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## Research Article

### Exploring the Influence of Out-of-Specialized-Field Teaching on Educators Development and Motivation

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#### ABSTRACT

Teaching outside your field of expertise means handling a subject you are not trained in or familiar with. This study presents the experiences of teachers assigned to teach subjects outside their area of specialization, focusing on their motivation and development. The study explores the impact of teaching outside their specialization on a teacher's development and motivation. Through a qualitative phenomenology approach, in-depth interviews were conducted with preselected Senior High school teachers in a private educational institution located in Guagua, Pampanga, the Philippines, teaching subjects that are not their field of expertise and fit the researcher's established criteria. The complexity of teaching outside one's specialization and how educators adapt to these demands. The study uncovers opportunities for professional growth. For some, the experience fostered resilience and broadened their perspectives, enabling them to become more versatile educators. Positive student responses give them a sense of fulfillment despite all the challenges. According to results, out-of-specialized-field teaching presents new challenges, but it helps show their adaptability, and resourcefulness and unlock more creative teaching strategies with the purpose of providing quality education. By focusing on the lived experiences of teachers, teachers should recognize teaching outside their specialization as a valuable opportunity for personal and professional growth, promoting a growth mindset that encourages embracing challenges.

**Keywords:** *Development, Education, Motivation, Out-Of-Specialized-Field, Qualitative Research*

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#### Introduction

Education shapes the destiny of mankind. Education must be guided by the desires and

dreams of humanity. The ultimate aim of education is to raise a person who is emotion-

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ally mature, wise, knowledgeable, and empathetic, and who values ethics, humanism, and compassion, which is essential for preparing them to navigate life responsibly (Šojat G. & Šojat Z., 2023). For the majority of people, education is a key component of the first 16 to 22 years of their lives (Bartlett & Burton, 2024). According to Molaba (2023), teaching is a complex job and is often referred to as the noblest profession because it forms the foundation for all other careers. Educators play a crucial role in shaping the minds of future generations. Therefore, teachers' efforts are highly valued in providing the quality education that students need. Teachers are crucial in ensuring students receive the education they deserve. In addition to what teachers do, their own education is also important for effective teaching. Ideally, teachers should be knowledgeable in the subjects they teach. However, this is not always the case (Bugwak, 2021). Educators are facing many challenges, one of which is teaching outside their specialization. Mercado and Morante (2024) describe out-of-field teaching as a situation where teachers lack the appropriate qualifications, training, or knowledge to teach certain subjects or grade levels. Additionally, they note that this mismatch between teachers' skills and the subjects they are assigned to teach is a common problem, often caused by teacher shortages and scheduling challenges.

Out-of-field teaching has become a common practice in many countries, where teachers are assigned to teach subjects outside their area of specialization. Moreover, this phenomenon is widespread, though perceptions and responses to the issue differ globally (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021; Hobbs & Törner, 2014; Price et al., 2019). A major contributing factor to out-of-field teaching is the shortage of in-field teachers, compounded by an increasing number of learners that must be managed by a limited teaching staff. Consequently, this stems from an imbalance between teacher supply and demand, and although schools continue to operate and advance students to the next level, the performance of out-of-field teachers has not been thoroughly investigated (Talili et al., 2021).

Teaching out-of-field presents challenges for educators, as they are required to learn new subject content, demanding significant time

and effort beyond their regular teaching responsibilities. Thus, this situation necessitates a deep understanding of effective learning strategies (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021). Additionally, Hobbs (2020) noted that in some countries, funding limitations based on the number of teachers and students make it difficult to maintain an appropriate mix of qualified educators for all classes, particularly in smaller schools. Consequently, out-of-field teaching is often accepted or tolerated as a part of the educational landscape, shifting the focus to what teachers can and are willing to teach, rather than their official qualifications in those subjects.

In South Africa, Hobbs (2020) found that approximately 30% of teachers were assigned to teach out-of-field. Similarly, in Ghana, out-of-field teaching is also prevalent, where it is often used as a "quick fix" for teacher shortages. This aligns with the definition provided by Owusu and Mensah (2022), where out-of-field teaching occurs when qualified teachers are placed in roles they are not formally trained for, making them effectively unqualified for those assignments. Furthermore, out-of-field teaching presents challenges related to insufficient teacher preparation. Teachers in these roles often struggle with low self-esteem, feeling that they fall short of meeting both the demands and expectations of their position. As a result, this situation can potentially weaken their teaching abilities, disrupt their professional identity, and negatively impact their self-confidence and overall well-being (Kola & Sunday, 2015).

Effective teaching involves various responsibilities, such as selecting appropriate learning activities, providing clear explanations, asking insightful questions, and assessing student learning, all of which depend on a teacher's understanding of the subject matter. Research indicates that teachers are expected to have a comprehensive knowledge of the subjects they teach, as this is a crucial attribute of highly effective educators (Weldon, 2016). Furthermore, Crisan and Hobbs (2019) emphasized the importance of considering teachers' experiences with the subjects they teach. Through their experiences, teachers can learn and adapt to the culture of a subject; with additional train-

ing, they can enhance their skills and confidence in teaching subjects for which they were initially unprepared.

