

Navigating The First Year: A Phenomenological Research On Newly Employed Teachers In Philippine Public Schools

ROWENA L. BADILLA

rowena.badilla001@deped.gov.ph
Juan S. Tismo National High School
Babatngon, Leyte 6520, Philippines

Abstract — This phenomenological study explored the first-year experiences of newly hired junior and senior high school teachers at Juan S. Tismo National High School in the Philippines. These new teachers were passionate but faced heavy workloads, administrative tasks, classroom management challenges, and limited resources. They showed resilience through time management, flexibility in teaching, and building relationships with students. The study found that mentorship, teamwork, and structured induction programs from the school helped teachers adjust and grow professionally. However, support was uneven, underscoring the need for more consistent, practical induction programs. Supporting first-year teachers is crucial for retaining them and improving teaching quality. The study recommends ongoing professional development, reflective practice, structured mentoring, and supportive school environments. It also urges the Department of Education to standardize induction policies and calls for more practical training in teacher education programs. Future research should consider other settings and long-term teacher development to strengthen support for new teachers. This study offers insights into the challenges and strategies of novice teachers and can guide policies to help them succeed and advance public education in the Philippines.

Keywords — *Newly Hired Teachers; First-Year Teaching Experience; Teacher Induction and Mentoring; Public School Education Philippines; Teacher Adaptation and Resilience*

I. Introduction

The first year of teaching is a critical, transformative time with many challenges and opportunities for growth. Newly hired teachers in the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines often find the transition demanding. First-year teachers must adjust to diverse student needs, manage classroom behavior, follow school policies, and balance lesson planning with administrative work (Borman & Kimball, 2005; Veenman, 1984). In DepEd schools, large class sizes, limited resources, and weak support systems can reduce teacher effectiveness and satisfaction (Ramos & Asuncion, 2019). However, the first year is also a chance to refine teaching skills and better understand the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

This study examined the experiences of newly hired Junior and Senior High School teachers at Juan S. Tismo National High School in Babatngon, Leyte, during the 2024-2025 school year. The school has 39 new JHS and 20 new SHS teachers this year. These educators are starting

their careers, adapting to a new environment, and balancing the expectations of students, administrators, and the Department of Education. Research shows the first year is key to shaping a teacher's career, affecting identity, satisfaction, and retention. New teachers often feel stress from workload, classroom management, and emotional exhaustion, all of which influence whether they stay or leave.

Despite the critical importance of the first year, studies on the experiences of newly hired teachers in the Philippines remain limited. There is a lack of in-depth research on the specific challenges faced by new teachers in DepEd schools, particularly in rural areas, and on the support systems available to them. According to Ingersoll (2003), new teachers often face a lack of mentorship, insufficient professional development opportunities, and inadequate support structures, all of which contribute to the challenges they experience during their initial years. This issue is particularly pronounced in Philippine public schools, where teachers frequently struggle with large class sizes, outdated teaching materials, and heavy administrative workloads (Ramos & Asuncion, 2019). These difficulties can impede the professional growth and success of newly hired educators, leading to burnout and attrition.

The theoretical framework for this study is based on Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), which states that learning is shaped by the interaction among individuals, their behaviors, and their environment. In the case of newly hired teachers, this theory indicates that their self-efficacy—defined as the belief in their ability to handle teaching challenges—plays a vital role in their adjustment to their new roles. Teachers with higher self-efficacy are more likely to persevere through challenges, seek support when needed, and continue developing professionally (Bandura, 1986). This idea is especially relevant for newly hired teachers, as their sense of self-efficacy can significantly influence their capacity to manage classroom demands and navigate the school environment. Additionally, the study draws on Tinto's Model of Student Retention (1975), which, although initially created for student retention, has been adapted to examine teacher retention. Tinto's model highlights the significance of both social and professional integration for individuals within an educational setting. (Tinto & Vincent, 1993) In this study, the model helps illustrate how integrating new teachers into the school's social and professional culture affects their adaptation, job satisfaction, and long-term retention.

Research on the lived experiences of newly hired teachers emphasizes the importance of strong induction programs, mentorship, and ongoing professional support for improving teacher retention and effectiveness. Darling-Hammond (2000) emphasizes the importance of induction programs that provide new teachers with structured mentorship, training, and peer support to help them transition smoothly into the profession. A study by Wong (2004) further shows that new teachers who receive comprehensive induction support are more likely to remain in the profession and perform better. In the Philippines, however, research by Ramos & Asuncion (2019) and Dela Cruz (2017) indicates that newly hired teachers often lack sufficient support from their schools and the broader education system, which worsens the challenges they face. These findings

underscore the need for targeted interventions to support new teachers and enhance their overall experience during the critical first year of teaching.

This study aimed to fill gaps in existing research by using a phenomenological approach to explore the real-life experiences of newly hired teachers at Juan S. Tismo National High School. It looked at the challenges they faced, the support they received, and how they adapted to their new roles. The findings offer insights into what it is like to teach in a DepEd school and how first-year experiences affect teachers' growth, job satisfaction, and decision to stay. The study also suggests ways to improve support and induction programs for new teachers in the Philippines.

Research Questions

This study explored the lived experiences of newly hired teachers in the Department of Education (DepEd) during their first year of teaching. Despite the critical role teachers play in shaping the educational landscape, the transition into the teaching profession can be challenging, particularly for first-year teachers. Newly hired teachers often face a range of challenges, including adapting to classroom management, fulfilling administrative responsibilities, and meeting the expectations of both students and school administrators.

Specifically, this study answered the following research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of newly hired teachers in public schools during their first year of teaching?
2. What are the challenges faced by newly hired teachers in DepEd during their first year of teaching?
3. How do newly hired teachers in DepEd perceive the support system available to them in their first year?
4. In what ways do newly hired teachers in DepEd adapt to the demands and expectations of their role in the first year?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section examines existing research and literature on the experiences of newly hired teachers, particularly within the Philippine context. It explores the challenges they encounter, including classroom management issues, demanding workloads, limited professional development opportunities, and the lack of mentorship. The discussion emphasizes the value of support systems such as induction programs and peer collaboration. It also draws on theoretical frameworks like Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and Tinto's Model of Retention to explain how these factors influence teachers during their first year in the profession. The overall aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the elements that facilitate new teachers' adjustment and professional growth.

Related Literature

Research on teacher retention and induction consistently emphasizes the crucial role of support systems for newly hired teachers, especially during their first year in the profession. Drawing from Tinto's (1975) Model of Student Retention, successful and lasting commitment depends on individuals' integration into both their professional and social settings. For new teachers, this integration includes access to mentorship, ongoing professional development, and a positive, supportive school culture. Adaptations of Tinto's model to the teaching context reveal that teachers who feel a strong sense of belonging and connection within their school community are more likely to remain in the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Miller, 2009).

Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory offers an important lens for understanding how new teachers adapt to the profession. Central to this theory is the concept of self-efficacy, which refers to individuals' beliefs in their own capabilities to perform specific tasks successfully. In the teaching context, educators with higher self-efficacy are more likely to navigate challenges effectively and achieve success in their classrooms. This framework is especially relevant for newly hired teachers, as their confidence in their teaching abilities significantly influences how well they manage the classroom and fulfill their professional responsibilities. Research by Richter et al. (2013) supports this idea, showing that teachers who develop strong self-efficacy through mentorship and professional support tend to be more resilient and better equipped to address classroom difficulties.

