

Lived Experiences of Volunteer Teachers of The National Learning Camp (NLC) Program

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Abstract — This descriptive phenomenological study investigated the lived experiences of volunteer teachers involved in the National Learning Camp (NLC) program in Calbiga District Schools, Samar, Philippines. The research aimed to understand the challenges faced during program implementation, the coping strategies employed, and the perceived impact of the NLC on student learning outcomes and teacher well-being. The data was collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with volunteer teachers who participated in the NLC program. The interviews focused on teachers' backgrounds, motivations, perceptions of their roles, and observations regarding student outcomes. A phenomenological approach guided the analysis, allowing for an exploration of essential themes within the teachers' narratives. The findings revealed several key themes, including the diverse backgrounds and motivations of teachers, their positive emotional experiences linked to witnessing student progress, and significant differences between the NLC program and traditional classroom instruction. Teachers observed notable improvements in students' academic performance, particularly in reading and communication skills, as well as enhanced social skills and peer interactions. However, challenges such as resource limitations, inconsistent student attendance, and bureaucratic hurdles hindered program effectiveness. Participants emphasized the importance of internal school support and effective communication in overcoming these challenges. Despite the challenges faced, the program demonstrates the potential for enriching educational experiences. Future research should explore strategies for addressing resource constraints and improving engagement to ensure the program's sustainability and effectiveness in supporting diverse learners in similar contexts.

Keywords — *Volunteer teachers, National Learning Camp (NLC), Student outcomes, Challenges, Phenomenological study.*

I. Introduction

The National Learning Camp (NLC) has emerged as a strategic response to the educational disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, aiming to address learning gaps in literacy and numeracy among Filipino learners. Rooted in learner-centered approaches such as problem-based and project-based learning, NLCs foster cognitive skill development while enhancing motivation among both students and teachers. Globally, similar initiatives like the ASEAN University Network (AUN) Summer Camp reflect the growing emphasis on immersive, skill-focused educational interventions to prepare students for global challenges.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education launched the NLC in 2023 under the Matatag agenda, recognizing the need for transformative educational environments that not only target academic proficiency but also cultivate social skills, responsibility, and self-reliance. The

initiative was informed by performance gaps identified in the 2018 PISA assessment, aiming to improve student outcomes through engaging, supportive, and community-driven learning experiences.

Previous studies have largely assessed the effectiveness of NLCs through student performance data, with limited focus on the lived experiences and insights of teacher volunteers—key agents in the program’s delivery. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the impact of Summer National Learning Camps on students’ academic performance and social development in Calbiga Districts I and II, Samar Division, Region VIII. By capturing both student outcomes and teacher experiences, this localized inquiry offers context-specific recommendations for enhancing the program and contributing to more inclusive, effective, and sustainable educational interventions.

Statement of the Problem

The study explored the lived experiences of volunteer teachers in implementing the National Learning Camp in the Calbiga District Schools Division of Samar during the school year 2024-2025, with the end view of developing a capability-building plan.

Specifically, sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of volunteer teachers in implementing the National Learning Camp program in the Calbiga District schools Division of Samar, particularly regarding their roles, motivations, and emotional responses?
2. How do volunteer teachers perceive the influence of the NLC program on students’ academic performance and social skills as observed through daily interaction?
3. What challenges and enabling factors emerged from the teachers’ narrative as critical to the implementation of the NLC Program in their specific context?
4. Based on the findings of the study, can a capability-building plan be proposed?

II. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative method, specifically a descriptive phenomenological research design, to explore the lived experiences of teacher volunteers involved in the implementation of the National Learning Camp (NLC) Program in selected districts of the Samar Division. The phenomenological approach enabled an in-depth understanding of how teachers responded to learners' needs and addressed challenges during the program. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and analyzed thematically, providing valuable insights that served as the basis for proposed recommendations, or an intervention plan grounded in the teachers’ actual experiences.

Measure

Data were gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews (Appendix B) with volunteer teachers from Calbiga Districts I and II, Samar Division, focusing on their lived experiences in implementing the National Learning Camp (NLC) program. The interviews explored teachers' roles, motivations, emotional responses, perceptions of the program's impact on students' academic performance and social skills, as well as the challenges and enabling factors they encountered during implementation.

