

The Plight of Novice Teachers in Teaching Social Studies in Private Schools

Ma. Luz S. Gardose, Dr. Aileen J. Sinang

Faculty of the Professional Schools University of Mindanao Davao City

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INTRODUCTION

Novice teachers have experienced many difficulties in applying the theories learned on campus in real-life teaching. As Sözen (2018) stated, the entry of newly graduated novice teachers into the workforce may raise concerns, as there is no gradual adjustment period or ease of entry into the teaching profession. Novice teachers need to understand the school environment, curriculum design, learner-centered strategies, and school dynamics (Uzman et al., 2018). Stepping into the school for the first time without prior experience can generate undesirable emotions in novice teachers, potentially leading to a sense of separation that may result in unfavorable outcomes, such as teachers leaving the education field.

Greater teaching experience increases teachers' confidence, which in turn improves their performance ratings and positively influences student achievement and academic development (Costa, 2026). Similarly, Levin et al. (2009) argue that teacher education should emphasize attention to students' thinking from the outset, rather than waiting for novice teachers to establish their identity and classroom routines, because early attention to student thinking directly supports student learning outcomes.

Furthermore, Moayed (2021) found that teachers felt their pre-service training lacked sufficient practical experience, that some required tests were burdensome and not classroom-relevant, and that limited support made their initial months of teaching difficult, highlighting the need for more targeted professional development and training.

Preparing skilled teachers is a key goal of 21st-century teacher education (Holmqvist, 2019), yet novice teachers face challenges such as limited opportunities, financial burdens, heavy professional demands, and difficulty adapting to professional development changes, which hinder meeting higher instructional standards (Makoa et al., 2021), particularly in applying skills in subjects like secondary social studies (Dack et al., 2019).

This research grounded on the theoretical and philosophical framework of Self-Efficacy developed by Albert Bandura (1977). Self-Efficacy Theory (1977), which emphasizes individuals' beliefs in their ability to successfully manage tasks and challenges. Novice teachers often encounter difficulties such as classroom management, curriculum design, and adapting to school culture (Saleem et al., 2020), and their self-efficacy strongly influences their teaching effectiveness, well-being, and overall classroom impact (Lazarides et al., 2020; Barni et al., 2019). Similarly, Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1960) supports this study by highlighting the importance of observation, modeling, and self-regulation in learning, underscoring how novice teachers develop confidence and improve instructional practices by observing experienced educators and reflecting on their own teaching, which is crucial for overcoming challenges and enhancing classroom performance (May-Varas, 2023; McHenn, 2025).

In Iceland, Wolff et al. (2020) examined novice and seasoned educators' cognitive proficiency and perceptiveness regarding classroom occurrences. Handling the classroom's many complexities and difficult circumstances is a significant challenge in classroom management. A teacher's experience level has substantially influenced their ability to manage this complexity effectively (Subramaniam, 2023). This results in disparities in the comprehension and responses of novice and experienced teachers to classroom events. Novice teachers may appear unprepared in the classroom because they are bombarded with doubts due to their lack of experience

(Peens, 2022). Novice teachers are actively developing cognitive frameworks that will shape their instructional approaches as they gain more expertise in education. Furthermore, in another study conducted in Indonesia, Ridwan (2022) states that novice teachers, lacking experience, face a shortage of teaching methods.

In the Philippines, specifically in Pampanga, a study by Valdez et al. (2020) reveals a substantial correlation among the demographic characteristics of newly hired secondary school teachers. The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers stipulates that the educational system includes a regular, full-time teaching position and mandates a minimum of 6 hours of daily classroom instruction. In these six hours of day-to-day classroom instruction, novice secondary school teachers in the Philippines face challenges such as developing lesson plans, delivering lessons, and evaluating learning outcomes.

Moreover, relevant literature reveals and discusses the plight of novice teachers. One study by Al-Naimi et al. (2020) concluded that teachers encountered several personal hurdles and plights within or beyond the school vicinity. The plights that novice teachers face include teaching strategies, excessive workload, lack of assistance from school management, and their attitude (Saidin et al., 2021). Furthermore, novice teachers encounter plights when developing their instructional outlines. These problems might be attributed to unclear teaching goals, leading to fewer warm-up exercises that ask the class about the current time and date (Bin-Hady, 2018). In addition, Bertram (2023) asserts that researchers, educators, and school administrators commonly blame novice teachers' lack of preparation for the actual classroom setting in teacher education programs.

According to Nurlatifah et al. (2021), novice teachers encountered the following plights. First, it is challenging for the novice teacher to integrate classroom learning with real-world practice. Second, classroom management is the most challenging aspect for novice teachers, as they will encounter a different type of learning. The inability to supervise the classroom led to students misbehaving, including daydreaming, sleeping, talking, and using gadgets. Next, when novice teachers are instructed, they frequently adopt juvenile views or give feedback based on the theories they learned in school. Lastly, novice teachers considered whether to continue teaching after confronting several hardships, feeling upset and frustrated. Moreover, Limeranto et al. (2023) found that novice teachers frequently encountered problems with students' rude and disobedient behavior. The emotions of anger, overwhelm, and these obstacles may influence the anxiety experienced by novice teachers.

Furthermore, a study by Grub (2023) shows that teaching novice teachers about classroom management information and key areas at the university level is essential because it helps them take their initial steps in the teaching and learning process, which is sometimes seen as particularly difficult. In addition, Romero (2021) investigates the participation of novice teachers embarking on their professional journeys in non-harmonic public, semi-private, and private educational environments. Novice teachers are limited in their ability to participate in such school communities due to various plights. In addition, according to Chandran et al. (2022), novice teachers commonly encounter difficulties with workload, instruction, social position, and identity. Given the results, it is crucial to equip novice teachers with the information and skills they need to manage their many duties and obligations within educational institutions effectively. This is a crucial factor to consider in teacher training. Novice educators demonstrated insufficient management of lesson-related issues (Tran, 2021).

Moreover, the quality of teaching significantly influences students' educational achievements. Enhancing a nation's teaching workforce is vital to ensuring high-quality education. Efforts to enhance teacher education at HEI levels should be accompanied by targeted initiatives that address the specific areas experiencing teacher shortages in primary education (Generelao et al., 2022). According to a study by Alm et al. (2022), incorporating work-integrated learning (WIL) projects and real-world experiences into students' studies can significantly improve their sustainability knowledge. In addition, teaching about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at higher education institutions (HEIs) enables students to develop their social skills and become environmental activists in their future careers.

Although numerous studies have investigated the plights novice teachers face, little research has specifically examined the difficulties experienced by novice social studies teachers in private schools. As a result, this research gap limits our understanding of the challenges novice teachers face in teaching social studies in Private schools. Novice teachers face challenges when transitioning from an online instructional format to a traditional face-to-face learning environment due to limited proficiency and expertise in the latter, as well as a lack of

practical pedagogical approaches to employ during face-to-face sessions, since their internship experience primarily involved observing online classes during the pandemic. Therefore, this study examines the challenges novice teachers face when teaching social studies in private schools. It aims to provide valuable information on specific areas where support and professional development can focus to improve teachers' social studies instruction skills.