In the Philippine context, the Department of Education (DepEd) recognizes the crucial role of teacher induction programs in supporting new educators. In its 2016 policy paper, the DepEd outlined several strategies to strengthen support for newly hired teachers, including implementing mentorship programs, organizing professional development seminars, and providing consistent feedback from school administrators. These initiatives are viewed as vital for enhancing teaching effectiveness and minimizing the risk of early-career attrition.

Mentorship plays a vital role during a teacher's first year, offering guidance, emotional support, and opportunities for professional growth. Darling-Hammond (2000) emphasizes that well-designed induction programs incorporating mentoring not only help teachers transition smoothly into their roles but also strengthen their instructional practices. In the Philippine context, however, the absence of structured mentorship systems has posed a significant challenge to the professional development of newly hired teachers (Ramos & Asuncion, 2019). Despite this, Fernandez (2018) found that informal mentoring—through peer support and collaboration with more experienced colleagues—can still provide valuable assistance, helping novice teachers navigate the difficulties of their early teaching experiences.

A significant body of literature also emphasizes the importance of professional development in the early years of teaching. Wong (2004) highlights that continuous professional development is essential for fostering teachers' ongoing growth, especially in their first year of

service. Participation in such programs enables teachers to address classroom challenges better, implement innovative teaching methods, and enhance their overall effectiveness. In the Philippine setting, however, many newly hired teachers—particularly those in rural areas—report limited access to professional development opportunities due to resource constraints (DepEd, 2020).

Moreover, Geiger and Pivovarova (2018) found that teachers who struggle to maintain a healthy work-life balance are more susceptible to burnout, which can adversely affect their job satisfaction and their likelihood of staying in the profession. This issue is especially pertinent in the Philippine context, where teachers frequently contend with heavy workloads, extended working hours, and emotional strain due to job demands (Manlapig, 2020). The combination of poor work-life balance and emotional fatigue contributes significantly to the high turnover rates among newly hired teachers in the country.

Finally, research on teacher preparation programs in the Philippines has shown a gap between the knowledge and skills taught in teacher education programs and the practical realities of classroom teaching. Dela Cruz (2017) found that many newly hired teachers felt inadequately prepared to handle real-world challenges, particularly in managing student behavior and addressing diverse learning needs. This underscores the importance of aligning teacher education programs more closely with the realities of classroom practice, emphasizing areas such as classroom management and instructional strategies for diverse learners.

Related Studies

The first year of teaching represents a pivotal phase in a teacher's career, as it presents distinct challenges that significantly influence their professional development and instructional practices. Extensive research has documented the difficulties newly hired teachers worldwide face, including classroom management issues, heavy workloads, and insufficient support (Veenman, 1984; Wong, 2004). These challenges are even more evident in the Philippine context, where public school teachers often contend with overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching materials, and administrative demands that limit the time and energy they can devote to teaching (Ramos & Asuncion, 2019)

Dela Cruz (2017) found that newly hired teachers in Philippine public schools often felt overwhelmed by the demands and expectations of their first year in the profession. Participants in the study identified insufficient preparation from teacher education programs and the absence of formal mentorship structures as significant challenges. Likewise, Ramos and Asuncion (2019) reported that new teachers in DepEd schools frequently struggled with classroom management, student behavior, and the management of diverse learning needs. These stressors contributed to significant levels of burnout and job dissatisfaction, which, in turn, led to higher rates of early career attrition among new teachers.

Furthermore, Fernandez (2018) examined the experiences of newly hired teachers in the province of Cebu and found that limited access to professional development and insufficient peer

support were key factors that impeded their professional growth. Conversely, teachers who benefited from mentorship and worked within a supportive school environment were more inclined to remain in the teaching profession. These findings align with Darling-Hammond's (2000) research, which shows that new teachers who participate in comprehensive induction programs are better equipped to succeed in the classroom and more likely to sustain long-term careers in education.

In line with these findings, Manlapig (2020) conducted a study on the experiences of newly hired teachers in the Eastern Visayas region of the Philippines, particularly in Leyte. The research revealed that teachers who received sufficient administrative support and had access to professional development opportunities were better able to handle the challenges of their first year of teaching. In contrast, those who lacked such support reported feelings of isolation and inadequacy, which negatively impacted their overall well-being and classroom performance.

Additionally, a report by the Department of Education (DepEd, 2020) recognized the difficulties newly hired teachers face in the Philippine public school system, particularly those assigned to rural and remote areas. The report emphasized the need to strengthen support mechanisms through more comprehensive induction programs, enhanced mentorship structures, and expanded training opportunities. These measures are deemed essential to help new teachers navigate challenges such as growing class sizes and limited educational resources.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it offers valuable insights into the lived experiences of newly hired teachers in the Department of Education (DepEd), shedding light on the challenges they face, the adjustments they make, and the coping strategies they adopt during their first year of teaching. The results of this research have meaningful implications for various stakeholders in the education sector, contributing to efforts to improve teacher support, retention, and professional development.

- a) **Newly Hired Teachers** – By examining the experiences of their fellow educators, new teachers can develop a clearer understanding of the common challenges they may encounter and the practical strategies used to overcome them. The study also aims to inspire and motivate beginning teachers, fostering resilience and strengthening their commitment to the teaching profession.
- b) **School Administrators** – This study offers school leaders valuable insights into the needs and challenges newly hired teachers face, enabling them to develop targeted support initiatives. Through this understanding, administrators can design effective mentoring systems, induction programs, and professional development opportunities that directly address the specific issues new teachers encounter.

- c) **Department of Education (DepEd)** – By exploring the real-life experiences of newly hired teachers, this study provides valuable input for shaping policies and programs related to teacher induction, professional development, and retention. The findings can guide improvements to onboarding processes, helping ensure a smoother, more supportive transition for new teachers into the profession.
- d) **Teacher Education Institutions** – The results of this study help colleges and universities that offer teacher education programs refine their curriculum to better prepare future educators for the real-world demands of classroom teaching.
- e) **Future Researchers** – This study can serve as a valuable reference for subsequent research on teacher retention, job satisfaction, and professional development. It contributes to the expanding body of literature on teacher induction and the challenges faced during the early stages of a teaching career, providing a foundation for further investigation and improvement in these areas.

II. Methodology

This research employed a transcendental-phenomenological design within the interpretivist paradigm to examine the lived experiences of newly hired teachers in the Department of Education (DepEd) during their first year of teaching. Phenomenology, as described by Creswell (2013), seeks to understand how individuals perceive and interpret their experiences and the meanings they derive from them. The study explored the challenges, support systems, coping mechanisms, and personal growth these teachers encountered during their initial year. Grounded in the interpretivist paradigm, the study aimed to capture participants' subjective realities and the meanings they construct from their lived experiences (Schwandt, 2007). Data were collected through in-depth interviews, allowing the researchers to gain rich insights into the teachers' perceptions and reflections.

