

Out-of-Field Social Studies Teaching in General Santos City: Challenges, Coping Strategies, and Innovative Curriculum Practices

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Abstract. This study investigated the challenges, coping strategies, and innovative practices of out of field teachers assigned to teach Social Studies in District 4 of General Santos City. The problem addressed was the mismatch between teachers' specialization and subject assignment, which often undermines confidence, preparation, and instructional quality. The objective was to explore how these teachers navigate curriculum delivery and how their experiences shape professional growth, learner outcomes, and teaching perspectives. A qualitative design using transcendental phenomenology was employed, with data collected through semi structured interviews from ten purposively selected secondary teachers. Thematic analysis of significant statements yielded sixteen emerging themes that captured the complexity of their experiences. Findings revealed that teachers encountered substantial challenges in content mastery, extended preparation, inadequate resources, and emotional strain, compounded by institutional constraints such as limited training and outdated materials. To address these difficulties, they engaged in professional learning through independent study, seminars, and collaboration, while integrating technology and adopting student centered strategies. Innovative practices such as contextualized teaching, storytelling, bilingual instruction, and culture based pedagogy enriched classroom delivery and sustained learner engagement. These coping mechanisms not only mitigated instructional gaps but also fostered professional growth, enhancing teachers' confidence, adaptability, and resilience. Overall, the study concludes that while out of field teaching in Social Studies is demanding and inequitable, it can also be transformative, reshaping teacher identity and enabling creativity. The results underscore the need for strengthened professional development, mentoring systems, and institutional support to sustain teacher competence and ensure effective Social Studies instruction.

Keywords: Curriculum delivery; Innovative practices; Out-of-field teaching; Social Studies education; Teacher resilience

Introduction

Teachers' competence and preparedness strongly influence the quality of education in their assigned subject areas. Yet in many educational systems, teachers are often required to teach subjects outside their specialization, a condition known as out-of-field teaching. This occurs when schools, due to shortages or scheduling constraints, assign teachers to handle subjects in which they have limited training. In the Philippine context, this practice is evident across disciplines, including Social Studies, a core area in the K–12 curriculum. Social Studies integrates history, geography, economics, politics, sociology, and culture, requiring teachers to possess both content mastery and pedagogical skills to foster critical thinking and civic engagement. Effective instruction in this field prepares students to become informed citizens capable of meaningful participation in democratic life. However, teachers without adequate preparation often struggle with lesson delivery, strategy selection, and confidence in addressing student inquiries. Out-of-field teaching in Social Studies can therefore lead to gaps in content mastery, reduced instructional quality, and challenges in promoting higher-order thinking skills. These difficulties highlight the systemic importance of professional development and institutional support.

Existing literature has examined out-of-field teaching globally, focusing on prevalence, teacher shortages, and instructional quality. While these studies provide valuable insights, most emphasize quantitative measures and general stress factors, with limited attention to the lived experiences of teachers assigned beyond their specialization. In the Philippine setting, research has documented challenges faced by out-of-field teachers, particularly in English and Science, noting issues of limited expertise and reduced confidence. Some local works have explored coping strategies, yet few have investigated the innovative practices teachers employ when navigating Social Studies instruction. This gap is significant because Social

Studies fosters civic awareness, cultural identity, and critical thinking—areas that demand both disciplinary knowledge and adaptive pedagogy.

In District 4 of the Division of General Santos City, out-of-field teaching is particularly evident. Staffing shortages often result in teachers trained in English, Filipino, TVE, or Science being assigned to Social Studies classes. While administrators attempt to address staffing gaps, the unintended consequence is that students may receive instruction from teachers lacking confidence or adequate preparation. Despite the prevalence of this practice, there is limited qualitative research capturing the lived experiences, coping strategies, and innovative practices of these teachers.

This study addresses that gap by examining how non-specialist Social Studies teachers in District 4 navigate curriculum delivery, cope with challenges, and develop innovative practices. Beyond Social Studies education, the study contributes to broader fields of curriculum studies, educational psychology, teacher identity, and school leadership. For curriculum studies, it highlights how staffing realities influence curriculum implementation. For educational psychology, it provides insights into teacher stress, coping, and motivation. For teacher identity, it examines how professional roles are reshaped under systemic constraints. For school leadership, it underscores the importance of administrative support and strategic staffing. By situating Social Studies instruction within these broader perspectives, the study demonstrates how out-of-field teaching is not only a disciplinary issue but also a systemic challenge with implications across multiple domains of education.

