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Research Article

Exploring Teachers' Educational Philosophies: A Comparative Analysis Based on Geographic Classifications

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological research explores the lived experiences of key informants through in-depth interviews and participant observation. The teacher-participants, who work in three geographical areas, were identified by the Department of Education (DepED) in the Schools Division Office of Albay. The study is grounded in the phenomenological concepts and principles of Husserl (1859-1938) and Heidegger (1889-1976), along with the Reflection-Action perspective of Freire (1921-1997), to capture the essence of their experiences. Due to the global health crisis caused by COVID-19, data collection utilized virtual platforms such as Facebook Messenger, Google Meet, Zoom, and phone calls, in addition to face-to-face interviews when possible. Health protocols mandated by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF), including mask-wearing, social distancing, and the use of hand sanitizer, were strictly followed to ensure safety. The findings indicate that teachers from rural, urban, and coastal areas reflect various educational philosophies such as essentialism, humanism/existentialism, pragmatism/progressivism, reconstructionism, constructivism, idealism, behaviorism, and perennialism. Some teacher-participants from rural and coastal areas also exhibit positivism, influenced by their expertise in mathematics and science. These educational philosophies enhance their coping mechanisms and teaching competencies to adjust to the local cultural realities.

Keywords: *Educational Philosophies, Geographic Classifications, Beginning Teachers, Cultural Realities*

Introduction

Education enables us to become wise, hopeful, and fosters a commitment to lifelong learning. It drives changes in our behaviors and

beliefs, reflecting personal growth and transformation. Through education, we can pave the way for a fulfilling and self-regulated life.

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John Dewey (1859–1952) asserted, “Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.” This underscores the essential role of education in shaping our world. Its significance remains paramount in every country.

The term “education” is understood in various ways. Some view it as formal schooling or lifelong learning, while others see it as the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. According to the National Council of Educational Research and Training (2014), education can also be seen as training minds in specific directions to effect desired change. It serves as a crucial arena for acculturation and enculturation, influencing perspectives and philosophies. For many, a nation’s success hinges on the quality of education its citizens receive.

Beginning teachers often enter the profession filled with idealism, but this passion can diminish over time as they encounter various challenges and realities. Many find themselves lacking adequate guidance, and factors such as overwork and insufficient support can drive them out of the profession more quickly (Tapper, 2018). Other significant influences on teachers’ decisions to leave include workload, school environment, salary, and personal circumstances (Smithers & Robinson, 2003).

Given these challenges, it is essential for beginning teachers to be informed about the local culture to navigate the practices and circumstances they will encounter, particularly when engaging with new communities. Annually, the Department of Education hires many beginning teachers who may not fully understand the underlying cultures of their assigned areas—whether rural, urban, or coastal. This lack of cultural awareness can hinder their ability to adapt to their new environments and develop the necessary philosophies for effective teaching.

Addressing the pressing concerns within the educational system—particularly the needs of teachers—is crucial for maintaining high standards in education and realizing its vision. The proponent strongly believes that beginning teachers on the island require optimum guidance and support, as they play a vital role in enhancing the quality of education.

Methods

This study employed qualitative research using a phenomenological design to capture individuals’ lived experiences regarding a specific phenomenon. Phenomenology is a qualitative research approach that emphasizes the commonality of lived experiences within a particular group. The primary goal of this approach is to describe the essence of a phenomenon by conducting interviews with individuals who have firsthand knowledge of the event, situation, or experience. Through this process, the researcher can construct a universal meaning and gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

The phenomenon explored in this research was the lack of awareness among beginning teachers, particularly in rural, urban, and coastal schools. The researcher posited that the life skills adapted by key informants—teachers from these areas—could significantly aid beginning teachers in adjusting to local realities. Additionally, the study examined the life histories of the key informants, their coping mechanisms, adaptations, and the relationships they formed to live harmoniously in their communities.

Data collection involved participant observation and in-depth interviews, with the resulting data analyzed thematically. The primary data sources included participant observations and in-depth interviews conducted using an unstructured interview guide with five purposively selected key informants from each school in rural, urban, and coastal areas managed by the Department of Education, Schools Division Office of Albay, Legazpi City, Philippines. The schools included Itaran National High School (INHS), Marcial Rañola Memorial School (MORMS), and Rapu-Rapu National High School (RRNHS). Data from participant observation and interviews were used to triangulate responses from community members and leaders.

The categories of key informants were purposively selected to obtain relevant information: (a) tenured teachers who were not local residents, (b) tenured teachers who were local residents, (c) beginning teachers who were non-residents, and (d) beginning teachers

who were local residents. These key informants were chosen for their understanding of community culture and the life skills necessary for effective teaching in rural, urban, and coastal settings.

The researcher immersed himself in the lived experiences of the key informants, focusing on practices related to life skills, including teaching, transportation, living conditions, interpersonal relationships, and community

adaptation. Secondary data sources, gathered during the triangulation process, included interviews and participant observations with locals, officials, and school leaders. This approach ensured data validity and captured various dimensions of lived experiences. Additionally, relevant studies and literature supporting the claims and hypotheses of this research were also considered.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Brief Description of the Educational Philosophies

