

Voices of the Far-Flung Areas: Experiences of Teachers Teaching in Remote Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the insights, challenges and resiliency strategy of teachers teaching in the far-flung areas. The research employed the services of nine teacher-participants who qualified in the inclusion criteria such as serve in the locality for five years or more and must be a permanent teacher. Findings revealed that teachers face significant challenges including limited resources, difficult travel routes, and time management struggles. Despite these hurdles, they exhibit strong adaptability and resourcefulness, often relying on community engagement and personal resilience to navigate their demanding work environments. The study also highlights the crucial role of administrative support from the Department of Education in the form of professional development and resource augmentation—though many of these provisions fall short of lasting through the academic year. The research underscores the importance of enhancing existing DepEd policies, particularly in resource distribution, teacher localization, and sustained professional support. Additionally, community support emerged as a key factor influencing teacher retention, with those residing within their school's community expressing a greater willingness to stay long-term. The findings advocate for a more inclusive, responsive, and sustainable approach to supporting teachers in remote areas to ensure equitable and quality education for all learners.

KEYWORDS

Bislig City Division; insights; challenges; resiliency strategy; Far-Flung School

INTRODUCTION

Being a teacher is a career that offers several difficulties and challenges. However, it's the most honorable and admirable vocation because it necessitates the hearts, minds, and souls working together. It also calls for enthusiasm and dedication. Teachers assigned in remote areas may face several disadvantages when it comes to professional and personal improvements. The purpose of this study is to investigate the distinct experiences of teachers in the City Division of Bislig who work in remote, rural, or geographically remote locations. With limited access to infrastructure, resources, and support, it seeks to comprehend the unique rewards and challenges of teaching in these environments. Teachers' first-hand stories and reflections are gathered for the study, which illuminates the challenges they encounter, the innovative solutions they come up with, and the influence they have on their pupils and communities.

Teachers can have a disadvantage in employment when assigned in remote areas. They receive little compensation and suffer from subpar furnishings and classrooms resources for communication as well as supplies. They also lagged in terms of promotions as

compared to teachers assigned in urban areas and big schools since they lacked the tools necessary to elevate their ranking like having talented students, access to seminars and research opportunities. These circumstances can be discouraging and detrimental to teachers' performance as well as pupils. In the study of Felongco, et al. (2022), most teachers in far-flung indigenous school areas are novices and fresh graduates. They are exposed to urban life, so they probably have no experience in isolated communities. Moreover, in the study of Lariosa et al. (2022), far-flung schools are mostly deprived of the much-needed facilities, and the teachers are exposed to various types of stress, which may affect their performance (Hartney, 2020).

Since its founding in 2003, the City Division of Bislig has emerged as a shining example of excellence that supports high-quality education and offers chances to surrounding communities and Bisliganon students. Many teachers from the city center are assigned to teach in the more isolated parts of the city as schools are opening there. Many of these teachers face difficulties traveling to and from their stations, and occasionally they are involved in accidents, particularly during the rainy season. A teacher assigned to one of Bislig's most isolated schools even traveled on Sunday to avoid being late for the Monday flag ceremony, staying at school the entire week to avoid the inconvenience of traveling there every day. Teachers who work in rural places frequently face this situation, yet many of them don't receive any extra advantages that might motivate them to stay in the community. Therefore, shortly after three years of teaching, most of them chose to request reassignment to a closer school. Only a handful stays for longer years teaching in those schools due to some personal reasons or attachments to the locality. To make matters worse, they were denied access to the internet despite the department's efforts to connect all schools. Due to these issues, many teachers assigned to these schools experienced burnout.

The significance of this study was to provide a deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by teachers in remote areas. The insights gained was used to design more effective support programs and resources for teachers who may otherwise lack the necessary tools to succeed in their roles. By identifying specific obstacles that affect teachers' day-to-day experiences, the study informed education policies aimed at addressing issues such as teacher retention, training, and professional development tailored to the needs of remote teachers. What's more, teachers in remote areas often show remarkable resourcefulness in overcoming challenges with limited resources. This study uncovered the resiliency and resourcefulness that teachers have developed in response to their circumstances. The findings informed best practices that can be shared across similar contexts globally. Exploring how teachers cope with the emotional and psychological stress of remote teaching provided valuable insights into teacher well-being, an often-overlooked area in educational research. This led to more holistic teacher support systems that address both emotional and professional needs. The purpose of this study was to investigate the insights and challenges of teachers teaching in the far-flung areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study explored how teachers in remote schools navigated the unique challenges they face, emphasizing the complex interplay of contextual factors, personal resilience, and community support. Teachers in these environments often contended with significant obstacles, including geographic isolation, resource scarcity, and socio-economic challenges.

This study is anchored on the theory concerning the phenomenon experienced by teachers as they teach in the remote areas, specifically on Rutter (1985) resiliency theory

which posits that individuals can overcome significant adversity through the interplay of protective factors such as personal attributes, social support, and environmental resources. This claims that teachers working in far-flung areas demonstrate resilience by drawing on internal qualities, such as perseverance and adaptability, as well as external resources, including community support and professional development opportunities. The research explored how these factors enable teachers to navigate the unique challenges they face, including isolation, cultural differences, and resource scarcity, ultimately influencing their effectiveness and well-being in such settings.

