

## **The Many Faces of Teacher: Exploring School Teachers' Experiences with Multiple Responsibilities Amidst Post-Pandemic Times**

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**Abstract:** This qualitative study aimed to explore the experiences of public elementary school teachers in Carmen District, Davao del Norte, Philippines, in handling multiple responsibilities during the post-pandemic period. Ten teachers were selected as participants using purposive sampling techniques. The study identified four main themes characterizing teachers' experiences: Testing teachers' versatility, doing countless responsibilities, excelling amidst trials, and Challenged with Multiple Responsibilities. Additionally, two coping mechanisms emerged from the data: Stress management and One task at a time system. Furthermore, the study uncovered insights related to educational management, including themes such as Work-life balance and Handling Task Conflict Effectively. The findings provide valuable insights into the nuanced challenges faced by public elementary school teachers in the post-pandemic context and offer implications for educational policy and practice.

**Keyword:** Lived Experiences, Multiple Responsibilities in School, Post-Pandemic Times

### **A. Introduction**

Public elementary school teachers have faced multifaceted challenges in handling multiple responsibilities in the post-pandemic era. The pandemic has resulted in significant learning gaps and disparities in student engagement, particularly for those with limited access to technology. Teachers are challenged to address these gaps and ensure that all students receive equitable educational opportunities (Kraft et al., 2020). According to Diliberti, Schwartz, and Grant (2021), teachers have encountered a significant increase in workload due to additional administrative duties and the need to adapt to new teaching methods. The shift to remote and hybrid learning models has added layers of complexity to their roles, requiring them to develop new skills and manage technology-based instruction alongside traditional responsibilities.

Moreover, public elementary school teachers in the Philippines face a range of complex challenges in handling multiple responsibilities in the post-pandemic period. For

instance, Nugroho et al. (2020) reported that the pandemic has significantly increased the workload for teachers in the Philippines. In addition to traditional teaching responsibilities, teachers now have to manage administrative duties related to health protocols, hybrid teaching models, and the coordination of remote learning activities. This increase in workload can lead to burnout and decreased job satisfaction. Likewise, Reyes and Yujuico (2020) also reported that there has been a notable lack of parental involvement and support, which is crucial for effective remote learning. Teachers often find themselves compensating for this lack of involvement, adding to their already heavy workload.

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced unprecedented changes and challenges to the educational landscape, significantly impacting public elementary school teachers. While there is a substantial body of research addressing the general impacts of the pandemic on education, there remains a notable gap in the literature specifically focusing on the qualitative, phenomenological experiences of public elementary school teachers in managing multiple responsibilities during the post-pandemic period.

Most existing studies have utilized quantitative methods to measure the impact of the pandemic on teachers, focusing on stress levels, workload, and educational outcomes (Sokal, Trudel, & Babb, 2020). However, there is a scarcity of qualitative research that deeply explores teachers' lived experiences, capturing the emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions of their challenges and coping strategies. A phenomenological approach is particularly suited to uncovering these nuanced experiences, providing rich, detailed insights that quantitative methods may overlook (Moustakas, 1994).

By providing a detailed understanding of the experiences of public elementary school teachers, this study can inform policymakers and educational leaders about the specific needs and challenges faced by these educators. This can lead to the development of targeted support systems, professional development programs, and policies designed to alleviate the burden on teachers and improve their working conditions (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017).

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the experiences of the teachers with multiple ancillary functions in public elementary schools. The challenges of the elementary teachers, as well as their insights, shall be determined at the end of this study, particularly in Carmen District, Davao del Norte. Specifically, the study tried to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in handling multiple responsibilities in post-pandemic time?

2. What are the coping mechanisms of elementary school teachers on the negative experiences they had in their roles as they handle multiple responsibilities in schools?
3. What educational management insights can be drawn from the experiences and challenges of elementary school teachers?

## **B. Methods**

This study employed a qualitative approach, specifically a phenomenological design. As noted by Williams (2021), qualitative research aims to explore the essence of phenomena as experienced by participants, revealing the underlying structures and processes that shape their subjective realities. Phenomenology focuses on deeply investigating participants' subjective experiences, seeking to grasp the essence of these experiences, including the emotions, thoughts, and meanings associated with them. This comprehensive understanding is essential for grasping the experiences of teachers handling multiple ancillary functions in public elementary schools.

