

Teaching Experiences of Volunteer Teachers in Tabaco City Division

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Abstract

This qualitative phenomenological study examined the teaching experiences of 10 volunteer teachers in Tabaco City Division with at least two years of experience, selected for their willingness to participate. Through in-depth interviews, it addressed four research questions: teaching experiences, strategies employed, personal and professional insights gained, and a proposed development plan.

Teaching experiences revealed three themes: supportive yet resource-limited environments from partner schools and the Local Government Unit providing essential resources; parental barriers due to program unawareness, work issues, and health concerns, addressed through committed home visitations fostering school-home partnerships; and adaptive responses to learners' needs including reading difficulties, low confidence, bullying, health issues, and unsupportive homes via differentiated instruction and personal funding for necessities. Witnessing learner growth brought deep fulfillment.

Volunteer teachers used student-centered strategies focused on creativity, differentiation, and engagement despite challenges like irregular compensation forcing personal spending, material shortages, poor weather-exposed facilities, student absences, and diverse behaviors. Resilience stemmed from learner progress and community support.

Insights showed personal growth in empathy, patience, and resilience, and professional gains in time management, organization, leadership, self-confidence, creativity, and purpose. Suggestions included regular stipends for expenses, sufficient facilities and resources, greater community and parental involvement with counseling, program awareness, safety during visits, and seminars on inclusive education. Advice to future volunteers stressed patience, dedication, passion, love, and care.

A development plan was proposed to tackle these challenges. The program builds resilient educators and learner progress, requiring enhanced stakeholder collaboration for sustainability.

Keywords: Volunteer teachers; Phenomenological study; Teaching strategies; Professional insights; Educational challenges; Development plan

1. Introduction

Education faced a global learning crisis where many enrolled learners failed to master basic literacy and numeracy due to poverty, inadequate resources, and large class sizes, particularly in developing countries like the Philippines. This crisis demanded innovative solutions beyond traditional administration. Volunteer teachers provided targeted remedial instruction, one-on-one support, and community engagement through programs like DepEd's Project 6Bs, Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs), ARAL Program, and Brigada Eskwela—aligning with UNESCO, UNICEF, and SDG

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4 goals. Philippine laws including the 1987 Constitution (Article XIV), RA 9418 (Volunteer Act of 2007), and DepEd Order No. 8 s. 2023 institutionalized this volunteerism.

In Tabaco City Division, volunteer teachers addressed foundational skill deficits among struggling learners, supplementing overburdened regular teachers. They delivered flexible interventions despite challenges like resource scarcity, irregular compensation, poor facilities, parental unawareness, student absences, behavioral issues, reading difficulties, bullying, and health concerns. Using personal funds, home visitations, and differentiated instruction, they fostered school-home partnerships and witnessed profound learner growth.

This qualitative phenomenological study explored volunteer teachers' teaching experiences in Tabaco City Division to identify challenges faced, strategies employed, personal/professional results gained, and insights for improvement. Motivated by the researcher's volunteer background coping with professional adversity, it developed a tailored personal and professional development plan addressing stipends, facilities, parental counseling, inclusive education seminars, safety measures, and stakeholder collaboration to optimize models, accelerate literacy-numeracy recovery, and advance educational equity.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

This study determined the teaching experiences of volunteer teachers in Tabaco City Division for School Year 2024-2025. Specifically, it answered the following sub-questions.

- What are the teaching experiences of volunteer teachers?
- What are the teaching strategies practiced by the volunteer teachers?
- What are the personal and professional insights gained by the volunteer teachers?
- What personal and professional development plan may be proposed?

1.2. Scope and Delimitation

This research focused on the ten volunteer teachers of Tabaco City Division with two years of experience in volunteer teaching. The researcher invited ten participants to complete this research study. Furthermore, the participants were from the four districts of the Tabaco City Division. The researcher put emphasis on the experiences of the volunteer teachers while teaching the struggling learners within the division. The scope of the study is clearly defined to ensure a focused analysis. Geographically, it is confined to public primary schools in Tabaco City Division. The academic year 2024-2025 serves as the timeframe, with data collection limited to qualitative methods like interviews and discussions. The study did not include the volunteer teachers in the private schools as well as the volunteer teachers who are in permanent positions in public schools. The non-teaching personnel are excluded from this study. Likewise, private and secondary public schools were not part of this study.

