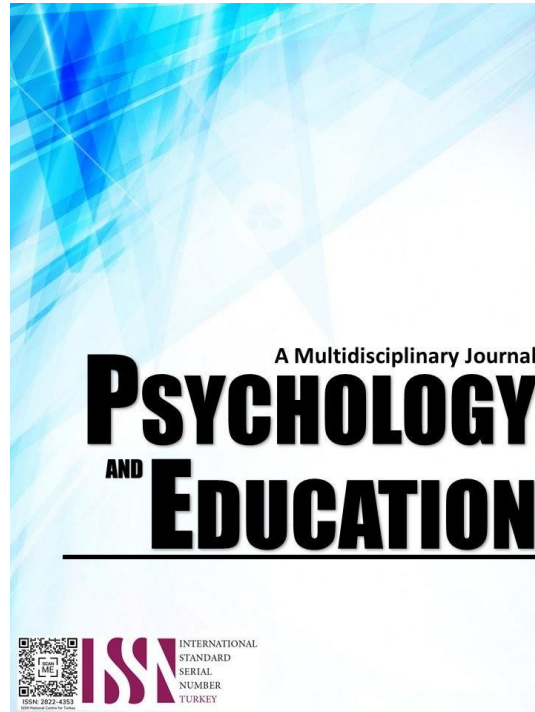


EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS FROM THE REMOTE AREA OF GENERAL LUNA, QUEZON: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH



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Exploring the Lived Experiences of Public Elementary School Teachers from the Remote Area of General Luna, Quezon: A Phenomenological Research

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Abstract

This study seeks to contribute more to knowing the challenges and to how the teachers assigned in remote areas and to how they cope with it. In line to that, this may contribute as well to know how efficient the government projects for the education sector of the country are, especially for the public schools in the remote areas of the Philippines. Phenomenological Approach: To fully explore the subjective lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in the distant town of General Luna, Quezon, the study will use a phenomenological research approach. A qualitative research approach called phenomenology focuses on a person's actual experiences in the world. Learning from the experiences of others is an effective strategy for researchers studying health professions education (HPE). The philosophical and methodological distinctions between hermeneutic and transcendental phenomenological methods are explained in this article. Successful phenomenological research requires an understanding of the ontological and epistemological assumptions. The two primary phenomenological research requires an understanding of the ontological and epistemological assumptions. The two primary subtypes of phenomenology are described in depth, along with examples. A potent research technique for examining difficult HPE problems is phenomenology. HPE scholars may take into consideration the usefulness of phenomenology while addressing their research questions by comprehending its nature and matching the research topic with the researcher's philosophy (Neubauer et al., 2019). Finally, implementing flexible and comprehensive assessment methods aimed at promoting diverse evaluation strategies beyond traditional testing, including performance-based assessments and project-based learning. DepEd, educational NGOs, and teacher training institutes led this initiative, ensuring teachers were equipped with the necessary training to assess students effectively in diverse learning environments. Together, these actions aimed to improve the overall educational experience for teachers and students in remote areas by addressing resource gaps, enhancing professional skills, and promoting culturally responsive education. The study aims to understand the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in General Luna, Quezon through an iterative coding and thematic analysis process. The researchers will analyze field notes and interview transcripts to identify recurring themes and patterns. The coding process organizes data, while thematic analysis explores underlying patterns. This approach ensures a thorough understanding of teachers' experiences, contributing to existing knowledge on challenges faced by educators in remote areas. The iterative coding and thematic analysis process also enhances the credibility and trustworthiness of the research outcomes.

Keywords: *phenomenological research, participant-centered framework, remote area*

Introduction

Teaching from kindergarten to the fifth grade, elementary school instructors oversee a student's education and growth. Along with specialized disciplines like music, physical education, and art, they teach kids subjects like writing, reading, and arithmetic. Teachers acquire social skills and become familiar with school policies. A friendly learning environment, lesson plans that adhere to curriculum standards, evaluation and grading of student work, constructive criticism, assessments, classroom setup, standardized test administration, parent communication, and classroom rules are just a few of their duties. Teachers can employ abilities like empathy, patience, communication, flexibility, resourcefulness, creativity, organization, and preparation to accomplish their aims. These abilities support educators in accomplishing their objectives in the classroom and aid in the general growth of their charges (Woods et al., 2019).

This study of Echazarra and Radinger (2019), looks at the equity and inclusivity of remote learning in rural settings, with a particular emphasis on the assistance that schools provide for teachers' pedagogical digital competence (PDC). The study discovered that remote teaching may solve several issues for school organizations and give students additional learning chances using a mixed method approach. It also emphasized the difficulties instructors have when attempting to use remote teaching, as well as the necessity for flexibility in the learning environment to meet individual requirements. The significance of teachers' PDC and digital relational competences, as well as their availability to cooperative communities and educational settings, was also emphasized by the research.