Novice teachers often experience stress and unpreparedness, but mentoring programs help them cope with classroom challenges and reduce anxiety by providing guidance and support (Zheng et al., 2025). Moen et al. (2026) examined the resilience of novice teachers in South Africa and found that teacher resilience varies, as shown by the item-person map from the Rasch model analysis. Teaching can be demanding and challenging, particularly during difficult times; however, as demonstrated by the teachers in this study, perseverance and resilience make success possible (Agayon et al., 2022).

This study examines the challenges novice teachers face when teaching social studies in private schools, particularly those with diverse professional backgrounds and limited formal training. It explores how they navigate the subject's interdisciplinary nature, adapt their expertise to classroom demands, and address the unique complexities of teaching social studies.

Moreover, to explore the challenges novice teachers faced in teaching social studies in private schools, this study aimed to achieve the following research objectives: to examine the lived experiences of novice teachers teaching social studies in private schools; to explore the coping mechanisms they used to address the challenges they encountered; and to draw out the insights and lessons they shared with fellow novice social studies teachers in private educational institutions.

Furthermore, there is an urgency to conduct the study to understand the plights that novice teachers face in teaching social studies in private schools, given the dearth of knowledge about their experiences, obstacles, strategies for addressing issues, and perspectives in this subject area. Thus, the researcher is prompted to pursue this study. By exploring their journeys, experiences, and perspectives, this study seeks to offer valuable insights into the unique plights faced by novice social studies teachers in private schools.

Moreover, this study aims to generate results that can serve as a reference for the Department of Education's policy and curriculum development. Furthermore, private schools provide insights into developing and crafting extensive seminars, workshops, and mentoring novice social studies teachers. Likewise, Novice teachers enhance their instructional effectiveness, specifically in social studies, and develop a heightened awareness of implementing superior pedagogical approaches, methodologies, tactics, and procedures in their teaching practice. In addition to the HEIs, it will provide insights to help improve the overall quality of education, fostering better-prepared educators who can positively impact student learning outcomes. Lastly, future researchers will build on this information as a basis for further studies.

METHOD

This section presents the study's research methodology, outlining the research design, participants, data collection procedures, research instruments, and data analysis techniques used to address the research objectives.

Study Participants

The study involved ten (10) novice teachers teaching social studies in private educational institutions. The private schools included were from both the north and south districts of Davao City. According to Creswell (2013), a phenomenology study should include 5 to 25 research participants. Consequently, 5 participants were selected for the In-Depth Interview and 5 for the Focus Group Discussion.

This study used purposive sampling. This sampling strategy relied on the researcher's discretion to select the most suitable participants for the study's objectives and the most practical method for selecting them. It allowed the researcher to maximize the restricted number of novice teachers teaching social studies in private schools. This strategy also helped the researcher in recruiting the required number of participants for this study.

The study was conducted in multiple private schools located in Davao City. These private schools were selected to examine the distinct challenges novice teachers face when teaching social studies within independent educational institutions. The researcher sent a formal permission letter to the administrations of selected private schools in Davao City to conduct the study and implement strategies safeguarding participants' identities and ensuring the confidentiality of any collected personal data.

The study focused explicitly on private schools and sought to comprehensively comprehend the distinct dynamics and requirements that novice social studies teachers encounter in this particular environment. The study locale provided an opportunity to explore these teachers' distinctive experiences and obstacles, shedding light on potential areas for professional development and support in social studies education within private school contexts.

The study's inclusion criteria for choosing participants were as follows: (1) Novice teachers who are in the first stages of their teaching career and those with less than three years of experience; (2) Bachelor of Secondary Education major in social studies graduate; (3) In-service teachers who are actively teaching social studies in different grade levels in Junior High School in a private school at the time of research. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria for determining those participants who are not qualified were as follows: Teachers outside Davao City; Public school teachers; Teachers whose experience is more than three years; Those who are not able to be interviewed via one-on-one interview; and Those who are not amenable to give such information and affirmative with regards to the present research study. However, potential participants will only be considered eligible if they demonstrate a willingness to engage in the research procedures with the researcher.

Participants may withdraw their consent and discontinue their participation at any time without any penalty. If they feel uncomfortable answering any interview questions, they have the right to remain silent or leave the discussion without explaining, especially if they believe ethical considerations are being violated. If the participant refused to participate in the interview, the researcher would actively recruit additional participants to meet the required number of informants.

Materials and Instrument

A self-created interview sheet was the primary data collection tool in this study. A panel of experts first validated it to guarantee its validity and reliability in obtaining data from the study's participants. The interview guide comprised open-ended questions regarding the perspectives and insights of novice teachers instructing social studies at private educational institutions. These questions were designed to encourage detailed responses rather than simple yes-or-no responses. Many open-ended questions began with "how," "what," and "where," giving participants the option to respond in their preferred languages, such as English, Tagalog, or their mother tongue, so that they could communicate their experiences more comfortably. The researcher also formulated "on-the-spot" questions to thoroughly understand their opinions and thoughts. Furthermore, audio equipment was used to record all data, ensuring that everything was well-documented. This was done with the interviewees' permission.

To ensure the validity of the research instrument, it underwent a comprehensive review by four internal validators and one external validator from the University of Mindanao and other higher education institutions. These validators were purposively selected based on their extensive professional experience, demonstrated expertise, and familiarity with the academic field relevant to the study. The instrument was evaluated using the criteria of Ethics, Artistry, and Rigor, ensuring ethical compliance, clarity in design, and methodological soundness aligned with the study's objectives.

Design and Procedures

This study utilized qualitative methods, specifically a phenomenological design. Qualitative researchers identified a phenomenon of human experience by gathering data from individuals who have encountered it. It provided a comprehensive portrayal of the encounter's fundamental nature. A phenomenological study addresses inquiries about the nature of "what" and "how" (Creswell, 1998). This approach elucidates the significance of multiple individuals' firsthand accounts of events. This design condenses a phenomenon's unique experiences

into a concise portrayal of its universal core. This study employed the Colaizzi data analysis method to guarantee the legitimacy and dependability of its findings. Researchers identified emerging themes and their interrelationships.

Moreover, qualitative research typically involves conducting comprehensive interviews and focus group discussions. By exploring the participants' perspectives, researchers can identify patterns of relationships and gain insights into how they have personally encountered the phenomenon under investigation (Nyumba et al., 2018). The researcher monitored proper conduct during data collection to prevent injury or discomfort to participants. Before conducting the study, the researcher sought authorization from the Graduate school where she was currently enrolled. After obtaining authorization to conduct research, the researcher will draft the study proposal, "*The Plight of Novice Teachers in Teaching Social Studies in Private Schools,*" which was submitted to the research panel for suitable critiques and revisions. After reviewing the research panel's proposal, the researcher created the interview sheet to collect data for this study. This interview sheet was validated by experts in the field, including the research validator designated by the Graduate School.

In this study, the researcher served as the author, primary data collector, participant observer, interviewer, translator, and interpreter. The researcher documented participants' behaviors and responses through notetaking, audio recordings, and photographs to capture underlying meanings and contextual nuances. When necessary, the researcher translated and interpreted participants' responses to ensure accurate representation of their perspectives. These data sources were triangulated during analysis to minimize bias and enhance the validity and reliability of the findings. Additionally, the researcher was responsible for data collection, conducting interviews, transcribing and encoding data, and analyzing the results. Throughout the research process, the researcher demonstrated sensitivity to participants' perspectives and strictly upheld ethical considerations, including confidentiality and the prevention of any potential harm.

