

# TEACHING THE SUBJECT CONTENT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY OF OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHERS

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## ABSTRACT

*This research investigated the personal experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and insights of teachers teaching subjects outside their expertise. This phenomenological investigation was conducted at Bango National High School in Compostela East District, Division of Davao de Oro. In-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with ten out-of-field teachers who were purposefully selected for the research. To gain insight into the experiences of teachers who taught subjects outside their area of expertise, the researcher employed thematic coding to analyze the responses provided by these teachers. The result of the study revealed that teachers teaching outside their expertise encountered many challenges, including a lack of understanding of the topic, difficulty delving deeply into the subject matter, unfamiliarity with subject-specific terminology, instructional delivery difficulties, and inadequate subject preparation. Thus, teachers teaching outside their expertise engaged in proactive approaches, such as studying the lesson beforehand, establishing a solid foundation of knowledge, watching instructional videos, and adopting a positive attitude toward the assigned task to cope with the challenges. In addition, the acquired insights included the significance of adaptability, a willingness to learn, the use of diverse strategies, the limitation of presenting subjects within the teacher's knowledge, and the consideration of individual differences among students. It was shown in the result that this endeavor positively influenced their pedagogical approach, allowing them to adopt innovative methods that effectively engaged students. Finally, the finding also suggested that school administrators may provide out-of-field teachers with specialized professional development, particularly through subject-specific seminars and training courses, and the need for proactive support systems.*

**Keywords:** *Keywords: out-of-field teaching, experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, insights, qualitative study, phenomenological study*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is widely regarded as a noble vocation. The transmission of knowledge, skills, and attitudes is a crucial aspect. Teachers must possess a profound mastery of the subject matter to facilitate the teaching and learning process in schools efficiently. The quality of teaching significantly impacts the educational progress and personal growth of students they receive inside the classroom setting. However, it is essential to acknowledge that several educational institutions worldwide have the challenge of assigning enough competent and proficient educators (Sen, 2010). The prevalent phenomenon of hiring educators to teach topics outside their specialization, despite their lack of fundamental experience or capacity, is often disregarded as a potential cause of these challenges. The issue is widely acknowledged by scholars, such as Cobbold (2006), who recognize its prevalence within the education system and, thus, its importance.

According to a study by Ngugi (2014), teachers must possess an in-depth knowledge of their subject matter. Teachers are better equipped to clarify concepts for students and fill in any gaps in their understanding when they fully grasp the material. Teachers not only had a significant impact on their students and communities, but they also had to deal with issues including teaching subjects for which they were not adequately prepared or what was known as "out-of-field teaching." The mismatch between teachers' credentials and the assignments they were expected to teach hindered the transfer of information and consequently impacted students' academic performance.

Thus, the significance of high-quality teacher education and training was further proven by ensuring that teachers had a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter for successful teaching and an educational system's overall performance.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Gamayao (2021) states that there currently needs to be more highly skilled educators in the education sector. The concept of teaching competencies proposed by Jackson (2009) is the theoretical basis for Gamayao's research. Competencies encompass the range of skills greatly enhancing an educator's effectiveness in their profession. Teachers must possess a wide range of expertise to maximize their students' learning potential within the complex and demanding environment they navigate daily, making numerous critical decisions. The most important factors influencing the essential skills that a teacher should possess are instructional delivery, classroom management, formative assessment, and personal competencies.

The research revealed that within the specific context of Bango National High School, a notable proportion of educators, namely 67%, were seen to be delivering instruction in subjects outside their areas of expertise. The existing body of data indicates that a considerable number of teachers often teach subjects that are outside their areas of competence. Teachers needing to be formally trained in their teaching areas could find it difficult to effectively convey content and use appropriate teaching methodology, adversely affecting learners' learning experiences and increasing teacher stress and dissatisfaction.

Therefore, it is essential to understand the perspectives and backgrounds of educators who are not experts in the subject. Doing so is crucial for solving this problem, finding ways to support their professional development, and improving the achievement levels of students. Thus, this phenomenological study aims to investigate the everyday lives, struggles, and teaching methods of teachers who are not specialists in the subject matter being taught.