The study of Javilla and Fabella (2019) looks at mobile teachers' experiences in Antipolo's outlying schools, particularly in district II-F. Participating were six educators with more than three years of expertise. Work as Calling Theory, Work Adaptation Theory, and Cultural Learning Theory were employed in the study. The study focused on four issues, including lived experiences, features of the work environment, motivators, and difficulties adjusting to a new culture. It was conducted using Giorgi's phenomenological research methodology. Four themes surfaced: favorable attitudes about work, environmental and job adaptability, and discomfort on the physical, intellectual, and emotional levels. The results may aid in the understanding of the working environment and culture of mobile teachers in outlying schools by city school officials.

Considering the COVID-19 epidemic, the research of Jamon et al. (2021), attempts to comprehend the advantages, disadvantages, possibilities, and risks of the new normal in Philippine public education. It employs a qualitative phenomenological research design and identifies eight themes: 21st-century teachers who are technologically literate; cooperation, commitment, and competence as critical values and skills; the necessity for new normal pedagogies; challenges in tracking and evaluating learning; the use of online and offline platforms; developed skills in creating self-learning kits and modules; difficulties in communicating with parents and students; and the threat of Covid-19 in the workplace. The results imply that instructors showed resilience in the face of these difficulties and turned them into advantages and strengths.

In many African nations, poverty is a serious problem that affects the standard of education. Lack of parental involvement, inadequate governmental financing, resource scarcity, underqualified instructors, and multi-grade teaching are some of the difficulties faced by rural schools. These problems originate from outside sources such as education authorities and local communities as well as from within school systems. Education quality and student achievement in rural schools have not improved in 25 years of democracy. According to a qualitative research study conducted in White River, Mpumalanga province, most rural schools are without power, water, or sanitary facilities, and their classrooms are in disrepair, which makes it difficult to conduct effective instruction. These problems have a big impact on how well education is in rural regions generally (Du Plessis and Mestry, 2019).

According to Napanoy and Peckley (2020), assessment is essential for improving instruction quality, and educators need satisfactory evaluation proficiency to arrive at their maximum capacity. In any case, educators are learned about homeroom evaluation, yet their practices are not broad. The writing on evaluation proficiency is restricted, with few considering showing experience and school type as factors influencing appraisal education, particularly in native networks. This review expected to decide evaluation proficiency of public grade teachers in Bontoc, Northern Philippines. Discoveries showed unfortunate appraisal proficiency, with educators continuously rehearsing evaluation according to reason, plan, and correspondence. Segment factors, school type, and showing experience didn't impact instructors' evaluation proficiency. Appraisal education relates to evaluation practices, and appraisal isn't restricted to individual execution yet to the entirety of people, including instructors as assessors. Along these lines, workshops on evaluation and postgraduate examinations ought to be led.

This study seeks to contribute more to knowing the challenges and to how the teachers assigned in remote areas and to how they cope with it. In line to that, this may contribute as well to know how efficient the government projects for the education sector of the country are, especially for the public schools in the remote areas of the Philippines.

Research Questions

In this study, the researcher sought to recognize the school life experiences of elementary teachers in a remote area. Specifically, this aspired to answer the following questions:

1. What are the school life experiences of the elementary teachers in the remote area in terms of:
 - 1.1. personal experiences;
 - 1.2. learning delivery;
 - 1.3. learning resources; and
 - 1.4. assessment?
2. What are the challenges of the elementary teachers in the remote area in terms of:
 - 2.1. personal experiences;
 - 2.2. learning delivery;
 - 2.3. learning resources; and
 - 2.4. assessment?
3. How do elementary teachers adapt and respond to challenges/situations in the remote area in the present situation in terms of:
 - 3.1. personal experiences;
 - 3.2. learning delivery;
 - 3.3. learning resources; and
 - 3.4. assessment?
4. Based on the results of the findings, what action plan can be proposed to aid the remote public-school teachers in General Luna, Quezon?

Methodology

Research Design

This study will investigate the personal encounters and points of view of public primary teachers in a remote area in General Luna, Quezon utilizing a phenomenological research approach. Phenomenology is a subjective exploration system that spotlights on grasping the lived encounters of people inside a particular setting. The study will focus on educators' everyday communications, difficulties, wins, and discernments inside the instructive climate. This will also focus on rich stories and individual records, distinguishing basic topics, examples, and forces implanted inside their encounters. Through the bits of knowledge from educators, phenomenology

empowers specialists to reveal the complicated layers of importance in their encounters, giving a comprehension of their emotional real factors. The subjective information got through phenomenological research holds huge value for examination, offering an all-encompassing depiction of their lived real factors.