Further, this study is also grounded on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan, which suggests that motivation and well-being are enhanced when individuals' basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied. This claims that teachers in far-flung areas experience varying levels of motivation and job satisfaction based on the fulfillment of these needs. Specifically, teachers who perceive greater autonomy in their teaching methods, feel competent in their ability to manage remote classrooms, and establish strong connections with their students and communities demonstrate higher levels of resilience and effectiveness despite the challenges of isolation and limited resources. This study explored how these factors shape the teaching experience in remote areas and their implications for professional development and retention.

Lastly, the Constructivist Theory as influence by Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Jerome Bruner, which emphasizes the role of active learning, social interaction, and cultural context in shaping educational experiences. This claims that teachers in far-flung areas, who face challenges such as isolation, limited resources, and cultural differences, draw upon constructivist principles to foster meaningful learning experiences. Teachers in these settings often adapt their pedagogical approaches to engage students actively in the learning process, build social relationships within the community, and consider the cultural context of their students. This study explored how these factors influence teachers' teaching methods, student engagement, and the overall effectiveness of education in remote areas.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study investigated and comprehended the insights and challenges of teachers teaching in the remote places using a qualitative research design was essential due to the complex, subjective nature of the phenomena being explored. Qualitative methods allowed for an in-depth understanding of the personal, social, and emotional experiences of teachers in challenging educational environments. It also focused on exploring the meanings and interpretations that individuals attach to their experiences. In the context of remote teaching, these experiences are shaped by a range of factors including resource limitations, isolation, professional development, and community support. As noted by Denscombe (2021), qualitative approaches enable researchers to capture the richness and depth of participants' perspectives, providing valuable insights into the lived realities of teachers working in remote areas. Furthermore, qualitative research can reveal the emotional and psychological impacts of teaching in isolated communities, which quantitative methods may overlook.

The transcendental phenomenological approach was particularly suited for this type of study as it focused on understanding how individuals perceive and make sense of their lived experiences. This approach, grounded in the work of Moustakas (1994), aimed to uncover the essence of experiences by gathering detailed descriptions of participants'

experiences and identifying common themes. In the case of remote teachers, this method allows for the exploration of how they perceive their challenges, motivations, and coping strategies in the absence of typical support systems found in urban schools. Van Manen (2016) emphasizes that phenomenology, particularly the transcendental approach, enabled researchers to look beyond the surface of participants' responses to uncover deeper meanings and insights about their experiences. Studies like Lopez & Rivera (2020) highlighted the need for such an approach, as it provided a thorough understanding of the essences of lived experiences of remote teachers and can offer practical recommendations for improving their working conditions and emotional well-being. By using transcendental phenomenology, the study explored how teachers' personal perceptions and lived experiences shape their teaching practices and overall job satisfaction.

Furthermore, by using this approach, the researcher was better able to comprehend, analyze, and uncover fresh information centered around the real-world experiences of the teachers working in remote locations. The researcher utilized grouping in phenomenological interpretations to document the informants' own experiences.

Research Locale

This study was conducted in Bislig City Division located in the southern part of the province of Surigao del Sur, one of the twelve (12) divisions in Caraga Region. This division was established in the year 2000 and categorized as a small division and currently divided into eight (8) districts with seventy (70) schools, of which fifty (50) are elementary schools and twenty (20) secondary schools. Of the 20 secondary schools, one (1) is a stand-alone senior high school while another one (1) is an integrated school offering complete elementary, junior high school and senior high school program.

As per the division record (annex 1), among the 70 schools, four (4) are considered far flung or remote schools namely: Pamaypayan Integrated School in Barangay Pamaypayan, Bislig City; Sikahoy National High School and Gerardo Verano Elementary School in Sitio Sikahoy, Barangay San Jose, Bislig City and New Bongga Elementary School in Sitio New Bongga, Barangay Pamaypayan, Bislig City. This categorization is based on Provincial Resolution No. 2047-24 s. 2024, a list of schools that are found within the Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs) where teachers are resigning because of the difficulty to and from the schools, duly authored by Hon. Conrad C. Cejoco.

Research Instrument

The researcher collected data from the participants using in-depth interviews to gather the teachers' lived experiences in teaching far-flung schools. The research questions that were used during the interview was validated by an Education Program Supervisor in Araling Panlipunan, Education Program Supervisor in English, two (2) school heads and one (1) master teacher. The researcher interviewed the participants at the school where they assigned to personally acclimate and understand their feelings and emotions. To allow for a more flexible and conversational approach while still ensuring that certain key topics are covered, a semi-structured interview was employed.

The present study employed the subsequent resources: an advance information that the researcher was going to conduct an interview and if they were willing to be part of the research study; a consent form distributed prior to the interview to the designated teacher-participants; an interview guide and interview questions distributed to the participants; and a personal data sheet and agreement form distributed to participants acknowledging that their answers will be utilized in this study ensuring that the sensitive and personal data to be gathered and processed is treated as confidential information in accordance with RA

10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The replies from the participants were noted and written down for use in a later stage of data gathering and analysis.

