

NAVIGATING the UNTOLD ACCOUNTS and SENTIMENTS of PRIVATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL with TRANSIENT TEACHERS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

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Abstract

This qualitative multiple-case study aimed to uncover how personnel in private elementary schools navigate the challenges that arise when working with transient teachers. Conducted in two (2) private elementary schools in Maniki Kapalong Davao del Norte, Philippines, the study focused on the lived experiences of key personnel who directly engage with transient teaching staff. The research involved in depth, one-on-one interview with four (4) primary participants: a school principal, an academic coordinator/head teacher, a head of Hr, and tenured educator. To enrich the data and validate responses, four (4) additional informants : assistant principal, a fellow head teacher, a colleague from Hr, and another tenured teacher, were also interviewed. Using a qualitative research design and a multiple-case analysis to explore the emotional and professional challenges faced by personnel. These included the emotional toll of frequent staff turnover, the difficulty of adapting to constant changes, and the challenges in implementing consistent instructions and maintaining instructional quality. Participants revealed coping strategies such as fostering collaboration, maintaining open communication, and conducting thorough orientation programs for incoming teachers. The findings also highlighted the importance of mutual respect, positive interpersonal relationships, and a supportive institutional culture in mitigating the disruptions caused by transient teaching staff. This study not only fulfills academic requirements but also contributes to the broader discourse on educational policy and school management. By centering the voices of those most affected, it offers practical insights for improving institutional responses to teacher transience in private elementary schools and underscores the need for systemic support mechanisms to ensure educational continuity and staff well-being.

Keywords: multiple case study, personnel, private elementary school, sentiments, transient teachers

1. Introduction

The existence of transient teachers in private elementary schools is sometimes neglected and ignored. Despite that, a good and motivating classroom depends on awareness of the dynamics of their positions and the experiences of both permanent and temporary personnel. Well-known for their strong standards 'or education and

close-knit community, private elementary schools mostly depend on their staff-including teachers, administrators, and support staff-to keep the quality of education. In this manner, transitory teachers who either work under short-term contracts or cover temporarily may have problems that greatly affect their performance, job happiness, and interaction with permanent staff and pupils (Sumipo, 2020).

In the United States, a study conducted under the Learning Policy Institute, based in Palo Alto, California found that transient teacher usually assigned to cover for a normal teaching staff, temporary instructors are supposed to attend current classes without continuity, therefore disturbing the learning environment (Darling-Hammond, 2017). As per Lubienski & Lubienski (2019) even if it offers flexibility and rapid answers to staffing shortages, nomadic teaching can induce sentiments of loneliness, uncertainty, and job instability, which helps to lower work satisfaction. Additionally, Hollins & Guzman (2018) give their restricted access to the same professional development opportunities and inability to be exactly in line with the school culture, establishing meaningful connections with both permanent staff members and students would be difficult.

The connections between transient and permanent teachers in private schools have also been another important issue with less studies on. Often more crucial in determining the direction of the institution, permanent professors might view temporary academics differently. Which could cause problems in cooperation and communication. The major turnover of temporary teachers affects the workplace culture at private schools, which is defined by cooperation, high standards, and community involvement; hence, it influences the emotional well-being of the permanent staff as well as the quality of instruction given to the students (Hattie, 2018).

The study explores the key challenges in private primary schools, focusing on the real experiences and coping strategies of school personnel. By hearing their stories, it hopes to inspire and support principals, academic coordinators, HR heads, and tenured staff in their roles. The findings offer insights into improving communication, teamwork, and job satisfaction while shedding light on how temporary instructors affect the school environment. More than that, this research fills an important gap in understanding the emotional experiences, job satisfaction, and overall atmosphere for these educators. By recognizing their perspectives, education authorities can create programs that truly support school personnel throughout their careers, helping shape a more stable and fulfilling teaching experience.

2. Theoretical Lens

This study was anchored on the Turnover theory, proposed by Mobley (1982), which posits that employee turnover was a function of three main factors: (1) dissatisfaction with one's current job, (2) attractiveness of alternative job opportunities, and (3) commitment to the organization. According to the theory, employees are more likely to leave their jobs if they are dissatisfied with their current work situation, if they perceive that there are better job opportunities available elsewhere, and if they have a low level of commitment to their employer.

In context, the Turnover Theory was used to explain why these teachers are more likely to leave their jobs than their non-transient counterparts. Transient teachers may be more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs due to factors such as low pay, heavy workloads, or a lack of support from administrators. They may also be more likely to perceive that there are better job opportunities available elsewhere, as they are not tied to a particular geographic location.

