



## Breaking down the enigma of out-of-field research teaching among private senior high schools in Davao City, Philippines: A transcendental phenomenological inquiry

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### ABSTRACT

Subject matter expertise goes far beyond simply knowing and regurgitating facts. It is a multifaceted ability encompassing a deep understanding of the content, pedagogical knowledge, assessment proficiency, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and cultivating positive attitudes and values. This transcendental phenomenological study was conducted to understand the lived experiences of SHS out-of-field research teachers in terms of assignment, instruction, and feedback. To grasp the phenomenon's essence, transcendental phenomenology aims to set aside the researcher's preconceived ideas and strive for neutrality. The study was participated by 14 teacher-participants from the selected private senior high schools in Davao City, Philippines. Findings show that in terms of assignment, participants' experiences include adherence and submission to school administrators, consideration of teacher potential, experience, and training, and feelings of anxiety and frustration. With regards to instructional experiences, it includes lack of experience, aptitude, and administrative support; difficulty in establishing authority and checking outputs. With these challenges, participants must be resourceful and creative and engage in professional development activities. In terms of feedback, participants were honest and open-minded and experienced the welcoming nature of the students. The findings elaborate on the complex and multi-faceted nature of out-of-field teaching, which is expected to inspire improved teacher hiring and placement policy. It is recommended that educational institutions should provide professional development programs to help those out-of-field teachers stay updated with best practices.

**Keywords:** Out-of-field teaching, practical research, professional development, phenomenology, quantitative research teaching

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## INTRODUCTION

Teachers need more than just subject knowledge to be effective. While understanding the content is crucial, true expertise includes shaping student learning through skills, attitudes, and values. Training and resources can help teachers master both content and effective teaching methods. Effective teachers draw on various knowledge areas: subject matter, pedagogy, learner understanding, and curriculum design (Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2007; Shulman, 1986). Additionally, systematic changes to teaching methods are imperative for educators to foster the sustainable growth society demands (Ahmed and Shogbesan, 2023). Thus, teachers must move beyond traditional content delivery and focus on helping students develop deep learning skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration (Zhao, 2012).

Teachers appointed by school officials to teach subjects unrelated to their training or education are known as out-of-field teachers (Shah et al., 2022). In the case of the present study, out-of-field teachers are the non-mathematics/statistics major teachers who are made to teach the subject of Practical Research 2: Quantitative Research. It supports the progressivist approach, which believes education should focus on the whole learner rather than the teacher. Teachers are given subject loads that they might need to gain experience in teaching. Moreover, it is a global phenomenon affecting developing and first-world countries (Lenhoff, 2020).

Prior to the establishment of K12 in the Philippines, there was no curricular program designed to equip pre-service SHS teachers to deliver the SHS curriculum; hence, human resources was one of the primary challenges. The Department of Education's (DepEd) response was to hire motivated teachers, professionals, and specialists to teach in SHS regardless of their training, experience, or license. The minimum

qualification only requires a bachelor's degree with 15 units of advanced specialization subjects relevant to the strand or a TESDA NC II certificate (Cortes et al., 2022). Additionally, a qualified candidate should only take the licensure examination five years after being appointed (DepEd Order No 27 series of 2016). The whole scenario predetermines the existence of out-of-field teachers in senior high school. This practice is already common in many countries. However, it has also been the subject of extensive debate in academic contexts due to worries about its harmful influence on students, teachers, and the greater educational community (Hobbs and Törner, 2019).

Contemporary educational theory holds that one of the pivotal causes of inadequate student achievement, especially in disadvantaged schools, is schools' inability to staff classrooms with qualified teachers adequately. In recent years, the issue and challenges of out-of-field teachers and their teaching process have been a prominent topic in educational policy and reform. Out-of-field teaching needs to be better understood in education. It has been found that the presence of out-of-field teachers reduces the desired outcomes of students, particularly in terms of their performance results. Moreover, researchers found that well-prepared, highly trained teachers significantly impact student accomplishment (Geiger and Pivovarova, 2018; Pit-ten Cate et al., 2018; Darling-Hammond and Youngs, 2002).

Students' learning is also harmed by out-of-field teaching. Out-of-field teachers have been shown in studies to have a negative impact on student learning, resulting in lower achievement levels. Such teachers need help to demonstrate content that is applicable in real life. Additionally, inexperienced teachers may use outdated and inadequate teaching approaches, such as relying only on the subject's textbook. They may need help to assist students

with their studies. It can also be upsetting for a confident and capable teacher to become unexpectedly inept because they must teach unfamiliar material. If students cannot relate what they have learned in different contexts, what they have learned in school will probably remain dormant (Bakker and Akkerman, 2019; Ní Ríordain et al., 2017; Hobbs, 2015). Hence, carrying out professional development processes must improve student achievement. Moreover, according to Antoniou and Kyriakides (2013), we need to change our mindset about how teachers naturally enhance their effectiveness and cognitive skills without specialized training.