PHILOSOPHIES	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Essentialism	<i>Essentialists</i> believe that there is a common core of knowledge that needs to be transmitted to students in a systematic, disciplined way. The emphasis in this conservative perspective is on intellectual and moral standards that schools should teach. The core of the curriculum is essential knowledge and skills and academic rigor. James D. Koerner (1959), H. G. Rickover (1959), Paul Copperman (1978), and Theodore Sizer (1985)
Humanism/ Existentialism	<i>Humanism</i> principles highlights that students should be able to choose what they want to learn. Humanistic teachers believe that students will be motivated to learn a subject if it is something they need and want to know. <i>Existentialism</i> in education is a teaching and learning philosophy that focuses on the student's freedom and agency to choose their future. Thus, teachers encourage all students to exercise personal agency and create their own meaning for life. These philosophies both point out the "freedom of choice" which was used as the parameter in analyzing the narratives of the key informants.
Pragmatism/ Progressivism	A <i>progressivist</i> John Dewey believed that individuality, progress, and change are fundamental to one's education. This pertains to individuals who believe that people learn best from what they consider most relevant to their lives. Progressivists center their curricula on the needs, experiences, interests, and abilities of students. <i>Pragmatism</i> is a philosophical movement that emerged in the 1870s that highlighted the importance of practicality and experience over principles and doctrine. These two philosophies were fused by delineating that pragmatism highlights on practicality and experience, progressivism highlights on human progress.
Reconstruction- ism	<i>Reconstructionism</i> is a philosophical approach that questions essentialism and other rigid and dogmatic standpoints. It questions the existing standards in order to provide new perspectives to the social, political, economical and other related issues (Brameld, 1904-1987).
Constructivism	<i>Constructivism</i> is 'an approach to learning that holds that people actively construct or make their own knowledge and that reality is determined by the experiences of the learner' (Elliott et al., 2000, p. 256).

PHILOSOPHIES	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Idealism	<i>Idealism</i> is the metaphysical view that associates reality to ideas in the mind rather than to material objects. It lays emphasis on the mental or spiritual components of experience, and renounces the notion of material existence.
Behaviorism	<i>Behaviorism</i> , also known as behavioral psychology, is a theory of learning which states all behaviors are learned through interaction with the environment through a process called conditioning. Thus, behavior is simply a response to environmental stimuli. Behaviorism is only concerned with observable stimulus-response behaviors, as they can be studied in a systematic and observable manner (McLeod, 2020).
Positivism	<i>Positivists</i> teaching philosophies are based on documented facts and tangible truths are normally those who would be in the math and science departments. The basic affirmations of positivism are that all knowledge regarding matters of fact is based on the “positive” data of experience and that beyond the realm of fact is that of pure logic and pure mathematics.
Perennialism	Perennialism aims to ensure that students acquire understandings about the great ideas of Western civilization. These ideas have the potential for solving problems in any era and its focus is to teach ideas that are everlasting, to seek enduring truths which are constant, not changing, as the natural and human worlds at their most essential level, do not change. Thus, cultivation of the intellect is the highest priority in a worthwhile education.

To explore the educational philosophies of the Junior High School teachers in the rural, urban, and coastal areas, an analysis of their life history and demonstrated life skills, which came from in-depth interviews and participant-observation with the key informants, was executed by the researcher thus providing a vivid picture of their philosophies relevant to education, of which are anchored on their respective personal experiences. These philosophies are contributory to the way each of them carries out their functions as teachers and the way they socialize with people.

Based on the researcher’s analysis of key informants’ narratives particularly on their life history and life skills, the following philosophies of teachers may still change as these depend on teacher’s personal experiences in life, culture, environment, and other significant factors contributory to teachers’ personal and professional development.

Table 2 presents the summary of teachers’ educational philosophies.

Table 2. Summary of Teachers’ Educational Philosophies

Rural Area	Urban Area	Coastal Area
Essentialism	Essentialism	Essentialism
Humanism/	Humanism/	Humanism/
Existentialism	Existentialism	Existentialism
Pragmatism/	Pragmatism/	Pragmatism/
Progressivism	Progressivism	Progressivism
Reconstructionism	Reconstructionism	Reconstructionism
Constructivism	Constructivism	Constructivism
Idealism	Idealism	Idealism
Behaviorism	Behaviorism	Behaviorism

Rural Area	Urban Area	Coastal Area
Positivism	Positivism	Perennialism
Perennialism	Perennialism	

The educational philosophies of the teacher-participants from the three geographical locations such as rural, urban, and coastal areas provide a picture of how teachers accommodate practices when assigned in a school located in a rural place as reflected in their life history and demonstrated life skills. Their philosophies as teachers are: essentialism, humanism/existentialism, pragmatism/progressivism, reconstructionism, constructivism, idealism, behaviorism, positivism, and perennialism. These philosophies are true to all the teacher-participants in rural, urban, and coastal areas but these are reflected in different practical circumstances and experiences of the key informants. The narratives substantiate the identified educational philosophies which portray their culture, way of thinking, and even their perspectives.

Essentialism. Based on the narratives of rural teachers, they show academic rigor and have high regard for acquiring basic concepts that are relevant in improving the skills of their students. They believe that there should have a common core of knowledge that needs to be transmitted to students in a systematic and disciplined way. They train students to read, write, speak, and compute clearly and logically and teach them hard work, respect for authority, and discipline. All teachers, Sir Don, Ma'am Delia, Ma'am Salvy, Ma'am Marites, and Ma'am Flora, showed academic rigor along with professional experiences, views in teaching, and life skills in teaching.

Accordingly, this is seen in the practices of Sir Don, one of the rural teachers in Itaran NHS, that ever since when he was a child, he has always been a studious person because he wants to explore different learning opportunities to improve himself. He has high regard for developing the communication skills of his students particularly in speaking, reading, and writing because he believes that the industry needs graduates who are adept in these macro-skills.

