

# Aspects of Classroom Lived Experiences of Newly-hired Teachers

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## ABSTRACT

The basis for the need to acculturate newcomers into the profession of teaching may spring from their experiences during the first few years of their careers. The content for any customized induction program may then be anchored to the responses to the research question similar to what this paper addressed: What are the classroom experiences of the newly-hired teachers? For this study, there were 5 participants from an elementary school setting. A phenomenological approach was used to determine their lived experiences by asking the participants questions from the interview schedule designed by the researchers. Data analysis yielded themes presented diagrammatically and discussed with respect to a theory of experience that consists of four aspects, viz. (a) experience manifests itself in/has passions; (b) experience integrates over space and time; (c) experience is a moving force; and (d) experience is transformation, as explicated. Variation characterizes beginning teachers' experiences. Although dominated by not-so desirable experiences such as extreme exhaustion, 'joy', due to salary increase, was pointed out as one positive experience. The results of this study have implications for policies about workload, induction, administrative support, and teacher education curriculum.

**Keywords:** Education, novice teachers, elementary, phenomenology, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

A new teaching job for a new teacher elicits a mixture of feelings. Being new in the trade, teaching for the first time brings excitement for the first few days, then these experiences progress into surprises, perhaps, mostly unpleasant due to some met or unmet expectations. According to Murshidi, Konting, Elias, and Fooi (2006), “when beginning teachers enter the teaching force, they often encounter the reality shock as they confront the complexity of the teaching task. The reality of the actual teaching situation sometimes differs so much from what the beginners were expecting”. Most of these experiences could stem from the classroom full of students with different personalities and different backgrounds. Aside from the classroom where teachers stay at least 50% of the time (Keller, Frenze, Goetz, Pekrun, & Hensley, 2014), teachers’ experiences could also emanate from other interactions, e.g., with the administration, colleagues, students’ parents or other groups outside the school perimeters

This study is about the lived experiences of newly-hired teachers who were not only teaching for the first time but were also hired with permanent tenure. It focused on the classroom experiences of newly-hired teachers during their first six months to one year of teaching in selected elementary schools in the Malaybalay City Division, Department of Education (DepED), School Year 2012-2013. The term ‘newly-hired’ is interchangeably used in this paper with the terms: novice, beginning teachers, new teachers, or newbies.

Broadly, DepEd is a government agency in charge of supervising the basic education of the Philippines. The classroom referred to in this paper may be described as a traditional learning setting in which the teacher and the students (an average of 55 students) are engaged in teaching and learning activities within the four walls of the classroom with the conventional chalkboard as a main teaching tool. In this paper, a typical classroom is located within the premises of a school campus with schoolchildren’s ages range from 7 to 12 years old. On the other hand, ‘experience’ in this paper refers to the teacher-student interaction (e.g., students learning from teachers) occurring in a traditional academic setting, which is an elementary school classroom.

Seeking to understand the newbies’ experiences is important in terms of designing and developing the teacher education curriculum, of determining the content and appropriateness of professional development activities for new teachers, or of drafting or revisiting policies related to workload, whether or not this is directly related to teaching per se. As an attempt to decipher new teachers’

experiences, several studies have already been written. For example, using a mixed-method, Fantilli and McDougall (2009) investigated the beginners' challenges and supports during their first years of teaching. Using grounded theory qualitative research, Dias-Lacy & Guirguis (2017) also studied the challenges new teachers face, including how they cope with these. Both of these studies concluded that newly-hired teachers experienced a litmus test in their roles as novice teachers.

Most of the lived experiences in the literature, however, are studied using the phenomenological approach that yielded themes illustrative of the beginning teachers' experiences. For instance, the study of Dejene (2017) shows that there was absence of proper orientation/induction, classroom management problems, and difficulty to engage students in the teaching-learning process within a televised classroom partly because of lack of proper induction and lack of orientation. Likewise, the study of Cakmak (2013) demonstrates, among others, the struggles of novice teachers.

## FRAMEWORK

The concept that undergirds this study is Phenomenology (Husserl, 1982, as cited in Husserl, 1989) to uncover the lived classroom experiences of newly hired teachers. In this context, the researchers sought to understand the meaning of the new teachers' experience as it is lived in classroom interaction with their students, and within the parameters of the classroom location. The study is, therefore, phenomenological because it sought the emergent significance of individual experiences.