In the Philippines, teachers often have mismatched teaching assignments. This concern has been largely overlooked, as schools have tended to view it not as an issue but rather as a teacher's responsibility (Aventura & Viña, 2023). Chi (2024) reports that in Manila, Philippines, 62% of high school teachers in public schools are teaching subjects outside their area of expertise. This mismatch is attributed to the department's practice of assigning subjects based on availability rather than teachers' specializations, due to budget limitations for hiring. Teaching outside their area of specialization creates challenges for educators at every stage of their careers. However, many studies on teacher effectiveness primarily consider teaching experience in terms of the number of years served, often overlooking the negative impact that out-of-field teaching has on teachers' confidence and motivation, making them feel less competent (Recede et al., 2023). According to Basalan et al., (2024) in Digos City, Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) teachers are frequently assigned subjects outside their specialization, which reduces their ability to teach effectively. Consequently, this misalignment not only impacts student learning but also increases teacher stress, as they struggle with teaching subjects they are less familiar with.

In rural areas, there is often a shortage of qualified teachers, leading to assignments outside their areas of expertise. Moreover, this lack of relevant qualifications and experience can pose significant challenges to their integration into the profession (Guiaselon et al., 2022). Additionally, Arendain and Limpot (2022) found that teachers who are not specialized in their assigned subjects require considerable time to prepare lessons, they must also grasp the lesson's structure, especially if the topics are unfamiliar to them. Despite these challenges, Augusto (2019) noted that the experience of out-of-field mentoring can foster personal growth and motivation for teachers as they strive to meet the needs of their students. Consequently, teachers often feel a sense of satisfaction when they observe their students

successfully delivering content and applying the feedback provided.

With all this in mind, the researchers decided to conduct this study to explore the motivations of teachers to teach subjects outside their area of specialization and how these motivations affect their engagement with the subject matter. Furthermore, it seeks to understand the impact of teaching subjects for which they are not formally trained on their professional growth and overall development. Through these objectives, the study will provide important insights into how teaching outside one's field impacts both teacher development and job satisfaction. The findings will aim to inform the creation of more supportive environments that will foster teacher growth, improve performance, and encourage retention in the profession.

## **Review of Related Literature and Studies**

### ***Faced Challenges of Educators Who are Teaching Outside their Field of Specialization***

Teachers often overthink their lack of knowledge and expertise, which can lead them to question their ability to handle new assignments and meet the needs of their students. This can affect their confidence and sense of effectiveness (Torcino & Villocino, 2023). This idea is supported by the study of Tran (2023), which found that teachers assigned to teach outside their field of expertise face difficulties in their first year, feeling uncertain about their knowledge, skills, and teaching methods. According to Torcino and Villocino (2023), the lack of knowledge leads teachers to do extra research and study before they begin teaching. The issue of teaching subjects outside of their expertise is a real concern, especially with ongoing teacher shortages and the uneven distribution of qualified teachers. Many teachers are assigned to classes they are not trained for, which can lower their confidence and make them question their ability to teach effectively (Du Plessis et al., 2014). This situation does not just affect teachers personally; it can also impact how they view their role within the school and their professional identity. Prince and O'Connor (2018) explain that this mismatch

between a teacher's qualifications and their teaching assignment can prevent growth and learning for teachers at any stage of their careers. Hobbs and Porsch (2021) suggest that school leaders should conduct a "Needs analysis" to better understand the challenges teachers face when they are teaching out-of-field. By identifying these specific challenges, school leaders can offer support, as teaching a subject a teacher is not comfortable with can affect their mental health and, in turn, harm their students' learning experiences (Arendain & Limpot, 2022).

### ***Gained Benefits of Teaching Non-Specialized Subjects on Teachers' Holistic Development***

The ability to adapt to new challenges, improve teaching methods, and make lessons fun and engaging helps teachers share their love for the subject with students. As a result, teaching outside their area of expertise also helps teachers become more flexible. Additionally, teachers who prioritize student needs tend to show more adaptability and versatility. Furthermore, research suggests that teaching subjects outside a teacher's specialty can be an opportunity for professional growth Torcino and Villocino (2023). Indeed, Gillies (2019) found that teamwork among teachers plays a big role in this process. By working together and sharing ideas, teachers can support each other and improve teaching strategies. Tumacder and Policarpio (2024) also highlighted that teachers aim for personal growth by reflecting regularly, which helps them make better decisions and handle their responsibilities effectively. A study by Aventura and Viña (2023) highlights that self-doubt and lack of confidence in out-of-field teaching can transform into opportunities for learning beyond teachers' comfort zones, especially among non-education graduates tasked with teaching social science subjects.

### ***Teachers' Motivation on Teaching Non-Specialized Subjects***

The effectiveness of teachers in fostering student learning is deeply influenced by their perceptions of their roles and willingness to learn (Harja et al., 2021; Tran 2023). High self-efficacy allows teachers to embrace teaching beyond their expertise as an opportunity for

growth, which enhances their confidence and motivation. Moreover, Johnson (2017) emphasizes the importance of supporting student self-sufficiency, while Co et al. (2021) argue that enthusiastic and adaptable teaching directly correlates with student success. This collective literature underscores the necessity for teachers to be passionate and flexible, creating a dynamic classroom environment that promotes both student engagement and continuous improvement in educational practices. Additionally, teachers receive personal and emotional support from their colleagues, which helps them manage the stress and concerns associated with teaching subjects outside their expertise. Teachers noted that such assistance relieves their worries and boosts their confidence (Raymundo, 2021).