To ensure the integrity of the study and prevent tampering or misrepresentation of the collected data, the researcher entrusted the data to a data analyst, who conducted a thorough thematic analysis. Codes, themes, and statements will be developed and discussed in light of the study's objectives. The findings served as the basis for conclusions and recommendations addressing the issues raised in this study. The data were clustered methodically and analyzed using theme analysis. The researcher analyzed the texts of the responses, selected relevant statements, derived meaning from them, and identified recurring themes. The data analysis tool transcribes research participants' responses, which are then coded to identify themes that will be assigned to narratives, consistent with the data gathered. A report detailing plagiarism and Turnitin was submitted along with the manuscript.

To ensure credibility, the researcher carefully selected participants who met the specified criteria and asked them to respond authentically to the research questions. The researcher also prolonged engagement with the participants to gain a clear understanding and establish trust. Furthermore, the researcher systematically followed and applied all steps in the data collection procedure to attain dependability. Moreover, Confirmability refers to the extent to which the outcomes of a research study can be corroborated by results from supplementary studies (Korstjens et al., 2017). To establish Confirmability in research, the information obtained was triangulated (Shenton, 2004). The researcher collected information from various sources and previous studies.

Transferability is guaranteed when study findings can be applied to different contexts and populations (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). As to the content of this research, the study's generalizations were truthful and honest, and the relevant findings were used to inform and apply in future research.

Moreover, the researcher took steps to adhere to ethical principles, including consulting the research adviser, a specialist in this field. Before the data collection process, the researcher secured ethics clearance and endorsement from the Professional School. During the in-depth interview, the researcher obtained prior informed consent from the participants. This involved informing them of the study's purpose and the ethical guidelines that would be followed, including maintaining the confidentiality of their responses, obtaining their approval, and ensuring their anonymity.

To uphold ethical integrity in this study, the researcher adhered to the ethical standards and guidelines established by the University of Mindanao Ethics and Review Committee and secured approval under UMERC Protocol No. UMERC-2024-313. This approval guaranteed the protection of participants’ rights, including respect for persons and the strict confidentiality of all information shared. The researcher sincerely acknowledged and valued the participants’ willingness to contribute their time and provide honest responses. Furthermore, the results of the study were shared with the participants as a form of recognition and to keep them informed of the valuable outcomes of their participation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the paper presents the study's results and discussion of the novice teachers' lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights and learning in teaching social studies in private schools. The data gathered from the interviews were carefully examined and analyzed to identify the emerging themes. The presentation of the results was organized according to the sequence of the research interview guide questions.

Study Participants’ Profile

Table 1 presents the demographic and professional profile of the study participants, including variables such as, months/years of teaching experience, gender and the data collection method used. This profile provides an overview of the participants’ backgrounds, which are relevant to understanding their perspectives and contributions to the study.

CODE	MONTHS/ YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE	GENDER	DATA COLLECTION
IDI-P1	2 years	M	In-depth Interview
IDI-P2	1 year	M	In-depth Interview
IDI-P3	10 months	F	In-depth Interview
IDI-P4	1 year and 5 months	F	In-depth Interview
IDI-P5	1 year and 6 months	M	In-depth Interview
FGD-P6	6 months	F	Focus Group Discussion
FGD-P7	1 year	M	Focus Group Discussion
FGD-P8	1 year	F	Focus Group Discussion
FGD-P9	1 year and 6 months	M	Focus Group Discussion
FGD-P10	10 months	F	Focus Group Discussion

Lived Experiences of Novice Teachers in Teaching Social Studies in Private Schools

Table 2 presents emerging themes from the lived experiences of novice social studies teachers in private schools. Participants' responses were carefully analyzed and categorized, resulting in the emergence of five major themes: *Instructional and Curriculum Challenges, Classroom Management Struggles, Relationship and Collegial Support, Engagement with Parents and Guardians, and Professional Growth and Learning.*

Table 2. Lived Experiences of Novice Teachers in Teaching Social Studies in Private Schools

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Instructional and Curriculum Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Struggle with language shift from English to Filipino

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in lesson planning and aligning strategies • Overloaded topics and pacing issues • Adjustments in content mastery • Time constraints in covering lessons
Classroom Management Struggles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short attention span of students • Difficulty establishing authority and routines • Managing noisy and distracted students • Diverse behaviors of learners • Learners exhibiting resistant attitudes
Relationships and Collegial Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited cooperation and communication among co-teachers • Competition and toxicity in faculty dynamics • Pressure to keep up with co-workers' submissions • Supportive colleagues easing transition • Camaraderie and peer support
Engagement with Parents and Guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts with demanding parents • Lack of cooperation from parents • Preference for personal communication • Reconciliation with parents of children with special needs • Supportive and eager parents
Professional Growth and Learnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for adaptability and innovation • Value of time management • Building relationships is more important than content • Learning gratitude and values advocacy • Burnout awareness and self-care

Instructional and Curriculum Challenges. Participants in the in-depth interview and focus group discussion reported that instructional and curricular challenges primarily affected their teaching experiences. Participants shared that they struggled with the language shift from English to Filipino, difficulties in lesson planning and strategy alignment due to overloaded topics and a fast-paced curriculum, and time constraints that hindered effective lesson delivery and content mastery.

According to a participant,

Yan ang pinaka challenge sa isang teacher dito, una sa lahat ang Aral-Pan ay mahirap sa kanila dahil sa wikang ginagamit ay wikang Filipino, kasi mas sanay sila sa english language at sa akin pod kailangan ko din mag tagalog. (IDI-P2)

(That is one of the biggest challenges for a teacher here. First of all, Araling Panlipunan is difficult for the students because the language used is Filipino, and most of them are more comfortable with English. As for me, I also have to speak in Tagalog.)

The participants shared that the shift from English-based learning to teaching in Filipino posed a major challenge, as it required both content delivery and translation, emphasizing the complexity of language adaptation in instruction.

Meanwhile, a participant from the focus group discussion expressed,

Sa amin kasi 45 minutes lang yung time ng Aral.Pan kaya kailangan mong hmm like somehow ipa mubo or summarize. (FGD-P6)

(Araling Panlipunan is only 45 minutes per session... I have to find ways to condense or summarize the lessons.)

The interviews revealed that Instructional and Curriculum Challenges are a significant concern for novice Social Studies teachers in private schools. These experiences are consistent with Sozen's (2018) findings, which emphasize the ongoing pedagogical adjustments and curriculum adaptations that novice teachers undertake, as well as the challenges of effectively implementing instructional strategies. Similarly, Dack et al. (2019) highlight the plights of transferring pedagogical skills into secondary classroom practice, particularly in social studies.

Classroom Management Struggles. Most participants shared their experiences and plights as novice Social Studies teachers in private schools, highlighting that classroom management struggles significantly affected their teaching. They encountered plights in maintaining students' attention, establishing authority and routines, managing noise and distractions, and addressing diverse learner behaviors, including resistant attitudes that disrupted the classroom environment and instructional flow.

