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Research Article

### Non-Education Graduates in the Teaching Profession: A Phenomenological Dimension

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#### ABSTRACT

This study established an approach towards the digression of a usual occurrence. When a graduate of a teacher's course becomes a saleslady or an Accountancy graduate becomes an educator, those are an unusual episodes because logically a person who wants to be a teacher takes up a course related to teaching or a person who wants to become a lawyer must take up law. Generally, this study described the rationale of why non-education graduates were in the teaching profession. As popular in a qualitative research, the study used purposive sampling in which participants were selected based on their experiences as a non-education graduate teachers. Specifically, this study described the profile of the participants in terms of educational attainment, age, sex, civil status, family background, and economic status. Parameters were established to confirm and comprehend the relevance of the study. The areas to be considered were the chosen course, motivations, work experiences, and performance which were analyzed using the phenomenology approach to understand the phenomenon from within its context. The responses of the participants were described using open coding, axial coding and selective coding. A qualitative data process were presented to understand the relevance of the study.

*Keywords:* Noema, Noesis, Non-education Graduates, Phenomenon, Phenomenology, Phenomenological Dimension.

#### INTRODUCTION

“The reason behind lack of creativity in school is that teaching is not a profession by choice. A lot of teachers are inclined towards corporate rather than teaching in school. The level of education can increase if teachers are teachers by choice and not by chance”

This passage has triggered controversy in the opinion of the researcher thus she decided to launch with it. As observed in the study, so many who have chosen Education or “teaching” as their profession ended up to be housemaids in other countries or salesladies. On the contrary, engineers and accountants are in the teaching profession. Is this by

choice or by chance? This study unfolded how a certain non-education graduate ended up in the classroom gracefully and successfully. Moreover, how does a non-education graduate teacher coped up with their chosen paths, for example, a doctor becomes a teacher? This paper was directed to provide answers to this career phenomenon. When an individual realized that the once-gratifying and satisfying job no longer provided the same excitement and enthusiasm, it may be the time to consider something new.

##### 1. Statement of the Problem:

The purpose of this study was to examine the existentialism of non-education graduates in the

teaching profession. No one has ever cared much as to describe the how, what, when, and why there are teachers who are non-education graduates. Specifically, the study sought to answer to the following questions:

1. What are the socio-demographic profile of the participants in terms of:
  - a. educational attainment/course;
  - b. age;
  - c. sex;
  - d. civil status;
  - e. family background
  - f. economic status (social class)
2. What motivates the non-education graduates to enter the teaching profession;
3. How do non-education graduate teachers make sense in terms of performance?
4. What are the general observations formulated out of the study?
5. What is the theory that summarizes the study?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 3.1 Participants:

The scope of this phenomenological study was mainly focused on the perspective and the lived experiences of the eight (8) non-education graduate participants who were in the teaching profession and how they managed to cope up with the change, what motivations they encountered and how they performed apart from their field of specialization. Proper procedures in making the interview and survey were carefully done and with tact. They were pre-informed and a considerable time for them to turn in the data was endowed. There was no browbeating follow up. The place and time of the study is limited to each place and time each participant has contributed.

Since purposive sampling was limited to small number of samples, the author settled for an eight (8) participants to avoid saturation of responses. The tendencies of getting the same answers and data would only hamper the progress of the study.

### 3.2 Instruments:

This study was designed to be qualitative. Qualitative research does not forecast what is to

happen in the future; rather, it is an analysis that provides a depth of understanding of an event or a phenomenon. Non-education graduates who became teachers made a challenging yet intriguing process or a life-bound decision that will entirely redesign one's life. A phenomenological approach to this study presented various descriptions of the experiences to accurately describe the phenomenon. Phenomenology is a relevant philosophic methodology that is utilized to describe the phenomena of the non-education graduates in the teaching profession.

### 3.3 Data Analysis:

The data analyzed were in the form of memoirs submitted by the participants, interviews/surveys and literature. The memoir, interview and any other relevant data pertaining to the analysis were analyzed and broad concepts identified prior to conducting theoretical sampling for the next concept. Mind maps were created as part of the analysis. During the mind mapping exercise, related codes were grouped together. The groupings of similar codes is called a concept.

Concepts are "words that stand for ideas contained in data. In other words, concepts are specific labels given to describe a specific piece of data. As the axial coding happened without a conscious effort, the first two steps namely open coding and axial coding was done simultaneously.