### 1.1 Research Questions

This research investigated out-of-field teachers' experiences, focusing on their difficulties with teaching unfamiliar subjects, their coping strategies, and their perspectives and suggestions. It was guided by the following questions;

1. What are the experiences encountered by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?
2. What are the challenges encountered by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?
3. How do out-of-field teachers cope with the challenges of teaching the subject content?
4. What are the insights gained by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section gives readers a thorough grasp of the problems and challenges experienced by out-of-field teachers by offering readings and subjects related to the current concept being examined. The results of a similar study were offered to help us comprehend what was being stressed in this qualitative examination. They came from a variety of places, including manuals, books, periodicals, and websites.

**Out-of-Field Teaching.** Research reveals that out-of-field teaching is widely used and affects the learning environment, teaching efficacy, and education (Du Plessis, 2013). The finding exposed a long-ignored educational issue. The researcher recognizes the necessity of resolving this issue, which lowers school quality and violates the School Act. Jerald and Ingersoll (2002) found that educators with lower college admission or license results taught more students. When educators teach outside their disciplines, the accuracy of the subject matter is compromised,

leading to learner disinterest, decreased academic achievement, and lowered teachers' self-confidence. This recurring pattern has led the public to believe that the quality of education is deteriorating (Caldis, 2017).

**Experiences of Out-of-Field Teachers.** As per Ingersoll's (2004) findings, educators frequently need help effectively conveying the curriculum when assigned to impart knowledge in disciplines beyond their competence. Their limited knowledge in the specific area of study causes them to need help to provide students with thorough explanations and confident responses to their inquiries. These difficulties might thus result in significant learning gaps for the students, impeding their capacity to pick up the material and improve academically. Dolores (2023) also examined how students perceive teachers who impart knowledge outside their expertise. He discovered that most students can tell whether a teacher is not an expert in a particular field and that this information may impact students' respect for the teacher and engagement in class activities. This implies that students' perceptions regarding their engagement and overall learning experience.

**Challenges of Out-of-Field Teachers.** Kind (2009) asserts that educators without expertise in the specific content exhibit less self-confidence in experimenting with innovative pedagogical approaches, demonstrate less creativity, and encounter incredible difficulty formulating creative lesson plans. Instead, they often use established methodologies. Moreover, in the study conducted by Lingard (2010), the emotional state of a teacher, particularly emotions of inadequacy or a lack of interest, significantly influences the dynamics inside a classroom. This fact has been emphasized by many scholarly articles and research studies (Ahn et al., 2011). According to Steyn and Du Plessis (2007), it was shown that non-specialist teachers who perceive a lack of control over their classroom environment tend to suffer emotional stress, which may eventually emerge as behavioral issues within the classroom setting. As a result, these teachers experience a decline in their self-esteem and become excessively critical of their teaching practices, ultimately affecting their interactions with other stakeholders involved in the educational process.

**Coping Mechanisms of Out-of-Field Teachers.** Akkerman and Bakker (2011) emphasize the significance of establishing and traversing boundaries in facilitating intentional transformation. Teachers assigned to teach topics outside their area of competence accomplish this based on their confidence in acquiring new knowledge and instructional strategies. The formation of an educator's identity may evolve as it becomes intertwined with their professional role, facilitated by collaborative interactions with peers, and influenced by favorable experiences within the educational setting. According to Armstrong (2006), educational administrators should prioritize teachers' professional well-being. This entails fostering self-assurance in their skills, nurturing a positive perception of themselves, and cultivating efficient self-regulation. The presence of appropriately skilled and capable educators is of utmost importance, as they can effectively implement instructional methods that are consistent with specific curriculum frameworks, drawing upon empirical evidence (Dorman & McDonald, 2005). This facilitates the development of a comprehensive approach that fosters the integration of current and emerging knowledge. According to Nielsen (2007), the engagement of teachers in areas beyond their qualified expertise not only has implications for their skill development and professional standing but also has consequences for their professional rights in terms of employment.

