



WEARING TWO HATS: EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF GUIDANCE DESIGNATES

Aylene Z. Villanueva

Graduate School, Mindoro State University, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines

ABSTRACT

Guidance and counseling services are essential in promoting students' holistic development; however, public secondary schools in the Philippines continue to face a significant shortage of licensed guidance counselors. As a result, classroom teachers are often designated to perform guidance and counseling functions alongside their teaching responsibilities, placing them in dual and often conflicting roles. This study explored the lived experiences of guidance designates in public secondary schools of San Jose, Occidental Mindoro during School Year 2025–2026. Employing a descriptive-qualitative design using phenomenological approach, the study involved twelve purposively selected guidance designates who had served in the role for at least three years. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's framework. Findings revealed that guidance designates derive rewards such as holistic development, kinship bonds, pedagogical transformation, intrinsic fulfillment, resource allocation, and professional empowerment. However, they also encounter challenges including role conflict, insufficient training, student behavioral strain, stakeholder-related conflicts, inadequate institutional support and impact on teaching performance. To manage these challenges, they employed various coping strategies such as time management, peer collaboration, referral systems and relationship-building. Based on the findings, the study proposes policy recommendations aimed at reducing teaching loads, strengthening institutional support, capability building, and hiring of Registered Guidance Counselors. The study contributes to the limited body of literature on guidance designates, particularly in rural contexts, and underscores the need for responsive policies and support systems to sustain effective guidance services while safeguarding the well-being of teacher-designates.

Keywords: *Guidance designates, Challenges, Rewards, Coping strategies, Qualitative study*

INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling is an essential part of the school's structure and process as it provides a means for the holistic development of students. The purpose of this program is to help shape student's personality, character, and general wellness (Arumugam et al. 2021). Hence, the specific needs, problems, and concerns of students shall be adequately addressed through a variety of school-based guidance and counseling programs (Aguilar-Ramat, 2022). Ideally, a registered or licensed school counselor carries out the responsibility of providing counseling services, psychosocial support, psychological intervention, and developmental programs, while school counselors have a significant impact on assisting all students to achieve positive educational outcomes. Thus, it is imperative for them to possess the necessary competencies to assist students while performing their duties and supporting their wellness (Department of Education & National Educators Academy of the Philippines, 2023).

However, the Philippines faces a substantial shortfall of licensed Guidance Counselors especially in the public education system. The Department of Education (DepEd) has never met the recommendation of one school counselor per 500 students. Consequently, classroom teachers are appointed by schools as guidance designates or guidance teachers so that critical student support programs can be continued (Boquia et al., 2022).

Guidance designates are regular classroom teachers that provide instructional and teaching support for students while performing specific guidance-related activities. As such, these classroom teachers may be responsible for addressing the issues of concern from students, developing and implementing prevention and developmentally oriented programs, supporting students experiencing behavior problems, helping students having difficulty academically and personally. Thus, their contribution is important to ensure students receive adequate student services within schools. However, as they serve a dual role as teacher and counselor, it creates an additional layer of complexity for these individuals due to the "wearing of two hats."

The lived experiences of those who provide guidance describe how they experience the realities of being both an instructional teacher and a counselor. As reported by Torres et al, (2025), in "Beyond the Call: Lived Realities of Guidance Designates in Tanjay City Division", the role of a designated guidance counselor is to develop and conduct counseling programs with varying degrees of administrative support from students and resources available. Teachers who serve as guidance designates face systematic barriers that prevent them from implementing their intended roles. However, these same teachers find ways to adapt to new situations and grow professionally as they incorporate their guidance role into each day at school.

On the one hand, guidance designates experience fulfillment by providing for student needs outside academics and for their growth in both content and process. Yet on the negative side, these teachers encounter obstacles such as a lack of formal education or training as counselors, inadequate school administration support for guidance, role conflicts, and large amounts of time spent on various works other than guiding. These have been somewhat ignored in academic literature but represent an important part of identifying the long-term viability and effectiveness of guidance services in schools within the Philippines.

The Philippines has developed several policies to deal with the licensed counselor shortages and the increasing demand for mental health assistance for students. The Department of Education's Specialized Training Program for Guidance Designates (DepEd, 2024a) was implemented to provide training for teachers on foundational counseling concepts and techniques. However, the passage of the Republic Act No. 12080 or the Basic Education Mental Health and Well-being Promotion Act (December 6, 2024) represents an advancement in this area. This act requires schools to create school-based mental health programs, establish Mental Health and Well-being offices, and hire licensed guidance counselors in addition to those already employed by the schools. These provisions are intended to enhance the capacity of the country to promote mental health and well-being in basic education.

Despite these developments, many schools in rural areas continue to depend on teacher designates to deliver essential guidance functions. Therefore, their experiences are crucial into how national policies are translated into actual practices implemented among schools.

Meanwhile, based on the schools' Personal Services Itemization and Plantilla of Personnel (PSIPOP) for the Fiscal Year 2025, there was a lack of licensed Guidance Counselors in the public secondary schools in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro which results in assigning teachers as guidance designates. The number of enrolled students and number of guidance-related cases are both increasing at an alarming rate based on the Guidance records of schools. In the initial interviews made, teachers who have been assigned as guidance designates reported that they experience difficulty when juggling instruction and counseling. Many reported experiencing emotionally demanding cases which would require specific interventions. However, these same teachers also stated that they were having difficulty meeting their expectations for classroom performance while addressing students' personal issues.

The number of discipline problems also continues to be a problem for many schools, especially since the DepEd implemented the Child Protection Policy (DepEd Order Number 40) in 2012. This policy has reduced the use of punishments and increased the emphasis on counseling as an intervention strategy. The reason that these issues are still present is because there is a lack of understanding of what it means to be a guidance designate during this time.

Although the role of the guidance designate is important, few studies have been conducted on the lived experiences of Guidance Designates. In particular, the majority of all current literature about guidance work has either focused on licensed school counselors or those working full time. Therefore, a significant amount of research exists regarding the experience of the guidance designates. Hence, this study expanded on the comprehension of the actualities of guidance designates' work in public high school settings. Results from this study may be used to develop policies, training, and support which can help teachers develop in ways to effectively function within both their teacher and counselor role while being able to maintain their own wellness as professionals and provide high-quality counseling services to students, which will later benefit all members of the school community.

The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Schools

Counseling and guidance have been recognized as two major parts of educational process through which the learner is helped in his or her overall growth. School counseling services not only assist a learner to be successful academically, but they also contribute to a learner's social well-being and emotional stability, thus enabling them to develop self-awareness, communication and interpersonal skills, career preparedness, and their mental health (UNESCO, 2017). The Department of Education has mandated public elementary and secondary schools to provide guidance services for the benefit of its students. Additionally, under DepEd Order No. 40, series of 2012 entitled Child Protection Policy and subsequent memorandum issued by the department requiring all schools to implement counseling and guidance program for learners. Although there is strong support from the policy side regarding counseling and guidance services in schools, most schools face structural and operational challenges in providing quality counseling and guidance services.

Shortage of Licensed Guidance Counselors

A significant obstacle for quality guidance services in basic education in the Philippines, is a lack of enough licensed guidance counselors. As reported by the Philippine Senate Press Release, as of March 2024, there are roughly 4,460 vacant guidance counselor positions within the public school system. It appears that only about 300 new graduates have the master's degree in Guidance and Counseling needed to become qualified counselors per year. This implies it would likely be at least 14 years before all present gaps can be filled based on current conditions.

Resorting to Guidance Designates

Consequently, the Department of Education has developed a specialized training program for guidance designates to provide them with the knowledge needed to successfully fulfill their responsibilities as school counselor and teacher. The purpose of this program is to assist the designated school counselor in being successful in fulfilling the two primary functions of the position: that of a teacher and that of an academic and

career guidance specialist. It is believed that since most teachers will be working in these positions on a full-time basis, they will require extensive training and support.

Policy Context and Professionalization

In terms of policy, the DepEd has recognized that there are limitations in the way the Department designed their guidelines. A Specialized Training Program for Guidance Designates (DepEd, 2024a), is a program designed to provide teachers with basic counseling knowledge and skills. Division-level memoranda (DepEd, 2024b) have emphasized an increased emphasis on the implementation of guidance and counseling programs as part of the government's effort to improve support services to students.

On the one hand, the Philippine government passed Republic Act No. 12080, or the Basic Education Mental Health and Well-being Promotion Act on December 6, 2024. This law mandated that schools develop their own mental health initiatives, create a school office for mental health and wellbeing, establish counselling centers at the school level, and provide permanent staff positions for school counselors and other relevant personnel. The passing of this law demonstrates the government's willingness to address its current shortage of licensed school counselors and to implement mental health support into public education systems. This is an important first step towards providing professional support and relief from excessive workloads and role confusion by providing structure for licensed counselor placement and training for current teachers who are designated as school counselors (Republic Act No. 12080, 2024).

Related Studies

Lived Realities of Guidance Designates

While many empirical studies document how guidance designates experience real life particularly in educational settings, according to Navarro (2019), they act as the primary means of addressing students' personal and emotional needs when there is no professional counselor available. Nonetheless, both their lack of formal counseling education and their dual responsibility of providing instruction and guidance results in an excessive number of conflicting responsibilities and workloads for them. This creates the potential for these individuals to be overwhelmed by students with extremely complex problems.

Age and Professional Experience

Various research studies suggest a relationship between teachers' age, years of teaching experience, and their ability to effectively manage classrooms and students. A Helen Runyan, et.al. (2019), "Classroom Management Competencies for School Counselors," study provided evidence supporting the development of competences in the areas of classroom management; interpersonal communications; and student engagement among school counselors due to practicing teaching over an extended period. Additionally, this study indicated that experienced educators have acquired

experiential knowledge and behavioral management skills relevant to the counselor/guidance roles.