### **Phenomenology and the Teaching Experience**

According to Valle et al. (1989), as cited in Dowling (2007), for Husserl, the aim of phenomenology is the rigorous and unbiased study of things as they appear in order to arrive at an essential understanding of human consciousness and experience. Dowling (2007) explains that when phenomenology is taken as a methodology, it provides aspects of how to conduct qualitative research. In this context, phenomenology, as used in this study, illuminated the path by which the newly hired teachers make meaning of their lived classroom experiences.

The theory of experience (cited in Roth & Jornet, 2014) provided the theoretical framework of this study. Based on the work of Dewey and Vygotsky, as explained by Roth and Jornet (2014), experience does not refer to the

participation of events or activities. Rather, 'experience is construed as a category of thinking, a minimal unit of analysis that includes people themselves (their intellectual, affective, and practical characteristics), the people's material and social environment, and their transactional relations (mutual effects on each other) and affect. Thus, the experience is not something concealed within individuals, but extends in space and time across individuals and setting in the course of temporally unfolding societal relations, which themselves are perfused with affect.

Roth and Jornet (2014) stated that based on the work of Dewey and Vygotsky, there are four aspects of the theory of experience, namely: (a) experience manifests itself in/has passions (affect, emotion); (b) experience integrates over space and time; (c) experience is a moving force; and (d) experience is transformation. From this perspective, the philosophical aspects of phenomenology that elucidate the meaning of the classroom experiences through the lens of the theory of experience are relevant to this study because the goal of this paper was to gain a deeper understanding of the newly hired teacher classroom experiences. Although Roth and Jornet explicated the theory of experience by analyzing the interaction between a student and a teacher in a learning situation located in a school, the researchers are applying the theory they generated to a situation in which an aggregate of new teachers experienced teaching the same level of learners in a similar classroom environment. It was assumed that their transaction with the learners in a classroom environment constitutes their holistic experience, not just the experiences about the technical aspect of teaching.

### **Background Literature**

Several studies yielded varied experiences of new teachers. For example, the qualitative phenomenological study of Nahal (2009) explored common themes about expectations of teaching before entering the teaching profession as well as the realities in the classroom environment among first-year Secondary School teachers. In this study, she identified eight themes: love for the profession, rewarding career, disconnect exist, student learning, preparation program practical elements, burdensome workloads and stress and burnout.

On the other hand, Erb (2002), who collected data from six second-year teachers on the emotional aspects of teaching, concluded that teachers at the beginning of their career experience the positive emotions of joy, elation, satisfaction, encouragement, interest, and relief and to a lesser degree, the negative

emotions of disappointment, frustration, anger, confusion, impatience, and exhaustion. In their phenomenological approach of “Why are beginning teachers frustrated with the teaching profession?”, Kutcy & Schultz (2006) also found that students and their attitudes toward learning caused the most frustration; lack of parental response to teachers’ concerns about students’ attitudes and disengagement, teaching assignments, administrative practices, personal and professional lives also give frustration. From their findings, they recommended that to achieve the intrinsic rewards of teaching and to stay in teaching, new teachers need supportive school conditions.

Peck (2008) likewise studied the lived experiences of 11 new teachers and four administrators in two small, rural districts in Washington State. The analysis of the qualitative study resulted in two major themes, which were (a) making connections with colleagues and in the community, and (b) thriving in the workplace through job efficacy and sufficient resources. Similarly, qualitative researchers were being studied in the context of newly-hired teachers’ perspectives (Nahal, 2009), emotional aspects (Erb, 2002), frustration (Collingridge, 2008), and lived experiences (Peck, 2008). Different themes emerged and recommendations were suggested to challenge educational leaders and administrators to provide support and create instructional opportunities for new teachers and enhance their desire to remain in the profession. While research in the area of newly-hired teachers is rich and plentiful and attention has been given to the problems encountered by newly-hired Secondary Teachers (van Hover & Yeager, 2004, Nahal, 2009, Erb, 2002 & Pfister, 2006), primary teacher (Mudzingwa & Magudo, 2013, Collingridge, 2008) and tertiary teachers (Peck, 2008), there continues to be a gap in the literature when one narrows the focus to newly-hired public elementary school teachers’ experiences and challenges. Additionally, no studies exist that highlight the lived experiences of the newly-hired teachers in the Malaybalay City Division in the province of Bukidnon.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of the study was to report the lived classroom experiences of the newly-hired teachers as they narrated these to the researchers. Specifically, the question that guided this study was, ‘What are the classroom experiences of a newly-hired teacher?’ The choice of respondents as well as the place where they are employed, was based on convenience, but strictly followed a certain

criteria for the participants, e.g., new teachers who have had 6 to 24 months teaching experience since they were hired; passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET); have a permanent appointment; and had previously served as administrative aide in a school setting but without any previous classroom teaching experience.