The participants in the study were six (6) newly hired Junior and Senior High School teachers from Juan S. Tismo National High School in Babatngon, Leyte, selected through purposive sampling. This non-probability sampling method was chosen because it allows the selection of participants who can provide in-depth and relevant information related to the research focus (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

Data collection began by securing approval via a transmittal letter that introduced the study to participants and outlined its objectives. An informed consent form was also distributed to ensure participants fully understood the purpose of the study, their rights, and the confidentiality of their responses.

A semi-structured interview guide served as the primary tool for data collection, allowing for deeper probing into specific areas of participants' lived experiences (Patton, 2015). All

interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent and subsequently transcribed for analysis. Throughout the process, strict measures were observed to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, ensuring the participants' identities remained protected. All collected data were securely stored for safekeeping and in compliance with ethical standards.

Thematic analysis was employed to examine the data, guided by the framework proposed by Clarke and Braun (2006). This process involved several systematic steps: familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, identifying potential themes, reviewing and refining these themes, and finally defining and naming them. Through this approach, the researcher uncovered recurring patterns and core themes that reflected participants' lived experiences.

Ethical standards were upheld throughout all stages of the research—including data collection, transcription, and analysis—to ensure integrity and confidentiality. Overall, the analysis yielded meaningful insights into the challenges and support systems encountered by newly hired teachers, offering evidence-based implications for enhancing teacher induction programs and professional development initiatives within the education sector.

III. Results and Discussion

This section presents the key themes that emerged from the lived experiences of newly hired junior and senior high school teachers during their first year in Philippine public schools. The findings highlight the participants' demographic profile, lived experiences, challenges, perceptions, coping strategies, and support systems, offering insights into their professional growth and adaptation.

Demographic Profile of the Participants

The participants in this study were newly hired teachers currently serving at Juan S. Tismo National High School, all of whom met the predetermined inclusion criteria. Their demographic information was collected through introductory interview questions, providing essential context for understanding their distinct perspectives and lived experiences during their first year in public school teaching. To uphold ethical standards and maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were assigned to all participants in the presentation of data. The group represented diversity in age, educational background, subject specialization, and motivations for entering the teaching profession, enabling a well-rounded, nuanced understanding of their early experiences as public school educators.

Shown below is the demographic profile of the participants.

Pseudonym	Age	Educational Background	Teaching Experience at Current School	Grade Levels Taught	Subjects Taught	Motivation and Initial Reaction
Teacher A	26	BSED Major in Mathematics, LNU	7 months	Grade 11 & 12	General Math, Statistics & Probability, Philosophy, Inquiries, Literature	Passion for teaching; grateful to fulfil a dream
Teacher B	26	BSED-Filipino, LNU	2 years	Grade 9 & 10	Filipino, English	Belief in the power of education; excited but nervous
Teacher C	42	BSED Major in Physics and Technology	2 years	Grade 7	Science	Wants to show Science is fun; excited to share knowledge
Teacher D	25	[Not Specified]	8 months	Grades 8, 9, 10	MAPEH	Chosen by mother; grateful and honored to serve and help family
Teacher E	39	Licensed in Nursing and Teaching	1 year, 8 months	Grade 11 & 12	Biology, Research, Oral Communication, Creative Writing	Lifelong dream; excited and ready for challenges
Teacher F	30	[Not Specified; initially took a pre-med course]	0–3 years (exact duration unspecified)	Grade 9	Science	Shifted to teaching to guide students; overwhelmed and honored to be hired

Table 1. *Demographic Profile of Participants*

The analysis of the table revealed diverse demographic and professional backgrounds among the participants. A majority were in their mid-20s, representing early-career educators, while others, such as Teachers C and E, were in their late 30s to early 40s, indicating mid-career entrants into the profession. Their academic qualifications and prior experiences varied widely, ranging from degrees in Mathematics, Filipino, and Physics to backgrounds in Nursing and pre-medical studies. This diversity highlights the multiple pathways individuals take to enter the teaching profession. Such findings are consistent with Ingersoll and Strong (2011), who observed that beginning teachers often come from varied educational and life experiences, which shape how they adjust to the challenges and expectations of classroom teaching.

Although all participants were assigned to the same school, there were notable differences in their teaching loads. Some teachers, such as Teacher C, were responsible for a single subject and grade level, while others, such as Teacher E, handled multiple subjects across multiple grade levels. This variation highlights the uneven distribution of workload even among newly hired teachers. Such disparities align with the findings of Fantilli and McDougall (2009), who reported that inconsistent teaching assignments can significantly affect novice teachers' stress levels, job satisfaction, and overall professional adjustment.

The participants' motivations for entering the teaching profession were largely intrinsic, with many citing a deep sense of passion, vocation, and a genuine desire to help students as their primary reasons. In contrast, Teacher D identified family expectations as a key influence, aligning with Klassen et al.'s (2011) findings, which noted that external factors, such as parental encouragement, can also shape individuals' career choices. Despite the varied motivations and pathways, participants commonly expressed gratitude, pride, and enthusiasm upon being hired—supporting Quijano's (2020) observation that joining the public education sector in the Philippines is widely regarded as a source of honor and fulfillment, even amid persistent systemic challenges.

This demographic overview offers valuable context for understanding the diverse backgrounds and motivations that shape the participants' first-year teaching experiences. It establishes a foundation for examining how these personal and professional factors affect their challenges, coping mechanisms, and professional growth, which will be further explored in the succeeding thematic discussions.

Lived Experiences of Newly Hired Teachers in Public Schools During Their First Year of Teaching

The lived experiences of newly hired teachers during their first year in public schools revealed three significant themes: *Overwhelmed but Passionate Beginnings, Evolving Relationships with Students, and Coping with Systemic Challenges and Finding Fulfilment*. These themes capture the complex emotional, relational, and institutional realities that these novice teachers navigated as they sought to establish their professional identities, manage expectations, and reconcile their passion for teaching with the demands of the public education system.

Theme 1: Overwhelmed but Passionate Beginnings

This theme captures the emotional and professional realities experienced by newly hired teachers during their first year, characterized by a blend of enthusiasm, idealism, and stress. While many entered the profession with a strong sense of purpose and excitement to positively impact their students, they soon faced heavy workloads and, in some cases, assignments outside their specialization. These circumstances often led to fatigue, uncertainty, and pressure as they navigated the complexities of classroom teaching. Despite these challenges, their passion for education and commitment to their learners remained central, reflecting the resilience and dedication that define the early stages of their professional journey.

One participant shared, *"I felt exhausted and overwhelmed... I was given subjects to teach beyond my expertise,"* underscoring the difficulty of managing responsibilities outside one's specialization. Another described the emotional conflict of beginning their teaching journey, stating, *"I was both excited and anxious... I also immediately felt the weight of responsibility."* Despite these initial struggles, participants demonstrated resilience. As one teacher reflected, *"Even though there was initial confusion, by the third week, I was able to settle down,"* illustrating their ability to adapt, persevere, and gradually gain confidence in their new role.

The experiences reflected in this theme are consistent with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, which highlights self-efficacy—an individual's belief in their capability to accomplish tasks—as a key factor in overcoming challenges and maintaining persistence. Likewise, Dela Cruz (2017) observed that while newly hired teachers frequently feel unprepared to handle the demands of the profession, their intrinsic passion for teaching often drives their motivation and commitment. In this study, the participants' initial struggles and emotional adjustments served as a crucial foundation for their developing resilience and professional growth, marking the beginning of their journey toward competence and confidence in the classroom.