3. Research Questions

This research aimed to find out the experiences, challenges and adjustments of transient teachers in private elementary schools. Therefore, important questions that were tackle were as follows:

1. What are the lived experiences faced by private elementary school personnel with transient teachers?

2. What coping mechanism do private elementary school personnel use to address the challenges of having transient teachers?
3. What are the insights that the personnel from private elementary schools with transient teachers gained throughout their experiences?

4. Literature Review

Transient Teachers

On the basis of Mortensen's (2017) theory of transient multilingual communities, transient teachers can be understood as educators who move between different schools and communities, often coming from diverse sociocultural and national backgrounds. These teachers temporarily engage in teaching roles, either in-person or online, contributing to students' learning within a defined period before transitioning to new locations or assignments. Their presence is short-term, and their impact is shaped by the specific educational goals established within each teaching environment (Oesterle et al., 2021).

Moreover, often filling in for permanent teachers who might be on vacation, transient teachers—those hired for a designated period, say a semester or academic year—or those working briefly or on a short-term basis. Under a short-term project or initiative. These teachers might potentially be employed to cover certain courses or subjects. Often without any long-term commitment from either side, they might be hired under contract and might work for another district or university. Sometimes teacher shortages or too high turnover demand temporary teachers to fill in for staffing shortfalls. They might also be utilized in remote areas where special education, language programs, or permanent teacher retention provide challenges. Although their contracts sometimes offer more freedom or a specified expiration date, temporary instructors' roles and responsibilities might be similar to those of full-time professors (Neupane, 2022).

However, transient teachers is also an issue for those few teachers who choose to live in the town for the duration of their employment at the school. Students and the school community are all too familiar with teachers' "comings" and "goings" and with the implicit as well as explicit promises that their temporary residency suggests (Moriarty et al., 2020).

In line with this, transient teachers play a vital role in a child's growth, providing relentless support and prioritizing students' well-being. Despite challenges, they continue to inspire learners. This study uses narratology and a qualitative approach to uncover the untold stories of elementary teachers in private schools, showing how shared experiences contribute to student learning. Six teachers participated in semi-structured interviews, highlighting their unique qualities, teaching methods, and values. The findings emphasize a humanistic and constructivist approach to education and suggest that collaboration through group projects can enhance teaching strategies and professional growth (Danganan et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, teaching is widely recognized as a demanding profession. Increasing responsibilities, heightened expectations, and an ever-growing workload have significantly contributed to rising stress levels among educators. These challenges make it increasingly difficult for teachers to balance their professional duties while maintaining their well-being (Cunningham, 2022).

Transient Teacher Practices

Transient teachers, who frequently move between schools or locations, develop unique instructional practices to adapt to different learning environments. Their teaching methods are shaped by the need for flexibility, efficiency, and engagement, ensuring that students receive quality education despite the temporary nature of their presence. These practices involve planning strategies, instructional techniques, and assessment methods that help transient teachers integrate quickly into new classrooms (Francisco & Celon, 2020).

In line with this, one key aspect of transient teachers' practices is their ability to adjust to diverse student needs. Since they often work in different schools with varying curricula, they must be highly adaptable, using student-centered approaches to create meaningful learning experiences. They rely on interactive teaching methods, such as group discussions, project-based learning, and technology-driven instruction, to keep students engaged (Loughland & Alonzo, 2019).

Additionally, assessment practices also play a vital role in transient teachers' instructional methods. Since they may not have long-term involvement in student progress, they often use formative assessments, such as quizzes, reflections, and peer evaluations, to gauge understanding and provide immediate feedback. This helps students stay on track and allows transient teachers to adjust their teaching strategies accordingly (Yan & Pastore, 2022).

Furthermore, (Ciampa & Gallagher, 2019) conducted a study revealing that a teacher that reflects on their teaching practices, their awareness of their teaching increases, and they can then unlearn the ineffective teaching methods which may have undesirable effects on students' learning experience. Additionally, transient teachers usually use reflection in order to improve their teaching in areas of classroom activities, lesson planning, behavioral management, and performance indicators (Meierdirk, 2018).

However, despite the challenges of frequent relocation, transient teachers contribute significantly to student learning by bringing diverse perspectives, innovative teaching methods, and fresh insights into the classroom. Their ability to adapt, engage, and inspire ensures that students receive quality education, even in temporary teaching arrangements (Dumbuya, 2025).

