

Tasks Beyond Instruction: A Case Study on Teachers' Ancillary Functions

Jophil Q. Arañas*

Northwestern Mindanao State College of Science and Technology, Tangub City, Philippines

*Correponding Author: aranas.jophil1998@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Teachers play multi-faceted roles. In addition to teaching, they also perform duties not directly related to teaching but are part of school's operations. As one of the rural schools in the Division of Ozamiz City, Sangay Integrated School teaching personnel are tasked to take multiple ancillary functions. This study explored the experiences of teachers having ancillary functions in Sangay IS for the School Year 2022-2023. It employed a case study research design where twelve (12) Sangay Integrated School served as the participants of this study. It utilized a semi-structured interview, and the data gathered were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. It generated five (5) themes, which answered the five (5) research problems. Based on the findings, teachers regard ancillary functions as additional tasks. These functions help teachers in their personal and professional development; however, time for instruction and family is sacrificed. To overcome this challenge, they employed workload management. They realized they needed assistance from more knowledgeable individuals to function effectively and efficiently, which can be done through mentoring, seminars, and training. It is recommended that school leaders may evenly distribute ancillary loads. Teachers may also create a checklist to balance their time well on what things are needed to do. An orientation for newly-appointed coordinators may also be done for their awareness of their responsibilities. The Department of Education may also employ a thorough and accurate time-use study that can clearly show which tasks should be assigned to teachers and which should be removed from their responsibility.

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INTRODUCTION

The researcher is an integrated public school teacher assigned to one of the rural schools in the Division of Ozamiz City. In total, fourteen (14) competent educators in the school perform various ancillary roles. Some of these teachers are assigned to multiple ancillary services. The researcher decided to do a case study to explore the experiences of these teachers as they execute their ancillary functions.

Teachers play multi-faceted roles. Inside the four walls of the classroom, teachers are more than just educators. In most instances, they simultaneously serve as a second parent, caregiver, counselor, entertainer, motivators, and even investigators. They are now seen as pillars of hope and strength in our society, and their job has become a profession worthy of great admiration. In fact, everyone has that particular teacher they will never forget and who profoundly impacted their life and helped shape who they are now.

In the Department of Education (DepEd), a regular full-time teacher is compelled to dedicate a maximum of six hours each day to classroom instruction. This is stipulated under the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers. An employee needs to render eight (8) working hours every day. For public school teachers, the remaining two (2) hours will be allotted for lesson preparations, other teaching-related activities, and other ancillary assignments. The most common ancillary duties are SBM Coordinator, Brigada Eskwela Coordinator, Disaster Risk Reduction Management Coordinator, Feeding Coordinator, Gulayan sa Paaralan Coordinator, School Canteen In-charge, Sports Coordinator, Learning Area Coordinator, EBEIS and LIS Coordinator, and other various coordinatorship.

In reality, two hours is very short of accomplishing those teaching-related duties and other administrative tasks. Teachers in large or mega schools are fortunate since tasks can be distributed to the teachers. However, the scenario is different in schools with few teaching personnel. Due to the limited workforce, teachers must take multiple ancillary assignments that obviously need effort and hardwork to fulfill effectively. While private schools employ non-teaching personnel to do some of the school-related tasks, public school administrative staffing is minimal. Ancillary functions pile up on top of teachers' many roles in the department. This implies that the teachers are carrying out administrative tasks, a situation hidden from the lenses of the typical metrics, which can compromise teaching quality (David et al., 2019).

On the other hand, some see the silver lining in doing ancillary functions. Some teachers find multiple ancillary tasks as an opportunity to gain benefits for their personal and professional growth (Into & Gempes, 2018).

According to Salise et al. (2021), an auxiliary function is a work that is necessary to the overall goals of how a system or organization operates. The term "ancillary functions" in the context of education refers to the tasks that teachers carry out that are not specifically related to teaching in the classroom, such as serving as class advisers, subject coordinators, club advisers, sports coaches, coordinators of both co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and community engagement services. Teachers do not perform actual teaching, yet these services are vital for the school's daily operations.

In other countries, like Indonesia, ancillary services are integrated into schools to support the implementation of the first four national standards of education in relation to the overall national goal of education (Salise et al., 2021). In the Philippines, this support is provided in accordance with the teachers' areas of expertise. As experienced teachers have the confidence to decline when these functions are offered to them, it is inevitable that these functions are also given to new teachers the school leaders. In other cases, regardless of whether they have the necessary skills, these positions are offered to people who have lesser teaching loads.

In the 21st century, some aspects of public education are altered. These include the role of the school principal, which has undergone a significant transformation. When it comes to leadership, what was originally thought of as a boss-like position has evolved into that of a "facilitator of instructors," where the conventional subordination and isolation model has been replaced with collaboration and consensus building (Rosenblatt, 2004). Principals are providing opportunities for teachers to become more involved with new initiatives and responsibilities.