Theme 2: Evolving Relationships with Students.

This theme captures the transformative journey of newly hired teachers as they learn to build authentic, empathetic connections with their students. Beginning their careers with strong ideals and expectations, the teachers gradually transitioned toward a more student-centered approach, grounded in mutual respect and understanding of learners' individual needs. Through daily interactions and classroom experiences, they discovered the importance of patience, flexibility, and empathy in fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment. These evolving relationships not only enhanced students' engagement but also deepened the teachers' sense of fulfillment and purpose in their professional roles.

For instance, one participant shared, *"We built a strong teacher-student bond,"* emphasizing the value of establishing meaningful relationships as a foundation for effective teaching. Another highlighted the importance of maintaining professionalism, noting, *"I ensured that my students and I had mutual respect and boundaries."* Similarly, a participant reflected on the evolving role of empathy in their practice, stating, *"I realized I need to show more empathy and try to help them the best that I can without compromising the mandates of DepEd."* These reflections illustrate how new teachers gradually learned to balance compassion with responsibility, fostering classrooms built on trust, respect, and care.

These evolving teacher-student relationships align with constructivist theory, which posits that learning is socially constructed through meaningful interactions and shared experiences. Wong (2004) highlighted that strong teacher-student relationships not only enhance student motivation but also reinforce teachers' sense of purpose and satisfaction in their work. Similarly, Bandura's (1986) Self-Efficacy Theory suggests that as teachers receive positive feedback and observe student growth, their confidence and belief in their teaching abilities are strengthened. Overall, this theme demonstrates that relational dynamics serve as a crucial foundation for effective classroom management, student engagement, and professional fulfillment among newly hired teachers.

Theme 3: Coping with Systemic Challenges and Finding Fulfilment.

This theme highlights how newly hired teachers navigated the systemic challenges inherent in the public education system while discovering personal and professional fulfillment in their

roles. Participants frequently cited administrative workloads, including excessive paperwork and non-teaching duties, as significant sources of stress that often limited their time for lesson preparation and meaningful classroom interaction. These demands also disrupted their work-life balance, leading to feelings of exhaustion and frustration. Despite these obstacles, many teachers found motivation and satisfaction in their students' progress and in the sense of purpose that teaching provided. Their ability to endure systemic pressures while maintaining commitment to their learners reflects a strong sense of resilience and dedication to the profession.

Participant D shared, *"The most surprising aspect in teaching, for me, is the amount of paperwork that needs to be submitted on time,"* reflecting a common sentiment among those overwhelmed by administrative demands. To manage these pressures, some teachers developed personal coping mechanisms, such as setting boundaries and prioritizing well-being. As Participant E explained, *"I learned to say no to maintain a healthier work environment."*

Despite these difficulties, moments of joy and fulfilment served as powerful motivators. Participant F expressed this sentiment vividly: *"It is fulfilling when everyone is participating actively... and hearing those 'aha' moments."* Such experiences reaffirmed the teachers' sense of purpose, illustrating how student engagement and success can counterbalance the strains of bureaucratic responsibilities and sustain teachers' commitment to their profession.

These findings underscore the dual nature of the teaching experience—one that is simultaneously constrained by systemic inefficiencies and enriched by the intrinsic rewards of instructional success. The absence of structured mentorship, as observed by Fernandez (2018) and reinforced by DepEd's (2016) recommendation for stronger induction programs, reveals a pressing gap in institutional support for novice teachers. Likewise, Darling-Hammond (2000) emphasizes that comprehensive and well-organized support systems are vital for fostering teacher retention, professional growth, and overall effectiveness. Collectively, this theme highlights the urgent need for administrative and policy reforms that alleviate bureaucratic burdens, strengthen mentoring structures, and sustain the motivation and well-being of newly hired teachers in the public education system.

Collectively, these themes portray the complex and transformative journey of newly hired teachers as they navigate their first year in the profession. Their experiences reflect an ongoing effort to balance emotional resilience, relationship-building, and adaptation to systemic demands. While feelings of overwhelm and self-doubt marked the initial phase, these challenges were mitigated by strong intrinsic motivation and a developing sense of self-efficacy. As their relationships with students deepened, teachers found renewed purpose and affirmation of their professional identity, resonating with the principles of Social Cognitive and Constructivist theories. At the same time, persistent systemic barriers—such as heavy workloads and limited institutional support—revealed the need for stronger mentorship programs and administrative reforms. Addressing these gaps could significantly enhance teacher retention, well-being, and long-term professional fulfillment.

In summary, the first-year experiences of newly hired teachers in DepEd public schools revealed a journey marked by enthusiastic beginnings, tempered by heavy workloads and systemic challenges. Over time, these teachers developed empathetic relationships with their students and discovered personal fulfillment amid the demands of the profession. The findings affirm the vital role of teacher self-efficacy, which can be strengthened through effective mentorship, responsive professional development, and supportive administrative structures. By gaining a deeper understanding of these lived experiences, education stakeholders can design and implement comprehensive induction and support programs that enhance teacher retention, improve instructional quality, and ultimately advance the overall quality of public education in the Philippines.

Challenges Faced by Newly Hired Teachers in DepEd During Their First Year of Teaching

This study examined the lived experiences of newly hired public school teachers in the Department of Education (DepEd) during their initial year in the profession. Using rigorous thematic analysis of data gathered from in-depth interviews, three major themes emerged that encapsulate the multifaceted challenges faced by these novice educators. These themes are: (1) Classroom Management and Student Behavior, (2) Time Management and Workload Overload, and (3) Instructional Challenges and Curriculum Delivery.

Each theme reflects the complex blend of personal, instructional, and systemic difficulties that teachers encountered as they adapted to their new roles. From establishing classroom discipline and managing diverse student behaviors to juggling administrative tasks and instructional responsibilities, these challenges illustrate the demanding realities of teaching in the Philippine public school system—particularly in contexts of limited resources, large class sizes, and high performance expectations.

Theme 1: Classroom Management and Student Behavior

This theme focuses on the struggles newly hired teachers encounter in maintaining discipline and creating an orderly classroom environment. It highlights the challenges of establishing clear behavioral expectations, addressing instances of student misbehavior, and coping with the emotional stress that often accompanies disciplinary issues. For many first-year teachers, mastering classroom management proved to be one of the most demanding yet essential aspects of their professional adjustment, as it directly affected both their confidence and the overall learning atmosphere.

These insights underscore how newly hired teachers view classroom management as foundational to effective teaching, yet also recognize its complexity. Establishing rules early on and maintaining consistency were seen as key strategies for creating order and mutual respect. The involvement of parents, as highlighted by Participant E, reflects an understanding that discipline extends beyond the classroom and benefits from collaborative partnerships between teachers, students, and families.

However, the participants' experiences also reveal the emotional demands of managing diverse student behaviors. Addressing issues such as bullying required not only adherence to policy but also empathy and patience, as Participant F noted. This highlights the dual role teachers play as both disciplinarians and emotional guides—balancing firmness with care to build a supportive learning environment conducive to growth and safety.