The analysis involved identifying key themes from the transcribed interviews (Appendix C), which included participants' verbatim responses. The interview guide used in the study was validated by experts to ensure its relevance and reliability.

Procedure

Semi-structured interviews were conducted using a prepared protocol, with participants selected through purposive sampling. Ethical standards, including informed consent and participant anonymity, were strictly observed. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) guided the data analysis process.

The researcher sought permission from the School Superintendent of Samar Division to conduct interviews with selected NLC volunteer teachers. Participants who verbally expressed willingness were interviewed after researchers explained the study's purpose and emphasized the importance of informed consent.

Challenges during data collection included scheduling conflicts due to the participants' teaching commitments and initial reluctance from some participants, which was addressed through further clarification of the study's goals and confidentiality assurances. Minor technical issues were resolved through careful note review.

Data were derived from interview transcripts and analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) method. This process involved data reduction and thematic analysis to address the study's research question. The final analysis, validated by the participants, offered a clear and comprehensive representation of their real-life experiences, based on face-to-face, written, or virtual interviews.

III. Results and Discussion

Teachers' Lived Experiences as National Learning Camp Volunteers

Teaching at a National Learning Camp provided a rewarding and distinctive opportunity. The activity aimed to enhance educational outcomes and foster a passion for literacy, offering teachers the chance to engage students in a dynamic and supportive environment. Through their

participation, teachers not only supported the academic and personal growth of their students but also gained valuable knowledge and experiences that shaped their professional and personal lives. This study explored the lived experiences of teachers who volunteered at these camps, highlighting the challenges they faced, the rewards they received, and the lasting impact of their contributions.

Table 2 Summary- Lived experiences of volunteer teachers in implementing the National Learning Camp program in the Calbiga District schools Division of Samar

Based on their Teaching Background and Experience

The volunteer teachers who participated in this study demonstrated a diverse range of professional experience. Their years of service spanned from over two decades to approximately seven years in the profession. A significant number of participants had extensive experience working with young learners in the early elementary grades, particularly Grades 1 and 2. This concentration of experience in the foundational years of education indicated a strong understanding of the developmental needs and learning characteristics of students at this critical stage. Their lived experience in teaching early elementary students likely influenced their instructional approaches and engagement with the National Learning Camp program. These insights were confirmed through the participants' feedback.

“Since the start of NLC I am already a volunteer handling Grade 1 with 2 groups in the first year of implementation and last NLC only 1 group. In the first year of implementation, I just volunteer since I am a grade 1 teacher, it is my incoming grade one who will be a part of this. While teaching, I just realized that it will really help me in preparing them for their grade 1 level so for the next year, I volunteer. To add to my motivation is the number of service credits that I will gained from this.”

- Participant 2, lines 3-8-

“As my teaching background, I experienced 23 years teaching in different grade level but most years of my teaching is in grade 2. My passion and strong desire to help struggling non-readers children motivated me to volunteer the NLC Program.”

-P5, lines3-5-

“I am 26 years in teaching grade 1, I find it enjoyable in teaching children. My passion and dedication motivate me to volunteer for the NLC program because I want to help to those pupils who need special attention in reading”.

-P7, line 3-5-

The findings revealed a diverse range of teaching experience among participants, with a notable concentration in the early elementary grades. Many participants had extensive experience working with students in Grades 1 and 2, indicating a deep understanding of the developmental needs and learning characteristics of young learners at this critical stage. This expertise influenced their teaching approaches and engagement within the National Learning Camp program. Their approach enhanced students' abilities in problem-solving, creativity, communication, collaboration, time management, responsibility, and self-reliance (Ivánková, 2022). The strong emphasis on supporting struggling readers, particularly among those with early grade experience, further underscored the importance of this background in shaping their commitment to the program.

Motivation for Volunteering

The teachers' motivations for volunteering for the National Learning Camp program stemmed from multiple factors. A strong passion for teaching and a deep love for children emerged as central themes. Many participants were driven by a desire to support struggling learners, particularly those requiring additional help with reading. For some, the opportunity to share their expertise in curriculum design and individualized instruction influenced their decision to volunteer. Additionally, the chance to contribute to a program focused on enhancing literacy skills and fostering a positive learning environment served as a key motivator. These motivations were validated by the participants' statements.