Furthermore, they believe that values, hand-in-hand with knowledge, should be

properly instilled in the learners consistently with the support of parents so that they can become good citizens. There should be balanced teaching between concepts and values because to them a child without character is socially unaccepted. Furthermore, they also believe that, as part of the 21st century, students learn better if teachers are knowledgeable in navigating technology. The students become active and attentive when they play videos and use PowerPoint presentations that result in better reception of learning on the part of the students. They also explore some social media platforms as the medium of their communication because of the pandemic. Along with this, the cultivation of the macro-skills such as reading, listening, speaking, writing, and viewing is also developed by teachers in the students because they believe that these are basic skills that the world demands. They hone their students towards a path of being problem-solvers so that they can contribute something to the community.

Rural teachers believe that teachers should likewise be good at speaking and writing the moment they enter the teaching profession because these are foundational skills in teaching. Alongside this, they also postulated that aside from being a good teacher in the classroom or school, they should also maintain a good reputation outside the school for the dignity of the profession. As Sir Don said, "*Ang pagiging isang guro ay hindi ibig sabihin na maging teacher ka lang sa loob ng classroom. Kahit nasa labas ka pa ng campus, kahit nasa bahay ka, kahit saan ka pumunta, once you are a teacher, kailangan mong kumilos ng tama kasi yan talaga ang pananaw ng mga tao sa teacher*" (Being a teacher is not practiced only in the classroom, it should be exercised even outside the school, even at home, wherever you go, once you are a teacher, you need to act in accordance to the norm). Furthermore, it is noticeable that teachers also want to update their learning by enrolling in graduate programs. To them, it is a way to improve their teaching and learn new concepts that they can share with their students.

Urban teachers share the same philosophy as rural and coastal teachers. To the urban teachers, they believe that core knowledge needs to be transmitted to the learners systematically and in a disciplined way. The knowledge that learners learned in school should be an instrument so that they can survive in real-life contexts; thus, to them, schooling should be practical and should be a preparation for students to become valuable members of society. This is supported by the narratives of the key informants taking into account the principle of essentialism: *"Para sakuya, an pinakajoy as a teacher, su natransfer ko kung ano an knowledge na yaon sakuya. Tapos mas maogma kun nakalampas pa. Nalampasan pa su piga-expect ko sainda halimbawa naging successful sinda through Mathematics tapos su success bako sana sa pag-eskwela kundi sa pag-kabuhay"* (For me, the joy of being a teacher is that I am able to transfer my knowledge. I would also be happy if my students were able to go beyond what is expected of them. An example of this is they become successful students through mathematics not just in their academics but also in real life).

On the other hand, urban teacher-participants believe that basic concepts should be taught well in the early stages or years so that learners can perform and adapt to higher concepts. In this context, it likewise follows the principle of essentialism based on the narrative of an urban teacher: *"May mga high school kami ngunyan na dae talaga nakakabasa, Minsan ngani nagabalik pa ako sa ABCD. Kaso, dahil sa paperworks, dae ko na natututukan an mga aki. Kaya tama man ito na bawasan an paperworks. Ining mga non-readers, an hiling ko kaini, dahil sa curriculum ta nata kita nakaabot sa arog kaini na garu pare-pareho an kaso kada eskwelahan"* (We have high school students who really cannot read. Sometimes, we go back to basics like ABCD. But because of paper works, I could not find time to focus on teaching the slow learners that is why it is really correct to lessen the paper works of teachers. I think these non-readers are the product of the curriculum itself because I wonder why they have reached this far, similar to other schools).

Like rural and urban teachers, these coastal teachers share the same principles in terms of

essentialism. To them, basic skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and arithmetic should be prioritized as these are foundational skills to prepare them to become knowledgeable, responsible, and valuable individuals of society. In addition to this, they also make sure that the intellectual and moral standards are being considered by the school to hone the students holistically; meaning, they would like to produce students who are full of knowledge and at the same time possess good values. They teach them the spirit of hard work, respect, and discipline. This narrative of a key informant shows how essentialism philosophy is manifested: *"Igwa ako pirmi sainda ki constant reminder. Piga-taraman ko sinda na arog kaini... oh igwang assignment, pag-adalan, inoton muna. Before sinda mag uli, pirmi ko sinda piga-remind para dae maka-lingaw. May time ngani ako na pigalaogan ko an mga aki ta piga-review ko lalo na kun wara su maestra"* (I always remind them constantly. I usually tell them that they have an assignment, that they have to study it so that they would not forget. There was a time that I even went to their classroom, if the teacher is not around, to give them a review on the subject). This was supplemented by the narrative of another key informant that highlights the main objective of teaching: *"An pinakaenot talaga dyan su makaukod an mga aki buda kumbaga bako man sana an pagturo an tuyo mo, kaipuhan may attachment ka sa aki ngani kumbaga ma feel mo man talaga na an pagturo mo nasa boot"* (The main objective in teaching is to make students learn and we should remember that we have to establish a connection among them so that you would feel that teaching is really your aspiration).

As of this moment, teachers are taking action to address the reading comprehension of their students as they claim the fact that many of them could not comprehend properly due to many factors. They also focus on providing activities that will enhance the speaking skills of the learners because most of them have frights in terms of expressing themselves to the public particularly during recitation. To them, they have to develop them because these are highly needed in interviews and examinations when they find jobs in the future.

Humanism/Existentialism. Rural teachers also believe in the essential goodness of learners, that humans have free will, moral conscience, the ability to reason, aesthetic sensibility, and religious instinct. They advocate that the young should be treated kindly and that learning should not be forced or rushed, as it proceeds in stages. They believe that students have personal freedom, choice, and responsibility.