In this study, 10 public elementary school teachers from Carmen District, Davao Del Norte. In selecting the participants, the researcher made use of purposive sampling technique with the following inclusion criteria: teachers who have been teaching for three or more years; had experienced handling multiple ancillary tasks and responsibilities in schools before and during the pandemic; and teachers who have been teaching in the elementary level.

In gathering data, the researcher utilized a semi-structured interview questionnaire. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with teachers to gather rich and detailed information. Following the completion of in-depth interviews with public elementary school teachers, all datasets from in-depth interviews and focus group discussion were integrated into a single dataset for analysis.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

**RQ#1:** What are the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in handling multiple responsibilities in post-pandemic time?

### **Theme 1. Testing Teachers' Versatility**

Teachers are required to continuously adapt to educational changes, address diverse student needs, and balance multiple responsibilities. Their ability to remain flexible, positive, and dedicated to professional growth is crucial in navigating the complexities of the educational landscape and ensuring the holistic development of their students.

This versatility not only enhances the quality of education but also contributes to teacher resilience and satisfaction, ultimately benefiting the entire educational community.

The following are the narratives of the participants:

*"I consider myself as a struggling teacher who is trying to cope with the never-ending changes of the Philippine educational system. In other words, I am changing aiming to be flexible to the demands of my teaching duties."*

This statement reflects the adaptability and resilience required of teachers in the ever-evolving landscape of the Philippine educational system, especially in the post-pandemic era. The teacher acknowledges the continuous changes and challenges, which could include shifts in curriculum, teaching methodologies, and integration of technology due to the impacts of COVID-19. According to Schleicher (2018), this sense of struggle underscores the demanding nature of the profession and the constant need for professional development to stay current with educational reforms. The emphasis on aiming to be flexible highlights the teacher's commitment to meeting these demands, despite the inherent difficulties, showcasing a growth mindset and dedication to their students' success.

Another participant mentioned:

*"I would describe myself as a positive, energetic, knowledgeable, and industrious teacher. I have a flexible style of teaching that can cater to all students and abilities."*

This statement highlights key attributes of an effective teacher: positivity, energy, knowledge, and industriousness. These qualities are crucial in fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment. The teacher's flexible teaching style indicates an ability to differentiate instruction, tailoring lessons to meet diverse student needs and learning styles, which is particularly important in a post-pandemic context where students may have varied learning gaps and needs. This versatility is a critical component of inclusive education, ensuring that all students, regardless of their abilities, receive the support they need to succeed (Tomlinson, 2014).

A participant shared:

*"Witnessing their insatiable desire to learn and the sheer joy they derive from every new discovery is nothing short of amazing. It's a rewarding journey to nurture their growth and be a part of their educational adventure. In my tasks, I kept to be versatile knowing that teacher's task should be all around."*

This statement captures the intrinsic rewards of teaching and the profound impact of fostering a love for learning in students. The teacher expresses joy and fulfillment in observing students' enthusiasm and growth, which reinforces the emotional and motivational aspects of the teaching profession. The mention of versatility reflects the teacher's awareness of the multifaceted nature of their role, which includes not only instruction but also mentorship, emotional support, and administrative duties. According to Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), this comprehensive approach is essential in adapting to the diverse needs of students and the dynamic demands of the educational environment, particularly in the wake of the pandemic where flexibility and holistic support have become more critical.

### **Theme 2.** *Doing Countless Responsibilities*

This theme reveals the complex and demanding nature of teaching in public elementary schools, especially in the post-pandemic context. Teachers are often required to handle numerous responsibilities beyond their primary teaching roles, which can lead to significant stress and burnout if not managed properly. However, the ability to effectively manage classroom dynamics and build strong relationships with students is crucial for creating a supportive and engaging learning environment. Recognizing and supporting these efforts is essential for sustaining teacher well-being and effectiveness.

The following are the narratives of the participants:

*"I am doing ancillary functions and responsibilities. During my first to third year of deployment, I was bombarded with so much loads of coordinatorship"*

This statement highlights the additional responsibilities that public elementary school teachers often undertake beyond their primary role of teaching. The term "ancillary functions" suggests duties that are supplementary to teaching, such as administrative tasks, coordination of school activities, or involvement in extracurricular programs. The teacher's mention of being bombarded with loads of coordinatorship during the initial years of deployment underscores the heavy workload and demands placed on educators, particularly in their early career stages.

