

Lived Experiences of Mentors in MOVE UPS

Balabagan Lanaodel Sur

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Abstract:

Lived experiences is a representation and understanding of human experiences that influence one's perception of knowledge. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach in research was used in this study to uncover the mentors and learners' lived experiences in the Mindanao Opportunities for Vitalized Education and Upgrading of Science (MOVE UPS) Philippines. Interviews, focus group discussions, on site immersion, story telling, and observations were the instruments used in the data gathering. The primary instrument was the researcher itself. Based on the analysis of data, three themes emerged that uncovered the mentors lived experiences namely; *dedicated and devoted mentors, moxie mentors, and adventurous mentors*. Three themes were also emerged in the learners' perceptions of the mentoring program that is; *satisfying, impressive and efficacious, and cheerful moments*. In general, the overarching theme of the mentors – pupils lived experiences is a *sweet delight*. Thus, mentoring is effective and creates a more fun in the teaching-learning environment.

Keywords:

Mentoring, lived experiences, hermeneutic phenomenology

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Introduction

As I scroll the gallery of my computer, I felt so happy looking back my experiences during the mentoring class in Balabagan Lanao del Sur. It was a self-fulfilling looking the happy faces of the pupils in the Balabagan Central School and I miss them so much. One day as we met with my co-mentors, I shared them what I felt saying that my stress and empty heart feelings will vanish as I look into the different pictures of our adventure in the mentoring program. Surprisingly; they said that they do the same. When they are sad, and discourage of their work due to environmental stressors, they also look those pictures for them to forget their discouragement. With the consensus of our feelings, I decided to write our lived experiences during our mentoring program in Balabagan Central School. Mentoring program was under the project of DOST-SEI named Mindanao Opportunities for Vitalized Education and Upgrading of Science (MOVE UPS). DOST-SEI envisioned in continuing to explore all possible avenues, strategies and approaches to achieve its main goal: *“to improve the uptake of Muslim pupils in the Philippine Science High School Central Mindanao Campus (PSHS CMC); and to improve the overall competitiveness of pupils in feeder schools by strengthening their capillaries.* The project was started ahead prior to our involvement as mentors. We started our mentoring in the year 2013 up to 2014. The mentoring project was implemented to few select elementary schools namely; Marawi Pilot School, AmaiPakpak Central School, Jose Abad Santos Central School, and Balabagan Central School. Among the four selected participating schools, Balabagan Central School is the farthest and the most remote place among them. So, no one of the remained first batch mentor accepted the said school.

Fueled with the desire to help other students, coupled with the adventurous character, without hesitations, the journey of the mentoring in Balabagan Central Elementary School started and lasted for two years. Thus, the purpose of this study was chronicling the lived experiences of the mentors and the pupils involved in the mentoring programs. Furthermore, students’ performance and perceptions about the effects of mentoring program to them was also measured quantitatively and qualitatively.

More often than not, teachers’ experiences are not usually studied in research. Most of the time, teacher’s qualification and performance were commonly investigated without looking the holistic attribute of the teachers. The phenomenon explored in this study is the experiences we encountered during the two (2) years mentoring program in Balabagan Central Elementary School, BalabaganLanao del Sur. Wilhelm Dilthey (1985) as mentioned by Max van Manen (1990), Professor Emeritus – University of Alberta (www.maxvanmanen.com/researching-lived-experience-human-science-f...), describes “lived experience” as a reflexive or self-given awareness that inheres in the temporality of consciousness.

Materials and Methods

In this phenomenological study, the key instruments in data sourcing were the mentors and the pupils in the mentoring program. Teaching modules was used by the mentors, while the pupils used the activity sheets, and the questionnaires. Moreover, community immersion, checklist, observations, storytelling, tape recording, documentary analysis, focus group discussion, and interviews were also performed as the instruments in data gathering. The study explicitly delved on the meaning of the lived experiences of the mentors as a person, a mentor, a mother, an ordinary citizen, as well as the environment, health, and the interactions of the mentors and pupils. Among the participants there were

three (3) mentors, seventeen (17) pupils, three (3) classroom teachers, and one (1) school principal. The school and pupils participant was selected through a pretest examination results.

According to Creswell (2007) phenomenological studies examined human experiences through the detailed descriptions of the participants. This method involves studying a small number of participants through extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships of meaning. Interviews are unstructured or semi-structured (Wimpenny and Gass, 2000; Coalizzi, 1978, and Creswell, 1994). The role of the researcher's is to act as facilitator and let the informants to talk freely.