In the Philippines, a study by Subong (2025), titled “Lived Experiences of Guidance Designated Teachers,” demonstrated that many schools have assigned guidance designated teachers because there are no licensed school counselors available. These guidance designated teachers are typically experienced classroom teachers who may or may not be formally trained in counseling, but use their years of experience teaching students, and their knowledge of how students behave in school settings to perform some aspects of the role of a counselor.

Experiences and Challenges Faced by Guidance Designates

A phenomenological study conducted by Subong IV (2025) identified three common themes for elementary and secondary school counseling specialists including; high levels of workload stress, conflicting expectations based on both their teaching and non-teaching duties, and a lack of sufficient preparation to perform their responsibilities.

In addition, Torrino and Naparan (2025), researched how elementary and secondary school teachers manage two positions that are required to be held simultaneously. These include; the position of school head and class adviser. The research found many similarities in terms of challenges experienced, while also finding that these teachers’ experiences of fulfilling roles were also represented. Additionally, it was evident through their narrative accounts that the participants had developed several ways to cope with the demands of their dual roles.

Several studies, on the one hand, have shown that there is both an individualized and institutional element of the experience of being a guidance designate. As a result of balancing multiple responsibilities, including the academic responsibilities of a classroom teacher and the counseling responsibilities of a school counselor — many guidance designates experience conflicting roles, divided attention, and reduced efficiency (Morales & Pineda, 2017), as well as competing priorities. Many guidance designates also receive limited training in counseling theory, technique, and ethics; this can make it difficult for them to effectively address students’ sensitive needs (Navarro, 2019). In addition to these factors contributing to a guidance designate’s inability to be an effective counselor, the multiple responsibilities assigned to a guidance designate contribute to high levels of stress and fatigue and can potentially lead to burnout (Ballada & Orcullo, 2018). Furthermore, the resources available to guidance designates may limit their ability to provide meaningful and effective services. For example, the absence of a dedicated counseling office and/or inadequate supplies or materials significantly limits the capacity of guidance designates to provide quality counseling services (Santos, 2020). Similarly, the research conducted by Mabuza (2025) found the same type of challenges for teachers as those mentioned above, specifically time constraints, lack of support from administration, lack of funding and lack of support from parents.

Coping Mechanisms and Sources of Fulfillment

Despite challenges, studies highlighted the positive aspects of guidance designation roles. Many teachers reported personal fulfillment in being trusted by students, supporting their growth, and being an essential part of the school's welfare network (Santos, 2020; Subong IV, 2025)

The coping strategies identified in these studies include self-directed learning (e.g., seeking additional modules or workshops), networking with fellow educators for peer support, and applying intrinsic motivation from student progress to sustain their commitment. A study in Apayao by Iglesia (2025) found that peer collaboration, mentoring, and intrinsic motivation were key to helping designates manage their dual responsibilities. Similarly, E-Palli (2025) in Cagayan de Oro identified transition factors such as professional learning, mentoring, and intrinsic motivation as crucial for guidance design adjustment. Despite limited formal preparation, guidance designates demonstrated resilience, resourcefulness, and a deep commitment to student welfare. In addition, Reaviles and Delfino (2025) explored the self-efficacy and skill development of guidance designates in the Philippines and discovered that despite lacking formal preparation, teacher-designates exhibited adaptive learning, high intrinsic motivation, and strong student relationships.

Recommendations to strengthen support for guidance designates

Medalla and Musni (2025) revealed that systemic support, including capacity-building initiatives, continuous professional development, inter-stakeholder collaboration, and responsive policy reforms, would help strengthen the role and recognition of guidance designates. Organizing regular workshops and campaigns to equip teachers and parents with guidance counseling would combat the challenges faced by guidance designates. (Mabuza, 2025). More support from school administrators, teachers, and parents by allotting more time to the subject and funding guidance and counseling activities would allow teachers to cover the curriculum more comprehensively, conduct in-depth counseling activities, and provide more individualized attention to students.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by four related theoretical frameworks that serve as lenses through which examined the lived experience of teachers who are assigned to both teach and provide student guidance services within their school setting. The first is Role Theory; developed by Biddle (1986) the theory suggests that people hold many social positions or "roles" and therefore have specific behavioral expectations for those roles. If an individual holds two or more roles simultaneously (i.e., classroom teacher and a guidance provider) then there will be several sets of expected behavior, standards, and practices that the individual must adhere to. Furthermore, these intersecting roles may lead to internal conflict for teachers and guidance designates, particularly if there is minimal institutional support or training in either teaching students or providing guidance services.

The application of Role Theory in this study allowed for an understanding of the experiences of guidance designates. This theory provided insights into the ways that these designates' negotiation of dual professional identity occurs; the way in which they make sense of, give priority to, and act upon their responsibilities within their respective institutions; and how they construct meaning related to their roles and how they manage the associated role pressures and demands.

Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory of motivation, which is used to explain how employees are motivated at work, distinguishes between motivating and hygienic factors that influence job satisfaction. A motivating factor, otherwise known as an intrinsic factor, influences a worker's job satisfaction as it contributes to employees' growth and development. Examples of motivating factors are opportunity for advancement, professional development opportunities, responsibility, challenge of the job, achievement, and recognition. Hygienic factors or extrinsic conditions, on the one hand, can be classified into three categories. These categories include organization policy, supervision, and compensation. Hygienic factors contribute to job satisfaction by eliminating dissatisfaction with the job environment. However, they do not inherently stimulate employee satisfaction.

Person-Role Conflict Theory, proposed by Kahn et al. (1964), highlighted the psychological strain that occurs when there is a misalignment between an individual's self-perception, personal values, and expectations of the role they occupy. In the case of guidance designates, person-role conflict arose when teachers who are primarily trained for instructional tasks are expected to provide psychosocial support and counseling services, often without adequate preparation or professional licensure. This theory provided a framework for understanding the emotional, cognitive, and professional challenges faced by guidance as they navigate conflicting role demands. This highlighted the stress and coping mechanisms involved in balancing instructional responsibilities with counseling functions, which are relevant as the study explored their lived experiences.

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Lazarus and Folkman as cited by Biggs et al. (2017), regarded stress as a transaction where the environmental stimuli are transformed into psychological distress through appraisals and coping strategies. Cognitive appraisal of the person's ability to cope with a particular situation, the secondary appraisal, precedes primary appraisal regarding the potential for harm from an event. Depending on the type of appraisal, coping strategies can either address the root cause of a stressful condition; or provide some relief from the emotional consequences of experiencing such conditions. Therefore, this theoretical model provides a basis for explaining how students use the coping mechanisms identified by design of the Guidance curriculum to deal with workload, emotional overload, and conflicting roles.

Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework illustrates how the key components of this research study, the lived experience of Guidance Designates among public secondary schools are

connected. It is built upon theory and the phenomenology perspective, to gain an understanding of what these experiences mean to the people who live through them.

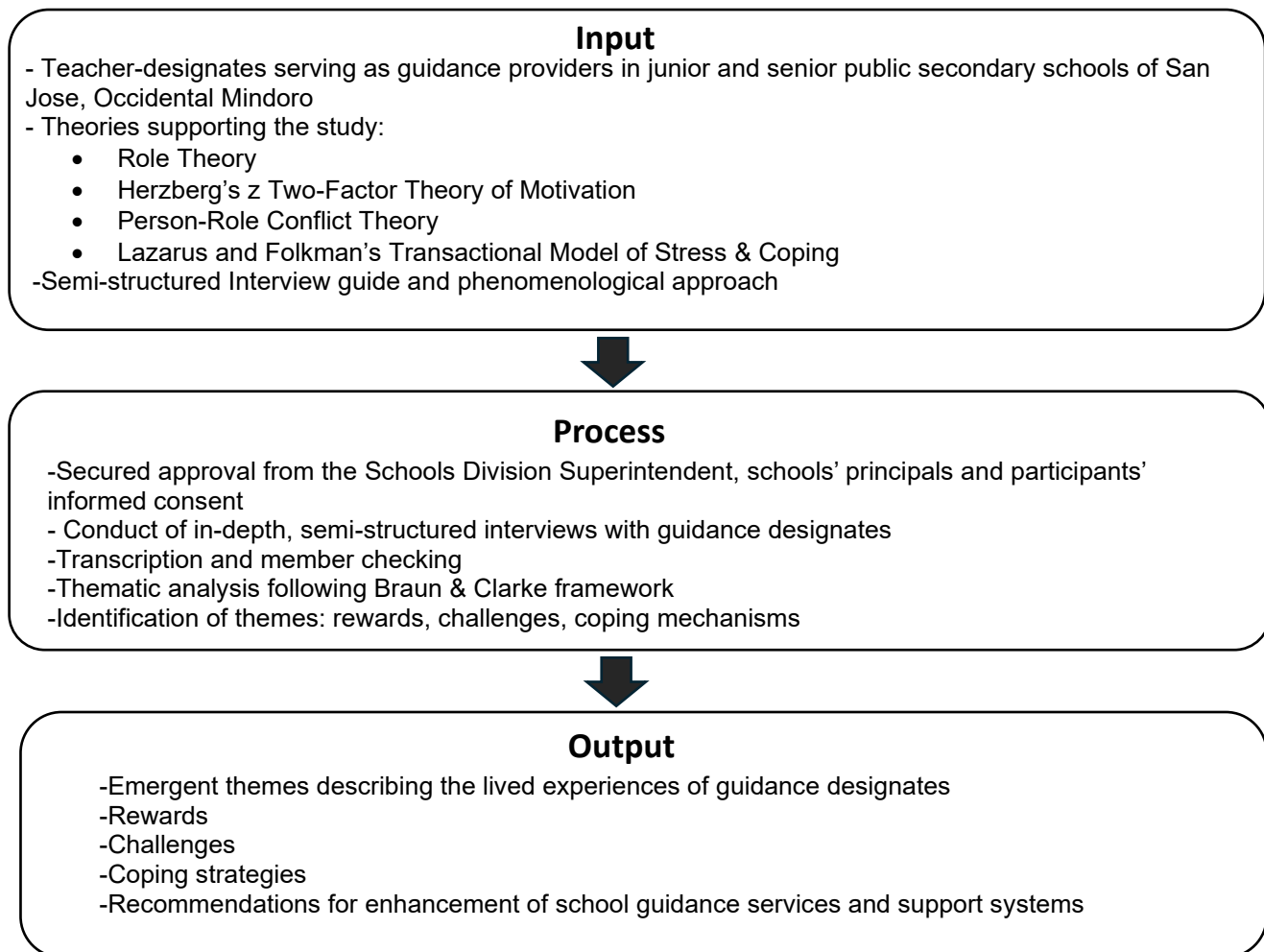


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Diagram

These four theories guided the study it dealt with the lived experiences of guidance designates:

- **Role Theory** and **Person-Role Conflict Theory** explained external and internal role challenges.
- **Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory** highlighted **intrinsic and extrinsic rewards** that motivate and sustain performance, respectively.
- **Lazarus and Folkman's model** illuminated **coping mechanisms** used to manage stress and maintained its effectiveness.