As noted by Wang and Holcombe (2016), this experience may reflect common challenges faced by teachers in adapting to the multifaceted nature of their profession and juggling various responsibilities simultaneously. It also speaks to the need for adequate support, resources, and professional development opportunities to help teachers effectively manage these additional duties while maintaining their focus on teaching and student learning outcomes.

Another participant mentioned:

*"Managing the classroom involves organizing class time, ensuring every student receives adequate attention, addressing questions about assignments or course content, and motivating and inspiring students while adapting to their individual personalities. These responsibilities have become ingrained in my teaching routine, and I've formed a strong bond with my students since I began teaching."*

This statement provides insight into the multifaceted role of public elementary school teachers in managing their classrooms. It underscores the myriad responsibilities involved in creating a conducive learning environment, including time management, individualized instruction, and student engagement. The teacher's mention of adapting to students' individual personalities highlights the importance of recognizing and accommodating diverse learning needs and preferences (Ladd & Dinella, 2009).

### **Theme 3. Excelling Amidst Trials**

The detailed interpretations of these statements reveal the multifaceted nature of teachers' experiences in managing multiple responsibilities in post-pandemic times. Teachers exhibit remarkable resilience, adaptability, and dedication, which enable them to excel amidst trials. These qualities not only enhance their teaching performance but also foster strong, supportive relationships within the school community. Recognizing and supporting these efforts is crucial for sustaining teacher well-being and effectiveness.

For instance, the participants narrated:

*"The learnings of accepting challenges which enabled me to perform better as a public teacher. Lastly, I was able to earn the love, respect and support of the parents, fellow teachers and the whole community as well."*

This statement reflects a teacher's ability to grow and excel despite facing numerous challenges. The teacher highlights the importance of embracing challenges as opportunities for personal and professional development. By learning to navigate these challenges, the teacher has not only improved their teaching performance but also gained the admiration and support of the broader school community. According to Richards et al. (2021), resilience and adaptability are crucial traits for teachers, allowing them to build strong, supportive relationships with students, parents, colleagues, and the community. The positive reception from these stakeholders suggests that teachers who effectively manage their responsibilities and challenges can significantly impact their educational environment, fostering a collaborative and supportive culture.

Another narrative was stated:

*"I was concerned and believed that managing numerous ancillary duties in our school. The assumption behind taking more ancillaries is to satisfy the demands of my school principal. These responsibilities might make it difficult for me to manage my professional and also personal obligations. Still, I was able to handle everything."*

This statement underscores the pressure teachers face to take on multiple ancillary duties to meet administrative expectations. The teacher acknowledges the potential strain these additional responsibilities can place on both professional and personal life. Despite these concerns, the teacher demonstrates a remarkable capacity to manage these duties effectively. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2016), the need for schools to recognize the demands placed on teachers and the importance of providing adequate support to balance their workload. Moreover, it illustrates the teacher's dedication and resilience, emphasizing that even under significant pressure, teachers can find ways to excel and fulfill their responsibilities.

In addition, a participant also stated:

*"I have a lot of memorable experiences as a teacher handling multiple ancillary services. The essence of meeting new faces, colleagues with different perspectives, beliefs and goal in life but building a companion and friendship. Gaining respect and appreciation from my superior, community, parents and students."*

This statement highlights the positive aspects and personal growth opportunities that come with handling multiple ancillary services. The teacher emphasizes the value of building relationships and networks with diverse colleagues, which can enrich their professional experience and foster a sense of community and support. The respect and appreciation received from superiors, the community, parents, and students suggest that managing these additional responsibilities successfully can lead to significant professional and personal rewards. This experience underscores the importance of interpersonal relationships and community support in the teaching profession, particularly in the context of handling extensive duties (Bauer, 2018).

#### **Theme 4. Challenged with Multiple Responsibilities**

The detailed interpretations of these statements reveal the multifaceted nature of teachers' experiences in managing multiple responsibilities in post-pandemic times. Teachers.