These difficulties in managing the classroom frequently led to emotional exhaustion. Participant B confessed, “There were moments when I felt overwhelmed and questioned my abilities,” while Participant F remarked, “Students can sense uncertainty, which may influence their engagement in the lesson.” This theme aligns with the conclusions of Ramos and Asuncion (2019), who found that numerous Filipino beginning teachers feel inadequately equipped to handle behavioral issues, resulting in stress and self-doubt. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) underscores the importance of self-efficacy in enabling teachers to assert authority and maintain classroom control—competencies that many participants were still honing during their first year.

Theme 2: Time Management and Workload Overload

This theme highlights the immense challenge that newly hired teachers face in managing multiple responsibilities, which often results in both physical and emotional fatigue. Many participants expressed that balancing teaching duties, administrative work, and personal commitments placed considerable pressure on them and became a significant source of stress.

Teachers described their struggles in managing an overwhelming workload. Participant B shared, “Balancing paperwork, lesson preparation, and actual teaching—I often ended up bringing work home.” Similarly, Participant E remarked, “*With all the paperwork and coordinators assigned to me, it sometimes becomes too demanding...*” while Participant F observed, “*Every public-school teacher faces time management challenges.*” Several participants also mentioned the difficulty of preparing for multiple classes. Participant C explained, “*I handle 25 class periods with different preparations and various grade levels.*” Furthermore, Participant A discussed the challenge of pursuing further education while teaching: “*Aside from being a teacher, I need to complete the Induction Program while also working on my master's degree.*” This struggle to maintain balance even extended to family life, as Participant D admitted, “*At first, it was hard for me to manage my responsibilities at school and my duties as a parent.*”

These demands frequently led to both emotional and physical exhaustion. Participant C confessed, “*There were times when I felt stressed trying to manage my time,*” while Participant E added another dimension, noting, “*Financial challenges... I need to take on sideline jobs to support my family's expenses.*” These observations align with Geiger and Pivovarova's (2018) findings, which identified excessive workload and poor work-life balance as key factors contributing to teacher burnout. Similarly, Manlapig (2020) emphasized that the lack of resources in Philippine schools further intensifies time pressures. Tinto's (1975) Theory of Institutional

Integration also reinforces that inadequate institutional support increases the likelihood of burnout and attrition—a pattern clearly reflected in the participants' experiences.

Theme 3: Instructional Challenges and Curriculum Delivery

This theme emphasizes the instructional difficulties arising from mismatched subject assignments, complex lesson planning demands, and insufficient teaching materials. Under these circumstances, many newly hired teachers found it challenging to deliver the curriculum effectively and maintain instructional quality.

A common concern among participants was the mismatch between their assigned subjects and areas of specialization. Participant D shared, *"I was teaching music and art, which were not part of my college training."* Likewise, Participant E remarked, *"The number of different subjects assigned to me affects my lesson planning... The less aligned they are with my field, the more time I need to prepare."* Participant F echoed this sentiment, stating, *"I was assigned subjects that did not match my specialization."*

Lesson planning also posed significant challenges. Participant A described struggling with *"the selection of effective activities,"* while Participant B found it difficult to *"adjust plans for different learning levels and pace lessons to meet deadlines."* Participant C agreed, noting that it was *"challenging to make and prepare lesson plans."*

Resource constraints further hindered effective curriculum delivery. Participant F expressed frustration over the *"lack of access to certain materials and resources needed during the teaching-learning process."* Similarly, Participant D noted that *"the medium of teaching is minimal."* At the same time, Participant F also pointed out *"limited time or shortened class days due to conflicting school activities and weather disturbances."*

These difficulties reflect Dela Cruz's (2017) findings, which reported that many Filipino teachers feel inadequately prepared due to the gap between preservice training and classroom realities. Wong (2004) likewise emphasized the importance of continuous professional development to meet evolving curriculum demands. However, according to DepEd (2020), teachers in under-resourced schools often lack sufficient training opportunities, which consequently diminishes their instructional effectiveness.

The experiences of newly hired teachers illustrate a combination of personal and systemic challenges that shape their transition during the first year of teaching. The three key themes—classroom management struggles, excessive workload and time constraints, and instructional difficulties—underscore how novice teachers simultaneously face emotional, relational, and institutional obstacles. These issues stem from deeper systemic factors, including limited preparation in classroom management, insufficient mentoring support, inadequate teaching resources, and burdensome administrative responsibilities.

The findings reinforce Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, emphasizing the crucial role of self-efficacy in enabling teachers to manage the classroom effectively and fulfill their professional responsibilities. Likewise, Tinto's (1975) Theory of Institutional Integration highlights the increased risk of attrition when teachers lack sufficient institutional support. Complementary studies by Wong (2004), Geiger and Pivovarova (2018), and Dela Cruz (2017) further affirm that bridging these structural gaps is vital to ensuring the successful adjustment and retention of newly hired teachers.

In conclusion, although newly hired DepEd teachers exhibit strong passion and commitment, these attributes alone are not enough to address the multifaceted challenges of their first year in the profession. Prioritizing comprehensive induction programs, sustained mentorship, manageable workloads, and continuous professional development is essential. Strengthening these support systems will enhance teachers' competence and self-efficacy, increase retention rates, and ultimately improve student learning outcomes across the public education system.

Perceptions of Newly Hired Teachers in DepEd on the Support System Available to Them in Their First Year

The lived experiences of newly hired teachers during their first year of service in the Department of Education (DepEd) uncovered three major themes that encapsulate their perceptions of the support systems available to them. These themes are: (1) Mentorship as a Pillar of Professional Growth, (2) Structured Programs with Limited Practicality, and (3) Culture of Collegiality and Administrative Support. Together, these themes offer a nuanced view of how support mechanisms influenced the early professional journey of novice teachers—highlighting areas of strength, gaps in implementation, and opportunities for improvement in DepEd's support infrastructure.

Theme 1: Mentorship as a Pillar of Professional Growth.

Mentorship emerged as a crucial form of support that facilitated the transition of newly hired teachers into their professional roles. It served not only as a tool for professional growth but also as a source of emotional encouragement. The guidance and insights offered by experienced educators and administrators were seen as both comforting and instructive, enabling novice teachers to navigate the challenges and intricacies of their first year in the classroom.

Participant C shared, *“Experienced teachers offered mentorship and guidance through informal conversations, where they provided advice drawn from their own experiences.”* Similarly, Participant A remarked, *“My mentor teacher gave me practical tips and emotional encouragement, which I deeply appreciated.”* Participant F emphasized the instructional value of this support, noting, *“The mentorship or guidance provided by our school principal centered on pedagogical approaches and classroom management strategies that could be applied in teaching.”*

These narratives demonstrate that mentorship—whether formally structured or informally provided—serves as a crucial support mechanism during the early phase of a teacher’s career. This observation aligns with Darling-Hammond’s (2000) assertion that effective mentoring strengthens both professional competence and emotional stability. Moreover, Bandura’s (1986) Social Cognitive Theory underscores the influence of social modeling in fostering self-efficacy; mentorship provides the observational learning and reinforcement that help novice teachers build confidence in their skills and teaching abilities.