The purpose of this integrated theoretical approach was to investigate the full range of experiences for professional school counselors, including the challenges and rewards associated with the two primary functions of guidance counselors as well as the coping strategies used by the counselors to manage the stress they experienced during their careers. It also served to inform potential policy initiatives related to support and training for school counselor professionals.

The focus of this theoretical model is to provide a forum where guidance designates can express themselves and share their experiences. This allows researchers and professionals in the fields of education and counseling to use systemic analysis to examine the guidance designates' accounts of experience so as to find issues that have yet to be explored.

Research Questions

This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of guidance designates in junior and senior high schools who simultaneously perform teaching and counseling roles among public secondary schools in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro during the School Year 2025-2026.

Specifically, this study sought to address the following:

1. What are the demographic and professional profiles of the guidance designates in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, years of service, and training in guidance and counseling?
2. What rewards do guidance designates derive from performing dual roles?
3. What challenges do they encounter in balancing teaching and guidance duties?
4. What coping strategies do they employ to manage their dual responsibilities?
5. What policy recommendations may be proposed to strengthen institutional support for guidance designates?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a qualitative research design employing a descriptive and phenomenological methodology. A descriptive-phenomenological approach was selected for this study since it allowed us to identify, explore and describe the lived experiences of guidance designate teachers in public secondary schools located in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. As per Alhazmi & Kaufman (2022), phenomenology provides an established theoretical and methodological framework to understand human experience in educational research. Further, Boquia et al. (2022) as cited in Mohamad & Parcon (2022) indicated that the aim of phenomenology is to illustrate specific phenomenon through investigating how individuals perceive and make sense of their own experiences. Typically, this is achieved through collecting high-quality, detailed information via qualitative methodologies; i.e., interviews/discussions/observations, etc. Thus, this

enabled the researcher to provide an accurate representation of the participant's perspectives.

Creswell and Poth (2018) have stated that phenomenological research focuses on the essence of a phenomenon or experience for researchers to gain an understanding of how individuals perceive reality and make sense of it. This was done to discover what participants experienced in terms of the challenges they faced, strategies they used to cope with these challenges, and meanings they assigned to being an educator and being a provider of guidance. Phenomenology is useful for researching how participants create realities based upon their interpretation of their lived experiences using their own words and perspective.

Research Locale

This study was conducted in the twelve (12) public secondary schools in San Jose, Division of Occidental Mindoro of MIMAROPA Region in Luzon which includes San Jose National High School, San Jose National Agricultural Integrated High School, Pedro T. Mendiola Sr. Memorial National High School, Bubog National High School, Caminawit National High School, Central National High School, La Curva National High School, Mangarin National High School, Mapaya National High School, Ambulong National High School, Iling National High School and Pawican National High School.

Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were consisted of twelve (12) guidance designates from both junior and senior high schools among the twelve (12) public secondary schools in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. These individuals are teachers who have been officially assigned to perform guidance and counselling tasks for one (1) year or more, in addition to their teaching responsibilities. These schools were purposively selected because they lacked licensed guidance counselors and relied on teacher designates to perform guidance and counselling responsibilities. A sample size of twelve (12) participants is often adequate for phenomenological depth because the goal is a deep and rich understanding of lived experiences and not statistical breadth.

Sampling Technique

The study used purposive sampling, a type of nonprobability sampling strategy most often employed in qualitative studies. Purposive sampling allows researchers to identify certain participants since they are knowledgeable about the phenomena being examined (Palinkas et al., 2015), as well as having been involved or experienced it. As such, only those formally assigned by their school administration as official Guidance Designates were allowed into the study so the information collected would be of high-quality, relevant to the purposes of the research and reflective of the goals and objectives of the study.

Research Instrument

The main tool for this study was a semi-structured researcher made check list/interview guide in English; it is expected that it will be possible to translate to Filipino at the request of the respondent. A primary function of the tool was to collect descriptive information about the participants' profiles (RQ1), as well as in depth interviews to gather information on specific aspects of guidance designates' experiences with rewards, challenges and strategies they have employed to find a balance between their work responsibilities (RQ2). The ability of the respondents to provide answers free from constraints has been enabled by the interview format.

The interview guide was reviewed and pilot tested with a group of subject matter experts in education, guidance and counseling, and qualitative research. This process allowed for validation as to whether the guide was relevant, understandable, and appropriate for the research goals. Feedback from this group of professionals aided in refining/developing the interview questions to strengthen the tool's ability to generate focused and meaningful responses.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher conducted the data collection using a systemized and ethical process. Before conducting the interview, the researcher sent a formal request letter, received formal approval by the Schools Division Superintendent of the Department of Education Division of Occidental Mindoro; received approval from principals/school heads of the involved schools to receive institutional approval/permission to conduct the study and to comply with research protocols. After receiving approval, the researcher provided each participant with written information about the purpose, boundaries, and processes of the study. Participants were also assured that there would be no negative repercussions if they chose to participate voluntarily, that any information they provide will remain confidential, and that they may terminate participation at any time. Informed Consent forms were completed by each participant prior to their participation in this study.

The interview schedule was developed in coordination with participant preferences regarding date, time and location. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Each of the interviews followed a similar format for collecting rich descriptive data about the participants' personal and professional experiences as guidance designates. Open ended questioning style was utilized so that detailed and reflective answers could be collected. Each of the interviews took between 45 minutes to one hour. The interviews were conducted in a private setting which eliminated any distractions or interruptions. This provided a conducive environment for encouraging candid participation and maintaining confidentiality

Audio recordings of each participant's interview were recorded with their permission for accuracy and completeness of the data as well as field notes to include both verbal and non-verbal cues and other relevant contextual elements which could further enhance the data analysis. Ethical measures were maintained at every stage of

this study. The identity of the participant's has been protected using pseudonyms, and the data has been secured in a locked file cabinet where it will remain accessible only to the researcher. After the completion of collecting data from the interviews the audio tapes were transcribed completely (verbatim) so that the original responses of the participants would not be altered.

To confirm the validity of the results of this research, Lincoln and Guba's suggested methods for credibility and trustworthiness were followed as mentioned by Haq Kakar et al. (2023). To establish credibility, member checking was employed. Member checking is defined as providing the participant with copies of their interview transcript and a summary of the findings to provide verification that the information they have provided has been accurately reported. Participants' views are also ensured by allowing them to view and validate the transcription from interviews after completion and prior to conducting analysis. Confirmability of the results was established by practicing reflexivity at all stages of the research. Reflexivity involves keeping a journal of the researcher's thoughts about any bias or assumptions made during the study. Dependability of the results was further strengthened through maintaining an audit trail of all research decisions, coding activities, and analytic procedures. This approach demonstrated transparency in the research process and allowed other researchers to follow the researcher's decision-making process.

After completing the research, all data obtained while collecting the data were thoroughly shredded and destroyed, therefore preventing unauthorized access.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data was analyzed through thematic analysis, following the framework of Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis was employed within a phenomenological framework to capture the essence of participant's lived experiences. This involves systematically identifying, coding, and categorizing emerging themes and patterns in participants' narratives. Through this process, the researcher aimed to interpret and synthesize the meanings and essences of the participants lived experiences as guidance designates. As observed in the paradigm, these phases were undertaken.

Phase 1: Familiarization with the data. In this phase, all interview recordings were transcribed verbatim. The researcher read and reread the data to immerse them in the participants' narratives and gained a deep understanding of their experiences. Notes and initial impressions were documented to assist in identifying potential patterns and meanings.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes. Meaningful data segments related to the research questions were systematically coded. Coding was performed manually, ensuring that every data item was given equal attention. These initial codes served as building blocks for the development of broader themes.

Phase 3: **Searching the themes.** Codes were examined and clustered into potential themes that represent patterns of shared meaning to understand the lived experiences of guidance designates.

Phase 4: **Reviewing themes.** Preliminary themes were reviewed and refined to ensure that they accurately reflect the data. The researcher checked if the themes are coherent, distinct, and supported by sufficient evidence from the dataset. Some themes can be merged, divided, or discarded. The goal was to develop a thematic map that clearly shows the relationships between themes and subthemes.

Phase 5: **Defining and naming themes.** The researcher outlined the central ideas contained within each thematic area as well as determined which themes would be most applicable to the research questions. Each theme was provided with a clear title or descriptor that clearly conveyed its meaning. In addition to providing a definition for each theme, excerpts that supported each theme were also identified and included within the results section.

Phase 6: **Producing the report.** This involves integration of the themes into a coherent narrative that answers the research questions. The researcher prepared a detailed analysis supported by direct quotations from the participants to highlight the depth and richness of their lived experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic and Professional Profiles of the Guidance Designates

This section outlines the demographic and professional background information of the 12 guidance designates that were participants in this study. Additionally, as shown in Table 1, the profiles outline the guidance designates' demographics; including their age, sex, education level, number of years of experience in teaching, and other related professional development they have received in guidance and counselling.