The data of this study were presented and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Data analysis was done through hand-coding analysis due to unavailability of qualitative data analysis software in the island. Hand-coding analysis involves a read and re-read methods, categorizing and coding similar response in order to generate themes. In phenomenology, the steps for data analysis are less structured and more open to alternative procedures (Creswell, 1994). Dukes (1984) as mentioned by Creswell (1994) suggested that in phenomenological analysis, one look for “structural invariants” of a particular type of experience—the patterns—and then submit the patterns to a different researcher for confirmation. Through hand-coding analysis the lived experiences of the mentors and the protégés were uncovered and the findings are presented through thematic approach.

Uncovering the meaning and essences in the lived experiences of the mentors and pupils was the ultimate output of this phenomenological study. Moreover, the analysis of data provides rich, in depth, descriptive and interpretive information that promotes greater understanding of a particular phenomenon. Findings of this study provide information for future interventions, policies, and serve as baseline to generate further research and enhance theory development towards teaching and learning process.

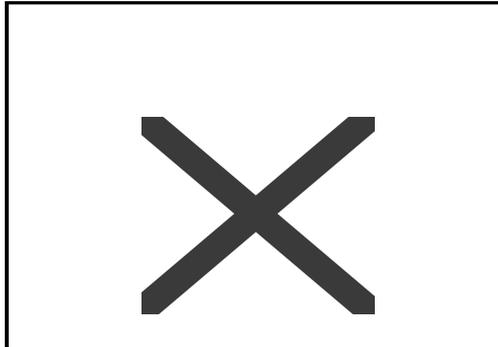
The Mentoring Site

This mentoring program was conducted at Balabagan Central School for seven to eight weeks per year in a period of two years. Balabagan Central School is one of the top performing schools in Lanaodel Sur Division 2. The school is situated at the heart of the town in Balabagan Lanao del Sur. It is located in the province of Lanao Del Sur in Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao which is a part of the Mindanao group of islands (http://www.philippine-islands.ph/en/balabagan-lanao_del_sur-philippines_barangays.html, 2010).



The Mentoring School

During heavy rains, the school site is flooded with water and sand. If this will happen, classes are suspended. Many students played under the rain, while their parent getting panic of finding and picking their kids to go home. This event is occasional and constant.



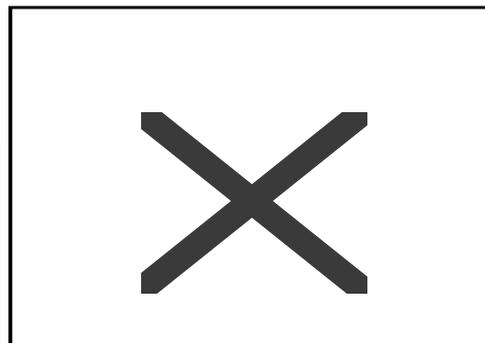
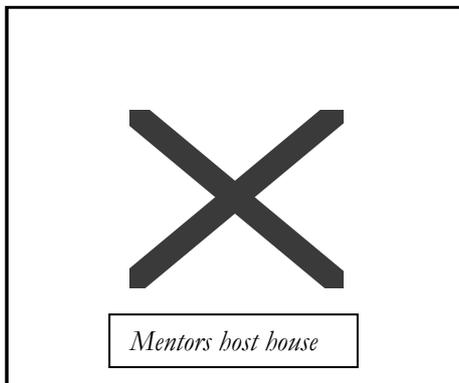
Faculty and Staff of the School together with the three mentors

The community did not bother at all and they said; *they are used to it.*



The Mentors Abode and Travel

For the period of two consecutive years in the implementation of the mentoring program, the mentors were housed at the resident of an agriculturist in Balabagan municipality for free. They were served with fresh and nutritious foods and treated as VIP's. The house is just a walking distance from the



Mode of Transportation in the place

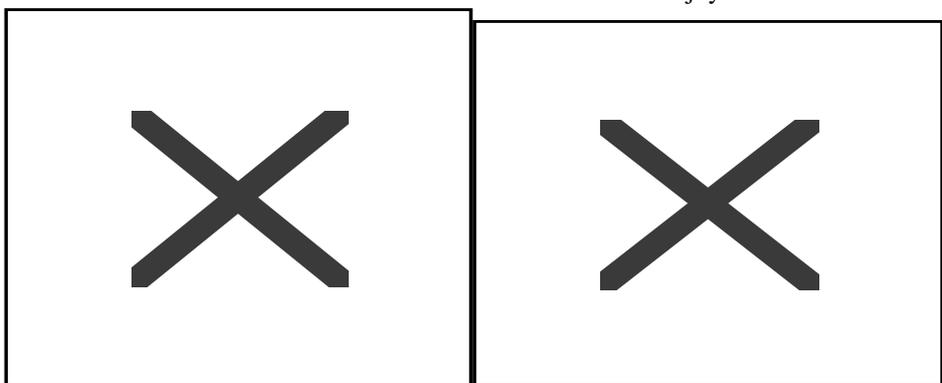


school site. It only took more or less 5 minutes for the mentors to walk from the house to the school. The house is situated at the heart of the town nearby wet market where fresh fishes are sold. The beach or the seashore is just a walking distance from the house but it can be also reached by riding a tricycle. The house is a three-story building

made of concrete. The original owner of the house is living at the United State together with her American national husband. The agriculturist is the care taker of the house which is the aunt of the lawful owner of the house.