**Mastery of the Subject Content.** The research done by Ngugi (2014) emphasizes the importance of teachers' acquisition of topic knowledge for effective instruction. A teacher's understanding of the subject enables them to communicate fundamental concepts and correct misunderstandings, impacting educational quality. Teacher preparation programs are vital in equipping educators with the necessary knowledge, competence, and confidence to impact how students learn and the overall quality of education. Awandia (2019co) asserts that teachers' comprehensive knowledge of the assigned area can positively influence students' attitudes toward it. Teachers who are experts in their subjects create an exciting classroom setting, answer student questions, and enable learners to make connections between classroom material and their lives, all of which increase motivation and comprehension. Researchers found that CPD significantly increased teachers' understanding of the subject, improving learners' attitudes and academic performance.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design by Creswell (2013) to investigate out-of-field teachers' experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and insights when delivering subject content outside their expertise. The research design was anchored in the conceptual framework proposed by Creswell (2013), which emphasizes exploring the lived experiences of individuals and understanding the meaning they attach to those experiences.

Phenomenology asserts that in order to fully understand human experiences, one must use interviews to fully submerge oneself in the concepts and wisdom of others. Since these were the participants' actual lives and they had all interacted with school management, it provides for a culmination of interpretation of their experiences (Creswell, 2009). According to Giorgi (2012), it involved the formation of meanings through their lenses and provided a means for the researcher to envision the participants' situations based on the phenomena they encountered and their shared experiences.

#### **3.2 Research Locale**

The study was conducted at Bango National High School in Purok 24 Bango, Barangay Ngan, Compostela Davao de Oro. It included 10 purposively selected out-of-field teachers relevant to teaching things outside their competence.

#### **3.3 Research Participants**

Creswell (2013) recommends that the research participants for this qualitative-phenomenological study should range from eight to fifteen. Ten participants were therefore available for the In-Depth Interview (IDI) in this investigation.

This study included 10 Bango National High School out-of-field teachers selected through purposive sampling to ensure they were pertinent to teaching lessons outside their expertise. Seven female and three male participants were permanent school employees. Participants had 1–8 years of professional teaching experience.

The participants held degrees in Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED), majoring in English, Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED), Bachelor of Science in Accounting Technology, Bachelor of Science in Computer Technology, Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, and Bachelor of Science in Management Accounting. This diversity of academic backgrounds added viewpoints and experiences on teaching subjects matter beyond their area of specialization to the research.

#### **3.4 Instruments of the Study**

The researcher served as the main data collector in a qualitative study. The interview was done, recorded, and notes were taken by the researcher. The researcher also employed an interview guide that panel members had verified. During the interview, the participants were asked the following set of questions. To set the tone for the talk, the researcher questioned the participants about their experiences, the difficulties they had, how they overcame them, and the lessons they learned about managing in schools. The researcher used open-ended questions with utmost caution.

#### **3.5 Procedure**

For qualitative researchers, the process of gathering data comprises several phases. The researcher conducted a number of activities and followed rigorous data gathering procedures before calling the study to a close.

First, the researcher made sure that the correct research protocols were followed. The thesis adviser and panel reviewed and verified the submitted work.

Subsequently, the investigator obtained consent from the Davao de Oro Schools Division Superintendent, Public Schools District Supervisor, and Teachers-in-Charge. Field notes, a tape recorder, and interview guide were among the materials needed for gathering information that were prepared.

In selecting those who participated, the purposive sampling technique was utilized. A non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement were read and signed by participants after gatekeepers assisted in their recruitment and communication. The investigator verified that the chosen subjects fulfilled the requirements and has pertinent experience in managing matters outside their area of expertise. Participants received comprehensive information regarding the goals and procedures of the study. Participants provided written authorization forms attesting to their voluntary involvement and desire to share their knowledge about teaching subjects outside of their area of expertise.

After giving their permission, participants had in-depth, one-on-one interviews arranged at times that worked for both of them. The pre-verified interview guide questions were used. In addition to receiving recompense for any inconvenience, participants received an explanation of their rights and duties. Every interview was recorded to guarantee accuracy and consistency. An audio recorder was used to capture interviews with participants' consent so that they could be transcribed and coded.

The researcher had exclusive access to the password-protected flash drive with the recorded interviews, which was kept safe and secure. They were also uploaded to Google Drive with restricted access for extra security. For data analysis purposes, responses were verbatim transcribed to guarantee accuracy. To avoid unwanted access, collected data were safely held for three years before being deleted.