Ma'am Flora is a teacher of Itaran NHS who really exemplifies humanism in life as she is a strong believer in God. She believes that learners should be taught how to become God-loving so that they can be good citizens. She integrates bible verses in her lesson and never forgets the presence of God before the class starts. It is also noticeable that aside from Ma'am Flora, these teachers value morality in all aspects that are integrated when teaching their lessons, and even in their day-to-day activities. They call the attention of those students who misbehave and try to talk and listen to them. Also, they give students the freedom to choose because to them, it is a way to make them responsible life.

To them, kindness is a manifestation of being humanitarian. This is postulated by the narrative of Ma'am Delia that narrates, "*Kami kayang mag-asawa, ganyan talaga kami, kung kaya naming tumulong, tutulong talaga kami up to the last cent kung talagang nakikita naming kaawa-awa*" (I and my husband are really helpful. We really help if we have something to give especially when someone is really in need).

Furthermore, as reflected in their demonstrated life skills in teaching, they provide activities that cater to students' multiple intelligences and employ differentiated instruction so that lessons will become meaningful to the learners. Along with this, they teach concepts from simpler ones to complex ones because accordingly, they set standards according to the level of readiness of their students. That is why sometimes they review and go back to previous concepts if students have not yet mastered them because they may not be able to understand advanced concepts if the basics are not yet fully learned. In addition, conducting home visitation is a demonstration also of a humanistic principle. They do it so that they would understand the situation of the learners and so

that they have anecdotes of the life history of their students which serve as their basis in giving considerations to them.

Because of the pandemic, they also exercise humanism with their students and even colleagues. They had to extend much patience to adapt to the new landscape of education and understanding that everyone is also transitioning to the new normal. With the mandate of the Department of Education, the school decided to implement a modular distance learning modality because most of their students do not have internet access. Before this, they conducted surveys and look into many considerations as to the modality they will choose for their students.

This educational philosophy is reflected among urban teachers as they believe that understanding the situation of the learners is a humanistic consideration. In the urban area, many students do not regularly attend classes because they are instructed by their parents to help in farming works instead of going to school. One urban teacher validated this based on her narrative, "*Diyan mo maaaraman na may mga estudyante na piga-obliga kan magurang na magtarok. Kina ikaw as a teacher, kakaarunun mo na kun pwede dae pagubuson an sarong week*" (That is where you will find out that many of our students are obliged by parents to help in the rice fieldwork. As a teacher, you need to talk to them and request the child not to be absent the whole week). Accordingly, the teachers are really doing their best so that their students will continue schooling despite the circumstance. They believe that this is the result of mass promotion because, to them, they cannot fail students even if they are not performing well in class. Furthermore, this humanistic perspective is also supported by the claim of one key informant narrating that, "*Minsan kaipuhan mo midbidun an saimong mga estudyante. May mga estudyante na mga pasaway sa klase ta sa harong bako sinda padaba*" (Sometimes you need to know your students. There are students who are mischievous in class because they are not loved at home). This validates that teachers in the urban school exercise understanding of one's behavior so that they can think of mechanisms to develop human character. Existentialism is focused on

freedom, the development of authentic individuals as they make meaning of life. It is also centered on individual choice and individual standards rather than external standards. In this context, urban teachers believe that students and even their children should be given the freedom to choose. *"As of now dae ko pa aram kun ano an muya ninda. Basta sabi ko sainda basta maski makatapos sana sinda ki four-year course depende kun ano an muya ninda ta nag-iiba baga an ambition ninda -habang nagdadakula ta sabi ko sainda igwa dyan nag graduate ning teacher pero nagiging police.. so nag-iiba an linyada ninda"* (As of now, I do not know what course do they like. But I have already advised them that I just want them to finish a 4-year course depending on what course do they want because I believe that our ambition changes as we grow up. I told them that some graduated as a teacher but in the long run, prefers to become a policeman).

They view the individual as an entity within a social context in which the learner must confront other's views to clarify his or her own view. They emphasize character development that emphasized individual responsibility for decisions towards self-fulfillment and self-regulation. To them, learners must be taught the sense of responsibility and accountability as part of survival mechanisms in real life.

Coastal teachers believe that humans have a moral conscience and possess essential goodness. To them, it is a must that morality and understanding should be established as these are foundations to develop human character. *"Maski ngani mga aki duman pigaparansin ko. Maski ngani su mga naga-kumpit, urogmahon sakuya ta pirmi daa ako nang-papansin"* (I even befriend children there, even the fisherfolks. They are always happy because I am approachable). Establishing a good relationship with students and other people they interact with is a representation of humanistic principle. They join in their celebration as their way so that they can adapt to the practices of the people that live in the place. It is furthermore supported by the narrative of one key informant that portrays a good relationship with people in the place: *"An ugali ko pawno bako man ako su katahaan na klase ki tawo. Maski si-say pwede baga sakuya magrani. Pirmi ako an*

na-ee not mag-pansin sainda. Minsan baga kaya kita, pagsaro kitang empleyado, an mga tawong dyan sa baba na dae man inadalan, nasusupog an magrani satuya. So, kita dapat na-igwag inadalan an dapat na magpansin sainda" (I am not a person who is rude. I entertain whoever may come and approach me. I am always the one who befriends and approaches them because sometimes, those people who have not studied also feel shy to mingle with those who have earned a degree. So, we should be the ones to the first approach and understand them because we finished our education).

Alongside these narratives, the humanistic philosophy is also reflected in their spiritual belief. They believe that the teaching they learn from the church reminds them to do good always, as they believe that God is omniscient and omnipotent.