## METHODS

The research approach of this study was qualitative which is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem (Creswell, 1998). Inherent in qualitative research, a thematic perspective was used to gather ideas and perceptions of the participants relevant to the phenomenon under study.

The collection of data was facilitated by the triangulation method: semi-structured interview which was audio-taped, classroom observation, and written answers to the research questions. The interview questions guided the semi-structured interview about the newly-hired teachers' classroom experiences. Patton (2002) recommended that observations provide a check on what is reported in interviews.

After the semi-structured interview, the participants were requested to answer the research questions in a written form. The newly hired teachers' responses were confidential and exclusively read by the researcher. The intention was to maintain the consistency of the interviews and to develop trust between the participant and the researcher. It was hoped that, as trust was built, the newly-hired teachers recognized that writing down the answers to the questions that were similar to those found in the interview schedule, is a way to adequately share thoughts and feelings that they did not voice out during the interview. To avoid any feeling of obligation or guilt, if the participants were too busy with other responsibilities, ample time was given to them. All participants handed their answers after their class observation. The classroom observations were conducted between January 30, 2014 and February 3, 2014. The researcher scheduled the visits with the newly-hired teachers. The purpose was to validate the responses of the participants in terms of the way students behave, the physical structure of the classroom, or the presence of visual aids.

The process of identifying themes from the narratives involved the following activities: transcription of the audio Visayan version into the English version.

From the interview data, 133 significant statements were extracted, then utilized to address the main research question: “What is it like to be a newly-hired teacher?” The succeeding activity involved the determination of ‘formulated meanings’ (in English). Data were further reduced by formulating ‘meaning units’ from where the themes finally emerged. A frame for every theme was drawn to show how each of the five themes was derived. Each frame has four columns: significant statements (first column), formulated meanings (second column), meaning units (third column), and theme (fourth column). Only a limited number of significant statements that represent the complete listing of significant statements were placed, as reflected in Appendix A. This procedure provided the means for discovering the essence of lived experiences of the newly-hired teachers. These experiences were validated by the interview with the participants, as well as by the actual classroom observations.

By Colaizzi’s (1978) phenomenology data analysis model, the researchers analyzed the data by following a procedure. Thus, the researchers read and reread the transcribed word-for-word interviews to make sense of them and acquire a feel for each description; extracted significant statements, which pertained directly to the proposed phenomenon, from the descriptions; formulated meanings after analyzing each significant statement. The researcher again reread the original transcription to assure the original description was portrayed in the extracted significant statement meanings; organized the formulated meanings into clusters, which allowed themes to emerge; integrated themes into an exhaustive description; referred the theme clusters back to the original transcriptions for validation, being cognizant of repetitive themes and discrepancies; researcher made a concise statement of the exhaustive description and provided a fundamental statement of identification; presented a concise statement of the exhaustive description to the original participants of the study in order to verify the statement; validated the information by asking the participants: “What aspects of your experiences have I omitted or inadvertently added?”

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

There were five purposely-identified participants of this study. They were all females and within the range of 23-33 years old. Four of the participants were affiliated with the Malaybalay City South District and one from Malaybalay City West District. These locations were accessible to the researchers via local public transport.

Table 1

*Participant Profile and Contexts*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>District</b>
<b>A</b>	F	Malaybalay City South District
<b>B</b>	F	Malaybalay City South District
<b>C</b>	F	Malaybalay City South District
<b>D</b>	F	Malaybalay City South District
<b>E</b>	F	Malaybalay City West District



*Figure 1.* The aspects of the lived experiences of new-hired teachers

Based on the totality of their narratives, five themes emerged (Figure 1). These are the (1) joy of teaching, (2) agony of teaching, (3) drawbacks of teaching, (4) challenges of teaching, and (5) realities of teaching. These findings describe the participants’ experiences during first year of teaching.