This study aims to uncover the less understood phenomenon and experiences of the out-of-field SHS research teachers in terms of assignment, instruction, and feedback. The findings of this study can be used to inform education practitioners and academic institution leaders of the importance of proper teacher placement and implement appropriate administrative support to help out-of-field teachers. Moreover, the study's findings are hoped to inspire national policies concerning teacher hiring and placement.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research design

This study used a qualitative method, specifically the transcendental phenomenological approach. Husserl played a major role in the development of transcendental phenomenology (TPh), a philosophical approach to qualitative research methodology that aims to comprehend human experience (Moustakas, 1994). The foundation of pure TPh is the idea that all preconceived notions (epoche) must be set aside to view events through clear glasses, allowing the genuine meaning of the phenomena

to emerge organically with and within their uniqueness. This study aims to explore the lived experiences of the SHS out-of-field research teachers experiencing the out-of-field teaching phenomenon. According to Waters (2000), the goal of a phenomenological study is to describe "lived experiences" in a phenomenon; thus, transcendental phenomenology is appropriate for this study.

Additionally, a qualitative research design is employed to examine the range of behaviors and their driving perceptions from a set of audience or respondents (Qualitative Research Consultants Association, 2017). Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriam, 2009). The researcher will utilize the design to tell a story about the phenomena and to learn about the SHS research teachers' perceptions, viewpoints, and understanding of out-of-field teaching.

### Research locale and participants

The study is conducted within the City of Davao in the Philippines. Davao City is one of the centers of commerce and a cultural melting pot in the Philippines; thus, the study is purposely conducted to cater to the diverse backgrounds and experiences of teachers, enabling the study to gain a more in-depth understanding of the out-of-field teaching phenomenon. The study participants were pooled from the different leading private senior high schools within the city using a purposive sampling technique. There are 14 teacher-participants, of which six (6) were invited for in-depth interviews and eight (8) for the focus group discussion. The participants are varied in terms of gender, schools assigned, major, and number of years in teaching Practical Research 2: Quantitative Research. This is done to paint a more holistic picture of the out-of-field teaching phenomenon.

**Research instrument**

A semi-structured interview guide was crafted for the purpose of the present study. The interview guide that intends to explore the experiences of the participants in terms of (a) assignment (2 sub-questions), (b) instructional experiences (3 sub-questions), and (c) feedback (3 sub-questions). To ensure that the interview guide probes what it meant to probe, the interview guide was subjected to a validity test. Experts in the field evaluated the validity. It received an outstanding (4.57) validity rating.

**Data analysis**

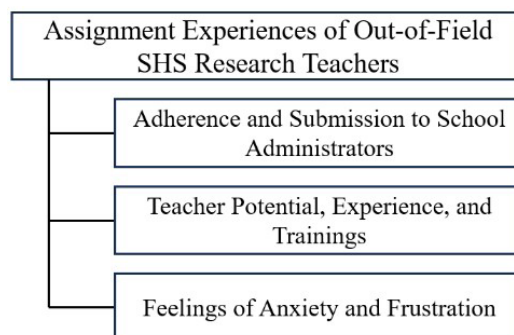
Thematic analysis will be used to analyze the qualitative data gathered. Thematic analysis is qualitative data analysis that entails reading over a set of data (such as transcripts from in-depth interviews or focus groups) and looking for patterns in meaning (Delve et

al., 2020). The researcher used the thematic analysis using the steps suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). In a paper by Braun and Clarke in 2006, they enumerated the steps in doing the matic analysis: (1) familiarization of data, (2) initial coding, (3) collating codes with supporting data, (4) searching for themes, (5) reviewing themes, and (6) writing of narrative.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Assignment experiences of out-of-field SHS research teachers**

Experiences of out-of-field research teachers refer to the lived accounts of research teachers who are not specialized in mathematics or statistics in teaching the subject. Practical Research 2: Quantitative Research. Figure 1 shows the three (3) themes from the assignment experiences of the out-of-field research teachers.



**Figure 1.** Themes on assignment experiences of out-of-field SHS research teachers.

**Adherence and submission to school administrators**

The findings of the study revealed that out-of-field research teachers were made to teach Practical Research 2 out of adherence to the assignment as teachers and submission to their respective school heads. One of the main reasons was there is a scarcity of teachers to teach the subject, Practical Research 2, in the schools that are employed.

*“Maybe the reason why, is that as far as I can remember , there was no one to teach Practical Research,. There was scarcity of teachers.” – FGD 8*

*“When I entered senior high, it was the administrator who told me, ‘We lack a research teacher, so go.’” – FGD 1*

Additionally, another participant argued that this scarcity of research teachers stems from the inability of the

institution to search for experienced teachers in terms of research. Moreover, participants have reported that administrators, due to the inability to look for experienced research teachers, have lowered the qualification level from minimal to almost none.