Pragmatism/Progressivism Teachers in rural areas believed in the power of education. To them, it truly is an avenue so that one can have a comfortable life in the future that is why they strived to finish college so that they can have a progressive life. Ma'am Salvy said, *"Iniyakan ko talaga ang pag-aaral. Sabi ko kay Mama, dawa mag-kasambahay ako, dawa mag community college ako, okay lang sakuya basta makaklase sana ako"* (I really cried just to continue my education. I told my mother that I am willing to become a housemaid or to study in a community college just to continue my schooling).

On the other hand, in terms of teaching, they provide meaningful learning activities to their students because they believe that students learn best when they are given hands-on experiences such as role-playing, simulations, experiments, and giving thought-provoking questions to prepare them to become problem solvers. The use of contextualization and indigenization of teachers in the lesson has been a great manifestation of the progressivism point of view because it provides learners a clearer understanding of concepts and provides the meaning of physical and cultural context.

Urban teachers employ the progressivist principle particularly on the pedagogy with the intent to make teaching and learning meaningful to their students. They devise and create different learning activities that cater to the

interest and capabilities of their students. They focus on learning experiences that test ideas through experimentation and problem solving and allow learners to question their experiences in their environment. One teacher shared his strategy to make his students appreciate mathematics subjects as stigma in learning this particular subject still arises: *"Naghahanap akong mga materials na pwedeng magamit. Dakulaon syang challenge and responsibility lalo na an mga pig-handle ko mga maray na-studyante. Kaya daw ma-push ko pa sindana mas maging matibay. Kaya naghanap talaga ako kaitong mga materials na thought-provoking talaga"* (I would look for materials that could be used in teaching them. It is really a big challenge and responsibility, especially that I am handling performing students. That is why I always encourage them to be good. That is why I always look for good materials that are thought-provoking).

Moreover, another urban teacher also shared his progressivist way of teaching by infusing academic jokes so that he could get the interest of the students and to make the discussion easy to bear. *"Maski sa pagnagaturo ako dae nanggad nalilingawan kan mga studyante an mga jokes ko. Pigatawan ko sindang jokes na mga related sa Math para makuha ko an attention ninda"* (Even when I teach, may students would not forget my jokes. I usually give them jokes that are related to Math so I can get their attention). Finally, to be able to establish meaningful learning, they critically look into the curriculum and make sure that it is within the interest of the students and encourage questioning to develop high-order thinking skills. They also take into account the methods that they have to use so that the objectives of the lesson will come to a realization. *"Pag ako naga lesson, pigahiling ko muna an objectives kun ano an mga targets na data ma-achieve. Syempre, pigahiling ko man an capacity kan mga estudyante kun kaya ba ninda ini ma-absorb. Kun indi, ichu-chunk ko pa sya or sa layman's terms man ngaya, ipapasasimple mo pa"* (When I write my lesson plan, I look at the objectives first if what is the target to be achieved. Of course, I also look into the capacity of the learners if they can do it. If not, I have to chuck it or in layman's terms, I need to make it simple". It

posits that teachers consider the interest, learning contexts, and background of the learners for better learning experiences of the students.

With the underlying local culture in the coastal school, teachers manifest the progressivism point of view along with teaching and even in their day-to-day life. They infuse songs in their lessons, use locally available materials, and contextualizes the lesson so that coastal learners may relate the concepts in their personal life experiences.

Their creativity in teaching is being activated because they are left with no choice but to think strategically to make teaching and learning meaningful. Creating interesting activities that are in line with the capacity of learners is one of the considerations that they make so that learners will appreciate the lesson and they could relate to it. One coastal teacher shared her strategy in teaching as following the principles of progressivism: *"Before the pandemic, nag handle akon subject na Understanding Culture, Society and Politics sa Senior High School. I see to it na mag-kaigwa kaming activity para sa United Nations Month wherein pipahiling an iba-ibang cultura kan mga countries or mga bagay na saindang natutunan sa subject. Na-enjoy po ninda ito. Maski kan nagaturo ako sa Cookery, igwa akon activity na kun sain pig-papahiling ninda an different cuesins na available digdi sa island"* (Before the pandemic, I handled the subject Understanding Culture, Society and Politics in the Senior High School. I see to it to have an activity in connection with the United Nations Month wherein it shows different cultures of countries or things that they learned from the subject. They enjoyed the activity. Even when I was still teaching cookery, I usually organized an activity that shows the different cuisines that are available on the island). Furthermore, they also give students systematic and hands-on activities such as role-playing, debates, experiments that allow them to learn by themselves. They believe that direct experiences will give students a higher amount of learning which they can use as they elevate into other year levels.

Reconstructionism. Based on the narratives of teachers, there is inequality in the system of the Department of Education as practiced by

the school leaders. They are aware that the same thing also happens in other schools as some of them have also worked in other stations. As reconstructionists, they believe that there are still a lot of things that need to be improved in terms of the facilities of the school. They say that they do not have enough classrooms to use that is why they strategize on how teaching and learning will still take place despite the situation. To them, it is another burden because the school should immediately take action on it because it is a necessity for both the teachers and the students.

In addition, they also see disparity in terms of giving training among teachers. Some of them are not given the opportunity to attend training just because they have a low rank. The school always sends those who are already tenured, resulting in financing themselves to attend training and seminars so that they can have a good rating in the IPCRF.