**Theme 1: The joy of teaching**

This feeling of joy emanated from three causes: from the beginning teachers’



observation that their students turned from non-readers to readers; from the positive feedback of their head teachers, that is, after the latter observed the former in their classes; and from the salary hike which was incidentally implemented during the period of their employment.

On teachers' compensation, one participant expressed it this way:

*(Karon) daku2x man ug sweldo...makaloan man...dayon..lahi ra gyud kung kuan ba? Kung permanent.....murag kanang...nindot e trabaho kay....murag worth pud ang atong...salary ba.*

( . . . my salary was more than enough. I could even apply for a loan. I am satisfied with my 'permanent' status as teacher)

Theme 2: Agony of teaching.

The positive emotion earlier reported was, however, weighed down by anger, nervousness, and discouragement. Two incidents stood out:

*"niabot jud to ang time sauna na gikwelyuhan ko gyud to mam. dili gyud to naku ilimod mam nga gikweluhan gyud na naku..ang akong dugo ,murag ..di gyud naku nga ..murag wala naku nakabalo sa mga kabataan nga ng-tan-aw sa ako.*

(At the height of my emotion, I must admit that I grabbed my student by the collar right in front of other students in the class-- unmindful about the fact that this student's classmates were watching me and my temper.)

*"... nagpabasa ko tagsatagsa...hala..wala man gyud.. naa man nagsaba2x... unya nag-ingon ko nga sege lang ana...unya ngkagubot naman dyon sila kay naa bata nga gilabay..sa mata ug ballpen..unya kay naulit naman kaau ko..gipabilum naman ta mo unya cege lang mo ug saba...naulit...giignan man daw siya ug bogok.. di..gilabay ug ballpen dayon naigo iyang mata . . .*

(My class was in the middle of a reading activity when one student hit a classmate's eye with a pen. The class lost its focus. I went ballistic. When I finally managed to calm them down, I learned that this hitting incident occurred in response to verbal bullying.)

Another incident contributing to the teacher's agony of teaching was associated with a head teachers' classroom observation. One teacher recalled that she got so confused with the sequence of her lesson. Another got so uneasy when no one wanted to participate in the class recitation; no one raised his/her hand to answer a question.

### Theme 3: Drawback of teaching

This lived experience consists primarily of the teachers' report regarding exhaustion perhaps because of the lack of time to perform teaching-related tasks such as the design and development of instructional materials, lesson planning, tutoring challenged students and the time to respond to individual student queries regarding the grades they obtain in a certain grading period.

For example, a teacher who needed to tutor intellectually challenged students on top of the urgency to respond to grade-related questions of students and their parents during teacher consultation hours, related to this incident:

*Ang mga reklamo kabahin sa grades. . . gadugang sa akong gabunahunaon . . . puli puli lang sila ug adto . . . bahala na patudluon ko ug kuan . . . basta dili lang nang ing-ana*

(. . . responding to the complaints of parents about their children's grades is time-consuming and causes mental stress. I would rather teach or tutor than be overloaded with queries.)

Referring to the preparation she had to make for an upcoming classroom observation, lesson planning and development of visual teaching aides, another teacher said:

*. . . nagniwang jud ko . . . bilar kaau . . . kulang ko ug tulog . . . dayon pagka buntag . . . maligo na dayon ko . . . kay unsa na oras . . . kapoy kaau*

(I lost weight . . . I lacked sleep . . . the following morning, I need to take a bath before I rush to work.)

However, this teacher claimed that after a few months, she learned to adjust slowly. She realized that her colleagues could share their instructional materials,

and hence, she didn't have to create every learning material needed for her own classroom.

#### Theme 4: Challenges of teaching

The challenges of newbies included classroom management and the physical structure of the classroom. The former seemed to be the most distressing lived experience. One teacher expressed it this way:

*“sa discipline maglisud gyud ko teach kay dili man gud ta maka-kuan sa ilaha... imoha kuan lang gyud taman lang ka sa pangasaba...” . . . “maunang maglisud ko . . . samot na nga tawag-tawagon pako..usahay kay tagaan lang ug activity or i-fuse didto sa labi nga section.” “ing-ana ba..labi najud tong karon oh..kanang mag-internet nalang ko ug mga example sa mga bata ba... lage na..mga activity..hatag nalang dayon sa bata. . . “ . . . dili nato madala ang work sa balay...mao nang atong june..naa mi seminar sa teaching dili pwede trabahuon sa balay..kay sa balay daghan buhaton... dili man gyud pwede”*

(Instilling student discipline is a big challenge. I know I can only reprimand kids who misbehave, but what complicates this situation is that in the middle of my classroom activity, I am often requested to encode something for administrative purposes. So, either I give my class activity or fuse them into another class. To make up for the time I lost contact hours with my students, I had to surf the net for additional activities since take-home assignments are no longer allowed.)