The mode of transportation in the town is a tricycle suited for two. The route of the tricycle is around the town and towards other nearby municipality like Malabang the next municipality. Travelling of mentors towards the mentoring site was not as easy as it can be. It was both adventure and life threatening experienced. The rough roads of almost two hours to travel were flooded anytime when rains come. We have to cross the creek by walking specially when there is rain because the tricycle could not move when it is loaded. However, despite of that risky situation we still managed to take pictures to chronicle our enjoyment on such unforgettable experienced.

There were also some instances that the tricycle we rode get stack on a heavy sand dunes after floods, and we need to push the tricycle and walk until the tricycle can manage to take us. Photos shown here are; some of our chronicled experienced during our travel under rains and the floods. As we walk and cross the creek we enjoy the moment and took

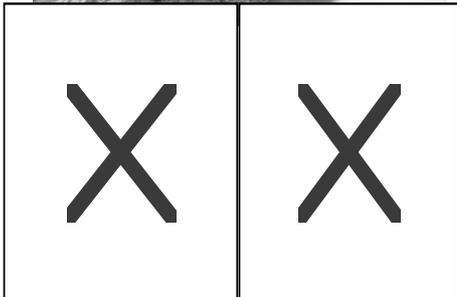


some pictures. Photo shown below is the creek that we need to cross. Originally there was a bridge in the creek; however it was devastated by a typhoon. As of this year (2015) the government started the reconstruction of the bridge.



Photo shown at the right is the appearance of the municipal road when there is rain. As shown in the photo, the road is very rough and

destroyed. Actually, I asked the people in the municipality why their road was not concreted; they said that the government did not provide enough budgets for it and their local government did not bother to reconstruct their road.



Others also said that concreting their road is

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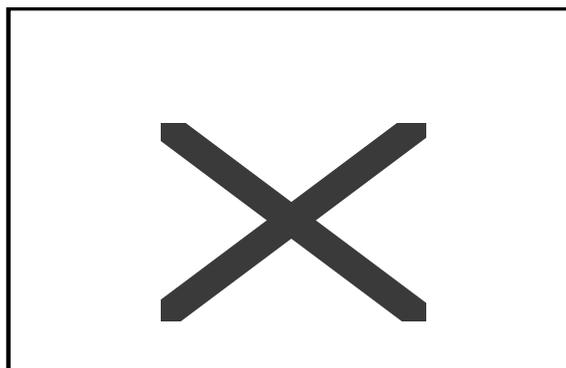
useless and a waste of money because every time there is a heavy rains their area specially the road and lower part of the municipality are always flooded not only water but with a heavy load of sand. In other words, the community felt frustrated and hopeless with regards to their road repair and construction. I also asked the opinion of the tricycle drivers, and they said; *“naanad ne me aningakarsadaangimportante peaceful and among lugardiliparehasauna”* (we are used to this kind of road, the important is our place is peaceful unlike before).Tracing back the history of the place, Balabagan was one of the war-conflicted areas in Lanao del Sur. It was the war zone between Philippine army and the bandits, pirates, and the so called “barakoda”. So, the resident in the said place is thankful enough that they survived with that long-ending war and now they are contented of having a peaceful life.

Theoretical Basis

This article utilized hermeneutic phenomenology to uncover the lived experiences of the MOVE-UPS mentors of varying experience. In its most basic form, phenomenology attempts to create conditions for the objective study of topics usually regarded as subjective: consciousness and the content of conscious experiences such as judgments, perceptions, and emotions. Although phenomenology seeks to be scientific, it does not attempt to study consciousness from the perspective of clinical psychology or neurology. Instead, it seeks through systematic reflection to determine the essential properties and structures of experience (Giorgi, Amedeo 2009). Creswell (2007) emphasized that hermeneutic phenomenology can be used to make sense of the phenomenon which are our lived experiences.

According to Max van Manen (1990) and I quote; *“human experience is the main epistemological basis for qualitative research, but the concept of “lived experience” (translated from the German Erlebnis) possesses special methodological significance”*. Lived experiences derived from the works of Dilthey (1985), Husserl (1970), MerleauPonty (1962), and their contemporary exponents. In English term, lived—derived from the Latin word experiential, meaning “trial, proof, experiment, experience” (Manen, 1990).