### ***Position of Education Sector on the Teachers Teaching Beyond their Area of Expertise***

When teachers lack a strong understanding of the subject they teach, it can lead to misunderstandings and inaccurate learning for students (Kind, 2014). In Malta, the Ministry of Education (2017) stresses the need for teachers to take part in self-directed Continuous Professional Development (CPD). However, Mizzi (2019) found that short-term programs, especially those targeting general teaching needs, do not adequately support teachers working outside their field of expertise. This suggests the need for long-term development programs that focus on the specific needs of these teachers. While school leaders have made efforts to assist teachers in this position, Sebrero (2021) believes these steps are not enough to fully solve the problem.

In the Philippines, the law requires that basic education teachers, including those in Senior High School, must have the proper teaching license. School leaders are encouraged to offer ideas to improve policies and programs that help teachers perform better when teaching outside their field (Abrantes & Bargamento, 2024). Increasing the number of teachers to meet demand and ensuring they are properly placed in schools is another key issue the education sector must address (Leonin, 2024). Additionally, in Mabalacat City, Yumang (2021) stresses the need for professional development

programs, in-service training, and formal mentoring to meet the needs of these teachers. However, teaching qualifications should be considered when assigning workloads. Moreover, the Department of Education should improve its teacher induction programs by including better monitoring and evaluation to identify and fix any issues in the programs. Teachers are encouraged to sustain collaborative activities through focus group discussions and professional learning communities, enabling them to learn from one another and offer mutual support.

### Theoretical Framework

This study was grounded and anchored to Social Learning Theory (SLT). SLT, proposed by Albert Bandura, posits that individuals learn by observing others and imitating their behaviors. The theory focuses on learning through observation. People gain knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs by watching what others do and noticing the outcomes. This can lead them to imitate and adopt these observed behaviors (McLeod, 2024). SLT provides valuable frameworks for understanding how out-of-field teachers can enhance their teaching skills through observation and adoption. Out-of-field teachers can develop their teaching techniques by observing experienced colleagues and gaining insights into effective practices across

various subjects. This framework is relevant for understanding how out-of-field teachers can improve their teaching skills by observing and learning from experienced colleagues. The SLT will help the researchers see how these teachers can handle the challenges of teaching new subjects. Through observational learning, a key part of SLT, out-of-field teachers can pick up effective teaching methods by watching skilled educators. By seeing how these colleagues plan lessons, manage the classroom, and interact with students, they can learn and adapt techniques that boost their teaching abilities. Key concepts from SLT help the researchers understand out-of-field teaching by focusing on Attention, Retention, Motor Reproduction, and Motivation. Out-of-field teachers need to pay attention to the effective methods used by experienced colleagues, which helps them learn how to engage students and manage their classrooms. To make the most of this learning, they must remember and organize what they observe so they can use those techniques in their teaching. They also need to adapt these observed methods to fit their style and classroom. Lastly, their motivation to use these practices depends on how they believe these methods will positively impact their students, encouraging them to teach subjects they are not trained in.

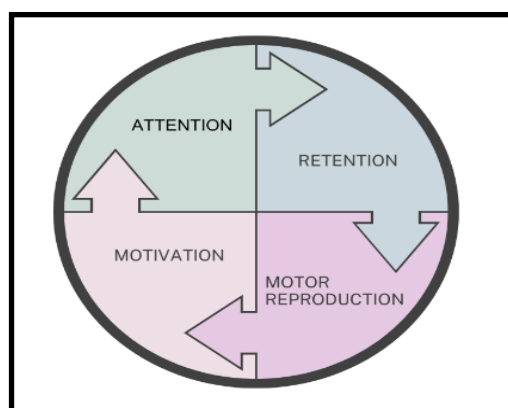


Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study

Figure 1 presents the paradigm of the study, illustrating how out-of-field teachers grow their teaching skills through a natural learning cycle, inspired by Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (SLT). The model, arranged in

a circle, shows the four phases these teachers go through—Attention, Retention, Motor Reproduction, and Motivation as they watch, remember, apply, and adapt what they learn from more experienced colleagues. It starts with

Attention: teachers observe skilled colleagues in action, picking up on effective strategies for classroom management, student engagement, and lesson delivery. Then comes Retention, where they store and mentally organize these observed techniques for future reference. In Motor Reproduction, they try these methods out in their classrooms, adjusting them to fit their own teaching style and student needs. Finally, Motivation kicks in as they see the positive impact these strategies have on their students, fueling a desire to keep learning and improving. The circular flow of this model reflects how this process becomes a continual cycle of growth, with each phase naturally building on the one before, helping out-of-field teachers become more effective and adaptable over time.

### **Aim of the Study**

This study aimed to explore the influence of out-of-specialized field teaching on educators' development and motivation.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions

1. What challenges do teachers encounter when assigned to teach subjects outside their expertise?
2. What motivates teachers to teach subjects outside their degree of specialization?
3. How do teachers' motivations influence their engagement with the subject?
4. How does being assigned to teach subjects outside their expertise impact their development as teachers?
5. Based on the findings, what career-based framework can be developed?