Private Elementary School Personnel

This survey found how the private school teachers and personnel felt about their working environment, professional growth, and retention policies. The association between the variables was found in this descriptive, correlational study employing surveys by means of polls. With 156 randomly chosen respondents, this survey was carried out at the several private schools around (Hungo et al., 2024).

Bukidnon, Philippines. Private school teachers and personnel's have great satisfaction with the regular participation and professional development initiatives. The elements of the working environment the teachers consider satisfying include the school leadership, teacher empowerment, facilities, and resources. It may also be changed in terms of time, say by setting aside more for instruction and learning readiness. Regarding retention, the private school teacher and personnel's considered their odds of remaining at their current school to be either good or mediocre. Teacher retention, the working environment, and professional development were shown to be quite correlated. The hypothesis of the study is therefore disproved. It implies the working circumstances and proficiency of the nature of teachers (Alarcon & circumstances and proficiency of the nature (Monterola, 2024).

In addition, usually include teachers, administrators, assistants, and other key players, private elementary school personnel. Teachers at these institutions are in charge of imparting education, classroom management, and student development support while administrators handle school management, curriculum development, and policy implementation. Among other support staff, counselors, librarians, and custodians help the school to function as it should. School administrators not only provide effective instruction but also create a compassionate environment for employees as well as for the children. All part of teacher responsibilities is curriculum delivery, assessments, and establishing a secure and inclusive. Classroom environment all of which help. Private school teachers might potentially be given extra duties including support with community service initiatives and school events (Jbara, 2022).

5. Methodology

This study used a qualitative research design in a multiple case approach in order to further understand the challenges, coping mechanisms from those challenges, and insights from the particular phenomenon they have experienced. As defined, qualitative research is a type of research where it does not require numerical data but more of the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic data to arrive at an exploratory means of in-depth collection, analysis and discussion of data through the means of interviewing (Creswell, 1998).

5.1 Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design in a multiple case approach in order to further understand the challenges, coping mechanisms from those challenges, and insights from the particular phenomenon they have experienced. As defined, qualitative research is a type of research where it does not require numerical data but more of the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic data to arrive at an exploratory means of in-depth collection, analysis and discussion of data through the means of interviewing (Creswell, 1998).

5.2 Data Collection

In gathering vital data for this study, formal procedures were followed. These procedures include everything from requesting permission to conduct a study to data collection.

5.3 Data Analysis

The data collected throughout the research was then examined in order to come up with conclusions to solve the problem under analysis. In a study, data analysis entails summarizing a large amount of data and presenting the results in a way that communicates the most significant qualities (Hancock et al., 2009). In the analysis, the words and their meaning, the context in which the comments are made, the internal consistency, frequency, the extent of the comments, the specificity of the answers, and the importance of identifying the main ideas should all be considered (Krueger, 2004).

5.4 Ethical Considerations

The only goal of ethics in scientific investigations is to control both the participant and the researcher's situation. Analysts point out that the relationship between the participant and the researcher during data collection might have moral repercussions in a normal qualitative study. As a result, different rules must be established to be followed in order to prevent ethical ramifications (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017).

6. Results and Discussion

To answer this research question, in-depth interview was conducted with the participants. Five sub-questions were asked to the four participants. These helped to elaborate the concept as regards to the experiences and challenges observed by the private elementary school. The major themes and core of ideas for the first main research question were presented on Table 1. From the answers of the research participants, major themes emerged: the challenges and ripple effects of teacher turnover, navigating and embracing educational shifts, The challenges of implementing and ensuring compliance with instructions.