Research Questions

This study described the challenges in curriculum delivery, the coping strategies and innovative practices of out-of-field Social Studies teachers in 3 secondary schools in District 4 of General Santos City Division. It answered the following questions:

1. How do out-of-field teachers describe their lived experiences in teaching Social Studies and in curriculum delivery?
2. What challenges do out-of-field teachers face in delivering the Social Studies curriculum?
3. What coping strategies, mechanisms, or innovative practices have out-of-field teachers developed to address difficulties in curriculum delivery?
4. How do these experiences shape their perceptions of teaching, professional growth, learner outcomes, and curriculum delivery?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study explored the lived experiences of out-of-field teachers assigned to teach Social Studies in secondary schools. Using a phenomenological design, it focused on their personal narratives, challenges, coping strategies, and meaning-making processes in teaching outside their specialization. The inquiry was limited to subjective accounts and did not aim to establish causal relationships or generalize findings to all teachers. Participants were ten purposively selected permanent secondary teachers from three schools in District 4, Division of General Santos City, who had been consistently assigned to Social Studies despite different academic preparation. Teachers with less than two years of service, those not holding permanent status, and those in elementary or higher education institutions were excluded. The scope was confined to experiences within the teaching and learning process, including lesson preparation, instruction, classroom management, and professional identity formation. Broader systemic issues such as shortages and deployment policies were considered only insofar as they directly influenced participants' experiences. The study was delimited by its qualitative nature, relying on in-depth interviews and reflective accounts. Findings therefore represent contextualized understandings rather than statistically measurable outcomes, intended to generate themes and recommendations for teacher support, policy consideration, and future research.

Literature Review

Challenges in Curriculum Delivery

Recent studies consistently highlight the difficulties faced by out-of-field Social Studies teachers in delivering the curriculum. In the Philippines, Angeles and Rabago (2025) identified inadequate training, lack of aligned materials, poor internet access, and limited stakeholder support as major obstacles. Branzuela et al. (2024) reported that non-Social Science majors struggled with subject matter beyond their expertise, while Calaguas and Dungca (2023) found compromised instructional quality among out-of-field teachers in Pampanga and Tarlac. National data from Robinson et al. (2024) revealed that 62% of public high school teachers teach outside their specialization, underscoring systemic issues. Regionally and internationally, scholars such as Rebucas (2022), Williams and Smith (2021), and Du Plessis (2023) documented challenges in content mastery, emotional strain, and diminished professional identity, reinforcing the global nature of these difficulties.

Teacher Professional Identity and Role Strain

Out-of-field teaching has been shown to reshape teachers' professional identity, often creating tensions between specialization and classroom realities. In the Philippine context, Landicho (2025) and Cabello et al. (2024) observed identity strain, emotional stress, and reduced confidence among teachers reassigned to Social Studies. Internationally, Du Plessis (2023) and Caldis (2022) reported similar findings, noting mismatched expectations and feelings of being overwhelmed among vocational and early-career teachers. While these experiences often undermine confidence, some teachers reframed them as opportunities for growth, cultivating adaptability and resilience. Collectively, these studies suggest that role strain can both erode identity and serve as a catalyst for professional development.

Coping Mechanisms

Literature also reveals that out-of-field teachers employ diverse coping strategies to manage instructional and professional challenges. In Northern Samar, Reyes (2025) found reliance on self-control, social support, and avoidance strategies, while David (2024) emphasized professional learning communities and training programs in Bulacan. Tamayo et al. (2024) noted that teachers turned to online resources and mentorship in Western Mindanao. Internationally, Du Plessis (2023) described teachers' reliance on team loyalty and personal study, while Khan et al. (2024) introduced "Saharaline," a WhatsApp-based peer support initiative in India. Filipino teachers also drew on culture-based pedagogy (De Villa & Manalo, 2021) and spiritual grounding (Reyes & Castro, 2023), underscoring the blend of problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies that sustain resilience.

Self-Efficacy and Motivation

Bandura's concept of self-efficacy provides a lens for understanding how teachers' confidence shapes their coping and motivation in out-of-field contexts. David (2024) found that teachers with stronger self-belief were more willing to innovate despite content gaps, while Obias et al. (2025) noted that reframing challenges as growth opportunities enhanced motivation. International studies by Salam and Doyuran (2023) and Du Plessis (2023) reinforced that self-efficacy predicts persistence and resilience, sustaining performance even when subject expertise is limited. These findings suggest that confidence not only influences perceptions of teaching as burdensome or meaningful but also determines teachers' willingness to adapt and innovate.