## 4. Results:

### 4.1 Findings:

As presented in Table 1, it is obvious that participants in this study were of different perspectives in life. Majority of them were in their mid-life to late mid-life. Some were married and some were single with above-average and average economic status with commendable family backgrounds. Surprisingly, one participant who was a Registered Nurse decided to become a teacher as young as 27. It has been noticed also that majority of the non-education graduate teachers were female though marital status does not show that much relevance. Simply, a certain phenomenon happens to anyone at any point in life

**Table 1:** Presentation of participants according to age, gender, marital status, family background, educational attainment and socio-economic class.

Demographic Segments	Par 1	Par 2	Par 3	Par 4	Par 5	Par 6	Par 7	Par 8
Age	50	54	51	47	41	27	38	34
Sex	F	M	F	F	F	F	F	F
Marital Status	M	S	M	M	S	S	M	S
Family Background								
House owned	own	own	own	own	own	own		own
House rented							rent	
Source of Income	Bn	Far	Bn	-0-	Bn	Bn	-0-	Bn
BS Degree	CE	ME	AB	BSBA	M.D.	BSN	BSCS	CE
Parents' Education	ND	ND	ND	ND	D	D	ND	D

Legend: Par – Participants Bn – Business Far - Farming ND – Non-degree Holders  
D – Degree Holders  
-0- - No data given

### *Motivations of Non-Education Graduates in the Teaching Profession:*

Though there were similarities in their reasons why they were in the teaching profession but somehow there were relevant differences in the process. The researcher has elaborated the following motivating factors as to why non-education graduates are in the teaching profession.

Participant 1 said, "I have no choice". There was no intention to teach since she was already a licensed engineer but peers had coaxed her to take Education units. The cajoling finally ended up in her teaching career. The researcher remembered her preacher once told them a joke about how he became a preacher. He said there were three reasons – the 3-T's: Tinawag (called), Tinulak (cajoled) or Tinopak (cracked or gone crazy).

Participant 2 confessed, "I am not lucky", so he thought. He did not pass the Licensure Examination for Mechanical Engineers. His engineering career ended when he did not make it for the licensure. The teaching choice was a fallback.

Participant 3 is a Sunday school teacher and a preacher's wife. And since she's been doing this for some time in her life it subsequently eventualized. It was a subsequence.

"I worked at H.R. at TIP but I was not happy", she admitted.

Participant 4 thought it was quite difficult to find a job in relevance to her career. Most offices would rather hire Accountancy or Banking and Finance majors for office management's plots. She said, "pacing up is hard with the steep competitiveness". She was in dire need of a job because she has a son and her husband is not stable in his job abroad, barely sending them for their subsistence. Applying for teaching position in the private school was easier provided you were well equipped intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Teaching out of desperation and the triggering monetarial need. The turn is a desideratum.

An excerpt from the fifth participant's narrative document says, "I was determined to fulfill my dream. As an elementary student, I would dream of the day when I would be a full pledged doctor and I was caring for the health needs of tribal people. I also saw myself sitting under a large tree and teaching them how to read and write. I was inspired as a young child to make a difference. It was what I looked forward to doing for the rest of my life. It was what made me persist to be a doctor in spite of the hardships of reading those thick, backbreaking books. I read of biographies of medical missionaries who did what I wanted to do. I was very passionate. According to a book by ZigZiglar., "To make a difference, passion plays a significant role. To find and develop one's passion is a journey, not an experience." One must follow a process; some find it early in life as I did, while some discover it much

later. A noble passion, when found and developed produces great joy and personal rewards and offers huge benefits to society as well." This doctor-teacher wanted to make a difference thru her passion. Childhood Aspiration it is. Participant 6 said, "I chose a teaching career primarily because of my parent's influence and the ministry that God has entrusted to my parents. But it came to me when I volunteered to become a missionary in Palawan. It was there I realized, I had this gift in me and I have learned to love and embrace this gift and eventually became my passion." Influence was the first motivation followed by Calling.

The 7th participant was the simplest of them all. "I am not choosy, I just need a job" she uttered. She just wanted to teach music. She is a very good singer though she has a diploma in Computer Science. She started tutoring music to few students until later she found herself applying for a teaching position in the pre-school and was hired. Previously, she managed her own computer café but close competition led her to leave the business and seek for a more promising work. Another sine qua non.