6.1 Table 1: Lived Experiences of Private Elementary School Personnel with Transient Teachers

Essential Themes	Supporting Statements
The Challenges and Ripple Effects of Teacher Turnover	• “Okay so, the challenges maybe when they need to leave the school because their contract has ended, so we need to look for another teacher to replace them. This can create a struggle and stress for the other teachers here because if we can not find a replacement, the tenured teachers will have to take on extra duties.” (IDI-01) • “The challenge that I have observed is that those of us who have been here for a while usually end up taking on and handling the tasks left behind by those transient teachers.” (IDI-02) • “When they move out to search for other schools, they can teach there as transients to gain experience, just like others who have had similar experiences. After they move out after two or three years or when their term as substitute or part-time ends, there are certain things they will inevitably leave behind.”(IDI-07) • “Of course, when they leave, it will be difficult for us because we do not have a choice since their term has ended, so that is just how it is.”(IDI-08)
Navigating and Embracing Educational Shifts	• “It is challenging because we need to adjust to changes and at the same time keep up with them in delivering the lesson. “(IDI-01) • “When it comes to how I am to deliver my lesson so medyo ma challenge ko sa ilaha nga makipagsabayan pag abot na ana kay need nako mo adjust og mo adapt sa ilang new strategies man gud.” (IDI-02) • “Of course if you are new, right are you still wondering what you should do although maybe you already know that but when you are going to apply it to the learners it will be very difficult not the same with those say for example ten to fifteen years or even five years in the field they can adjust in other words those who were coming in as a new teachers are already in the adjustment period.” (IDI-07)
The Challenges of Implementing and Ensuring Compliance with Instructions	• “So the instruction sometimes, the instruction, me as an academic coordinator it is difficult to implement the instructions to the teachers, because some teachers seem to disregard it.” (IDI03) • “Like what I said, those who do not know how to follow instructions, that is where the struggle lies. That is what I noticed about her because she always reminds us about our paperwork. As an academic coordinator, she also needs to do this to clear her

	clearance, so if we do not follow instructions, she will also struggle.” (IDI-04) • “I keep announcing repeatedly, but sometimes despite the repeated reminders, until now, nothing has been submitted, they did not follow the instructions.” (IDI-07)
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The major themes and core of ideas for research question number 2 was presented in Table 2. From the answers of the participants, three major themes emerged: fostering teamwork and strengthening collaborative connections, building strong communication and meaningful connections, and ensuring comprehensive onboarding and integration.

Table 2 showed the themes and core ideas on the coping mechanism of private elementary school personnel with transient teachers.

6.2 Table 2: Coping Mechanism of the Private Elementary School Personnel with Transient Teachers

Essential Themes	Supporting Statements
Fostering Teamwork and Strengthening Collaborative Connections	• “I encourage the tenured and transient to work together and collaborate with each other, this can help create good relationship and ensure the continuity of learning through this they can discuss what to do to support students learning.” (IDI 01) • “Sister encourages us to help them (transient) so that we can have conversation, get to know each other better, I think sister wants to see us tenured and transient teacher helping each other, work as a team.” (IDI-02) • “If there is a problem, their child will chat with the teacher, the adviser, because that is how you will know the child’s lacking’s and what happened to the child so yes, we collaborate together with the parents or guardians. That is how you can connect with the parents of your students.” (IDI-03) • “You need to collaborate with the parents as a teacher, you openly discuss the problems and concerns, and connect with parents. (IDI-04)
	• <i>Open communication, have a quick conversation with them, and ask them how they feel and listen to their concerns.” (IDI-01)</i> • “Engage in conversation with them if needed, especially if they have problems. Ask them and be ready to listen to them. As teachers, we are not just teachers, but also like their mothers or sisters, so there should be constant communication.” (IDI-02) • “Proper communication is key, it is all about proper communication. Whatever issues or problems they

Building Strong Communication and Meaningful Connections	encounter, they just need to tell me so that we can help each other.” (IDI-03) • “Just talk to them, communicate with them.”(IDI-04) • “The important thing is communication, dialogue, not monologue. So, you have to start a conversation with transient teachers because when you are new, you tend to feel shy.”(IDI-05) • “You need to communicate with them and inform them, just like ma’am. This is how you handle your students, this is the school’s policy, and these are the benefits you can receive. So, communication is key.”(IDI-06) • “To manage them, still communication because if they do not understand you or if they do not understand what you want them to do, so effective communication is very important.”(IDI-07) • “Oh, it is still just communication and it is still just a relationship. They are really connected because if there is no communication, they will be ashamed. They do not know what to do anymore.”(IDI-08)
Ensuring Comprehensive Onboarding and Integration	• “<i>What we did is we oriented them, gave them a tour, introduced them to their new workmates or co-teachers, and to the students. I also encouraged the staff of this school to support the transient teachers and help them if needed.</i>” (IDI-01) • “We also have orientation so in orientation we orient them about school policies, procedures and what they need to follow. We also introduce them to their new students and to other school personnel and teachers.” (IDI-02) • “There is a seminar on school-based training at the beginning of the school year, they also provide in-service training. “(IDI- 07) • “So, when classes start, we will have an orientation. So, when we say orientation, it is for teachers, during the introduction meeting they introduce the transient teacher to all staff including students. So, explain your experiences to the new ones, that is how it is.” (IDI-08)

The major themes and core of ideas for research question number 3 was presented in Table 3. From the answers of the participants, three major themes emerged: cultivating a culture of respect and appreciation, cultivating a nurturing and support, and cultivating meaningful connections and friendship.