*“I feel that the institution has no choice. Because it was difficult to hire teachers with a research background, so, it must be difficult for them.”* – KII 2

*“Administrators also said in the interview that, ‘It can be done since everyone has undergone thesis, so anyone can teach the subject.’ In my experience, I did not take my thesis seriously ... As I can remember in the interview, they were not looking for specific people to teach research, only those who were willing to teach because everyone had thesis [experience].”* – FGD 1

Another reason for the assignment is to complete the teaching load of the concerned teachers, which is likely the outcome of incorrect teacher placement.

*“The number one reason why I was given a research load is because there was not enough load for the subject that I was teaching. So, there was a surplus of teachers.”* – FGD 7

*“Out of necessity, because of the scarcity of teachers, our department will not have any subject to teach by the second semester, so no one will handle the subject, that is why it was given to us.”* – KII 2

These ideas are consistent with the statement that teachers should conform with and submit to administrators to avoid having an undesirable relationship with them. Bayani and Guhao (2018) believe that teachers would work hard to earn the trust and confidence of the administrators in order to help the school achieve great things.

*“What I did is I did a lot of readings; I did a lot of studying. I really studied so that I won’t be embarrassed by the students and the administrator to whom I said yes., I can teach Practical Research.”* – KII 3

Teachers strive to meet their school’s high expectations, as well as the high expectations of their students, through a systematic school climate, strong leadership, measuring student success and providing feedback, effective classroom management, believing that every student can learn, family involvement, and a well-organized curriculum (Cohen et al., 2010; Döş and Savaş, 2015).

### **Teacher potential, experience, and training**

Adding to the list of reasons why teachers were assigned in out-of-field contexts is because of teacher potential and past training. Gist (2022), have expressed that teachers should be recruited based on previous academic achievements and potential for academic success and commitment to/potential for creating a culturally responsive learning environment for each student. Individuals who exhibit an openness to a wide range of cultures and the capacity to engage in culturally responsive practices as educators should be targeted for recruitment. Transcripts from interviews and focus group discussion have revealed this concept.

*“I think they chose me as a research teacher because I wrote there in my college days application that I got an award in college as having the best thesis.”* – KII 1

*“...not to brag, I was the best researcher in college. So, I am confident that I can teach when I was being asked to teach research.”* – KII 3

In contrast, Education Commission (2019), Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), and

OECD (2011) reported that soft skills, such as collaboration, communication, and interpersonal abilities, can be more predictive of excellent applicants than high academic achievement.

The study also found that administrators factored in the specialization of teacher applicants as part of the decision in the assignment of out-of-field teachers. Participants have expressed that one of the reasons they were assigned to out-of-field positions is their specialization. Aside from academic achievement and specialization, another element of the out-of-field assignment is the teacher's experience and training.

*"Maybe the reason that I was chosen to teach research is because, for STEM, because of my major which is biology, that's why I was chosen."* – FGD 3

*"I think because of my major because I was a major in English. So, I was chosen to be part of the Practical Research 2."* – KII 6

*"I think that would contribute to my experience as a research assistant from a previous school I work with. And then, I think I would also assume of some of the seminars and workshops that I attended while working there."* – KII 4

Attracting quality teacher applicants remains a massive issue in education. Education systems in both high and low income countries struggle to find qualified individuals for teaching positions. Low salary, low job prestige, terrible working conditions, a lack of support, and applicants exploring other career options are all common factors (Podolsky et al., 2016; Symeonidis, 2015; Salzano and Labate, 2016).

### Feelings of anxiety and frustration

As a result of the reasons above, the study participants have revealed that they

have experienced anxiety and frustration throughout their teaching. The result agrees with the idea that teachers are more likely to be frustrated when they are confronted with fears related to teaching beyond their area of competence (Schleicher, 2021).

*"Actually, I was really nervous at that time because I don't have a wide knowledge in terms of teaching Practical Research, especially in different contexts or different discipline. I was really nervous. And then when I was teaching it for the first time, I had these doubts, "What if? What if? What if?" So, there are a lot of what ifs that came into my mind."* – KII 3

*"I was nervous because aside from it is my first time to receive a research subject, it was my first teaching experience as well, so it's not my field, I am still adjusting, it's my formative year and then I have a research subject."* – FGD 7

Participants shared that they have struggled in their teaching of the subject. In the study of Bugwak (2021), he reported that one of the experiences of out-of-field teachers is feeling challenged due to the teachers' exposure to new content that they are not aware of. Also, teachers are having difficulty because it requires them to read and research about the subject. The finding of Bugwak's (2021) study aligns with the findings of this study.

*"I wasn't expecting for that task or for that assignment because I am not really into research, and I don't have enough bullet, or I don't have enough knowledge, so it has been a struggle ... I would honestly admit that I am not well versed in research."* – FGD 3

Additionally, participants reported that teaching out-of-field causes mental and psychological stresses, which ultimately resulted in self-doubts and low self-esteem.

In the study from Příbylová et al. (2015), they stated that teachers in primary schools are currently under pressure, which necessitates a high level of psychological resilience and the ability to cope with stressful conditions.

