



Lived Experiences and Philosophies: Basis for Life Skills Guide for Beginning Teachers

Roldan C. Cabiles¹

¹ Bicol University Graduate School

*Corresponding author's email: roldancabiles08@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological research produced a Life Skills Guide for Beginning Teachers to orient them to local realities in rural, coastal, and urban schools. Based on the analysis, the life history of teachers reflects grit and resilience along with their external and internal motivations in their choices, particularly in their professional development. Family for them is a significant source of motivation to overcome the challenges and concerns in the educational landscape. The key informants in the three (3) geographical locations demonstrated adaptability or flexibility, good communication, interpersonal or social skills, pedagogical skill, and practicality. Teacher-participants in the rural and urban areas are digitally literate and competitiveness was mainly reflected in the urban areas. Moreover, financial literacy is strongly reflected among the teacher-participants from the rural and coastal areas probably because there are few to none distractions which may tempt them to spend. Among urban teachers, it was noted that they are susceptible to spending their money because they are surrounded with commercial establishments and entertainment centers. Based on the life history and demonstrated life skills, teachers in the rural, urban and coastal areas reflect essentialist, humanistic/existentialist, pragmatist/progressivist, reconstructionist, constructivist, idealist, behaviorist, and perennial philosophies. It was significantly observed that selected teacher-participants in the rural and coastal areas also exhibit positivism that is influenced by their field of expertise which is mathematics and science. Given these findings, the life skills guide for beginning teachers is proposed to help the beginning teachers cope with the actual realities of their teaching assignments.

Introduction

It is through education that we become wise, hopeful, and value the cultivation of learning. We change our behavior and belief which is a mere manifestation of improvement, learning, and change. It can be a way towards reaching a comfortable life to become self-fulfilled and regulated. According to John Dewey (1859–1952), “education is not preparation for life; education is life itself”, through education, we can change the world. Education remains highly significant in every country. The enrollment for the basic education level for School Year (SY) 2020-2021 has reached 24, 892, 492. This, DepEd said, was 89.63 percent of the total enrollment in SY 2019-2020 recorded at 27.7 million (Manila Bulletin, 2020). Thus, given the continuously increasing population of schoolchildren and the increasing

number of challenges, DepEd is also increasing and expanding its existing efforts to deliver quality, accessible, relevant, and liberating, basic education (Oxales, 2019). With this, one must be educated to acquire knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits that are necessary to battle countless challenges in real life.

The term 'education' has been interpreted by different people in different ways. Some refer to it as formal schooling or lifelong learning. Some others refer to it as the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Some say that education is nothing, but the training of people's minds in a particular direction to bring about a desired change. (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2014). Education is the best arena for acculturation and enculturation that may change and influence one's perspective and philosophy. To many, the success of a certain country is dependent on the quality of education provided to its citizens. To ensure the successful implementation of a curriculum and attain national goals, the teachers who are key players should be well-equipped with the necessary knowledge on pedagogies as well as with a full understanding of the curriculum. As teaching is considered a noble profession that contributes to the progress of a nation, the needs of the teachers must likewise be addressed to keep the idealism of the profession.

Many beginning teachers come in the field with so much idealism but, in the long run, it increasingly diminishes until such time that the amount of passion for teaching becomes weak and for some, such passion vanishes because of the varied realities and challenges that they have to face. Oftentimes, these beginning teachers find themselves without due guidance. Overwork and lack of support are some of the factors that drive teachers out of the profession much faster (Tapper, 2018). In addition, workload, a new challenge, the school situation, salary, and personal circumstances are the main factors that influence teachers' decisions to leave. (Smithers; Robinson, 2003). With this foregoing phenomenon, it is timely and relevant that beginning teachers should be informed of the local culture so that they will be guided by the practices and circumstances in the locality, particularly on dealing with new people. Annually, many beginning teachers are hired by the DepEd who have inadequate knowledge of the underlying cultures in their assigned placements, be it in Rural, Urban, or Coastal Areas. Thus, beginning teachers find it hard to cope with the new environment because of the lack of knowledge and awareness of life skills that they should develop before their deployment in the area.

The implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum with all its expected competencies in a spiral progression poses a great challenge to the teacher requiring them to be more adept in whatever interaction they may find themselves in. One of these is the reality that neophyte teachers, particularly the newly graduated students, are often assigned to far-flung areas and remote islands.

To address this, Republic Act No. 8190 or Localization Law on appointment or assignment of teachers in all public schools and other learning centers under the Department of Education providing high-rank personnel to implement said law that grants priority to residents of Barangay, Municipality or City where the school is located, in the appointment or assignment of classroom Public School Teachers (Luistro, 2013). However, it cannot be denied that based on the teachers' experience, this law is not firmly implemented in some offices due to limited vacancy; that is why some of the teachers opt to apply in some offices

even if they are far from their locality. This has led teachers from the cities and municipalities to be assigned to coastal areas or island municipalities in response to the current needs of teachers in the municipalities.

