

The Lived Experiences and Perceptions of Social Studies Teachers and School Administrators on the Out-Of-Field Teaching Phenomenon in Zamboanga City

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ABSTRACT

This study sleuthed on the wide yet less explored issue called out-of-field teaching among the public junior high schools in Zamboanga City, Philippines. It focused on the extent and experiences of teachers who are assigned to teach social studies but are not licensed in it and conversely those licensed but are assigned to teach outside the field of social studies. It also sought to discuss the perceptions of some school administrators on the factors that lead to the occurrence of the phenomenon. Data were mainly gathered using a descriptive-qualitative method, particularly through survey, interviews, and document analysis. The results revealed that 37% of the teachers assigned to teach social studies is teaching out of their field of specialization. Interviews also show a consensus in identifying under-loading of teachers, lack of resources, and the lack of coordination between the HEIs and DepEd as main factors to out-of-field teaching in the city. It also suggests that out-of-field teachers experience a certain degree of emotional and physical stress and difficulty in understanding

certain contents and practical concepts. These are reflected on their instructional practices that include the reliance on textbooks and the use of survival strategies such as lectures, group reports, and video presentations. This situation can be partly attributed to and/or is further exacerbated by onerous number of subject preparations and the unavailability of adequate instructional resources. Hence, the findings of the study imply the need for higher education institutions to conduct constant assessment of actual demand for teachers among the schools in the division. Regular training programs for out-of-field teachers aided by the production of adequate instructional resources are also necessary. Lastly, a review on the policy concerning the daily number of teaching loads of the teachers is deemed necessary to minimize the extent and magnitude of out-of-field teaching.

Keywords— Social Studies, lived experiences, out-of-field teaching, qualitative design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the attention of educators was drawn towards the issue of the implementation of the “K to 12” curriculum of the Department of Education (Dep Ed), particularly on the Senior High School program which formally commenced during the academic year 2016-2017. This program was initiated by the then Aquino administration as part of its move to improve not only the education system but also the economy of the country. As tackled in the 2010 Discussion Paper on the Enhanced K+12 Basic Education Program of Dep Ed, the aim of the program is “to create a functional basic education system that will produce productive and responsible citizens equipped with the essential competencies and skills for both life-long learning and employment” (p.7). Furthermore, for these goals to be attained, the program has two intertwined objectives. First, is to offer every learner a chance to have quality education based on an improved and decongested curriculum that can be recognized and compared to international standards, and second, is to change the people’s perception of secondary education as just a training for tertiary education; rather than as passport for gainful occupation and/or self-employment in a rapidly shifting and progressively globalized society (p.7).

This program is a clear manifestation of the abidance of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which mandates the state to “establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of

the people and society” (Article XIV, Sec. 2, Para. 1). This is also a clear observation of the right to quality education of every Filipino child. The program’s goal of providing quality education is clear but it seems uncertain.

For a country to have quality education, it must first assure that its teachers possess the desired qualities and required qualifications. Being a major player in the teaching-learning process, the teachers’ teaching quality is paramount in achieving the goals of a curriculum, as teachers serve as the front liners in its implementation. Akinsolu (2010) contends that teachers can either create or destroy the curriculum. Hence, their adequacy and quality must be gauged regularly. But, in order to secure qualified teachers for our schools, it is necessary to define first what a qualified teacher should be. In the Philippines, particularly in Zamboanga City, it is public knowledge or assumption that a teacher is qualified if he or she has passed the licensure examination for teachers and has met certain requirements needed for him or her to have a government post. Often overlooked is the need for congruence of the teacher’s field of specialization with the actual teaching load or subject assigned. Ingersoll (2005) explained that “highly qualified teachers may become highly unqualified if they are assigned to teach subjects for which they have little [or no] background and preparation” (p.175). In this context, it is important to note that a qualified teacher is one who has not only passed certain examinations and met certain requirements, but also one who has acquired sufficient academic background on the subject that he or she is teaching. Although background on the subject being taught by the teacher does not guarantee quality education, Ingersoll (1996) opined that this knowledge is a necessary prerequisite (p. 2).

For many years the Philippine education system has been confronted by several problems. Some of these problems are so obvious while some are so obscure. One issue which is often unnoticed and overlooked by educators is the issue of out-of-field teaching. As defined by Ingersoll (2003), out-of-field teaching refers to those “teachers assigned to teach subjects which do not match their training or education” (p.5). In addition, in the study of McConney and Price (2009), out-of-field teaching is defined as “teaching at a level of schooling (e.g., primary) for which a teacher is not formally qualified” (p.1). Ingersoll in 1998 explained that one of the causes for the lack of knowledge on this issue is the nonexistence of accurate data on the subject. This is further exacerbated by the fact that some school administrators and teachers are hesitant to make this issue known in public to protect their credibility and the image of their schools from the criticisms that it can have due to its general negative implications (Ingersoll, 2002; Plessis, 2005).

