for future success.

Asking Help through Collaboration with Colleagues and School Heads

Seeking support or guidance is essential when facing challenges in teaching. I turn to my school head and my siblings, who are also teachers, for assistance. For instance, with two teachers in my family, I can readily request help or guidance on effective classroom management and teaching techniques, particularly in addressing student behavior. Seasoned teachers, who possess a wealth of experience, are invaluable resources. As the adage states, experience is the best teacher. FGD-06

I seek support from my school heads, as they oversee the school and its teachers. I also consult my co-teachers, particularly seasoned educators, given their extensive experience in addressing challenges within their teaching roles. FGD-04

Working together with colleagues and school administrators fosters teamwork, shared knowledge, and effective problem solving. By seeking advice, sharing best practices, and engaging in open discussions, educators enhance their teaching strategies and address challenges more effectively. School leaders provide guidance and resources, creating a supportive environment that benefits both teachers and students.

The cornerstone of effective education lies in the quality of its teachers. As Nancy (2019) emphasizes, strong pedagogical skills are crucial for enhancing instruction and creating engaging learning experiences. These skills encompass an educator's ability to guide students, facilitate meaningful learning, and manage the classroom effectively. A teacher's deep subject knowledge and effective communication are also vital, ensuring clear concept presentation and fostering collaborative relationships with parents and colleagues. Integrating these elements creates a dynamic and inclusive classroom where students thrive.

Capacitating Career Growth among Teachers

Attending seminars provides me with valuable insights that enhance my classroom management. Indeed, the primary objective of seminars is to acquire knowledge applicable to the classroom setting. IDI-06

Supporting teachers in their career growth involves providing opportunities for continuous learning, skill enhancement, and professional advancement. Through mentorship, training programs, and collaborative learning, educators can refine their teaching practices, stay updated with new methodologies, and enhance their effectiveness. Participants shared their experiences through their journey on professional development.

The transition into the teaching profession is a dynamic and challenging journey, particularly for novice educators. As Anggraini et al. (2020) emphasize, continuous skill development, the ability to recognize and nurture student abilities, and the seeking of guidance from experienced colleagues are crucial for long-term growth. New teachers must engage in critical thinking to refine their instructional methods, adapt to diverse student needs, and enhance their overall effectiveness. This involves embracing professional development through mentorship, peer collaboration, and ongoing training opportunities, including workshops, seminars, and reflective practice. By prioritizing self-assessment and actively seeking feedback, new teachers can identify areas for improvement and cultivate strong communication skills, classroom management techniques, and the ability to create inclusive learning environments.

However, the effectiveness of these programs can be hindered by various challenges. As highlighted by Yuliana (2020), teacher induction programs often face issues such as time constraints, inadequate planning, and poor communication among stakeholders. These limitations can restrict the program's impact and lead to inconsistent guidance. To improve these programs, schools should refine their structure, align training with teachers' needs, and foster better collaboration. Strengthening mentorship, providing targeted support, and enhancing communication will ensure a more effective and meaningful induction experience.

Refining Teacher Skills and Pedagogical Competence

On-going professional development helps educators refine their teaching methods, adopt innovative strategies, and effectively engage students. By continuously improving their skills, teachers enhance instructional quality and contribute to better learning outcomes. Pedagogical competency grows through continuous learning, training, and applying effective teaching strategies. By refining their methods and adapting to student needs, educators improve instruction and enhance learning outcomes.

A teacher does not only mean you are good in teaching. truly believe that a teacher does not only possess good teaching skills, but also how, how you will how will you interact with your students. IDI-07

Effective teaching hinges on a robust foundation encompassing comprehensive training, refined pedagogical skills, deep self-awareness, and solid subject matter expertise. As Panda (2019) asserts, effective training not only provides teachers with subject expertise and instructional strategies but also helps them develop critical thinking, adaptability, and classroom management techniques. By establishing clear professional standards, schools ensure educators are well-prepared to foster student success.