Theme 2: Structured Programs with Limited Practicality

Newly hired teachers often mentioned structured initiatives such as the Induction Program for Beginning Teachers (IPBT) and in-service training (INSET). Although these programs were valued for providing essential theoretical foundations, many participants voiced concerns about their limited practical relevance. The absence of sufficient opportunities for hands-on application in actual classroom contexts led to a noticeable gap between theoretical learning and real-world teaching practice.

Participant E remarked, *"The IPBT Program is like a self-paced program... It is really up to the teacher to learn more."* Participant A added, *"They were informative but lacked real-life application. Some topics needed more in-depth discussion."* On the other hand, Participant F had a more favorable view: *"On a scale of 1 to 10, it is 10/10 effective because the training I attended focused on curriculum delivery and dealing with a new generation of students."*

The variance in experiences suggests that while DepEd has established structured training programs, the delivery and contextual relevance need enhancement. Dela Cruz (2017) found similar issues in his study, in which many professional development initiatives were overly theoretical and failed to equip teachers for classroom realities. This also echoes Feiman-Nemser’s (2001) argument that induction should be a learning-focused, practice-based process rather than a one-time orientation.

Theme 3: Culture of Collegiality and Administrative Support

A strong sense of collegiality and administrative backing emerged as a significant theme in the experiences of newly hired teachers. Beyond structured mentorship and formal training, everyday interactions with colleagues, school leaders, and coordinators fostered feelings of belonging and professional validation. Emotional encouragement, administrative understanding, and a supportive, non-intimidating work environment were identified as crucial factors that facilitated positive adjustment and resilience among novice teachers.

Participant A shared, *"Our school head and coordinators were approachable and helpful, although they were sometimes overwhelmed with their own workloads."* Participant E echoed this sentiment, noting, *"The school head was very supportive and understanding, especially when I needed to take leave for personal reasons."* Likewise, Participant B affirmed, *"Yes, I did. The*

support I received was invaluable—it made my work easier and allowed me to become more effective.”

These accounts highlight the crucial role of a supportive school environment in fostering the retention and empowerment of newly hired teachers. Tinto’s (1975) Model of Retention underscores that integration into both the professional and social spheres of the institution is vital for sustaining long-term commitment. Similarly, Geiger and Pivovarova (2018) emphasized that strong collegial relationships help reduce burnout and reinforce professional identity, particularly during the critical first year of teaching.

The thematic analysis of newly hired teachers’ perspectives presents a comprehensive understanding of DepEd’s support systems. Mentorship emerged as highly valued, especially when personalized and conducted informally. In contrast, structured programs such as the IPBT, while useful for foundational learning, were often viewed as lacking direct applicability to classroom realities. The third key aspect—peer collaboration and administrative support—was found to be essential in fostering a sense of belonging, professional validation, and overall confidence among new teachers.

These findings underscore the need for support systems that are both contextualized and sustainable. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) emphasized that comprehensive induction programs—incorporating mentorship, collaborative planning, and consistent administrative feedback—greatly enhance teacher retention and student performance. The results further highlight that relational and emotional support are equally vital as pedagogical preparation, especially for teachers adapting to the complex demands of public-school environments in the Philippines.

The perceptions of newly hired teachers toward DepEd’s support systems reveal a mix of gratitude and constructive critique. Three central themes emerged—mentorship, structured programs, and collegial support—all of which significantly influenced their first-year teaching experiences. While mentorship and collegial relationships were widely regarded as encouraging and empowering, structured programs were often perceived as lacking the practical depth needed to connect theoretical concepts with effective classroom application.

This study underscores the need for more responsive, practice-based, and holistic induction models within DepEd. Formalizing mentorship while maintaining flexibility, grounding training programs in authentic classroom contexts, and institutionalizing collegial support can shift the first year of teaching from mere survival to a stage of genuine professional growth and empowerment. By strengthening these key areas, DepEd can better prepare its novice teachers not only to endure the challenges of their early career but to thrive and excel in their practice.

Adaptation Strategies of Newly Hired Teachers in DepEd During Their First Year

Newly hired teachers in the Department of Education (DepEd) recounted experiences of adjustment, perseverance, and learning throughout their first year of service. Three key strategies

emerged as central to their adaptation: effective time management and work-life balance, flexibility and creativity in instructional delivery, and improved communication and classroom management skills. These strategies illustrate how beginning teachers navigated the demands of public school teaching, gradually building resilience, confidence, and professional competence.

Theme 1: Strategic Time Management and Work-Life Integration

Newly hired teachers consistently highlighted the importance of developing effective time management strategies to balance professional responsibilities with personal life. The combined demands of lesson planning, administrative tasks, and professional development often proved overwhelming. To cope, teachers adopted techniques such as prioritizing essential tasks, establishing structured routines, and setting clear boundaries to prevent exhaustion. This theme reflects their deliberate efforts to create a sustainable balance between work and personal well-being—an essential factor in maintaining motivation, productivity, and overall effectiveness during their first year of teaching.

Participant A explained, *“I think practicing first things first and establishing time management greatly helps me in balancing my professional responsibilities and personal life.”* Similarly, Participant B shared, *“It was tough at first. I had to set boundaries and take weekends to rest and recharge.”* Participant F added, *“I usually work on my professional responsibilities during free time or after teaching hours... I do not bring them to my house unless it is the weekend.”*

These accounts demonstrate a proactive and intentional approach to time management, highlighting how newly hired teachers consciously organize their schedules to maintain productivity while safeguarding their personal well-being.

This theme aligns with the findings of Geiger and Pivovarova (2018), who emphasized the critical importance of maintaining work-life balance to prevent early career burnout among public school teachers. Similarly, Tinto’s (1975) Theory of Institutional Departure highlights that the successful integration of professional and personal life is a key to teacher retention. In the Philippine context, Manlapig (2020) observed that the absence of structured time management strategies often leads to emotional exhaustion, ultimately compromising teaching quality. Therefore, for newly hired teachers, deliberate time management served not just as an organizational tool but also as a vital survival strategy for navigating the demands of their first year.

Theme 2: Instructional Adaptability and Responsive Pedagogy

Confronted with diverse learner needs and the challenges of meeting curriculum requirements, newly hired teachers frequently relied on instructional flexibility to maintain effective teaching and foster student engagement. They adapted their approaches through experimentation, collaboration with colleagues, and the integration of digital tools and materials. This theme reflects their growing ability to design and implement student-centered instruction that

accommodates varied learning styles and classroom contexts—often achieved despite limited mentoring support and scarce resources.

Participant A shared, *“I got information from YouTube and the internet, as well as seeking advice or asking my co-teachers about their effective teaching methods.”* Participant C explained, *“I adjusted my teaching methods by using varied activities in my classes. I also assessed what my students need to determine the most appropriate strategies for my lessons.”* Participant F added, *“I typically used the discovery and inquiry method... I usually group them by pair (think-pair-share) or assign differentiated activities.”*

These statements illustrate a strong inclination toward pedagogical experimentation and learner-centered instruction among newly hired teachers. They demonstrate how first-year educators actively sought creative, adaptive, and research-informed ways to engage students and enhance learning outcomes despite limited experience and resources.