2. Research Method

This research employed a qualitative approach using interviews to explore volunteer teachers' experiences in Tabaco City Division, strategies for struggling learners, personal and professional insights gained, and challenges faced, as Creswell (2014) highlighted qualitative methods' role in generating contextual knowledge for social interventions and McMillan and Schumacher (2010) emphasized deep data analysis for uncovering patterns. Findings affirmed volunteer teachers' vital contributions to learning recovery and teaching improvements, prompting the researcher to formulate a personal and professional development plan addressing obstacles like resource shortages, while providing an empirical basis for future studies.

2.1. Sources of Data

There were two (2) sources of data used for this study. The main source was the response of the 10 volunteer teachers of Tabaco City Division using the in-depth structured interview questionnaires. Additionally, the published and unpublished theses and dissertations, books, journals, magazines, and internet served as the secondary sources of data.

2.2. Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were the ten volunteer teachers of the Tabaco City Division, who had at least two years of volunteer teaching experience. One participant from the following school, Tabaco North Central Elementary School, Tabaco South Central Elementary School, Bonot Elementary School, Buang Elementary School, Mayon Elementary School, Matagbac Elementary School, Pawa Elementary School, Bongabong Elementary School, Comon Elementary

School, and Basud Elementary School. The selection was done using duration of voluntary service as a criterion since it was important to ensure that the participants had sufficient exposure and experience of the voluntary teaching. Through this, the researcher was able to collect in-depth and valuable data about their experiences and views in the context of volunteer teaching. The data was collected from July 27 to August 10 through an in-depth structured interview.

2.3. Research Instrument

The research instrument employed in this study was an interview using a researcher-generated in-depth structured interview questionnaire. Boyce and Neale (2006), asserted that the in-depth structured interview questionnaire was a method of qualitative research that incorporates in-depth interviews that are conducted individually and extensively, using well-constructed questions. They were essential in investigating the ideas, lives, and emotions of people regarding certain issues, initiatives, or circumstances. These interviews can aid the researcher in getting holistic views that may not be seen in quantitative research, as well as provide an aid in placing and describing behaviors observed in other data sources. The answers provided by the respondents were carefully analyzed by the researcher to draw valid and meaningful conclusions on the teaching experiences of volunteer teachers.

2.4. Validation of Research Instrument

The research instrument was subjected into two (2) phases of validation. The first face was the validation done by the Thesis Committee during the presentation tool of the study. The second was the content validation by the external validators as suggested by the thesis committee. The external validators were three school heads from Tabaco City Division. It was approved by the validators. It was suggested that instead of Teaching Methods and Strategies, the researcher should omit the methods and make it teaching strategies as the theme.

2.5. Data Gathering Procedure

To pursue this study, a letter of request was sent to the Schools Division Superintendent of Tabaco City Division to seek approval for the conduct of the research. Upon approval, the research instrument was submitted to the research adviser for review and subsequently forwarded to the Thesis Committee for validation. It was then evaluated by external validators, who were school heads of the Tabaco City Division. After validation, the final copy of the instrument was personally distributed by the researcher to the respondents during one-on-one interviews. Prior to the interviews, the researcher sought consent from the participants to record the sessions, which they approved. The data gathered were then carefully analyzed and interpreted. The responses provided by the participants were carefully evaluated and categorized by the researcher to group the underlying themes. The collected data was then interpreted, these insights meaningfully contributed to the overall research findings. These themes served as the basis for drawing conclusions and formulating recommendations that address the objectives of the study.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Teaching Experiences of the Volunteer Teachers

The teaching experiences of the volunteer teachers were anchored in three (3) themes. These were the teaching environment, experiences with the parents, and experiences with the learners. Teaching experiences were crucial in school setting, as educators utilize their talents and skills to create an engaging and productive learning environment that supports a child's educational progress. The learners can make meaning of the concepts being taught depending on how the teacher would apply strategies and methods. Since learning does not only take place between the volunteer teachers and the learners, they need to consider the parents, community, and the stakeholders; each has an important role to take for the learners to achieve their academic success. They guide the learners by employing innovative methods and strategies that further enhance their skills to be creative in order to address the different learning styles of their learners. The advancement of technology seems to be helpful in the field of education; both the teachers and the volunteer teachers integrate technology in teaching to make learning meaningful and lifelong.