Table 1
Demographic and Professional Profiles of Guidance Designates

Participant	Age	Gender	Educational Background/ Attainment	Years as Guidance Designate	Years in Teaching	Training in Guidance & Counseling
1	42	Female	BSED-English	11	18	Basic seminars
2	51	Female	MAEd	3	7	Basic seminars
3	44	Female	BSED-Values Education	4	15	Basic seminars
4	45	Female	BSED-Values Education	15	20	Basic seminars
5	37	Female	MA	10	10	Basic seminars

6	48	Female	BSED	12	14	Basic seminars
7	35	Female	MA - Science Education	11	12	Basic seminars
8	36	Female	BS Management MA	4	7	Basic seminars
9	56	Female	BA-History and Philosophy of Religion	10	15	Basic seminars
10	54	Female	BSED-Science MAED	2	32	Basic seminars
11	47	Female	BSED-Filipino	3	20	Basic seminars
12	55	Female	BSED-Values Education	3	25	Basic seminars

Age Profile

Participants' ages fall within a range of thirty-five (35) to fifty-six (56). Three participants are in their thirties. Five or more participants are in their forties and five participants being fifty-plus. These participants represent an adult population that is experienced, typically in the middle to later stages of their lives; many have completed their education and may be at a point where they are considered established professionals, especially as it relates to their careers and potential number of years of professional experience.

This suggests that the school administration may be selecting guidance designates based upon what they believe is the designated teacher's maturity level, classroom management ability or both. The selection of veteran teachers would suggest that the administrators view this position as a leadership position requiring the type of judgment and insight that comes from age, experience and/or being wise. Runyan et al. (2019) and Subong (2025) support these findings when stating that typically younger educators who have less teaching experience are viewed as being less qualified to counsel students and perform other duties associated with providing guidance. Tenured teachers have a better understanding of classroom management techniques and have more developed interpersonal skills and therefore will be able to handle student behavioral and emotional problems.

Gender Profile

The gender composition of all twelve individuals in this study is female. Thus, as noted above regarding the role of Guidance Designate which is predominantly represented by women, it follows an established trend in the fields of helping and teaching. In these fields there is generally a higher proportion of women than men. It may also add another idea to the mothering and parental themes noted throughout this study as well as according to UNESCO that women represent a substantial amount of the world's teachers, especially in basic education.

Educational Background/Attainment

The Educational Profile illustrates an impressive level of academic attainment with an emphasis toward specialization within pedagogy. Almost all participants possess a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education (BSED), with major fields being English, Values Education, Science and Filipino. Participants also have other academic backgrounds such as BS Management and BA in History and Philosophy of Religion. Many participants either currently hold or are pursuing post-baccalaureate degree(s) (MA/MAEd) indicating these individuals as a cohort of lifelong learners seeking to enhance their professional status through graduate education.

These results show the teachers who are designated as counselors typically stem from many different areas of academic specialization. This is reflective of the typical procedure for schools to assign teachers into roles related to student counseling without adequate training or background preparation in guidance and/or counseling as reported by Subong (2025), as opposed to Commission on Higher Education (CHED) (2013) stating that it is ideal for professionals practicing guidance and counseling to receive specialized academic preparation in theory-based practices in counseling, psychological assessments, human development and interventions strategies.

Years as Guidance Designate

This profile indicates a variation in specific experience in guidance office, ranging from 2 to 15 years. Six of them had a decade and more experience of guidance role. While four of them were relative newcomers to the designation, having served three years or less. This finding may lend support to the finding of Subong (2025) that guidance designates who had served for several years said that being around student problems over the years gradually helped them to develop practical counseling techniques and coping mechanisms as well as understanding the guidance functions in a school. She further reported that although most of the designates were not trained in counseling many years of actual experience had taught them many things through doing, as well as through repeated contacts with students, parents, and teachers.

Years in Teaching

There was a significant amount of experience for the participants when it came to teaching. Experience ranged from 7 to 32 years. These are not new teachers but experienced teachers who have seen many school reforms and classroom issues. They most certainly demonstrate a great deal of professionalism through being resilient enough to be able to deal with the emotional demands of counseling, without having a support structure to help them do so. This study supports Subong (2025), who stated that schools usually choose mature, and experienced, teachers to serve as guidance designates.

Training in Guidance and Counseling

The most significant finding within this study's data, however, participants reported receiving the same training. All participants indicated their participation in basic seminars focused on mental health issues, reproductive health information, referring students to appropriate services, and establishing safe spaces. Although these types of seminars can serve as foundational training for future work with student populations, it does not appear that these training programs will adequately prepare them for providing high-level, or even moderate level counseling services.

This profile confirms that "the Guidance Designate" has emerged from an institutional need. For most of the time, the designation of the role of guidance designates is based upon availability instead of specialization. In fact, due to the shortage of licensed counselors in schools, the Philippine educational system assigns teachers to act as counselors for students. As such, there are few requirements for teachers acting as counselors, other than being available to do so. Therefore, many guidance designates take on the role of counselor with very little training and background in counseling theories, techniques and ethics. According to Ballada and Orcullo (2018) and Navarro (2019), these teachers are referred to as "accidental counselors", since they were originally assigned as a teacher and then asked to perform a function for which they had no experience.

2. Rewards guidance designates derive from performing dual roles

Despite the demands of their roles, participants reported several meaningful rewards. The rewards received by guidance designates as shown in Table 2 describe satisfaction from intrinsic to extrinsic and personal to professional recognition.

Table 2
Rewards guidance designates derive from performing dual roles

Participant Statement	Code	Theme
P1: "Developed skills like active listening, conflict resolution, and communication"	Skill Acquisition - communication skills, active listening, conflict resolution	Holistic Personal and Interpersonal Development
P8: "I became a good listener."		
P11: "Strengthened my communication skills"		
P1: "Taught me to be more patient and developed empathy."	Emotional Growth: Enhanced patience, empathy, and sensitivity	
P7: "Became more passionate and had empathy"		
P8: "More understanding and sensitive"		

P3: "I learned being a mother to them" P10: "I adopted students and treated them as my children."	Mothering role – treating students as children, adopting them	Relational Depth and Kinship Bonds
P2: "Being a teacher alone, I consider punishment, embarrassment and reprimand as normal way... I learned that it has a process to follow and know my limitations." P5: "Improves my classroom management and teaching strategies"	Shift from Punitive to Process: Moving away from "punishment and embarrassment" toward "humane processes" Contextual Teaching: Improved teaching strategies, classroom management	Pedagogical Transformation and Classroom Management
P5: "It makes me more versatile and well-rounded educator."	Role Enhancement: versatile, well-rounded	Professional Versatility and Credibility
P5: "It brings me positive reputation and credibility"	Reputational Gain: Positive reputation, credibility	
P8: "It feels satisfying and heartwarming" P12: "It is fulfilling when I can help students" P11: "Strengthened my sense of purpose" P5: "I feel the priceless satisfaction of seeing the positive results"	Emotional Reward: Fulfillment, heartwarming experiences	Intrinsic Fulfillment and Sense of Purpose
P8: "Touching the lives of my students" P11: "Seeing students overcome challenges, build confidence and improve their behavior is truly rewarding."	Impact: Touching lives, seeing positive results, Student improvement, confidence building, behavior change	
P4: "A simple appreciation from my principal is a big thing for me" P4: "It makes me teary-eyed when they appreciate and thank me"	Administrative Recognition: Appreciation from school heads Student Gratitude: Teary-eyed moments	External Validation and Legacy
P2: "The principal arranges my schedule." P7: "I put all my teaching load in the morning and free my afternoon." P5: "Providing flexible work conditions and well-being resources."	Operational Support: Flexible Class Schedules/De-loading	Institutional Support and Resource Allocation

P2: "The management provided my needs in facilitating like printers and other materials."	Material Support: Printer and any materials and supplies needed	
P11: "Provided resources and support staff."	Personnel Support: Assigned Assistants/Clerks	
P9: "I can delegate some tasks to advisers and subject teachers."	Collaborative/Relational Support: Peer Assistance/Mentorship	
P8: "I gained a lot of experience including seminars and meetings."	Professional Growth: Seminars and Trainings	Professional Empowerment and Community Building
"Able to meet different guidance designates here in our province."	Social Validation: Meetings with other Designates	

Theme 1. Holistic Personal and Interpersonal Development

In this theme, many guidance designates emphasized that having dual role has helped them enhance essential skills and further grow emotionally. The data reveals that the dual role of a guidance designate serves as a profound catalyst for personal transformation. Participants did not merely learn tasks; they underwent a significant shift in their emotional intelligence. By moving beyond the traditional teacher-student boundary, designates acquired skills that they previously lacked. As Participant 1 remarked, "I have developed skills like active listening, conflict resolution, basic counseling skills, empathy and communication skills." This suggests that the counseling role softens the professional persona of the educator, replacing rigid authority with empathetic understanding. As Participant 1 noted, "It taught me to be more patient and developed empathy", gaining a fuller picture of student lives provided the necessary motivation to be more patient.

The finding that designates develop enhanced patience and active listening skills directly aligns with UNESCO (2017), which positions counseling as a tool for social well-being and emotional stability. Furthermore, it supports the observations of Reaviles and Delfino (2025), who noted that despite a lack of formal training, teacher designates exhibit significant adaptive learning and skill development through their lived experiences in the role. The participants' growth confirms that the role acts as an informal professional laboratory for emotional intelligence.

Similarly, this is consistent with Arumugam et al. (2021), who emphasized that guidance and counseling services contribute to the holistic development of educators and students alike. The improvement in interpersonal skills suggests that continuous interaction with students' concerns enhances emotional intelligence and communication abilities. Exposure to counseling situations and real-life student issues allows teachers to develop practical helping skills beyond theoretical knowledge.

Theme 2. Relational Depth and Kinship Bonds

A significant aspect of this research was how teachers and students developed a kinship relationship through their teaching-learning process. “I have learned to find a balance of both being a mother and teacher to them” (Participant 3). “I adopted and treated them as if they were my own children” (Participant 10). These relationships indicate that when students experience some type of family crisis; many times, it creates a parental void in the student’s life, and a guidance designate fills that void. The long-term bond or friendship created by the relational development that occurs in the school environment has an extended lifetime beyond graduation.