In this context, the study attempts to galvanize the discussion on the issue of out-of-field teaching in the Philippines by providing initial and substantive data on the prevalence of this practice on a local level particularly in public junior high schools in the Division of Zamboanga City. It also sleuths on the experiences and perceptions of some teachers and administrators on the issue to have a holistic grasp of the nature of the issue of out-of-field teaching.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general aim of this study was to determine the extent of out-of-field teaching in social studies in public junior high schools in Zamboanga City and to discuss the major concerns revolving it. Specifically, the study aimed to determine the: 1. Extent of out-of-field teaching in social studies in the public junior high schools in Zamboanga City; 2. The perceptions of some school administrators on the factors to the occurrence of out-of-field teaching in the division of Zamboanga City; 3. The experiences of some social studies teachers on the out-of- field teaching phenomenon.

FRAMEWORK

This study is exploratory in nature in the context of the Zamboanga City. Its purpose was to generate a comprehensive and extensive knowledge on the issue of out-of-field teaching in social studies by statistically determining its extent and qualitatively discussing the experiences and perceptions of school administrators and teachers concerned. Although the practice has been prevalent for quite some time now, school administrators and educators still do not have a good grasp and understanding of the issue due primarily to the lack of discourses on this issue. Hence, aside from providing the conceptual framework and premises of this study, the succeeding literature provide essential and substantive knowledge or background on the nature of out-of-field teaching.

Defining and Measuring Out-of-Field Teaching

Definitions of Out-of-Field Teaching

Basic throughout the course of this research was the assumption that there is a significant number of teachers among the public junior high schools in Zamboanga City who are tasked to teach subjects that are not within their fields of expertise. This notion is made due primarily to the personal experience that

the researcher had and due to the fact that there is a great shortage of teachers in the country arising from the growing population of the students every year. Yet, though this may be a common scene to most of the schools throughout the country, this particular situation is inadequately understood both by the teachers and school administrators. Moreover, it is assumed that most educators in the country lack the knowledge on how to define or what technical term to use in addressing this particular situation. This proposition is made with the support of one of the findings of Du Plessis (2005) who noted that the participants in her study were aware of the existence of out-of-field teaching in schools but did not have a name for the problem.

Measuring Out-of-Field Teaching

The variations in the definition of out-of-field teaching, as pointed out in the aforementioned, may have been caused by the different measures or standards used by the researchers in determining out-of-field teachers. These standards are important and must be set clearly in any study relating to out-of-field teaching as it determines the teachers who will be classified as out-of-field (Ingersoll, 2002b). Other than these standards, Ingersoll (2000b) further argued that the focus of the study (e.g., whether teachers or students, elementary level or high school level) must also be stated and explained clearly as these may also have an implication on the extent and severity of the problem of out-of-field teaching. Hence, to discuss these further, the five major decisions that must be considered in measuring out-of-field teaching, as identified by Ingersoll in 2002, are presented and briefly explained in the succeeding paragraphs.

1. Setting the Standard for Qualified and Unqualified

The first decision that must be considered in measuring out-of-field teaching is the standards to be used in identifying a qualified teacher. The identification of the qualified teachers basically serves as the framework from which the unqualified, and consequently the out-of-field, teachers will be identified. Though easy as it may sound, Ingersoll (2002b) noted the sophistication in setting these standards as authors and researchers lack the consensus in deciding as to what really constitute a qualified teacher. The complexity in setting the standards for qualified teachers certainly has an implication on out-of-field teaching as this may mean that there may also be a lack of consensus in the decision as to what really constitute or when really to consider a teacher as out-of-field. Nevertheless, Ingersoll (2002b) managed to identify and discuss the strengths and limits of the

five possible standards that have either been used or could be used in measuring out-of-field teaching. These five standards are the: teacher examination scores, course work in the field, certification in the field, major or minor in the field, and major and certification in the field.