For instance, the participants narrated:

*"Pandemic introduced unique challenges such as remote work, health concerns, economic uncertainties, and adapting to rapidly changing circumstances. Some may have found their roles more demanding during pandemic due to the unprecedented nature of the situation, while others may have experienced greater difficulties in their pre-pandemic roles."*

This statement highlights the diverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on public elementary school teachers. The shift to remote work, coupled with health concerns and economic uncertainties, created an environment of rapid change and increased demands. Some teachers found these new challenges particularly taxing, indicating a higher level of stress and adjustment difficulty due to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic (Kraft et al., 2020). Conversely, for some teachers, the pre-pandemic challenges might have been more demanding, perhaps due to longstanding systemic issues such as inadequate resources, large class sizes, or administrative burdens. This variability underscores the importance of considering individual and contextual differences when assessing the impact of the pandemic on teachers' work.

Another narrative stated:

*"Pandemic time is more challenging for me because the means of communication is quite limited. Using new technology is very necessary to perform my duty. I also need to learn unfamiliar platforms to submit my reports which is very difficult for me because I am not an ICT literate. This so called ASAP reports really stressed me most of the time."*

This statement reflects the specific challenges related to technology and communication that teachers faced during the pandemic. The necessity of using new technologies for teaching, communication, and administrative tasks added a layer of complexity, especially for teachers who were not proficient in information and communication technology (ICT). Learning to navigate unfamiliar platforms for report submission and other duties was a significant source of stress, highlighting the need for professional development and support in digital literacy (Trust & Whalen, 2020). The pressure of timely report submissions ("ASAP reports") further exacerbated stress levels, indicating that adequate training and streamlined administrative processes are essential for reducing teacher stress in such contexts.

In addition, a participant also stated:



*"Lack of financial support or scarcity of funds, absence of parental support, hectic schedules, abrupt submission of reports are on my lists."*

This statement points to several key challenges that exacerbate stress and workload for teachers. Financial constraints limit resources available for teaching, professional development, and student support. The absence of parental support can hinder effective communication and collaboration, essential for student success. Hectic schedules and the need for abrupt submission of reports further add to the workload and pressure on teachers. These challenges highlight systemic issues within the education system that need to be addressed to create a more supportive environment for teachers (Diliberti, Schwartz, & Grant, 2021).

*"Lack of support, particularly from the school heads, who are the main sources of knowledge and instruction, understanding your students, personalized learning, Time Management, Student Discipline in the Classroom, weight of Responsibility, Excessive Workloads and Overtime, Communication with Parents, bullying."*

This statement underscores the critical role of school leadership in providing support and guidance to teachers. Lack of support from school heads can lead to feelings of isolation and overwhelm. Effective school leadership is crucial for fostering a supportive environment, offering professional development, and providing resources for personalized learning and classroom management. The mention of multiple responsibilities such as time management, student discipline, and communication with parents highlights the breadth of tasks teachers must handle, often leading to excessive workloads and extended working hours. Addressing these issues requires strong leadership, adequate resources, and a collaborative approach to problem-solving (Grissom, Egalite, & Lindsay, 2021).

*"The challenges that I encounter in handling my ancillary functions is getting the data from my co-teacher. Because as we all know, we teachers have many things to do not just our role as a teacher but our role outside the four corners of our classroom, though it is challenging I am making myself widely open to many possible reasons that the teachers are facing differently."*

This statement highlights the difficulties in managing ancillary functions, particularly in terms of data collection and collaboration with colleagues. Teachers often juggle multiple roles and responsibilities, both within and outside the classroom. The teacher's willingness to understand and accommodate the diverse challenges faced by colleagues demonstrates a collaborative and empathetic approach. Effective communication and cooperation are essential for managing shared tasks and responsibilities. This emphasizes

the need for streamlined processes and support systems to facilitate efficient collaboration among teachers (Graham, Tripp, Seawright, & Joeckel, 2019).

*"It is the time management that challenges me. For instance, because of lots of ancillary functions i am handling, my time with family could be compromised. Instead of spending my time with family during after office hours or even weekends, i have to spend it complying reports jus to submit it on time."*

This statement reflects the significant challenge of balancing professional and personal responsibilities. The need to manage multiple ancillary functions often leads to extended working hours and reduced time for family and personal activities. The struggle with time management can lead to feelings of stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction. This highlights the importance of effective time management strategies and support from school administration to ensure that teachers can maintain a healthy work-life balance. Policies that address workload distribution and provide adequate time for completing tasks are essential for promoting teacher well-being (Klassen & Tze, 2019).