Innovative Practices

Out-of-field Social Studies teachers have also developed innovative practices to address instructional gaps. Branzuela et al. (2024) documented creative adaptations among non-Social Science majors, while De La Cruz and Alda (2024) described peer learning and reflective teaching in Cebu. Tamayo, Santos, and Villanueva (2024) highlighted digital integration and mentorship in Western Mindanao. Culture-based pedagogies proposed by Pacaña et al. (2022) and narrative-driven adaptations observed by Paraiso et al. (2025) further enriched instruction. Internationally, Du Plessis (2023) and Khan et al. (2024) emphasized team-based planning and collaborative platforms, while Salam and Doyuran (2023) noted cognitive reframing and emotion-focused techniques. These innovations demonstrate how teachers transform constraints into opportunities for engagement and resilience.

Professional Development and Institutional Support

Finally, literature underscores the critical role of institutional support in enabling teachers to thrive in out-of-field contexts. In the Philippines, Recede, Asignado, and Castro (2020) and Reyes and Castro (2023) emphasized mentoring, in-service training, and culture-based pedagogy as scaffolds for strengthening content mastery and confidence. Internationally, Khan et al. (2024) and Polanin et al. (2024) highlighted collaborative platforms and inquiry-based models that sustain motivation and innovation. These findings collectively show that strong institutional and peer support transforms out-of-field teaching from a source of strain into an opportunity for professional identity expansion and resilience. The reviewed literature reveals that out-of-field Social Studies teachers face significant challenges in curriculum delivery, professional identity, and confidence. However, they also employ coping mechanisms, draw on self-efficacy, and developed innovative practices to adapt. Institutional support further shaped their resilience and professional growth. Taken together, these experiences directly influenced teachers' perceptions of teaching—whether they see it as burdensome and misaligned with their expertise, or as a meaningful, evolving profession that fosters growth and innovation. This synthesis underscored the need for qualitative inquiry into how out-of-field Social Studies teachers in the Philippines navigate these realities, thereby addressing the research gap.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed transcendental phenomenology, as articulated by Moustakas (1994), to explore the lived experiences of out of field Social Studies teachers. This approach is well suited because it emphasizes understanding phenomena from participants' perspectives, allowing authentic voices to emerge while bracketing researcher bias. More recent scholars, such as Creswell and Poth (2018), affirm its relevance in qualitative inquiry aimed at capturing meaning making processes. Through in depth interviews, reflective accounts, and limited observations, the study examined teachers' challenges, coping strategies, and innovative practices in teaching outside their specialization. Data analysis followed phenomenological procedures, including bracketing, coding, thematic clustering, and synthesis, to identify the essence of the phenomenon. As Neubauer, Witkop, and Varpio (2019) note, phenomenology provides a powerful lens for understanding lived experiences, while McLeod (2024) emphasizes its focus on meaning from the individual's perspective. This design enabled rich, contextually grounded insights into how teachers navigate curriculum delivery, adapt to role strain, and develop resilience. By centering participants' narratives, transcendental phenomenology ensured rigor and credibility while generating findings that inform both educational practice and policy in the Philippine context.

Sampling Design

A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that participants could provide rich and relevant accounts of their experiences. The selection process involved coordination with school administrators in District 4, General Santos City to obtain lists of teachers currently teaching Social Studies. Potential participants were then screened against inclusion criteria: (a) currently teaching Social Studies at the secondary level, (b) holding a degree, major, or licensure in a field other than Social Studies, and (c) having at least two years of teaching experience in the Department of Education. Teachers who met these criteria were formally invited through letters and personal communication, with the study's objectives and ethical considerations explained. Those who voluntarily agreed signed informed consent forms and were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. From this process, ten participants were selected. This number was consistent with phenomenological research, which emphasizes depth and quality of data rather than large sample sizes, allowing for thorough exploration of individual experiences while maintaining manageability for in depth interviews and analysis.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in 3 secondary schools in District 4 of the Division of General Santos City, namely Baluan National High School, Buayan National High School, and Ligaya National High School. The locale was chosen because it has a significant number of out-of-field social studies teachers with more than 2 years of teaching experience, and these identified schools are experiencing the same concerns as the study.