Students’ perceptions of a guidance counselor’s role in providing care to students via kinship roles, treating them as if they were their children, supporting the work of Santos (2020) and Subong IV (2025), both of whom demonstrated that building trust with students results in a higher level of job satisfaction. The depth of these bonds are also reflective of the Department of Education’s Child Protection Policy contained in DepEd Order No.40, s. 2012. As such, for Guidance Designate roles, achieving student welfare occurs when students develop meaningful relationships with school staff, as indicated by Reaviles and Delfino (2025).

Theme 3: Pedagogical Transformation and Classroom Management

One of the most significant professional rewards is the radical shift in how participants manage their classrooms. The transition from punitive discipline like punishment and embarrassment to restorative processes, like understanding and empathy, is a key outcome. Participant 2 stressed, “Being a teacher alone, I consider punishment, embarrassment and reprimand as normal way, now I learned that it has a process to follow and know my limitations.” P2’s reflection is crucial as exposure to guidance work taught them that student misbehavior is often a symptom of underlying burdens rather than simple defiance. The designate’s role improves the teacher’s instructional efficacy by creating a more compassionate, stable learning environment.

The transition by the participants from punishing, penalizing, and reproofing to restorative or humane disciplinary processes is an important outcome. This relates to DepEd (2024b) Division Level Memoranda for increasing Guidance Programs to transition toward greater student centeredness. It is consistent with the findings of Santos (2020), as he stated that students’ experience related to guidance helps teachers to gain a better understanding of their students’ behaviors; resulting in discipline methods that are more effective and responsive than those based upon traditional classroom control.

Theme 4: Professional Versatility and Credibility

Participants found the dual role to be a means of professional development/career enrichment. They did not view their additional responsibilities as merely a burden but rather as opportunities for growth/development into being “well rounded” (P5). This theme illustrates how the Guidance Designate develops social capital/professional status in the

school, setting through their role as a confidant/problem solver; this may also provide a degree of credibility/respect from both peers and parents which can potentially be developed by one's subject matter expertise alone.

Becoming a well-rounded educator and having a positive reputation is associated with adaptive learning as stated by Reaviles and Delfino (2025), while Navarro (2019) stated that the role of counselor was created out of necessity. However, the participants felt an increase in their credibility; therefore, they also experienced career growth when working as counselors on a part-time basis like other studies regarding teacher-counselor career advancement.

Theme 5: Intrinsic Fulfillment and Sense of Purpose

Most of the benefits mentioned are all internal. Many participants described working as “heartwarming,” “priceless,” and “fulfilling.” These participant descriptions suggest that what motivates them to continue with this kind of work is primarily based on the reward of watching students achieve success over personal struggles. Many participants were also able to articulate how this sense of fulfillment relates to having a “sense of purpose” (P11). Many stated they felt as though they were making an impact by being “able to touch people’s lives” (P8), which was something a standard lesson plan could never provide. Therefore, it appears that the ‘emotional harvest’ associated with this type of work has been what compensates for both the absence of monetary incentives, as well as formal incentives.

A primary way teachers find personal gratification in being able to touch lives has been described as an intrinsic source of motivation that parallels the finding from both Iglesia (2025) and E-Palli (2025) who described that teachers are motivated by an internal desire to make positive contributions. Intrinsic motivations were found to be the main reason why teachers are willing to remain committed to their roles; this supports Santos (2020) who reported that the emotional accomplishment of the students serves as a form of psychological wage for the teacher.

Theme 6: External Validation and Legacy

The results show that even though there are many problems associated with having teachers and counselors in one position; the external validation has a large impact on the degree of commitment that Guidance Designates have. In the absence of formal recognition for this type of work, student and colleague appreciation become an important motivator and serve as the “sustenance” needed by the Guidance Designate. Participant 4 states that the “appreciation from higher authorities”, such as administrators or school board members, provides additional motivation. Additionally, the “tearful” moments experienced when successful alumni return to express their gratitude to the Guidance Designate give the teacher a sense of professional legacy. Therefore, the external validation helps to reinforce the Guidance Designate’s commitment to their roles and confirms that the sacrifices they made while fulfilling both roles contributed significantly to the success and survival of their students.

The importance of school heads and alumni recognizing the efforts made by a school counselor to enhance their career as an effective advocate for students also helps to justify Medella and Musni's (2025) claimed that recognition is critical in enhancing the capacity of school counselors. When other people recognize the contributions of school counselors it can reduce feelings of anxiety, fatigue, or burnout identified by Ballada and Orcullo (2018). Successful alumni demonstrating an appreciation for their own success will help validate the long-term success envisioned by RA 12080, Basic Education Mental Health and Well-being Promotion Act.

In addition, this finding is supported by a similar study conducted by Subong (2025). The study found that for those who guide, they found personal satisfaction and motivation from being recognized and appreciated as they carry out their duties. Reaviles and Delfino (2025) have also identified that recognition will lead to an increase in the educator's self-efficacy and overall professional fulfillment. Finally, Torrino and Naparan (2025) concluded that while positive reinforcement can help reduce teacher stress, it will help enhance teacher job satisfaction; especially since many teachers are responsible for multiple roles at one time.

This finding suggests that being appreciated by students and recognized by the heads not only boosts morale but also reinforces their dedication to supporting students' academic and emotional needs.

Theme 7: Institutional Support and Resource Allocation

This theme explores the tangible ways the school administration eases the burden on guidance designates which they considered as rewards.

Operational Support

The results suggest that the incentives provided to Designates are flexible scheduling and de-loading or the reduction/adjustment of their teaching load/schedule to allow time for assistance with student-related issues; these help reduce the degree of role strain and fatigue. Scheduling flexibility is viewed as an incentive because it recognizes the importance of Guidance Work as equivalent to Classroom Instruction. Participant 2 reported "The principal arranges my schedule." Participant 7 said "I place all of my teaching into my mornings so I can have my afternoons open for counseling." This represents actual de-loading to accomplish both roles. This demonstrates DepEd Order No. 40 and the shortage of licensed personnel and directly addresses the workload stress and role conflict cited by Morales by Pineda (2017), and Subong IV (2025). The research found that the Department's administrative response to address the shortage of licensed teachers was to provide operational support via flexible scheduling.

Material/Personnel Support

The responses made by Participant 2 regarding "getting printers and other materials" and Participant 11 concerning "clerical support staff" represent examples of

tangible rewards as Santos (2020) stated that the lack of resources and materials to dedicate to programs constrains school counseling service delivery. Therefore, the participant's comments demonstrate empirically how providing operational support allows schools to overcome some of the structural barriers to school counseling identified within the RRL. Providing the designated person with printer and additional office supplies can help reduce their costs associated with preparing for guidance sessions thereby reducing the amount of time spent on this task in addition to reducing their overall out-of-pocket costs, both being important types of tangible rewards.

Meanwhile, assigned assistants or clerks streamline administrative workflow. Having a clerk or co-teacher feels as a reward to help with clerical tasks and allow the designate to focus on "high value" tasks like actual counseling sessions rather than just filing reports.

Peer-teachers' collaboration also fosters a help-seeking culture. Asking for assistance from peers and referring students informally are forms of social capital. Here, the rewards include the development of peer-professionalism and shared responsibility in support of student success. Therefore, the designated teacher will have less feeling of being alone on an island when they share the burden with others. As Participant 9 stated, delegating tasks to advisers is consistent with the findings of Morales and Pineda (2017), regarding heavy workloads of designates.

Theme 8: Professional Empowerment and Community Building

This theme captures the rewards that enhance the designates' Expert Power and their sense of belonging to a larger professional network.

Capacity building through seminars and training.

Training and seminar access serve as a reward for being designated to be an expert in their area of specialization by providing the designated individual with special knowledge and expertise over those who teach in the regular classrooms. This is framed as a long-term investment in the professional development of the individual. Whether or not there is a salary increase associated with the designation, the individual will always have "portable rewards" and the new skills/knowledge acquired. Many guidance designates consider knowledge to be their "currency." As they typically do not receive a salary increase due to the designation, the reward is based upon the ability to gain new knowledge and experience the prestige of being the "expert/educated/trained" individual at school.

It is clear from what Participant 8 said "I gained a lot of experience such as seminars and meetings" that this has been validated through DepEd (2024a) Specialized Training Program. In addition to this, it is further evidence that the government's efforts are coming down to earth in locations such as San Jose. Additionally, this is consistent with the suggestions made by Medella & Musni (2025), about developing capacity. The experiences of the participants confirm that professional development is an important

source of confidence for designates who do not have formal qualifications or backgrounds in the area.

Peer Benchmarking and Networking

Participants valued “meeting different guidance designates in the province” (P8) most valuable. Through meeting and communicating with each other, participants can reduce feelings of isolation at work and build a network for support. The opportunity to leave their individual schools allows them to see that they are not working in a vacuum; this provides a relational benefit. These benefits come from knowing that you have people who understand what you do and validate your experience. They turn a lone wolf role into a group role. Getting out of the school for an education seminar is both a way for a guidance designate to get some professional validation as well as relief from day-to-day duties. These results were consistent with those of Iglesia (2025) and E-Palli (2025), who stated that “collaboration among peers”, “professional networking” and “a community of practice” was important due to the lack of licensed counselors (“The Shortage of Licensed Counselors in Schools,” Senate Press Release, 2024) and that designates rely on communities of practice for support while navigating their new role.

3. Challenges Encountered in Balancing Teaching and Guidance Duties

Guidance designates are faced with significant challenges in balancing teaching and guidance duties, primarily including time constraints and role conflict, insufficient training and professional preparation, student behavioral and emotional challenges, stakeholder-related conflicts, lack of institutional support, and suffering teaching performance.