The Department of Education (DepEd) annually hires teachers to be deployed. Some of these teachers are assigned in far-flung coastal areas, mainland, and or even remote islands. These teachers undergo the Department of Education's Teacher Induction Program (TIP). DepEd conducts Teacher Induction Program (TIP) that aims to realize with a vision for teachers to serve as the frontline in giving quality education for all school learners. This provides systematic and comprehensive support for newly hired teachers to immerse themselves in the public school system offering basic education (Llego, 2019). The program focuses on the orientation of newly hired teachers on policies and guidelines intended to create informed teachers on the DepED system. However, such orientation does not include life skills and coping mechanisms which are essentially helpful to newbies or neophyte teachers, especially those assigned in far-flung or coastal areas. Thus, it is necessary to likewise equip the beginning teachers with a practical guide beyond the given information on the system which TIP provides, and pedagogical training from DepEd and other support institutions. The study intended to produce a Life Skills Guide for neophyte teachers assigned to Rural, Urban, and Coastal areas that would provide the necessary life skills and practical adjustments as well as coping mechanisms which they can adapt to cope with the culture and other needs in their assigned areas.

With the pressing concerns reflected in the educational system particularly in addressing the needs of teachers, it is quintessential that these needs should be given attention to maintain what is ideal in the field of education and materialize its vision. The proponent strongly believed that optimum guidance and support must be provided among beginning teachers on the island as they significantly contribute to improving the standards and quality of education.

Therefore, this study aimed to empower DepEd teachers by enabling them to develop a life skill guide that embodies the lived experiences of rural, urban and coastal teachers as incorporated on key informants' life history and demonstrated life skills. Hence, the life skill guide that was developed by the proponent will provide beginning teachers a picture of the local culture and realities for them to adjust to the different scenarios in the locale. With this initiative, it was hoped that quality education will be better served in the field because there is harmony within the pivotal component of the system that is expected to deliver quality service towards nation-building.

The study was conducted in three schools of the Schools Division Office of Albay, Legazpi City, broken into the categories of school's geographical location such as rural, urban, and coastal schools. The chosen study locales were: Itaran National High School (INHS) at Polangui, Albay; Marcial O. Rañola Memorial School (MORMS) at Guinobatan; and Rapu-Rapu National High School (RRNHS) at Poblacion Rapu-Rapu, Albay, respectively. Based on the 2013 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS), the country registered a 90.3% rate and 91.6% of literacy rate in 2019, which means that nine out of every 10 Filipinos aged 10-64 were functionally literate (PSA-FLEMMS, 2013;2019). While the national result showed a good rating, it could not be denied that it has to be improved at

the community level. In fact, out of 70, 000 pupils, 18,143 cannot read in both English and Filipino particularly in Grades 3 to 6 while “non-readers” were in Grades 1 to 2, based on the data released by the Curriculum and Learning Management Division of DepEd- Bicol (Jaucian, 2020). The finding is another proof that the Philippines’ ranking in reading among 79 countries and economies in the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (Pisa) is not a fluke.

The researcher strongly believed that this situation could be addressed by the Department of Education by attending to the prevailing needs of the teachers, especially those who are flourishing in the profession. They can perform better their duties and responsibilities if they are informed of the life skills they have to develop in teaching within their assigned area.

Research Methods

The study used two (2) instruments to gather the most salient data needed for the production of the Life Skills Guide to be made by the researcher, intended for the beginning teachers of the Department of Education (DepED). These instruments underwent a process of review and validation by highly experienced and qualified teachers or professors. The instruments were:

Unstructured Interview Guide. These were anticipated series of questions that were informally asked during the participant-observation and in-depth interviews to let the key informants elicit their responses in consonance with the objectives of the researcher. The questions were structured from convergent to divergent levels to build a connection with the key informants. The questions revolved around their life history and circumstances and skills demonstrated along with teaching, transportation and living conditions, establishing interpersonal relations, and adapting skills to the community.

Field Notes and Audio-Recorder. To make sure that all the necessary data were recorded while a series of participant observations were done, the researcher had to accomplish a day-to-day journal entry for review and verification purposes. The field notes and the audio recordings served as the repository of facts and information collected and served as the tracer of information collected.

This study employed qualitative research using Phenomenological Design to record a person’s lived experiences over a phenomenon. A phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. The fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon using interviews with a group of individuals who have first-hand knowledge of an event, situation, or experience. Through this process, the researcher may construct its universal meaning and arrive at a more profound understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The phenomenon that was explored in this research was the lack of awareness of beginning teachers in the field specifically in rural, urban, and coastal schools. Thus, the researcher believed that life skills that were adapted by the key informants who were teachers of rural, urban, and coastal areas could be a noble contribution to help beginning teachers adjust to the local realities.