Usually, a person accepts many ancillary duties to advance their career (Parham & Gordon, 2011). However, there is more to that. Teachers who perform various ancillary duties significantly benefit their professional and personal growth. Additionally, it has broader implications for all of the educators in the country. Although they were given a more extensive range of teaching-related tasks, they used it as a guide to enhance their abilities and solidify their organization's dedication to public service. They were able to recognize the value of time management and that improving students' academic performance is one of their primary roles as teachers (Into & Gempes, 2018).

In a study, the motivations for the English teachers taking several ancillary roles were professional and personal development, loyalty to superiors, the school head's trust, and confidence, and finally, professional responsibility (Mohamad & Parcon, 2022). On the other hand, it also gave them some personal gains. When challenged with various roles, most teachers who multitask at work appreciate and maintain the workflow that results from transitioning from one activity to another, and they see it as the most productive way (Alquizar, 2018).

Most people know that a public school teacher is a multifaceted professional who is frequently regarded as a "Jack of all trades." Due to a limited personnel in remote locations, teachers do everything they can (Magalong & Torreón, 2021). When a student becomes ill, they become temporary nurse. They can also perform other duties, including gardening, cleaning, and security guarding, depending on the level of financial inadequacy of a particular school.

Teaching can be a fulfilling profession that involves meaningful work. However, given how complex the job is, teaching can sometimes be difficult, and many teachers are stressed (Langan-Fox and Cooper, 2011). Teachers are forced to work longer hours and are given more professional and administrative responsibilities in addition to educating more students (Talastas, 2021). According to the study's findings, teachers' stress sources are other stakeholders, actual work, oneself, proportional problems, and DepEd policies. Stress might manifest as eating more or less, sleeping too much or too little, being always exhausted, having sleep issues, and being moody, irritable, or angry (Balmeo, 2021). It can also negatively affect their performance in their respective schools (Hendawi, 2020). Additionally, it was shown that when teachers experienced relationship problems, these problems were caused by their fatigue and lack of energy as a result of their large workloads or supplementary responsibilities (Peters & Pearce, 2012).

Furthermore, teachers who perform numerous ancillary duties often lose their motivation, satisfaction, competence, and even feel burned out (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Many studies have supported this. A study showed how elementary teachers dealt with various ancillary issues, including time management, stress at work, and teacher productivity (Tolibas & Lydia, 2022). Many excessively given tasks affect the time for lesson preparation (Ndioho & Chukwu, 2017) which leads to the deterioration of the quality of teaching (Leyco, 2019). But if they are given ample time, they can indeed manage their work well (Gatens, 2016).

Despite the challenges, teachers have different approaches to coping with their experiences (Mohammad & Parcon, 2022). One of these is through industry, perseverance, faith in oneself, and God (Alquizar, 2018).

On the other hand, Tulo and Gempes (2016) cited that effective time management is crucial for employee motivation and, as a result, for enhancing organizational performance. Time is one of the most vital resources. Establishing a schedule facilitates effective work (Fecske, 2020). When you prioritize tasks, it means that the most urgent items on your list have the highest priority and take up most of your time (Tavakoli, Tavakoli, & Pouresmaeil, 2013).

Faculty workload management is also essential. Administrators can use it to decide how to divide the job most effectively. The academic workloads of teachers can also be enhanced by developing an action plan based on evaluation results to allow faculty members to attend workshops, courses, and conferences that support the development of abilities for both teaching and research (Talastas, 2021).

It is also paramount that teachers have good relationship with one another. Collaboration is vital since many teachers face workplace stress, which can make them passive and ineffective. Despite paperwork and other non-teaching tasks, unity and cooperation among coworkers foster a positive work environment (Ghamrawi, N. K. Jammal & (2013). Elementary teachers stated that developing positive relationships with coworkers, adopting a positive outlook, providing financial support, and creating a routine might all assist in overcoming the difficulties of performing several ancillary duties (Tolibas & Lydia (2022). In addition, elementary teachers can be more motivated to complete their many jobs if they receive prizes, incentives,

and financial help from their administrators (Lockheed, 2014). This means that extrinsic motivation is also significant for teachers.

Also, teachers with ancillary functions need to be mentored to fulfill their tasks well and use their accomplishments for their career advancement. According to a study, accepting other school-related tasks can be an avenue for promotion (Sangalang, 2018).

As one of the rural schools in the Division of Ozamiz City, Sangay Integrated School teaching personnel are tasked to take multiple ancillary functions. This study aimed to explore teachers' experiences having ancillary functions in Sangay Integrated School for the School Year 2022-2023. In order to provide an in-depth narrative about their experiences, the researcher sought to answer the questions below:

1. What are the perspectives of teachers about ancillary functions?
2. What benefits do teachers get from having ancillary functions?
3. What challenges do teachers encounter as they fulfill ancillary functions?
4. How do teachers cope with the challenges they encounter?
5. What assistance do teachers need to do ancillary functions effectively and efficiently?

