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# ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCES OF NIGHT HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

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**Abstract:** Teachers play a very important role in helping individuals build a better future. A better education is also important for a better society. This study examines the experiences of night high school teachers in Calbayog City Night High School located in Calbayog City, Samar, Philippines. This study was conducted by using a phenomenological approach. Ten participants were identified and invited to join the interviews. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the gathered data. The gathered data were then transcribed and read repeatedly to identify common patterns in the responses of the participants. Codes were then used to develop themes aimed to explore and provide qualitative understanding of the experiences of night high school teachers in Calbayog City. The researchers were able to develop themes such as Expectations & Challenges and Coping Mechanisms and Rewards. Conclusions were made based on the results of thematic analysis and actual statements of night high school teachers.

**Key words:** *Lived Experiences, Teachers, Night High School, Challenges, Rewards, Coping Mechanisms*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is important to humans because it serves as a foundation to build a better future. The importance of education does not only hold true for individuals but for society in general. Education is a major factor in which growth and progress in society are realized. Education helps individuals become qualified for a job and be integrated in society with good values and morals while helping improve the economy [1]. Because of this, governments invest a lot in the education department.

When providing quality education, it is important to consider teachers' role in educating individuals. Teachers play a very important role in shaping the future of individuals and society at large. The role of teachers is challenging. Teachers take care

of students as second parents while being responsible in providing proper education [2].

Quality education depends on the teachers' experiences. "The quality of teachers shows stronger relationship (than school facilities and curricula) to pupil achievement. [3]" Teachers are viewed as a classroom practitioner translating different educational goals into knowledge and skills needed by students. Teachers evaluate, assess, and provide for different types of students. What defines a quality teacher is the ability to teach students while leaving a positive influence. This is true however this is not the only basis for a being a quality teacher. It is also important to consider other factors such as work environment, character of students, school management, and peer influence. School management has to make sure that teachers are satisfied with the job to prevent teacher turnover. Schools with teacher turnover face negative

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consequences [4]. Teacher turnover could lead to impacts that disrupts the organizational composition of teachers in a school and loss of institutional knowledge [4].

As observed by the researchers, night high school teachers in the Philippines face greater risks compared to teachers teaching in day high schools. Night high school teachers have to make sure that students go home right after the class to avoid and prevent students being victimized by criminal-minded individuals. Night high school teachers play an interesting role in helping less fortunate individuals. As observed, many of the students attending night high schools in the Philippines are those coming from marginalized families. These students have to work during day time to support their families.

In Samar, Calbayog City Night High School (herein referred to as CCNightHS) plays a very important role in providing educational opportunities to many less-fortunate families. As a night high school, CCNightHS has little space devoted to help teachers achieve their goals in supporting those less-fortunate students. In view of this, the researchers decided to study the lived experiences of teachers in CCNightHS.

This study aimed to explore and provide a qualitative understanding on the experiences of night high school teachers in Calbayog City. This study includes the challenges, coping mechanisms, rewards benefited as night high school teachers.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Design**

This study focused on understanding and describing lived experiences of night high school teachers working in Calbayog City Night High School. A Phenomenological approach was employed by the researchers in conduct of this study. Phenomenological approach helped in clearly presenting the subject of inquiry. "Phenomenology allows researchers to interpret the meaning of the experiences through hearing and observing the words and descriptions of participants [5]." With phenomenological research, the researchers are enabled to explore experiences and sensory perception (different to abstract perception) of researched phenomenon, and the information of understanding based on the experiences and perceptions [6]. This study made use of the participants' acquired experiences to describe and analyze the phenomenon thereby producing comprehensive information about the phenomenon.

### **Participants of the study**

Ten participants from Calbayog City Night High School participated in the conduct of this study. All of the participants were informed prior as to what this study is about. They were identified through purposive sample.

### **Data Analysis**

The analysis of the gathered data were done using the thematic analysis proposed by Clarke & Braun [7]. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcribed data were repeatedly read to identify commonality among the responses of the participants. The gathered data entered stages such as coding, grouping/clustering, repeated reading, and generation of themes.