Table 3
Challenges Encountered by Guidance Designates in Balancing Dual Roles

Participant Statement	Code	Theme
P1: “Managing multiple subject areas... can be quite exhausting at times. Often have limited time..”	Multiple responsibilities, exhaustion	Time Constraints and Role Conflict
P2: “Teaching time gets broken because of the problems I must attend and leave my class behind.”	Interrupted classes	
P3: “I must leave the class and sometimes late because I have sessions.”	Schedule conflict	
P6: “Time constraints or time conflict...”	Conflicting schedules	
P7: “Classes are interrupted... students are left unattended”	Unattended class	
P9: “One duty suffers... clients need more time...”	Competing demands	
P11: “Juggle lesson preparation, paperwork and students’ concerns”	Work overload	

P12: "Hectic schedule parents show up"	Hectic workload	
P1: "Couldn't perform effectively due to lack of training"	Lack of counseling skills	Insufficient training and preparation
P12: "We need proper training"	Need for training	
P3: "Challenge how to discipline students."	Discipline fatigue	Student behavioral and emotional challenges
P6: "Very challenging in terms of student discipline."	Student discipline issues	
P10: "How to lessen absenteeism and handle depressed students"	Managing absenteeism/emotions	
P4: "Parents tolerate wrongdoings"	Lack of parental support	Stakeholder-related conflicts
P12: "Conflict between teacher, student, parents"	Stakeholder conflict	
P6: "No office for Guidance and Counseling"	Lack of facility	Lack of Institutional Support
P2: "Hard to request assistance from co-teachers"	Lack of support	
P8: "Hard to give enough attention to every student"	Limited attention to students	Workload and role strain
P11: "Emotionally draining when handling personal issues"	Emotional exhaustion	
P5: "Reduced lesson preparation, delayed checking"	Reduced teaching quality	Impact on teaching performance
P5: "Difficulty tracking learner progress and backlogs"	Backlogs and stress	

Theme 1. Time Constraints and Role Conflict

Time for teaching is fragmented, they reported as their most persistent problem. Participants have explicitly stated such issues with "Teaching time breaks down; I am concerned about other things so I will be forced to leave the classroom." (P2). "I will be forced to leave the classroom, and occasionally it will be at a later time." (P3). "Classes are interrupted and left unattended." (P7).

This indicates that balancing teaching and counseling responsibilities often leads to role strain and reduced efficiency in both areas. Time constraints arise because guidance responsibilities are added on top of existing teaching duties rather than integrated into workload structures.

The findings support the study by Morales and Pineda (2017) which found that role conflict was one of the biggest causes of stress for teacher counselors. The findings also support Kahn et al. (1964) in their role theory which explained how conflict resulted from

conflicting duties. Further, these findings are consistent with Mabuza's (2025) study of the effect of having two roles on teaching performance which showed that teachers experienced less than optimal instructional performance due to increased workload and decreased time available to devote to each role.

Theme 2. Insufficient Training and Professional Preparation

The participants expressed both competence as well as anxiety. In their responses, they stated that there was little to no formal training on counseling provided to them. When asked what challenges they had in their role as the school's guidance designate, they cited a general lack of counseling skills and limited preparedness for dealing with emotional or behavioral issues as major obstacles. While Participant 1 said "There are times that I couldn't perform effectively due to lack of training", Participant 12 expressed that "We need proper training not only guidelines to follow how to handle students and parents."

This suggests that guidance designates may feel unprepared and not well-equipped to handle complex student concerns, particularly sensitive cases. The lack of training is primarily due to systemic issues such as counselor shortages, limited access to training programs, and workload constraints.

The findings support Dulay and Pitonang (2023), who stated many guidance counselors felt under prepared based on less than formal educational experiences. As such, the teacher is placed into a role with required specialized knowledge but not sufficient preparation to be confident or effective as a designate. Additionally, it supports Navarro (2019) who reported that lack of formal education in counseling theory and ethics will limit a designate's ability to effectively counsel students.

Theme 3. Student Behavioral and Emotional Challenges

Participants encountered several complex student issues such as discipline fatigue, and struggle with handling modern student issues like chronic absenteeism and depression. As Participant 3 mentioned, "It is such a challenge how to discipline students." While Participant 6 said, "Very challenging, in terms of student discipline." Participant 10 added, "The most challenging part is how to lessen the absenteeism and how to handle when the student is depressed and stressed."

This emphasizes a critical need to develop a particular set of abilities by teachers to handle different types of student difficulties. The challenges of dealing with sensitive student issues illustrate an area where the lack of experience and/or appropriate training is significant (Medalla & Musni, 2025). The complexities of students' needs are so varied that they can no longer be simply viewed as only academic. A lack of relevant training will limit RAs ability to address sensitive issues like mental health, family troubles, or dangerous behavior. This reinforces the justification for RA 12080 (The Basic Education Mental Health and Well-being Promotion Act) since it identifies student needs exceed what trained individuals can provide.

Theme 4. Stakeholder-related Conflicts

Data revealed that participants encountered conflicts with parents and experienced disagreements among co-teachers, students and parents. Participant 4 stated, "When I encounter parents who tolerate wrongdoings of their children. The students think that what they believe is right because their parents allow them to do so." Participant 12 also mentioned, "If there is conflict between teacher versus student, teachers versus parents, teacher versus co-teacher and so on."

These challenges reveal the complexities of this function which will need to be coordinated effectively by all relevant parties. As Mureu and Wasanga (2013) have indicated, teacher counselors often experience difficulties in coordinating with a variety of parties. The conflicts the school counselor experiences with parents, colleagues, and administrators indicate that there has been little agreement on the definition of the duties assigned to the guidance function as it varies from one party to another. Misunderstandings or conflict due to overlapping functions and/or ambiguous expectations can occur.

Theme 5. Lack of Institutional Support

In this theme, participants expressed concerns about limited administrative support, insufficient facilities and resources. Participant 6 admitted, "There is no office specially made for Guidance and Counseling." And Participant 2 exclaimed, "It's hard to request assistance from my co-teachers, their time are so precious."

The lack of support for the school counselors also shows that there is a gap within the educational system. School systems may have limited amounts of money or resources. There could be limited or no school counselor offices. There could also be an absence of support from their fellow educators. All these elements point to what Torrino and Naparan (2025) also found when they studied how inadequate institutional support affects the amount of workload pressure on school counselors as well as their ability to effectively implement the counseling process.

Theme 6. Impact on Teaching Performance

Participant 5 revealed that their teaching responsibilities were sometimes affected, "I experienced reduced lesson preparation and delayed checking of learners' output. These challenges affect the quality of my instructional materials, difficulty tracking learner progress and backlogs that caused me stress." This suggests a deterioration of pedagogical quality.

Dual roles create a negative environment for teaching as it divides the educator's attention and energy causing their ability to deliver instruction effectively to be reduced. Mabuza (2025) has demonstrated with his research that dual roles reduce an educator's instructional performance due to time constraints and increased workload. It demonstrates further evidence to support Ballada and Orcullo's (2018) warning that

combined roles contribute to educators experiencing high levels of stress and burnout, which can result in compromising the educator's original role; that is to teach.

Synthesis of Interpretation

The information presented in Table 3 provides an example of "Overextension." The role as a Guidance Designate is no longer about doing multiple jobs - it is now about functioning within a system that requires students to receive professional level counseling with limited professional level time, space and training. Therefore, both the quality of education provided by teachers and the quality of support services provided through guidance will be impacted. This is why we believe that school survival is contingent upon the passage of RA12080 and workload reductions.

4. Coping Strategies Employed to Manage Dual Responsibilities

To manage the challenges they have encountered, the findings revealed that guidance designates employ a range of adaptive strategies to effectively perform their dual roles as teachers and counselors. The strategies highlight both personal initiatives and collaborative efforts within the school system as shown in Table 4. The coping mechanisms identified in this study reflect a high degree of resilience and professional agency. Participants do not merely endure the dual role; they actively restructure their environment to mitigate the challenges identified in Table 3.

Table 4
Coping Strategies Employed by Guidance Designates in Managing Dual Responsibilities

Participant Statement	Code	Theme
P1: "If it is not a crisis, I set counseling appointment."	Prioritization	Time Management and Structured Scheduling
P7: "I requested the principal to put all my teaching load in the morning and free my afternoon."	Role Segregation	
P12: "I handle cases during my vacant time or lunch break."	Schedule	
P5: "I let my colleagues and students know my schedule."	Transparency	
P2: "Problems are first handled by their advisers, if they can't manage then I will help."	Adviser First-Response	Collaboration and Delegation of Responsibilities
P5: "Some behavioral issues can be handled by advisers."	Shared Responsibility	
P6: "I do referrals, with the help of DSWD, Barangay VAWC, Child Protection Committee."	Inter-agency Referral External Support Utilization	Referral Systems and External Support Networks
P10: "I ask help from Child Protection Committee."		

P4: "I make them feel that I am their friend and their mother."	Relational Coping	Empathy, Building, Practice	Relationship- and Ethical
P12: "I insist honesty in handling cases."	Ethical Standard Setting		

Theme 1. Time Management and Structured Scheduling

The most prominent coping strategy participants emphasized is the physical and temporal separation of duties. Strategies used include allocating specific time for counseling, using vacant periods, and adjusting teaching loads to minimize disruption. They exemplify Role Segregation by clustering as Participant 12 declared, "I handle cases during my vacant time or lunch break," while Participant 7 stated, "I requested the principal to put all my teaching load in the morning and free my afternoon." This is a sophisticated survival tactic designed to prevent the interrupted classes identified as a major challenge.

These findings suggest that effective time management is a critical survival strategy for guidance designates, enabling them to balance competing demands while maintaining both instructional and counseling responsibilities. This aligns with Iglesia (2025), who identified time management as a key coping strategy among guidance designates. The use of time management strategies indicates that participants actively attempt to regain control over competing demands. This reflects adaptive behavior in response to role overload.

Theme 2. Collaboration and Delegation of Responsibilities

Participants sought help from colleagues, particularly class advisers and subject teachers, to initially address student concerns before escalating to the guidance office. They shared the following:

Participant 2: "To make it easier, the problems of students are first handled by their advisers, if they can't manage the situation, then I will help."