Findings and Discussions

The Life History of Junior High School (JHS) teachers

Generally, the life history of teachers reflects their grit and resilience along with their external and internal motivations in their choices, particularly in their professional development.

1a. Personal Circumstances.

The informants possess a genuine and deep love for family, which includes not simply the spouses and children, parents, and siblings, but also grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, godparents, and other extended relatives. To them, family is the source of personal identity, the source of emotional and material support, and the person's main commitment and responsibility. Others are left with no choice but to take the path of the teaching profession because it is their source of income and their bread and butter. For them, teaching sustains their daily needs and becomes the foundation of their being. Because of it, they were able to finish their degree and provide their children quality education from the wage they get in teaching. Their present line of thinking is influenced by their previous experiences from childhood to this time. It is usually influenced by several incidents in their lives including culture, people, and environment that led them to their present circumstance. Nonetheless, given this ideology, they view life as a situation that is full of good memories and challenging moments which for them, is natural because it makes life meaningful. The COVID-19 pandemic has made them feel immensely apprehensive because the landscape of education has likewise drastically changed particularly the mode of delivery of instruction in the Department of Education (DepEd). As of this moment, they are still transitioning from traditional to distance learning. Thus, they need to be continuously capacitated with this kind of modality coupled with the availability of appropriate technology in the school.

1b. Professional Experiences.

Their choice of the teaching profession is motivated by their personal circumstances. Being a public teacher in a government institution will provide them a comfortable life and achieve their aims and aspirations in life and become stable. For them, teaching is a profession where one needs to endure many sacrifices because it consumes their personal time attending to many concerns even at home. However, their commitment to teaching remains. The new normal brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic has challenged most of them, especially on adjusting particularly on the use of technology for distance learning. They find difficulty in navigating platforms for teaching including printing modules for remote learners, sorting out, distribution and retrieval.

1c. Aims and Aspirations in Life.

The key informants' aims and aspirations in life were influenced by their personal and professional experiences. They aim to uplift their family's condition and aspire for the betterment of their family and they aspire for the success of their family members to attain a comfortable and secure life later on. They relate their aims and aspirations towards work particularly on being promoted to a higher rank or position. Gaining a higher rank for them will provide them a higher compensation for them to comfortably provide the basic needs of

the family. Their feeling of success is reflected in their personal and professional achievements as a result of their hard work and dedication in teaching. Success for them is the sense of being happy which they get from their environment and people they have interacted with as well as becoming somebody who has fulfilled their aims and aspirations. Furthermore, obtaining a higher educational attainment for them is a way to get promoted to the teaching profession as well as for updating themselves with the new pedagogical trends while getting higher compensation.

1d. Sources of Joys and Feeling of Success.

Their sources of joy and feeling of success are driven by their personal and professional experiences in life. Similar to their personal circumstance, family is one of their sources of joy particularly their bonding moments. During the pandemic, the help extended by their family members in doing work-related documents such as sorting out and printing of modules to be distributed to the learners also gives them happiness. Moreover, doing recreational activities like swimming, hiking, watching movies also releases stress and diverts them from mental disturbance which may lead to depression. Their light and easy-going relationship with colleagues also strengthens their interpersonal relationship which is helpful in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as teachers. This results in a certain emotional balance and optimism, a healthy irreverence for power and office, and a capacity to survive. Meanwhile, they feel successful when they see their students achieve their dreams or have become the person they wanted to be. Because of this, they become intrinsically motivated in inspiring more learners to continue creating a legacy.

1e. Challenges and Concerns.

The key informants relate their challenges and concerns along with personal circumstances and professional experiences. The main concern of teachers in the rural, urban, and coastal areas is the lack of preparation in the middle of the pandemic. They were caught unprepared on how to transition to the new normal that requires technological skills among teachers like navigating learning management systems as a platform in delivering the lessons. Moreover, lack of school facilities, poor access to the internet, improper behavior, the passivity of students in learning across subjects, and poor reading comprehension have been perennial concerns of every school.

1f. Views on Teaching.

Their personal and professional circumstances are contributory factors to their views in teaching. They view teaching as a big responsibility to fulfill because there are many challenges in it. Most of their time is devoted to teaching even when they are at home particularly during the pandemic because there are many deliverables expected of them. Thus, commitment to teaching is necessary including love and passion for teaching to endure the challenges that come along. Furthermore, they view it as a noble profession as it hones many professionals who are part of nation-building. They see it as a reward when their students become self-fulfilled and regulated and are now fully independent in their lives. They believe that values should be strongly instilled hand in hand with learning to

holistically develop a child, especially that the virtual learning time is bombarded with many explorations which may lead learners towards improper direction.