Research Participants

The participants of this study were secondary school teachers currently assigned to teach Social Studies but without formal academic training, licensure, or specialization in the subject. They were considered "out-of-field" because their educational background or professional preparation lay in other disciplines such as English, Filipino, Science, or Technology and Livelihood Education. In addition, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants comprised three individuals: two out-of-field Social Studies teachers and one student. They were purposively chosen based on their direct experiences relevant to the study, providing triangulation of perspectives between teachers and learners.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a semi-structured interview guide, which is appropriate for phenomenological research as it allows participants to describe their lived experiences while giving the researcher flexibility to probe deeper. The guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed accounts of challenges, coping strategies, and perceptions of teaching Social Studies outside specialization. To ensure credibility and validity, the instrument underwent expert review in educational research and Social Studies pedagogy, with minor revisions made for clarity and alignment with research objectives. In addition to interviews, contextual observations and insights from participant interactions were noted to enrich understanding and support triangulation. All interviews were audio-recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and served as the primary data source for coding, thematic analysis, and interpretation in accordance with phenomenological procedures.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection followed a systematic and ethical approach consistent with phenomenological research. Permission was first secured from the graduate school, division office, school administrators, and relevant authorities. Using purposive sampling, secondary school teachers assigned to Social Studies outside their specialization were identified and invited. Informed consent was obtained, ensuring voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any time. Each interview lasted between two to three hours, conducted in the participants' preferred language (a mix of Filipino, Cebuano, and English) to allow authentic expression. Sessions were audio-recorded with consent. Transcriptions were produced verbatim by the researcher, reviewed against recordings for accuracy, and returned to participants for member checking to confirm reliability. To further validate emerging findings, a three-person Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted. This was not a full focus group but a validation session, designed to confirm themes identified in interviews. It included two out-of-field Social Studies teachers and one student, purposively selected to triangulate perspectives. The student's inclusion provided insight into how out-of-field teaching was experienced from the learner's side, strengthening the credibility of findings. Throughout the process, ethical standards were upheld, including respect for participants' narratives, anonymity, and confidentiality. These procedures ensured credibility, trustworthiness, and alignment with phenomenological principles.

Results and Discussions

Thematic Analysis of Out-of-Filed Social Studies Teachers in Curriculum Delivery

Table 1. Integrated Thematic Analysis of Out-of-Field Social Studies Teachers in Curriculum Delivery

Themes	Sub-themes	Key Codes	Supporting Quotes
1. Instructional Adaptation and Coping Strategies	Self-directed learning; instructional adjustment; collaboration; ICT integration; student-centered strategies	Independent study; resource searching; instructional adjustment; contextualized teaching; consulting colleagues; ICT use; experiential learning	"I read my lessons every day because AP is not my major." "We adjust our teaching when students struggle." "I use YouTube videos to explain lessons."
2. Emotional and Professional Challenges	Anxiety and role strain; emotional stress; institutional constraints	Fear of inadequacy; nervousness; workload stress; lack of training; limited resources	"I felt nervous teaching a subject not aligned with my major." "Teaching unfamiliar topics is stressful."
3. Professional Growth and Identity Transformation	Knowledge expansion; pedagogical development; confidence building	Learning new content; improved strategies; resilience; professional confidence	"Teaching AP helped me gain new knowledge." "Over time I became more confident."
4. Learner Outcomes and Curriculum Realities	Student engagement; curriculum implementation; teaching limitations	Critical thinking; participation; workload constraints; limited depth of instruction	"Students participate more when lessons are interactive." "Non-specialists sometimes provide limited explanations."

The findings revealed that out-of-field Social Studies teachers experience a complex process of adaptation, emotional adjustment, professional transformation, and instructional negotiation in curriculum delivery. While participants encountered limitations associated with specialization mismatch, they also demonstrated resilience, creativity, and professional commitment through adaptive teaching practices and continuous learning.