### **Method**

#### **Research Design**

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological approach, specifically transcendental phenomenology to explore the experiences and viewpoints of teachers involved in out-of-field teaching. This approach focuses on describing participants' experiences and less interpretation. It aims to understand how individuals perceive and express their lived experiences without the researcher adding their own perceptions (Rao, 2019). This research design is particularly suitable for this study as it helps the

researcher uncover the challenges, motivations, and personal experiences of the participants. According to Ho and Limpaecher (2022), phenomenology as a qualitative method focuses on understanding the core of an experience through the eyes of those who have directly encountered it. By exploring the "how" and "why" behind participants' experiences with out-of-field teaching, the study aimed to gain deeper insight into how this affects their professional growth, motivation, and the challenges and opportunities they face when teaching outside their area of expertise. This approach focused on personal narratives and experiences, giving the researchers a deeper understanding of the topic. By conducting a face-to-face interview or online interview with the participants, the researchers can uncover the individual significance they associate with their experiences to understand the challenges they face, the strategies they use, and how they impact their motivation and professional development. Instead of just measuring the effects of out-of-field teaching, this method helps the researchers explore the multifaceted nature of this study through the perspectives of those directly involved.

#### **Participants**

The study involved seven (7) Senior High School teachers from a private educational institution in Guagua, Pampanga, Philippines, who were teaching subjects beyond their areas of specialization. Participants were selected based on data saturation to ensure the collected information was thorough and sufficient to achieve the study's objectives. To qualify, participants needed to be currently employed in the Senior High School department, teaching subjects outside their field of expertise, and have at least two years of experience as out-of-field teachers. Teachers in administrative roles, as well as part-time or substitute teachers, were excluded from the study. This criterion allowed the researchers to focus on full-time classroom educators, providing more relevant insights into the experiences and challenges of teaching outside their specialization.

The study utilized purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of teachers who met the established criteria. Prospective participants

were provided with a consent letter to confirm their voluntary participation. While in-person interviews were the primary mode of data collection, online interviews were made available for those unable to meet face-to-face. The researchers followed Creswell's (2013) guidelines and aligned with Bayani and Guhao's (2018) approach. This methodology enabled

the collection of rich insights from teachers with firsthand experience teaching outside their areas of expertise. By using this approach, the study captured the unique opportunities and challenges faced by these educators, providing a deeper understanding of their professional experiences.

*Table 1. Participants Matrix*

Actual Field	Out-of-Specialized-Field	Frequency
Filipino	Entrepreneurship	3
Filipino	Understanding Culture, Society and Politics (UCSP)	1
English	Earth and Life Science	2
Physical Education (P.E)	Entrepreneurship	1

The table showcases the actual field of specialization of teachers, the subjects they teach outside their expertise, and the number of teachers experiencing these assignments.

**Instruments**

To gather the required information and data, the researchers utilized self-made interview questions as the primary research instrument for collecting valid data to address the specific objectives of the study. To ensure its validity and relevance, the instrument was reviewed and validated by three experts in the field of education. These experts evaluated the content, structure, and clarity of the items, providing constructive feedback to enhance their accuracy and reliability. Based on their evaluations, the instrument was refined and finalized for use in the study. Using the Item-Content Validity Index (I-CVI) to measure expert agreement on the relevance of each interview question, each expert was given a validation tool and rated each item based on a 4-point option rating scale. A rating of “4” implies that the item is relevant and succinct, “3” indicates that the item is relevant but needs minor modification, “2” means that the validator cannot determine relevance without revising the item, or that the item needs revisions that would make it irrelevant, and “1” signifies that the item is not relevant (Lynn, 1986). Following the content validation process, the ratings for each item were compiled and received an I-CVI of 1.00, which implies that the experts endorsed each item as being content-valid.

**Data Gathering Procedures**

To address the research questions and achieve the study’s objectives, the researchers followed a structured data gathering procedure to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information collected. The researchers provided a letter addressed to the Senior High School Principal to request permission to conduct interviews with Senior High School teachers. Once permission was granted, the researchers distributed a consent letter to the participants. This letter explains the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the measures taken to ensure confidentiality. Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time without penalty. Their consent was obtained before any interviews were conducted.

The interviews were conducted either face-to-face or online, depending on the participants' preferences. In face-to-face interviews, as described by Schroder (2016), the interviewer meets with the participants, reads questions aloud, and records answers, often using a paper-and-pencil format (PAPI). This approach allows the interviewer to clarify questions more thoroughly when using self-made questionnaires. Alternatively, online interviews, as noted by Akyirem et al. (2024), use Internet technology to facilitate real-time, in-depth conversations. Online interviews lower costs, eliminate time and location barriers and may lead to more genuine responses due to the privacy of social media platforms.

The interview schedule depends on the participants' availability. These interviews allowed teachers to share personal experiences and reflect on how teaching subjects outside their specialization has impacted their professional growth, confidence, and motivation. After data collection, the researchers analyzed responses to identify common themes and insights, aiming to deepen the understanding of how out-of-field teaching influences teachers' professional development and motivation.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical guidelines were important to how this study was done. The researchers followed the National Ethical Guidelines for Health and Health-Related Research (Philippine Health Research Ethics Board, 2017), the Belmont Report (1979), and the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act 10173). Adults signed consent forms, and minors (17 and younger) signed assent forms. These forms explained what the study was about, its benefits, privacy protection, possible risks, and how participants were chosen. Taking part was voluntary, and personal information was kept private, as required by the Data Privacy Act. The study also followed the Belmont Report's main principles: respect for individuals, doing good, and fairness. All data gathered from participants were only used to examine the ideas and goals of this study and will not be used for any other purpose. Furthermore, there is minimal risk involved in joining the study. The interview process took around 15-30 minutes for each participant. Participants may withdraw at any time without any questions or consequences. There is no direct benefit for participants in this study, but the findings may help the researchers complete this work and may serve as a reference for other researchers interested in the same topic.