The study will focus on the challenges faced by remote area public elementary school educators in General Luna, Quezon, Philippines, focusing on their unique socio-geographical context. This will examine the educational landscape, including logistical constraints and socio-economic disparities, and the role of teachers in academic development and socio-cultural enrichment. The research aims to provide insights into educators' experiences, fostering discourse and action towards advancing educational equity and quality in remote areas.

Participants

The study will examine public elementary school teachers at a remote area located at General Luna in Quezon, Philippines, using a purposive sampling approach. The researchers aim to gain in-depth insights into the challenges, triumphs, and experiences faced by educators in this setting. Factors considered include years of teaching experience, subject specialization, grade level assignment, and additional roles within the school community. The goal is to generate nuanced findings that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and experiences faced by educators in this educational context.

Instrument

The researcher will create observational checklists to understand participants' daily routines and challenges in learning delivery, materials, and evaluation. A self-made checklist will be used to capture participant behavior, while a semi-structured interview will be conducted.

The checklist will cover challenges with learning delivery, resources, and evaluation, as well as everyday school activities. Open-ended questions will be used to understand participants' adaptations and responses. Three education specialists will consult the researcher to develop the checklist and interview guide, and consent will be obtained from the thesis supervisor and oral examination committee before usage.

Procedure

The study will survey teachers in General Luna, Quezon to understand their classroom experiences. Participants will be diverse, informed about the study's goals, methodologies, risks, and benefits. They will be informed of their rights and confidentiality. Field notes and audio recordings will be meticulously transcribed.

A phenomenological data analysis approach will identify recurring themes. Iterative coding and evaluation will extract valuable insights. Member checking will enhance the credibility of the findings. Data gathering will continue until saturation is achieved. The study aims to provide valuable insights into teachers' experiences, inform potential interventions and policies for improving educational practices and outcomes in the region.

Data Analysis

The study aims to understand the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in General Luna, Quezon through an iterative coding and thematic analysis process. The researchers will analyze field notes and interview transcripts to identify recurring themes and patterns. The coding process organizes data, while thematic analysis explores underlying patterns. This approach ensures a thorough understanding of teachers' experiences, contributing to existing knowledge on challenges faced by educators in remote areas. The iterative coding and thematic analysis process also enhances the credibility and trustworthiness of the research outcomes.

Ethical Considerations

The aim of the study is to guarantee that participants have a method for giving their informed consent after being fully informed about the processes, benefits, risks, and purpose of the study. Throughout the investigation, anonymity will be upheld by removing identifying information and using pseudonyms to shield identities. There will be no consequences for withdrawing or choosing not to participate; participation is entirely optional.

The viewpoints, experiences, and cultural backgrounds of participants will be acknowledged and valued by researchers, who will adhere to the values of respect, sensitivity, and cultural competency. Throughout the study process, their opinions will be valued and heard. The study protocol will be subjected to a comprehensive ethical evaluation by appropriate review boards or ethics committees, guaranteeing adherence to ethical principles and norms, encompassing safeguarding the rights, welfare, and privacy of participants. Further ethical issues unique to the research site and participants will also be considered.

Results and Discussion

This part of the study showed the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the gathered data from the questionnaires answered by the respondents. Such a presentation is in accordance with the specific questions posited on the objectives of the study.