2. Defining Teaching Fields and Matching with Training Fields

After having presented the different standards used as measures, another decision that must be considered in measuring out-of-field teaching, according to Ingersoll (2002b), is on defining the teaching fields of interest (in this case the social studies field) and matching it with its training fields. In particular, defining teaching fields may mean choosing what teaching fields to include in the study, whether single discipline fields such as mathematics or multi-disciplinary fields such as social studies. Deciding on what teaching field to study may have an implication on the number of out-of-field teachers one will identify. For example, if a researcher decides to investigate out-of-field teaching in social studies, he or she must decide further on how to define the field, whether broadly or narrowly. If one decides to define it broadly, then this may mean, as an example, that a teacher who has earned a degree in political science and is certified as social studies but is actually teaching economics may not be considered as an out-of-field but as an in-field instead. On the other hand, if one decides to define it narrowly, then, as given in the example, the teacher who has earned a degree in political science but is actually teaching economics may not be considered or counted as in-field but as an out-of-field instead. In this context, it is quite evident that the latter definition is more reliable as the former one tends to disregard or overlook the out-of-field teaching that could occur within the multi-disciplinary field.

3. Identifying Those Assigned to Teaching Fields

The third important decision presented by Ingersoll (2002b) that must be made in measuring out-of-field teaching is on identifying the teachers who are assigned to teach a particular field. In this case, there could be two possible ways on how to identify teachers assigned to particular teaching fields; one is by focusing only on the main assignments of the teachers, that is the “teaching fields in which they teach the most classes” (p. 30), or second, is by including all those who are teaching in the field, regardless whether it is their main or simply an additional/extra assignment. In this context, Ingersoll (2002b) elaborates the advantage of the former measure, which he termed as “main-field-only measure”, by stating that the data could easily be obtained and be calculated using it. He

further posited that this could be the possible reason why this measure has been featured in several reports in the United States. However, though this is the case, Ingersoll (2002b) also identified some flaws that the former measure bears, one of which is on the inaccuracy of the data obtained. Main-field-only measures may lead to an underestimation of the extent of out-of-field teaching as it tends to disregard the other teaching assignments of the teachers from where the practice could most frequently exist. Perhaps the basic contention here is that, not all teachers teaching in a field are found within the department or area of that field. There are those who have their own original main field but are having additional teaching field which could be a case of an out-of-field but may not be counted due to the broad yet exclusionary nature of the main-field-only measure. In this sense, the second measure, which is counting all those who are assigned to teach a field, evidently becomes more logical and reliable.

4. Selecting the Entity to be Measured

Moving on, the fourth decision that must be made in measuring out-of-field teaching is selecting the entities to be measured – teachers, classes or students. Deciding on which of these entities to be measured is an important and a crucial aspect of any study concerning the issue of out-of-field teaching as each of these entities may have its own implication regarding the seriousness of the issue. Hence, to discuss their implications further, Ingersoll (2002b) explained the nature of these entities one by one. Of the three entities, Ingersoll (2002b) declared that the teachers are the most frequently used measure with the explanation that interests in out-of-field teaching have basically emerged from a perspective of research and policy that concentrates on the problems regarding teacher quantity and quality. This measure is useful especially for those who are concerned with the attributes of the labor force of the education sector. However, one main flaw identified by Ingersoll (2002b) concerning this measure is that, it disregards the amount of out-of-field teaching that a teacher does, particularly the number of classes in which a teacher teaches out of his/her field. Hence, this measure can overestimate (or perhaps underestimate) the number of classes and students taught by out-of-field teachers. To remediate this flaw, Ingersoll (2002b) moves to a second possible measure – the percentage of classes taught by out-of-field teachers. Unlike the first measure which primarily focuses on the number of teachers teaching out of their fields, this measure accurately counts the number of classes taught by out-of-field teachers and moves away from the possibility of having an overestimation or underestimation of the number of classes exposed to

out-of-field teaching. Yet, though reliable as it may seem, Ingersoll (2002b) also identified its flaw by pointing out that this measure focuses solely on the number of classes and does not include their sizes which consequently leads to its failure to identify the actual number of students affected by out-of-field teaching. So, to solve this problem, Ingersoll (2002b) moves on to the third and perhaps the most reliable measure – the percentage of students enrolled in each field who are taught by out-of-field teachers. This measure tends to be more useful in avoiding the problems of underestimation or overestimation. And since it focuses on the number of students exposed to out-of-field teaching, Ingersoll (2002b) also posited that this measure could also be useful in analyzing the inequities in the distribution of qualified teachers or the students' access to them. But, although it appears to be more reliable than the first two measures, Ingersoll (2002b) also explained its disadvantages by stating that calculation in this measure could be more difficult and time-consuming since it requires the cumulating of class sizes for every field not just for out-of-field teachers but for in-field teachers as well.