Data Gathering Procedure

In this study, all the data gathering procedures were conducted at the identified schools within the Bislig City Division. The researcher analyzed data rigorously and comprehensively. The first stage was to provide a letter of approval (Annex B) to be submitted to the Thesis Adviser, Graduate School Dean of Northeastern Mindanao State University, to the Schools Division Superintendent of Bislig City Division, to the Public Schools District Supervisor and to the school heads and teacher-participants concerned of the identified schools. The next step was stage 2, the collection of data. In order to record audio and video for later transcription and translation, the researcher conducted moderate interviews during this phase. A semi-structured interview questionnaire will be employed. The third stage was the analysis of the data using thematic analysis and coding. This assisted the researcher in determining the data's themes. The fourth stage of the data gathering process was the interpretation of data out from the themes and codes. Lastly, the researcher finalized all the gathered data

Data Analysis Plan

Statistical Treatment

Following the distribution, gathering, and conclusion of the interviews, the researcher used verbatim transcription and analyzed all the information received. Coded themes were produced. Thematic analysis was used to examine the data.

Thematic analysis, a popular technique for handling qualitative data in research projects, was employed in this one. Analyzing the material came next after all the data had been collected for the study. The researcher was able to create a well-thought-out solution to the current issue through data analysis.

Additionally, the researcher conducted a thorough and robust analysis of the data, resulting in a qualitative approach that guarantees the validity and reliability of the results. It helped the researcher in recognizing new topics and the connections between them. Descriptive phenomenological researchers should view this approach as a straightforward and reasonable process for investigating the fundamental structure of an experience.

Moreover, the researcher wrote up the audio recordings of the participant responses to questions about their issues and experiences. While doing so, the researcher considered the nonverbal cues that were noticed during the interview.

Lastly, the researcher made use of Colaizzi's seven-step descriptive phenomenological technique as the basis for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Q1: What is the Profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, marital status, educational backgrounds, years of service, living conditions, transportation, facilities available?

Table 1. Age Distribution of Participants

Age Range	Number of Respondents
27 – 33	6
34 – 40	0
41 – 47	1
48 – 54	1
55 – 61	1
Total	9

The table shows that there is a comparatively youthful workforce in these schools since most of the participants are between the ages of 27 and 33. Young teachers are frequently new graduates looking to launch their careers. Teaching in remote locations is frequently seen by them as a great way to satisfy service requirements and obtain experience. According to a study by Algonés et al. (2024), almost 40% of teachers in distant locations were new teachers. This suggests that younger teachers are frequently put in these difficult roles since they are entry-level and eager to start their careers.

Table 2. Age Distribution of Participants

Sex	Number of Respondents
Male	3
Female	6
Total	9

The predominance of female teachers (67%) compared to male teachers (33%) in far-flung schools may reflect broader societal trends where women are increasingly entering the teaching profession. Research indicates that women often pursue careers in education due to perceived job stability and a desire to contribute positively to their communities. A study by Algonés et al. (2024) emphasizes that female teachers in remote areas often demonstrate resilience and commitment despite facing significant challenges, such as limited resources and difficult commuting conditions.

Table 3. Marital Status of Participants

Marital Status	Number of Respondents
Married	5
Single	4
Total	9

The table shows that a slight majority of the participants are married, which may influence their perspectives on job stability and family responsibilities.

Table 4. Educational Background of Participants

Educational Background	Number of Respondents
BEED	4
BSED	3
BEED with MA units	1
Others	1
Total	9

Majority of respondents hold a Bachelor of Elementary Education with 44.44%, indicating a strong presence of elementary education professionals in remote teaching environments. A notable portion holds a Bachelor of Secondary Education with 33.33%.

The predominance of BEED graduates suggests a strong focus on elementary education, which is critical in far-flung areas where foundational skills are essential for children's development. This aligns with educational goals aimed at improving literacy and numeracy among young learners.

Table 5. Years of Service of Participants

Years of Service	Number of Respondents
0 – 5	5
6 – 10	4
11 – 15	0
16 – 20	0

Over 20 Years	0
Total	9

Majority of participants (55.6%) have only 0–5 years of teaching experience, followed by 44.4% with 6–10 years. Notably, there are no teachers with more than 10 years of service in these far-flung schools. The lack of teachers with over a decade of experience highlights a significant gap in retaining seasoned teachers in remote areas. The data suggests that far-flung schools are staffed primarily by novice or early-career teachers, which may indicate challenges in retaining experienced educators due to the difficult conditions associated with remote postings.

In the study of Mariecon & Roel (2024), teachers in far-flung schools emphasized that many educators assigned to remote areas are novices or fresh graduates.

Table 6. Living Condition of Participants

Living Condition	Number of Respondents
Poor	0
Average	9
Rich	0
Total	9

The data shows the living conditions of teachers in far-flung schools indicates that all 9 participants report having "Average" living conditions, with no respondents indicating "Poor" or "Rich" conditions. This uniformity suggests a consistent experience among teachers in remote areas, highlighting both the challenges and the adequacy of their living situations. The fact that all participants report "Average" living conditions implies that while teachers may not be experiencing extreme hardship, they are also not thriving in optimal conditions.