One participant from IDI said,

mahirap talaga mag establish ng classroom management if your students are not paying attention. Next one is mahirap talaga kapag nagdi-discuss ka dito sa harap ng classroom at walang kang rules na impose sa students mo. (IDI- P2)

(My main challenge in classroom management is that it's really hard to establish control if the students are not paying attention. Another difficulty is trying to teach in front of the class when you have not imposed clear rules on the students.)

Participants shared that establishing authority becomes particularly challenging when students are inattentive.

Furthermore, a participant expressed that,

Lisod i-handle ang noisy ug distracted students, especially for me na nag intership og online or limited face-to-face pa ang setup. (FGD- P7)

(It's difficult to handle noisy and distracted students, especially for me, since I did my internship with limited face-to-face or online setups.)

It was revealed that the participants encountered plights managing noisy and distracted students, primarily because they were novice teachers and had limited exposure to such situations during their internships, as most of their teaching experience occurred online or through limited face-to-face interactions.

Classroom management difficulties remain a major challenge for novice Social Studies teachers in private schools (Nurlatifah et al., 2021). Similar findings are reported by Wolff et al. (2020) and Grub (2023), who note that novice teachers often struggle to manage classroom dynamics and unexpected classroom situations. Additionally, Limeranto et al. (2023) found that novice teachers frequently encounter issues related to students' rude and disobedient behaviors. Overall, these findings indicate that classroom management remains a persistent

and critical concern for novice teachers, as noted by Hirsch et al. (2021), particularly in secondary Social Studies instruction.

Relationships and Collegial Support. This theme encompasses issues concerning relationships and collegiality. Participants shared plights, including limited cooperation and communication among co-teachers, and pressure to keep pace with colleagues' submissions. Conversely, they highlighted positive experiences, including supportive colleagues who facilitated their transition, fostered camaraderie, and provided valuable peer support.

As one of the participants shared,

Okey, let's have the challenges, it's quit challenging kasi ako sa loob ng faculty, mero akung i-suggest sa kanila para ma improve ang teaching strategy nila, pero ang iba naman parang na belong na sya sa toxic, sa ang ginagawa ko kung may sabihin din sila gagawin ko. Kasi merong mga ginatawag nating bida-bida din. (IDI-P2)

(One of the challenges I face is within the faculty itself. While I try to offer suggestions to help improve our teaching strategies, not everyone receives it positively—sometimes, it can feel a bit toxic. As a result, I often choose to just listen and go along with what others suggest. It can be difficult, especially when some colleagues tend to dominate discussions or constantly try to take the spotlight.)

Meanwhile, a participant also highlighted,

For tenure lang they to respect each other lang and then be approachable, good morning mam, good morning sir and then if naay tuyo you have to be respectful. (FGD-P8)

(As for the tenured teachers, they just respect each other and are approachable saying “good morning, ma’am” or “good morning, sir,” and if you have something to say, you need to be respectful.)

In addition, a participant from the FGD highlighted the positive relationships they had with their co-workers,

Yes, yes wala jud koy problema, my subject coordinator okey pod kaayo, of course okey jud kaayo ang mga leaders sa among school, wala man koy mga problem, also they also listen to you, if you have suggestion, like what if cher ing-ani and they listen, and when they listen, we do it. (FGD P9)

(Yes, yes, I really don't have any problems. My subject coordinator is also very good, and of course, the leaders in our school are really great. I don't have any problems. They also listen to you if you have suggestions, like ‘What if, teacher, we do it this way?’ and they listen, and when they listen, we implement it.”)

Participants' experiences revealed that collegial relationships can both support and hinder novice teachers. Common challenges included limited cooperation, ineffective communication, and pressure to meet colleagues' expectations (Bertram, 2023; Romero, 2021). Conversely, supportive and collaborative relationships were shown to ease novice teachers' transition into the profession and promote their professional growth (Guellouma & Bilouk, 2024). Complementing these findings, Rhodes (2017) reported that peer coaching effectively enhances novice teachers' instructional competence and overall development. Furthermore, Ahmed et al. (2020) recommended that head teachers' supportive attitudes and the establishment of a conducive school environment are crucial for fostering novice teachers' job satisfaction and retention.

Engagement with Parents and Guardians. Participants shared that engaging with parents and guardians was both essential and challenging for novice Social Studies teachers in private schools. They experienced conflicts with demanding parents, frustration from a lack of cooperation, and pressure from families who preferred personal rather than formal communication. Some also faced difficulties reconciling with parents of children with special needs. Despite these challenges, teachers noted positive experiences with supportive, eager parents whose involvement strengthened collaboration and improved classroom dynamics.

A participant shared,

One time, gikasab-an ko sa parent tungod lang sa low grade sa anak niya. (IDI- P3)

(One time, I was scolded by a parent just because of their child's low grade.)

Moreover, a participant from an in-depth interview shared,

Ohh the most challenging part as a new teacher is this one, how to have a good relationship with the parents, for me during ptc, parents and teachers conference that is the venue we're we can talk with the parents na one on one focusing on the strength and things to improve ng bata Ito din very challenging if hindi mag cooperate ang parents po.

(IDI- P4)

(Ohh, hehe, the most challenging part as a new teacher is building a good relationship with the parents. For me, the parent-teacher conference is the venue where we can talk to the parents' one-on-one, focusing on the child's strengths and areas for improvement. This is also very challenging when the parents don't cooperate.)

In addition, a participant from the FGD highlighted positive relationships with their parents.

Wala pody toxic na mga parent didto supportive kaayo sila sa ilang mga anak and about pod ana kay mas parent pa laga ang "sige mam buhaton na" kaysa mga bata, didto pa problemado pa ang mga bata kaysa parent, ing-ana basta in terms with activity, so ing-ana among relationship. (FGD- P6)

(There are no toxic parents; they're actually very supportive of their children. In fact, it's often the parents who are more eager, saying things like 'Alright, ma'am, we'll do it,' more than the students themselves. Sometimes, it's the students who feel more pressured than the parents. That's how it is when it comes to activities—that's the kind of relationship we have with them.)

Like the above experienced, a participant from the FGD also shared,

Parents? ahmm I my advisory I don't have they are supportive too, because I am more on discipline, more on character development ko. (FGD- P9)

(Parents? Ahmm, in my advisory, I don't have any issues; they are supportive too because I focus more on discipline and character development.)

Novice teachers experienced both negative and positive forms of engagement with parents and guardians. On one hand, Antony-Newman (2023) reported that novice teachers faced challenges such as managing high parental expectations, addressing parents' concerns, and resolving emerging issues. On the other hand, positive interactions fostered collaboration, strengthened trust, and supported student learning (Adams & Forsyth, 2007). These findings underscore the importance of equipping novice teachers with communication skills and strategies to navigate complex parent-teacher relationships effectively (Antony-Newman, 2024), and Hart (2024) likewise emphasized the need to strengthen teachers' interpersonal competencies.

Professional Growth and Learning. This theme highlights the transformative experiences of novice teachers as they navigate the complexities of teaching in private schools. Participants emphasized the need for adaptability and innovation in instructional practices, the critical role of time management, and the importance of building relationships rather than merely delivering content. Additionally, they reflected on learning gratitude, advocating for values, and recognizing the significance of burnout awareness and self-care as integral components of sustainable professional development.