3.1.1. Teaching Environment

Volunteer teachers in Tabaco City Division described a supportive teaching environment as vital for both educators and learners, fostering collaboration among colleagues who shared ideas and feedback to enhance teaching practices and cater to diverse needs. For students, this created safe, positive spaces where they felt secure to ask questions, make mistakes, and develop enthusiasm for learning, ultimately driving academic success and a lifelong love for education. Such environments formed the foundation for effective instruction, benefiting teachers striving for quality and students growing academically.

Participants 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10 expressed profound gratitude for resources provided by partner schools and the Local Government Unit (LGU), feeling blessed with complete materials essential for volunteer teaching, even if LGU supplies arrived irregularly—schools consistently filled the gaps to ensure continuity. This support made their roles fulfilling and enabled effective instruction for foundational skills.

In contrast, participants 2, 4, and 6 received some resources but often created their own due to prior shortages from low volunteer numbers, evoking initial sadness over insufficiencies; yet they remained hopeful, optimistic, and resilient, committed to guiding learners despite limitations. The researcher observed this positivity during data gathering, relating it to her own experiences where school leaders played crucial roles in sustaining efforts.

Overall, the study emphasized that adequate resources and consistent school-community backing equipped volunteers to build engaging learning spaces, with Parental Support Theory highlighting schools' roles in boosting parent involvement. Perpetue et al. (2024) and Rosales (2018) reinforced needs for enhanced collaboration, sustained systems, and volunteerism's power for quality education and community development amid resource challenges.

3.1.2. Experiences with the Parents

Volunteer teachers in Tabaco City Division emphasized that parent-teacher collaboration was essential for student success, as studies showed involved parents led to better academic outcomes by creating supportive home-school environments. All ten participants conducted parent orientations as the first step to build strong partnerships, informing parents about programs and encouraging home follow-up on lessons, despite risks like safety issues during home visits, which they endured for learners' welfare.

Participants 1, 2, and 8 shared experiences where principals sometimes intervened when parents neglected roles, while participants 6 and 7 expressed gratitude for parents who shifted to appreciation, respecting volunteers' sacrifices and showing generosity, such as during Teacher's Day celebrations. This fostered community respect and open communication, strengthening home-school ties. Parental awareness of school and LGU programs empowered them as key partners, as Participant 4 hoped all parents would prioritize foundational skills for lasting educational benefits.

The researcher related firsthand from her volunteer stints in two schools, comparing varying parental commitment levels, and noted how informed parents became empowered allies working with teachers and officials. Parental Support Theory linked involvement to parents' self-valued roles and capabilities, with Hardaway et al. (2024) finding it boosted academic attainment, emotional regulation, and social skills via cognitive stimulation at home. Gamage et al. (2023) added that engagement enhanced motivation, self-regulation, and self-efficacy through ongoing financial, emotional, and communicative support.

Parent orientations proved crucial, as participants 2 and 5 noted some parents hired them as private tutors afterward, reinforcing learning and providing income. Participant 9 held special sessions for absentees, underscoring consistent communication's role in building trust—parents witnessed volunteers' dedication, leading to gratitude and stronger partnerships. Participant 5 highlighted how openness allowed parents to see impacts, prompting tutoring requests.

The researcher confirmed that group chats and orientations built trust, keeping parents updated on progress and behaviors, turning them active in learning and fostering collaborative communities. This dedication earned respect, aligning home and school for academic success. Cruz and Ramos (2017) affirmed that trust, communication, and collaborations overcame rural education barriers.