Demonstrated Life Skills of Junior High School Teachers

As defined by UNICEF (2003), life skills are psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. They are loosely grouped into three broad categories of skills: (a) cognitive skills for analyzing and using information, (b) personal skills for developing personal agency and managing oneself, and (c) interpersonal skills for communicating and interacting effectively with others. In this context, it points out the coping mechanisms, strategies, and abilities which teachers acquired throughout their lives and are now being applied in a particular geographical location where they are assigned to meet the demands and challenges of teaching based on their mandated duties and responsibilities.

Teacher-Participants from Rural Areas

Based on the circumstances and life skills of teachers, the rural teachers are computer-literate, practical, financially literate, immersed with theories and principles in teaching, adaptive, and socially/interpersonally able. These represent their coping mechanisms in adjusting to the present context in Itaran National High School being a rural school in the Schools Division of Albay. The life skills of the teachers in the rural areas dominantly exhibit practicality, adaptability or flexibility, and interpersonal skills or social skills. These are demonstrated by them to be able to adapt to the existing culture of the locale so that they can teach in the place with security and safety, just to be able to carry out their duties and responsibilities as teachers.

Teacher-Participants from Urban Areas

From a thorough analysis of the narratives of urban teachers, significant life skills were elicited which are manifestations of teachers' coping mechanisms or adaptation in an urban area to provide premium service to their learners and stakeholders. Accordingly, they possess expertise in applying theories and principles in teaching, they are also good communicators, sociable/interpersonal, adaptive, digitally literate, practical, competitive, and intuitive. The glaring life skills demonstrated by the teacher-participants in the urban place are pedagogical skill, digital literacy, competitiveness, good communication, and adaptability or flexibility. Similar to the participants from rural and coastal key informants, these have been their coping mechanisms to teach in the place, taking into consideration the demands and challenges in the profession.

Teacher-Participants from Coastal Areas

From a conscientious and in-depth analysis of rural teachers' narratives derived from participant observation and intensive interviews, the rural teachers' skills were: Pedagogical Skill, Adaptability or Flexibility, Interpersonal or Social Skill, Good Communication, Practicality, and Financial Literacy. Teachers in the coastal area are abreast with teaching strategies, theories, and principles in teaching to provide the best learning experiences to

their students amid the many circumstances in the locale. From this pedagogy, they would like to develop students' critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills that they can use in their day-to-day activities. Like teachers in rural and urban areas, teachers in the coastal area are digitally literate. This is because they have the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills. Based on the narratives of the teachers in the given geographical contexts, it is observed that the key informants shared and demonstrated similar life skills such as Digital Literacy, Practicality, Adaptability or Flexibility, Pedagogical Skill, and Interpersonal Relationship or Social Skill as coping mechanisms as they adjust to the realities and circumstances they face in the place where they teach so that they can fulfill their duties and responsibilities as teachers.

On the other hand, urban teachers differ in life skills from that of rural and coastal teachers. It was noticed that rural teachers are "competitive" than rural and coastal teachers because urban schools, particularly big schools have higher allocation of Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) compared to medium and small schools, thus they really can fully operationalize.

Generally, the teacher-participants from the coastal areas have manifested the skills such as adaptability or flexibility, interpersonal or social skills, and practicality, which served as the coping mechanism of the teachers in the coastal area so that they can deliver what is expected of them as teachers. It can be noted that the rural and coastal teachers exhibit the same significant life skills to be able to overcome the challenges and demands they face in their places of assignment.

Educational Philosophies reflected in their Life History and Life Skills

To explore the educational philosophies of the Junior High School teachers in the rural, urban, and coastal areas, an analysis of their life history and demonstrated life skills, which came from in-depth interviews and participant-observation with the key informants, was executed by the researcher thus providing a vivid picture of their philosophies relevant to education, of which are anchored on their respective personal experiences. These philosophies are contributory to the way each of them carries out their functions as teachers and the way they socialize with people.

The educational philosophies of the teacher-participants from the three geographical locations such as rural, urban, and coastal areas provide a picture of how teachers accommodate practices when assigned in a school located in a rural place as reflected in their life history and demonstrated life skills. Their philosophies as teachers are: essentialism, humanism/existentialism, pragmatism/progressivism, reconstructionism, constructivism, idealism, behaviorism, positivism, and perennialism. The narratives substantiate the identified educational philosophies which portray their culture, way of thinking, and even their perspectives.

Essentialism

Based on the narratives of rural teachers, they show academic rigor and have high regard for acquiring basic concepts that are relevant in improving the skills of their students.