5. Choosing Grade Levels to be Examined

The fifth decision that must be considered in measuring out-of-field teaching is choosing the grade levels to be examined. In particular, grade levels in this context could either refer to broader levels such as elementary and secondary or to more specific levels such as 7th grade level or 12th grade level and the like. As in most cases, including in his own works on the issue, Ingersoll (2002b) noted that most analyses focus on the secondary level than the elementary level. This situation, accordingly, is due to the differences in the curriculum and structure of elementary and secondary levels. Evidently, teachers in the elementary level tend to be “generalists” teaching different fields in several grade levels while teachers in the secondary level tend to be “specialists” teaching only in one field and perhaps also only in one particular grade level. In this context, the underlying principles behind the analyses of out-of-field teaching may definitely be more suitable in secondary level than the elementary level. Nevertheless, Ingersoll (2002b) contends that analyses of out-of-field teaching in the elementary level could be made as they could also be measured based from their fields of expertise (e.g., general education, kindergarten, or prekindergarten).

Extent of Out-of-Field Teaching

As stated by Ingersoll (1996), one main factor for the lack of knowledge on out-of-field teaching is the non-existence of accurate statistical data on

this issue. This situation may not have an impact on the issue of out-of-field teaching alone as this may also have a corresponding implication on the data and discussions regarding the aspects of teacher qualifications and students' access to qualified teachers. Hence, it is perhaps from this context, other than their personal experiences, that Ingersoll and other researchers have conceptualized and come up with their respective analyses on the issue of out-of-field teaching. The findings of their analyses have contributed much not just on the definition of out-of-field teaching, but most importantly on the evidence of its existence and extent both in the local and international perspectives.

Causes of Out-of-Field Teaching

The foregoing discussions in this chapter has so far established the definition and existence of out-of-field teaching both in the local and international setting. After having done so, the researcher now moves to a more essential aspect of the issue, the causes of its existence. The discussion on this aspect of the issue, more than the purpose of supporting the foundations of this study, needs to be undertaken to fully build a comprehensive understanding on the nature of out-of-field teaching. To do this, the contentions made by the researchers and the findings of their studies which may have both direct and indirect implications on the causes of out-of-field teaching are consolidated and presented in this part of the paper. On a broader perspective, these implications need to be pointed out as these may shed light on the other aspects concerning this issue, more importantly, on the aspect of the possible effects and solutions or remedies to the problem of out-of-field teaching.

Effects of Out-of-Field Teaching

As stated earlier, one major reason for the lack of knowledge on the problem of out-of-field teaching is due to the absence of concrete data regarding it, most especially on its extent and magnitude. However, through the initiatives and the findings of several researchers and analysts, the problem on the unavailability of the data has been addressed and the establishment of the evidence on the existence and widespread of out-of-field teaching has sufficiently been made. Yet, though these data seem to be sufficient and significant, these alone may not be enough in drawing more attention on this issue from the people both within and outside the education community. Perhaps the next question that could arise following the establishment of these data is “so what?” or “do these data really matter?” To address this concern, there is a need to dig and present more data other than

on the extent of the issue. In particular, both quantitative and qualitative data on the effects of out-of-field teaching both on the students and the teachers must be fully established as this aspect provides the very reason why the problem of out-of-field teaching must be recognized and be addressed seriously.

Effects on the Students

One may argue that students' academic achievement may solely be a product of their own attributes which could include their levels of mental and physiological abilities, socio-economic status, peers, parental upbringing, and other factors that are found outside the school setting. This notion tends to disregard the possibility that students' performance could be associated with factors found within the premises of the schools, more specifically with the attributes that their teachers possess. In particular, these teacher attributes could include visible and personal characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity and religious affiliation. On the other hand, other teacher attributes which are more essential but appear to be less visible could include their educational background, professional experiences and in general, their qualifications. These characteristics, contrary to the first notion, are important as these could have definite implications on the students' achievement and consequently on the schools' performance. It is in this context where the issue of out-of-field teaching could be implicated and be discussed thoroughly.

Effects on the Teachers

The effects of out-of-field teaching on the students have certainly been evident in the findings made by the researchers discussed earlier. However, to fully comprehend the negative implications that the out-of-field teaching phenomenon bears, it is important to also look at its effects on the out-of-field teachers themselves. By doing this, one may develop a deeper understanding on why things such as poor student outcomes prevail in the schools. More so, studying the effects of the phenomenon within the perspective of the teachers may provide more essential information that could be utilized in devising a mechanism on how to address this problem. Hence, certain studies which dwell on the effects of out-of-field teaching specifically on the teachers have been identified and are presented in this part of the chapter to provide an idea on how the phenomenon can affect the professional performance and development of the teachers. These studies are generally categorized into two aspects, the technical aspect which includes the effects of the phenomenon on the teaching practices of the teachers,

and the behavioral aspect which includes the effects of the phenomenon on the feelings and emotions of the teachers.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive-qualitative research design to investigate the phenomenon of out-of-field teaching in social studies in Zamboanga City. This design was seen to be adequate and suitable as this study did not only aim to determine the extent of the of out-of-field teaching but also to discuss the lived experiences and perceptions of some teachers and administrators on the phenomenon. This design is discussed in details in the succeeding paragraphs.