Sir Don observed that, *"Kung sino iyong naunang ma-in, sila muna ang binibigyan ng training kahit division or region. Bale 10 kaming English Teachers doon at pang walo akong na-in sa service kaya siguro matagal tagal pa ata akong mabibigyan"* (Whoever gets in first, they will be the one to be sent to division or regional trainings. We are 10 teachers and I was the 8th who got in. That is why I think it will take much time before I can finally be sent to trainings). Also, *"Kapag Teachers I ka, wala masyado opportunity hindi kagaya ng may mataas na level. Pagmeron ka nang mataas na title, ang mga opportunities ay lalapit nalang sayo at doon mo na magagawa kung ano ang gusto mong gawin sa school"* (If you are a Teachers I, you have less opportunity compared to others who have a high position. If you have a high rank, more opportunities will come to you and then that is the time that you can do what you want for the school).

Lastly, as a reconstructionist, they infuse social issues in their discussion particularly on the current trends and let their students reflect on it so that they can be aware of what is happening and think of what should be improved in the school, society, or country. They believe that students should know these things as part of global citizenship to make a standpoint leading to critical thinking.

Urban teachers are social reconstructionists as they believe that systems in the organization must be changed to overcome politics, oppression, and inequality. They are vocal about their observations because to them it is not proper thus it calls for immediate actions from higher authorities so that they can serve better as teachers. *"Wara man ako masyado apprehension ta an content kaya ko man. An problema lang an pag-deliver. Kadaklan kong nailing nakaiba, igwa sindang darang projector kina laptop pag-magaturo, ako an kaya ko lang. Dakol man kutang computer duman kaso dae man nagagamit ta siguro an isyu, internet"* (I do not have apprehension in terms of content because I can do it. My concern is in terms of delivery. Some of my colleagues would bring projector and laptop for teaching. In my case, I only bring what I can. Even though there are many computers in the school, they could not be used because of the poor internet connectivity). This is one of the narratives of urban key informant complaining that this recurringly happens even in other schools that computers are not being used by students because of the many factors. To him, it should be used for instructions so that students will learn better and especially that the landscape of education has already evolved which needs integration of technology. Furthermore, another key informant expressed her experienced that there may be somehow politics in the promotion process in which the "whom-you-know" concept is being applied. *"Syempre lalo na na yaon ako sa big school, may bahid pa din yan na pulitika. Maski pwedi na ako maging Teacher III now, still I have to wait na may mabakante ta kulang an position.* (Especially that I am in a big school, there are still politics even in the promotion. That is why even if I am qualified already to be a Master Teacher, I still have to wait for the item to be vacant). This key informant wishes that this kind of process be changed to establish fairness along with promotion to put in place who deserves it.

Coastal teachers see many predicaments in the locality particularly in the school which calls for action of the authorities. It is a manifestation that they are critical theorists as they want to address social questions and have a better society for the betterment of each of

them. They believe that same with other teachers, the system within the organization must be improved so that the quality of education will likewise be improved. To them, the school should address the status of signal in the locality as it is significantly needed particularly during this time of the pandemic. Along with this, they also want that the school should also intensify the technology being used by the students as it is one of the 21st-century skills to be developed by the teachers and the students. They believe that the higher administration should look into this particularly in the coastal areas. Also, power, the passivity of students towards academics, and travel going to the island are one of the glaring concerns that need to be addressed so that they can confidently do their mandated duties and responsibilities. Aside from this, they integrate social issues and concerns in their lessons so that students will be aware of the problems that the country is facing. They want them to be involved in thinking for possible solutions to address the problem which to them, this strategy also develops the critical thinking and higher-order thinking skills of the students.

Constructivism. This principle of constructivism exists in the narratives of the teacher-participants from the rural area, specifically in their life skills in teaching. Accordingly, they think of interactive activities that are within the interest of the students such as role-playing, collaborative games, simulations, etc, which the students like because it involves movements and allows them to interact within a group. Some teachers, particularly Ma'am Delia and Ma'am Salvy, make their lessons interesting by providing students thought-provoking questions and interactive activities to activate curiosity and develop critical thinking skills. With these strategies of teacher-participant from the rural, students learn to appreciate the subject and develop the skills because the teachers consider their learning styles, learning readiness, and personal experiences. Meaning, the teacher themselves relate and connect their lesson to the prior knowledge of their learners so that students will understand easily the concepts that they are teaching.

As discussed above, constructivists believe that the learner actively constructs his or her

own understandings of reality through interaction with objects, events, and people in the environment, and reflecting on these interactions. For learning to occur, an event, object, or experience must conflict with what the learner already knows. Teachers in the rural area also manifest the constructivism principle as reflected in their life history and demonstrated life skills, particularly life skills in teaching. They devise creative activities that are in line with the interest of the learners and activate the prior knowledge of the students to understand complex concepts relevant to making their discussion meaningful. Like Sir Tomas, Ma'am Maria, and Ma'am Lilia, they make use of technology to make their lessons interesting and use instructional materials suited to the learning maturity of their learners. Also, they contextualize their lessons by using examples that can be seen around by the learners to simplify the lesson and for better learning.

The teacher-participants from the coastal school, just like the teacher-participants from the rural and urban schools, were observed to be constructivists. Their constructivist perspective is found in their views on teaching and life skills in teaching. They are called to be constructivists because they all consider the capacity of their learners, especially that most of them are living in remote areas. Sir Felipe and Ma'am Grace employ a constructivism approach through the contextualization and indigenization (locally available materials) of their lessons so that they will be within the learning capacity of their students. To do such, they use examples that are known by the students such as mobile legends, k-pop, k-drama so that his students will have an interest in listening to his discussion. Moreover, Ma'am Editha employs a different strategy which is to use songs integrated into her lesson. With this, her students appreciate the discussion and learn better, while Ma'am Rosalyn introduces her students to collaborative activities so that students will appreciate her lessons in Araling Panlipunan. She also integrates social issues in her lesson because she wants her students to be aware of the current events.