Overall, these experiences showed parent orientations and transparent communication transformed parents into vital partners, enhancing continuous learning, motivation, and outcomes despite challenges, while proving volunteer teachers' efforts cultivated respect and sustainable educational ecosystems.

3.1.3. Experiences with the Learners

Volunteer teachers in Tabaco City Division encountered diverse learner behaviors and styles that challenged their efforts, yet they persevered by immersing themselves in students' stories, uncovering backgrounds, and forming lasting bonds. Participants 1, 2, 3, 9, and 10 highlighted joyful moments of academic and personal growth in struggling learners, expressing deep appreciation when students acknowledged their sacrifices; they went beyond teaching by sharing personal resources, especially food, with hungry children, demonstrating compassion despite their own constraints.

All participants noted encountering grade 6 students lacking basic foundational skills like reading, leading to bullying, absenteeism, and discouragement, compounded by external issues such as hunger and poor hygiene that hindered

focus—volunteers often used personal funds for meals, while the researcher related similar experiences where unclean or malnourished learners embarrassed parents, further motivating her to build confidence and mastery.

Participants 5, 6, 7, and 8 emphasized that affection, care, love, and empathy created secure atmospheres boosting engagement and success; Del Felice (2012) affirmed this as driven by desires to empower marginalized groups, positioning volunteers as change agents for community development.

Ultimately, these experiences revealed that effective teaching addressed holistic needs—hunger, self-esteem, and emotional support—beyond academics, fostering behavioral and social growth; themes underscored parental involvement, communication, trust-building relationships, volunteer dedication, and shared community responsibility in education, as "it takes a village to raise a child."

3.2. Teaching Strategies Practiced by the Volunteer Teachers

This can be best explained by two themes: the teaching strategies and the challenges and support. Teaching strategies are the different ways teachers help students learn. These strategies are more than just sharing knowledge; they focus more on how students use that information and think for themselves. This theme shows the various strategies that volunteer teachers use. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (2021), teaching strategies stress that informal learning is just as valuable as formal learning, as it also requires the teachers to connect to structured goals, such as utilizing adaptable teaching methods to foster a meaningful teaching-learning process. According to Teaching Strategies Theory⁹, these strategies capture students' interest, thus encouraging them to contribute and explore ideas that foster a positive attitude toward learning.

3.2.1. Teaching Strategies

Volunteer teachers in Tabaco City emphasized the critical role of diverse teaching strategies to engage struggling learners and foster meaningful learning, as they recognized that varied learning styles demanded creativity and resourcefulness from educators. Participants highlighted how strategies prevented boredom from rote reading, instead capturing interest through gamified approaches, technology integration—like the researcher's use of a laptop for educational videos and visual aids—and flexible methods tailored to individual paces. Studies from Frontiers in Psychology (2023) and Frontiers in Education (2024) affirmed gamification's power to boost engagement, motivation, and outcomes, while Tomlinson (2014) stressed leveling instructions to differentiate content, processes, and products for diverse needs.

The Marungko Approach, provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU), proved highly effective for participants 1, 2, 5, 6, and 10 in teaching letter names, sounds, word recognition, phonemic awareness, and reading fluency among primary students with difficulties, as evidenced by Perez and Villocino (2025). This intervention bridged literacy gaps in early education, though the researcher, volunteering via Brigada Pagbasa, relied on school coordinators and her preschool background for similar beginning reading techniques. Leveling emerged as essential, allowing all learners to progress gradually at their own readiness, avoiding a one-size-fits-all model that failed diverse groups.

Differentiated instruction stood out as a cornerstone, enabling students to learn at their pace, build confidence, and thrive in supportive environments beyond traditional classrooms. Volunteer teachers blended gamified elements—games, songs, creative activities—with tech to make sessions interactive and fun, enhancing regular attendance and concept mastery. This holistic flexibility ensured strategies not only taught literacy but also transformed learning into an enjoyable, motivating process.

Overall, these findings underscored the necessity of multifaceted, adaptive strategies in volunteer settings, where no single method sufficed; instead, combining gamification, technology, Marungko, and differentiation created engaging, effective teaching that addressed learner diversity and sustained long-term success.