Lastly, a theme analysis was carried out. In order to guarantee proper data analysis based on fundamental ideas deduced from participant responses, a data analyst worked in collaboration with the researcher.

### **3.6 Ethical Consideration**

The measures that were undertaken in ensuring ethical considerations in this study will be based on the principles of the Belmont Report in 1979. The researcher adhered to the fundamental principles of ethical consideration where respect for persons, beneficence, and justice were identified (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979).

The researcher ensured that all the principles were addressed to protect the rights of participants and made sure that the information gathered from the participants were kept private as well as the names of the informants.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the findings to the research questions that explored the experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and the insights used by the out-of-field teachers in Bango National High School, Compostela East District, Division of Davao De Oro.

### **4.1 What are the experiences of the teachers-in-charge in dealing with management in schools?**

The first major research question; **“What are the experiences encountered by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?”**. Two specific research questions were used to gather data and information for this major research question. The questions were intended to gather information on the experiences encountered by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content.

#### **4.1.1 Reaction Upon Learning would be Teaching Subjects not Aligned**

The themes in this section came from the specific research question 1.1, "What was your reaction when you learned you would be teaching subjects that are not aligned with your specialization?". The responses generated six themes: shocked, go with the flow, hesitant and apprehensive, shocked and excited, not being used to the subject, and prepared.

The theme shocked constituted the primary experience of out-of-field teachers' participants. When confronted with the prospect of teaching subjects beyond their specialization, participants initially experienced feeling shock. This unfamiliar territory posed a significant challenge, leading to concerns about their ability to effectively convey content unrelated to their expertise.

Informant 3 pointed out that;

*I was shocked, and of course, it is also a challenge as part of being a teacher when you have to teach a subject that is not your specialization. I take it as a challenge, even though it is difficult on my part. However, the teacher is resourceful, so we must find ways to provide our learners with what we should share.*

Building upon that point, Informant 4 shares a similar initial reaction to being assigned a non-specialized subject:

*Before, I was shocked. After that, I felt nervous because what if I could not handle or deliver the content properly? Considering that it is not my specialization compared to the specialized subject I had studied before.*

In addition, Informant 7 shared;

I felt nervous and shocked because I studied Accounting Technology.

Similarly, informant 8 experience resonates with the notion of initial shock, yet they offer insight into the acceptance of this reality within the teaching profession. He stated;

*At first, I was shocked because it was not within my area of specialization, but as time passed by, it seemed like I eventually learned that, once you are in the field of teaching, you do not have a choice but to teach what your head or superiors assign to you.*

#### **4.1.2 Adjustments Made from Subject Out of Expertise**

This section presents the results of the specific research question 1.2, "What adjustments did you make to teach the subject, not of your expertise?" under the first major research question, "What are the experiences encountered by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?" The following themes served as results: do some research, familiarize the terms, know your students well, organize learning materials, and have a hard time adjusting to Physical Science.

These narratives collectively emphasized the essential role of research in preparing out-of-field teachers to handle the challenges of teaching subjects beyond their expertise. The theme exemplifies the proactive and resourceful approaches these educators adopt to provide meaningful and comprehensive instruction to their students.

Informant 1 relayed her adjustment to teach a subject content unrelated to her specialization;

*Back then, there was no Wi-Fi or internet connection to search for information quickly. Since I live in a rural area, it was challenging for me whenever I needed to do research for the lesson. I had to visit a computer shop on Saturdays or Sundays at the población (town center).*

The informant emphasizes the significance of becoming knowledgeable with subject-specific terminology as a fundamental adjustment for out-of-field educators. The theme reflects the participants' proactive efforts to bridge the language gap and enhance their ability to deliver comprehensive instruction, ultimately highlighting the importance of linguistic competence in facilitating successful teaching experiences. Informant 2 narrated;

*My primary adjustment was to familiarize myself with the terms, learn how to communicate with the students, and adapt to the medium of instruction and language.*

Being well-acquainted with students allows teachers to determine where to focus their teaching efforts and where their instructional methods can be most effective. This theme highlights the crucial role of building a solid teacher-student relationship to create a conducive learning environment and enhance the quality of education.