One participant expressed,

Time management talaga pinaka importante. Kasi, It allows me to balance planning, teaching, and self-care. (IDI- P5)

(Time management is really the most important. Because it allows me to balance planning, teaching, and self-care.)

In line with this, it was shared,

The lack of time management. Dili lalim mag-prepare og lesson while managing classroom tasks, plus reporting and extra duties. (IDI- P3)

(The lack of time management. It’s not easy to prepare lessons while managing classroom tasks, plus reporting and extra duties.)

The participants shared that, as novice teachers, they need to learn effective time management, as it helps them balance lesson planning, instructional responsibilities, and self-care, which are essential for sustaining productivity and well-being.

Furthermore, participants emphasized during the interviews that building relationships with students is often more critical than merely focusing on content delivery.

A participant emotionally answered,

On a positive note, I learned that relationship-building is more important than just delivering content. Students learn better when they feel you care for them, talk or communicate ka sa kanila, kamustahin mo sila sa bahay hindi lang ang talk all about the subject matter that you handle. (IDI- P3)

(On a positive note, I’ve learned that building relationships is more important than just delivering content. Students learn better when they feel that you genuinely care for them—when you take time to talk to them, check in on how they’re doing at home, and not just focus on the subject matter you teach.)

Establishing positive teacher-student connections fosters trust, engagement, and a supportive learning environment, which ultimately enhances academic achievement and holistic development.

Novice teachers may appear unprepared due to self-doubt stemming from limited experience (Peens, 2022), highlighting the need for continuous professional development and reflective practice. Effective teaching requires adaptability and innovative pedagogy (Paniagua & Istance, 2018), along with strong time-management skills and positive teacher–student relationships. It also involves values advocacy, gratitude, and self-care practices to help prevent burnout (Brittain, 2025). Overall, professional competence develops through sustained engagement with instructional practice and attention to personal well-being. Zhukova (2018) emphasizes that one of the most effective ways to support teachers’ career progression is through systematic, differentiated professional development tailored to their developmental stage and individual support needs.

Coping Mechanisms of Novice Teachers

Table 3 below presents emerging themes regarding the coping mechanisms novice teachers use when teaching social studies in private schools. The participants’ responses were systematically analyzed and categorized, resulting in the identification of five overarching themes: *Proactive Planning and Time Management; Adaptive and Engaging Pedagogy; Relational and Institutional Supports; Personal Self-Care and Stress Relief; and Sustaining Motivation and Purpose.*

Table 3. Coping Mechanisms of Novice Teachers Teaching Social Studies in Private Schools

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Proactive Planning and Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance preparation before classes • Time management as the key coping skill

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task-focused checklists/planners • Pause–reflect before acting • Set work–home boundaries
Adaptive and Engaging Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use humor with values infusion • Use of gamification strategy • Use of storytelling, mini role-plays, and restorative talks • Use of differentiated, visual, and “mix-and-match” approaches
Relational and Institutional Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance from administrators • Collegial help and shared strategies • Family as emotional anchor • Faith-based coping • Counseling and wellness programs
Personal Self-Care and Stress Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleep and rest • Food breaks and shared meals • Short solo trips and mini travel • Hobbies and recreational activities • Physical and wellness activities
Sustaining Motivation and Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursuit of professional growth and advanced studies • Motivation drawn from student joy and learning outcomes • Motivation from practical and financial incentives • Commitment to service, faith, and nation-oriented purpose • Dedication to family-centered aspirations and support

Proactive Planning and Time Management. This theme illustrates how novice social studies teachers in private school settings cope with challenges through proactive planning and time management. Preparation ensures instructional readiness, while task-focused strategies such as checklists and planners help organize responsibilities. Teachers also emphasize reflection before action and setting work-home boundaries to maintain well-being. These practices collectively foster resilience and professional effectiveness amid demanding roles.

One participant expressed,

Always be prepared for anything—whether it involves co-teachers, school leaders, or daily tasks. Preparation is constantly emphasized to prevent mistakes from being repeated. That’s why I always make it a point to be ready. (IDI- P1)

Another participant added as she shared,

I always tell myself that I should not bring my work at home. For example my class or my regular work end at 5 pm, stop na sya. (FGD- P10)

(I always tell myself not to bring work home. For example, my class or regular work ends at 5 PM—after that, I stop working. and don't bring my laptop home, except maybe when exams are coming up. Then I bring my laptop if I need to update or finish lesson plans.)

Setting clear work-home boundaries is a vital coping mechanism for novice teachers. Limiting tasks beyond school hours except during critical periods helps maintain work-life balance and reduce stress, reflecting a deliberate effort to safeguard personal time while fulfilling professional duties.

Interview data revealed that novice Social Studies teachers in private schools cope with challenges primarily through proactive planning and effective time management (Carr, 2013; Ahles, 2015). Preparation ensures instructional readiness, as McDonald (2025) explains, while tools such as checklists and planners aid in task organization. Teachers also practice reflection before acting and set work-home boundaries to maintain well-being (Lindqvist et al., 2022). These strategies collectively promote resilience and support professional growth (Çakmak et al., 2018).

Adaptive and Engaging Pedagogy. Participants in the in-depth interview and focus group discussion highlight the importance of adaptive and engaging pedagogy in teaching Social Studies. Strategies include humor with values integration, gamification, storytelling, mini role-plays, restorative conversations, and varied visual aids through “mix-and-match” methods. These approaches promote active participation and support meaningful learning experiences in Social Studies for diverse groups of students.”

As a participant from IDI shared,

Hmm for me is, um, the, putting humor on the, putting humor on, the lesson, because sometimes, merong mga lesson talaga, makakonote lagi, ang mga bata, na, boringso you have to put some, humors on that one. I will put humor sometimes in relatable situations, which somehow, mupukaw ang interest nila. (IDI- P1)

(For me, one of the most effective strategies is adding humor to the lesson. There are really topics that students often perceive as boring, so I try to lighten things up by incorporating humor—especially through relatable situations. That way, I can spark their interest and keep them engaged.)

FGD-P8 further narrated that,

We really focus on values and how to connect them. It's actually hard in economics to relate the core mission and values of the school, especially when my topics are mostly about graphing or math. But I really try to include values in the activities. That's it. (FGD- P8)

Participants noted that using humor integrated with values education served as a coping mechanism that captured students' attention, sustained their engagement, and supported meaningful Social Studies learning in junior high school.

Adaptive and engaging pedagogy is significant, as it serves as a key coping mechanism for novice Social Studies teachers facing classroom challenges (Männikkö & Husu, 2018; Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). It helps create interactive learning environments that boost student engagement and reduce classroom management issues (Sasson et al., 2020). These methods not only enhance instructional effectiveness but also strengthen teacher confidence and resilience, enabling novice educators to manage stress and address diverse learner needs (Öztürk & Yildırım, 2013).

Relational and Institutional Supports. This theme discussed the significance of relational and institutional supports in helping novice Social Studies teachers in private schools cope with professional challenges. Participants highlighted guidance from administrators, collegial assistance, and the sharing of teaching strategies

as vital sources of support within the school environment. Beyond institutional help, family served as an emotional anchor, providing encouragement and stability during stressful periods. Faith-based coping, including prayer and reliance on spiritual guidance, was also emphasized as a source of strength and resilience. Additionally, participants recognized the value of the counseling services and wellness programs provided by their schools, which helped them manage stress, maintain emotional well-being, and remain effective in the classroom.