Table 3 showed the themes and core ideas on the insights of private elementary school personnel with transient teachers.

6.3 Table 3: Insights of the Private Elementary School Personnel with Transient Teachers

Essential Themes	Supporting Statements
Cultivating a Culture of Respect and Appreciation	• "We respect each other, respect teachers and participate." (IDI-01) • "If you want to gain respect, respect yourself first and respect others, I always tell my students that you also respect your teachers, even if they are transient or tenured." (IDI-02) • "Respect them because they have something to help you make your work easier" (IDI-05) • "So, we should not underestimate them. We should respect and appreciate what they are capable of." (IDI-06)
Cultivating a Nurturing and Support	• <i>"Maybe we just need to talk to them and provide support to the children through communication."</i> (IDI-03) • "What ma'am did is that maybe as a teacher you should do first is to teach the students and support them." (IDI-04) • "We really need to be patient with them, we need to teach them and have conversations with them. If it is needed to model them, I will model them, but we should not expect too much from them instead we should support them." (IDI-07) • "You must be support one another and be patient with the newcomers, and perhaps they are also patient with us because we have many questions, especially regarding technology." (IDI-08)
Cultivating Meaningful Connections and Friendship	• <i>"Build a positive relationship, we need to build friendship with them, you must be kind as a student."</i> (IDI-01) • "You should build a strong relationship with them, help each other, give and take, you will share what you have learned with them and they will also share their knowledge with you so that both of you can grow and learn. It is really nice to be in a place where there is unity and a good relationship with one another." (IDI-02) • "It's really friendship. It is like adding an additional set of friends, and having good relationship with other, of course." (IDI-05) • "You can build relationships as friends because you can bond with them." (IDI-06)

The results of the study were included in this chapter, as well as a discussion of each set of findings. It also included the researcher's study implications and synthesis based on the themes that emerged during the data analysis.

In most cases, a qualitative approach was used to answer questions about the participant's experiences, meaning, and point of view. Using this cue, the researcher conducted a qualitative multiple-case study to collect data from the target respondents. It seeks to substantiate the claim that the case study technique, specifically the multiple-case studies design, can be used successfully to delve beneath the surface of a situation and provide a rich context for understanding the phenomena under investigation (Zach, 2006).

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews that allowed her to address the phenomenon in depth, providing a forum for informants to convey their experiences in detail, as close to reality as possible. It is to comprehend the essence of participants' shared experiences on a common ground. As a result, the subjective and objective experiences of the participants were presented. Only the researcher and the participant have access to the information obtained during the interview (Mills et al., 2010).

7. Conclusion

As part of fulfilling the requirements for an undergraduate degree in elementary education, the researcher seized the opportunity to conduct a study centered on the perceptions and insights of private elementary school personnel. This undertaking enabled the researcher to explore the perspectives and experiences of four participants and four informants, including principals, Academic Coordinators/Head teachers, HR personnel, and tenured educators. Throughout the study, the researcher uncovered a diverse range of viewpoints and valuable insights.

From the outset, the panel members accepted their roles with confidence, trusting that the researcher would approach the study with diligence and integrity. True to this expectation, the researcher devoted significant time and effort to every stage of the research process, from conducting interviews and transcribing responses to analyzing data and presenting findings. Numerous challenges emerged along the way, testing the researcher's perseverance and commitment to completing the study. Despite these obstacles, the researcher embraced the challenge, and through unwavering dedication, this final product represents the culmination of her best efforts not only as a requirement for her bachelor's degree but also as a testament to her personal commitment to the field. With a sincere hope that the study will leave a lasting impression, the researcher aspires for this work to be recognized as a meaningful and

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-The Researcher

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Appendices

- A Letter of Permission to Conduct the Study
- B Compliance Certification
- C Sample Informed Consent Forms
- D Sample Member Checking Certificate
- E Interview Guide
- F Validation Sheet
- G Archival Log
- H Note Taker Form with Field Notes

- I Audit Trail
- J Editor's Certificate
- K Plagiarism Check Result from Turnitin