Informant 3 explained;

*You need to adjust their behavior and classroom management, especially their behavior because not all students have the same behavior and attitude inside the classroom. So, as a teacher, you should know your students well to capture their interest and determine where your teaching methods are most effective.*

#### **4.2 What are the challenges encountered by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?**

This section presents the findings related to the second major research question: "**What are the challenges encountered by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?**" Three specific research questions were employed to procure data for this primary research question and acquire insights into the challenges experienced by out-of-field teachers in delivering subject content.

##### **4.2.1 Challenges Encountered in Teaching the Subject Content**

The themes in this part came from the specific research question 2.1, "What are the challenges you encountered in teaching the subject content?". The responses generated six themes: no knowledge of the subject, deepening the subject, unfamiliar terms, not aligned with specialization, delivery of instruction, and preparation of the subject.

Participants revealed that one of the significant challenges encountered by out-of-field teachers is that they need help to have a solid understanding of the subject, as it can lead to effective instruction and help students learning experiences. The teacher may need help to explain complex concepts clearly, leading to confusion among students. This theme is formed upon analyzing the response from informant 1, who said,

*One of the challenges is that I need more subject knowledge because my major focused on credit and debit only.*

Informant 2 seconded;

*Teaching content, we do not know how to deliver is one of the challenges.*

Informant 5 also added about the difficulty in teaching subjects with little knowledge;

*In MAPEH, especially in Music, I find it challenging because I am not very knowledgeable in the historical aspects, and the available reference book in the school is limited.*

One of the main challenges and issues that out-of-field teachers face when providing their students with a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of a subject matter. Informant 4 shared his perspectives on the difficulties and obstacles, he encounters while attempting to deepen his teaching approach. He cited;

*The challenge, perhaps, is the deepening of the subject matter. Teachers not specialized in the subject can only provide less information than specialized teachers.*

##### **4.2.2 Training and Seminars on Assigned Subject Undergone**

The themes in this part came from the specific research question 2.2, "Which training sessions and seminars related to your assigned subjects did you attend?". The responses generated seven themes: more on pedagogy, training in the Filipino subject, mass training on the K-12 curriculum, training in the Science subject, seminars on formative assessment, training in the MAPEH subject, and attending ALS Senior High training.

The participants' feedback reveals that their experiences in workshops and training sessions have mainly revolved around pedagogical approaches, techniques, and strategies, with less attention given to the course material they are teaching.

Informant 1 narrated;

*Regarding the subject I was assigned to teach, we received no specific training or seminars. Seminars were mainly focused on pedagogy.*

Adding to the discussion, Informant 4 shares their experience with webinars, noting a need for more emphasis on the subject matter they were teaching.

*During that time, there were webinars, mainly focusing on strategies but not the subject matter assigned to me.*

Offering another perspective, Informant 10 reflects on their extensive participation in training and seminars, primarily centered around their specialized subjects, yet lacking attention to the subject they were assigned. He said;

*I have attended many trainings and seminars in my specialized subjects, particularly pedagogy. However, none of the subjects have been assigned to me.*

#### **4.2.3 Benefits from Training in Teaching the Subject Content**

The themes in this section were drawn from specific research question 2.3, "How does the training help you in teaching the subject content?". These themes are as follows: it helped a lot, did not help, helped contextualize, and helped in my teaching style.

Training and seminars provide significant positive impact on educators' teaching approaches, enhancing their effectiveness and equipping them with valuable strategies and insights to meet diverse student needs. This was what informant 2 asserted;

*The training and seminars greatly help because they immerse us in the subject. After attending these sessions, we received valuable input on how to teach effectively, the best approaches to use with the students and new terminologies, if there are any.*

Reflecting on the insights gained, Informant 8 emphasizes their relevance in meeting the demands of subject content.

*It helped me because, at least through that training or seminar, I gained insights. I acquired new things and new learnings that could help also cater to the demands of the subject matter or subject content.*

#### **4.3 How do out-of-field teachers cope with the challenges of teaching the subject content?**

This section unveils the findings about the third major research question: "How do out-of-field teachers cope with the challenges of teaching the subject content?" Three specific research questions were employed to collect data and insights for this primary research question, aimed at understanding the coping mechanisms of out-of-field teachers when faced with challenges in teaching subject content.