One participant in the focus group discussion expressed,

So my admin, so naa dito si ahmm VP sya sa academic, so pag time nana sya mu ingon, mu adto sa classroom naga visit siya naga observed so ana that time naga adto sya, after ana punta ka sa office ko talk tayo, pag-usapan namin yung mga kailangan gawin, mga advices niya and then with that good, naka tabang sa akoo atleast maka reflect ko.

(FGD- P6)

(So in our admin, we have our VP for academics. When it's time, she goes around visiting classrooms and observes. After that, she'll say, 'Come to my office, let's talk.' Then we'll discuss the things I need to work on, and she gives me advice. That really helps me because it allows me to reflect.)

It was also shared by one of the participants in the in-depth interview,

... joining or talking with my co-teachers, especially in some grade level in social studies, like "mam gina unsa nimo pag ing-ani ang topic? medyo taas sya", then they will reply ing-ani dapat buhaton like number one gina ingon nila, read advance jud and need to make PPT para mas ma catch ang attention ng bata and insert activities in between para dili sila ma bored. (IDI- P3)

(... joining or talking with my co-teachers, especially those teaching the same grade level in Social Studies, helped a lot. For example, I would ask, "Ma'am, how do you handle this topic? It's a bit long." They would then reply with advice like, "You should do it this way: first, read the material in advance, and make a PowerPoint presentation to better catch the students' attention. Also, insert activities in between so they don't get bored.)

The participants' experiences show that administrative guidance and collegial support function as key coping mechanisms for novice Social Studies teachers. Feedback from administrators helps them reflect and improve their teaching, while advice and shared strategies from co-teachers provide practical solutions that ease instructional challenges.

Relational and institutional supports are essential for novice Social Studies teachers to manage professional plights (Jin et al., 2019). These supports reduce stress and enable teachers to adapt and thrive in demanding contexts (Sikma, 2019). Formal and informal support networks also help mediate the expectations and workload pressures of beginning teachers, guiding improvements in induction and working conditions (Pogodzinski, 2013).

Personal Self-Care and Stress Relief. This theme illustrates how novice Social Studies teachers relied on personal self-care and stress-relief practices to manage the emotional demands of their work. Participants emphasized the importance of adequate sleep and rest to restore their energy, while food breaks and shared meals with colleagues provided moments of relaxation and social support. They also engaged in short solo trips or mini-travels to temporarily disconnect from work-related pressures. Hobbies and recreational activities, along with physical and wellness routines, further helped them release stress and maintain emotional balance. Collectively, these practices served as vital coping mechanisms that supported their overall well-being amidst the challenges of teaching.

FGD-P10 shared,

In my case, I regain my sanity through sleeping and eating gyud. Because that's the only time I think where I can be happy, and then I always tell myself that I should not bring my work at home. (FGD- P10)

(In my case, I regain my sanity through sleeping and eating gyud. Because that's the only time I think where I can be happy and then I always tell myself that I should not bring my work at home. Like the above statement, a participant also shared)

Similarly, one participant for IDI-P3 shared,

Ahh to add on, Also, self-care every weekend, sleep and go to church on Sundays. (IDI- P3)

The participant's experiences showed that sleep and regular rest were important coping mechanisms. By prioritizing sleep, taking time to eat, and practicing weekend self-care, including resting and attending church, the participant regained balance and managed teaching-related stress more effectively.

The participant's experiences showed that physical and wellness activities served as valuable coping mechanisms for managing stress. Engaging in activities such as hiking, participating in meditation and yoga sessions, and joining regular Zumba routines and school devotionals helped them release tension, regain focus, and experience a sense of calm. These wellness practices provided both physical relief and emotional balance, supporting their overall well-being amid the demands of teaching.

In conclusion, Personal Self-Care and Stress Relief highlights the pivotal role of proactive coping strategies in sustaining teachers' well-being (Kelly, 2021). The findings affirm that intentional practices such as self-care and stress management are not merely supplementary but essential for reducing emotional strain and sustaining professional effectiveness in the demanding context of teaching (Lehr, 2022; Juárez & Becton, 2024).

Sustaining Motivation and Purpose. This theme shows that participants sustained their commitment to teaching by nurturing strong motivation and purpose. Their intrinsic values and professional dedication helped them cope with the pressures of the educational environment. Participants drew motivation from multiple sources, including the pursuit of professional growth and advanced studies, the joy and positive learning outcomes of their students, and practical or financial incentives that supported their efforts. Many were also driven by a deep commitment to service, faith, and nation-oriented purpose, while others found strength in family-centered aspirations and support. Together, these motivations served as vital coping mechanisms, enabling novice Social Studies teachers to persevere despite the profession's challenges.

IDI-P1 shared,

Yes, I'm taking hmm I'm trying to build my professional growth in order hmm Just like, enrolling myself into master's degree. So, that's the thing. I think that's the first step for me to really take the passion to teach. (IDI-P1)

(Yes, I'm working on building my professional growth by, for example, enrolling in a master's degree program. I believe that's the first step for me to truly embrace my passion for teaching.)

Similar to the above statement, a participant also shared,

I want to pursue my dream, my professional dream na mag take og masters puhon if maka save na. (IDI- P4)

(I want to pursue my professional dream of taking up a master's degree someday, once I've saved enough.)

The participant's experiences indicated that the pursuit of professional growth and advanced studies served as an important coping mechanism. Enrolling in or aspiring to pursue a master's degree provided them with a sense of direction, motivation, and long-term purpose, helping them stay focused and positive despite the challenges of being a novice teacher.

In addition, a participant also shared about being motivated drawn from student joy and learning outcomes,

So, first akong coping mechanism sa hmm, isa ka jud akong ganahan, kanang makit-an nako malipay ang bata, ma'am, pagsulod pa lang nako sa classroom, naga-bless man gud ang bata, gina-bless ko nila kay culture sa school, ma'am, ba. (FGF- P6)

(So first, my coping mechanism—what really keeps me going—is seeing the students happy, ma’am. The moment I enter the classroom and the students come to bless me (they do ‘mano po’), it’s because that’s part of the school culture, ma’am.)

The participant’s experiences demonstrated that dedication to family-centered aspirations and the emotional support of loved ones served as important coping mechanisms. Their desire to support parents and siblings provided strong motivation, while daily encouragement and open communication with family members, especially parents, offered stability and emotional relief. This close family bond helped them manage stress, remain resilient, and stay committed to their responsibilities as novice teachers.

Sustaining Motivation and Purpose highlights the essential role of maintaining a strong sense of meaning and commitment within the teaching profession, which is critical for long-term engagement and effectiveness (Appova & Arbaugh, 2017). The findings indicate that sustained motivation, anchored in personal values and a clear sense of purpose, is essential for fostering resilience, long-term job satisfaction, and continued professional engagement, as noted by Barni et al. (2019). By nurturing their intrinsic motivation and reaffirming the significance of their role, teachers become better equipped to navigate challenges and remain effective in meeting the ongoing demands of their vocation (Singh & Garg, 2025).

Insights and Learning of Novice Teachers

Table 4 presents emerging themes derived from insights and learning from novice teachers regarding the teaching of social studies in private schools. Participants’ responses were systematically analyzed and categorized, resulting in three major themes: *Make Social Studies Meaningful and Interactive*; *Grow with Reflection and Resilience*; *Teach with Courage, Care, Collaboration, and Faith*.