They believe that there should be a common core of knowledge that needs to be transmitted to students in a systematic and disciplined way. They train students to read, write, speak, and compute clearly and logically and teach them hard work, respect for authority, and discipline. They believe that values, hand-in-hand with knowledge, should be properly instilled in the learners consistently with the support of parents so that they can become good citizens. There should be balanced teaching between concepts and values because to them a child without character is socially unaccepted. Furthermore, they also believe that, as part of the 21st century, students learn better if teachers are knowledgeable in navigating technology. The students become active and attentive when they play videos and use PowerPoint presentations that result in better reception of learning on the part of the students. They also explore some social media platforms as the medium of their communication because of the pandemic. Along with this, the cultivation of the macro-skills such as reading, listening, speaking, writing, and viewing is also developed by teachers in the students because they believe that these are basic skills that the world demands. They hone their students towards a path of being problem-solvers so that they can contribute something to the community.

Rural teachers believe that teachers should likewise be good at speaking and writing the moment they enter the teaching profession because these are foundational skills in teaching. Alongside this, they also postulated that aside from being a good teacher in the classroom or school, they should also maintain a good reputation outside the school for the dignity of the profession. Furthermore, it is noticeable that teachers also want to update their learning by enrolling in graduate programs. To them, it is a way to improve their teaching and learn new concepts that they can share with their students.

Urban teachers share the same philosophy as rural and coastal teachers. To the urban teachers, they believe that core knowledge needs to be transmitted to the learners systematically and in a disciplined way. The knowledge that learners learned in school should be an instrument so that they can survive in real-life contexts; thus, to them, schooling should be practical and should be a preparation for students to become valuable members of society.

Like rural and urban teachers, these coastal teachers share the same principles in terms of essentialism. To them, basic skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and arithmetic should be prioritized as these are foundational skills to prepare them to become knowledgeable, responsible, and valuable individuals of society. In addition to this, they also make sure that the intellectual and moral standards are being considered by the school to hone the students holistically; meaning, they would like to produce students who are full of knowledge and at the same time possess good values. They teach them the spirit of hard work, respect, and discipline.

Humanism/Existentialism

Rural teachers believe in the essential goodness of learners, that humans have free will, moral conscience, the ability to reason, aesthetic sensibility, and religious instinct. They advocate that the young should be treated kindly and that learning should not be forced or

rushed, as it proceeds in stages. They believe that students have personal freedom, choice, and responsibility.

Furthermore, as reflected in their demonstrated life skills in teaching, they provide activities that cater to students' multiple intelligences and employ differentiated instruction so that lessons will become meaningful to the learners. Along with this, they teach concepts from simpler ones to complex ones because accordingly, they set standards according to the level of readiness of their students. That is why sometimes they review and go back to previous concepts if students have not yet mastered them because they may not be able to understand advanced concepts if the basics are not yet fully learned. In addition, conducting home visitation is a demonstration also of a humanistic principle. They do it so that they would understand the situation of the learners and so that they have anecdotes of the life history of their students which serve as their basis in giving considerations to them. Because of the pandemic, they also exercise humanism with their students and even colleagues. They had to extend much patience to adapt to the new landscape of education and understanding that everyone is also transitioning to the new normal. With the mandate of the Department of Education, the school decided to implement a modular distance learning modality because most of their students do not have internet access. Before this, they conducted surveys and looked into many considerations as to the modality they will choose for their students.

This educational philosophy is reflected among urban teachers as they believe that understanding the situation of the learners is a humanistic consideration. In the urban area, many students do not regularly attend classes because they are instructed by their parents to help in farming work instead of going to school. Accordingly, the teachers are really doing their best so that their students will continue schooling despite the circumstances. They believe that this is the result of mass promotion because, to them, they cannot fail students even if they are not performing well in class.

Urban views the individual as an entity within a social context in which the learner must confront other's views to clarify his or her own view. They emphasize character development that emphasized individual responsibility for decisions towards self-fulfillment and self-regulation. To them, learners must be taught the sense of responsibility and accountability as part of survival mechanisms in real life.

Coastal teachers believe that humans have a moral conscience and possess essential goodness. To them, it is a must that morality and understanding should be established as these are foundations to develop human character. They join in their celebration as their way so that they can adapt to the practices of the people that live in the place. Alongside this, they believe that the teaching they learn from the church reminds them to always do good, as they believe that God is omniscient and omnipotent.

Pragmatism/Progressivism

Teachers in rural areas believed in the power of education. To them, it truly is an avenue so that one can have a comfortable life in the future. That is why they strived to finish college so that they can have a progressive life. They provide meaningful learning activities to their students because they believe that students learn best when they are given hands-on experiences such as role-playing, simulations, experiments, and giving thought-provoking

questions to prepare them to become problem solvers. The use of contextualization and indigenization of teachers in the lesson has been a great manifestation of the progressivism point of view because it provides learners a clearer understanding of concepts and provides the meaning of physical and cultural context.

Urban teachers employ the progressivist principle particularly on pedagogy with the intent to make teaching and learning meaningful to their students. They devise and create different learning activities that cater to the interest and capabilities of their students. They focus on learning experiences that test ideas through experimentation and problem solving and allow learners to question their experiences in their environment.