In the study of Barcena et al. (2018), teachers frequently face logistical difficulties, such as long commutes and poor transportation options, which can exacerbate feelings of isolation and hinder their ability to perform effectively.

Table 7. Mode of Transportation of Participants

Mode of Transportation	Number of Respondents
Single Motorcycle	2
Single Motorcycle, Ongbak	2
Walking	5
Total	9

The data shows that majority of participants (5 out of 9) rely on walking as their primary mode of transportation. This reflects that most of the teachers teaching in the far-flung areas are living in the locality. This indicates the difficult terrain that many teachers must navigate to reach their schools, indicating a lack of accessible transportation options. Two participants use single motorcycles, while another two utilize a combination of single motorcycles and "Ongbak" (a local term for a type of motorcycle taxi). This suggests that while some teachers have access to motorized transport, it may not be sufficient for all teachers, particularly those living farther from their schools.

In the study of Hartney (2020), difficulties in transportation can impact teachers' punctuality and overall effectiveness in the classroom. Long commutes can lead to fatigue, which may affect their teaching performance and engagement with students.

Table 8. Facilities Available in the School of Participants

Facilities Available	Number of Respondents
Laptop, Internet, TV	3
Laptop, TV, Solar Electricity	6
Total	9

The table shows that majority of participants (6 out of 9) have access to laptops, TVs, and solar electricity. This indicates a positive trend toward integrating technology into the teaching environment, which is crucial for enhancing educational delivery and providing resources for both teachers and students. Only 3 participants reported having access to laptops and internet connections. This suggests that while some teachers may have the necessary hardware, connectivity issues remain a significant barrier. The lack of reliable internet can hinder teachers' ability to access online resources, communicate with peers, and engage in professional development opportunities (Barcena, 2018).

Q2. What are the insights and challenges of teachers assigned in the far-flung areas?

Table 9. the insights and challenges of teachers assigned in the far-flung areas

Major Themes	Sub Themes	Participants
Dedication and Passion to Teaching	Teachers' commitment despite hardships	2, 3 and 4
	Personal sacrifices made for their students	1, 7, 8 and 9
Challenges and Struggles of Teachers	Lack of resources and parental support	1, 2, 4 and 6
	Lack of infrastructure and transportation difficulties	3, 6, 7, 8 and 9

During the interview the following responses reveal a range of insights and challenges that teachers experience while teaching the far-flung school. The major themes identified include dedication and passion to teaching and challenges and struggles of teachers while the sub-themes are teachers' commitment despite hardships, personal sacrifices made for their students, lack of resources and parental support and lack of infrastructure and transportation difficulties.

Dedication and Passion for Teaching

Despite the hardships, teachers in remote areas exhibit unwavering commitment to their profession.

1. Teachers' Commitment Despite Hardships

Educators continue teaching despite facing difficult conditions, which demonstrates their deep dedication. According to Day and Gu (2013), teachers' commitment is crucial for student success and educational quality, even in challenging environments. Their resilience suggests an intrinsic motivation to educate and uplift communities, regardless of external difficulties.

“One of the most significant siguro na naexperience nako dinhi is kanang of course kanang makatudlo ka sa mga bata og proper nga education bisan og layu, remote area na siya, at least mahatag gihapon nimo ang quality education though kanang layu siya sa kanang kabihasanan jud.”
 (P2)

(I think, one of my most significant experiences is teaching kids the proper education that despite it is far and remote area, at least I can still give them the quality education they need.)

“Kanang makita nako nga encourage, fueled, well-driven ang among mga students nga mueskwela jud.” (P3)

(Seeing my learners encourage, fueled and well-driven in their studies.)

“Ma-feel nako nga at home ra ko. Then ma-feel nako nga this is my community, so I strive hard nga maka help jud sa akong community, ug dili sila lain.” (P4)

(I can feel that I’m at home. I can also feel that this is my community, so I strive hard to help my learners. They don’t feel like others to me.)

2. Personal Sacrifices Made for Their Students

Teachers often make financial, emotional, and personal sacrifices to support their students. Research by UNESCO (2018a) highlights that teachers in rural areas frequently go beyond their professional duties, providing students with materials, emotional support, and even food. This reflects their strong sense of social responsibility and empathy.

“Kung way kanak kuan supply, magpalit ako, mag-loan. Magpalit ako ng kanak mga gamit na kaugalingon, gamiton ko sa classroom.” (P1)

(If I have no supplies, I’ll get a loan to buy one. I’ll buy things to be use in the classroom.)

“Giving rewards as a reinforcement really works well in teaching especially ang uban bata kay walay kwarta pampalit og pagkaon.” (P7)

(Giving rewards as reinforcement really works well in teaching especially that some learners have no money to buy food.)

“Pag far-flung teacher ka, you should be resourceful, creative and should be willing and ready to adapt to the community.” (P8)

(If you are a far-flung teacher, you should be resourceful, creative and should be willing and ready to adapt to the community.)