*“Worst experience was the first, especially in STEM because I can’t contribute anything at all. Also, I can’t contribute to the method, design, and all. I feel down like, ‘What am I doing here? Am I a teacher?’” – FGD 7*

*“With the type of student, I had, somehow, a hard time in dealing with them because, you really cannot deny this one that others have attitude issues, other are hardheaded, and others don’t want to learn. Learners are very blunt with their ideas or whatsoever to the point that sometimes, the teacher is-, sometimes it gives me discomfort. It sometimes led to low self-esteem. Like I am questioning myself emotionally and mentally like, ‘Can I do this? Can I teach Practical Research?’” – KII 3*

Despite being anxious, frustrated, and having experienced emotional and psychological stress, participants also shared that they have grown personally and professionally in their out-of-field teaching context. This is consistent with the findings of the study of Hobbs and Quinn (2020), which found that teachers’ capacity and enjoyment grew more in out-of-field than in-field contexts. Some participants envisioned the challenges in out-of-field teaching as an opportunity to grow and widen their horizons.

*“Fortunately, in my case, I really love to teach research because I just love to do it. I just love to write papers. I just love to tell people that research is just easy. I mean, not easy, but research is just easy to understand. So, I was happy but at the same time challenged because it’s going to be my first time to teach the subject.” – KII 1*  
*“When I was assigned, I’m happy*

*because I always know that and once I teach the subject, I also get to learn along the way. So, excited also, because I was also expecting certain trainings, particularly that’s my first time teaching that subject.” – KII 4*

Participants see that being assigned in out-of-field context is a learning opportunity. Participants believed that aside from being the subject’s teacher, they too can learn as a student of the same experience. Participants also shared that teaching in an out-of-field context is an avenue to learn from and with their students. This notion is best exemplified by the responses of various participants.

*“I gained more knowledge in research. But I’m not saying I’m really skilled or expert in research, what I’m saying is that I grew in wisdom in terms of researching. I was not only a teacher, but I was also a student at the same time.” – KII 2*

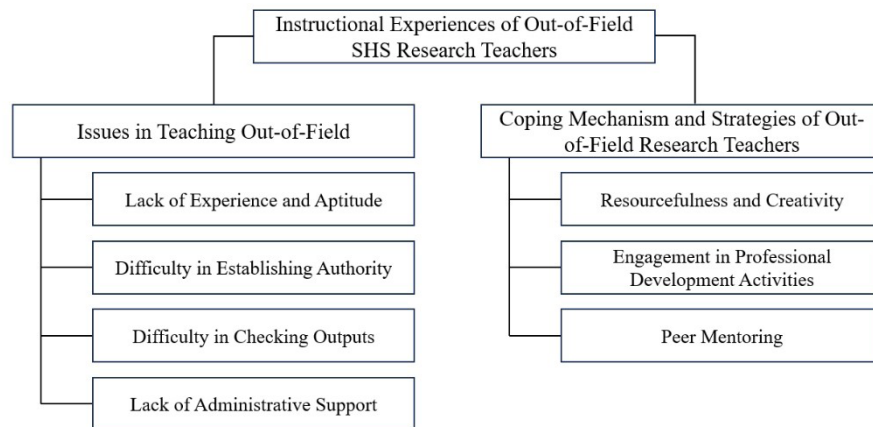
*“I was able to meet excellent students, you really know that they really know and then they were so humble that, ‘No ma’am, we will be doing it together’” – KII 6*

### **Instructional experiences of out-of-field SHS research teachers**

The instructional experiences of out-of-field SHS research teachers are divided into two (2) major themes: (1) Issues in Teaching Out-of-Field and (2) Coping Mechanisms and Strategies of Out-of-Field Teachers. Figure 2 shows the major themes along with its sub-themes.

#### **Lack of experience and aptitude**

All participants expressed difficulty in teaching the subject because of several reasons. One reason participants struggle is because of their lack of experience. According to Graham et al., (2020), beginning teachers do not have inferior teaching quality than experienced teachers, indicating that experience is not a



**Figure 2.** Themes on instructional experiences of out-of-field SHS research teachers.

determining factor for a teacher’s teaching ability. This concept contradicts the findings of this study, which could be explained by the fact that participants in this study are teaching in out-of-field settings, which means they lack the theoretical and practical competence to teach the subject because they were not trained to do so during their college years.

*“Back in college, I did not teach research for the practicum. I only taught, of course, the sciences that I was working on or that were part of the curriculum, but research was not part of that one.” – KII 1*

Deepening and conveying the subject’s content is a difficulty for the participants. Teachers were unable to expound effectively because they were unfamiliar with the subject, which hampered their ability to generate ideas and assist students with their work. Participants acknowledged that their lack of experience impacted their students’ outputs.