Theme 1: Instructional Adaptation and Coping Strategies

The findings revealed that out-of-field Social Studies teachers actively reconstructed their instructional competence through self-directed learning, collaboration with colleagues, ICT integration, and learner-centered teaching approaches. Rather than relying solely on formal specialization, teachers compensated for gaps in content mastery by independently studying lessons, searching for supplementary resources, contextualizing discussions, and consulting peers with stronger Social Studies backgrounds. These adaptive practices suggest that curriculum continuity in out-of-field teaching contexts is often sustained through teachers' personal initiative and informal professional learning networks rather than through structured institutional preparation alone. This reflects Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, which explains how repeated preparation, successful classroom experiences, and continuous engagement gradually

strengthen teachers' confidence in handling unfamiliar subject matter. Similarly, Lev Vygotsky's Constructivist Theory emphasizes that learning develops through collaboration, scaffolding, and socially mediated interaction, which were evident in participants' reliance on peer support and collaborative instructional problem-solving. The findings support Reyes (2025) and David (2024), who found that out-of-field teachers frequently relied on self-directed learning and professional learning communities to sustain curriculum delivery despite limited specialization. Likewise, Tamayo et al. (2024) emphasized the use of digital resources and online instructional materials in addressing instructional gaps. However, the present findings further suggest that these adaptive practices are not merely compensatory mechanisms but manifestations of professional resilience developed in response to structural shortages in specialization alignment. This implies that schools may be relying heavily on teacher adaptability and informal support systems to maintain instructional continuity in out-of-field teaching contexts.

Theme 2: Emotional and Professional Challenges

The findings showed that teachers experienced significant emotional strain, including anxiety, self-doubt, stress, and frustration, when assigned to teach outside their specialization. Participants described feelings of nervousness, fear of inadequacy, workload pressure, and uncertainty associated with unfamiliar subject content and limited preparation. These emotional experiences indicate that out-of-field teaching extends beyond instructional difficulty and directly affects teachers' professional identity and sense of competence. This finding is explained by William J. Goode's Role Strain Theory, which highlights the tension experienced when individuals are expected to perform responsibilities beyond their preparation or perceived capability. Teachers were not only managing unfamiliar content but were also negotiating expectations related to authority, competence, and professional legitimacy. The findings are consistent with Landicho (2025), Cabello et al. (2024), Du Plessis (2023), and Caldis (2022), who similarly reported that out-of-field teachers often experience emotional exhaustion, diminished confidence, and professional identity strain. However, the findings further suggest that these emotional struggles are not isolated personal experiences but structural consequences of institutional staffing practices where teacher deployment prioritizes workforce demands over specialization alignment. Consequently, teachers may internalize systemic inadequacies as personal professional shortcomings, thereby intensifying emotional stress and professional uncertainty. This highlights the importance of institutional support mechanisms, targeted professional development, and workload management strategies in sustaining teacher well-being and professional confidence.

Theme 3: Professional Growth and Identity Transformation

Despite initial difficulties, the findings revealed that prolonged engagement in out-of-field teaching contributed to significant professional growth and identity transformation among teachers. Participants described becoming more flexible, resourceful, resilient, and confident in handling unfamiliar subjects over time. Through continuous exposure to instructional challenges, teachers developed broader pedagogical skills, expanded content knowledge, and stronger adaptive capacity. These findings suggest that professional growth emerged not only from formal training but also from sustained engagement with unfamiliar teaching demands and reflective classroom practice. Consistent with Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, repeated mastery experiences and successful adaptation gradually strengthened teachers' confidence and professional competence. The findings support Obias et al. (2025), Salam and Doyuran (2023), and Du Plessis (2023), who emphasized that resilience and self-efficacy enable teachers to persist despite unfamiliar instructional contexts. However, the present findings further indicate that out-of-field teaching may unintentionally function as an informal professional development context where teachers reconstruct professional identity through experiential learning and adaptive practice. Although initially associated with stress and uncertainty, these experiences eventually contributed to identity expansion, instructional flexibility, and long-term professional adaptability. This suggests that, when supported appropriately, out-of-field teaching experiences may become opportunities for meaningful professional growth rather than solely sources of instructional difficulty.

Theme 4: Learner Outcomes and Curriculum Realities

The findings revealed that teachers perceived improved student engagement when utilizing interactive, contextualized, and learner-centered instructional strategies. Participants observed that collaborative discussions, real-life applications, and inquiry-based activities encouraged student