Table 4. Insights and Learning of Novice Teachers teaching Social Studies in Private Schools

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Make Social Studies Meaningful and Interactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go beyond facts by linking lessons to values and everyday realities. • Lighten up lessons and make concepts memorable through creative strategies. • Maximize technology and student-centered outputs. • Adopt gamification and collaborative activities
Grow with Reflection and Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be flexible, patient, and reflective • See challenges as opportunities for fulfillment • Build confidence and resilience • Teach with passion and purpose
Teach with Courage, Care, Collaboration, and Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face teaching with courage and determination • Show patience, love, and genuine care for students • Seek collaboration and mentorship • Stay grounded in faith and values

Make Social Studies Meaningful and Interactive. For this theme, the findings show that novice teachers learned to strengthen Social Studies instruction by making lessons meaningful, relevant, and interactive. They

recognized that going beyond facts by connecting content to values and everyday realities deepened students' understanding. Participants also emphasized using creative strategies like storytelling, humor, and role-plays to make concepts memorable. In addition, they maximized technology, encouraged student-centered outputs, and integrated gamification and collaborative activities to sustain engagement. These insights highlight that interactive and relevant approaches are essential for effective Social Studies teaching.

Participants related as they shared,

I am handling Grade 7 and 9 with 4 sections per level. I think it is because they see it as memorizing facts and dates, unlike Science or Math, which feel more hands-on and problem-based. That is why I try to make my lessons engaging and connected to real-life issues. (IDI- P5)

Further shared the same sentiment,

Approaches, like maintain the humor in your class, to make students love social studies. Insert dramatization and role playing and giving story or summarizing the topic to them. (IDI- P1)

Novice Social Studies teachers in private schools realized the importance of connecting lessons to values and real-life situations, helping students see the subject as more than just memorization. They also found that creative approaches, such as humor, role-play, storytelling, dramatization, and lesson summaries, made classes more engaging and easier to remember. Overall, the experiences show that making lessons relevant and creative plays a big role in capturing students' interest and improving how well they learn Social Studies.

Moreover, one participant responded to maximize technology and student-centered output, as shared,

Hmm, I make fun in allowing my students to make their "History TikToks" and mini-podcasts for certain lessons. Since they are more on to soc.med especially in tiktok. (IDI- P3)

Participants reported that novice social studies teachers in private schools recognized that using technology and student-centered outputs can make Social Studies more engaging and relevant. Activities like "History TikToks," mini-podcasts, and digital travel brochures allowed students to work with platforms they already enjoy while strengthening their understanding of the content. The teachers also observed that gamified activities and collaborative tasks kept students interested, reduced boredom, and encouraged active participation. Overall, the findings show that technology, creative digital outputs, gamification, and teamwork are effective in boosting student engagement in Social Studies.

Making Social Studies Meaningful and Interactive underscores that novice teachers in private schools sustain their motivation and commitment by designing engaging and relevant learning experiences for their students (Cimatu, 2025; Asanza, 2025). By fostering a sense of purpose and prioritizing interactive strategies, teachers can cope with the challenges and emotional strain of the profession (Ural,2021). These practices not only enhance student engagement but also function as vital coping mechanisms that strengthen teachers' dedication and resilience in the classroom (Gibson, 2025).

Grow with Reflection and Resilience. This theme shows that participants learned to adapt and thrive in the teaching profession by being flexible, patient, and reflective. They shared that seeing challenges not as setbacks but as opportunities for growth helped them find fulfillment in their work. Through deliberate self-assessment, they built confidence and strengthened their resilience, allowing them to recover from difficulties and stay effective despite constant demands. Ultimately, the theme highlights that reflecting on experiences, staying adaptable, and teaching with passion and purpose are essential for sustaining both personal and professional growth.

As the participant from IDI shared,

I've learned that flexibility, humility, and reflection are essential. You need to be open to learning every day. Big help talaga ma'am para ma identify yung what works and what doesn't so you can adjust and improve po ma'am. (IDI- P5)

(I've learned that flexibility, humility, and reflection are essential. You need to be open to learning every day. It's truly a big help, ma'am, in identifying what works and what doesn't, so you can adjust and improve.)

Added to the above statement, one participant also expressed,

Challenging because every day is a unique day naa judy concerns or problems but fullfilling sya labi na na overcome nimo to na mga challenges and mas fullfilling pajud pa mu ingon sila og, teacher mas nakasabot nami karon sa AralPan bisan 2-3 lang a students mag ingon ana at the end of your class lami na kayo paminawon makawala og kakapoy. (IDI- P4)

(It's challenging because every day is a unique day—there are always concerns or problems—but it's fulfilling, especially when you overcome those challenges. And it's even more fulfilling when students say, "Teacher, we understand Araling Panlipunan better now." Even if it's just 2 or 3 students who say that at the end of your class, it feels so good—it takes away all the exhaustion.)

Participants' responses indicated that novice teachers recognized the importance of being flexible, patient, and reflective in their practice. They discovered that adapting daily, evaluating what works, and being open to continuous learning were essential for improving their teaching. They also recognized that challenges, though frequent, were meaningful opportunities for fulfillment, especially when students demonstrated a better understanding of the lesson. These insights show how reflection and a positive mindset helped strengthen their confidence and growth as novice teachers.

In line with the above statement, a participant answered,

ayaw pod kahadlok kung magkamali ka, kung magkamali ka diha ka more maka learn and make sure na tanggap pod nimo kung unsa imung mali, dili pod nimo i tolerate imung self na mali ka, i-tama gihapon bisan mali. So kailangan gihapon i-correct imung sarili and patabang sa lain kung manghingan lang. (FGD- P6)

(And don't be afraid to make mistakes. When you make mistakes, that's actually when you learn more. What matters is that you accept your mistakes and don't tolerate them—acknowledge them, but make sure to correct yourself. Be willing to ask for help when you need it.)

Thus, a participant shared,

you have to pause and reflect, do not be afraid to commit mistakes because it's the only way to learn. (FGD- P8)

During the interview, FGD- P9 recommended,

Na learned jud nako or na realized ang teaching, dili ni para sa tanan, calling gyud ni. Lisod siya, kapoy, oo kayo hahaha pero fulfilling. Teaching is hard, pero kung naa kay passion, makaya ra. Bisin unsa pa kapoy, basta nakakita ko og improvement sa mga estudyante, ma-feel nako nga worth it tanan. Ug hangtod karon, malipay gihapon ko nga teacher ko. (FGD- P9)

(What I really learned or realized is that teaching is not for everyone — it's truly a calling. It's hard and tiring, yes, but fulfilling. Teaching is tough, but if you have passion, you can handle it. No matter how tired I get, once I see improvements in my students, I feel that everything is worth it. And even now, I'm still happy to be a teacher.)

The participants' responses showed that novice teachers in private schools teaching social studies recognized the importance of building confidence and resilience as they navigated professional demands. They recognized that mistakes are part of learning and that progress comes from admitting errors, seeking help, and pushing through challenges. Through reflection and perseverance, they found that difficulties actually strengthened their commitment to teaching. Even when setbacks occurred, seeing their students improve reminded them of their purpose and highlighted how resilience, confidence, and passion shape the success of beginning educators.