*“So it’s not my field, I am still adjusting, it’s my formative year and then I have a research subject. So, I was not able to contribute something, I just relied on other research teachers.” – FGD 7*

Participants are also limited by their lack of aptitude. Participants stated that their lack of content knowledge has a

significant impact on how they teach the subject. Content knowledge represents teachers’ understanding of the subject matter taught. According to Shulman (1986), a teacher must not just know that something is true; he or she must also know why it is true. Limited content knowledge of teachers limits learning opportunities, thus affecting students’ learning and motivation.

*“So, the problem is, for those who are new to the Practical Research 2 is that when they discuss things during meetings or when they plan out content, new teachers are not usually put into consideration that they are still lacking [in content]. So, when it comes to the actual lessons, there are problems that are not anticipated. The problem really is when you get caught by something that you still need to learn, why is it not included in the slides or in the learning content. So, as much as we would study the learning content and prepare the slides and make sure we are kept up to date, there are knowledge that is not gained by studying alone.” – KII 5*

Due to the participants’ lack of aptitude, they have troubles adjusting to academic content, which leads to issues with contextualization, data analysis, and worries about the quality of instruction and student output. The Practical Research 2 subject is a contextualized



subject, which means that instruction varies from strand to strand. Participants were challenged to contextualize their instruction across strands because they had not been exposed to such disciplines before. The lack of content knowledge of the subject on top of the difficulty to contextualize the examples added extra pressure to participants.

*“My problem is I was assigned in the ABM strand. I struggled how to contextualize my examples while teaching Practical Research 2. Also, I don’t have knowledge about business since it is not my major.”*  
– FGD 8

Reyes et al. (2019) defined contextualization as one of the keys to involving students in the teaching-learning process by allowing them to relate their experiences to the lesson. It connects the students’ background to the subject given in school, making the lesson engaging and relevant to their lives. Another participant has reported the same scenario.

*“... a lot of problems ... the scope of Practical Research 2 is HUMSS, STEM, and ABM and we were challenged to do it. To teach the subject for context, like the context of HUMSS, the context of ABM, the context of STEM ... So, the research of HUMSS must be about humanities, the research of ABM is about accounting and management, the research of STEM is about science and math and then knowing that I am majoring in English, so, mostly [it’s a] challenge for me.”* – KII 6

Difficulty in statistical analysis has also surfaced. In this study, the participants are research teachers who are non-mathematics-statistics majors. Participants said it was challenging to teach the statistical component of the subject. Aside from participants struggling with teaching the statistics part of the subject, they also have expressed difficulty in assisting students with the data analysis part of their paper.

*“... if it is statistics, I am useless. In my first year, I can remember that we swap teachers because we can’t teach statistics, we are not confident. So, in my first year, it is the statistics teacher who will teach the statistics [part of Practical Research 2] to my classes. So, until now, I am still not confident to teach statistics, so, I will just let the students watch videos. It’s not good in my part that I am a Practical Research 2 teacher, but I can’t teach this properly.”*  
– FGD 1

*“... I’m not really a math person. So, that is a struggle also because I can’t help them. And so, there were times I could not advise. I think I am still lacking [in content] that I was not able to advise them, what was the proper methodology for them to use in able to effectively process the data that they gathered.”* – KII 5

This finding parallels the statement of Shah et al. (2022) that teachers who teach subjects for which they do not have a subject-specific qualification are referred to as “out-of-field.” It appears to have a negative impact on teachers’ work and students’ learning, according to theory and empirical evidence.

### **Difficulty in establishing authority**

The study participants’ narratives revealed that they had problems establishing authority with the students, which resulted in disinterest and boredom. Because the participants were unable to display passion, the students were uninterested in the topics in Practical Research 2 and appeared disengaged. As a result, they were unable to develop a connection with the students.

*“The problems that I’ve encountered is that, number one, the interest of the students. Because unlike any other subjects, research for me, and for most students is boring. We don’t do a lot of activities because students are just doing research paper. [They are] Just*

*doing things that some of them don't understand.” – KII 1*

The findings support the notion that in order to be an excellent teacher, a teacher must be enthusiastic. The teacher must be enthusiastic in engaging students to participate and stimulating them to explore in order to infuse the lesson with energy, enjoyment, and anticipation. If the teacher is unable to develop rapport and show emanate passion, he/she must learn first to spark the curiosity of students and jumpstart their motivation to learn. Better teaching evaluations, positive attitudes toward teachers, more excellent student performance, and improved classroom behavior can all result from these attributes.

### **Difficulty in checking outputs**

Participants in this study admitted that they found it challenging to check students' papers. Teachers would have to devote a significant amount of time to thesis review because they will be checking not just the structure of the papers but also the grammar, statistics, and other factors. Being a research teacher, according to participants, would mean taking on many responsibilities. Research teachers must be grammarians, statisticians, validators, and other roles in addition to teaching the subject's content. This issue is clearly revealed in one of the participants' narratives.