“Naa mi mga bata nga usahay atangan sa mga tao sa dalan tungod anang mga uyab-uyab, kasuyaanan sa uban. Tungod ana maong dili na dayon mo-eskwela ang mga bata kay atangan man kay magbyahe pa man sila padulong eskwelahan ug pauli. Ang ako gibuhay kay gipatawag namu ang mga involve labi na ang mga outsider. Nagpauban sa mga opisyal sa sitio aron ma-settle ang problema para makapadayon pag-eskwela ang mga bata.” (P9)

(We have learners that sometimes being waited by outsiders upon their way home because of girls, because of disgust. Due to this, they tend to stop going to school due to risk in their lives. What I did was, I called the attention of those involve especially those outsiders. I brought with me the sitio officials to help in settling the problem so that my learners can continue with their schooling.)

Challenges and Struggles of Teachers

While their dedication remains strong, teachers in far-flung areas face systemic challenges that hinder their teaching effectiveness.

1. Lack of Resources and Parental Support

Teachers struggle with inadequate learning materials, outdated textbooks, and limited school facilities. Moreover, parental support is often lacking due to low literacy levels or economic struggles. A study by Bower and Parsons (2003) suggests that resource scarcity

significantly impacts student learning outcomes, making it difficult for teachers to implement effective teaching strategies.

“Way internet kay gamiton ko sa iyan magdownload ng mga lesson plan, mga video lessons.” (P1)

(There’s no internet to be use for downloading of lesson plan and video lessons.)

“Ang challenges as being a teacher is kanang usahay lack of materials tungod kay layu, dili man ka dali-dali makaadto og Mangagoy. Ang internet pud problema kay once na mawala jud, wala mi connection kay wala mi data.” (P2)

(The challenges as being a teacher is that sometimes you lack materials because of distance since you can’t easily go to Mangagoy. The internet is also a problem. Once you lost connection, you can’t really search for lessons because the place has no data connection.)

“Challenges nako kanang mga parents nga gahi motabang sa school. Di jud pud nato ma-expect nga tanan madali-dali jud nato og tawag sa school biskan og taga diri ka.” (P4)

(It is really a challenge for me the parents who don’t want to help the school. We can’t also expect that everyone will help even though if you are a residence of the place.)

“Sauna, wala mi books even mga ICT equipment pati printer wala.” (P6)

(Before, we have no books and ICT equipment like printer.)

2. Lack of Infrastructure and Transportation Difficulties

Poor roads, long travel distances, and lack of proper school infrastructure make education delivery more challenging. Infrastructure limitations in rural schools result in lower attendance rates and increased teacher burnout. Many teachers walk long distances or use unsafe transport to reach their schools, affecting their well-being and ability to focus on teaching.

“The road is very lisud talaga. Even though I am living here, at the same time nagrent pud ko sa Mangagoy kay anytime nay mga training nga ipatawag unya ang span kay maabot og 3 day, 1 week, dili nako mag-uli kay as makulata akong lawas, sakit kaayo.” (P3)

(The road is really challenging to drive on. Even though I am living in the community, at the same time I rented a place in Mangagoy since anytime if there are trainings that span for 3 days or 1 week, I won’t travel every day since it will simply result in bruises.)

“Lack of resources gyud ug buildings pud. Grabe ang struggle nako sa dalan, actually tinood gyud nihilak ko ana. Dili na mao na motor ako gigamit, tong XRM 125 kapila gyud ko madautan nga as in nga magcommute na ulan or init, magpaguyod og lain motor kay nadaot. Pauli ug padulong madaot, walay pili.” (P6)

(We really lack resources and even buildings. I really struggle with the road to the point that I even cried. My previous motorcycle XRM 125, it broke down many times and I even commute rain or shine. Going to and fro, my motorcycle broke down that I will ask somebody to pull it.)

“The most challenging part is the transportation going in and out. Kanang maassign ka sa place na layo sa imo balay, it cost you a lot of money, time adjustment and patience. Personally, nagagamit ko og kaugalingon motor para lang makaabot diri sa school.” (P7)

(The most challenging part is the transportation going in and out. Whenever you’re assigned to a place far from your home, it will cost you a lot of money, time, adjustment and patience. Personally, I drive my own motorcycle as my means of transportation in going to the school.)

“Risky among life everyday while gatravel. Nakadepende among safety sa driver.” (P8)

(Our lives is at risk everyday while travelling, our safety depends on our driver.)

“Ang pinakalisod lang jud diria nga grabe kasignificant jud nga maapektuhan ang pagtudlo sa teachers is kana ra jung pagbyahe. Murag mogasto na man gud daan ka og kusog mag-gikan paka daan sa balay. Unya pag-abot diria, kapoy naka unya pag-uli pa jud sa balay pagkahapon, dili naka maka prepare pa labi na if naa kay pamilya. Maong diria na ko sa school magprepare og lessons kanang free time.” (P9)

(The most difficult part of being a teacher that will affect your performance is travelling. It will cost you already your strength so by the time you reach the school, you’re already tired then you can’t prepare lessons at home especially that you have family to tend to. That’s why I prepare lessons at school during my free time.)