### **Ethical considerations**

The researchers are not disclosing the names and addresses of the participants since the sample size was small. This is to avoid and prevent inconvenience to their part especially to their professional identity. The researchers replaced their names as T1 to T10 instead of showing their actual names.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The gathered data from the night high school teachers in Calbayog City yielded two major themes which are "expectations and challenges" and "coping mechanisms and rewards". Table 1 shows the sample coding done by the researchers. Table 2 provides the profile of the participants which includes their marital status, number of children and their age range, and the teaching area. The teaching areas of the night high school teachers in Calbayog City include English, Music, Arts, Physical Education and Health (MAPEH), Science, Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE), Values Education, ArPa (Araling Panlipunan), Filipino, and Mathematics. Table 3 illustrates the expectations, challenges, coping mechanisms, and rewards of night high school teachers. During the process of analysing the gathered data, codes were used to identify categories or subthemes. Those similar codes were clustered. The researchers were able to reduce the codes to a total of 32. These codes were then categorized into "expectations of night high school teachers from their profession", "challenges of night high school teacher profession", "night high school teachers' coping mechanisms", and "rewards from job performance".

The identified categories/subthemes were then reduced to major themes including “expectations and challenges” and “coping mechanisms and rewards”.

**Table 1.** Sample of Coding Process

Data	Coding
Upon transferring to the night high, I expected to have more time in the morning for personal matters to attend to. However, I already expected my students to be not the same as my former students in the day class because most are working during the day and most night high students are those who did not pass for admission in the day high. I already thought that most of the students might struggle in their academics.	Student Expectations
The biggest challenge I am facing is on the behavior of the students as well as their culture at home. Their priority is not really on education because they are struggling on how to survive their daily needs.	Student behavior and priority
I worked harder to help them catch up with the lessons. I employed great patience and understanding in carrying out my task as a teacher.	Patience and understanding
I just tried to understand them better and I adjusted to match their situation.	
I consider it rewarding when my students perform well and I can see that they learned something from me.	Performance and Reward

**Table 2.** Profile of Participants

Respondent	Marital Status	No. Of Children	Age Of Children		Teaching Area
			1 month to 15 years	16 years and above	
T1	Single	0	-	-	English
T2	Single	1	1	-	MAPEH
T3	Single	0	-	-	Science
T4	Married	3	-	3	TLE
T5	Separated	3	2	1	Values Education/ArPa
T6	Single	2	1	1	Filipino
T7	Married	2	2	-	Mathematics
T8	Married	4	3	1	Mathematics
T9	Married	1	-	1	English/Filipino
T10	Married	1	1	-	Filipino

**Table 3.** Themes Development

Codes	Categories/Subthemes	Major Themes
Student Expectations	Expectations of Nigh High School Teachers from their Profession	Expectations and Challenges
Stable Income and High-Performing Students		
Time For Family		
Work Expectation		
Sharing Basic Life Skills		
Literacy Of Students Lower Than Current Level		
Students With Special Needs		
High Salary and Unexpected Expenses		
Stable Income and Career		
Student Behavior and Priority	Challenges of Night High School Teacher Profession	
Difficulty in modules retrieval and bad student character		
Students’ Lower Level of Understanding and Interest		
Gap Between Students Competency and Curriculum Standard		
Teacher and Students’ Gap		
Student Attitude Problems and Basic Skills		
Lack of Training Opportunities for Nigh High Teachers		

Lack of Free Time, Attention, and Opportunities  
Low Student Performance, Interest, and Motivation  
Negative Extreme of Students  
Patience and understanding  
Strengthened Stress Tolerance  
Adjustment Student Level  
Positive Attitude towards Challenges  
Positive Attitude towards Challenges  
Reinforcement Activities  
Lessons Simplification  
Positive Disposition towards Work  
Working beyond Capacity  
Patience Extension and Stress Tolerance  
Feeling of Self-Fulfillment  
Self-gratification and Satisfaction  
Becoming a Better Educator

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Night High School Teachers' Coping Mechanisms	Coping Mechanisms and Rewards
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Rewards from Job  
Performance

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## 1. Expectations and Challenges

### 1.1 Expectations of night high school teachers from their profession

Upon landing a permanent job in the government, night high school teachers have various expectations from their job. Some, considering the work schedule, assumed to have more time for other tasks and for their families during the day. Idealists expected that they would have a stable high-paying job with learners who are not far back compared to the day class students. However, among them, one teacher who was one of the first teachers to be assigned in the night high said this "I expected that I will be teaching the underprivileged learners so I expected a lot of work in terms of uplifting their morale as well as their academic skills. I expected more work for me." Another teacher believed that her job is to teach the night high school students with certain life skills they can use because for most night high students, education is not their priority because they are busy fending off for themselves to survive.