To be able to establish meaningful learning, they critically look into the curriculum and make sure that it is within the interest of the students and encourage questioning to develop high-order thinking skills. They also take into account the methods that they have to use so that the objectives of the lesson will come to a realization. With the underlying local culture in the coastal school, teachers manifest the progressivism point of view along with teaching and even in their day-to-day life. They infuse songs in their lessons, use locally available materials, and contextualize the lesson so that coastal learners may relate the concepts in their personal life experiences.

Their creativity in teaching is being activated because they are left with no choice but to think strategically to make teaching and learning meaningful. Creating interesting activities that are in line with the capacity of learners is one of the considerations that they make so that learners will appreciate the lesson and they could relate to it. They also give students systematic and hands-on activities such as role-playing, debates, experiments that allow them to learn by themselves. They believe that direct experiences will give students a higher amount of learning which they can use as they elevate into other year levels.

Reconstructionism

Based on the narratives of teachers, there is inequality in the system of the Department of Education as practiced by the school leaders. They are aware that the same thing also happens in other schools as some of them have also worked in other stations. As reconstructionists, they believe that there are still a lot of things that need to be improved in terms of the facilities of the school. They say that they do not have enough classrooms to use that is why they strategize on how teaching and learning will still take place despite the situation. To them, it is another burden because the school should immediately take action on it because it is a necessity for both the teachers and the students.

In addition, they also see disparity in terms of giving training among teachers. Some of them are not given the opportunity to attend training just because they have a low rank. The school always sends those who are already tenured, resulting in financing themselves to attend training and seminars so that they can have a good rating in the IPCRF. As a reconstructionist, they infuse social issues in their discussion particularly on the current trends and let their students reflect on it so that they can be aware of what is happening and think of what should be improved in the school, society, or country. They believe that students should know these things as part of global citizenship to make a standpoint leading to critical thinking.

Urban teachers are social reconstructionists as they believe that systems in the organization must be changed to overcome politics, oppression, and inequality. They are vocal about their observations because to them it is not proper thus it calls for immediate actions from higher authorities so that they can serve better as teachers

Coastal teachers see many predicaments in the locality particularly in the school which calls for action of the authorities. It is a manifestation that they are critical theorists as they want to address social questions and have a better society for the betterment of each of them. They believe that same with other teachers, the system within the organization must be improved so that the quality of education will likewise be improved. To them, the school should address the status of the signal in the locality as it is significantly needed particularly during this time of the pandemic. Along with this, they also want that the school should also intensify the technology being used by the students as it is one of the 21st-century skills to be developed by the teachers and the students. They believe that the higher administration should look into this particularly in the coastal areas. Also, power, the passivity of students towards academics, and travel going to the island are one of the glaring concerns that need to be addressed so that they can confidently do their mandated duties and responsibilities. Aside from this, they integrate social issues and concerns in their lessons so that students will be aware of the problems that the country is facing. They want them to be involved in thinking for possible solutions to address the problem which to them, this strategy also develops the critical thinking and higher-order thinking skills of the students.

Constructivism

This principle of constructivism exists in the narratives of the teacher-participants from the rural area, specifically in their life skills in teaching. Accordingly, they think of interactive activities that are within the interest of the students such as role-playing, collaborative games, simulations, etc, which the students like because it involves movements and allows them to interact within a group.

The teacher-participants from the coastal school, just like the teacher-participants from the rural and urban schools, were observed to be constructivists. Their constructivist perspective is found in their views on teaching and life skills in teaching. They are called to be constructivists because they all consider the capacity of their learners, especially that most of them are living in remote areas.

Idealism

The idealism philosophy of the key informants from the rural area is found in their aims and aspirations in life and views on teaching as significant components of their life history. Upon scrutiny of their narratives, they were found to be longing for self-improvement in terms of personal and professional aspects which motivates them to continue their studies by enrolling in a graduate school to update themselves of the new learning trends in the teaching profession particularly focusing on their field of specialization. It also is noticeably narrated that they are after the “betterment” side of their learners that is why they always consider the learning capacity and the situation of the learners and look into the personal, social, and economical background to address and respond to their needs. Accordingly, they

do it because of their commitment to the teaching profession and they want their students to finish their studies so that they can have a stable job in the future.

Teachers in the urban area share a similar philosophy with the teachers from the rural school. The principle of idealism is likewise reflected in them that to discover and develop each individual's abilities and full moral excellence is important to better serve society. They believe that education should influence students with good values and skills and students should be holistically developed and they should be supported with what they need so that someday they can likewise help their family and the community. All of them also wish to finish or enroll in a master's degree to capacitate themselves with new principles and theories in education which they can apply in their station. To them, family is a top priority because it gives them motivation and happiness that is why they also wish to be promoted so that they can provide the necessities of their family. They also believe that good working relationships with colleagues and the community should be strongly instilled in each of them to become productive individuals as they help one another and collaborate in the school.