Mentoring on the other hand, is widely accepted as strategy for facilitating successful learning especially in the basic education. Premack principle states that access to high-frequency behaviors acts as a reinforcer for the performance of low-frequency behaviors (Elliott, Kratochwill, Cook & Travers (2000). In this manner, mentors play a vital role for learners reinforcing of knowledge and



Interview Conducted with the School Principal

guidance. In other words, mentoring has great influence on how an individual's prepare themselves, and develop their skills, knowledge and attitudes throughout the teaching-learning process. Based on the mentoring theory, mentoring share and retain knowledge, promote diversity, create continuity of culture, and ensure adequate supply of leadership talent (Corporate Leadership Council, 2005).

Results and Discussion

A. The Mentors

Mentors that provided responses for this study described their lived experiences during mentoring in four perspectives namely: "Who I Am," "What I Do" and "External Factors". Based on the information collected from the mentors and my immersion with the mentors since I am also one of the mentors, and at the same time the leader of the team, three themes were generated and used to explicitly uncover the lived experiences of the mentors. The following themes are as follows: *Dedicated and Devoted Mentors; Moxie Mentors, and Adventurous Mentors.*

A.1 Dedicated and Devoted Mentors

During interview and focus group discussion with the mentors, they were ask to assessed themselves who they are with their personal perceptions and feelings being selected as one of the mentor in the MOVE UPS program. All of them feel excited of being a mentor even without knowing the background of the place where they are assigned to. When they asked about their expectations of their incoming pupils, they said; "*well we could not expect too much from them considering that they are in a remote place. Probably most of them belong to below poverty line*". The mentors were also asked who they are; what is teaching for them and why they accepted the task of being a mentors and sacrificing their weekends for the sake of teaching. Upon hearing the questions they said; "*teaching is an engagement*", *if you are a teacher you have to sacrifice and do your best for the sake of the students.* They also added that when they saw students learned from them they feel satisfaction with their profession and proud of themselves of being a teacher. Teachers believed that their profession is very important to them and with that, many teachers were unmarried because they marry their teaching profession.

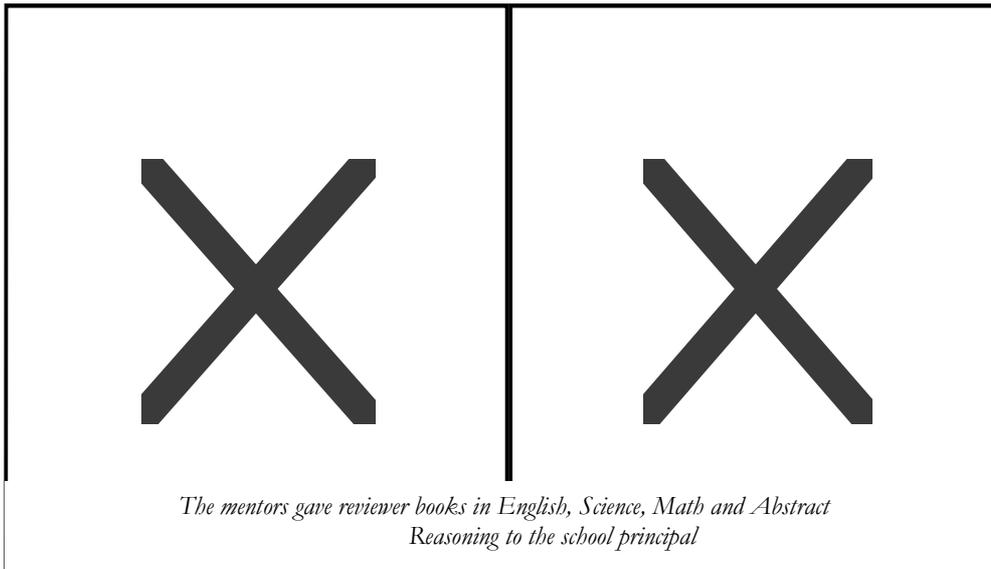
Mentoring needs passion. If a teacher or a mentor love what he or she is doing and understand deeply the nature of the job, then passion in teaching or mentoring will evolve. When there is passion in mentoring or teaching, the job will become a worry free and not a stressful one. A happy mentor or teacher could design different pedagogy that could elicit optimum learning outcome to the pupils. Mentoring is an essential leadership skill, it could motivate other people or learners by helping them learn how to learn and become more effective and successful learners. Mentoring can be a rewarding experience both personally and professionally. Through mentoring you can improve your leadership and communication skills, learn new perspectives and ways of thinking, advance your career, and gain a great sense of personal satisfaction (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCDV_70.htm).