Basically, most of the night high school teachers expected quite much from their profession, but were proven quite wrong later on.

### 1.2 Challenge of night high school teacher profession

One of the most common challenges faced by night high school teachers is that most of the night high students have not acquired the basic skills needed for high school students. Comparing them to other students, they are quite left behind and have not fully acquired the skills needed to be able to catch up with the lessons in junior high. Another challenge is on student behavior – most of the students come from the poorest of the poor and most do not have strong parental foundation on good

behavior and proper manners because they have been exposed to harsh living conditions. Absenteeism and habitual tardiness are also evident among students. Some do not have any other choice but to come to school late because they are juggling different jobs during the day for them to be able to survive daily.

According to a night high school teacher, "Academically, one of my greatest challenges as a teacher in night high is that there is really a very far gap between the expected competency of learners compared to the standard of their current curriculum. Our learners lag behind and that is a big challenge for me to establish mastery of the basic skills required in the curriculum. They are not academically well-prepared for high school."

Another participant said that "Some of the challenges are the lack of training opportunities given for teachers in the night high as well as limited avenues of opportunities for students. Teachers and students in the night high are commonly discriminated or belittled by those coming from the day high."

Generally, if we are to put these challenges in a single statement, the biggest challenge that night high school teachers face is that students in the night high are not academically prepared for high school and their priority is not education but daily survival.

## 2. Coping Mechanisms and Rewards

### 2.1 Night High School Teachers' Coping Mechanisms

When asked about the coping mechanisms they employed, unanimously, night high teachers strengthened their stress tolerance so as not to affect their work attitude and family life. They lengthened their

patience and understanding towards students and other aspects of their job that challenges them. Adjustments on the lessons were made without affecting the competencies required for every subject of every grade level. They tried to simplify the lessons and present as many examples as they can to help students understand every topic, to the point of spoon-feeding information on certain difficult topics. Most of the teachers cope by putting on happy dispositions to provide a light and happy mood whenever they teach their students, despite the adversities they face. Acceptance of their present situation and resilience are the key coping mechanisms of the night high school teachers.

## 2.2 Rewards from Job Performance

Teaching is indeed a very noble profession, and teaching in the night high is one of the noblest teaching assignments a teacher can ever have. Though it is not financially rewarding, the feelings of self-fulfillment and self-gratification that night high school teachers feel whenever they see how the students learn from them and how they are able to change the lives of their students, that is already very rewarding for them. As teachers, they feel as though their students are their children from other parents and it is just satisfying and fulfilling to witness the small wins of their students in different aspects of their lives. Seeing their former students living better lives and having improved living conditions, that alone is already rewarding for night high school teachers.

According to one participant, “Of course, our profession is not that rewarding financially but seeing them appreciate what you are doing and making them realize that what you are doing is good for them, that is already very rewarding. For them to realize that your job impacts their life, that is one of my greatest rewards.”

## CONCLUSION

This study unveiled the lived experiences of night teachers in CCNightHS. Concerns about teaching, non-teaching, personal, family life of night high school teachers were raised and analyzed. The researchers found that night high school teachers from CCNightHS expected a lot from their job. However, expectations do not really match the reality the teachers are facing. Teachers struggle to cope up with the challenges of their job while also facing personal challenges. The researchers also found out that the most of the students enrolled in CCNightHS have no basic skills required to be admitted in a high school, thus giving teachers a hard time in dealing with them. Teachers have to go back to teaching basic skills to their students as required in high school. This also shows that the school enrolled students

even though they have no basic necessary skills and learning necessary for a high school student. Expected competencies of students are far beyond curriculum standards. Lack of trainings for night high school teachers also affects their performance and satisfaction. It is important that night high school teachers be trained in handling different types of students. The researchers also found that night high school teachers in CCNightHS are strengthening their stress tolerance. They keep stress from affecting their performance and personal lives. There are no financial rewards for teachers when they are having a good job performance. For the majority of the night high school teachers, it is more rewarding to see their students succeed and live better lives.

There are several factors that could be subject for further theoretical and empirical researches in the future in the CCNightHS. Several points that can be improved in CCNightHS are improvements of work environment, team building activities, training for teachers, teacher retention, rewards and recognition, and improvements in management.

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