3.2.2. Challenges and Support

Volunteer teachers in Tabaco City faced significant challenges that influenced the teaching-learning process, including shortages of resources, facilities, and financial support, which hampered creating suitable learning environments. Nine out of ten participants highlighted the lack of stipends or aid as the primary obstacle, followed by insufficient materials and teaching spaces, yet their commitment to student learning and the profession drove them to persevere despite these hurdles. They also navigated diverse learner behaviors, special needs—like Participant 4's handling of a child with a medical condition using motherly empathy—and external factors such as political delays in supplies due to

administrative changes, as noted by Participant 5 and supported by World Bank (2019) on political impacts on school funding.

Additional struggles emerged in transportation and attendance; Participant 7 solicited family funds for travel costs, Participant 8 endured rough roads on her motorcycle despite her LGBTQ identity, showcasing unmatched perseverance, while Participant 9 from Children's International Bicol uniquely avoided financial woes but battled learner absenteeism. Participant 10 shared typical financial constraints alongside others, and Participant 6 grappled with varied student behaviors. Parental involvement posed further tension, ranging from absenteeism due to work or ignorance to over-involvement, compounded by behavioral issues and diverse learning styles that demanded constant adaptation and led to educator stress and burnout.

These obstacles extended beyond resources to include dealing with unsupportive parents and meeting unique student needs, yet they fostered creativity and resilience among volunteers not yet in permanent positions. Fernandez (2017) emphasized that such teachers drew motivation from aiding disadvantaged students, finding affordable, innovative ways to teach despite constraints. Their passion enabled them to model resourcefulness and flexibility for learners while strengthening school-parent-community ties essential for holistic success.

Resilience shone through as volunteers overcame lack of formal support, turning adversities into growth opportunities that enhanced their skills and demonstrated determination to students. This not only sustained learning under tough conditions but also proved that personal and professional development thrived amid difficulties.

Ultimately, the study showed how student-centered strategies like differentiated instruction and gamification succeeded in resource-scarce settings, reliant not on formal training but deep commitment to adaptation, offering a model for inclusive education and highlighting how challenges built resilient educators who positively shaped society.

3.3. Personal and Professional Insights Gained by Volunteer Teachers

It consists of two themes: personal and professional growth and suggestions based on the experiences of the volunteer teachers. Experience enabled volunteer teachers to acquire important personal and professional lessons. On a personal level, they become more empathetic, patient, and more fulfilled by giving back to their communities. They develop new professional skills, including communication, leadership, and adaptability, which helps them improve their teaching skills and welcomes professional growth. These experiences open their hearts and minds to be more committed to education.

3.4. Personal and Professional Growth

Volunteer teachers in Tabaco City underwent tremendous personal transformation as they deeply connected with their communities and empathized with struggling learners' well-being, extending beyond classroom teaching to foster constant self-reflection and meaningful impact on the educative process. This growth led to enhanced personal and professional development, which made their roles more purposeful as they focused on self-improvement to better serve students.

Participants 1, 9, and 10 developed strong time management skills through volunteer teaching, as they balanced preparation of learning materials with their weekday jobs from 7:30 to 4:00, while school administrators reinforced mindfulness of time despite their non-permanent status. Heyck-Merlin (2012) linked such skills directly to teacher effectiveness through techniques like task batching, weekly planning, and efficient filing systems. This also improved their work-life balance amid ongoing volunteer commitments.

Participants 1, 2, 5, and 6 gained self-confidence by regularly conversing with teachers and principals about learner behaviors, overcoming initial shyness from student teaching days; the researcher similarly built confidence in communicating with school staff and barangay councils. Participants 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7 honed leadership skills by serving as team leaders or secretariats, collaborating with peers and seeking guidance from master teachers, whose authentic experiences proved invaluable. Harris (2025) described this as trust-building mentoring and coaching that empowered teachers without formal authority.

Participants 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 became more attuned to learner behaviors, which enabled tailored strategies for diverse styles, while they improved writing and communication through solicitation letters; they explored online resources for differentiated instruction, especially for slow learners that tested patience. This built deeper connections, approachability, and trust, which enhanced teaching success. Participants 7 and 8 boosted creativity in activities and school events, often hosting as emcees with partner school support.