##### **4.3.1 Things Done to Manage Challenges**

The results in this section were taken from the responses to the specific research question 3.1, "What did you do to manage those challenges?" under the third major research question, "How do out-of-field teachers cope with the challenges of teaching the subject content?". The following were the themes drawn from the responses: study the lesson beforehand, have a strong foundation, watch some videos, and acceptance is a must.



Out-of-field teachers give their strong commitment to thorough preparation, continuous learning, and utilizing various resources to ensure effective teaching that engages and benefits students. The participants' responses highlight the significance of investing time in reviewing and understanding the topics they are about to teach. Informant 1 openly said,

*To manage, of course, we have a lesson plan where you decide on the activities you will be doing. Before starting the discussion in class, you should study the lesson the night before.*

Elaborating on the necessity of preparation, Informant 3 emphasizes the importance of thorough research to enhance teaching effectiveness.

*Find time to research and study the lesson very well. So that, as a teacher, I can better understand what I should impart to my students.*

In addition, Informant 4 advocates for a diverse approach to studying, including utilizing online resources and seeking guidance from subject experts.

*Keep reading all the time, watch videos on YouTube using the internet, and seek advice or guidance from those who specialize in your teaching subject.*

#### **4.3.2 Initiatives Taken to Teach Topics Difficult to Handle**

The themes in this part came from the specific research question 3.2: "What initiatives did you take to teach topics difficult to handle?". The responses generated four themes: download videos, study and research, review the lesson beforehand, and suit their level of competency.

The initiatives taken by educator's aid in addressing challenging topics, providing visual explanations, promoting student-centered learning, and enhancing the overall teaching and learning experience.

Informant 1 shared;

*For those complex topics, I download videos to help with my teaching. There are ready-made PowerPoint presentations available that I download and then show to my students.*

In contrast, Informant 4 highlights challenges faced when teaching unfamiliar subjects despite efforts to access supplementary materials.

*Sometimes, I can only deliver shallow content due to the subject's difficulty. Although I try to read and watch videos, they are still limited because they are not my specialization.*

Addressing the need for resourcefulness, Informant 5 suggests taking time to create PowerPoint presentations or utilizing online resources such as YouTube videos, particularly for science subjects. She expressed;

*Take time to create PowerPoint presentations; if not, resources are available online, like YouTube videos, especially for science subjects. These videos help visualize the processes in Science, as sometimes, if it is just storytelling, only some things get absorbed. However, the approach becomes more holistic if students see and hear it and even write it down.*

#### **4.3.3 Dealing Students with Undesirable Behavior in Class**

This section presents the responses to the specific research question 3.3, "How do you deal with students showing undesirable behaviors in your class?". The following essential themes mentioned are justified by the testimony of the participants during the in-depth interview activity. Responses collated from the IDI showed a common point collated from the IDI showed a common point.

Capturing students' attention helps foster participation and maintain a conducive learning environment. The participants' responses highlight techniques they employ to achieve this goal and the rationale behind their methods. Informant 1 confided;

*What I do with them to catch their attention is to call on them regularly. Because if you don't call their attention, they might not participate. When you have their attention, it will encourage them to participate more.*

Similarly, informant 5 described their approach of calling students' attention and implementing a warning system for disruptive behavior. Informant 5 cited;

*So, what I usually do is call their attention. I remind them to listen carefully, and if I catch someone cheating or being too loud, there is a system where I give three warnings. If they do not change after the third warning, I ask them to leave the class temporarily to reflect on their behavior and not disturb those who are attentive and eager to learn. Sending them outside serves as a consequence for them to reflect on their behavior.*

In contrast to immediate consequences, Informant 8 emphasized the importance of addressing students' mistakes gently within the classroom setting; she said,

*You have to acknowledge them nicely, not to the extent of reprimanding them directly, but by calling their attention and talking to them about their mistakes inside the classroom.*

#### **4.4 What are the insights gained by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?**

This section presents the findings addressing the fourth major research question: "What are the insights gained by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content?" Data and insights were gathered using three specific research questions to delve into the insights gained by out-of-field teachers in teaching the subject content.