Q3. What are the resiliency strategies employed by teachers assigned in the far-flung areas?

Table 10. the resiliency strategies employed by teachers assigned in the far-flung areas

Major Themes	Sub Themes	Participants
Personal resilience and adaptability	Maintaining a positive mindset	1, 3 and 7
	Self-motivation	3, 4 and 8
Resourcefulness and innovation in teaching	Flexible teaching methods	2 and 3
	Technology adaptation	5 and 6

There are many obstacles to overcome while teaching in remote areas, therefore teachers must become resilient and use creative thinking to maintain high standards of instruction. Two main themes emerge from the data: personal resilience and adaptability and resourcefulness and innovation in teaching. These themes show how educators deal with their situations and maintain successful learning in spite of a variety of constraints.

Personal Resilience and Adaptability

Teachers assigned to remote schools often rely on their inner strength and coping mechanisms to sustain their motivation and effectiveness.

1. Maintaining a Positive Mindset

Teachers in isolated areas remain optimistic despite the hardships they face. Research by Gu and Day (2013) suggests that a positive mindset contributes to teacher resilience, allowing them to persist despite challenges such as poor infrastructure, lack of resources, and geographical isolation. Maintaining a strong sense of purpose helps teachers cope with stress and burnout.

“Tarungon ko lamang sila, kanak da aru-aruhan. Maghatag ako ng ice candy, fruit salad. Magpa-snak ako sa kanila.” (P1)

(I’ll treat them well, give encouragement. I will give them ice candy or fruit salad. I will give them snack.)

“Usahay nagapalit ko og akong kaugalingon supplies then I let them use it.” (P3)

(Sometimes I buy my own supplies and I will let them use it.)

“Being in this kind of teaching environment, I have learned about the importance of empathy, passion, and dedication towards our pupils. These are essential values that a teacher should have for us to be reminded that we are in need by them, our pupils. Without it, we can’t see our pupils progress and develop into a person that they should be.” (P7)

2. Self-Motivation

Teachers in far-flung schools often rely on intrinsic motivation to stay committed to their profession. According to Mansfield et al. (2016), self-motivation plays a crucial role in teachers' ability to sustain engagement and passion in difficult teaching environments. This is particularly evident in teachers who continue their work despite inadequate salaries, long travel times, and limited professional support.

“It drives me nga kanang mas maningkamot mag-serve para sa ilaha kay looy akong community kung ing-ani lang permente ang kahimtang sa mga bata.” (P3)

(It drives me to persevere for more to serve my community so as to elevate the condition of the learners.)

“Nakapa boost sa ako na diri jud ko na-assign sa among lugar mismo kay naa ra pud diri ang akong family. Mao ra jud pud ang akong dream nga bisan naa koy chance nga maka-teach sa Davao pero gibiyaan nako, niuli jud ko diri. Lahi ra jud ang imong lugar. Paningkamutan jud nako nga makatabang sa akong community.” (P4)

(It boosted my morale that I am assigned here in my own community since my family is also residing here. This also my dream despite given the chance to teach in Davao but I really went home. It's really different when you're at home. That's why, I work hard to help my community.)

“Be prepared for whatever encounter, anyway God is just around, ever ready and ever willing to help.” (P8)

Resourcefulness and Innovation in Teaching

Due to the lack of adequate teaching materials and infrastructure, teachers in remote areas develop creative solutions to ensure effective learning.

1. Flexible Teaching Methods

Teachers adapt their instructional approaches to accommodate students with limited access to books, technology, or structured learning environments. Flexibility in teaching—such as using storytelling, peer-assisted learning, and contextualized examples—helps engage students in rural settings where standardized materials may be unavailable.

Kanang mawala ang internet, magkara-kara ko ana og pangukad napud sa kadtong mga modules. Manguha ko og resources nga kanang related ra pud sa ako topic. (P2)

(Whenever the internet is lost, I am always in a hurry to look for my modules. I'll look for resources that are related to my topic.)

Nagadevelop mi og mga learning materials intended for kaning sa mga IP. (P3)

(We developed learning materials intended for our IP learners.)

2. Technology Adaptation

While digital access is limited in remote areas, some teachers leverage available technology such as mobile phones, pre-downloaded educational videos, or radio-based instruction. According to UNESCO (2021), many educators in developing regions use low-tech solutions to bridge the digital divide, ensuring that students receive some form of technology-assisted learning even without stable internet connections.

Sa wala pa mi internet, munaog ko didto magdownload. Sabado, Domingo, didto magdownload sa ubos. (P5)

(At the time that we have no internet connection yet, I'll go to downtown every Saturday or Sunday just to download lessons.)

Nagpalit gyud kog mga gamit naku labi na ning world map naku nga grabe ka dako. Ako gyud gi selopin para makita gyud sa bata gyud ba na in-ana. labi na sa atoa lagi na factual ingun ana kinahanglan makita gyud nila dili lang pulos imagine na mao ni didto mao ni didto. (P6)

(I bought my own big world map and laminated it with cellophane so that the learners can see it firsthand especially that we teach mostly factual, not just imagination.)

What is the administrative support given by the Department of Education for those teachers assigned in the far-flung areas?