Cultivating Active and Engaged Learning Environments for Students

I think as a kindergarten teacher, I always applied differentiated instruction to accommodate different skills, levels or learning styles, so that I caught their interest during the delivery of the lesson. IDI-02



Fostering an active learning environment encourages student participation, critical thinking, and deeper understanding. Educators can achieve this by using interactive teaching strategies, promoting discussions, and incorporating hands-on activities. Engaging students in meaningful learning experiences enhances their motivation, improves retention, and cultivates a positive classroom atmosphere that supports academic growth and success.

The foundation of a rich and effective learning experience lies in the seamless integration of classroom-based learning with established curriculum frameworks. As Chaiyasit et al. (2023) emphasize, this approach creates a structured yet adaptable educational environment, ensuring students engage with essential content while also experiencing interactive, real-world applications. By blending curriculum guidelines with dynamic classroom activities, educators foster critical thinking, collaboration, and differentiated instruction, enabling students to develop the skills necessary for lifelong learning.

Handling the Behavior of the Students Proactively

A strategy I have found effective in enhancing my teaching abilities is the implementation of positive reinforcement through rewards. For instance, students who achieve high exam scores or maintain perfect attendance for a month can be rewarded. This incentivizes attendance and encourages student engagement during class. FGD-06

To ensure full student attendance, I employ strategies that emphasize encouragement. I also implement a system of recognition, awarding certificates for perfect attendance and adherence to the school uniform policy. These positive reinforcements serve to motivate students. They particularly appreciate public acknowledgment. IDI-06

Effective strategies for enhancing student motivation and fostering a positive learning environment include the judicious use of incentives and the cultivation of strong student-teacher relationships. Dean (2019) notes that implementing incentives is an effective strategy to enhance academic performance and

encourage positive behavior among students. By offering rewards, teachers can motivate students to stay engaged and develop good habits. Academic incentives might include recognition for outstanding work, while behavior-based incentives foster a respectful and cooperative learning environment. To be truly effective, incentives should be meaningful, fair, and aligned with students’ intrinsic motivation, ensuring a balance between extrinsic rewards and self-driven learning.

Beyond incentives, the foundation of a supportive learning environment lies in strong student-teacher relationships. As highlighted by CAO Central (2021), these relationships are built on mutual respect, trust, and open communication. When teachers build meaningful connections with their students, they create an inclusive environment where students feel valued and understood. These positive relationships foster a sense of belonging, making students more engaged, motivated, and willing to take academic risks. When students feel seen and appreciated, they develop greater confidence, leading to improved participation and a greater willingness to overcome challenges. Furthermore, strong teacher-student connections promote respectful and cooperative interactions among peers, creating a classroom culture of kindness and collaboration. Investing in these relationships not only enhances academic success but also helps students develop essential social and emotional skills that extend beyond the classroom.

New teachers learn to handle their jobs by doing a few key things. They make sure everyone in their class feels welcome and included. They work well with other teachers, helping each other out. They keep learning new things to get better at their job. They practice their teaching skills and find ways to make lessons fun and interesting. They try to make their classes active, so students want to learn. And they learn how to deal with student behavior before it becomes a problem. Doing these things helps new teachers feel more confident and become better at teaching.

Table 3
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Insights from the Experiences of Newly Hired Teachers

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Commitment of Lifelong Learning and Professional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attend seminars to apply new strategies participate in more seminars to improve teaching strategies pursue professional growth through seminars and training seek graduate studies or get a master’s degree attend the MATATAG Curriculum seminars
Fostering Positive and Supportive Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> build a relationship based on respect and gratitude have emotional connections with students that make teachers touched by the love they offer seek advice from colleagues to shape the beliefs of collaboration and unity make an effort to really teach students amidst different challenges teach students the importance of respect and manners



<p>Embodying Patience, Strength, and Dedication in Teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a lot of patience as the key • be strong and equipped with strategies as key for new teachers • embrace the craft and purpose of being a teacher • observe, understand, and adapt to the challenges of teaching • keep serving as a teacher, even when it's tiring
<p>Inspiring and Motivating Student Growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give students motivation to study hard and achieve success as rewarding • witness learners grasp a challenging concept • make students motivated to create a lasting reward as a teacher • become motivated when children learn through the teacher's teaching • witness student growth that motivates teachers
<p>Building Resilience in Teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare oneself for the challenges along the way • reflect that teaching might be difficult but fulfilling • learn from experienced colleagues the way to handle students • ignore bashers and continue with teaching, whatever the circumstances

Commitment of Lifelong Learning and Professional Growth

Embracing lifelong learning allows educators to refine their skills, stay updated with new teaching strategies, and adapt to evolving educational needs. Through ongoing training, self-improvement, and collaboration, teachers enhance their expertise and effectiveness in the classroom. A commitment to professional growth fosters innovation, improves student outcomes, and ensures long-term success in the field of education.