The classroom structure of the teacher compounds classroom management issues. For example, the teacher has difficulty managing students because they cannot help but turn their attention to the other classroom because no sound-proofed walls separate two classrooms.

*. . .ang problema kay wala pud bitaw mi classroom didto rapud bya mi sa covered court..dyon open kaau . . . didto man sa likod...open kaau...blackboard lang ang naka..ana..unya didto pud si kuan sa pikas... ana ra mi..maunang..dili ka ka-control sa mga bata..kay naa sa kilid magtan-aw2x..busa usahay..malagot lage ka.. pero depende katong dili.”*

(My classroom management issue is inherent to the apparently lack of

classroom and other essential facilities. For instance, classes are conducted in a wide, open space at the covered basketball court. Temporary classrooms may be set up in this space, of which blackboards double as dividers and writing boards for teaching and learning purposes. Needless to say, the noise from the adjacent room either disrupts my students or me. This physical arrangement irks me as it is nearly impossible to let my students focus on our classroom activities.)

#### Theme 5: Realities of teaching

This theme included non-teaching functions which consist of social adjustments with the school head, fellow teachers, and at the same time doing non-teaching functions such as encoding reports of some administrators; filling out forms prescribed by the Department of Education (DepEd); computing grades by following a new grading system, e.g., for K to 12 grades

Talking about the new system of doing things, in particular, one teacher complained:

*... sauna Form 3 rajud nang akong nakita..unya karon kay nay Form 1 ug Form 2 ..hala oi..unsaon mani unsa baya nga sa district..Form 3 ra baya diretso...dili jud ko kabalo... makurat jud ko tanan..ga-adjust pa jud ko..."*

*"magege man gyud ko ug pangutana...sa ila kay dili paman ko kabalo..labi najud nang Form 1 ug Form 2 . . . kay dili man gyud ko kabalo..kay mga tigulang naman to sila..maunang sa ila gyud ko moduol..hebe..kabalo naman gyud na sila..."*

(Whether I like it or not), there are too many forms to fill out. Before, there was only one, but this time, there are already three forms in addition to other documents to prepare. I ask the senior teachers all the time, especially about completing Forms 1 and 2. I am not only taken aback by these changes; I am embarrassed to ask help, but who else can assist me?)

The question that guided the study was: ‘What are the classroom lived experiences of a newly-hired teacher?’

Unexpectedly, the themes that emerged in this study were almost always aligned with Dewey’s concept of experience (See Figure 2 below). In this figure, there are two columns of boxes; the first column enumerates the themes that emerged from the beginning teachers’ experience; the second column shows the aspects of the theory of experience. In this figure, the one-to-one correspondence

between the experience and the theory is shown.



*Figure 2.* One to one correspondence between beginning teachers' lived experiences and Dewey's elements of experience

Themes: Joy of teaching and Agony of teaching

On the left box right under classroom experiences (Figure 2) are two themes; the joy of teaching and the agony of teaching. These are put together since these themes manifest passion that may characterize conflicting emotions. Also, these dual feelings are like two sides of the same coin: there is joy as well as pain in teaching that may be experienced in varying degrees in separate occasions, yet, in any case, it cannot be claimed as a single experience in the entire teaching career. The famous poet Khalil Gibran (1995), profoundly states the kinship of joy and pain, this way:

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight. Some of you say, "Joy is greater than sorrow," and others say, "Nay, sorrow is the greater." But I say unto you, they are inseparable. Together they

come, and when one sits, alone with you at your board, remember that the other is asleep upon your bed. Verily you are suspended like scales between your sorrow and your joy. Only when you are empty are you at standstill and balanced. When the treasure-keeper lifts you to weigh his gold and silver, needs must your joy or your sorrow rise or fall.