Bandura’s (1986) Social Cognitive Theory suggests that teachers with stronger self-efficacy are more inclined to experiment with innovative instructional strategies and persevere in the face of challenges. Supporting this, Fernandez (2018) found that when formal mentorship is lacking, novice teachers often turn to peer collaboration and online platforms to refine their teaching practices. Similarly, Wong (2004) highlighted the significance of continuous professional development in strengthening instructional competence during the early stages of a teaching career. Collectively, these studies affirm that instructional adaptability is not only essential for effective teaching but also serves as a marker of developing professional autonomy and agency among new educators.

Theme 3: Evolving Communication and Classroom Management Approaches

A prominent theme that emerged was the gradual evolution of communication and behavior management strategies among newly hired teachers. While many initially relied on authoritative approaches to maintain control, they later transitioned to more inclusive, empathetic, and relationship-oriented methods. This shift signified a growing awareness of student diversity and the value of positive discipline in promoting respect, cooperation, and a supportive classroom climate. Ultimately, these evolving practices reflect the teachers’ increasing emotional intelligence and adaptability in managing classroom dynamics effectively.

Participant A shared, *“By not being so strict during class discussions... students will not feel intimidated, and it will serve as an avenue to establish a welcoming and conducive learning environment.”* Participant B reflected, *“Yes, I shifted from a strict approach to a more collaborative one. I now listen more and assert less.”* Participant F highlighted the importance of fairness, stating, *“Because of the students’ diversity... their behavior varied and needed to be addressed fairly.”*

These reflections illustrate a significant transformation in teachers' communication and management styles, moving from control-oriented approaches toward more empathetic, equitable, and student-centered interactions. This evolution underscores their growing awareness of the role that positive relationships and fairness play in fostering a respectful and supportive classroom atmosphere.

This theme is consistent with Darling-Hammond's (2000) view that effective classroom management is rooted in relationships built on respect and empathy rather than mere authority. It also aligns with Ramos and Asuncion's (2019) findings, which show that novice teachers often encounter difficulties with discipline until they adopt more inclusive and communicative approaches. The participants' progression from control-oriented methods to relationship-centered discipline represents a pivotal stage in their professional growth, fostering not only classroom harmony but also deeper student engagement and trust.

The findings of this study indicate that newly hired teachers in DepEd navigate their first year in the profession through a combination of planning, adaptable instructional practices, and continuous interpersonal development. The identified themes reflect a clear shift from reactive coping mechanisms to proactive adaptation strategies. Through strategic time management, teachers balanced professional responsibilities with personal well-being, while instructional adaptability enabled them to design responsive learning experiences that addressed diverse student behaviors and learning needs.

These experiences affirm Bandura's (1986) assertion that self-efficacy is a key factor influencing how individuals face challenges and generate effective solutions. The findings also support Geiger and Pivovarova's (2018) conclusion that robust systemic support structures are crucial in preventing early-career burnout among teachers. Likewise, Tinto's (1975) theory highlights the importance of social and institutional integration in retaining novice educators within the profession. Together, these theoretical perspectives emphasize that teacher adaptation is not solely an individual endeavor but a dynamic process shaped by both personal determination and supportive external systems.

In conclusion, the lived experiences of newly hired teachers in DepEd during their first year highlight the dynamic interplay of resilience, adaptability, and reflective practice. Through effective time management, flexible instructional approaches, and the continuous refinement of communication and classroom management strategies, these teachers demonstrated their ability to overcome the challenges inherent in the early stages of their careers. Despite facing institutional limitations and emotional pressures, their experiences reflect an enduring dedication to professional development and a steadfast commitment to delivering student-centered, quality education.

These findings carry significant implications for DepEd policymakers and school leaders. It is essential to prioritize comprehensive induction programs, sustained mentorship, and a

reasonable workload distribution to support a smooth transition for newly hired teachers. Fostering a supportive and nurturing work environment that values adaptability, professional growth, and teacher well-being can enhance the effectiveness and retention of novice educators. Ultimately, strengthening these support systems will not only empower new teachers to thrive but will also contribute to improved student outcomes and the overall quality of public education in the Philippines.

SUMMARY

His study examined the lived experiences of newly hired teachers during their first year of teaching in Philippine public schools, with a specific focus on Junior and Senior High School educators at Juan S. Tismo National High School in Babatngon, Leyte. Employing a transcendental-phenomenological approach, the research sought to uncover the emotional, instructional, and institutional challenges faced by these novice teachers, along with their coping mechanisms and perceptions of the support systems provided by the Department of Education (DepEd).

Through in-depth interviews with seven participants, the thematic analysis identified four major dimensions of experience: (1) Emotional and Professional Adjustments, (2) Instructional and Classroom Realities, (3) Support Systems and Collegial Culture, and (4) Adaptive Strategies and Personal Growth.

First, the theme “Overwhelmed but Passionate Beginnings” captured the participants’ initial excitement and motivation as they entered the teaching profession, which were often accompanied by feelings of stress and uncertainty. Many struggled with teaching subjects outside their areas of specialization and with managing heavy workloads. Despite these difficulties, the participants demonstrated a strong sense of purpose, commitment, and early signs of resilience as they adapted to their new roles.

Second, the theme “Evolving Relationships with Students” reflected how teachers transitioned from holding idealistic expectations to fostering relationships grounded in mutual respect, understanding, and empathy. This shift enabled them to create more student-centered, responsive, and inclusive classroom environments that supported both academic engagement and emotional connection.

Third, the theme “Coping with Systemic Challenges and Finding Fulfilment” highlighted participants’ struggles with institutional issues, including excessive paperwork, misaligned subject assignments, and inadequate teaching materials. Despite these persistent challenges, many teachers found motivation and a sense of fulfillment in their students’ progress, classroom achievements, and the meaningful connections they built through daily teaching experiences.

Fourth, the theme “Strategic Time Management, Instructional Flexibility, and Evolving Communication Strategies” revealed how newly hired teachers actively developed adaptive

practices to navigate the demands of their first year. They managed their workloads through careful scheduling, adjusted their instructional methods to meet diverse learner needs, and refined their communication styles to foster positive classroom relationships. By incorporating student feedback, collaborating with peers, and utilizing online resources, these teachers demonstrated creativity and resilience in overcoming institutional constraints and enhancing their professional growth.

Moreover, participants' perceptions of support systems indicated that while mentorship, both formal and informal, was instrumental in fostering professional growth, structured initiatives such as the Induction Program often fell short in their practical application in real classroom situations. Despite these limitations, the presence of a collegial work culture and supportive school leadership played a crucial role in enhancing teachers' sense of belonging, confidence, and overall professional efficacy.

The findings affirm the relevance of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, Tinto's Institutional Integration Theory, and constructivist principles, which collectively highlight the importance of self-efficacy, institutional support, and social learning in teacher development. The study concludes that although the first year of teaching presents numerous personal and systemic challenges, these difficulties can be alleviated through responsive mentorship, context-driven training programs, reasonable workload management, and a nurturing school culture that promotes collaboration and continuous growth.

These insights serve as a foundation for developing more effective induction and mentoring programs and offer practical recommendations for the Department of Education, school administrators, teacher education institutions, and future researchers to improve teacher retention and professional success in public schools.