*"The challenges I faced/experienced in handling these multiple functions, aside from my role is to understand the different characteristics amongst students, lack of funding, being encourage and motivated, endless paper works and extended working hours, pressure from district coordinators in short I was burned out. Time is always not enough and is limited."*

This statement encapsulates the multifaceted nature of the challenges faced by teachers, including understanding diverse student needs, lack of funding, motivation, excessive paperwork, extended working hours, and external pressure. The cumulative effect of these challenges often leads to burnout, characterized by physical and emotional exhaustion. The acknowledgment that "time is always not enough and is limited" highlights the critical issue of time constraints in effectively managing responsibilities. Addressing these challenges requires systemic changes, including adequate funding, professional support, streamlined administrative processes, and strategies to manage workload and time effectively (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018).

**RQ#2:** What are the coping mechanisms of elementary school teachers on the negative experiences they had in their roles as they handle multiple responsibilities in schools?

### **Theme 1. Stress Management**

This illustrates various strategies and coping mechanisms employed by elementary school teachers to manage stress while handling multiple responsibilities. Acceptance of the profession's challenges, prioritizing personal and family time, and recognizing the

impact of stress on cognitive and instructional quality are highlighted as key components of effective stress management. These insights underscore the importance of tailored approaches to stress management that encompass both professional and personal well-being, ultimately contributing to the sustainability and effectiveness of teachers in their roles.

The participants shared:

*"I always go back the backbone of it all. This my chosen profession and my source of income. I have to accept all the light and dark shades of it. Acceptance is the key which makes me enjoy this job. Manage stress and be pro-active."*

This statement underscores the importance of acceptance and proactive stress management in the teaching profession. By acknowledging teaching as a chosen career and source of livelihood, the teacher emphasizes the necessity of embracing both its positive and negative aspects. Acceptance here is seen as a fundamental coping mechanism, allowing the teacher to find enjoyment and fulfillment despite challenges. Proactive stress management involves anticipating potential stressors and developing strategies to address them before they become overwhelming. This approach can include setting realistic goals, seeking support, and maintaining a positive outlook, which are essential for sustaining well-being and resilience in a demanding profession (Montgomery & Rupp, 2018).

*"First things first then manage stress effectively. First, bonding with my family which is my treasure and everything. Second, playing my favorite games in cellphone. Third, window shopping at mall."*

This statement highlights the teacher's personalized approach to stress management through prioritizing self-care and leisure activities. The mention of family bonding underscores the importance of strong social support systems in mitigating stress. Family interactions can provide emotional support, stability, and a sense of belonging, which are crucial for stress relief. Engaging in hobbies, such as playing games on a cellphone, and activities like window shopping offer mental breaks from work-related stress, contributing to overall well-being. These activities can serve as effective distractions and provide enjoyment, which can help replenish mental and emotional resources depleted by work responsibilities (Wang et al., 2018).

*"For me, stress management, memory retention, and classroom instruction all heavily depend on coping mechanism. Coping is a problem that needs to be addressed if teachers are to be able to control their stress levels and continue to provide high-quality instruction."*

This statement emphasizes the interconnectedness of stress management, cognitive function, and effective teaching. The teacher recognizes that coping mechanisms play a critical role in managing stress, which in turn affects memory retention and classroom instruction quality. High stress levels can impair cognitive functions, including memory, attention, and decision-making, which are vital for effective teaching. Therefore, developing and implementing effective coping strategies is essential for teachers to maintain their cognitive abilities and instructional quality. This could involve techniques such as mindfulness, time management, and seeking professional support, all of which contribute to better stress management and, consequently, higher quality teaching (Jennings et al., 2017).

### **Theme 2.** *One Task at a Time System*

The detailed interpretations of these statements reveal how elementary school teachers use the “one task at a time” system as a coping mechanism to handle multiple responsibilities. This approach, combined with positive self-talk, clear boundaries, and effective organization, helps teachers manage stress, improve focus, and maintain high-quality performance in their roles. Additionally, emphasizing work-life balance by making time for family and personal activities is crucial for sustaining well-being and preventing burnout. These strategies collectively contribute to a more manageable and fulfilling professional experience for teachers.

The following are the narratives of participants during in-depth interview (IDI):

*“My coping mechanisms to address the problems that I encountered as a teacher with multiple ancillary functions is to be more positive in handling it. Just one task at a time.”*

This statement highlights the teacher’s use of a positive attitude and a focused approach to managing multiple responsibilities. By adopting a positive outlook, the teacher can mitigate the stress associated with handling various ancillary functions. The strategy of tackling “one task at a time” is a practical approach to managing workload. This method helps in reducing feelings of being overwhelmed and enhances productivity by allowing the teacher to concentrate fully on the task at hand. This sequential approach can improve efficiency and ensure tasks are completed with greater attention to detail (Sutherland, 2018).