Table 11. the resiliency strategies employed by teachers assigned in the far-flung areas

Major Themes	Sub Themes	Participants
Professional	Capacity-Building Programs	4 and 6
Development and Training	Access to Digital Learning and Resources	7
Infrastructure and Resource Support	Development of School Facilities	1 and 4
	Provisions of School Supplies and Internet Connectivity	2, 3 and 9

Teachers in far-flung areas face multiple challenges that impact their ability to provide quality education. However, administrative support, particularly in professional development and infrastructure and resource support, plays a crucial role in helping them overcome these difficulties. This analysis explores the insights shared by teachers regarding these forms of support, along with the challenges they continue to face.

Professional Development and Training

Providing teachers with capacity-building programs and access to digital learning resources helps improve their teaching effectiveness, especially in remote areas where professional development opportunities are limited.

1. Capacity-Building Programs

Teachers highlighted the importance of capacity-building programs in enhancing their instructional skills and adapting to the unique needs of rural learners. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), continuous professional development is essential for teacher growth and student success, particularly in challenging environments. However, limited access to training centers and inconsistent program implementation remain significant barriers.

“Isa sa mga support nga gihatag sa DepEd kay kanang mga seminars.” (P4)

(One of the supports that DepEd gave to us are the seminars.)

“Sa training, maapil na sa trainings ang mga teachers.” (P6)

(Teachers are already included in trainings.)

2. Access to Digital Learning and Resources

Digital learning resources provide teachers with opportunities for self-directed learning and innovative teaching strategies. However, the availability of these resources in far-flung areas is often restricted due to poor internet connectivity. Research by UNESCO (2021)

emphasizes that teachers in rural settings benefit greatly from technology-assisted learning, but lack of infrastructure limits their ability to fully utilize such resources.

“We were provided with laptops to ensure that teachers will not have to worry about performing tasks like forms, reports and seminars. We are also provided with television for our learners.” (P7)

Infrastructure and Resource Support

A well-equipped school environment is critical for effective teaching and learning. However, teachers in far-flung areas continue to struggle with inadequate facilities and insufficient resources.

1. Development of School Facilities

Teachers expressed concerns about the poor state of school infrastructure, including dilapidated classrooms and lack of basic amenities inadequate school facilities in remote areas negatively impact student attendance and teacher motivation. While government initiatives aim to improve rural schools, progress is often slow due to budget constraints and logistical challenges.

“Ining mga bag-o na building kay sauna lisuday sa ngani, ang classroom kay gamay da tapos adto magtudlo sa mini gym tapos idtong cottage ng teachers inghimo da na classroom.” (P1)

(This new building, before it’s really hard. The classroom was small then classes were held in the mini gym and the teachers’ cottage was also converted into a classroom.)

“Kana pud mga repairs para sa classrooms. At least masibot ang mga bata kay nindot na ang classroom.” (P4)

Those repairs for classrooms. At least the learners would be eager to go to school since their classroom is now better.)

Q5. What policy can be proposed to strengthen the DepEd programs particularly among schools in the far-flung areas?

Table 12. The DepEd programs particularly among schools in the far-flung areas

Title	Enhancing Support for Teachers in Far-Flung Areas
Executive Summary	This policy recommendation aims to address the challenges faced by teachers in far-flung areas by improving resource allocation, providing additional support, and enhancing professional development programs. The proposed policy changes are designed to ensure that teachers are well-equipped to provide quality education to their students, despite the unique challenges of their teaching environments.
Introduction	Teachers in far-flung areas face significant challenges, including resource limitations, high workloads, and frequent curriculum changes. These challenges impact their ability to deliver quality education and require targeted support from the Department of Education (DepEd). This policy recommendation seeks to address these issues by proposing specific actions to enhance support for teachers in these areas.
Problem Statement	Teachers in far-flung areas often lack adequate resources and face high workloads, making it difficult to manage their teaching responsibilities effectively. Additionally, frequent changes in the curriculum and time management challenges further exacerbate the situation. These issues highlight the need for improved support and resources to help teachers