##### **4.4.1 Insights Gained in Teaching Subjects Outside Area of Specialization**

To answer the sub-question, 4.1. "What are the insights you have gained in teaching subjects outside your specialization?". Common ideas were presented based on the responses of the participants. Six emerging themes were revealed.

Education is dynamic, and teachers must be open to change, embrace versatility, and continuously adapt to new information and trends to provide holistic and relevant learning experiences. Informant 1 affirmed it by saying,

*As a teacher, you need to be flexible and knowledgeable. You should focus on more than one thing and think outside the box.*

In line with this perspective, Informant 5 emphasizes the importance of continuous learning and adapting to evolving educational trends. She said;

*Learning is a continuous process; it does not stop. What is important is that we remain open to changes. Some trends were not present before but are relevant now, so teachers should be flexible and strive to adapt to what is up to date to be more effective.*

##### **4.4.2 Help Insights had in Dealing with Teaching Career**

Seven important emerging themes were formulated from the second sub-question 4.2 "How do these insights help you in dealing with your teaching career?". These themes include helping teacher's teaching style, providing huge help, helping in assessing students, being optimistic, developing expertise on the subject, developing personal growth, and challenging teachers.

The themes revealed how the experience of teaching subjects outside one's area of expertise significantly impacts a teacher's instructional approach and methods. This was what participant 1 had to say;

*It helps me develop my teaching skills as I discover and ask myself, "Can I do this?" Then, I realized that what I thought I could not handle could be managed because I had no choice but to try.*

As added by Informant 3:

*It helped me teach, especially in handling a class where the subject is not my specialization. It has been beneficial, Ma'am, because you also have your knowledge and experiences to share about that subject, which I have not encountered before. However, the challenge given to me helped me a lot in shaping my personality as a teacher and my teaching methods.*

#### **4.4.3 Piece of Advice to Give with Out-of-Field Teachers Teaching Subjects Beyond Expertise**

The themes in this section were drawn from specific research question 4.3, "What pieces of advice would you give to other out-of-field teachers who are teaching subjects that are beyond their expertise?" under the fourth major research question, "What are the insights gained by out-of-field teachers who are teaching subjects that are beyond their expertise?". The themes drawn were learning to accept, not give up, being more patient, avoiding complaining, not overdoing everything, planning, and discovering new learnings.

Out-of-field teachers acknowledged and embraced the reality of teaching subjects outside their primary areas of expertise. Instead of resisting or complaining, they are encouraged to be open to the challenge, engage in continuous learning, and actively work to bridge any gap in their understanding. Informant 2 claimed that:

*Teachers who teach subjects outside their majors, especially in the Department of Education (DepEd), cannot do anything about it. What we can do is embrace and accept it. If we do not accept it, we have no choice but to teach what is given to us.*

Similarly, Informant 5 suggests a different approach, advising a mindset of openness and ongoing exploration instead of resignation.

*Advice is to be open to learning; instead of complaining, why not take time to discover more? Not only should the students discover new learning, but also us as teachers.*

Expanding on this idea, Informant 8 stresses the importance of embracing assigned subjects to grow professionally and expand our teaching skills.

*I would advise learning to embrace the subject assigned to you because it is just part of your professional growth and learning as a teacher. It will help us improve in that particular subject and provide us with ideas on other subjects that can contribute to our growth as teachers in the teaching field.*

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study explores the challenges teachers face while teaching outside their expertise. It evaluates participant's initial reactions, including shock and excitement, upon being assigned unfamiliar subjects. Teachers who are fluent in the language do better in the classroom. They will also grasp what it means for students to demonstrate an understanding of essential vocabulary connected to the subject content. This study aims to illustrate how teachers need help understanding subject areas that are unfamiliar to them and do not fall within their field of expertise. It shows how a teacher is ready and enthusiastic to face challenges and find ways of overcoming them.