Descriptive Design

Descriptive research design was utilized to address the first objective of the study. Specifically, this study used a survey questionnaire to gather data on the extent of out-of-field teaching in social studies in relation to the number or percentage of out-of-field teachers and the profile of the out-of-field teachers in terms of fields of expertise and length of service.

Standard of Measure

The standard used in measuring or determining out-of-field teaching was the license held by the teachers who were assigned to teach any class or discipline of social studies (Araling Panlipunan) in the junior high school level. In particular, those who were classified as in-field teachers or social studies specialists were those who held a license in the field of social studies and were not assigned to teach other subject outside the field of social studies. Consequently, those teachers assigned to teach social studies but did not hold a license in that field, and those social studies specialists who were teaching outside the field of social studies or along with it, were classified as out-of-field teachers. As a clarification and emphasis, certified or licensed social studies teachers or specialists refer to those who have passed the licensure examination for teachers in this field regardless of their undergraduate degree.

Sampling Procedures

Initially, the study used a combination of clustered-convenience sampling method to choose the respondents of the study. Applying the principle of this

sampling method, the public junior high schools in the city were categorized according to school districts. After having done this, a convenience sampling approach was used to determine the number of schools that was identified as respondents per school district. This procedure is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 – Cluster-Convenience Sampling of Public Junior High Schools in the Division of Zamboanga City

School District	Total Junior High Schools Per District	Sampled Schools based on Convenience
A	5	2
B	4	2
C	4	1
D	4	3
E	2	1
F	4	3
G	5	3
H	1	1
I	3	2
J	1	1
K	6	1
L	0	0
TOTAL	39	20

Table 3.1 shows that the total number of schools identified as the initial respondents of the study is 20 out of 39. This sample represented 51% of the total number of public junior high schools in Zamboanga City.

After having identified the number of schools as the initial respondents of the study, a complete enumeration of the teachers assigned to teach social studies per school was undertaken. This was done by identifying the social studies teacher in every class or through the list of social studies teachers provided by the subject coordinators for social studies or by the principals of the schools. The number of social studies teachers per school is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 – Number of Social Studies Teachers Per Responding School

Responding School	Number of SS Teachers
School 1	11
School 2	4
School 3	26
School 4	1
School 5	5
School 6	23
School 7	4
School 8	3
School 9	1
School 10	5
School 11	5
School 12	2
School 13	3
School 14	2
School 15	2
School 16	13
School 17	6
School 18	10
School 19	33
School 20	1
20 Schools	160 SS Teachers

Table 3.2 shows that there is a total of 160 teachers assigned to teach social studies among the twenty schools. These 160 teachers were chosen as the respondents to address the first objective of the study. However, due to the unavailability of some teachers during data gathering, some survey forms were not delivered or retrieved. The response rate of the survey is shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 – Retrieval / Response Rate of the Survey

Survey Forms	Number	Percentage
Retrieved Forms	136	85%
Uncounted and Rejected Forms	24	15%
Total	160	100%

Table 3.3 shows that out of the 160 teachers assigned to teach social studies in the twenty public junior high schools in the city, 136 or 85% accomplished the survey forms. Only 15% or 24 out of 160 teachers were not counted due to some reasons such as unavailability of teachers, invalidations and rejection of forms, and unwillingness of the teachers to participate in the survey. Nonetheless, this rate was large enough to establish the generalizability of the results of the survey.

Instrument

A researcher-made survey questionnaire was used to gather data needed to address the first and second objectives of the study. It is composed of seven items designed to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of: name, school, area of specialization, number of Social Studies (Araling Panlipunan) classes taught, grade level assignment, number of years in service, and other teaching assignments. The instrument was subjected to validation by three notable professors or experts in the field of social studies, one of whom was a former president of one of the universities in the city.