METHODS

The study used a qualitative research design. According to Creswell & Creswell (2017), a qualitative research design is a method for examining and comprehending the meaning of certain social or human problems. In addition, qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning that individuals have constructed for themselves and the world around them (Merriam, 2009). This research specifically used the case study approach because it sought to learn tangible, contextual, in-depth information on a particular real-world subject.

The researcher conducted the study in Sangay Integrated School, District 5, Division of Ozamiz City, Region 10, Philippines. It is one of the rural schools in the division. Currently, it houses 1 School Principal and 13 competent teachers. Eight (8) of them are elementary teachers, while five (5) are junior high school teachers. Due to less number of teachers available, some of them are tasked with multiple ancillary functions.

The participants in this research endeavor are the teachers in Sangay Integrated School who are assigned ancillary roles for the School Year 2022-2023. Sangay Integrated School only has a total of 13 teachers, including the researcher. All twelve (12) teachers served as participants in the study. The researcher decided to exclude himself from the study to strengthen its objectivity.

The data gathered were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2012) thematic analysis. This data analysis procedure is comprised on six phases.

Familiarization: To effectively analyze the data, it is essential for the researcher to develop a thorough understanding of the dataset and actively engage with it. By thoroughly examining the information, they can expand their analysis. This involves reading the transcripts multiple times, listening to recordings, and taking notes of their initial observations.

Coding: The process of identifying patterns in the data is fundamentally dependent on coding. Coding acts as the first step toward finding significant insights by grouping together related pieces of data.

Searching for themes: Finding and searching for themes extends beyond simple discovery since themes are not submerged and waiting to be found. Instead, in order to produce a convincing representation of significant data patterns, the researcher combines several codes.

Reviewing themes: The process of developing themes is put on hold while the researcher determines if the potential themes "fit" well with the coded data and the complete data set and whether they each possess a distinct, recognizable "essence" that serves as the main organizing factor. Few or no adjustments may be made, potential topics may be dropped, or the preceding step may be repeated while reviewing.

Defining and naming themes: Defining themes clearly and selecting appropriate names enhance the conceptual clarity of each theme. These steps also serve as a guide for the final write-up, ensuring a coherent and cohesive presentation of the findings.

Writing the report: In the report, the researcher combines compelling data extracts with their analytical narrative to effectively convey their insights and conclusions. This synthesis of vivid data and thoughtful analysis creates a persuasive and informative report.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore teachers' experiences having ancillary functions in Sangay Integrated School for the School Year 2022-2023. There were four problems identified in this research endeavor: What is the perspective of teachers about ancillary functions? What benefits do teachers get from having ancillary functions? What challenges do teachers encounter as they fulfill ancillary functions? How do teachers cope with the challenges they encountered? What assistance do teachers need in order to do ancillary functions effectively and efficiently?

The interview produced five (5) themes, which answered the five (5) research problems, after thematic analysis: (1) Teachers perceive ancillary functions as additional tasks; (2) Ancillary functions help teachers in their personal and professional development; (3) Ancillary functions require sacrifice ; (4) Teachers employed workload management; and (5) Teachers need assistance from more knowledgeable individuals.

Problem 1: What is the perspective of teachers about ancillary functions?

Theme 1: Teachers perceive ancillary functions as additional tasks

These teachers view ancillary functions as additional responsibilities on top of their prime role as educators, which is to teach. As educators in the Department of Education (DepEd), these teachers are fully aware of the regular workload of a public school teacher. The normal workload is six (6) hours of actual teaching while the remaining two (2) hours is utilized for teaching-related duties. Aside from actual teaching, they are stretching the two (2) hours in lesson planning, checking outputs, home visitations, consultation with parents, faculty meetings, and other school-related activities.

In reality, two (2) hours is hardly enough for lesson preparation. Due to the school's one-year level-one section setting, teachers must prepare instructional materials for every hour of actual teaching. This means that if they have six hours of teaching every day, they must also prepare six (6) times every day. Moreover, aside from lesson preparations, they also need to do duties related to their ancillary assignments, which are obviously extra jobs to do.

Problem 2: What benefits do teachers get from having ancillary functions?

Theme 2: Ancillary functions help teachers in their personal and professional development

All the teacher participants in the study regard ancillary functions as something that would help them personally and professionally. One of the motivating factors why teachers accept ancillary designations given is personal and professional advancement (Talastas, 2018). According to them, it helps them develop personally since they can gain more knowledge and skills as DepEd teachers from the ancillary functions assigned, whether it is familiar or new to them. It allows them to appreciate the department's functions in their quest to provide holistic learning to learners. Furthermore, these additional tasks make them more active, involved, and responsible assets in society. Major ancillary assignments enhance their leadership ability, especially in the delegation of workload to other committee members.