A.2 Moxie Mentor

The purpose of the mentoring program was to uplift elementary students content knowledge and skills in Science, Math, English and critical thinking through abstract reasoning. From time to time I asked the mentors to describe their teaching experiences during the mentoring program. When I asked them about their students' performance, they

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said; *“it so sad to know that these kids are very eager to learn however, they are not well-taught due to lack of educational materials and lack of expert teachers in the field of English, Science, and Math subject”*. Proficiency and expertise in teaching specifically in English, Science and Math is very much necessary for the learners to learn the correct concepts that they need to learn. As I observed the class interaction of the mentors and the pupils, the teaching and learning process took smoothly even in a slow pace considering the poor background of the pupils towards questions that calls for higher order thinking skills. To help the pupils and other students in the said school, the DOST-SEI Philippines, the sponsor of the mentoring program provide some review materials in English, Science, Mathematics, and Abstract Reasoning to the school participants. In this manner the teachers will make use of the review materials in teaching their students after the mentoring program.



Despite of the pupils' difficulty in catching and understanding the subject matter, they showed positive response and participate actively the class interaction especially during hands-on activities. When I asked the mentors regarding the attendance of the mentees they said; *“Wow the pupils are very punctual our class time start at 7 in the morning and they arrive at 6:30 or earlier!”* As I observed the whole duration of the mentoring program, none of the pupils got absent in the class even the weather is bad and the school and street are flooded. The attitude of the protégés motivated the mentors to do their mentoring program as efficient and effective as much as possible. Even heavy rains occurred and it rains like cats and dogs, the protégés are still attending their mentoring class. Photos shown below are the situation of the school during heavy rains. As shown in the photos, the school site was flooded with water and sand. The parents were panic picking their children in school to avoid any accident due to floods. This is the normal occurrence of the area anytime when rain comes.

Teaching is a moxie because teaching needs courage and determination. The attitudes of the mentors in the mentoring program is a good evidence that they are courageous and determined to teach the students despite of a long travel, and sacrificing their family time just for the sake of teaching. Moreover, the most difficult aspect in the mentoring program was the travelling period. It took three to four hours travel of the mentors from their residence to the mentoring site. The long period of travel was too risky for the mentors considering that the travel passed along remote places and known to have many bandits and family fudge. Aside from unsafe road to travel due to bad people or family conflict that resulted to chaotic scene, the road to travel is not conducive specially going to the Municipality of Balabagan wherein the road will become flooded when rain comes and the mode of transportation is just a tricycle. Despite of those difficulty and life-threatening scene, the mentors are determined and full of courage to move back and forth for the sake of teaching their pupils'. They are willing to sacrifice themselves in order to share their knowledge and expertise so that the students could be able to access quality teaching and quality education that they longed over a long period of time. One of the faculty observer during mentoring class said; *"The mentors are so bright and willing to give all the knowledge and skills they have that our pupils can fully understand them. They also give their time to us, as teachers to introduce the knowledge and skills in our teaching processes especially in K-12 program. Thank you so much and hope and pray that we can have another mentoring program to come"*.

More evidence supports that the teachers are moxie enough. As I interviewed the school principal in Balabagan Central Elementary School and the respective teachers of the pupils in the mentoring school participant, they unanimously said; *"mentoring class is very effective, it helps our students to performed better"*. They also added that they are satisfied with the performance of the mentors in the mentoring class. The school principal itself believed the effectiveness of the mentoring class and said *"there was a significant improvement in the learning in our students. In fact I was told lately that they performed well in the schools where they currently enrolled in high school"* (the mentees are already in high school during the interview on the effectiveness of the mentoring). When I asked the science, mathematics, and English teachers of the pupils in the said school about the performance of their student's protégés in their classes, one said *"the students performed best after mentoring"*, while the other said;

"I observed that they improved their way of understanding especially when I told them to explain definitions and made conclusions on certain topics. To justify this I conducted a film viewing last August 3, 2015 about parts of speech and vocabulary I didn't expect that they could interact with me while discussing topics, and I was surprisingly amazed about their comprehension because it was great and fantastic".

In the aspect of the mentors, I asked the school principal and the teachers concern as well, and they unanimously said that they were satisfied with the performance of the mentors. The following excerpts were quoted below to support this claims.

"In my opinion, the mentors do their best to discuss all the lessons academically to the students. They are expert of the subject they teach". (Science and Math Teacher in the mentored school)

“The mentors of the MOVE UPS mentoring program do their best to teach the students”.
(The school principal of the mentored school)

“To the mentors of the said program, they are all heroes in our school for their dedication and motivation in coming, conducting and lecturing our pupils even though it’s raining cats and dogs! The best mentors the school ever had! (English Teacher)

The moxie mentors are determined to make a difference to their pupils. In fact, after the mentoring program, a test was given to determined how much students learned in the mentoring program. Table 1 is strong evidence and manifestations that the pupils participated actively the mentoring class and performed better after the mentoring program. As shown in Table 1 majority of the pupils obtained a higher score in the achievement test after the mentoring program. Despite of a short period and limited time given by the DOST-SEI in the mentoring program, still the effect of mentoring is effective enough to say that the students benefited the program improved their academic performance.