The researcher felt joy witnessing these developments, noting how her own volunteer experience molded her into a wiser educator despite her novice status. School administrators played key roles in steady skill enhancement for future endeavors. Participant 8 viewed volunteer teaching as more than service—it was a gateway to personal and professional growth. Punzalan (2022) and De Guzman (2019) affirmed that such experiences boosted educational performance, community ties, and dedication despite challenges, shaping volunteers' lives holistically.

3.4.1. Suggestions Based from their Experiences

Volunteer teachers in Tabaco City, drawing from their extensive experiences, provide critical recommendations to improve volunteer teaching initiatives through better stakeholder support and sustainable systems. Participants 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, and 10 stress the necessity of allowances or compensation, even for volunteer work, as they often purchase essential learning materials out-of-pocket; they express optimism that the Tabaco City Literacy Hub program could become an ordinance, reclassifying them as government-paid tutors rather than volunteers, which would ensure regular payments unlike the current irregular LGU disbursements every three months, limited mainly to those with contracts—while Brigada Pagbasa volunteers, like the researcher, receive points toward permanent Teacher I positions instead. Beaven and Borg (2025) note that such motivations, including resume-building and skill enhancement, drive volunteers forward.

A persistent challenge is the shortage of facilities and resources, vital for differentiated instruction in well-ventilated environments; participants 1, 2, 5, and 6 highlight how this hampers meaningful teaching-learning processes, especially in remote barangays versus city-center schools, where the researcher personally bought supplies to sustain lessons. Poverty exacerbates learners' low literacy and numeracy skills through malnutrition and hunger, as confirmed by Mendoza (2016), who details economic struggles in rural fishing and farming areas; participants 2, 6, and 10 propose barangay or municipal funding for free snacks or feeding programs before reading sessions, echoing the Food Research and Action Center (2019) findings on how school meals boost health, attendance, behavior, and achievement—since hungry learners, often malnourished from low-income families, struggle to absorb knowledge despite volunteers sharing limited food.

Despite these trials, participants 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10 convey heartfelt fulfillment—"teaching is a work of heart"—finding profound satisfaction in literacy gains, life impacts, and personal growth in empathy, patience, leadership, and resourcefulness, which fosters positive environments and motivates persistence to avoid stunting learner progress. Preparation is key: aspiring volunteers need training in beginning reading (as the researcher learned from mentors and graduate studies), understanding pupil backgrounds for tailored strategies, creativity for diverse styles and behaviors (theory differs from practice), hands-on data on personal/school info, and parental/community engagement—Participant 4, with five years' experience as a mother and volunteer, urges intrinsic service over pay, community focus on counseling for home issues (e.g., parental health, violence), LGU safety for home visits, and holistic empowerment beyond donations.

Ultimately, the study identifies challenges, analyzes strategies, evaluates effectiveness, and proposes a personal/professional development plan to equip volunteer teachers, enhance learner environments, and advance foundational skills across Tabaco City Division, promoting broader societal transformation through empathetic, skilled educators.

Volunteer teachers in Tabaco City faced many tough challenges that affect how well they teach and how committed they stay. These issues included having little to no compensation for their work, lack of needed teaching supplies, and unstable support from the local government and community. They also dealt with bad learning spaces that were not protected from the inclement weather and faced difficulties with students, such as absences, different learning needs, and behavior problems. In addition, getting the community and parents to help was a struggle, since not all of them were participative enough to help their learners, thus often forcing volunteers to make risky home visits on their own.

Given these many problems, this research introduced a plan for personal and professional growth. The plan aimed to help volunteer teachers by giving them the tools and skills to handle these issues. It addressed their challenges that hinder their individual growth as well as the need for better support from the system. This approach went beyond quick solutions to create a more lasting and positive experience for volunteers, helping them provide better education and strengthening the whole school community.