*“I thought that it was the same pattern with college where learners will have to find their mentors or research advisers. However, from what I experienced, I'm the research teacher, I'm the research adviser, and then I'm also the statistician, the grammarian, so, it's quite a big toll to me as a research teacher, because I'm wearing too many hats that time.” – KII 4*

Given that research paper checking takes time, another issue that adds to the load is the volume of papers to be checked.

Participants have raised the issue of the volume of papers they receive daily. Participants claimed that this issue is consuming their personal time because they are pressured to return students' work on time. Participants were compelled to stay up late and spend longer hours merely to check their students' papers. Despite this initiative, participants continue to fall behind on their checking schedule.

*“As a regular teacher, imagine Teacher A, for example, he/she has six sections and in that six sections, per section she would have also five to six groups. So  $5 \times 6 = 30$ , that's 30 papers, 30 titles that you need to study on. It's not just only the students who will study, the teachers should also study about the research. Because what will the teacher contribute to the lesson if he/she do not know what is being tackled by the students? So, for me, one challenge that I can see is there are too many paper that needs to be checked, there are too many theses that you need to advise and consult, and it would really take a lot of your time and energy to pull it off.” – KII 2*

### **Lack of administrative support**

Another common theme among the participants' responses was a lack of administrative support. The failure of teachers to attain the desired competence in terms of content knowledge and experience boils down to the inability of the administration to provide support, such as providing relevant training in research and other professional development opportunities for the participants.

*“... I don't have any idea about research. That's why I struggled, I think that there is no proper seminar or workshop done by the school for the Practical Research teachers. So, we were not ready, or we are not fully equipped in teaching the subjects.” – FGD 5*

*“There is a lack in guidance, seminars, trainings, and exposure that the school provides.” – KII 2*

According to Uzun and Ozdem (2017), administrative support has a direct impact on teachers’ job performance. They also discovered that job satisfaction plays a moderating function in teachers’ job performance, which is linked to administrative support. Parallel to the findings of Uzun and Ozdem, (2017) participants are more likely not prepared to teach the subject because of administrators’ inability to provide exposure to teachers.

Administrative support, in addition to work satisfaction, has a significant impact on teacher retention (Ford et al., 2018). Teachers who found themselves not being invested by the administration would eventually get dissatisfied and leave their position. Out-of-field teachers who are not appropriately supported may believe they are ineffective as educators and would prefer to quit in search of a more welcoming setting.

*“Do you think you are effective as a teacher? I think no. That’s why I transferred to social science because I am not think I can’t see myself teaching research in the long run.” – FGD 5*

Teachers should be able to promote learning for a wide range of learners in a variety of learning situations, employing a variety of teaching knowledge and abilities (Lee-Chua, 2012). Such goal can be attained if the teachers were given enough administrative support, that is, being prepared through relevant seminars and trainings.

### **Resourcefulness and creativity**

To cope with the demands of teaching in an out-of-field context, the participants revealed that their resourcefulness and creativity had helped

them become better Research teachers. To fill in the gaps in their content knowledge, participants would consult various printed and online resources. Participants thought referring to other sources for ideas would help them enhance their content knowledge.

*“... just to read books, particularly the references that we make use for teaching Practical Research. And in some instances, if I can’t understand the book, I go to the internet, look for the most appropriate explanation or the most comprehensive explanation.” – KII 1*

The ability to be resourceful opens the door to greater success. Similarly, a resourceful teacher will constantly find a way for professional growth and development during his or her teaching career (Lopez and Roble, 2022). Being resourceful entails challenging one’s own and others’ beliefs, embracing hurdles and disagreements, and appreciating the benefits of discomfort (Briggs, 2018).

To alleviate the problem of checking the students’ output, participants were compelled to be creative and think of innovative ways of checking that would help them minimize their workload. Participants would devote time in class to check the students’ outputs and provide real-time feedback so that students could amend what needed to be changed. Ahea et al. (2016) highlighted the great importance of feedback in improving the learning experience for the students. This strategy of participants is a two-way process since not only are they able to check the output of the students, but they also provide them constructive feedback at the same time.

*“I give them time during our period or session, we will have a short discussion, then afterwards I ,letthem meet their group, and then I will check their output if it is correct ... just the basics and then advice then edit real-time during the session.” – FGD 5*

The findings also supported the notion that in order to attain the desired outcome, creative teachers regularly create their own learning activities and gather and adapt ideas and strategies from their peers (Johnson, 2015). Johnson (2015) continued by saying that one of the most common mistakes committed by new and experienced teachers is attempting to be innovative on their own. Talking with other teachers about how to engage children might provide innovative ideas that turn into excellent learning opportunities. One of these innovative ideas is seen in the responses of one of the participants. This is to respond to the problem of students getting bored and feeling disengaged in the subject.