Idealism. The idealism philosophy of the key informants from the rural area is found in their aims and aspirations in life and views on

teaching as significant components of their life history. Upon scrutiny of their narratives, they were found to be longing for self-improvement in terms of personal and professional aspects which motivates them to continue their studies by enrolling in a graduate school to update themselves of the new learning trends in the teaching profession particularly focusing on their field of specialization. It also is noticeably narrated that they are after the "betterment" side of their learners that is why they always consider the learning capacity and the situation of the learners and look into the personal, social, and economical background to address and respond to their needs. Sir Don, Ma'am Delia, Ma'am Marites have conducted home visitation to their students even if it is located in the far-flung area because they want to know the circumstances of their students at home. Through home visitation, they were able to know the background of their students which can be a basis in their decision-making in the classroom specifically in the instructions. Accordingly, they do it because of their commitment to the teaching profession and they want their students to finish their studies so that they can have a stable job in the future.

Meanwhile, to Ma'am Salvy, Ma'am Flora, Ma'am Marites, and Sir Don, establishing a harmonious relationship is very important within the organization because it helps them grow in the organization. It is also important to them that family should be a top priority and that they should be provided with their needs aside from doing their duties and responsibilities in the school.

On the views on teaching, Sir Don believes that learners must be taught properly by teaching them concepts in a simple and complex way and he pointed out that teaching students the essence of respect is very important as this is a foundation for them to become responsible citizens. Moreover, Ma'am Delia, Ma'am Salvy, and Ma'am Marites believe that the teaching profession is the noblest, however, sacrifices and enduring pains will have to be surpassed by the teacher for the benefit of the learners. To Ma'am Flora, teaching is an avenue to make children whole and that they can face the world full of armors, grow and mature as a human person while Ma'am Salvy believes that theory

and practice should go hand in hand to produce students that are skillful and that teachers should possess pleasing personality and should know how to communicate ethically with students. "*Dapat maingat dapat makipag-usap sa mga parents, dapat presentable lagi, marunong kung ano ang tamang pakikipag-communicate sa mga estudyante*" (We should be very careful in communicating with parents. We should be presentable, know how to communicate too with our students).

Teachers in the urban area share a similar philosophy with the teachers from the rural school. The principle of idealism is likewise reflected in them that to discover and develop each individual's abilities and full moral excellence is important to better serve society. Ma'am Maria, Sir Chris, Sir Tomas, Ma'am Rose, and Ma'am Lilia believe that education should influence students with good values and skills and students should be holistically developed and they should be supported with what they need so that someday they can likewise help their family and the community. All of them also wish to finish or enroll in a master's degree to capacitate themselves with new principles and theories in education which they can apply in their station. To them, family is a top priority because it gives them motivation and happiness that is why they also wish to be promoted so that they can provide the necessities of their family. They also believe that good working relationships with colleagues and the community should be strongly instilled in each of them to become productive individuals as they help one another and collaborate in the school.

Just like the teacher-participants from the rural and urban areas, the key informants from the coastal area have shared similar philosophy with them. It was found out that all of them seemed to have used the "idealism" philosophy in fulfilling their mandated duties and responsibilities while attending also to other concerns in life. The principle of this philosophy is found in their aims and aspirations in life, views on teaching, professional experiences, and their life skills in teaching. They believe that the aim of education is to discover and develop each individual's abilities and full moral excellence in order to better serve society.

Sir Felipe considers the learning ability of his students as he crafts his lesson plan and activities so that they can appreciate and learn from them which is more important. He also believes that values should be integrated with lessons coupled with real-life concepts to be able to create a meaningful experience. Moreover, Ma'am Grace believes that students should be given priority as clients of the school and should be taught independency for them to overcome that challenges in life, while Ma'am Editha, Ma'am Annabelle, and Ma'am Rosalyn believe that a teacher should be a passionate and compassionate one to establish a working relationship and good rapport with students. To them, it is their responsibility to hone the skills of their students so that they can find a stable job in the future to help their family and their community.

Behaviorism. This philosophy of education is likewise manifested in teacher-participants in the rural school. They say that they employ the behaviorism principle in their classes to establish control and management of students' behavior. However, they also believe that this principle should not be exercised freely to the learners especially when they commit mistakes because of laws that protect the learners. One rural teacher shared her experience about giving punishment to her student, *"In the first three years ko didi, igwa ako mga estudyante na pigachallenge talaga ako kaya minsan pigabato ko sinda eraser, piga-kwelyohan ko talagata wara pa man kaito ki Children Protection Policy. Pero ayo man ako mga estudyante na mga maboboot man talaga kaya pasalamat man ako sainda"* (I my first three years in this school, I have students who challenged me that is why I would hit the, with an eraser, pull their collar when the Child Protection Policy was not yet implemented. But it could not be denied that I also have students who are kind that is why I am thankful to them). In this context, it is evident that the teacher imposed punishment on those students who misbehave and given rewards through kind words and praises to those who behave well in class.

Furthermore, teachers also give praises during the class discussion by saying "very good", "that's great" and other positive comments to affirm the good work of the learners.

In the modular modality, they write positive notes and comments in the modules to motivate learners to continue getting good scores. And Lastly, they provide learners intervention especially for those who were not able to understand the lesson. This is to strengthen their skill on a particular topic and cope with advanced concepts.