"Why shift from previous job to current career? Better opportunities", muttered the three-degree holder participant who is now a School Directress in Sengdara International Bilingual School in Vientiane, Laos. She also quoted, "Experiences: Obvious disparity as to method of teaching in a foreign country which has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. Also, cultural differences. You have to be conscious and also make the conscious effort to be culturally-sensitive to Laotians". Motivation by Commitment was her turning facet.

This participant was committed to make a difference in the learning system of the country where she is working now.

To restate briefly, the emerging motivations as to why non-education graduates are in the teaching profession according to the data the researcher has collected from the eight participants were Peers Influences – Cajoling, Fallback, Subsequence, Desideratum, Childhood Aspiration or Passion, Calling or Gift, Sine Qua Non, and Commitment.

### *Performance Evaluation of the Non-Education Graduate Teachers:*

The pedagogy of the non-education graduates in the teaching profession may differ from that of the education graduate teachers but the former's effect on the teaching process may contribute vast knowledge depending on the participant's field of specialization and the experience which can be shared in the learning process. Two of the eight participants were school administrators and they substantiated the observation that majority of their non-education graduate teachers are very good when it comes to the teaching skills and abilities. Transfer of learning is the major concern. One may be very good and highly intellectualized, but if he cannot be

understood then the ability is a failure. Needless to say, some of the non-education graduates in the teaching profession who may have the varied knowledge and skills but there is no passion for teaching, must not be in teaching profession.

As observed from the related literature and studies and also the actual observation of the researcher to few of these participants and even observation from outside inputs the researcher has assumed the high potentialities and exceptional performance from the non-education graduates in the teaching field.

#### 4.2 Discussion and Conclusion:

The interviews and related literature and study findings divulged almost a homogenous result. Family background plays a very vital post in the decision making of an individual. Considering the close family ties and culture this category cannot be ignored. Passion is the most common reason and yet going deeper into its core gives a different degree of meaning and essence. Faith is something that humans do not see yet they believe. In the midst of ambiguous uncertainty, faith comes in. A phenomenon is something one may not see yet it occurs. It happens without a warning so there is a relativity. Another is Interest. Some of the subjects in the literature findings and even the actual interview postulated that the educational preparation they have was never of their interest. Others say interest came later in their lives. But some say it was their ardent desire and aspiration at their young age to become a teacher but ironically the preparation prior to this dream was too far different. And the last category is Service. Based on the literature and one interview, service was one particular aspect one would do, to pay tribute and to make a difference, the desire to make the best of what was already better.

In the light of the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Participants have strong and impressive family backgrounds, with high sense of values and strong faith in God.
2. There are five dimensional forces that motivate non-education graduates to be in the teaching profession, namely: family background, passion, faith, interest and service.
3. Non-education graduates in the teaching profession show an impeccable performance because of the passion to teach and the varied experiences and skills.
4. General observations are formulated out of this study as follows:
  - a. Non-education graduates are in the teaching profession because they are committed to serve mankind.
  - b. Non-education graduates are in the teaching profession because of the passion to teach.

c. Non-education graduates are in the teaching profession because of the previous interest or expectation.

d. Non-education graduates are in the teaching profession because of inexorable family and peers influences.

e. Non-education graduates are in the teaching

5. Non-education graduates are in the teaching profession because a subsequential circumstance called fate dominated.

#### Recommendations:

In consistence with the drawn conclusions, I would suggest that non-education graduates who plan to be in the teaching profession or other career apart from their course preparations or degree may consider rigorous pursuit of life's meaning. In doing so, reading materials similar to this study will make the decision less difficult. Specifically the following recommendations will be useful:

1. The demographic profile of the participants has a major role in the derivation of the result of the study and therefore must be taken into well consideration.
2. Strong motivational forces are relevantly necessary in considering another expectation.
3. The ability and skills together with passion and the desire to serve mankind have to be the natural tendencies of the non-education graduate in the teaching profession.
4. Non-education graduates in the teaching profession may likewise examine more in-depth reasons why they have settled to teaching.
5. Non-education graduates who want to teach must acknowledge the invisible factor that affects a certain phenomenon.

#### Authors' Contribution:

Ms. Leonor N. Teves, authored the current study and Dr. Jesusa D. Baccay, thesis adviser, guided the main author in the conceptualization and editing of the manuscript.

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