The Personal and Professional Development Plan aims to solve the complex problems of volunteer teachers by combining the process of mastering personal traits and professional skills. This Personal Development Plan aims to build resilience and an optimistic learning mindset among the volunteer teachers for them to effectively manage the

challenges in volunteer teaching. The plan emphasizes the benefits of motivational skills, resourcefulness, and creativity in addressing the needs of the recipient learners.

Table 1 Personal and Professional Development Plan

| Table 1a Personal Development Plan | | | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Themes | Objectives | Activities | Time frame | Persons involved | Budget/source |
| Teaching Environment | To construct a quality instructional delivery in different circumstances. | Establish adaptability and resilience. | April - May 2026 | Volunteer Teachers, School Administrators | School Fund |
| Experiences with Parents | To establish effective parent and community engagement. | Conduct home visitations. | Every end of the quarter. | School Administrators, Teachers, Volunteer Teachers, Parents, Barangay Officials | School Fund |
| Experiences with Students | To develop individualized programs that incorporate positive reinforcement strategies. | Develop motivational skills | Every end of the quarter. | School Administrators, Educational Experts, Volunteer Teachers | School Fund |
| Teaching strategies | To generate strategies that can improve the teaching-learning process. | Enhance creativity and a continuous learning mindset . | Every week starting from 2026 | Faculty, Volunteer Teachers | School Fund |
| Challenges | To cultivate resourcefulness and creativity in volunteers for addressing program challenges and needs. | Develop resourcefulness and creativity. | June 2026 to March 2026 | Volunteer Teachers Barangay councils Parents | School Fund |
| Personal and Professional growth | To build leadership and networking capabilities. | Connect with the stakeholders. | June 2026 to March 2026 | Local Government Office Teachers Barangay councils Parents Volunteer Teachers | School Fund |
| Suggestions based from Experiences | To develop resilience despite challenges encountered in volunteer teaching. | Stay motivated despite difficulties | June to March 2026. | Volunteer Teachers | School Fund |

| Table 1b Professional Development Plan | | | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Themes | Objectives | Activities | Time frame | Persons involved | Budget/source |
| Teaching Environment | To construct a quality instructional delivery in different circumstances. | Enhance learning on how to use technology and improvise materials | April - May 2026 | Volunteer Teachers, School Administrators | School Fund |
| Experiences with Parents | To establish effective parent and community engagement. | Develop strategies to educate parents and the members of the community. | Every end of the quarter. | School Administrators, Teachers, Volunteer Teachers, Parents, Barangay Officials | School Fund |
| Experiences with Students | To develop individualized programs that incorporate positive reinforcement strategies. | Assess learners' levels and develop an individualized program. | Every end of the quarter. | School Administrators, Educational Experts, Volunteer Teachers | School Fund |
| Teaching strategies | To generate strategies that can improve the teaching-learning process. | Research other strategies that can improve the teaching-learning process. | Every week starting from 2026 | Faculty, Volunteer Teachers | School Fund |
| Challenges | To cultivate resourcefulness and creativity in volunteers for addressing program challenges and needs. | Advocate for community support. | June 2026 to March 2026 | Volunteer Teachers, Barangay councils, Parents | School Fund |
| Personal and Professional growth | To build leadership and networking capabilities. | Build leadership and networking capabilities | June 2026 to March 2026 | Local Government Office, Teachers, Barangay councils, Parents, Volunteer Teachers | School Fund |
| Suggestions based from Experiences | To develop resilience despite challenges encountered in volunteer teaching. | Develop strategies for classroom management and engagement. | June to March 2026. | Volunteer Teachers | School Fund |

Table 1a consists of suggested activities that support the volunteer teachers to develop personally and at the same time become an effective and efficient educator who would significantly contribute to educational success. More specifically, in addressing the foundational issues in the field of education. O'Leary (2012), emphasized the value of goal-setting and reflection among the educators for creating autonomous individuals capable of advancing their own learning and developing self-regulating capabilities essential for effective professional practice.