This philosophy is reflected in the lived experiences of urban teachers particularly in their life history and demonstrated life skills. It is observed that based on their narratives, they are considered behaviorist because they believe in the concept of the conditioning process. They teach students by conditioning them through desired behavior based on their observations and reinforce as the students display the behavior. To support this principle, this narrative of one urban teacher sheds light on how the conditioning process is done in his classroom. *"Dapat pag maga lug ka sa classroom, ipahiling mo saindang ingut ka tanganing dae sinda magpasaway"* (When you enter inside the classroom, you have to show them that you are angry so that they will not misbehave). Aside from this, they believe that the learning of the students will improve if they are going to notice positive achievements of the students by giving them praises when they have answered well the question and acknowledging also their creativity in class. Through this, students' confidence is being boosted and also encourages others to do the same. However, when a particular student does not do good in class like misbehaving, being inattentive in classes, not submitting on time the requirements or if not, no submission at all, they immediately call the attention of the student to gather facts and provide necessary action on the behavior made by the student.

The teacher-participants from the coastal area are also behaviorists. They believe that if teachers provide positive reinforcement or rewards, whenever students perform a desired behavior, they will learn to perform the behavior on their own. They also think people act in response to internally or externally generated physical stimuli.

This philosophy is shown by Sir Felipe where he believes that students who poorly perform in class should be immediately and

directly told and reminded of their performance in class so that they will have time to contemplate and eventually improve their performance. He Believes that discipline should be imposed on them to let them know what is right and what is wrong. Thus, reverse psychology is no longer applied because the current behavior of his students quite alarming.

However, Ma'am Grace does her behaviorist principle in a different way; instead of punishment, she encourages her students by giving them papers, snacks, and other things they may need in school to show them that there is someone who cares for them. Meanwhile, Ma'am Editha remains her "motherly figure" as a motivating factor that encourages and inspires students to behave in school and do well in class through her words of guidance and they give praises and awards to those who excel in class to motivate them so do more or the same thing.

Perennialism. The perennial principle is reflected in all teachers in the rural school. They have shown immense appreciation of the western civilization which some of them are also practiced in the Philippine culture. They participate in fiestas in their community as a form of establishing interpersonal relations and adapting to the community. Aside from this, the cultivation of the intellect should be regarded by teachers so that students will become skillful through the theories and concepts that are being taught.

The teacher-participants from the urban school were also considered perennial educators because they do not disregard the traditional culture of western civilization. As reflected in their life skills to adapt to the community, they all noted that they participate in the celebrations of the community such as fiestas, commemorations, and other activities sponsored by the barangay or the local government unit where their school is located. Also, they have shown religious practices just like Ma'am Maria who has been serving as a lector in Balogo, Oas, Albay as her devotional act to his faith in God.

Similar to teacher-participants from the rural and urban areas, teacher-participants from the coastal are also perennials. They likewise join in the commemorations and fiesta in Rapu-

Rapu as a way of adapting to the community. To them, doing such is a way to get support from the local government so that they will become partners of the school.

Positivism. This philosophy is reflected in the narrative of Ma'am Salvy (Math Teacher) and Ma'am Delia (Science Teacher), who are rural teachers, because they believe that students should learn how to think logically and they strongly believe that science and mathematics are sources of facts and data.

Moreover, this philosophy is reflected in the narratives of urban teachers specifically to Sir Tomas who is a mathematics teacher for so long time. His field of specialization influenced him to become positivist, believing that mathematics subject offers logic, develops critical thinking, and provides observable data that can be applied in real life. He is known to be a mathematics teacher who is an expert in his field that many of his colleagues would sometimes seek for his knowledge because he shows mastery of the subject matter especially those subjects that involve higher or advanced concepts.

From the discussion and analysis among the three geographical locations, it was found out that the selected teacher-participants share the same educational philosophies reflected in their life history and demonstrated life skills. All of them are considered essentialist, humanistic or existentialist, pragmatist or progressivist, reconstructionist, constructivist, idealist, behaviorist, and perennials. These educational philosophies served as their coping mechanism to adjust to the local realities in a specific geographical location for them to accomplish their duties and responsibilities as teachers, despite the different circumstances they have experienced in terms of personal and professional aspects.

Hence, all the beginning and tenured teachers regardless of their geographical location exhibited essentialism, humanism or existentialism, pragmatism or progressivism, reconstructionism, constructivism, idealism, behaviorism, and perennialism while beginning teacher glaringly showed idealism as their educational philosophy. This is the reason why most of the neophyte teachers tend to lose their love and passion for teaching because of the frustrations

they feel from being exposed to the actual realities.

However, it was found out that coastal teachers did not show "positivism" as their educational philosophies because positivism, as a philosophy, is influenced by the field of specialization of the teacher. Some of the teachers in the rural and urban schools are graduates of Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) with a specialization in science and mathematics, where facts and tangible truths in teaching the subjects are highly integrated as part of their teaching strategy. According to Crossman (2019), positivists utilize scientific evidence such as experiments, statistics, and qualitative results to reveal a truth about the way society functions which is similarly practiced by teachers of rural and urban schools respectively. They did not manifest positivism because of the occurrence that the chosen key informants in the coastal area are neither specializing in mathematics nor science.

In general, the educational philosophies of teachers are influenced by their personal circumstances and professional experiences including their area of assignment. Educational philosophies are influenced by various factors such as the place, the kind of people they often associate with.

Conclusion

Based on their life histories and demonstrated life skills, teachers in rural, urban, and coastal areas embody a range of educational philosophies, including essentialism, humanism/existentialism, pragmatism/progressivism, reconstructionism, constructivism, idealism, behaviorism, and perennialism. Some teacher-participants from rural and coastal areas also exhibit positivism, influenced by their expertise in mathematics and science. These educational philosophies not only enhance their coping mechanisms but also strengthen their teaching competencies. The philosophies of these teachers are varied and dynamic, shaped by their environment, culture, and interactions with the people around them.

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