“My love to children and my passion in teaching are the key factors why I volunteered myself to be a part of the NLC program.”

-P1, lines 6-8-

“I just realized that it will really help me in preparing them for their grade 1 level so for the next year, I volunteer.”

- P2, lines 6-7-

“volunteer for NLC program is for sharing knowledge and expertise in curriculum design, providing and individualized support to learners, fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment.”

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-P5, lines 4,5-

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The participants’ statements strongly supported the identified motivations for volunteering. Recurring themes of deep passion for teaching and love for children were clearly reflected. A prominent motivator was the desire to assist struggling learners, particularly in reading, which aligned closely with the program’s literacy-focused goals. Participants emphasized that a positive learning environment, combined with teachers’ love and compassion, left a lasting impact on learners and played a vital role in shaping their future. The provision of opportunities for students to explore exceptional wisdom and skills represented the high hopes of the educational institution (Apurada, 2023). Furthermore, participants confirmed their desire to share expertise in curriculum design and individualized instruction, as well as their commitment to fostering a supportive and enriching learning atmosphere. These findings highlighted the multifaceted nature of the teachers’ commitment to the National Learning Camp program, driven by both personal passion and a strong dedication to enhancing student outcomes.

Role Differences: NLC vs. Regular Teaching in terms of Scope & Context

The teachers perceived clear differences between their roles in the National Learning Camp (NLC) program and their regular teaching responsibilities. The NLC program was described as more engaging and activity-based, offering flexible time allocation and not being bound by a rigid schedule. In contrast, regular teaching required adherence to a structured curriculum that covered multiple subjects and aimed at long-term academic goals. The NLC's concentrated focus on specific skills, such as literacy and numeracy, within a shorter timeframe stood in contrast to the broader and year-long scope of the regular curriculum. Additionally, the ungraded nature of the

NLC program differed from the formal assessment system used in regular classroom settings. These perceptions were strongly supported by the participants' statements.

“in the NLC it is engaging, more activities that will not think of the time allotment because it is enough time while in the regular class there is a structured format that must follow”.

-P2 lines 11-13-

“In my regular classroom, I follow a set curriculum across multiple subjects throughout the school year, focusing on long-term academic goals. The NLC, on the other hand, is more focused and intensive, with a primary aim of helping learners improve in specific areas like literacy and numeracy within a short period”.

P4, lines 15-19-

“This NLC classes is not graded. While in the regular teaching role-all subjects have to be taught focusing on all the competencies of each learning areas. In NLC there was short period of time allocations whereas in regular class it is for the whole school year and this is graded”.

-P6, lines 11-14-

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-P7, lines 8,9-

The contrasting characteristics of the NLC program and regular teaching, as highlighted by the teachers' experiences, revealed significant differences in both approach and structure. The NLC's flexible, activity-based format, its intensive focus on specific skills within a short timeframe, and the absence of formal grading stood in clear contrast to the structured, multi-subject curriculum and year-long, graded assessments typical of regular classroom instruction. The program provided an important alternative learning environment that enhanced educational competence in literacy and numeracy (Maguate et al., 2024). These distinctions underscored the unique contributions of the NLC program in offering targeted support and a distinct, student-centered learning experience.

Emotional Experiences in NLC: Feelings & Reactions of Volunteer Teachers

The volunteer teachers overwhelmingly described their emotional experiences within the NLC program as positive. Common themes included a strong sense of fulfillment and deep satisfaction from witnessing student progress and celebrating their achievements. Although they encountered challenges that demanded adaptability and resourcefulness, these experiences were perceived as valuable opportunities for professional growth. Overall, the teachers expressed joy and happiness in supporting students' learning and development. These sentiments were affirmed by the participants' own reflections and statements.

“...was overwhelmingly positive, characterized by a blend of fulfillment, challenge and growth. The opportunity to work with such a diverse and motivated group of learners was incredibly rewarding. Witnessing their progress and celebrating their successes brought immense satisfaction. The program also presented challenges, requiring flexibility adaptability, and resourcefulness but these challenges were ultimately enriching and contributed my professional development”.