IV. Conclusion

The first year of teaching in Philippine public schools, as experienced by newly hired educators, is characterized by a dynamic mix of enthusiasm, pressure, and personal transformation. This study revealed the complex realities faced by junior and senior high school teachers at Juan S. Tismo National High School, who, despite their initial passion and dedication, encountered substantial challenges such as excessive workloads, administrative demands, classroom management difficulties, and limited teaching resources. Often assigned to demanding roles with insufficient preparation, these early-career teachers nonetheless demonstrated notable resilience, adaptability, and a deep commitment to their profession and students.

Crucially, the study found that institutional support—or its absence—significantly influences the quality of a teacher's first-year experience. While some participants emphasized the positive impact of supportive colleagues, school leaders, and peer mentoring in easing their transition, others noted gaps, including the lack of structured induction programs, limited emotional support, and insufficient professional development opportunities. These inconsistencies

highlight the need for a more coherent and systematized support framework within DepEd to ensure that all newly hired teachers receive equitable, consistent, and meaningful guidance that enables them to adjust effectively and succeed in their professional roles.

Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of grounding education policies and school practices in the authentic experiences of newly hired teachers. By recognizing the challenges they face and the types of support they require, DepEd and school leaders can design more responsive and effective programs that promote teacher retention, professional growth, and instructional excellence. As the Philippine education system continues to evolve, investing in the development and well-being of beginning teachers is not only crucial for their individual success but also for ensuring the long-term quality and sustainability of public education in the country.

V. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, several recommendations are put forward to address the challenges newly hired teachers face and enhance their early teaching experiences in Philippine public schools. These recommendations are directed toward the key stakeholders identified in the study's significance: newly hired teachers, school heads, the Department of Education (DepEd), teacher education institutions, and future researchers. Each recommendation outlines the specific roles and contributions of these groups in strengthening teacher induction and support mechanisms. Collectively, these proposed actions aim to build a more responsive, sustainable, and empowering professional environment for beginning teachers in the country.

For newly hired teachers, it is recommended that they actively pursue continuous professional development and take the initiative to seek out both formal and informal support systems to ease their transition into the teaching profession. They should engage in reflective practices to assess and improve their teaching performance, collaborate with peers to share strategies and experiences, and seek mentorship from experienced colleagues or school leaders. Proactively developing skills in classroom management, differentiated instruction, and emotional regulation will strengthen their confidence and instructional effectiveness. Moreover, cultivating a growth mindset and personal resilience is essential for navigating challenges and sustaining enthusiasm throughout their teaching journey.

School heads are encouraged to foster a nurturing and supportive environment for newly hired teachers by implementing structured induction and mentoring programs tailored to their specific needs. Designating experienced mentors who can provide consistent guidance, conducting classroom observations focused on formative and constructive feedback, and facilitating professional collaboration among teaching staff can significantly ease the transition for novice educators. Additionally, cultivating a school culture grounded in openness, respect, and inclusivity will make new teachers feel valued and motivated, empowering them to grow both personally and professionally within the school community.

The Department of Education (DepEd) is urged to reinforce its policies and programs concerning teacher induction and early-career support. A standardized, comprehensive induction program should be developed and implemented uniformly across all public schools to ensure that newly hired teachers receive equitable training, guidance, and access to essential resources. Moreover, DepEd should prioritize manageable teaching loads, adequate instructional materials, and regular capacity-building initiatives that specifically address the unique challenges faced by early-career teachers. To ensure accountability and long-term effectiveness, the Department must also establish robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess program impact, identify gaps, and guide continuous improvement in supporting the professional growth and retention of new educators.

Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) must take a more proactive and responsive role in equipping future educators for the practical realities of the teaching profession. It is recommended that TEIs enrich their pre-service programs by integrating extended practicum experiences, classroom simulations, and problem-based learning activities that mirror authentic school contexts. Strengthening partnerships with public schools and aligning their curricula with DepEd's current standards and classroom demands will help ensure that graduates enter the workforce with relevant competencies. Moreover, TEIs should give equal emphasis to pedagogical mastery and socio-emotional readiness, enabling beginning teachers to confidently manage classroom dynamics, adapt to institutional challenges, and foster positive relationships with learners and colleagues from the very start of their careers.

Finally, future researchers are encouraged to expand their exploration of newly hired teachers' experiences across broader, more diverse contexts, including rural, urban, and indigenous school settings. Conducting longitudinal studies that track teachers beyond their first year would provide deeper insights into their career trajectories, professional growth, and retention factors over time. Moreover, researchers may design and evaluate intervention programs—such as structured mentoring systems, teacher well-being initiatives, and professional learning communities—that directly address the unique needs of beginning educators. By extending and refining the findings of this study, future research can play a pivotal role in shaping evidence-based policies and practices that foster a more supportive, sustainable, and empowering environment for novice teachers in the Philippine education system.

REFERENCES

- [1] American Psychological Association (APA). (2017). *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*. American Psychological Association.
- [2] Bandura, A. (1986). *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. Prentice-Hall.
- [3] Borman, G. D., & Kimball, S. M. (2005). Teacher Quality and Educational Inequality: Do Teachers with Higher Standards-based Evaluation Ratings Close the Achievement Gap? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 27(3), 269–292.

- [4] Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- [5] Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- [6] Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence. *Educational Policy Analysis Archives*, 8(1).
- [7] Dela Cruz, M. T. (2017). The Lived Experiences of Newly Hired Public School Teachers in the Philippines: A Phenomenological Study. *Philippine Journal of Education*, 90(1), 121–140.
- [8] DepEd. (2016). *Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of the Teacher Induction Program*. Department of Education.
- [9] DepEd. (2020). *Challenges Faced by Newly Hired Teachers in DepEd Schools*. Department of Education.
- [10] Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4.
- [11] Fernandez, J. (2018). Mentorship and professional growth among newly hired teachers in Cebu. *Philippine Educational Research Journal*, 10(2), 98–112.
- [12] Geiger, B. F., & Pivovarova, M. (2018). Understanding teacher turnover in urban schools: A comprehensive study. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 56(2), 203–219.
- [13] Ingersoll, R. M. (2003). *Who controls teachers' work?* Cambridge University Press.
- [14] Manlapig, M. (2020). Challenges faced by newly hired teachers in Leyte: A regional study. *Philippine Journal of Teacher Education*, 7(1), 52–65.
- [15] Miller, J. (2009). The Importance of Teacher Support Networks in the First Year of Teaching. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 48(3), 101–115.
- [16] Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- [17] Ramos, S., & Asunción, L. (2019). Challenges Faced by Newly Hired Teachers in Public Schools: A Case Study of DepEd. *Journal of Philippine Educational Research*, 13(2), 89–103.
- [18] Richter, D., Kunter, M., Klusmann, U., Lüdtke, O., & Baumert, J. (2013). Predicting Teachers' Instructional Quality from Personal and Professional Characteristics: A Longitudinal Study. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 105(3), 787–804.
- [19] Schwandt, T. A. (2007). *The SAGE Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- [20] Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research. *Review of Educational Research*, 45(1), 89–125.
- [21] Veenman, S. (1984). Perceived Problems of Beginning Teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 54(2), 143-178.
- [22] Wong, H. K. (2004). Induction Programs that Keep New Teachers Teaching and Improving. *NASSP Bulletin*, 88(638), 41–58.