**Table 1 Pupils Scores in the Achievement Test
 (School Year 2014-2015)**

Student #	Math (40 items)		Science (40 items)		Abstract (40 items)		English (40 items)		Total Score	
	Pretest	posttest	Pretest	posttest	pretest	posttest	pretest	Posttest	Pretest	posttest
										180
1	9	9	11	13	26	27	25	24	71	73
2	5	8	12	17	18	26	34	36	69	87
3	4	6	13	15	15	30	32	29	64	80
4	4	4	11	10	10	17	22	25	47	56
5	5	8	10	8	15	24	15	21	45	61
6	9	4	14	13	18	19	26	25	67	61
7	6	7	9	17	20	24	26	22	61	70
8	10	6	9	17	15	33	21	28	55	84
9		7		18		30		32		87
10	7	11	5	13	20	26	18	26	50	76
11	6	6	14	13	14	24	22	25	56	68
12	6	7	3	10	6	22	21	28	36	67
13	5	4	10	16	11	25	17	33	43	78
14	10	15	18	22	19	30	37	40	84	107
15	6	4	7	10	26	27	26	29	65	70
16	8	6	9	9	18	22	17	22	52	59
17	10	4	11	14	14	28	23	30	58	76
18	7	13	11	12	15	25	18	16	51	66
19	5	6	2	14	12	26	18	30	37	76
20	6	8	6	16	16	22	25	19	53	65

Mentoring is a two-way process between the mentors and the pupils. The learners learned from the mentors and at the same time the mentors gained some helpful insights and strategies in dealing the individual differences of the learners. Mentoring coupled with strategies. The mentors will act as advisers, counselors, and coaches that direct the goals and give interventions to the learners. According to the International Coaching Federation

(2011) as mentioned by McWilliams and Beam (2013) coaching profession is distinguished by the action, accountability, and follow-through that are the focus in a coaching session. Coaches seek to elicit solutions and strategies from clients themselves, as well as to nurture the skills and resources that a client already possesses, rather than “treating a problem” or educating a client. Mentoring is increasingly seen as a critical skill to help learners. Mentoring focuses on work-related needs of the while building the skills of individual (Schornack and Beack, 2002).

A.3 Adventurous Mentors

Student development needs proper mentoring. Several strategies have been explored and used to address student developmental needs, specifically towards quality education. However, mentors or teachers needs also a break and refresh themselves from the unending demand of the teaching profession. The mentors in the MOVE UPS mentoring program are one of a kind that could simultaneously do adventures while rendering their job or profession. They enjoy while they teach and they refresh and rejuvenate as they travelled and mentored the protégés. As I asked the mentors what impressions could they express in the mentoring sites and locale; they said that it is awesome because of its richness in natural resources.

The fresh fishes, the very relaxing cold spring and the astonishing seashore served as their refreshing avenue to rejuvenate their strength. I asked them about their other activities before and after their mentoring class, and they said; “*in the early morning we go the beach waiting for the fishermen so that we can buy fresh fishes to be brought at home. And while waiting for the fishermen to arrive we enjoy the scenery of seashore and go into swimming*” they said it with a smile and excitement showing that they really enjoyed the place. Personally I felt the same what they felt because I am one of them. The three of us were kept on waiting the fishermen in the seashore running along the beach if the fishermen arrived. It was so much fun and relaxing. We felt freedom and away from polluted city where we lived. In the late afternoon, we went to the cold spring for relaxation so that at night we had a very nice sleep. This cold fresh water spring is just a few meters away from the seashore. As we submerged ourselves in the water it is so refreshing and we felt the alternating current of water with alternating cold and hot water.

B. The Pupils

The pupils of the mentoring program was composed of grade six and grade five students at the Balabagan Central Elementary School during school year 2013 – 2015. These pupils were selected through achievement test. There were fifteen pupils from grade six and five from grade five during first year of operation. In the second year of operation the same number of pupils was selected using the same sampling procedure. The participants of this study were limited only on the pupils that are still studying within the municipality. Pupils that transferred to other places were no longer included in this study. Since the interviews were conducted last August 2015, majority of the pupils were now on their high school level of education. The information gathered from the pupils under the mentoring program, evolved three themes. These themes were used in analyzing and describing the lived experiences of the pupils during mentoring. As such according to them the mentoring program and the mentors work are *satisfying, impressive and efficacious, and made a cheerful moment* in their lives. Thus these are the themes of the lived experiences of the protégés with their mentors.

B.1 Satisfying

Based on interviews from the pupils, they all agreed that the mentoring program was beneficial and they satisfied the teaching methods of the mentors. They said that they understand the discussion of the lesson very well and the mentoring classes help them a lot in their study; “*angpagexperemento at pag activity at paglalaro and pinakamasaya at unforgettable*” (doing experiment and activity and play was the most enjoyable and unforgettable experience we had). When I asked them what they can say about their mentors in the mentoring class, some of their responses were quoted below;

“*tinuturoankamingmabutiparamakapasa*”
(They teach us well in order to pass).