Data Gathering Procedure

The process of collecting the data commenced with a letter that was sent to the superintendent of the schools' division office of the Department of Education – Division of Zamboanga City seeking permission for the conduct of the study. Along with this was the request for some initial data needed for the study, particularly a list of all the public junior high schools in every school district in Zamboanga City. Consequently, upon receiving the approval for the conduct of the study and the list of all the junior high schools, the sampling procedure was immediately done to determine the number of schools that would be taken as the initial sample or respondents of the study. After this, a letter with the attached endorsement or approval sheet from the superintendent was sent to the principals of the respective schools to notify them and seek direct permission for the conduct of the study. In particular, thirteen of the twenty schools were personally visited by the researcher throughout the course of gathering the data. On the other hand, the communications and gathering of data for the seven schools was done by the research assistants or enumerators who were all teachers assigned respectively in those schools.

Upon receiving the approval from the principals, the process of gathering the data within the schools immediately followed. Specifically, for big schools,

a list of all the sections or classes from Grade 7 to Grade 10 and a list of all the social studies teachers were requested from the office of the principals and area coordinators to identify the assigned social studies teacher for every class. By doing so, the total number of social studies teachers for every school was identified and confirmed and the conduct of the survey was immediately administered. On the other hand, in small schools, the number of social studies teachers was easily identified and the survey was directly administered.

Data Analysis

After the retrieval of the survey forms, the process of identifying the out-of-field teachers was immediately done per school. Afterwards, the number of out-of-field teachers per school was then aggregated to determine the total percentage of the out-of-field teachers within the twenty sampled junior high schools.

Qualitative Design

The qualitative part addressed the second and third objective of the study which primarily dealt with the experiences and perceptions of some school administrators and teachers regarding the issue of out-of-field teaching. It employed the basic principle of phenomenological research approach through the conduct of a semi-structured interview to draw the experiences and perceptions of school administrators and teachers who were exposed to out-of-field teaching.

Interview with the School Administrators

The first set of interviews was intended for the school administrators and was done with eight persons; six school principals and two area coordinators for social studies. These persons were considered key informants on the issue of out-of-field teaching as their experiences both as teachers and as administrators provided essential inputs on the factors that lead to the occurrence of the phenomenon. In addition, the organizational perspective introduced by Ingersoll (2002) as a possible explanation for the cause of out-of-field teaching was utilized as a theoretical framework throughout the interview with these key informants.

Participants

The study used purposive sampling in identifying the eight participants for the interview with administrators. These eight administrators were selected primarily based on the results of the survey, particularly from schools where out-of-field teachers were identified. To have an optimal representation of the schools

and administrators, the location of the schools of the administrators was also emphasized. Two administrators came from the schools in the west coast of the city which were reachable approximately for about thirty minutes to one hour via commuter's ride from the central business district, two from the east coast with approximately the same travel time, and four from three big schools within the city proper. For emphasis, these eight participants represented seven public junior high schools in the division of Zamboanga City. Two participants came from one school. The profile of the administrators is presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.3 – Profile of the Administrators

Participant	Sex	Position	No. of Years in the Position	No. of School Assignments
A1	M	Principal	18	6
A2	F	Principal	10	3
A3	M	Department Head – Social Studies	9	4
A4	M	Principal	13	4
A5	F	Department Head – Social Studies	13	3
A6	F	Principal	17	5
A7	M	Principal	2	2
A8	M	Principal	6	5

Interview Guide

The instrument for this design was an interview guide which was composed of thirteen questions. The questions were raised based from the pre-determined categories which include the views of the administrators regarding the causes or factors to out-of-field teaching. Similar to the survey instrument, the interview guide was subjected to validation process by the same three notable professors. In addition, prior to the actual interview with the eight participants, the interview guide was subjected to a pilot test with an administrator which eventually led to the deletion and rephrasing of some questions.

Procedural Details

All of the administrators were personally invited by the researcher for an interview. This mostly happened during the initial visit of the researcher to the schools, particularly during the conduct of the survey. All interviews were done at

the respective offices of the administrators. Upon their approval and availability, the consent of the administrators was formally sought and secured through the consent form. Before the interview started, the participant was given time to read the contents of the consent form which included an information on the use of a recording device and an assurance that their personality would be dealt with the highest level of confidentiality and anonymity. Afterwards, the researcher explained to the participant the purpose of the study and some guidelines that needed to be observed during the interview.

Interview with the Teachers

The second part of the qualitative design dealt on the experiences of some teachers who were assigned to teach out of their fields. This was also done through a semi-structured interview which sought to determine some practices, experiences, and challenges encountered by the out-of-field teachers.