	overcome these obstacles and provide quality education to their students.
Policy Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase Resource Allocation. Allocate additional resources to far-flung schools to ensure teachers have the necessary materials and support. - Enhance Professional Development Programs. Provide targeted training and development programs for teachers in far-flung areas. - Strengthen Community Engagement. Foster partnerships with local organizations and communities to support teachers.
Recommendation	The recommended policy action is to implement a combination of increased resource allocation, enhanced professional development programs, and strengthened community engagement. This comprehensive approach addresses the multifaceted challenges faced by teachers in far-flung areas and provides a sustainable solution.
Rationale	Increasing resource allocation ensures that teachers have the necessary materials to deliver quality education. Enhanced professional development programs equip teachers with the skills and knowledge to manage their teaching responsibilities effectively. Strengthened community engagement fosters strong support networks, providing both practical assistance and emotional support. This combination of actions addresses the root causes of the challenges faced by teachers and provides a holistic solution.
Implementation Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource Allocation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a needs assessment to identify resource gaps in far-flung schools. - Allocate additional funding to address identified gaps. - Monitor and evaluate the impact of resource allocation. 2. Professional Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop targeted training programs for teachers in far-flung areas. - Provide ongoing support and mentorship for teachers. - Evaluate the effectiveness of training programs and make necessary adjustments. 3. Community Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish partnerships with local organizations and communities. - Facilitate regular meetings and collaboration between teachers and community members. - Monitor the impact of community engagement initiatives.
Impact Assessment	The recommended policy is expected to have a positive impact on teachers' ability to deliver quality education in far-flung areas. Increased resource allocation will address material shortages, while enhanced professional development programs will improve teachers' skills and knowledge. Strengthened community engagement will provide additional support and foster a collaborative environment. Potential negative effects, such as the financial cost of implementation, will be mitigated through careful planning and monitoring.
Conclusion	The proposed policy changes are essential for addressing the challenges faced by teachers in far-flung areas. By increasing resource allocation, enhancing professional development programs, and strengthening community engagement, the Department of Education can ensure that teachers are well-equipped to provide quality education to their students. These actions will ultimately contribute to improved educational outcomes and a more supportive teaching environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings presented, the following conclusions can be drawn for each of the given questions:

1. This indicates a level of uniformity in the support and facilities provided by their respective schools, which could contribute to a consistent educational environment. The reliance on basic transportation methods like walking and single motorcycles implies potential challenges in accessibility and mobility for the participants. The presence of technological resources such as laptops, TVs, and solar electricity in schools highlights an effort to integrate technology into the educational process, which can enhance teaching and learning experiences.
2. The significant challenges faced by teachers in far-flung areas, such as resource limitations and high workloads, imply a need for systemic changes to support these educators. The difficulties in time management and frequent curriculum changes suggest that teachers in these areas require more stability and better planning to manage their responsibilities effectively.
3. The use of adaptability, resourcefulness, and community engagement as resiliency strategies indicates that teachers in far-flung areas are highly resilient and capable of overcoming significant obstacles. This resilience highlights the importance of fostering these qualities in teacher training programs and recognizing the critical role of community support in educational success.
4. The administrative support provided by the Department of Education, including professional development and peer collaboration, underscores the necessity of continuous professional growth and a supportive work environment. This support is crucial for maintaining teacher morale and effectiveness, particularly in challenging teaching environments.
5. The need for improved resource allocation and enhanced professional development programs implies that current policies may not be adequately addressing the unique challenges faced by teachers in far-flung areas. Strengthening these policies is essential to ensure that all teachers have the resources and support they need to provide quality education, regardless of their location.
6. The Department of Education must prioritize and strictly implement localization of teachers to get rid or minimize the frequent request for transfer of teachers.
7. School administrators should focus on community linkages and partnerships not just to support the learners but also teacher well-being especially those who are living outside the community.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations can be provided:

For **teachers**, it is beneficial to embrace adaptability and resourcefulness to manage the challenges of teaching in far-flung areas. Engaging actively with the community can help build strong support networks that provide both practical and emotional assistance. Additionally, participating in professional development opportunities can enhance skills and knowledge, ensuring effective teaching practices despite the challenging environment.

For the **Department of Education**, it is important to allocate additional resources to far-flung schools to address material shortages and support teachers in delivering quality

education. Providing continuous professional development programs tailored to the unique needs of teachers in remote areas can significantly enhance their skills and effectiveness. Fostering strong community partnerships can also create a supportive environment for teachers and students, contributing to better educational outcomes.

For **Teacher training programs** can incorporate training on adaptability, resourcefulness, and community engagement into the curriculum to prepare teachers for the challenges of far-flung areas. Offering specialized modules that address the specific needs and conditions of teaching in remote locations can be highly beneficial. Facilitating mentorship programs that connect new teachers with experienced educators who have worked in similar environments can provide valuable guidance and support.

For **academicians**, conducting further research on the challenges and resiliency strategies of teachers in far-flung areas can inform policy and practice. Publishing studies and articles that highlight the experiences of these teachers can contribute to a broader understanding of their needs. Collaborating with educational institutions and policymakers to develop evidence-based solutions for improving teaching conditions in remote areas can also be impactful.

Advocacy groups can play a crucial role by advocating for equitable resource allocation and support for teachers in far-flung areas to ensure they have the necessary tools to succeed. Raising awareness about the unique challenges faced by these teachers and the importance of supporting their work can garner public and institutional support. Partnering with local communities and organizations to provide additional resources and support for teachers and students can further enhance the educational experience.

For **students**, engaging actively in the learning process and taking advantage of the resources and support provided by teachers and the community can enhance their educational experience. Participating in school activities and initiatives that foster a positive and inclusive learning environment can contribute to their overall development. Providing feedback to teachers and school administrators can help improve the educational experience for all students.

Future researchers can explore the long-term impact of the challenges and resiliency strategies of teachers in far-flung areas on educational outcomes. Investigating the effectiveness of different support mechanisms and policies in improving teaching conditions in remote locations can provide valuable insights. Studying the role of community engagement in enhancing the educational experience for both teachers and students in far-flung areas can also contribute to the development of effective support strategies.

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