On the other hand, ancillary functions are also an opportunity for professional development. Teachers see them as training grounds that open more opportunities for promotion. Teachers were sent to training and seminars. Certificates gained were used as they aspire to improve their position on the career ladder. Those who performed well were given recognition which can be used in the ranking in the future.

Problem 3: What challenges do teachers encounter as they fulfill ancillary functions?

Theme 3: Ancillary functions require sacrifice

Ancillary functions consume time that is why there are instances that these teachers carry with them at home their work. Instead of spending quality time with their family they use the time beyond working hours for a task that is not even their major duty as educators.

Accepting additional responsibilities comes with a price. Teachers' primary role is to teach; however, when ancillary assignments demand their full attention, the essence of why they became educators is compromised. Teachers shared that the ancillary functions sometimes affect their classroom teaching. There are cases when ancillary assignments require urgent submission of documents. This led them to leave their learners with activities only while they are busy doing their assigned tasks to meet the urgent deadlines otherwise they will be called out in work-related group chats on messenger. Ironically, their time for classroom instruction is sacrificed to accomplish tasks in their secondary roles.

Moreover, when these teachers utilize the two hours allotted for school-related duties, lesson preparations are less prioritized than ancillary functions. These sadly result in the deterioration of the quality of teaching and the quality of learning the learners will gain (Ndioho & Chukwu, 2017).

Ancillary functions consume time, so there are instances when these teachers carry their work with them at home. Instead of spending quality time with their family, they use the time beyond working hours for a task that is not even their major duty as educators.

Problem 4: How do teachers cope with the challenges they encountered?

Theme 4: Teachers employed workload management

Public school teachers are bombarded with many tasks. To accomplish all these tasks, Sangay Integrated School teachers needed to strategize. They shared that systematic workload management guided them to perform school-related responsibilities. When competing with deadlines, they ensure they prepare relevant activities for their learners. This ensures that even if they are busy with something, their learners still do something that helps them attain the competencies set. An indication of systematic workload management is listing things to remember, setting reminders, planning their day's activities, or completing tasks based on their urgency and importance (Into & Gempes, 2018). Another indication of workload management is their delegation of functions. Teachers show their leadership ability when work requires prominent effort by assigning committees that will perform different but interconnected tasks.

Time management is also essential. Although they have personal and professional obligations, they strive to accomplish things within a specific time. For instance, a time to teach, a time to prepare lessons, a time for their personal space, and time for the ones they love. Although not all the time that all were accomplished in their expected schedule, time management has saved them from accomplishing tasks in many instances.

Problem 5: What assistance do teachers need in order to do ancillary functions effectively and efficiently?

Theme 5: Teachers need assistance from more knowledgeable individuals

Not all teachers are experts on the tasks assigned to them. Based on the interview, teachers need guidance from others who are more experienced and knowledgeable than them. As they shared, constant advice from the school head and other teachers is valuable for their success in their job. Whenever they have doubts about how things should be properly done, there must be people who can answer their queries. Expert personnel can also provide them with relevant technical assistance, which is why they are willing to accept both positive and negative feedback so long as they are essential for the betterment of their work.

Aside from the support from the immediate people surrounding them, they also aspire to gain assistance and guidance from experts outside the school's boundaries. This may be done through training

and seminars at the division, region, or national level. It is paramount that these individuals will not just teach them what their ancillary is all about but also how this can be effectively and efficiently fulfilled in schools.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to explore teachers' experiences having ancillary functions. Based on the given findings, it can be concluded that teachers regard ancillary functions as extra loads on top of their major role, which is to teach, which provides an opportunity for personal and professional development. By accepting designations, valuable things such as time for instruction and loved ones may be sacrificed. This sad reality can be minimized, if not wholly avoided, by managing the workload properly. Thus, valuable insights are necessary from expert and more experienced individuals so that tasks can be done effectively and efficiently.

The following recommendations are suggested by the researcher based on the findings of the study: (1) Sangay Integrated School teachers may create a checklist of what to accomplish according to importance and urgency for them to do their job as both teachers and coordinators efficiently; (2) Given the limited teaching personnel, the school head may distribute additional assignments evenly among teachers; (3) The division may provide orientation for newly-appointed coordinators so they will be guided on what they need to do; and (4) The Department of Education may evaluate the workload they are giving to their teachers. A systematic way and evidence-based approach are necessary to reduce teachers' workload. A thorough and accurate time-use study can clearly show which tasks should be assigned to teachers and which should be removed from their responsibility.

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