Table 1b shows the Professional Development Plan which encourages the volunteer teachers to master specific strategies, like using technology and improvising materials, to deliver quality instruction. It also emphasizes the importance of building effective parent and community engagement through home visits and orientations. The plan

outlines practical measures that combine this community-based approach with continuous professional growth. It also includes timeline to make sure that the plan would be put into action. Üstüner, Demirtaş, & Cömert (2020), suggested that professional development plan involves goal setting and reflective practice, which significantly contributes to an increased belief in one's ability to succeed in teaching tasks and promotes sustained professional growth. Whereas, Vescio, Ross, & Adams, (2008)²⁴, highlighted the importance of support systems in the successful execution of Professional Development Plans. Their studies analyzed how structured mentorship and peer collaboration enhanced a teacher's ability to implement the goals outlined in their PDP, suggesting that the plan's success was not solely dependent on individual motivation but also on the professional learning community.

One of the purposes of this Personal and Professional Development Plan is to cultivate holistic growth among the volunteer teachers of Tabaco City Division. Its successful implementation would result in the overall personal development among the volunteer teachers, particularly in terms of resilience, optimism, motivation, and creativity and essential professional competencies, such as effective instructional strategies, technological proficiency, and sustained implementation would result in the overall personal development among the volunteer teachers, particularly in terms of resilience, optimism, motivation, and creativity and essential professional competencies, such as effective instructional strategies, technological proficiency, and sustained community engagement. This combination is expected to significantly improve volunteer teachers' self-efficacy and instructional efficiency. Furthermore, with the necessary support systems, continuous peer collaboration, and mentorship, the plan will become a catalyst for the continuous improvement of education, generating successful, sustainable, and improved educational outcomes for both the teachers and the wider school community.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were drawn, reflecting the key insights, patterns, and implications revealed through the analysis of the data:

- Based on the teachers' shared experiences, the findings indicate that the Tabaco City Division provides a supportive yet resource-limited environment, highlighting the need for prompt and strategic action from public administrators, policymakers, and volunteer teachers. School administrators and stakeholders are encouraged to strengthen the support extended to volunteer teachers, as this will play a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of the volunteer teaching program in the Tabaco City Division.
- Participants in the study were given the opportunity to talk about their volunteer teaching experiences. According to the study's findings, the volunteer teachers were not solely defined by access to learning resources but by their resilience, resourcefulness, and unwavering commitment to the struggling learners. Their struggles exhibited the importance of stronger community support to sustain and strengthen the volunteer teaching program in the Tabaco City Division.
- The study provided an overview of the personal and professional insights gained by the volunteer teachers in the Tabaco City Division in the volunteer teaching program. The findings reflected that volunteerism extends far beyond teaching literacy and numeracy, as it also fostered strong and empowered volunteer teachers with a deeper sense of identity and purpose. While the volunteers were driven by strong commitment, motivation, and passion, the program's full potential relied on a collaborative engagement between the schools, local government, parents, and the community. Ultimately, this collaborative engagement transformed the volunteer teaching program into a mutually beneficial and empowering process for the learners and all stakeholders.
- The volunteer teaching program has brought positive effects to the learners and volunteer teachers despite the challenges in almost every aspect of the educative process. Future research could include efforts to understand and better equip the volunteer teachers in their future endeavors as significant contributors in the field of education.

Recommendations

- Future studies may build on this research to further explore the teaching experiences of volunteer teachers and develop evidence-based interventions tailored to their specific needs.
- Decision-makers, school administrators, and stakeholders should use the study's findings to provide adequate resources, materials, and support that enhance the effectiveness of volunteer teaching.
- The study's findings should be applied across all primary schools in the Tabaco City Division, in collaboration with the Department of Education (DepEd) and relevant sectors, to develop empowered and skilled volunteer teachers.
- The personal and professional development plan created through this study should be shared with other volunteer teachers to promote the wider adoption and improvement of the volunteer teaching program.

Areas for Further Study

Based on the findings of this study, the following topics are recommended for further exploration in future research:

- Training and Professional Development Needs of Volunteer Teachers in Tabaco City Division.
- Evaluating the Effectiveness of Teaching Strategies in Improving Literacy and Numeracy in Tabaco City Division; and
- Impact of Feeding and Counseling Programs on Learner Attendance and Academic Performance.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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