-P3, lines 20-25-

“It was fun when I see my learners immensely improving”.

-P5, line 12-

“I am happy because those children who need special time to learn will have an opportunity to focus on their learning.”

-P7, lines 13,14-

The overwhelmingly positive emotional responses of the volunteer teachers underscored the rewarding nature of their involvement in the NLC program. Witnessing student progress and celebrating their achievements fostered a deep sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. Although challenges were present, teachers regarded these as opportunities for professional growth and development, which further amplified the positive impact of their participation. The program’s focus on addressing diverse understandings and challenges reflected a strong commitment to continuous improvement and adaptation, contributing to its inclusivity and effectiveness over time (Resuello et al., 2024). This positive emotional experience highlighted the NLC program’s capacity to create a supportive and enriching environment for both teachers and students.

Table 3 Summary Perceptions of Volunteer Teachers on the Impact of the NLC Program on Student Academic Performance and Social Skills

Perceptions of Volunteer Teachers on the Impact of the NLC Program on Student Academic Performance and Social Skills

This study revealed the multifaceted positive impact of the National Learning Camp (NLC) program on student learning. The program enhanced foundational academic skills while also fostering critical communication abilities and nurturing a genuine love for learning. By addressing individual student needs and providing a supportive environment, the NLC program contributed significantly to both academic growth and personal development.

Overall Improvement on Learners’ Academic Progress

Participants observed significant academic progress among learners in the NLC program. This progress was attributed to tailored academic support that allowed students to advance based

on their individual needs. The program effectively scaffolded learning, ensuring each student received the necessary assistance to succeed.

"A very significant progress with regards to the academic progress on the part of the learners. Based on my observations, learners were being followed academically, and they were scaffolded based on their academic needs through this NLC program."

-P1, lines 23-25-

Reading Skills

Improvements in reading skills were particularly notable. Many students demonstrated enhanced comprehension and developed a stronger foundation in reading. The structured approach of the NLC program facilitated this growth, allowing learners to become more proficient readers over time.

"For the 2 classes I have already handled NLC, I can see improvement. Those pupils I handled continued to be readers with comprehension and have the basic mathematical skills."

-P2, lines 19-23-

Communication Skills

The program was instrumental in fostering communication skills. Participants noted substantial growth in students' oral communication, with learners gaining confidence and becoming more active in discussions. This development was essential in helping students express themselves more effectively and interact with their peers.

"Observing the academic progress of participants in the NLC program was incredibly rewarding. I witnessed significant growth across various learning domains... one student, initially hesitant and lacking confidence, demonstrated remarkable progress in oral communication."

-P3, lines 28-32-

Foundation Skills

There was a marked improvement in foundational skills, particularly in reading fluency and basic mathematics. Participants observed that consistent practice and targeted instruction enabled students to perform better in these areas, effectively preparing them for future academic challenges.

"Many learners showed noticeable improvement in foundational skills, particularly in reading fluency, comprehension, and basic math operations... with consistent phonics practice and guided reading sessions, they were able to read short paragraphs with greater ease."

-P4, lines 26-34-

Motivation and Curiosity

The NLC program successfully ignited students' curiosity and increased their motivation to learn. By fostering an enjoyable and engaging learning environment, participants reported that students became more eager to explore new concepts and take an active role in their educational journey.

"The National Learning Camp (NLC) has been successful in sparking curiosity, enhancing the desire to learn, and making the learning experience enjoyable."

-P5, lines 15-16-

Reading Level Advancement

Many learners demonstrated progress in their reading levels, showing the ability to read sentences and short stories with improved pacing and intonation. This advancement highlighted the effectiveness of the program in preparing students for the next grade level and enhancing their overall literacy skills.

"After 15 days of implementation, most of these learners were able to read sentences and short stories with proper pacing and intonation, thus making them ready for the next grade level."

-P6, lines 26-27-

Average Progress

While some participants noted that learners' academic progress was generally at an average level, the NLC program fostered a supportive atmosphere that encouraged active student engagement. Grouping students at similar learning stages promoted a sense of belonging and minimized competition, enabling more collaborative learning experiences.