Participants

Similar to the interview with the administrators, purposive sampling was utilized to identify the five teachers who were invited to participate in the second set of interviews. On the other hand, three other out-of-field teachers were identified through snowball sampling because they were not counted in the preliminary survey since they were not given any social studies assignment. Overall, eight out-of-field teachers teaching in the public junior high schools were interviewed for the study. This number was seen sufficient or adequate as this study did not intend to draw a general conclusion about the experiences of the out-of-field teachers but rather, it aimed to identify and discuss some particular cases and experiences of teachers who were directly exposed to the issue of out-of-field teaching. The attributes that were emphasized to identify the participants for the interview were their fields of specialization and out-of-field assignments and the location and size of the school where they were connected to. Ideally, the eight participants were divided into two groups, one group was composed of four teachers who were purely teaching out of their fields and were not given any in-field assignments while the other group was composed of four teachers who were teaching in their field but were at the same time assigned to teach other subject outside their fields of specialization. The profile of these teachers is presented in Table 3.5 in the next page.

Table 3.5 – Profile of the out-of-field teachers

Group	Teacher	Sex	Years in Service	Field of Specialization	Actual Teaching Assignments
Out-of-field Teachers with no In-field assignment	T3	M	3	English	Filipino and Social Studies
	T5	F	1	Social Studies	English
	T6	M	6	Social Studies	MAPEH
	T7	M	5 Months	Social Studies	Math and Filipino
Out-of-field Teachers with In-field assignment	T1	M	9	Social Studies	Social Studies and TLE
	T2	F	13	Biology	Science and Social Studies
	T4	F	20	Social Studies	Social Studies and Values
	T8	F	2	General Science	Sciences, Filipino, Values Education and Social Studies

Interview Guide

Each participant was interviewed using an interview guide which contained eighteen questions designed to develop direct responses for the pre-determined categories that included: the teacher's background, experiences, and views. The interview guide was validated along with the first two instruments by the same three experts in the field of social studies. Afterwards, the guide was also subjected to a pilot test with two out-of-field teachers which showed that there was an overlapping of questions and had a longer duration of the interview. Hence, the researcher rephrased some questions while others were removed to shorten the duration of the interview.

Procedural Details

Similar with the administrators, the teachers were personally invited by the researcher for an interview. Five were identified through the result of the survey while three were identified through snowball sampling. Before the interview, the teachers were asked to read the consent form and consequently signed it to secure their consent.

Analysis for the Interviews

After the interview with the administrators and the teachers, the responses were transcribed by the researcher. In general, the principle of phenomenological research design was employed in the analysis and interpretation of the gathered qualitative data. Consequently, the commonalities or themes that emerged from the different responses of the participants as well as the peculiar ones were

highlighted and were used as a starting point from where the interpretations and the discussions of the data were focused. Other than the transcripts, the tone of the voice of the participants was also reviewed in doing the analysis. In general, an inductive content and discourse analysis method was employed in analyzing the data gathered from the interviews.

Document Analysis

A document analysis was also employed in the study to triangulate some statements given by the administrators during the interview. In particular, a copy of the Registry of Qualified Applicants (RQA) from the DepEd Division of Zamboanga was requested and analyzed to match the statements given by some administrators about the supply of teachers per field of specialization with the actual number of teachers found in the registry. Four registries equivalent to four years were originally planned to be analyzed, however, due to the unavailability of the document for a particular year, only three registries were analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the survey show that 37% of the teachers assigned to teach social studies in the public junior high schools in Zamboanga City is teaching out-of-field. When grouped according to their fields of specialization, it appeared that 70% of the out-of-field teachers are social studies specialists who are mostly assigned to teach Values Education along with social studies. In addition, when grouped according to years in service, the results show that 35% of out-of-field teachers belong to the bracket of 1 – 5 years which suggest that young teachers are more likely to teach out of their fields in social studies.

The perceptions of some school administrators on the factors leading to out-of-field teaching provide substantial insights on the phenomenon. One common factor identified by most of the administrators or participants is the under-loading of teachers. To meet the six hours minimum teaching loads as prescribed by DepEd memorandum no. 291, s.2008, some teachers are assigned to teach other subjects outside their fields of specialization. This appears to be more frequent in schools which are small in terms of the number of students or classes. Also, another factor identified by some administrators is the lack of resources on the part of the government particularly in the aspect of plantilia items which results to the shortage of teachers and is exacerbated by the annual increase in student population. Lastly, the lack of coordination between the Higher Education Institutions in Zamboanga City and the Department of Education Division of

Zamboanga was also identified as a major factor to out-of-field teaching. Due to this, the actual demand for teachers in specific teaching fields is not being assessed and consequently not being met. In effect, some administrators believe that there is an oversupply of teachers for sciences while a shortage exist for teachers in some other fields such as Values Education which seemed have been corroborated by the result of the analysis of the registry of qualified applicants for teachers for three years.