Experiences with School Life

Table 1. *Experiences with School Life of the Respondents*

<i>Could you share your own experiences working as an elementary school teacher in General Luna, Quezon's isolated area?</i>
P1: "Working here is a unique experience. The community is tight-knit, and the children are eager to learn despite the challenges we face with limited resources."
P2: "Teaching in General Luna is fulfilling yet challenging. The isolation means we have to be resourceful and adaptable to meet the educational needs of our students."
P3: "It's a rewarding experience. The students are enthusiastic, and their eagerness to learn motivates me every day, despite the remoteness of our location."
P4: "Being an elementary teacher here requires dedication. We often face logistical challenges, but seeing the progress in our students makes it all worthwhile."
P5: "Working here is both challenging and fulfilling. The bond with students and colleagues is strong, and seeing the impact of education in such a remote area is heartwarming."
P6: "Teaching in General Luna has taught me resilience. Despite the lack of modern amenities, the passion for education among the students and teachers alike is inspiring."
P7: "It's a privilege to teach here. We may lack some resources, but the commitment to education is unwavering among the community, which makes our work deeply rewarding."
P8: "My experience here has been enriching. The community support and the determination of students to learn make every challenge worth overcoming."
<i>What would you say about the method used to teach pupils in this far-off place?</i>
P1: "We rely heavily on interactive methods and visual aids due to limited technology. It helps keep the students engaged and enhances their understanding."
P2: "The teaching methods here are hands-on and practical, which suits the students' learning styles in this environment."
P3: "Our approach emphasizes community involvement and real-life applications, which resonates well with the students and their families."
P4: "Adaptability is key. We use a mix of traditional teaching methods and innovative approaches to cater to the diverse needs of our students."
P5: "Teaching methods are tailored to the local culture and environment. It fosters a deeper connection with the students and makes learning more relevant."
P6: "Simplicity and creativity define our teaching methods. We make the most out of what we have to ensure effective learning experiences."
P7: "The methods are practical and student-centered, focusing on foundational skills and critical thinking rather than relying on technology."
P8: "We emphasize collaborative learning and encourage peer teaching, which fosters a supportive learning environment despite the geographical isolation."
<i>What educational resources are accessible to instructors in a distant location, and how do they affect the way you teach?</i>
P1: "Resources are limited to basic textbooks and locally sourced materials. It challenges us to be creative and innovative in our lesson planning."
P2: "We have few educational materials, but the community support and our collective creativity compensate for this limitation."
P3: "Access to technology is minimal, so we focus on traditional teaching aids like blackboards and educational games made from local materials."
P4: "Educational resources are sparse, but we make the most of what we have. It encourages us to think outside the box and create our own teaching tools."
P5: "We rely on donated books, community contributions, and government aid for educational resources. It forces us to be resourceful and maximize every opportunity."
P6: "We have basic supplies and textbooks, supplemented by community donations. The lack of resources pushes us to innovate and find creative teaching solutions."
P7: "Resources are limited to essentials, so we focus on practical learning and collaborative projects that require minimal materials."
P8: "We have access to basic textbooks and some teaching aids. The challenge is making these resources engaging and relevant to our students' lives."
<i>In what ways do you measure and appraise pupils' learning at a remote location?</i>
P1: "We use regular assessments like quizzes and exams, supplemented by observations and student portfolios to track progress."
P2: "Formative assessments and daily observations play a crucial role in understanding each student's development."
P3: "We emphasize continuous assessment through class participation, group projects, and practical demonstrations."
P4: "Assessment methods include oral exams, written assignments, and peer evaluations, tailored to suit the community's cultural context."
P5: "We use a combination of traditional tests and performance-based assessments to evaluate students' understanding and skills."
P6: "Observation and feedback are key. We assess students' progress through daily interactions and informal evaluations."
P7: "We conduct regular assessments aligned with curriculum goals, adapting methods to accommodate the diverse learning abilities in our community."
P8: "We assess students through a mix of written tests, projects, and practical demonstrations, focusing on holistic development rather than just academic achievements."

Table 1 showed the experiences of the respondents within the remote areas. The experiences shared by elementary school teachers in General Luna, Quezon's isolated area reveal a profound commitment to education amidst challenging circumstances. These educators



demonstrate remarkable resilience and adaptability, navigating limited resources, geographical isolation, and sometimes adverse conditions with creativity and determination. They rely heavily on community support, forging strong partnerships and utilizing local contributions to supplement scarce educational materials. This collaborative spirit extended into their teaching practices, where they innovate with practical, hands-on methods that engage students effectively despite technological constraints. According to Oh & Jeong (2022), millennial elementary school teachers' experiences as department heads include challenges, negative emotions, heavy workloads, positive emotions, and beneficial opportunities for personal growth and professional development.

Central to their approach is a holistic view of education, emphasizing not only academic achievement but also the development of practical skills, critical thinking, and personal growth. Assessment strategies reflect this holistic approach, blending traditional tests with performance-based evaluations and informal observations tailored to the diverse learning needs of their students. Through these methods, teachers in General Luna foster a supportive learning environment where peer teaching and collaborative projects thrive, nurturing a sense of community and shared responsibility for education.

Above all, their passion for teaching shined through in their dedication to inspiring young minds and instilling a love for learning. Despite the challenges they face, these educators exemplify the transformative power of education in remote and underserved communities. Their experiences underscore the importance of resilience, community engagement, innovative teaching practices, and a steadfast commitment to educational excellence. Through their efforts, they not only educate students but also empower them to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential, demonstrating that quality education can flourish even in the most challenging environments. The teacher experienced lessons with lack of professionalism, confusion over the essence of inclusive education, and tensions with people around her in relation to life guidance and relationships (Jo, 2023).