*“In making sure that everything is set and scheduled, just one task at a time to avoid conflict. After works, I am making time to catch up with my family.”*

This statement reflects the importance of organization and scheduling in managing multiple responsibilities. By ensuring that tasks are set and scheduled, the teacher can

prioritize and manage their workload more effectively. The focus on “one task at a time” helps in preventing conflicts and overlaps, which can cause unnecessary stress. Additionally, the teacher emphasizes the importance of work-life balance by making time to connect with family after work. This balance is crucial for maintaining mental health and overall well-being, as it allows the teacher to recharge and return to work with renewed energy and focus (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

*“I cope with multiple ancillary functions and responsibilities by practicing positive self-talk, setting clear boundaries and expectations, asking for help when needed, staying organized and planning ahead, and by maintaining strong student relationships and most importantly, one task at a time to improve focus and output quality.”*

This statement outlines a comprehensive set of coping strategies that the teacher uses to manage multiple responsibilities effectively. Positive self-talk helps in maintaining a constructive mindset, which is essential for overcoming challenges and staying motivated. Setting clear boundaries and expectations ensures that the teacher can manage their workload without overcommitting or experiencing burnout. Asking for help when needed highlights the importance of collaboration and support from colleagues. Staying organized and planning ahead are key strategies for managing time and tasks efficiently. By focusing on “one task at a time,” the teacher can improve their focus and the quality of their output, which is crucial for maintaining high standards in both teaching and ancillary functions (Herman et al., 2018).

**RQ#3:** What educational management insights can be drawn from the experiences and challenges of elementary school teachers?

### **Theme 1.** *Work-Life Balance*

The detailed interpretations of these statements reveal various strategies elementary school teachers use to achieve work-life balance and manage stress. Engaging in relaxing activities, personal coping mechanisms such as stress eating and listening to music, and institutional support through organized events and seminars are highlighted as effective methods. These insights underscore the importance of both individual and systemic approaches to promoting teacher well-being

As a fact, the participants narrated:

*“Engaging relaxing activities can help me cope with stress. My relaxing activities include going to the beach, videoke, sitting in nature, or listening to soft music. Attending stress management seminar initiated by our school guidance/teacher is of great help.”*

This statement highlights the importance of engaging in relaxing activities as a strategy for coping with stress. The teacher mentions specific activities such as going to the beach, singing videoke, sitting in nature, and listening to soft music, which can provide mental and emotional relief from work-related stress. These activities promote relaxation and help in reducing the physical and psychological symptoms of stress. Additionally, attending stress management seminars organized by the school's guidance counselor or teacher is recognized as beneficial. These seminars can offer practical techniques for managing stress, fostering a supportive community, and providing teachers with valuable tools to balance their professional and personal lives. This reflects the need for schools to support teachers' well-being through structured programs and resources (Dewe & Cooper, 2017).

*"My personal mechanism is stress eating, funny as it is but I am fun of eating more when I am stress at work. Because in my own special way I am making myself more active and alive in dealing with my reports. I am also fun of listening to music wherein I am able to reminisce my worth as a teacher and remember all the promises that I instill to myself before I enter the Department of Education."*

This statement illustrates a personal coping mechanism where the teacher engages in stress eating to manage work-related stress. While stress eating can provide temporary relief, it may have long-term health implications if not managed properly. The teacher also mentions listening to music as a strategy to cope with stress. Music can be a powerful tool for emotional regulation, helping to uplift mood and provide comfort. By reminiscing about their worth and the promises made before joining the Department of Education, the teacher reaffirms their commitment and motivation, which can enhance resilience and a sense of purpose. This highlights the importance of finding personal coping mechanisms that work for the individual, as well as the need for promoting healthy stress management strategies within the educational environment (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015).