The experiences of some teachers who were directly exposed to the phenomenon further defined the nature and meaning of out-of-field teaching. Through their responses, it appeared that some out-of-field teachers experience certain degree of difficulty in understanding some contents and concepts in their out-of-field assignments. Also, it became apparent that some of the teachers exposed to the phenomenon are confronted with both emotional and physical stress. These can respectively be attributed to the sense of guilt and disappointments that some of them have and to their onerous teaching preparations which are exacerbated by the lack of adequate instructional resources. Consequently, these challenges are somehow reflected on the teaching practices or instructional performance of the out-of-field teachers. In particular, majority of the participants indirectly pointed out their heavy reliance on textbooks and modules as a usual attribute or part of their teaching activity in their out-of-field assignments. More so, some teachers employed some survival teaching strategies which seemed to appear as their ways of coping with the difficult situation brought by their out-of-field assignments. These survival strategies specifically include the conventional lecture and board work strategy, group reports and performances, and the use video clip presentations.

This study was exploratory in nature as this may be one of the only few that attempted to investigate the issue of out-of-field teaching within the context of the Philippines. More so, this study employed a mixed-method research design in identifying the magnitude and in discussing the experiences of those who were directly exposed to this issue. In particular, the study applied the principle of descriptive statistics in measuring the extent of out-of-field teaching and employed a phenomenological research design as part of its qualitative aspects. The design of the study is peculiar in a sense that most studies found on the literature discussed the statistical extent of the problem and the experiences of people exposed to it separately. In addition, this study did not only deal with the experiences of the teachers but also included the perspective of administration or management as an aspect that may also have an implication with the issue.

However, this study has also its boundaries with regards to certain aspects. One limitation of the study is that it solely focused on the field of Social Studies (Araling Panlipunan) and did not account for the extent of out-of-field teaching in other teaching fields. In addition, the study used the license or certification in social studies as its measure in identifying the number of out-of-field teachers. With this, the study did not determine the extent of out-of-field teaching that could have occurred in the disciplines, such as economics and history, within the social studies field. Similarly, the study only concentrated on the public junior high school level in Zamboanga City, hence, its generalizability cannot be fully established in the city and in the whole secondary education system which includes the senior high school level and the schools in the private sector. Lastly, the findings of the study on the extent of out-of-field teaching in Social Studies can only be applied in one year as this was conducted in the school year of 2016-2017 and did not intend to determine the growth rate of the phenomenon as data on its extent in the previous years are not available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for all institutions and individuals concerned:

1. The establishment of the coordination between the higher education institutions, particularly the teacher education institutions in the city, and the Department of Education Division of Zamboanga must be fully done in order to dismantle the imbalance in the supply of teachers for certain teaching fields. As directly suggested by some of the administrators, the higher education institutions must conduct constant survey and evaluation of actual and specific demands for teachers in the public junior high schools in the city to allow them to review their curricular programs and eventually supply the actual teachers needed in the schools.

2. The policy with regards to the number of teaching hours of the teachers per day, as mandated by DepEd memorandum no. 291, s. 2008, should also be reviewed and be amended in relation to the issue of out-of-field teaching. It is suggested that out-of-field teachers should be given special considerations in this aspect, especially those assigned in small schools and in the remote areas in order to decongest their workloads and provide them adequate time for preparation.

3. To fully monitor and track the extent of the out-of-field teaching among the secondary schools in the city, the Department of Education Division of

Zamboanga City should develop a record system which could serve as a data base of out-of-field teachers and could be used by future researchers on this issue. This system could be done by requiring all the schools to strictly submit any reliable and well-furnished document concerning the teaching assignments and academic profile of the teachers every year.

4. The out-of-field teachers must be provided with constant and regular trainings which will not only focus on the contents of their out-of-field assignments but also on the teaching strategies appropriate to it. These trainings may be done through the collaboration of the higher education institutions, the division of Zamboanga, and other related agencies. In addition, the mentoring and coaching schemes for out-of-field teachers among the schools must be strengthened and be observed strictly. If possible, a particular mentor and a specific time for mentoring must be identified for the formalization of the coaching and mentoring activities. Out-of-field teachers in small schools, which usually do not have access to master teachers and area coordinators, should also be given priority or should highly be considered in this aspect.

5. Lastly, to minimize their difficulty, it is recommended that out-of-field teachers should be provided with the necessary and readily-available instructional materials. These materials should not only be limited to textbooks and other printed materials but must also include multi-media resources backed up by adequate equipment and facilities.

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