"The academic progress of the learners participating in the NLC program is in the average level... having attended the NLC the learners are very active and motivated because they are at the same stage of learning."

-P7, lines 17-20-

NLCs' Impact on Social Skills Development

Interaction with Peers

The NLC program fostered positive student interactions by providing opportunities to engage with peers from diverse backgrounds, which promoted collaboration, understanding, and the development of social skills.

"NLC program influence students' social skills and interactions in a way that the learners were exposed to different types of learners."

-P1, lines 28-29-

Confidence Building

The NLC program's strategy of grouping students by similar skill levels significantly boosted their confidence. This approach reduced feelings of inadequacy and competition, enabling students to form positive relationships with peers facing similar challenges, thereby fostering a supportive environment that nurtured self-esteem.

"The NLC influence social skills because pupils with the same level are grouped and then they win new acquaintances that build their confidence."

-P4, lines 38-39-

Collaborative Learning

The NLC program played a key role in improving students' social skills and encouraging positive peer interactions. Through a collaborative and supportive learning environment, it promoted the development of interpersonal skills essential for communication and teamwork. This focus on collaboration enriched the learning experience and prepared students for future social and professional settings.

NLC program influence students' social skills and interactions in promoting a collaborative and supportive learning environment, improve interpersonal skills..."

-P5, lines 24-25-

Positive Interactions

"Social skills and interactions of pupils participating in the NLC program were enhanced because the learners were grouped according to their reading level/category..."

-P6, lines 30-31-

Reduced Shyness

"The pupils that joined the NLC are already classmates in kindergarten and also neighbors, so they are not anymore shy to each other."

-P2, lines 6-7-

Enhanced Sense of Belonging

The familiarity among students who had been classmates and neighbors since kindergarten led to reduced shyness, facilitating more open communication and interaction. This comfort level enhanced collaborative learning experiences, allowing students to engage more freely in group activities and discussions, ultimately fostering a stronger sense of community within the classroom.

"The NLC influence social skills because pupils with the same level are grouped... her social skills increase because of her confidence that they are same and that they are not thinking of competitions."

-P7, lines 24-29-

Table 4 Summary Challenges, Strategies, and Outcomes in the Implementation of NLC Program

Resource Related Challenges

Irregular Attendance

Irregular student attendance posed a significant challenge to the NLC program's effectiveness. This impacted on the program's overall outcomes and required teachers to adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate the inconsistent presence of students.

"Some of the learners were lazy in coming to school regularly and hard to complete the perfect attendance..."

-Participant 1, lines 34-35-

Material Constraints

Insufficient materials and limited preparation time posed significant challenges for teachers during the NLC program. These constraints hindered effective lesson planning and delivery, requiring extra effort to make learning activities accessible and engaging for students.

"The challenge I have encountered is the materials to be used... I do not have enough time to prepare the materials."

-Participant 2, line 31

Funding Delays and Budget Allocation Delays

Delayed funding allocations significantly hindered the initial implementation of the NLC program. The late release of funds disrupted the procurement of essential materials and supplies, affecting the timely execution of learning activities. These delays created resource constraints that impacted teachers' ability to plan and deliver effective lessons.

"The biggest resource challenges during NLC implementation was during the first year... allocations of funds were released late..."

– P6, lines 38-40-

"The NLC focal persons are not on time in giving the allocation for the materials intended for that activity."

- P7, lines 33-34

Resource Availability

Limited resources—such as inadequate learning materials, technology, and space—significantly affected the implementation of the NLC program. These constraints required teachers to creatively adapt their lesson plans and contributed to an increased workload.

"Limited resources, such as insufficient learning materials, inadequate technology, and lack of physical space..."

– P3, lines 46-47-

Students Related Challenges

Diverse Learning Needs

The diverse learning needs of students presented a significant challenge, as students entered the program with varying levels of prior knowledge, learning styles, and academic abilities. This heterogeneity required teachers to adapt their instruction to meet the individual needs of each learner.

"Students entered the program with varying levels of prior knowledge, learning styles, academic strengths and weaknesses."

-P3, lines 56-57-

"One of the most significant student-related challenges I encountered during the NLC program was addressing the diverse learning needs..."