*“... the problem was in the interest of the learner. In Practical Research, we make use of some engaging activities but of course we don’t expect that really the learners would be engaged, and they would really be interested on the activities. In my case personally I make use of crystal ball (...) would really make sure that they understand the concepts or they understand how to manipulate or how to explain this specific statistical tool that their group is going to make use.” – KII 1*

### **Engagement in professional development activities**

Another common notion that emerged is teachers’ engagement in professional development. Teachers who are not subject matter experts, according to Ní Ríordain et al. (2017), show inadequacies in content knowledge as well as conceptual errors connected to the curriculum they teach. Because of diverse student profiles, classroom contexts, and periods, this research stresses that while teachers’ confidence in their content knowledge is generally high, it is not adequate to apply that content knowledge to any teaching situation correctly. Participants have revealed from

their narratives that learning is a never-ending process and that to boost efficacy, teachers must welcome change and engage in professional development.

*“We attend some seminars; we join seminars that talk about how to how to analyze data. And then second one, we do growth sessions, in order for all of the teachers in the department to have the same knowledge on this particular topic that we are going to teach particularly in the statistical tools. And lastly, personally, I go to YouTube to watch videos on how to really do the data analysis part.” – KII1*

Higgins and Parsons (2009) underlined that carrying out professional development processes must improve student achievement. The primary motivators for teachers, according to Girvan et al. (2016), are changes directly observed in student results and behavior. They discovered that favorable student outcomes can act as a catalyst for engaging teachers in pedagogical innovation and motivating them to implement it in their own classrooms. Even if lessons are ongoing, participants said that participating in professional development helps them to better teach the subject.

*“Of course, by attending all of the trainings and seminars about research. Actually, that was helpful but the class in ongoing already, the different workshops that we have gotten too. So, I think that was helpful.” – FGD5*

### **Peer mentoring**

Teacher characteristics are at the center of both professional development processes and the benefits gained from them. According to Antoniou and Kyriakides (2013), there is a need to change our perception that teachers naturally grow more effective and increase their cognitive skills without specialized training. The participants in this study demonstrate this shift in perspective because they seek professional development

rather than relying entirely on their abilities. Peer mentoring is a means for participants to improve themselves in addition to attending training and seminars.

*“... I attend peer mentoring sessions on Practical Research, I paid attention to what they do, I observed the things they are doing. And every time students will ask me, what I can remember at that time, I consult with my colleagues and ask for advice.” – FGD 7*

*“I attend mentoring because the team is very helpful to the teachers, especially the new ones, so they really help. And also, with the colleagues who are willing to extend help and support to explain things that you have difficulty dealing with.” – FGD 3*

Participants view peer mentoring as a valuable tool for expanding their knowledge and skills in teaching the subject and giving high-quality instruction to students. Peer mentoring, which is based on collaborative, reflective practice and the critical inquiry tradition, has been widely used as an innovative technique for teacher development. Knowledge is co-constructed in a peer-mentoring approach through cooperation with peers. This is because ‘engaging with another person in a way that enables talking with, questioning, and even confronting the trusted other in order to evaluate planning for teaching, implementing, and evaluating it’ is a powerful strategy for encouraging reflective

action (Nguyen and Ngo, 2017). Teachers can learn to develop their teaching practice by continually examining and reexamining their teaching experience. Thus, professional development engagement and participation in peer mentoring activities proved to be a great asset to help out-of-field research teachers cope with the problems that they experience and improve the quality of their instruction.

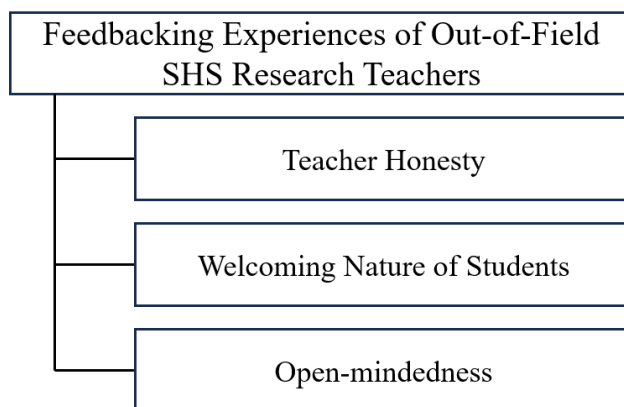
**Feedbacking experiences of out-of-field SHS research teachers**

Figure 3 shows the themes under the feedback experiences of out-of-field SHS research teachers. The following are: (1) Teacher Honesty, (2) Welcoming Nature of Students, and (3) Open-mindedness.

**Teacher honesty**

All participants articulated that they have demonstrated honesty throughout their teaching experience. Catalana (2019) has found out that teaching goes beyond academic responsibilities, that is, it is sometimes more crucial for teachers to nurture social skills that boost children’s self-esteem and self-worth rather than focusing just on academics thus, being honest as a teacher is an essential aspect for the students. Participants, being honest, are captured from the responses of the participants.