Difficulties Elementary Teachers Face

Table 2. Difficulties Faced by the Respondents

<i>As an elementary school teacher in a distant place, what personal problems do you face?</i>
P1: "Personal problems often revolve around isolation and limited access to amenities. Living far from urban centers means fewer social opportunities and challenges in accessing healthcare."
P2: "One of the main personal challenges is adjusting to the rural lifestyle, which can be quite different from what I'm accustomed to. It requires adaptability and a willingness to embrace local customs."
P3: "Financial constraints are a significant issue. Salaries may not adequately cover living expenses in remote areas, leading to financial stress."
P4: "The lack of professional development opportunities is a concern. Remote locations often have limited access to workshops, training, and career advancement programs."
P5: "Balancing work and personal life can be challenging. The demanding nature of teaching in a distant place sometimes makes it difficult to find time for family and self-care."
P6: "Healthcare access is limited, which can be worrying, especially in emergencies. It requires careful planning and reliance on local healthcare facilities."
P7: "Cultural adjustment is a personal challenge. Integrating into a new community with different norms and values takes time and effort."
P8: "Distance from family and support networks is tough emotionally. It requires building a strong support system within the local community."
<i>What challenges do you have while teaching pupils in this far-flung place effectively?</i>
P1: "Limited resources make it challenging to create diverse learning experiences. We have to be creative with the materials we have."
P2: "Engaging students can be difficult due to the lack of modern teaching tools. It requires innovative approaches to keep lessons interesting and relevant."
P3: "Adapting curriculum to local needs and cultural context is a constant challenge. Ensuring that lessons are meaningful and applicable to students' lives is crucial."
P4: "Classroom management can be challenging with mixed-age groups and varying levels of academic readiness among students."
P5: "Maintaining consistent attendance can be an issue, as students may face obstacles like long distances to school or family responsibilities."
P6: "Language barriers can hinder effective communication and understanding, especially in multicultural settings."
P7: "Balancing individualized attention with limited time and resources is a constant juggle. It's challenging to meet each student's unique learning needs adequately."
P8: "Limited access to extracurricular activities and enrichment programs can hinder holistic development outside of academics."
<i>What kind of restrictions or shortcomings do you face regarding educational materials?</i>
P1: "We often lack up-to-date textbooks and supplementary materials. It requires improvisation and adaptation of teaching resources."
P2: "Technology is limited, so we rely heavily on traditional teaching aids like chalkboards and handmade visuals."
P3: "Educational materials are sometimes outdated or irrelevant to local contexts, requiring us to modify or create our own resources."
P4: "Limited availability of science and laboratory equipment restricts hands-on learning experiences."
P5: "There's a shortage of books and reading materials, which impacts literacy programs and access to diverse literature."
P6: "Art and music supplies are scarce, affecting creative expression and cultural education."
P7: "Access to computers and internet connectivity is minimal, hindering digital literacy and research capabilities."
P8: "Funding constraints limit our ability to purchase new educational materials and maintain existing ones."
<i>What difficulties do you have while evaluating the learning results of your students?</i>
P1: "Assessment can be subjective without standardized tools. It requires careful observation and understanding of each student's progress."



- P2: "Measuring academic growth accurately can be challenging due to varying learning paces and educational backgrounds among students."
P3: "Finding time for thorough assessment amidst busy schedules and limited class hours is difficult."
P4: "Language barriers sometimes affect students' ability to demonstrate their knowledge effectively, especially in written assessments."
P5: "Limited access to assessment resources like standardized tests or diagnostic tools makes it harder to gauge learning outcomes comprehensively."
P6: "Evaluating practical skills and applied knowledge without appropriate facilities or equipment presents a challenge."
P7: "Ensuring fairness and consistency in grading can be challenging with large class sizes and diverse learning abilities."
P8: "Communicating assessment results effectively to parents and guardians, especially in remote communities, requires additional effort and resources."

Table 2 showed the difficulties the respondents faced within the remote areas. Elementary school teachers in remote areas of Quezon Province faced a myriad of personal and professional challenges, yet their resilience and adaptability were commendable. Personal issues often revolved around isolation, limited access to amenities and healthcare, cultural adjustment, financial constraints, and balancing work with personal life. These challenges required teachers to be resourceful, adaptable, and proactive in seeking support within their local communities. Challenges in emergency remote teaching for elementary school teachers include directing gateways, lack of skill and knowledge, addressing needs, engaging students, and lacking support from parents (Yong et al., 2021).

Professionally, teachers grappled with limited resources, outdated materials, and the necessity of improvising to create engaging and relevant lessons. The lack of modern teaching tools, coupled with difficulties in classroom management, language barriers, and inconsistent student attendance, added layers of complexity to their roles. Teachers had to continually innovate to adapt the curriculum to local contexts and ensure meaningful learning experiences. The shortage of educational materials was a significant hurdle, impacting literacy, science education, creative expression, and digital literacy. Teachers often relied on traditional methods and their own creativity to compensate for these deficiencies. Funding constraints further limit the acquisition and maintenance of necessary teaching aids. Demir et al. (2022) stated that Primary teachers face difficulties in compulsory distance education due to limited internet connection, lack of technological resources, and lack of professional expertise in many places.