Participant 5: "I let students ask their teacher and adviser for assistance. When the case is not solved, that is the time the case is forwarded to guidance office. Some behavioral issues can be handled by advisers."

Participant 9: "I can also delegate some tasks to advisers and subject teachers."

Participant 10: "I ask help from teachers or advisers."

Seeking help from colleagues suggests that guidance work is informally shared within the school community. This compensates for the lack of formal support systems. This supports Torres et al. (2025), who emphasized collaboration as essential in managing dual roles. This reflects the importance of shared responsibility and teamwork in managing student concerns, reducing the burden on guidance designates. This strategy also supports the peer collaboration and mentoring identified by Iglesia (2025) and E-Palli (2025). It suggests that designates are effectively building a welfare network (Santos, 2020) within the school to ensure they only handle cases that truly require specialized attention.

Theme 3. Referral Systems and External Support Networks

Participants utilized formal referral systems involving internal and external stakeholders such as parents, school committees, and other agencies in the community. When internal school resources are exhausted, designates turn to Inter-agency linking. Participants 6 and 10 mentioned DSWD, Barangay VAWC, and the Child Protection Committee and other guidance counselors which indicates an awareness of the limits of their own expertise.

The use of referrals demonstrates awareness of professional limitations and ethical responsibility. Referral mechanisms extend the support system beyond the individual, ensuring that complex cases receive appropriate intervention.

This finding is consistent with Boquia et al. (2022), who highlighted the importance of referral systems in addressing cases beyond teachers' expertise. This indicates that guidance designates recognize when cases require specialized intervention.

This utilization of external networks is a direct application of the Basic Educational Mental Health and Well-Being Promotion Act (RA 12080), which encourages inter-stakeholder collaboration to support student mental health. It shows that designates are proficient at referral procedures, a key emphasized in the DepEd 2024 Specialized Training Program.

Theme 4. Empathy, Relationship-Building, and Ethical practice

Interestingly, some participants utilized emotional labor as a coping mechanism. They highlighted the importance of emotional connection, honesty, and trust-building in managing students effectively. As Participant 4 mentioned, "I make them feel that I am their friend and their mother." By adopting a motherly persona, they simplify the counseling process through established trust, which may make conflict resolution faster and more effective. Furthermore, the insistence on "honesty" (P12) acts as an ethical anchor, providing a clear framework for handling cases amidst the chaos of a dual role.

These interpersonal strategies strengthened rapport with students, making counseling more effective and fostering a supportive school environment.

This supports Subong (2025), who found that strong relationships and ethical practices are central to effective guidance work. Reliance on empathy suggests that, in the absence of formal training, personal values and interpersonal skills become the primary tools for counseling. Furthermore, this confirms the finding of Reaviles and Delfino (2025), who noted that strong student relationships and intrinsic motivation allow teacher designates to adapt to roles for which they were not formally prepared.

Overall, the findings indicate that guidance designates rely on a combination of personal initiative, organizational strategies, and collaborative support systems to effectively manage their dual responsibilities. These coping mechanisms are essential in

addressing the challenges posed by limited time, resources, and role expectations. These strategies reflect adaptability and resilience among guidance designates.

The coping strategies employed by guidance designates in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, demonstrate a move toward strategic boundary-setting. They cope not by doing more, but by doing differently, such as delegating minor tasks, segregating their time, and reaching out to external experts. However, the interpretation suggests that these are compensatory behaviors; they are ingenious solutions to a systemic problem of overwork, further emphasizing the need for role clarification and workload reduction.

5. Policy Recommendations to Strengthen Institutional Support for Guidance Designates

Table 5
Policy Recommendation
The “One Hat at a Time” Program

Proposed Recommendations	Policy	Suggested Actions	Expected Outcome
1.Reduce Teaching Load of Guidance Designates (Schedule Reform)		-Assign fewer teaching loads for fewer teaching preparations -Allocate dedicated counseling hours -Provide official schedules for guidance duties.	Better management of guidance responsibilities and improved student support services.
2.Strengthen Institutional Support: Establishment of "The Talk Room" (Guidance Office)		-Provide counseling rooms and materials -Develop referral protocols -Assign clerical or administrative assistance	Improved productivity, service capacity and delivery, and enhanced confidentiality and trust.
3.Provide Specialized Training Programs: Practical First-Aid Training (Capability Building)		-Conduct annual capability-building seminars -Partner with counseling professionals and institutions -Provide Mental Health and Psychological First Aid training	Improved confidence and competence among guidance designates.
4.Hire Licensed Guidance Counselors		-Include counselor positions in staffing plans -Coordinate with educational authorities for Plantilla items -Strengthen counseling units in schools	Improved quality of counseling and student welfare services.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION REPORT

I. Title of the Policy

The “One Hat at a Time” Program: A Balanced Framework for Guidance Designates

II. Rationale

This policy recommendation is based on research findings of the study regarding the lived experiences and challenges of guidance designates in performing guidance and counseling responsibilities while balancing teaching duties. This shows that Teacher-Designates face "role strain" from trying to teach and counsel at the same time.

The findings revealed that guidance designates experience:

- Time constraints and role conflict;
- Lack of specialized training;
- Insufficient institutional support: Lack of private space for students;
- Difficulty handling sensitive student concerns; and
- Heavy workload due to dual responsibilities.

These challenges affect both teaching performance and the delivery of guidance services. To ensure the well-being of both teachers and students, a formal balance between these "two-hats" is necessary.

III. Policy Objectives

This report aims to:

- Create a balanced work schedule that separates teaching hours from counseling hours;
- Enhance the professional competence of guidance designates: Provide designates with practical, "first-aid" mental health training;
- Strengthen institutional support for guidance designates such as establishing a safe, private "Talk Room" for student counseling;
- Build a support network so that guidance work is shared, not solitary;
- Improve the delivery of school guidance services;
- Promote student welfare through effective counseling support.

IV. Proposed Policy Actions

Reduce Teaching Load of Guidance Designates (Schedule Reform)

- Assign fewer teaching loads for fewer teaching preparations
- Allocate dedicated counseling hours
For example, afternoons should be strictly reserved for "Counseling Only" to prevent them from leaving their classrooms unattended during student emergencies.
- Provide official schedules for guidance duties.

Strengthen Institutional Support: Establishment of "The Talk Room" (Guidance Office).

- Provide counseling rooms and materials
- Develop referral protocols
- Assign clerical or administrative assistance

Provide Specialized Training Programs: Practical First-Aid Training (Capability Building).

- Conduct annual capability-building seminars
- Partner with counseling professionals and institutions
- Provide Mental Health and Psychological First Aid training

Hire Licensed Guidance Counselors

- Include counselor positions in staffing plans
- Coordinate with educational authorities for Plantilla items
- Strengthen counseling units in schools

V. Expected Outcome

By implementing "One Hat at a Time," the school will transform guidance from a "burden" into a structured "service." Guidance designates will feel more competent and less tired. The professional preparedness of guidance designates will improve, school counseling services will be strengthened and work-related stress will be reduced. Furthermore, the students will have a reliable, private place to seek help whenever they are in need, that will promote students' academic, emotional, and social well-being.

VI. Conclusion

The "One Hat at a Time" Program provides a practical solution to the dual-role strain faced by guidance designates. By structurally separating teaching and counseling hours, providing specialized training, and investing in dedicated spaces, this policy bridges the gap between institutional gaps and student needs. Implementing these recommendations will mitigate teacher burnout and elevate the standard of school counseling, ensuring a healthier academic and emotional environment for the entire school community.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Teachers designated as guidance counselors do not have formal background in guidance and counseling, at the most, they have attended some basic seminars on mental health.
2. Guidance designates gain meaningful awards such as interpersonal skills, professional growth, fulfillment and recognition in performing dual roles.

3. The dual role fosters a holistic approach to education, where teachers are not only instructors but also mentors, counselors, and advocates for students' overall well-being.
4. Guidance designates face significant challenges in balancing their dual roles due to time constraints, role conflict, and insufficient institutional support.
5. The lack of formal training in guidance and counseling limits their effectiveness in handling complex student concerns.
6. Student-related issues and stakeholder conflicts further intensify the demands placed on guidance designates.
7. Existing school structures and resources are often inadequate to support the dual responsibilities of teaching and counseling.
8. Despite these challenges, guidance designates demonstrate resilience and adaptability by employing various coping strategies such as time management, collaboration, and referrals.

Recommendations

Considering the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. For the Department of Education (DepEd)

Implement mandatory and continuous training programs for guidance designates, focusing on crisis intervention, counseling skills, ethics, mental health awareness, and case management.

Develop clear policies on workload distribution, particularly reducing teaching loads of guidance designates.

Allocate funding for the hiring of licensed guidance counselors in public schools.

2. For School Administrators (Principals and Heads)

Provide strong administrative support, including flexible scheduling and provision of necessary resources.

Assign manageable teaching loads to guidance designates.

Establish a functional and private guidance office to ensure confidentiality in counseling sessions as required by the Safe Spaces Act and ethical counseling standards.

Assign a clerical assistant to designates to help with the heavy paperwork (referral forms, case tracking) so the teacher can focus on the students.

Encourage a collaborative school environment where teachers assist in managing student concerns.

3. For Guidance Designates

Continue practicing effective time management and prioritization strategies.

Engage in professional development opportunities to enhance counseling competencies.

Strengthen collaboration with teachers, parents, and external agencies for holistic student support.

Maintain ethical standards, empathy, and professionalism in handling student cases.

4. For Teachers and School Personnel

Provide initial support to students by addressing minor concerns before referral.

Collaborate actively with guidance designates in managing student behavior and well-being.

Participate in trainings and seminars related to student support and mental health.

5. For Future Researchers

Conduct a larger quantitative study to measure the impact of the Dual Role on the actual academic performance (grades/test scores) of students in classes handled by guidance designates.

Explore the experiences of male guidance designates to see if the parental coping strategies and rewards differ across genders.

Conduct further studies on the effectiveness of guidance programs in schools with and without licensed counselors.