### **Data Analysis**

The researchers used Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) to interpret the collected information. This method helps explore meaningful and symbolic aspects of the data based on participants' explanations and situations. Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to organize the data, a common approach for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes are key groups of information that help answer the study's questions. Braun and Clarke (2006)

suggest six steps for developing these themes: (1) Familiarizing with the data, (2) Creating initial codes, (3) Identifying themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, and (6) Writing the report.

The researchers started by familiarizing themselves with the data, carefully reviewing transcripts, and noting key responses from participants. To organize the data, they generated preliminary codes by highlighting important terms or phrases in the participants' responses. Next, they group related codes to identify themes based on common patterns. These themes were refined into a thematic map that accurately represents the entire data set, with each theme clearly defined to illustrate its relevance to the research questions. Finally, the researchers compiled a comprehensive report to present their analysis and findings. Through this thematic identification and labeling, they aimed to uncover how teaching outside one's expertise affects professional growth and motivation, offering valuable insights to improve teacher training and support programs.

### **Findings and Discussion**

This section presents the findings derived from interviews with seven Senior High School teachers about their experiences with teaching outside their field of specialization. Each theme is discussed with supporting evidence from the data, followed by an interpretation in the context of existing literature.

#### **The Challenge of Lesson Planning and Lack of Resources in Teaching**

This addresses the challenges teachers face when giving significant time to lesson planning and mastering content, specifically in subjects outside their area of expertise. The effort required to create thorough and engaging lessons, coupled with the lack of instructional tools and materials, forces teachers to be highly resourceful.

#### **Additional Time Allocation in Lesson Planning and Mastering Lesson Content**

The significant amount of time educators spend creating and perfecting lesson plans, especially in subjects in which they may be less versed. The responses highlight how time-consuming lesson planning is and how much more effort is needed to provide quality education. Teachers understand that it takes a significant time commitment for good lesson planning and



a thorough understanding of the subject matter to provide students with accurate and interesting learning experiences, especially in subjects outside of their primary field of study.

*"Talaga pong gugol sa oras ma'am, talagang pinag-pupuyatan (pause 1 sec...) pinag-pupuyatan po namin po yung paggawa ng lesson plan"* (That is really what consumes our time, ma'am. (pause 1 sec...) We really stayed up late working on the lesson plan and then the lesson itself) -P1

*"Kailangan gumugol talaga ng oras po no sa pagplapano ng mga lesson plan"* (This really requires a lot of time spent on planning the lessons) -P6

*"Kailangan gumugol ka talaga ng oras para pag-aralan mo yung lessons mo at maideliver mo ng tama sa mga bata."* (You really need to invest time in studying your lessons to deliver them properly to the students) -P6

*"It affects in a way that it takes much more time for me to plan through the lesson planning."* -P3

*"I have to give more time to study the lessons since yun nga anak from English teacher I have to teach a Science subject."* (I have to give more time to study the lessons since you know child, from being an English teacher I have to teach a Science subject) -P4

*"It takes more time to take course I mean to plan the lesson..uh talagang time consuming yung paggawa ng lesson plan."* (Takes more time to take course—I mean to plan the lesson. Uh, creating the lesson plan is really time-consuming) -P3

*"Kase I have to adjust my time no just to prepare my lessons compare doon sa of course knowledgeable kana."* (I have to adjust my time just to prepare my lessons compared to, of course, when you are already knowledgeable) -P4

Hobbs and Porsch (2021) claimed that educators must learn new subject matter which creates challenges for them requiring considerable time and effort adding to their regular teaching duties. Moreover, Arendain and Limpot (2022) noted that teachers who are not formally trained to teach a specific subject require a significant time to plan their lessons. Furthermore, they still need to grasp the lesson structure, especially in dealing with non-specialized subject content.

### **Lack of Instructional Tools and Materials in Teaching**

According to the responses, teachers usually need to be innovative and proactive to work around these constraints. The absence of sufficient resources compels educators to adopt creative and resourceful approaches, often depending on research, and developing alternative materials, which complicates the process of effective instruction.