“*masasabikongmagandaangpagtuturonilasaamin at hindisilanagsasawasaaminkahitminsannakukulit kami*”

(All I can say was that they teach us very well and they were not tired with us even though we are naughty sometimes).

“*magandanamanklaroang discussion at marami pa kamingnatutunanadngpageeperiemntsa science at pagsolvesamga problem at pag-oral*”

(The discussion was beautiful and clear and we learned a lot like doing experiment in science, solving problem in math and oral recitation).

“*salamatsainyodahilmaramikamingnatutunansainyo at nagsaya kami*”

(Thank you to all of you because we learned a lot from you and we also enjoyed).

In general, pupil’s perception on the mentoring class is very commendable. They really enjoyed and learn a lot through mentoring. Many of them got a firsthand experience of doing activities and performing a hands-on application of the concept during teaching-learning process. Table 2 below shows relationship of pretest and posttest score of the protégés in the assessment test.

Table 2 Paired Sample test between Pretest Score and Posttest Score of Protégés

	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper			
Pretest – Posttest	-3.8947	4.1351	.948	-5.8878 1.9017	-4.105	18	.001

As shown in Table 2 pretest and posttest score of the pupils in the assessment test in English, Science, Math and Abstract reasoning is significantly different ($t \alpha .001 \leq 0.05$). This value implied that the pupils performed better during posttest after they were mentored. According to McWilliams and Beam (2013), effective mentoring involves intentional conversations focused on the pupils' growth and development. Mentors ask thought-provoking questions, practice active listening, and provide objective feedback and guidance, and model effective behaviors. Effective mentoring relationships help build learners ability to learn and the learners learned key skills about building networks and the importance of lifelong learning and development. Research reveals that mentoring programs play vital role in teaching-learning process and bring a positive influence and commitment to the learners, driving retention and facilitating knowledge with others.

B.2 Impressive and Efficacious

We all believed the saying that first impression is not a final expression. However, first impressions last. In the case of the mentor's pupils their first impressions to their mentors was their final expression and it last. The pupils all said that they were happy and lucky that they were chosen as participants in the mentoring program. They all like their mentors, the way how the mentors treated them and the way the mentors taught them. During interview I asked them how the mentoring class helped them in their study being a junior high school student. Excerpt of their responses are quoted below;

“ angnakatulongsamin ay angnadadaanan naming sa Science, English and Math nanataposnaminsang mentoring ”

(The lessons that was taught us in the mentoring class helped a lot in our study)

“ngayong high school na kami maramikamingalamnamgabagaynanatutunan naming sa mentoring”

(Now that we are in high school we already knew a lot that we learned from the mentoring)

“ maramikamingnatotonan at naintindihan ”

(We learn a lot and understand)

“ nakakatulongsang akin ang mentoring dahil hindi kami masyadong nahihirapan ngayon ”

(Mentoring helped us a lot because we did not find so much difficulty now)

Self-assessment checklist was also given to the pupils for them to express their perceptions in the mentoring program and evaluate their mentors as well. Based on the data presented in Table 3 almost all of them agreed that the mentoring class helped improved their academic performance during their elementary education after the mentoring sessions, as well as to their academic performance in their high school education. In fact when we interviewed them they said; *“angmasasabikolangmagalingsilangmagturongmgabata. Sana magpatuloyang mentoring nilasa school naming sa elementary”* (All I can say is that they really teach well to the children. I hope that the mentoring class will continue to our school in elementary). Actually the pupils were emotionally touched during the last day of our mentoring class because that was the last mentoring program. They said that; *“marami kami natotonan at naintindihan”* (we learn a lot and understand them). While many said; *“maramingmaramingslamatpo, dahil maramikamingnatutunansainyotuladng problem solving”* (A million thanks to you because we learn a lot from you like problem solving). Other also said; *“salamatsainyodahiltinuruanmo kami ngmabuti”* (thank you so much to

you because you teach us very well). “Thank you for your guide and some of your subject that we learn and acquired from you. I am a top 11 in grade 7”. “Proud akosamga mentor naming dahil may natutunanakonapakarami kaya nagpapasalamatakosakanila” (I am so proud to my mentors because I learn a lot from them so I say thank you to them).