-P4, line 58-

Behavioral Issues

Behavioral issues, including occasional disruptive behavior during learning activities, emerged as a challenge in the program. These disruptions affected the flow of instruction and necessitated strategies from teachers to maintain a conducive learning environment.

"Occasional behavioral challenges arose, such as disruptive behavior in learning activities."

- P3 line 56-57-

Engagement Levels

Engagement levels varied significantly among students, with attendance predominantly among proficient readers, while those who needed the program most were often absent, attending only sporadically. This disparity limited the program's effectiveness in supporting all learners.

"Those attending most of the classes were those who are very good readers... while those who were supposed to be required to attend, came to school once or twice only..."

- P6, lines 48-49-

Communication Importance

The importance of constant communication was emphasized as a crucial strategy for addressing both internal and external issues and concerns. Effective communication facilitated better coordination and support among teachers, students, and stakeholders, enhancing the overall implementation of the program.

"For me, constant communication is very important in addressing any internal and external issues and concerns."

- P1 lines,44-45-

"Constant communication is very important in addressing any internal and external issues and concerns."

- P 5 lines, 36-37-

Individualized Support

Individual support was essential for addressing the learning difficulties of some students. Tailoring activities to meet specific needs allowed teachers to provide targeted assistance, fostering a more inclusive learning environment that accommodated diverse learner requirements.

"We have learners who have learning difficulties... I give him activities that suit his needs."

- P7, Lines, 38-39-

Impact on Social Skills

The NLC program significantly enhanced students' social skills and interactions, fostering a positive environment where collaboration and communication flourished. This improvement contributed to stronger relationships among peers and greater engagement in group activities.

"The NLC program had a noticeable and positive impact on students' social skills and interactions..."

- P4, lines 46-47-

Table 5 Summary Administrative or logistical hurdles impacting the NLC program's success

Administrative or logistical hurdles impacting the NLC program's success

Internal Support: Motivation from School and School Resources

Motivation and support from the school were crucial to the successful implementation of the NLC program. Alignment among stakeholders helped minimize challenges, while the provision of adequate resources—such as learning materials—facilitated smoother execution and enhanced the program's overall effectiveness.

"If the people concerned on the program are on the same pace, no huge problems will be encountered..."

-Participant 1 lines 50-51-

"The school provided enough supplies for a smooth implementation of the NLC, especially on the printing..."

- Participant 2 lines 43-44-

Funding and Resources: Limited Funding and Supplies Delays

Funding constraints and delays in resource allocation significantly hindered the success of the NLC program. Limited financial support restricted program expansion and the hiring of

qualified staff, while delayed supplies caused logistical challenges, ultimately impacting the program's implementation and effectiveness.

"Limited funding can restrict program expansion, limit the hiring of qualified staff..." – Participant 3, line 65-

"The delays of the supplies and allocations impacted the success of the program."

- P7 line 43-

Bureaucracy: A Complex Process

Complex bureaucratic processes presented significant obstacles to the timely implementation of the NLC program. These intricate procedures often led to unnecessary delays and hindered efficient decision-making, ultimately impacting the program's effectiveness and ability to respond swiftly to emerging needs.

"Complex bureaucratic processes can slow down program implementation, create unnecessary delays..."-

P3 line 67-68-

Attendance and Engagement: Irregular Attendance and Parental Coordination

Irregular attendance emerged as a significant challenge for the NLC program, making it difficult for educators to maintain consistent learning progress. To address this, teachers emphasized the need for parental coordination and involvement, recognizing that encouraging regular attendance was essential to improving student engagement and overall program success.

"There were also a few instances of irregular attendance, which made it difficult for some students..."

- P4 lines 64-65-

"Coordinating with parents and encouraging learners to attend regularly became part of the effort..."

- P4, lines 65-66-

Time Management: Short Program Duration

The short duration of the NLC program imposed time constraints that limited the comprehensive delivery of essential skills. The limited sessions made it difficult to fully meet the needs of all learners, especially those who required extra support or reinforcement.

"Since the program was relatively short, covering all the essential skills within a limited number of sessions felt rushed..."