I think one of my plans is to seek graduate studies or a master's degree to enhance my pedagogical competence in my career. This motivates me to enroll in graduate school, which I know will help me improve my pedagogical skills. The training there is different, and graduate school truly allows you to master your career. So, I think that's one piece of advice I can give to my newly hired colleagues. IDI-O7

Participant emphasized pursuing a master's degree enhances expertise, strengthens teaching strategies, and opens opportunities for research, leadership, and career advancement.

Teaching is a dynamic and evolving profession that demands continuous learning and growth. As Bates and Morgan (2018) state, educators must consistently refine their skills, adapt to new teaching methods, and stay updated with evolving educational trends to meet the diverse needs of their students effectively. Ongoing professional development through workshops, mentorship, peer collaboration, and self-reflection allow teachers to enhance their instructional strategies, integrate innovative technologies, and create more engaging learning environments. By embracing lifelong learning, educators not only improve their effectiveness but also inspire their students to adopt a similar mindset of curiosity and perseverance. This highlights the necessity for teachers to be adaptable, emotionally intelligent, and committed to fostering both academic and personal growth in students.

Fostering Positive and Supportive Relationships

Creating a positive and supportive environment fosters trust, respect, and collaboration among students, teachers, and the

school community. Educators can achieve this by promoting open communication, encouraging teamwork, and showing empathy. Strong relationships enhance student engagement, boost confidence, and create a welcoming atmosphere where everyone feels valued and motivated to succeed.

Being a newly hired teacher is truly challenging. As I have learned, you encounter a lot. You will be surprised by the diverse students you meet, each with their own attitudes, skills, and talents. For me, I have realized that teaching is not just about academics. You must never stop learning yourself. It is not simply about delivering lessons; you must also share your knowledge with your students. You need to teach them manners because many children lack those skills. They should have learned them at home, but as a teacher, you have to instill respect and good manners. The experience is quite different from that of an experienced teacher, who knows how to handle these situations. As a new teacher, you focus more on the positive aspects that can help the children. You must teach them not only academically but also emotionally. IDI-06

Building upon the foundation of strong relationships, teacher feedback plays a crucial role in fostering a supportive classroom environment. Allen et al. (2018) highlight that constructive feedback strengthens student-teacher relationships and offers valuable guidance for growth. Effective feedback provides specific insights on how to enhance learning, develop critical thinking skills, and build confidence. When teachers offer clear, actionable, and encouraging feedback, students are more likely to engage actively and take ownership of their progress. Moreover, consistent and meaningful feedback reinforces a sense of support, showing students that their efforts are recognized and valued. This helps establish a positive learning atmosphere where students feel safe to ask questions and collaborate.

Embodying Patience, Strength, and Dedication in Teaching

The insights I can share with other newly hired teachers seeking to enrich their pedagogical competence are: first, they need to observe, understand, and adapt to the challenges. They should also learn from other teachers by observing, understanding, and adapting. Furthermore, they need to remain motivated



because being a teacher is not easy. It is vastly different from being a student or an OJT. It is a completely different experience when you are in the field as a teacher. Just be strong. And be MATATAG. FGD-04

Effective educators embody patience by understanding students' diverse learning needs, resilience by overcoming challenges, and dedication by continuously striving to improve their teaching. By maintaining a positive attitude and adapting to different situations, teachers create a nurturing and motivating environment where students feel supported, encouraged, and inspired to succeed.

A teacher's patience fosters a supportive and encouraging learning environment, allowing students to grasp concepts more thoroughly and develop a deeper understanding of the material. When students feel comfortable asking questions and exploring ideas without fear of judgment, they become more engaged in the learning process. This not only enhances their comprehension but also enables them to absorb information more effectively and at their own pace. In turn, a patient approach helps build students' confidence, reduces anxiety, and promotes a positive attitude toward learning, ultimately leading to greater academic success (Morris et al., 2020). However, to maintain this patient and effective teaching, teachers themselves need to be supported.