Evaluating student learning outcomes presented additional difficulties. The absence of standardized tools and assessment resources, coupled with the challenge of ensuring fairness and consistency in grading, required teachers to adopt meticulous and often subjective assessment methods. Language barriers and the need to communicate results effectively to parents in remote communities demanded extra effort and innovative communication strategies. Despite these daunting challenges, the dedication of these teachers ensured that students in remote areas received an education that was as comprehensive and effective as possible. Their ability to adapt, innovate, and persist in the face of adversity not only addressed the immediate educational needs but also contributed to the long-term development of resilient and well-rounded learners. According to Ferri et al. (2022), technological challenges in remote areas include unreliable internet connections and students' lack of electronic devices, while pedagogical challenges include lack of digital skills, structured content, interactivity, and teacher social presence.

Adjustment and Reaction to Difficulties

Table 3. Adjustment and Reaction to Difficulties of the Respondents

In your capacity as an elementary school teacher in a remote location, how do you adjust to overcome personal challenges?
P1: I maintain a positive mindset by focusing on the progress of my students. Celebrating small achievements keeps me motivated and resilient.
P2: I engage in regular self-care routines such as meditation and exercise to manage stress and stay healthy.
P3: I connect with fellow teachers online to share experiences and seek advice, which helps me feel less isolated and more supported.
P4: I stay organized by planning my lessons and activities well in advance, which helps me manage time more effectively.
P5: I take part in professional development programs to enhance my skills and knowledge, which boosts my confidence in tackling challenges.
P6: I seek support from my community, including parents and local leaders, to address personal and professional needs.
P7: I prioritize my tasks and focus on what I can control, letting go of factors beyond my influence.
P8: I remind myself of the positive impact I have on my students' lives, which gives me a sense of purpose and fulfillment.
Could you elaborate on any tactics you use to deal with difficulties in efficiently presenting lessons?
P1: I use storytelling and real-life examples to make lessons more engaging and relatable for my students.
P2: I incorporate visual aids, like drawings and charts, to simplify complex concepts and maintain student interest.
P3: I divide lessons into smaller, manageable segments to ensure students can absorb and retain information better.
P4: I use interactive activities, such as group work and hands-on projects, to encourage active participation and learning.
P5: I regularly assess students' understanding through informal quizzes and discussions to identify and address gaps promptly.
P6: I utilize local resources and the environment to create experiential learning opportunities that are both educational and enjoyable.
P7: I adapt my teaching pace to match the students' learning speed, ensuring no one is left behind.
P8: I foster a collaborative learning environment where students feel comfortable asking questions and helping each other.
What tactics do you employ to make the most of the limited learning materials available to you? How do you handle them?
P1: I create my own teaching aids using locally available materials, like crafting models from recyclable items.
P2: I borrow books and other resources from neighboring schools and share them with my students.
P3: I encourage students to bring relevant items from home to use as learning tools during lessons.
P4: I integrate multimedia resources, such as educational videos and online content, when possible.



- P5: I conduct community drives to collect donations of books, stationery, and other learning materials.
P6: I use improvisation and creativity to adapt available materials to suit various teaching purposes.
P7: I involve students in the creation of learning materials, which also enhances their understanding and retention of the subject matter.
P8: I prioritize essential learning goals and focus on achieving them with the resources at hand, rather than trying to cover everything.
- How do you modify your evaluation techniques to get around obstacles in assessing pupils' learning?*
- P1: I use oral assessments and presentations to gauge students' understanding, especially when written tests are not feasible.
P2: I implement peer evaluations, where students assess each other's work, providing diverse feedback and promoting collaborative learning.
P3: I conduct regular one-on-one sessions with students to discuss their progress and address any challenges they face.
P4: I use project-based assessments that allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through practical applications.
P5: I create rubrics with clear criteria for each assignment, ensuring transparent and consistent evaluation.
P6: I incorporate self-assessment techniques, encouraging students to reflect on their learning and set personal goals.
P7: I adapt traditional tests to be more flexible, such as using open-book exams or allowing extra time for completion.
P8: I use observational assessments during classroom activities to monitor student engagement and participation.

Table 3 presented the adjustment and reaction to difficulties of the respondents. Through the respondents' experiences, several key themes emerged that highlighted their adaptive strategies and resourcefulness. Teachers emphasized the importance of maintaining a positive mindset and self-care routines to manage personal challenges. Many found solace and strength through connections with fellow educators, professional development, and community support. These approaches not only helped in overcoming isolation but also reinforced their commitment to the educational mission. Efficiency in lesson presentation was achieved through a variety of innovative methods. Teachers used storytelling, visual aids, and real-life examples to make lessons engaging and relatable. Breaking lessons into smaller segments and incorporating interactive activities ensured better comprehension and retention among students. Development of professionalism in remote areas involves facilitating permission for teachers to continue studies, emphasizing school principals and teachers with more abilities to share, and improving school facilities and infrastructure (Kurniati et al., 2020).