- P4 lines 67-

Monitoring and Oversight: Administrative Facilitation and Allocation of Funds

Regular monitoring and facilitation by school and district leaders played a key role in the NLC program's success. Their oversight supported effective implementation and teacher assistance. Timely fund allocation also eased the burden on educators by providing essential resources like student worksheets, thereby improving the overall learning experience.

"The regular monitoring and facilitation of the school head as well as the District Head... made a great impact."

- P6 line 53-

"The allocation of funds helped ease the teachers' burden because worksheets were provided to the learners..."

-P6, line 55

4. Summary and Findings

The findings revealed several key insights into the experiences of volunteer teachers involved in the National Learning Camp (NLC) program. Participants came from diverse teaching backgrounds, with many having extensive experience in early elementary education, which informed their approaches to addressing young learners' developmental needs. Their motivations for volunteering were rooted in a strong passion for teaching, a desire to support struggling readers, and the opportunity to contribute their expertise in curriculum design.

Teachers identified notable differences between their roles in the NLC and their regular teaching duties. The NLC's engaging, activity-based approach—with a flexible schedule and skill-specific focus—contrasted sharply with the structured, graded nature of regular classroom instruction. Despite facing various challenges, teachers reported overwhelmingly positive emotional experiences, marked by fulfillment and satisfaction from witnessing student progress.

The program had a significant academic and social impact on students. Teachers observed improvements in reading, foundational skills, and communication abilities. Students also demonstrated increased motivation, curiosity, and in many cases, advanced reading levels that prepared them for the next grade. Socially, the program promoted collaboration and boosted students' confidence and interpersonal skills, particularly by grouping learners according to their reading levels, which reduced shyness and fostered a sense of belonging.

However, the program's implementation was not without difficulties. Teachers encountered resource-related challenges such as attendance issues, delayed funding, material shortages, and time constraints. Student-related challenges included varying academic levels, behavioral issues, and inconsistent engagement. Teachers addressed these through individualized instruction and constant communication.

Administrative and logistical hurdles also impacted the program's success. Delays in funding, bureaucratic processes, and irregular attendance posed obstacles to smooth implementation. The short duration of the program limited the coverage of essential content. Despite these barriers, strong internal support, timely resource allocation, and regular monitoring by school and district leaders played a crucial role in mitigating challenges and supporting the program's goals.

Overall, the findings emphasized the NLC program's value in promoting student learning and social development, while also highlighting the importance of addressing logistical and resource-related concerns to ensure continued success in future implementations.

IV. Conclusion

1. Overall Impact

The NLC program significantly impacted education in Calbiga District, as seen in volunteer teachers' experiences, student outcomes, and the challenges and supports involved in its implementation.

2. Teacher Commitment and Adaptability

Volunteer teachers showed strong dedication to student growth, using their backgrounds—especially in early education—to adapt teaching strategies and build supportive, engaging learning environments.

3. Emotional Fulfillment

Teachers expressed feelings of fulfillment and satisfaction from witnessing student progress, which reinforced their passion for teaching.

4. Student Development

Teachers observed major improvements in students' academic and social skills, including better reading, communication, and peer interaction, highlighting the program's effectiveness post-pandemic.

5. Implementation Challenges and Support

The program faced challenges like funding delays, limited materials, attendance issues, and bureaucracy, but strong school support and effective engagement strategies helped ensure its success.

V. Recommendations

This study offers sufficient information regarding the lived experiences of volunteer teachers in the National Learning Camp (NLC) program in Calbiga District Schools, Division of Samar. As such, the study's recommendations will focus on the volunteer teachers shared experiences.

1. Parental Engagement

Actively involve parents through workshops, regular updates, and meetings to strengthen the home-school connection and support student learning.

2. Resource Coordination

Develop a centralized system to manage and distribute teaching materials and funding efficiently, ensuring teachers have what they need for effective instruction.

3. Teacher Development

Provide continuous professional development focusing on teaching strategies, classroom management, and curriculum alignment to better equip volunteer teachers.

4. Supportive Environment

Foster collaboration and positivity through networking events, online platforms, and mentorship programs to boost morale and encourage knowledge sharing.

5. Stakeholder Communication

Establish clear and consistent communication channels among teachers, administrators, parents, and stakeholders to promote alignment and collaboration.

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