Just like the teacher-participants from the rural and urban areas, the key informants from the coastal area have shared similar philosophies with them. It was found out that all of them seemed to have used the "idealism" philosophy in fulfilling their mandated duties and responsibilities while also attending to other concerns in life. The principle of this philosophy is found in their aims and aspirations in life, views on teaching, professional experiences, and their life skills in teaching. They believe that the aim of education is to discover and develop each individual's abilities and full moral excellence in order to better serve society. To them, it is their responsibility to hone the skills of their students so that they can find a stable job in the future to help their family and their community.

Behaviorism

This philosophy of education is likewise manifested in teacher-participants in the rural school. They say that they employ the behaviorism principle in their classes to establish control and management of students' behavior. However, they also believe that this principle should not be exercised freely to the learners especially when they commit mistakes because of laws that protect the learners. Teachers also give praises during the class discussion by saying "very good", "that's great" and other positive comments to affirm the good work of the learners. In the modular modality, they write positive notes and comments in the modules to motivate learners to continue getting good scores. And lastly, they provide learners intervention especially for those who were not able to understand the lesson. This is to strengthen their skill on a particular topic and cope with advanced concepts.

This philosophy is reflected in the lived experiences of urban teachers particularly in their life history and demonstrated life skills. It is observed that based on their narratives, they are considered behaviorist because they believe in the concept of the conditioning process.

The teacher-participants from the coastal area are also behaviorists. They believe that if teachers provide positive reinforcement or rewards, whenever students perform a desired behavior, they will learn to perform the behavior on their own. They also think people act in response to internally or externally generated physical stimuli.

Perennialism

The perennial principle is reflected in all teachers in the rural school. They have shown immense appreciation of the western civilization which some of them also practiced in the Philippine culture. They participate in fiestas in their community as a form of establishing interpersonal relations and adapting to the community. Aside from this, the cultivation of the intellect should be regarded by teachers so that students will become skillful through the theories and concepts that are being taught.

The teacher-participants from the urban school were also considered perennial educators because they do not disregard the traditional culture of western civilization. As reflected in their life skills to adapt to the community, they all noted that they participate in the celebrations of the community such as fiestas, commemorations, and other activities sponsored by the barangay or the local government unit where their school is located. Also, they have shown religious practices just like Ma'am Maria who has been serving as a lector in Balogo, Oas, Albay as her devotional act to his faith in God.

Similar to teacher-participants from the rural and urban areas, teacher-participants from the coastal areas are also perennials. They likewise join in the commemorations and fiesta in Rapu-Rapu as a way of adapting to the community. To them, doing such is a way to get support from the local government so that they will become partners of the school.

Positivism

This philosophy is reflected in the narrative of Ma'am Salvy (Math Teacher) and Ma'am Delia (Science Teacher), who are rural teachers, because they believe that students should learn how to think logically and they strongly believe that science and mathematics are sources of facts and data.

Moreover, this philosophy is reflected in the narratives of urban teachers specifically to Sir Tomas who was a mathematics teacher for a long time. His field of specialization influenced him to become positivist, believing that mathematics subject offers logic, develops critical thinking, and provides observable data that can be applied in real life. He is known to be a mathematics teacher who is an expert in his field that many of his colleagues would sometimes seek for his knowledge because he shows mastery of the subject matter especially those subjects that involve higher or advanced concepts.

From the discussion and analysis among the three geographical locations, it was found out that the selected teacher-participants share the same educational philosophies reflected in their life history and demonstrated life skills. All of them are considered essentialist, humanistic or existential, pragmatist or progressivist, reconstructionist, constructivist, idealist, behaviorist, and perennials. These educational philosophies served as their coping mechanism to adjust to the local realities in a specific geographical location for them to accomplish their duties and responsibilities as teachers, despite the different circumstances they have experienced in terms of personal and professional aspects.

Hence, all the beginning and tenured teachers regardless of their geographical location exhibited essentialism, humanism or existentialism, pragmatism or progressivism, reconstructionism, constructivism, idealism, behaviorism, and perennialism while beginning teacher glaringly showed idealism as their educational philosophy. This is the

reason why most of the neophyte teachers tend to lose their love and passion for teaching because of the frustrations they feel from being exposed to the actual realities.

In general, the educational philosophies of teachers are influenced by their personal circumstances and professional experiences including their area of assignment. Educational philosophies are influenced by various factors such as the place, the kind of people they often associate with.