*“I try to be honest with them as much as I can or as allowable as possible without breaking the image of an educator or breaking the confidence*



**Figure 3.** Themes on feedbacking experiences of out-of-field SHS research teachers.

*that they have in their teacher. So, I really told them that I am not good at math, but I do tell them, I do give them the assurance that we will try to work on it as best as I can.” – KII 5*

Participants have also expressed that students appreciate honesty from their teachers. Being open and honest with students creates a bond and a sense of respect. Students are more likely to trust their teachers if they feel they are being honest with them. It is crucial because respect and honesty go hand in hand when creating a learning atmosphere free of bias and judgment.

*“Yes, I always tell them at the orientation, from the beginning, I always tell them that I’m not a mathematic or statistic major. So, if there’s something that you might want to confirm, ask a statistics or math teacher but I’ll try my best as possible to answer your queries because I have done research myself.” – KII 2*

### Welcoming nature of students

Another typical response that emerged is that participants have noticed the welcoming and accepting nature of the students. Participants have revealed that when they disclose to their class that they are not majoring in mathematics or statistics, the reaction is not negative; instead, students welcome them and are eager to learn with them. Participants have expressed that students have the notion that being a mathematics or statistics major is not an issue because they believe that anyone can teach research.

*“I told the students that I am not a mathematics major or a statistics major. I really told them that I’m a biology major. I can’t remember the reaction, but I think they were okay with it. The students believe that anyone can teach research.” – KII 1*

Generally, participants noticed that when they told students that they were not majoring in mathematics or statistics, they received no response. One participant suggested that this situation could be explained by the fact that students have no idea at the start of the session that they will be learning a lot of mathematical and statistical concepts.

*“Yes, I did tell my students that I wasn’t a math-statistics major. I did tell them and their reaction, they don’t have reaction because at that time that I told them, they still don’t know that they need to learn so many things about statistics. So, they don’t have reactions at that time.” – FGD 8*

Another participant pointed out that the reason why students did not react is because students already have prior knowledge of statistics from their Grade 11. Although students have prior knowledge of statistics from their previous grade level, participants stated that even if they are not mathematics or statistics majors, they will do their best to answer students’ questions and that if they do not know the answers, they assured the students that there is someone who can help them with their problem.

*“Yes, I tell my students that I don’t do math or statistics. But it’s the same, they don’t have reactions because they don’t care. But I think that is because they have prior knowledge about statistics, although not much but I think it’s workable.” – FGD 1*

*“I always tell them; I introduce myself that I am majoring in English. And also, every time we are at the data analysis and interpretation of data, I always tell them to research, to ask questions to experts because I’m not really good in terms of math or statistics. Also, I always tell them that this is what I know based on my knowledge, based on what I learned.*

*They can always ask validation or confirmation from other people, especially those who are math majors.” – KII 3*

### Open-mindedness

Out-of-field research teachers remained calm, collected, and open even when they received negative feedback about their performance. They do not react to negative input but rather accept it as constructive criticism.

*“Yes, definitely. I received a number of negative feedbacks all throughout my teaching of Practical Research 2. Because we cannot really please everybody and we cannot meet their standards. How do I cope it? I took it as a positive criticism. It helped me to become more, to become better, to learn more, to do stuffs that will help me in teaching the subject. I never took it negatively. So, how will I improve it? How will I eradicate this kind of negative feedback from me?”  
– KII 3*

This statement proves the idea that despite the considerable effort teachers put into presenting them with quality knowledge, a teacher should exhibit sympathy and regard for pupils' learning limits in obtaining the supplied knowledge (Lavrič, 2006). Within the educational process, a teacher's responsibilities involve not just his skill in his own teaching methods but also his student-rearing style.

### CONCLUSION

For educators, entering the unfamiliar field of research instruction without any prior experience might be intimidating. This study examines the experiences of these out-of-field research teachers, highlighting the challenges they encounter as well as their incredible potential for development. The primary focus of the assignment experiences of out-of-field research teachers is their lack

of expertise, training, and preparation in teaching research, which led to compliance with school administrators and sentiments of anxiety and frustration. Despite this, out-of-field research teachers view these challenges as opportunities for growth, and it may be said that they are adaptable, resilient, and goal-oriented. The issues they encountered with their instructional experiences included a lack of background, aptitude, and administrative support, as well as challenges with establishing authority and checking outputs. These issues motivate out-of-field teachers to be resourceful, creative, and engage in professional development activities. This demonstrates how engaged, inventive, innovative, and dedicated out-of-field teachers can be. Regarding the feedback experiences, the students' welcoming attitude matched the teachers' honesty and openness. This implies that students are likely to be willing to journey with teachers who are open to new learning possibilities and honest about what they do not know. It is recommended that educational institutions should invest in robust and ongoing professional development programs for teachers, especially for out-of-field teachers. These programs can address challenges related to experience and aptitude and help teachers stay updated with best practices. It is encouraged to have open communication between school administrators and teachers. Honest and open-minded dialogues can lead to constructive solutions and a more harmonious working environment. Further, the Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, and other international bodies overseeing teacher placements may consider crafting a comprehensive policy regarding teacher recruitment and placement to avoid incidence of out-of-field teaching.

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