*"Kulang din sa materials when it comes to Science meron po tayong experiment, kulang po tayo sa gamit."* (We were also lacking materials when it comes to teaching Earth and Science; we have experiments, but we lacked the tools) -P1

*"Kapag may mga missing resources ako na wala dun sa mga ka-collab ko gumagawa ako ng way para mag create ng another resources, which is dagdag sa workload ko at the same time kailangan ko maglaan ng time sa paggawa ng mga materials na gagamitin ko sa klase."* (When I have missing resources that I cannot get from my collaborators. I find ways to create other resources which add to my workload and at the same time I need to allot time to create my materials that I will use in my class.) -P2

*"Why modules and textbooks so that yung mga students they have individual copy of the lessons. However, they should be the one who provides that kase hindi naman kaya ni teacher yung expenses."* (Why modules or textbooks? So that the students have individual copies of the lessons. However, they should be the ones who provide that because the teacher cannot afford the expenses.) -P4

*"Kami lang bahalang gumawa ng LP and then dalawa lang po kaming nagtuturo ng trends nung time po na yon kaya talagang sobrang adjust po talaga sa mga paghahanap ng mga resources and learning materials."* (We were just told to create our own lesson plans, and there were only two of us teaching trends at that time. So, it was really difficult to find resources and learning materials) -P6

Cayabas and Sumeg-ang (2023) highlighted one of the vital challenges faced by educators in crafting their Instructional Materials is lack of time due to excessive workload. Moreover, the shortage of classroom resources can pose a significant challenge to both the students and teachers. This not only affects their well-being but also hinders their ability to achieve their

full learning potential due to the lack of sufficient tools and learning materials (Maffea, 2020). Additionally, Mercado and Morante (2024) supported the conclusion that the lack of teaching and learning resources presents a significant challenge for out-of-field teachers, as it prevents them from meeting the students' needs inside the classroom.

### **Embracing Flexibility and Engagement for Growth in Teaching**

This highlights the importance of both adaptability and student involvement in teaching. Together, these factors emphasize how adaptability and engagement contribute to a fulfilling and successful teaching experience.

### **Adaptable to Changes Beyond their Area of Expertise**

Teachers should be adaptable, particularly when teaching subjects outside of their areas of competence. The responses emphasize that educators must be ready to adapt and embrace change, especially when they are given tasks or subjects that are not their primary focus. Since flexibility is essential for managing new tasks and responsibilities, especially when teaching subjects outside of their areas of expertise, educators must be well-rounded in their teaching duties. Accepting these modifications enhances professional development and strengthens the ability to handle different teaching scenarios.

*"Ganon naman talaga the reality of teaching, and as a teacher di ba you have to take it you have to be flexible even though you are not Science major you have to be a science major you have to be flexible."* (That is the reality, and as a teacher you have to take it you have to be flexible even though you are not a Science major you have to be a science major you have to be flexible.) P3

*"Dapat making flexible bilang isang teacher at talagang hindi naman po tayo makaka-hindi kase kapag teacher dapat handang-handa po tayo dapat prepared po tayo."* (You have to be flexible and as a teacher you don't have a right to say no, as a teacher you have to be prepared.) -P6

*"As uhm educator kailangan namin siyang tanggapin kase nga meron tayong kailangan patunayan na flexible ang teacher na hindi siya pweding sa isang subject lang."* (As an educator we have to accept that we need to be flexible not only in one subject.) -P7

Torcino and Villocino (2023) claimed that the capacity to adapt to new problems, enhance teaching techniques, and make lessons enjoyable and engaging allows the teacher to share their enthusiasm for the subject with the students.

### **Students' Active Participation in Class**

The importance of student engagement, according to the responses, active participation and interaction of the students in each class session greatly boost the teachers' confidence and motivation. Having this active engagement in the class makes teaching more fulfilling even with a subject that is outside their area of specialization. It encourages them to go through each challenge of handling the subject with a positive outlook and makes their endeavors in the academe much more rewarding.

*"When the students are attentive uh they are participating in my discussion so I feel motivated."* -P3

*"When I see my students enjoying the subject."* -P4

*"Mamomotivate ka kung nagpaparticipate at alam mong nag-eejoy yung mga bata apag nagtuturo ka."* (You feel motivated when you see your students are participating when you are discussing.) -P6

*"Malaki po kase yung factor nung participation po nung bata."* (It is a big factor when the students are participating.) -P7

Augusto (2019) claimed that educators felt satisfied when they saw their students successfully performing the feedback provided. Teachers' effectiveness in fostering learning nowadays is truly based on their perception of how to do their roles and how willing they are to learn (Harja et al., 2021; Tran 2023).

### **Making Use of Engagement and Enthusiasm to Encourage Student Learning**

This emphasizes the importance of aligning activities with students' interests to capture their attention and enhance learning outcomes. Additionally, a teacher's energy and enthusiasm are vital in fostering an interactive, motivating classroom environment.

### **Alignment of Activities to Gain Students' Interest**

This highlights the importance of designing engaging and meaningful tasks that capture students' attention while aligning with the in-

tended learning outcomes. Educators customize activities to align with students' interests, fostering greater engagement and improving learning outcomes. By carefully selecting resources and using creative, interactive strategies, teachers can maintain students' focus and ensure that activities effectively support the lesson's objectives.

*"...kailangan po no pinag-isipan ng mabuti kung anong gagamitin, at kung ano pa yung mga ipapa-activities naten at mga mga materials na gagamitin naten." (...it's important to carefully consider the activities and materials we'll use.) -P6*

*"...siyempre kinakailangan dahil powerpoint tayo nasa modern na tayo ngayon dapat sa powerpoint pa lang is nandon na yung interest nila e." (...of course, since we are using PowerPoint and are in a modern era, their interest should already be caught through the PowerPoint.) -P2*

*"As time goes by I became more creative and I will always depend on the students diba." (But as time goes by, I became more creative, and I will always think of the students first, right?) -P4*

Abrantes and Bargamento (2024) found that incorporating ice-breaking activities into the curriculum enhances student engagement, reduces boredom, fosters a positive learning environment, and increases motivation and interest in learning. Therefore, teachers achieved this by using methods such as gamification, multimedia tools, real-world examples, interactive recitations, and creative activities. They also reported that out-of-field teachers employed similar strategies to motivate students. Bayani and Guhao (2017) further observed that these teachers used engaging activities to capture students' attention, increase interest in lessons, and improve academic performance.