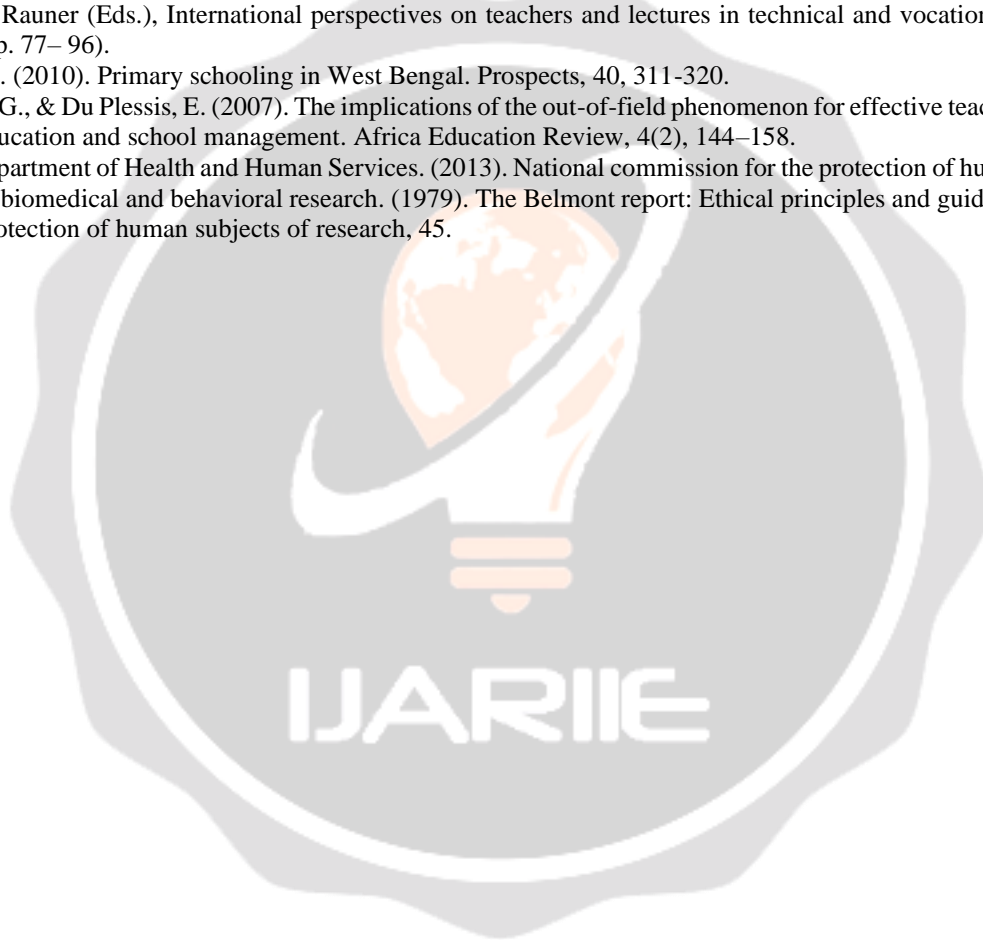
In addition, the study suggests that insufficient preparation for teachers in specific subjects affects their teaching effectiveness, emphasizing the need for comprehensive and subject-specific training. The research also disclosed that a notable role was played by training and seminars in providing teachers with the right teaching resources, allowing for an innovative approach in the presentation of subjects, better preparation of classes, and ultimately building pedagogical awareness overall. Teachers show their adaptability through the use of proactive preparations and educational videos. They can also control learners' behavior as they handle complex subjects. They know the importance of creating favorable classroom learning conditions and strive to keep them in order.

Finally, the research shows that teachers are flexible and optimistic about teaching new subjects to students, showing how they grow within their career, practice-related methodologies, and dedication to the progression of the learner's academic achievement. These findings stress the significance of proactive support systems in enhancing ongoing professional development. Educational leaders must note and resolve challenges associated with teachers who teach subjects beyond their capability areas; improving education and effective teaching methodologies should be implemented immediately.



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**BIOGRAPHIES**

 A portrait of Shiela Mae V. Osman, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a light pink short-sleeved button-down top.	<p>Shiela Mae V. Osman is a teacher at Bango National High School, Bango, Ngan, Compostela, Davao De Oro. She finished her Master of Arts in Educational Administration at Assumption College of Nabunturan.</p>
 A portrait of Roel P. Villocino, a man with glasses, wearing a dark brown button-down shirt.	<p>Roel P. Villocino, EdD is a faculty member of Assumption College of Nabunturan, Nabunturan, Davao de Oro, Philippines.</p>