*"I always make sure that celebrating teachers' day will surely distress all the teachers. We also have team building and Stress Management Seminar that somehow lessen my stress and this is supported by DepEd. Work-life balance is a must."*

This statement emphasizes the significance of institutional support and organized activities in promoting work-life balance among teachers. Celebrating events such as Teachers' Day can serve as a collective stress relief, providing a sense of appreciation and camaraderie. Team-building activities and stress management seminars are essential components of a supportive work environment. These activities not only help in reducing individual stress but also foster a collaborative and cohesive school community. The

support from the Department of Education (DepEd) underscores the importance of systemic efforts to enhance teacher well-being. This reflects the broader understanding that work-life balance is critical for maintaining the health, productivity, and job satisfaction of teachers, and requires active promotion and support from educational institutions (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

## **Theme 2. Handling Task Conflict Effectively**

The theme reveals key insights into handling task conflict effectively within the context of educational management. By taking on ancillary functions, teachers experience personal and professional growth, improve their time management skills, and ultimately enhance student academic performance. Prioritizing students amidst numerous responsibilities and recognizing the value of seeking help and support are crucial strategies for maintaining motivation and effectiveness.

The participants narrated:

*"The essence of handling ancillary functions of teachers made and gain positive developments and persistence. Those teachers taking numerous ancillaries are motivated by their emotional and professional growth."*

This statement highlights the positive outcomes associated with handling ancillary functions, which are additional duties beyond the primary teaching role. Managing these extra responsibilities can lead to significant personal and professional development. Teachers who take on numerous ancillary tasks often demonstrate increased persistence and resilience. The motivation derived from these roles can be attributed to the emotional growth experienced through overcoming challenges and the professional growth resulting from acquiring new skills and experiences. This indicates that while ancillary functions can be demanding, they also provide opportunities for teachers to enhance their competencies and advance their careers. It underscores the importance of recognizing and supporting teachers' efforts in managing multiple roles, as these can contribute to their overall development and job satisfaction (Day & Gu, 2019).

*"Regarding the development of one's self career, teaches perform a variety of auxiliary duties that are very beneficial. They improved students' academic performance by being aware of the importance of time management and their primary responsibility as teachers."*

This statement emphasizes the dual benefits of teachers performing auxiliary duties: personal career development and improved student academic performance. By taking on additional responsibilities, teachers can enhance their time management skills, which are crucial for balancing multiple tasks effectively. This heightened awareness and skill in

managing time allows teachers to fulfill their primary responsibilities more efficiently. As a result, they can devote adequate attention and resources to their students, thereby improving academic outcomes. This reflects the idea that ancillary functions, when managed well, can complement teachers' primary roles and contribute to both personal growth and student success. It highlights the need for professional development programs that equip teachers with the necessary skills to manage their diverse responsibilities effectively (Schleicher, 2018).

*"My primary focus should always be on the students, making them a priority amidst numerous ancillary tasks and responsibilities. I've come to realize that seeking help and support is not a sign of weakness but a means to stay motivated and effective in my teaching role."*

This statement underscores the importance of prioritizing students despite the multitude of ancillary tasks and responsibilities that teachers face. Maintaining a student-centered approach ensures that the core mission of education – student learning and well-being – remains at the forefront. Additionally, the teacher acknowledges the value of seeking help and support, challenging the notion that doing so is a sign of weakness. Instead, it is viewed as a strategy to maintain motivation and effectiveness. This realization promotes a culture of collaboration and support within the educational community, where teachers feel empowered to ask for assistance when needed. It highlights the importance of providing adequate support systems and fostering an environment where seeking help is encouraged and normalized, contributing to better handling of task conflicts and overall teacher effectiveness (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

#### **D. Conclusions**

The findings of this study shed light on the multifaceted experiences of public elementary school teachers in navigating the complexities of their roles in a post-pandemic environment. Four overarching themes emerged, encapsulating the lived experiences of these teachers: testing teachers' versatility, encountering countless responsibilities, excelling amidst trials, and grappling with multiple responsibilities. Additionally, the study elucidated the coping mechanisms employed by elementary school teachers to navigate the negative experiences associated with their roles. Two key themes emerged: stress management and adopting a one-task-at-a-time system. These coping strategies highlight the importance of self-care, resilience, and effective time management in mitigating the challenges inherent in managing multiple responsibilities. Moreover, the study identified valuable educational management insights derived from the experiences and challenges of elementary school teachers. Two salient themes emerged: work-life balance and handling task conflict effectively. These insights emphasize the significance of fostering supportive work environments, promoting well-being initiatives, and



providing resources for effective task management to enhance teacher satisfaction and performance.

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