participation, interaction, and critical thinking. These practices reflect Lev Vygotsky's Constructivist Learning Theory, which emphasizes meaningful learning through social interaction, contextualization, and collaborative engagement. However, participants also acknowledged that limited subject mastery, workload pressures, and insufficient preparation sometimes affected the depth and consistency of curriculum delivery. This finding reveals a significant tension between learner engagement and instructional depth within out-of-field teaching contexts. While adaptive teaching strategies successfully promoted classroom participation and active learning, specialization mismatch may have constrained opportunities for deeper conceptual explanation and disciplinary rigor. The findings support Calaguas and Dungca (2023), who noted that out-of-field teaching may compromise instructional depth despite teachers' efforts to sustain learning continuity. Similarly, Polanin et al. (2024) and Nayeli Ramirez-Ramirez and Ramirez-Montoya (2021) emphasized the value of active and contextualized instruction in enhancing student engagement and meaningful learning experiences. However, the present findings further suggest that effective classroom engagement alone does not necessarily guarantee comprehensive curriculum mastery or instructional consistency. This highlights the importance of aligning teacher specialization with subject assignments while also providing structured instructional guides, updated teaching resources, and continuous pedagogical support to improve teaching quality and learner outcomes in out-of-field teaching contexts. Overall, the findings demonstrated that out-of-field Social Studies teaching is both challenging and transformative. Teachers experienced emotional strain, instructional limitations, and preparation difficulties; however, they also demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and professional commitment through continuous learning and innovative instructional practices. The findings further suggest that out-of-field teaching should not be viewed solely as a deficit condition, but also as a context that can foster professional growth, identity expansion, and adaptive teaching competence when supported by appropriate institutional mechanisms.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to strict ethical standards to protect participants' rights, dignity, and well-being. Ethics clearance was formally obtained through a formal approved letter from the Graduate School of Sultan Kudarat State University. Permission was also secured from the Division Office of General Santos City and the principals of participating schools. Informed consent was obtained from all teacher participants after they were clearly briefed on the study's purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature, including their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. For the student participant in the validation Focus Group Discussion (FGD), written parental consent and student assent were secured to ensure voluntary participation and protection against power imbalance. The FGD was conducted as a validation session rather than a full focus group, designed to confirm emerging themes. The inclusion of one student provided triangulation of perspectives, but safeguards were maintained by emphasizing that the student's role was to share experiences freely without evaluation or judgment.

Conclusion

Participants described significant challenges in delivering the Social Studies curriculum, including perceived content knowledge gaps, extended preparation demands, limited instructional resources, and emotional strain. Institutional constraints such as inadequate training and outdated materials compounded these difficulties, while feelings of anxiety and self-doubt reflected the demanding nature of teaching outside specialization. Despite these struggles, participants reported coping through professional learning, technology integration, student-centered strategies, and innovative practices. Instructional adaptation, emotional adjustment, and resourcefulness were perceived as enabling them to continue lesson delivery, while professional growth was suggested through expanded knowledge, increased confidence, and evolving teaching identities. Collectively, the findings suggest that out-of-field teaching is both challenging and potentially transformative. Participants' accounts indicate that the experience reshaped their professional identity and fostered resilience. These insights highlight the need for institutional support to sustain curriculum delivery and teacher development, while recognizing that outcomes were based on lived experiences rather than measured instructional effectiveness.

Recommendations

Educational institutions should strengthen support mechanisms for out-of-field Social Studies teachers by implementing targeted school-based and system-level interventions directly aligned with the challenges identified in this study. At the school level, administrators, department heads, and master teachers should prioritize regular Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, peer mentoring, collaborative lesson

planning, ICT training, and access to updated instructional resources such as textbooks, digital modules, and localized teaching materials to address difficulties in content mastery and curriculum delivery. Schools should also establish teacher wellness and stress-management programs, including workload monitoring and counseling support, to help reduce the emotional strain, anxiety, and professional pressure experienced by teachers assigned outside their specialization. At the district and division levels, Education Program Supervisors (EPS) and curriculum coordinators should conduct specialized seminars, capability-building workshops, and inter-school professional learning communities focused on Social Studies pedagogy, contextualized instruction, and technology integration, while also developing centralized resource repositories accessible to teachers across schools. At the policy level, the Department of Education should refine teacher deployment policies to minimize prolonged specialization mismatch and institutionalize mandatory orientation and bridging programs for teachers assigned outside their area of expertise. These initiatives should be aligned with the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) framework by recognizing mentoring participation, instructional innovation, and professional development activities as part of teacher advancement and evaluation. Increased funding for instructional materials, ICT resources, and teacher support systems is likewise recommended to improve instructional consistency and learner outcomes. Future researchers are encouraged to investigate the long-term effects of out-of-field teaching on teacher identity, emotional well-being, instructional quality, and student achievement, as well as to examine the effectiveness of mentoring programs, professional learning communities, and institutional interventions across different subject areas and educational contexts.

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