The practical application of the joy and pain of teaching, however, is aptly described by Palmer (n.d.) below:

Our task is to create enough safe spaces and trusting relationships within the academic workplace—hedged about by appropriate structural protections—that more of us will be able to tell the truth about our own struggles and joys as teachers in ways that befriend the soul and give it room to grow.

The divergent feelings of joy and pain that characterized the experiences of the novice teachers are confirmatory of the findings of Erb (2002), and likewise validate Dewey's notion that experience manifests itself in emotions—intense yet conflicting, as in the case of the study's participants, e.g., the teacher was happy about the positive feedback of her supervising teacher, and at the same time the teacher got confused with the sequence of her lesson, during the classroom observation. In both cases, we see that the source of both joy and pain is something that teachers lacked control, something they could not anticipate – a situation manifesting the affective aspect of Dewey's theory of experience.

For the beginning teachers, to go through the ordeal of balancing these emotions coming from different sources is probably the litmus test on whether teaching is a profession worth pursuing.

#### Theme: Drawback of Teaching

Exhaustion, due to lack of time for the preparation to perform teaching-related tasks such as the design and development of instructional materials, was dominant in this theme. This experience is considered a downside because extreme fatigue is something that is not supposed to occur in the teaching career, especially if the occurrence is something beyond the control of the teacher. If teaching must be a profession that is mentally and emotionally draining, then this condition could overflow into the learning environment in which health and wellness are supposed to prevail in order to properly shape and mold the students.

This burnt-out phenomenon was validated by Gavish & Friedman (2010) when they found that “novice teachers experience burnout immediately upon entering teaching and throughout their first year at school . . .” Their participants, however,

did not directly attribute burnout to the lack of material time to prepare for teaching tasks. Rather, what their participants indicated was that burnt out was, among others, due to an unappreciative social environment. This particular situation may have somehow possibly contributed to burnout that teachers felt in our study.

In any case, exhaustion as a lived-experience cannot be taken as an isolated experience because the contributing factors to burnout could be seen in the other parts of teachers' narrations such as multiple tasks resulting to an enormous amount of work, teaching or nonteaching-related. Thus, when exhaustion takes place due to insufficient time to prepare, along with a plethora of things related to teaching, research, or community work, for example—then all of these put together could lead to weariness. In this case, experience may be understood as the way Roth and Jornet (2014) explained it:

Experience then is to be understood in this way: “when a name is wanted to emphasize the interconnectedness of all concerns, affairs, pursuits, etc., and it is made clear that experience is used in that way, it may serve the purpose better than any word that is as yet available” (Dewey & Bentley, 1949/1999, p. 187).

However, there is one participant in our study who claimed that after some time, she has learned to find a way to, for instance, lessen her stress in having to create all the teaching materials she needed. This declaration demonstrates Dewey's notion that experience is not a ‘synchronic category, an entity that can be named before its course has reached an end. It (experience) has to be considered as an unfolding unit that encompasses change itself, rather than change being an external factor causing or affecting experience.’ (Roth and Jornet, 2014, p. 2). Indeed, experience integrates across time and space. In the case of our study's participants, the experience of ‘exhaustion’ is the progressive convergence of wide-ranging events that peaked into ‘exhaustion’.

#### Theme: Challenges of Teaching

If the word ‘challenge’ means something difficult which requires tremendous effort and determination, then, central among the teachers' lived experiences reflect this situation, e.g., the challenges seen in their classroom management and classroom' physical structure. These challenges converge with the novice teachers' challenges that one essay reveals, such as ‘struggling with classroom management, burdened by curriculum freedom and sinking in unsupportive environments’ (Goodwin, 2012); and align with the state of congestion, if not, lack of classrooms in the Philippines especially those in the hinterlands. Year after year, newspapers across the country

such as *The Manila Times* (May 27, 2018), for example, reports about the lack of classrooms every time school opens in June in the Philippines (Alcober, 2018).

This is the propensity to categorize the “challenges of teaching” under the moving force element of Dewey’s experience because of the assumption that soon, classrooms will be repaired, and that majority of these challenged students would soon learn to read and write, and then move up to the next level. If this ever happens, then this occurrence represents a movement towards an endpoint – an element of ‘moving force’ described by Roth and Jornet (2014).