Explore the long-term impact of dual roles on teacher performance and well-being.

Investigate additional strategies and models that can improve guidance services in resource-limited schools.

Overall, these policy recommendations suggest strengthening institutional support which requires a multi-level approach, including professional development, adequate staffing, administrative backing, proper facilities, and workload adjustments. These policy interventions are essential to ensure that guidance designates can effectively fulfill their dual roles without compromising the quality of instruction and student support services.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The researcher strictly adhered to ethical standards in conducting this study, guided by the principles of respect, beneficence, and justice. Rigorous ethical protocols, as required and certified by the University Research Ethics Review Committee of Mindoro State University, were observed. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants after they are fully advised of the study's purpose, procedures, and rights as respondents. The participants were informed that it is strictly voluntary, and respondents may withdraw at any point without any adverse consequences. Pseudonyms were used in all transcripts and reports to protect the identities of the participants and their respective schools. Participants were asked for audio recording consent during the interviews to ensure accuracy of data collection. They were given an option if they want to decline or

omit some recorded data. Images were also taken with consent, and participants were given the right to refuse without any negative consequences. Audio recordings, transcripts, and other data were stored securely in password-protected files and accessible only to the researcher. Data will be disposed of after completion of the study. Should a participant exhibit signs of significant emotional distress during participation, the researcher should pause the session and assess immediate safety. Participants would be provided with appropriate referrals, including campus counseling services and other local mental health providers. In case of acute risk, emergency services should be contacted in accordance with institutional policy.

Acknowledgments

The researcher would like to express her sincere gratitude to all those who supported her throughout the course of this research. This achievement could not have been possible if not with the help of the following individuals:

Ms. Aleth Attila D. Abarquez, the Adviser, for her invaluable mentorship, patience, and constructive feedback. Her scholarly guidance had been a cornerstone in shaping the direction of this study and her unwavering encouragement throughout the entire research process made this study possible;

Dr. Alice R. Ramos, Dean of Graduate School and Method Specialist, for her expert advice and technical assistance. Her expertise and valuable insights were instrumental in refining this research and improving the quality of this study;

Dr. Marinel V. Burgos, Content Specialist, for her thorough review of this paper. Her profound recommendations and mastery of the field significantly improved and refined this research paper;

Mr. Leonel C. Mendoza, Chair of the Panel, for his critical evaluation and challenging remarks during the defense. His guidance was pivotal in steering this research toward its successful completion;

Dr. Jhimson V. Cabral, External Expert, for generously sharing his time, distinct expertise, and professional objectivity. His comprehensive review and high-level recommendations greatly enriched the depth and value of this study;

To the panel of experts who served as instrument validators; Dr. Ferdinand J. Gotoy, Mr. Efsael G. Marcelo, and Mr. Lemuel D. Perez. Their meticulous evaluation, constructive corrections, and validation of the research tool ensured the reliability and integrity of the data collection process;

To the Department of Education Division of Occidental Mindoro, Schools Division Superintendent, Dr. Loida P. Adornado, CESO VI, for allowing the researcher to conduct this study in San Jose-Area Secondary Schools;

To the DepEd San Jose Secondary Schools Principals and Administrative Officers for their unselfish assistance, and most especially to the Guidance Designates who served as respondents, for their whole-hearted support and cooperation;

To the researcher's children, especially to her ever-supportive husband, for all the understanding, love and prayers and for providing a wellspring of motivation and inspiration to complete this research work;

To all individuals whose time, expertise, and moral support have contributed in one way or another to the successful completion of this research undertaking;

Above all, “special thanks” to Almighty God, to Him is the highest praise and honor, for giving the strength she needs, and for blessing her with these people who helped her in the completion of this thesis.

REFERENCES

- Aguilar-Ramat, G (2022). Extent of implementation of the guidance program in the public schools of Urdaneta City. *International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2, 275-301.
- Alhazmi, A., & Kaufmann, R. (2022). Phenomenology as a research methodology in education: Theoretical perspectives and applications. *Journal of Educational Inquiry*, 19(2), 45–59.
- Arumugam, T., Mohamad, S., & Ahmad, N. (2021). The importance of guidance and counseling services in schools: A holistic approach to student development. *International Journal of Education and Psychology*, 13(2), 45–56.
- Ballada, L. C., & Orcullo, J. M. (2018). Challenges faced by guidance designates in Philippine public schools. *Philippine Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 43(2), 88–101.
- Biddle, B. J. (1986). Recent developments in role theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 12, 67–92. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.12.080186.000435>
- Biggs, A., Brough P., Drummond S. (2017). Lazarus and Folkman’s psychological stress and coping theory. *The handbook of stress and health: A guide to research and practice*. Wiley Blackwell, 351-364
- Boquia, A. M., Maidu, N. A., Mohamad, H. A., & Datu, M. F. (2022). Experiences of designated teacher as guidance and counselor in secondary school of Maguindanao I Division. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 5(1), 469–480. <https://scimatic.org/storage/journals/11/pdfs/740.pdf>
- Boquia, R. S., Dela Cruz, J. A., & Ramos, L. P. (2022). Exploring lived experiences of teacher-counselors in secondary education. *Philippine Journal of Educational Studies*, 35(1), 77–93.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Department of Education. (2012). DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012: Child Protection Policy. Department of Education, Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.deped.gov.ph>
- Department of Education. (2024a). Specialized Training Program for Guidance Designates. Department of Education, Republic of the Philippines.
- Department of Education. (2024b). Division Memorandum on the Intensification of Guidance and Counseling Programs. Department of Education, Republic of the Philippines.
- Dulay, L., & Pitonang, M. F. (2023). Experiences of Guidance Designates in the Implementation of School Guidance Services: A Phenomenological case study. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 10(2).

- E-Palli, R. M. (2025). Transition experiences and professional learning of guidance designates in Cagayan de Oro City. *Philippine Journal of Educational Leadership and Innovation*, 12(1), 45–63.
- Harrison, M. G., King, R. B., & Hocson, S. M. G. (2023). The roles of school counselors in the Philippines: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Psychologists and Counselors in Schools*, 33(2), 161–174. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jgc.2023.4>
- Haq Kakar, Z. U., Rasheed, R., Rashid, A., & Akhter, S. (2023). Criteria for assessing and ensuring the trustworthiness in qualitative research. *International Journal of Business Reflections*, 4(2), 150–173. <https://doi.org/10.56249/ijbr.03.01.44>
- Iglesia, J. P. (2025). Competence and coping strategies among guidance designates in Apayao: A mixed-methods study. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educational Research*, 9(2), 77–94.
- Kahn, R. L., Wolfe, D. M., Quinn, R. P., Snoek, J. D., & Rosenthal, R. A. (1964). *Organizational stress: Studies in role conflict and ambiguity*. Wiley.
- Mabuza, D. C. (2025). Challenges Faced by the Teachers for Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Eswatini High Schools. *Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science* 38 (1):39-49. <https://doi.org/10.9734/jesbs/2025/v38i11367>.
- Medalla, E. Jr., & Musni, R. V. (2025). Exploring the roles and challenges of guidance designates in the preparation of homeroom guidance programs: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention*, 12(7)
- Mohamad, M. I., & Parcon, M. C. (2022). Phenomenological inquiry in education: A methodological review. *Asian Journal of Educational Research*, 10(3), 15–28.
- Morales, C. D., & Pineda, J. A. (2017). Role conflict and work-related stress among teacher-counselors in public high schools. *Journal of Educational Psychology and Guidance*, 32(1), 22–35.
- Mureu, M. W., & Wasanga, C. M. (2013). Perception of dual roles of teacher-counselors in technical schools in Thika County, Kenya. *Kenyatta University Institutional Repository*. <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/handle/123456789/11123>
- Navarro, L. R. (2019). The dual role of teachers as guidance designates in Philippine public schools. *Philippine Journal of Educational Management*, 45(2), 101–115.
- National Educators Academy of the Philippines & Department of Education. (2023). Capacity building for DepEd-registered guidance counselors (PD2023-002-0913) <https://www.deped.gov.ph/2024/10/28/capacity-building-for-deped-registered-guidance-counselors-rgcs/>
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Reaviles, A. T., & Delfino, R. J. (2025). Self-efficacy and skill development of guidance designates in public secondary schools. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Education*, 11(1), 56–74.
- Republic Act No. 12080. (2024, December 6). An Act Strengthening the Promotion and Delivery of Mental Health Services in Basic Education by Developing School-Based Mental Health Programs, Establishing Mental Health and Well-Being Offices and Care Centers, and for Other Purposes. *Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph>
- Runyan H., Grothaus T., & Michel R.E. (2019) Classroom Management Competencies for School Counselors: A Delphi Study. *Sage Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X19834293>

- Santos, M. C. (2020). Challenges and coping mechanisms of guidance designates in public secondary schools. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 8(1), 23–39.
- Schools' Personal Services Itemization and Plantilla of Personnel (PSIPOP) for the Fiscal Year 2025. Department of Budget and Management, Republic of the Philippines.
- Subong, A. P., IV. (2025). Lived experiences of elementary and secondary school guidance designates: A phenomenological inquiry. *Philippine Normal University Journal of Education and Psychology*, 19(1), 33–52.
- Subong, Q. (2025). Lived Experience of Guidance Designates in Selected Schools in the Philippines. *Psychology of Education*, 32 (7), 847-852.
- Torres, L. C., Subong A. P., IV, & Delfino, R. J. (2025). Beyond the Call: Lived Realities of Guidance Designates in Tanjay City Division. *Philippine Journal of Educational Development*, 47(1), 112–130.
- Torrino, R. F., & Naparan, A. M. (2025). Professional identity and workload stress of guidance designates in public secondary schools. *Journal of Counseling and Educational Studies*, 15(1), 54–70.

APA Citation:

Villanueva, A. Z. (2026). WEARING TWO HATS: EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF GUIDANCE DESIGNATES. *Ignatian International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 4(6), 2085–2123. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20998832>

azvillanueva15@gmail.com