Adapting the teaching pace and fostering a collaborative classroom environment were also crucial in addressing diverse learning needs. Resourcefulness was key when dealing with limited learning materials. Teachers created their own aids, borrowed resources, and encouraged students to contribute items from home. Community drives and improvisation played significant roles in supplementing the scarce resources. Prioritizing essential learning goals helped in making the best use of what was available, ensuring that the core educational objectives were met. Assessing students' learning in remote areas required flexible and innovative evaluation techniques. Oral assessments, peer evaluations, and project-based assessments provided alternative ways to measure understanding. One-on-one sessions, rubrics, self-assessment, and observational assessments further enhanced the accuracy and comprehensiveness of evaluations. These methods ensured that students were fairly assessed, and their progress was accurately monitored despite the challenging circumstances. In conclusion, the dedication and ingenuity of elementary school teachers in Quezon Province shone through their ability to adapt and thrive in a remote teaching environment. Their strategies not only addressed the immediate challenges but also contributed to a more resilient and effective educational system. Through personal resilience, innovative teaching techniques, resourcefulness, and adapted evaluation methods, these educators continued to make a significant impact on their students' learning and development. According to Gonzalez & Poole (2021), teachers adopted a "less is more" approach and used inquiry processes to develop coherent learning units for remote instruction, adjusting instruction accordingly.

Action Plan

Table 4. <i>Proposed Action Plan</i>		
<i>Objective</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Person In Charge</i>
Enhance Community and Government Support	Improve access to healthcare, provide financial assistance, and ensure reliable transportation and communication infrastructure for teachers in remote areas. This includes establishing healthcare facilities closer to remote schools, offering regular medical camps, and implementing hardship allowances.	Local Government Units (LGUs), Department of Education (DepEd), Health Department Officials
Expand Professional Development Opportunities	Offer more professional development programs specifically tailored for teachers in remote locations, including online training, workshops, and seminars focused on innovative teaching methods, curriculum adaptation, and effective classroom management strategies.	Department of Education (DepEd), Educational NGOs, Online Education Providers
Improve Access to Educational Resources	Allocate funding to ensure remote schools have up-to-date textbooks, technology, and other essential educational materials. Organize community drives and partnerships with NGOs to supplement these resources.	School Principals, Local Government Units (LGUs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
Develop Culturally Relevant Curriculum and Teaching Aids	Encourage the creation of curriculum and teaching aids relevant to the local context and culture by involving local communities in developing these materials, ensuring they are meaningful and applicable to students' lives.	Curriculum Developers, Local Community Leaders, School Principals
Implement Flexible and Comprehensive Assessment Methods	Promote the use of diverse assessment strategies beyond traditional testing, such as performance-based evaluations, peer assessments, and project-based learning. Provide training for teachers on these methods to ensure effective implementation and consistency in grading.	Department of Education (DepEd), Educational NGOs, Teacher Training Institutes

Table 4 presented the action plan to be proposed based on the results of the study. The action plan aimed to address critical challenges faced by elementary school teachers in remote areas of Quezon Province through a series of targeted objectives. Firstly, enhancing community and government support involved improving access to healthcare, providing financial assistance, and ensuring reliable transportation and communication infrastructure. This initiative, led by Local Government Units (LGUs), the Department of Education (DepEd), and Health Department Officials, sought to alleviate personal challenges such as isolation and limited amenities. Secondly, expanding professional development opportunities focused on offering tailored programs like online training, workshops, and seminars to enhance teachers' skills in innovative teaching methods and effective classroom management. This effort, spearheaded by DepEd, educational NGOs, and online education providers, aimed to bridge the gap caused by geographical isolation.

Improving access to educational resources was another critical objective, entailing the allocation of funding for textbooks, technology, and other essential materials in remote schools. Collaborative efforts involving school principals, LGUs, and NGOs were crucial in organizing resource drives and securing additional support. Developing culturally relevant curriculum and teaching aids was also prioritized, emphasizing collaboration between curriculum developers, local community leaders, and school principals to integrate local context into educational materials, thereby enhancing student engagement and relevance.

Finally, implementing flexible and comprehensive assessment methods aimed at promoting diverse evaluation strategies beyond traditional testing, including performance-based assessments and project-based learning. DepEd, educational NGOs, and teacher training institutes led this initiative, ensuring teachers were equipped with the necessary training to assess students effectively in diverse learning environments. Together, these actions aimed to improve the overall educational experience for teachers and students in remote areas by addressing resource gaps, enhancing professional skills, and promoting culturally responsive education.