Therefore, experience, if it is to be a force, must itself encompass change. This is precisely what Dewey makes a requirement of his theory of the continuity of experience: “Every genuine experience has an active side which changes in some degree the objective conditions under which experiences are had” (Dewey, 1938/2008b). In the unity of experience, the development of the forces is to be taken “not by itself, not only as a cause, but also as a consequence, result, and product of the reverse action of the system of production relations on the productive forces” (Il’enkov, 1982).

It is evident from the data that quitting was not an option. Thus, consistent with Dewey’s theory of experience, the elementary teachers in this study experienced their first year of teaching as a ‘moving force.’ Apparently, they think of teaching and learning as a continuous process of bearing with the present situation and reconstructing this experience with the future in mind. For the teachers, the education of their students is more important than a decent classroom, which may not be instantly possible considering budgetary constraints. This line of thinking is probably what Dewey meant when he explained that ‘the educator can look to the future with the perspective of viewing each present experience as a moving force that influences future experiences’ (Dewey, 1938, cited in ‘Dewey’s philosophy on experience’, International Centre for Educators’ Styles (ICES website).

#### Theme: Realities of teaching

Perhaps, a new teacher enters the world of teaching without any inkling that the teaching job is not confined to a classroom or school environment because, during the teaching practicum, a student-teacher is given only a short term training to teach students in an actual classroom. If ever there were other tasks, those were minimal ones that could not at all be sidelined by nonteaching tasks. Thus, during the first few months at work, the teacher’s aims were to educate the pupils in terms of providing knowledge, skills, and values; however, it would not be long before the demand to carry out administrative assignments plus many other non-teaching assignments,



intermingle with the teacher's key task. David, Albert, and Vizmanos (2019) aptly describe this phenomenon this way:

Every public school teacher has a regular full-time teaching load and is mandated to devote a maximum of six hours of actual classroom instruction a day, under the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers. In reality, however, several additional administrative or student support roles are assigned to each teacher. These include paperwork on seminars and trainings they are tasked to attend and additional designations in line with student guidance, budget, disaster response, and health. Teachers are likewise expected to participate in the implementation of various government programs, such as mass immunizations, community mapping, conditional cash transfer, deworming, feeding, population census, antidrug, election, among others.

These roles place more burden on the already heavy workload, which is related to teaching such as lesson-planning, visual making, and managing the learning activities inside the classroom. Moreover, with the rapid change of technology, the way teachers design and develop their lessons, compute grades, or make terminal reports have radically changed as all of these have to be done online. Otherwise, to remain traditional in ways of doing things will already isolate the teacher, if not, affect the corporate team in terms of beating deadlines or rendering accurate electronic reports

We would like to describe this occurrence as “transformative” in a sense that the teachers who perceived teaching as classroom teaching and doing teaching-related tasks per se have traversed from this perception which was confirmed by their practicum teaching, into what transpires in the real world of teaching, that is, teaching as complex and multi-dimensional

## CONCLUSIONS

This study sought to determine the lived experiences of newly-hired teachers by drawing out narratives from the five participants of the study and then analyzing their responses using the theory of experience rooted in the work of Dewey and Vygotsky as expounded and illustrated by Roth and Jornet (2014). The themes extracted from the results of the interview validate most of the lived experiences in the extant literature. These experiences are characterized by both positive, e.g., increase in salary and the joy of seeing students improve on their reading skills, and negative emotions such as burnout and inability to manage student misbehavior. It is expected that there are more negative experiences because the teachers are new and that they are

still adjusting in the new environment. However, the main contribution of this study lies in the expanding the concept of experience illustrated by Roth and Jornet (2014) using the interaction of a single student and a single teacher; this study focused on the lived experiences out of the interaction between a group of 5 teachers and a group of students in a classroom setting. Thus, this study confirmed that the experiences of newly-hired might be described as affective, integrative, and transformative. However, to say that the lived experience is a 'moving force,' the interaction between the teachers and their students in our study is not yet ripe enough to be able to determine it with certainty.

Moreover, since data are limited, the findings cannot be used to generalize the experiences of other beginning teachers in different work settings. However, the experiences of new mentors may be helpful to potential teachers preparing to enter the profession; and to school administrators who have a hand on the induction program of the school and who plays the role of school instructional leader. The novice teacher's source of joy, anger, anxiety, or exhaustion may be addressed by revisiting policies by checking our sources of creative resources to add classroom and other learning facilities. Furthermore, studies may, therefore, be done along these lines.

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