Inspiring and Motivating Student Growth

The memorable experiences in my teaching career, witnessing my learners grasp a challenging concept and achieve those goal after struggling incredibly rewarding. IDI-02

Participants shared that teachers play a vital role in inspiring students to reach their full potential by fostering a supportive and motivating learning environment. By using encouragement, personalized guidance, and engaging teaching methods, educators help students develop confidence, resilience, and a passion for learning. This empowerment not only enhances academic success but also nurtures personal growth and lifelong learning skills.

A study conducted by Garcia (2021) posits that when educators and students establish positive, respectful, and encouraging interactions, it cultivates a classroom atmosphere where students feel valued, understood, and motivated to learn. A nurturing relationship between teachers and students promotes open communication, mutual trust, and a sense of belonging, all of which contribute to a more engaging and enjoyable educational experience. When students feel genuinely supported by their teachers, they are more likely to participate actively in lessons, take intellectual risks, and seek help when needed. This positive dynamic not only enhances their motivation but also boosts their confidence and academic performance. Additionally, a warm and inclusive classroom culture reduces stress and anxiety, making learning more enjoyable and meaningful. By fostering strong relationships, teachers can inspire students to develop a love for learning, build resilience, and cultivate essential life skills that extend beyond the classroom.

IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING PRACTICE

The lived experiences of newly hired elementary school teachers were a rich source of pedagogical growth, demanding a concerted effort from schools to leverage these insights. By directly engaging with students and classroom dynamics, they began to understand how to manage diverse learners, engage students, differentiate instruction, and assess learning outcomes. These experiences helped build their confidence and competence in practical teaching. Additionally, teaching practice encouraged new teachers to reflect on their methods, identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

Results of this study indicated that structured mentorship and induction programs were paramount, pairing novice educators with seasoned professionals. This provided a haven for new teachers to articulate their challenges and successes, fostering a sense of belonging and support. Moreover, tailored professional development, driven by the real-world experiences of these teachers, proved significantly more effective than generic training.

Finally, to directly assess the impact of pedagogical strategies on student outcomes, researchers considered including students as participants. This would enable a direct examination of whether the teachers' pedagogical approaches, informed by their lived experiences, effectively improved student performance. By comparing the lived experiences of teachers with the observed outcomes in students, researchers could establish a clear link between pedagogical competence and student achievement, thereby providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of teacher development strategies.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Unlocking the lived experiences of newly hired elementary teachers reveals a powerful connection by engaging directly with classroom challenges, new educators gain firsthand knowledge of effective teaching strategies, refine their skills, and build confidence in their instructional abilities. The process of reflecting on their experiences, receiving mentorship, and adapting to the diverse needs of their students fosters continuous professional growth, shaping them into more effective and capable teacher. These teachers, much like the students they serve, learn and grow through social engagement, adapting innovative approaches to support not only student communication skills but also their own professional development.

By creating inclusive classroom environments that foster structured peer interactions and creative role-playing for students, these teachers are simultaneously building their own repertoire of effective teaching strategies. This process underscores the critical importance of cultivating a supportive professional culture where new teachers feel empowered to experiment, take risks, and learn through interaction with colleagues and mentors.

This study, therefore, provides valuable insights into how the lived experiences of new teachers, particularly their social interactions, contribute to their pedagogical growth. It



highlights the need for professional development programs that emphasize collaborative learning, mentorship, and access to resources. By providing opportunities for peer observation, co-teaching, and reflective dialogue, schools can create a supportive network that enables new teachers to refine their skills and build confidence. Furthermore, engaging families in the educational process not only benefits students but also provides new teachers with valuable insights into diverse cultural backgrounds and community resources, enriching their understanding of their students and their pedagogical approaches.

Future research should delve deeper into the long-term impact of interaction on the pedagogical competence of newly hired elementary teachers. This includes exploring the effectiveness of various mentorship models, examining the role of online professional learning communities, and investigating the integration of technology to support collaborative learning among teachers.

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