### **Enthusiasm for Effective Teaching**

Highlights the critical role a teacher's energy and enthusiasm play in a learning environment setting. The responses show how big of a factor it has in capturing the students' attention and getting them to engage in the class session. This relates to student participation as also one factor that gives fulfillment to the teacher's motivation. Maintaining a high level of energy in the class can inspire and engage students which gives them a sense of accomplishment and acknowledge their hard work and effort.

*"Talking about the enthusiasm I think yung energy talaga is nag ma-matter siya inside the classroom." (Talking about the enthusiasm, I think the energy really matters inside the classroom.) -P5*

*"Kailangan po yung energy mo mahahawa mo yung mga bata kase kapag ikaw na teacher wala kang energy ibig sabihin uh maaaring hindi nila makuha yung uhm lesson mo." (Your energy must be contagious. If you're a teacher with no energy, the students will probably not absorb the lesson.) -P7*

*"Yung mantra ko in teaching for me to be able to teach effectively my mantra is I want my students to learn walang lalabas ng room nag wala silang nage-gets so yon." (My mantra in teaching, for me to be able to teach effectively, my mantra is: I want my students to learn. No one will leave the room without understanding anything. So that.) -P3*

Attitude is the way a person tends to react, either in a positive or negative way, to someone or something, it is the positive attitude toward the profession and willingness to go beyond assigned roles are crucial, especially since teachers often work in challenging environments with limited resources (Kara & Ada, 2021). Teachers' attitudes toward teaching subjects outside their specialization are particularly important for ensuring effective teaching (Co et al., 2021).

### **Building Confidence and Advancing Careers Through Teaching Beyond Expertise**

This highlights the growth that happens when teachers step outside their areas of expertise. By embracing new challenges, educators not only build confidence in their teaching abilities but also gain valuable skills and insights.

### **Teachers Built Confidence by Teaching Beyond their Expertise**

Shows how teachers' confidence as educators improves when they step outside of their comfort zones and teach subjects with which they lack expertise. The response highlights how these experiences contributed to personal growth and a greater trust in their capacities. Teachers' confidence increases significantly when they teach subjects outside of their areas of expertise because it allows them to recognize their potential and creates a sense of achievement, both of which increase their effectiveness as educators.

*"Malaki yung naging advantage niya sa akin so dito mas lalo pa akong nagkaroon ng confidence as a teacher."* (This subject has had a big advantage for me. It has increased my confidence as a teacher) -P2

*"It made me confident kase uhm narealize ko that I can be more I can do more na than what I expected."* (It made me confident because, uhm, I realized that I can be more) -P3

*"It actually boost my confidence okay. Mapapa-sa no bi ka nalang na, I'm just proud to myself."* (It actually boosts my confidence, okay. You will just say to yourself, "I am just proud of myself) -P4

*"Mas dito na bboost yung confidence ko bilang ano isang guro po na tumayo sa harapan ng mga nakakarami."* (This boosts my confidence as a teacher standing in front of many students) -P6

Torcino and Villocino (2023) emphasized that this can impact how confident and capable educators feel in their abilities. Moreover, Johnson (2017) noted that teachers with high confidence view teaching outside their expertise as an opportunity for growth. This attitude boosts their confidence and stay motivated.

### **Willingness to Learn New Skills to Teach Efficiently**

The theme of "Willingness to Learn New Skills and Strategies to Teach Efficiently" highlights the significance of keeping an open mind when striving to improve teaching efficacy. It becomes a demonstration of how teachers can grow by gaining new insights while acquiring more effective teaching techniques. The responses emphasize the teacher's dedication to development and flexibility. It highlights the need for educators to always be ready to learn, whether it's about new material or better strategies for assisting students. Over time, this continuous learning helps them to improve their ways of teaching.

*"I'm willing to take a new learning or to know new knowledge about other subjects."* -P2

*"I feel more willing to learn new skills."* -P3

*"So willingness talaga importanti ya particularly ing willingness manigalar new lessons."* (That's the importance of willingness to teach and learn new lessons.) -P5

Murray (2021) claimed that willingness to learn and having the passion for teaching

reflect the perception of embracing a growth mindset. Additionally, the way teachers view their roles and their openness to learning significantly impacts how well they can support student growth (Harja et al., 2021; Tran, 2023).

### **Career Enhancement Opportunity in their Teaching Profession**

Highlights how instructing beyond their area of expertise offers educators chances for both personal and professional advancement. According to the participants, venturing outside their main subject area enables teachers to broaden their knowledge and skill set, resulting in a heightened sense of fulfillment and growth. By teaching outside of their specialization, educators gain significant career enhancement opportunities through knowledge expansion, the promotion of professional development, and the opening of new pathways for advancement, all of which contribute to increased fulfillment and adaptability in their teaching careers.