Proposed Life Skills Guide for Beginning Teachers in Rural, Urban, and Coastal Areas

This life skill guide for beginning teachers is an offshoot of the researcher's in-depth interviews and participant observation with key informants from rural, urban, and coastal areas managed by the Department of Education (DepED) Schools Division Office of Albay, Legazpi City. The life skills guide espouses the lived experiences of the key informants along teaching and life experiences particularly, their life history and educational philosophies. The life skills presented in this guide are reflections of the teacher's cultural practices as they cope with the local realities in the place. It orients the beginning teachers about the teachers' personal circumstances, professional experiences, aims and aspirations in life, sources of joy and feeling of success, challenges and concerns, and views on teaching. It also provides beginning teachers the necessary life skills in teaching in a specific geographical context, coping with the mode of transportation and conditions of living, including establishing interpersonal relations with the aim of adapting to the community or work stations.

This life skills guide can be used by the Department of Education (DepEd) as additional information to orient the newly hired teachers during their Teachers' Induction Program (TIP) for beginning teachers. It will help beginning teachers adjust to the existing local realities whenever they are deployed in rural, urban, or coastal schools. The life skills guide is translated into the Filipino language to effectively deliver its purpose which is to orient not only the beginning teachers but also the general public who are considered to be stakeholders and partners of education. With the translated material, it is hoped that the guide will shed light on the cultural practices experienced by the teachers in rural, urban, and coastal areas as public servants, and eventually become responsive to the needs of the teachers.

The material was validated by teachers and administrators in the Department of Education who had direct experience in teaching in rural, urban, and coastal areas to look into the provisions stated herein and evaluate it based on their perspectives as teachers or administrators in a specific geographical location. The life skills guide translated in Filipino was likewise edited by an expert.

Many beginning teachers come in the field with so much idealism but, in the long run, it increasingly diminishes until such time that the amount of passion for teaching becomes weak and for some, such passion vanishes because of the varied realities and challenges that they have to face. Oftentimes, these beginning teachers find themselves without due guidance. Overwork and lack of support are some of the factors that drive teachers out of the profession much faster (Tapper, 2018). In addition, workload, a new challenge, the school situation, salary, and personal circumstances are the main factors that influence teachers' decisions to leave. (Smithers; Robinson, 2003). With this foregoing phenomenon, it is timely

and relevant that beginning teachers should be informed of the local culture so that they will be guided by the practices and circumstances in the locality, particularly on dealing with new people.

The Department of Education (DepEd) annually hires teachers to be deployed. Some of these teachers are assigned in far-flung coastal areas, mainland, and or even remote islands. These teachers undergo the Department of Education's Teacher Induction Program (TIP) that aims to realize a vision for teachers to serve as the frontline in giving quality education for all school learners. This provides systematic and comprehensive support for newly hired teachers to immerse themselves in the public school system offering basic education (Llego, 2019). The program focuses on the orientation of newly hired teachers on policies and guidelines intended to create informed teachers on the DepED system. However, such orientation does not include life skills and coping mechanisms which are essentially helpful to newbies or neophyte teachers, especially those assigned in far-flung or coastal areas.

Thus, it is necessary to likewise equip the beginning teachers with a practical guide beyond the given information on the system which TIP provides, and pedagogical training from DepEd and other support institutions.

This material is divided into seven (7) parts which give tips to the following concerns:

1. The FIRST PART aims to give tips on how to reach their workstation using the most convenient and safest means of transportation. This part also discusses the best vehicle/transportation one can use should a teacher be assigned in a rural, urban, or coastal area.
2. Meanwhile, a new teachers' content knowledge and pedagogy is encouraged to adapt to the workstation one is assigned. The SECOND PART presents this concern and gives strategies to challenges one can overcome.
3. Interpersonal relations between the teacher and the people in the school and community explained in the THIRD PART of the guide. It is important to maintain a harmonious relationship with others in the school and community.
4. FOURTH PART discusses how to manage rural, urban, and coastal living depending on the workplace a teacher has just been assigned. It also discusses a smooth adjustment to the culture and lifestyle the locality a workplace has.
5. The FIFTH PART of this material gives focus on ways to adjust and live peacefully with the community.
6. Maintaining a teacher's psycho-social well-being despite stress-inducing factors related to the area of his/her new assignment is presented in the SIXTH PART of this guide.
7. The SEVENTH PART presents ways to grow and strengthen one's spirituality. This part elaborates the need for establishing one's faith in a time of uncertainties. It aims to give beginning teachers perspectives on the importance of a faith-centered professional path.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn based on the foregoing findings of the present study. First, family is the central source of a teacher's life where they build their goals, dreams, aspirations, and motivations. Second, the identified demonstrated life skills are shaped and influenced by personal circumstances, professional development, and

adaptation to actual places of deployment. The third one is that the educational philosophies of the teachers are varied and dynamic because they are influenced by the environment, culture, and the people they come in contact with. Finally, the life skills guide reflects the actual realities of teachers assigned in the rural, urban and coastal areas and acts as a practical survival kit that will definitely guide the beginning teachers as they dispense their duties in their respective localities.

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