It was revealed that Grow with Reflection and Resilience highlights the essential roles of reflective practice and adaptability in novice social studies teachers' coping strategies (Mirand, 2024). By engaging in self-assessment and cultivating resilience, teachers can learn from challenges, recover from setbacks, and maintain professional effectiveness (Stewart & Jansky, 2022; Harris, 2025). These practices not only support personal growth but also strengthen their capacity to thrive amid the dynamic and demanding nature of the teaching profession (Kutsyuruba, 2019).

Teach with Courage, Care, Collaboration, and Faith. For this theme, the findings show that novice teachers learned the importance of approaching the profession with courage and determination. They emphasized being patient, showing love and genuine care for students, and seeking support through collaboration and mentorship. Staying rooted in their faith and personal values also helped them stay focused and purposeful. These qualities became meaningful guiding insights, enabling them to overcome challenges and maintain a positive, intentional teaching practice.

IDI- P5 recommended,

To all Neophyte teachers like me, you must be patient with yourself. Learn from others. Don't hesitate to ask for help. (IDI- P5)

Similarly,

Also, don't hesitate to ask for help from your colleagues. (FGD- P8)

In addition, it was also recommended in the IDI,

Always seek guidance to our Lord, because all your plans will be prospered if salig nato sa iyaha and para dili pod ta ma exhaust. (IDI- P4)

(Always seek guidance from the Lord, because all your plans will prosper if we trust in Him—and so that we won't become exhausted.)

A participant from FDG also shared,

Yes, as guidance, kaya may tagline kami na "Jesus is Lord". (FGD-P7)

(Yes, as guidance, that's why we have the tagline 'Jesus is Lord.')

The participants' responses showed that novice social studies teachers in private schools recognized the importance of seeking collaboration and mentorship early in their careers. Reaching out to experienced colleagues helped build their confidence, expand their teaching strategies, and make classroom challenges more manageable. They also emphasized staying grounded in faith and personal values, noting that prayer and spiritual guidance helped them cope with stress and stay purposeful. These insights show that collegial support and faith-based grounding are essential to helping novice teachers grow, remain resilient, and find stability on their teaching journey.

The participant has expressed that teaching with Courage, Care, Collaboration, and Faith emphasizes that novice Social Studies teachers rely on spiritual grounding, optimism, and collaborative relationships as vital coping mechanisms (Nieto, 2006; Baker-Doyle et al., 2018). Seeking divine guidance and maintaining resilience enable them to navigate the emotional and professional challenges of teaching (Phillips, 2021; Miles & Marburg, 2025). These strategies not only help sustain their well-being but also reinforce their commitment to delivering meaningful instruction despite the inherent demands of the profession.

Implication And Concluding Remark

This section highlights the implications of the study's significant findings. Considering the challenges and coping strategies shared by participants, recommendations are provided to help schools, teachers, and policymakers

create safer, more inclusive learning environments. Lastly, the researcher offers personal insights and reflections in the concluding remarks.

Implication for Practice

The findings show that novice Social Studies teachers in private schools face a wide range of plights that affect how they teach, manage their classrooms, and sustain their well-being. Many challenges with lesson pacing, shifting between languages, heavy content, and limited time often make instruction difficult. Managing diverse learner behaviors adds another layer of complexity to their early teaching experiences. Strained relationships with colleagues, limited parental cooperation, and heavy workloads further intensify these issues.

Despite these challenges, novice Social Studies teachers in private schools showed resilience by adapting their teaching methods, planning, relying on supportive relationships, and attending to their well-being to stay motivated and purposeful. These insights highlight several important implications for educational practice.

First, private schools may consider developing comprehensive training initiatives, such as seminars, workshops, and ongoing capacity-building programs to strengthen the instructional skills of novice Social Studies teachers. Establishing structured mentoring programs in which novice teachers are paired with experienced mentors who can provide focused support in areas such as curriculum alignment, Social Studies specific teaching strategies, classroom management, and language integration. Together, these efforts help create a supportive professional environment that encourages growth, builds resilience, and promotes long-term effectiveness in Social Studies education.

Second, the Department of Education may also draw on these insights when designing guidelines that promote structured induction programs, ongoing mentoring, and professional development tailored to the specific needs of beginning teachers. By improving access to coaching, encouraging meaningful peer collaboration, and providing shared teaching resources, institutions can assist new educators in navigating the unique challenges of Social Studies and establishing a solid foundation for their teaching careers.

Third, Higher Education Institutions can bolster their teacher education programs to better prepare future educators to be skilled and resilient. Enhancing pre-service training by expanding content knowledge, refining Social Studies-specific teaching methods, and exposing student-teachers to diverse classroom environments can help them better manage the realities of real teaching. Incorporating courses and activities that foster adaptability, reflective practices, and emotional resilience can further support new teachers as they enter the profession. With these improvements, HEIs can cultivate competent, confident, and resilient Social Studies educators ready to meet the changing demands of the classroom.

Lastly, Novice Social Studies teachers in private schools may gain from targeted support to improve their instructional skills. Assistance in applying suitable pedagogical techniques, evidence-based strategies, and classroom methods tailored to the context can help them create lessons that are engaging, relevant, and meaningful. With structured support in these areas, novice teachers can gradually build confidence and enhance their overall effectiveness in teaching Social Studies.

Overall, providing holistic support to novice teachers—both professionally and personally, can significantly enhance the quality of Social Studies instruction and contribute to more positive and effective learning environments in private schools.

Implications for Future Research

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on novice teachers' lived experiences by offering detailed insights into the unique challenges faced by novice Social Studies teachers in private schools. However, because the study used purposive sampling and involved a limited number of participants, the findings cannot be generalized to all novice teachers.

Future research may involve broader samples across different regions, school types, and cultural contexts to examine whether similar challenges persist. Employing mixed-methods or quantitative designs could allow researchers to measure variables such as teacher self-efficacy, burnout levels, instructional competence, and student engagement. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to explore how novice teachers' coping strategies, beliefs, and professional identities evolve over time. In addition, examining the effectiveness of mentoring programs, professional development efforts, and institutional support systems can provide practical evidence to improve teacher preparation and retention.

Concluding Remarks

The most important finding of this study is not only the challenges novice teachers face in teaching social studies in private schools, but also their resilience, adaptability, and willingness to grow despite the complex realities of the classroom. Their stories show that teaching Social Studies in private schools means juggling instructional demands, managing diverse classroom dynamics, building professional relationships, and safeguarding personal well-being, all at once and often with limited experience.

This research has deepened the researcher's understanding of novice teaching by showing that effective teaching involves far more than delivering content. It also requires emotional labor, strong relationships, and ongoing reflection. The study highlights how novice teachers sustain their commitment to the profession by drawing strength from support systems, adaptable teaching practices, personal values, and intentional self-care.

In conclusion, novice teachers should not be viewed as deficient practitioners but as developing professionals who need guidance, empathy, and meaningful opportunities to grow. Supporting them is a shared responsibility among school leaders, colleagues, and institutions. When private schools create nurturing environments and implement responsive policies, they empower novice Social Studies teachers to flourish, ultimately improving student learning and strengthening the overall quality of education.

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