Table 3 Self –Assessment of Protégées Perceptions on the Mentoring Program

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Frequency of Yes</i>	<i>Frequency of No</i>	<i>Frequency of Partly</i>
<i>Are you happy to be one of the students who participated in the mentoring?</i>	15		
<i>Did you understand the discussion of the lesson by your mentors?</i>	14		4
<i>Is the mentoring class help you in your study?</i>	18		
<i>Did the mentoring class improve your academic performance in your elementary and high school?</i>	18		
<i>Did the mentoring class improve your academic performance in English, Science and Math in high school?</i>	15		
<i>Total Protégées</i>	18		

B.3 Cheerful Moments

An elementary grade is the stage of enjoyment and a period of adjustment between childhood and puberty. Since the pupils were grade five and grade six pupils, we the mentors could not avoid making fun with them and even play with them. During mentoring classes, the mentors provide varied activities and games so that the teaching-learning processes were more fun and meaningful to the learners. Indoor and outdoor activities were provided; awarding, giving of snacks and bonding time were done by the mentors.

Most pupils said; “*anghindikomalilimutan ay angpag-aagawan naming ng t-shirt*” (the unforgettable experienced I had was the competition of getting t-shirt). Other also said they enjoyed during awarding. Generally, the most cherish moments of the pupils was the actual activities done in the class, playing, bonding and awarding. This is expected from them considering that they are still kids. Learning is an act of getting and assimilating new

knowledge, and or modifying and reinforcing prior knowledge stock in the mind and experiences of the individual learners. This may involve synthesizing new and old but different types of information. However, learning become more meaningful and fun if the mentors integrate activities that are playfull in the aspect of the learners specially in the elementray level of education. Playing is one way of developing social skills and emotional skills of the kids through sharing and collaborations. Play has been the first approached form of learning as believed by several theoriest. Lev Vygotsky as mentioned in the book of educational psychology by Elliot, et al. (2000), agrees that play is pivotal for children’s development, since they make meaning of their environment through play. Upadhyay (2005), examined the lived experiences in an urban science classroom of an elementray school. His findings concluded that students bring different funds of knowledge that are accumulated through their lived experiences not the classroom. He suggested that lived experiences of the students will be used to develop a curricular framework in teahcing.

C. Overarching Theme: *Sweet Delight*

In general, the overarching theme that described both the mentors and pupils lived experiences is “*sweet delight*”. Sweet delight ultimately became the overarching theme because the mentoring program and classes executed by the mentors established rapport to the unknown constituents in the mentored school specifically the pupils, the researchers abode, and the faculty and staff in the participated school. Sweetness and camaraderie among them made the mentors and the pupil’s teaching-learning process effective. It is a delight since the mentors provide a high degree of gratification and joyous moment to the pupils, to the faculty and the school principal and at the same time they gave the same feelings in the same way to the mentors. There are many ways that could make learning more fun to the students. In doing this, mentors or teachers and they like must make sure that they have satisfaction and devotion to their profession so that they could create a joyful learning environment and make teaching and learning more effective, meaningful, and make believe that there are so much fun in teaching and learning. It is also a sweet delight to us as mentors upon knowing that we effectively and efficiently impart knowledge to the protégées as well as to the teachers of the mentored school. Results from the checklist that we administered to the teachers of the pupils and the school principals are very satisfying and ease all our fatigue in the travel. Table 4 summarized the response of the school administrators in Balabagan Elementary School. As shown in Table 4, all they responded yes to the seven assessments.

Table 4 Evaluation on MOVE UPS Mentoring

Assessment	Yes	No	Partly
Are you happy to be one of the participating schools in the mentoring program?	4		
The students’ academic performance specially in English, Science and Math improved significantly because of mentoring class	4		
Mentoring classes help our students performed better in their high school academic performance	4		
The lesson discussed in the mentoring classes was very useful and helpful in our teaching with the students	4		
The mentors in the mentoring classes are diligent and	4		

hardworking	
The mentors in the mentoring class did their best in teaching our students	4
Are you satisfied with the performance of the mentors in the mentoring classes?	4
Total (N)	4

The concluding statement of the school principal is quoted below;

He said; “*hope the program will continue, mentoring time allotment is not enough need more time for the program*”. He further said that most of their students are indigenous people, however they excel in the high school just because of the mentoring program given by the DOST. He suggested that if there will be another mentoring, it should be started in Grade 5, so that there is a continuity of learning. Then he added that their teachers should be trained.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Earning a degree and receiving a certification of excellence or diploma is not a guarantee that one could make difference in their profession. It is not the degree that counts but instead it is you who can make difference to other people lives and how you touch their lives. Mentoring program is very helpful and significant for it develops the learning abilities of the learners or pupils. In doing this it needs a devoted and versatile mentor. There is so much fun in teaching if the teachers are satisfied with their job and find self-fulfillment and satisfaction of whatever endeavor he has to undertake. Therefore based on the findings of this study, I can guarantee that teaching is really a noble profession. In this moment, I recommend that there is need for the teachers to develop values that could make their profession more enjoyable to them in order to keep away from stress and stressors. This matter only depends on the personality and outlook of the teacher and an individual human being as a whole. So make more fun in your job and make others smile what you have done to them because laughter is the only best medicine that is free of charge

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