*"Mas lalo pa pong lumawak yung kaalaman ko hindi lang po sa Filipino."* (My knowledge has been expanded not just in Filipino subjects.) -P1

*"Malaki yung fulfillment ng growing dito at as a teacher yung mga nangyayari kumbaga sila yung...lalo ka lang na go-grow."* (It's a great here as a teacher, all the experience helps you grow more.) -P2

*"Teaching outside my specialization proves that I can be flexible, and I can do more aside from specialization aside from my major."* -P3

*"It is an advantage, it's an opportunity, it opens new doors open to me."* -P4

*"Mas lumalawak yung kaalaman namin."* (I can say that our knowledge has become broader.) -P6

Torcino and Villocino, (2023) claimed that teachers who prioritize students' needs tend to show more adaptability and versatility. Additionally, Tran (2023) teaching subjects outside of a teacher's specialty can offer valuable opportunities for professional growth. Aventura and Viña (2023) highlight how self-doubt and lack of confidence in out-of-field teaching can actually become opportunities for learning, especially for non-education graduates. Stepping beyond their comfort zones, teachers can turn these challenges into meaningful experiences for both themselves and their students.

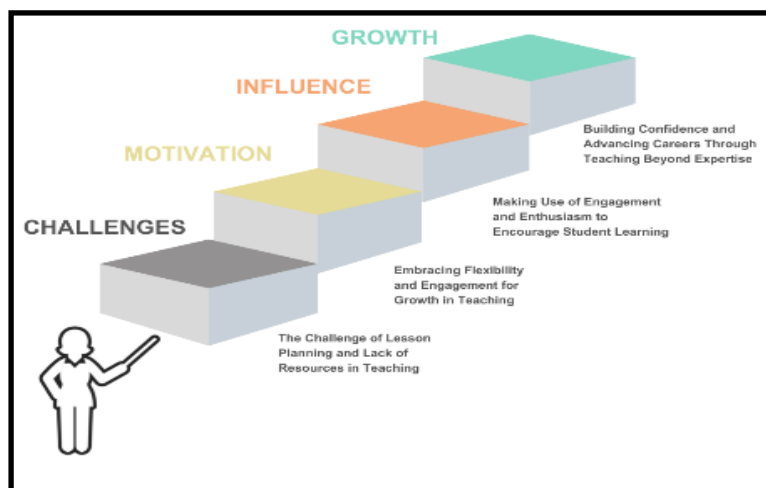


Figure 2. EEASY Framework: The Educators Pathway to Growth

The "EEASY Framework: The Educators Pathway to Growth" uses a stair-step metaphor to depict a teacher's journey from facing challenges to achieving professional growth. The stair-step design symbolizes step-by-step progress, emphasizing that growth in a teaching career happens one step at a time, requiring effort, persistence, and reflection. The teacher icon at the bottom represents the starting point, meeting the gray step, which represents the challenges of time management and limited resources in lesson preparation. Moving upward, the yellow step symbolizes flexibility, where adapting teaching styles enhances student involvement and engagement. The orange step represents motivation, which shapes teaching approaches and promotes deeper student engagement, reaching the green step, where teaching outside one's expertise redefines challenges into opportunities for career growth and personal development. The colors, gray for challenges, yellow for flexibility and optimism, orange for motivation and passion, and green for growth and opportunity reflect different stages of a teacher's journey, highlighting how overcoming difficulties leads to valuable learning and professional advancement. The name "EEASY", an acronym formed from the researchers' last letter of first names, this suggests that being an educator is not an easy job and involves a significant amount of responsibility, dedication, and adaptability. The phrase "Educators Pathway to Growth" effectively highlights the framework's main objective.

## Conclusion

Based on the summary of findings, it can be concluded that teaching subjects outside their area of specialization comes with challenges such as exerting more time and effort in mastering the subject content, however, it also opens new opportunities. In line with the results, a sense of fulfillment keeps the teachers motivated when students are engaged in their lessons and actively participate. Based on the results, the challenges mentioned were viewed on a positive note as an opportunity to advance their careers, gain more knowledge, and test their limits and adaptability to changes in their teaching career. Career opportunities are open to the teachers and make them confident to handle other subject areas that are not their specialization.

## Limitations

This study focused on understanding how teaching subjects outside their specialization affects teachers' growth and motivation. The participants are limited to seven (7) teachers in the Senior High School Department at the private educational institution located in Guagua, Pampanga, the Philippines who have more than two years of teaching experience and are currently teaching subjects not related to their field of expertise. The study does not include newly hired teachers with less than two years of experience or those who are not education graduates. It also excludes teachers who are teaching within their specialization. By focusing only on these selected participants, the

study aims to provide specific insights into how teaching outside their field impacts their professional development and motivation.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance professional growth and motivation of educators teaching outside their specialized field:

1. Teachers should view teaching outside their specialization as an opportunity for both personal and professional growth. Embracing a growth mindset can help them navigate challenges and recognize the creativity they bring to their lessons, especially when students are actively engaged.
2. Educators should align their lessons with students' interests and adopt engaging teaching strategies, such as incorporating multimedia tools, to sustain energy and enthusiasm for effective teaching.
3. Opportunities should be provided for teachers to collaborate with colleagues who are also teaching outside their areas of expertise. This collaboration can foster the exchange of experiences and effective teaching strategies, enhancing their adaptability and instructional practices.

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