Conclusions

The experiences of elementary school teachers in the isolated area of General Luna, Quezon Province, reveal their profound commitment to education despite challenging circumstances. These educators demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability, creatively navigating limited resources, geographical isolation, and adverse conditions. They relied heavily on community support, forging strong partnerships, and utilizing local contributions to supplement scarce educational materials. This collaborative spirit extended into their teaching practices, where they innovated with practical, hands-on methods that engaged students effectively, even with technological constraints.

Central to their approach was a holistic view of education, emphasizing academic achievement alongside the development of practical skills, critical thinking, and personal growth. Their assessment strategies reflected this holistic approach, blending traditional tests with performance-based evaluations and informal observations tailored to the diverse learning needs of their students. Through these methods, teachers fostered a supportive learning environment where peer teaching and collaborative projects thrived, nurturing a sense of community and shared responsibility for education.

Despite personal challenges like isolation, limited access to amenities and healthcare, cultural adjustments, financial constraints, and balancing work with personal life, these teachers remained resourceful and proactive. They sought support within their local communities and engaged in professional development to overcome these obstacles. Professionally, they grappled with limited resources, outdated materials, and the necessity of improvising to create engaging and relevant lessons. Their creativity and dedication ensured that students received a comprehensive education.

The shortage of educational materials impacted literacy, science education, creative expression, and digital literacy. Teachers often relied on traditional methods and their own creativity to compensate for these deficiencies. Evaluating student learning outcomes presented additional difficulties, requiring flexible and innovative assessment methods. Despite these daunting challenges, the dedication of these teachers ensured that students in remote areas received an education that was as effective and comprehensive as possible.

The dedication and ingenuity of elementary school teachers in General Luna shone through their ability to adapt and thrive in a remote teaching environment. Their strategies addressed immediate challenges and contributed to a more resilient and effective educational system. Through personal resilience, innovative teaching techniques, resourcefulness, and adapted evaluation methods, these educators continued to make a significant impact on their students' learning and development. Their efforts demonstrated that quality education could flourish even in the most challenging environments, empowering students to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential.

Enhancing community and government support had been crucial for better supporting teachers in remote areas. This included improving access to healthcare, providing financial assistance or incentives, and ensuring reliable transportation and communication infrastructure. For instance, establishing healthcare facilities closer to remote schools or offering regular medical camps would have alleviated the healthcare access issues faced by teachers. Financial incentives such as hardship allowances could have helped offset the higher living costs in remote areas, reducing financial stress for the educators. Improving transportation infrastructure would have made it easier for teachers to commute and for educational materials to reach these distant locations. Reliable communication infrastructure would have facilitated better connectivity, enabling teachers to access online resources and stay connected with their families and professional networks.

Expanding professional development opportunities was also essential. More programs specifically tailored for teachers in remote locations were needed, including online training, workshops, and seminars that focused on innovative teaching methods, curriculum adaptation, and effective classroom management strategies. For instance, online professional development courses could have been offered to teachers, providing them with the latest teaching techniques and pedagogical approaches without requiring them to travel. Workshops and seminars could have been conducted during school breaks or through mobile training units, bringing expertise directly to remote areas. These opportunities would have helped teachers stay updated with current educational trends and improve their teaching practices, ultimately benefiting their students.

Improving access to educational resources was another important recommendation. Allocating funding to ensure that remote schools had up-to-date textbooks, technology, and other essential educational materials was necessary. For example, government and NGO funding could have been directed towards purchasing new textbooks, digital devices, and other learning aids. Community drives and partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) could also be organized to supplement these resources. Local communities could have been engaged in fundraising or donating materials, while NGOs could have provided additional support through resource distribution programs. These efforts would have ensured that students in remote areas had access to the same quality of educational materials as their urban counterparts.

Developing culturally relevant curriculum and teaching aids was crucial as well. Encouraging the creation of curriculum and teaching aids that were relevant to the local context and culture involved local communities in developing these materials, making them meaningful and applicable to students' lives, which enhanced their engagement and learning outcomes. For instance, incorporating local history, traditions, and languages into the curriculum would have made learning more relatable and interesting for students. Teachers could have collaborated with community elders and local experts to develop teaching aids and lesson plans that reflected the students' cultural backgrounds. This approach would have fostered a deeper connection between students and their education, promoting a sense of pride and identity.

Finally, implementing flexible and comprehensive assessment methods was recommended. Promoting the use of diverse assessment strategies that went beyond traditional testing, such as performance-based evaluations, peer assessments, and project-based learning, provided a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of students' progress. Providing training for teachers on these methods ensured effective implementation and consistency in grading. For example, performance-based evaluations could have included practical tasks that demonstrated students' skills and knowledge, while peer assessments would have encouraged collaborative learning and self-reflection. Project-based learning could have allowed students to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts, making learning more engaging and relevant. Training teachers in these assessment methods would have equipped them with the skills to evaluate their students' learning more holistically and fairly.

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