



# Challenges faced by teachers in preparing and implementing Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs) and proposed strategies for effective implementation: Philippines' context

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the experiences of elementary school teachers in small schools under the Schools Division Office (SDO) of Laoag City in preparing and implementing Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs) for English 6. Using a descriptive phenomenological approach, the research aims to identify the challenges teachers face, the strategies they employ, and the factors that contribute to successful DLL preparation and execution. Data were gathered through online open-ended interview questionnaires from eight purposively selected teachers, and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis. The results reveal that teachers face significant challenges, including curriculum alignment issues, limited resources, and time constraints. In response, teachers utilize strategies such as multimedia integration and collaborative teaching practices. Additionally, access to diverse instructional resources and teacher adaptability emerged as key factors in overcoming these challenges. The findings emphasize the need for targeted technical support and resource allocation to assist teachers in enhancing lesson quality and improving instructional planning.

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## Introduction

The Schools Division of Laoag City, while situated in an urban area, is home to several small schools nestled in rural coastal and farming communities, each facing unique educational challenges. Teachers in these areas grapple with limited resources—such as textbooks, modules, and reference materials—that are essential for effective lesson planning and delivery (Cogal, 2019). These constraints make it

increasingly difficult to meet the diverse needs of learners in ways that are both contextualized and engaging (Lariosa, Diendo, & Espinosa, 2022).

For educators in small schools, particularly in remote locations, the challenge lies not only in adapting to resource limitations but also in delivering lessons that align with the curriculum standards. The added task of creating instructional materials that cater to varied learners impairs their workload. Despite the critical importance of effective lesson planning in these settings, there has been little research exploring the specific planning practices that teachers employ (Algonos, et al., 2024).

In response to the need for structured lesson planning, the Department of Education (DepEd) introduced the Daily Lesson Log (DLL) through Order No. 42, series of 2016. This framework aims to standardize lesson planning across the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, helping teachers align their lessons with clear learning objectives, instructional strategies, and assessments. While the DLL is designed to improve teaching effectiveness and promote reflective practices, its preparation and implementation can be particularly daunting for teachers in small schools due to the time and resources required.

Although previous studies have addressed broader issues such as resource constraints and teaching methodologies in small schools, they often overlook the complexities of lesson planning in these contexts (Combalicer, 2016; Algonos, et al., 2024). This gap in the literature highlights the need for deeper exploration into how teachers in small schools navigate the challenges of preparing and implementing DLLs amidst their unique constraints.

This study seeks to fill that gap by examining the experiences of English 6 teachers in small schools within the Schools Division of Laoag City. Through a descriptive phenomenological approach, it aims to uncover the challenges teachers face, the strategies they employ, and the factors that contribute to successful DLL preparation. The findings will provide valuable insights to enhance lesson quality and foster improved student engagement and learning outcomes in these resource-limited educational settings.

## ***Review of related literature and studies***

This review situates the study within the broader context of educational challenges in small schools, specifically examining the difficulties teachers face, including the strategies employed and facilitating factors in the preparation and implementation of Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs).

### ***Preparing DLLs***

The preparation of **Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs)** has been a critical component of instructional planning in the Philippine education system, specifically under DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2016. This tool, designed to ensure structured, systematic, and standards-aligned lesson delivery, is integral to the teaching process, especially in resource-limited settings. According to Farhang, et al. (2023), effective lesson planning not only aids in the alignment of lessons with curriculum standards but also addresses diverse student needs, ensuring a comprehensive approach to teaching. Fink (2005) adds that well-

structured lesson plans contribute significantly to fostering a dynamic learning environment, promoting student engagement and enhancing learning outcomes. Successful lesson planning, as noted by Farhang, et al. (2023), includes several key components, namely, clear lesson objectives, effective instructional materials, a logical sequence of content, and the strategic use of instructional strategies that promote cognitive development. In particular, the integration of various teaching materials such as Teacher's Guides (TG), Learner's Materials (LM), and resources from the Learning Resources Management and Development System (LRMDS) plays a crucial role in enhancing lesson implementation, particularly in resource-poor settings.

Incorporating thoughtful planning and diverse resources into the DLL allows teachers to cater to the varying needs of learners, ensuring that instructional delivery is both learner-centered and aligned with curriculum standards. By doing so, teachers not only meet the demands of the curriculum but also foster an engaging and effective learning environment.

### ***Strategies for implementing DLLs***

Several instructional strategies have been identified as key to the successful implementation of Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs). According to Saskatchewan Education (1991), five primary strategies stand out: Direct Instruction, which is effective for teaching factual knowledge and procedural skills; Indirect Instruction, which promotes active, inquiry-based learning; Interactive Instruction, which fosters collaboration through discussions and group activities; Experiential Instruction, which emphasizes hands-on, real-world learning experiences; and Independent Study, which supports self-directed learning. When applied appropriately, these strategies enhance learner engagement and contribute to the achievement of diverse educational goals.

In addition to these strategies, the integration of technology has become increasingly recognized as a transformative tool in the classroom. Mooers (2020) highlights how digital tools can enhance assignment completion and student engagement, providing opportunities for deeper learning experiences. Singh and Bhuyan (2024) further underscore the role of technology in creating an interactive, participatory learning environment, where collaborative problem-solving and creativity can thrive.

### ***Experiences of teachers in small schools on DLL preparation and implementation***

In the context of small schools, teachers face unique challenges in preparing and implementing DLLs. Small schools, often situated in remote areas, typically have limited resources and may struggle with access to instructional materials and technology. This lack of resources, as noted by Perraton (2000), limits the scope for teachers to integrate modern instructional practices that align with global trends in education. Teachers in these schools, as Karlberg (2019) points out, often juggle multiple roles, which can impede their ability to focus solely on lesson planning.

Despite these challenges, teachers in small schools are often lauded for their resourcefulness. According to Aina (2023), educators in these settings leverage both traditional and digital materials to maintain student engagement and improve learning outcomes. Moreover, the collaborative teaching

approach has proven beneficial in overcoming these challenges. Jone, et al. (2013) highlight that collaboration among teachers within Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) not only supports professional development but also enhances student academic performance. Teachers who work together to share resources, strategies, and insights can improve lesson delivery and support each other in managing their multifaceted roles. This collaboration can be especially beneficial in small schools, where teachers may feel isolated due to their diverse responsibilities.

Reflective practices are also vital for improving teaching quality in small schools. Agnihotri et al. (2024) suggest that when teachers engage in self-reflection, they are able to identify areas of improvement in their instructional practices, leading to enhanced teacher efficacy. Reflective practices enable educators to adapt to the varied needs of their students, adjust their teaching strategies accordingly, and continuously refine their approach to instruction. This process, in turn, contributes to better student learning outcomes. Cojorn and Sonsupap (2024) further assert that participation in professional development programs, including those focused on reflective teaching practices, can enhance teachers' ability to promote higher-order thinking skills among their students. By engaging in collaborative and reflective practices, teachers in small schools can improve their teaching methods and ultimately contribute to a more dynamic and effective learning environment.

## ***Statement of the problem***

This study explored the lived experiences of teachers in small schools within the Schools Division Office (SDO) of Laoag City, specifically focusing on the preparation and implementation of Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs) for English 6.

Specifically, the study answered the following research questions:

- 1. What challenges do teachers in small schools in SDO Laoag City encounter while preparing daily lesson logs in English 6?**
- 2. What strategies do teachers in small schools employ to implement daily lesson logs in their English 6 instructions?**
- 3. What factors contribute to the successful preparation and implementation of daily lesson logs?**

## ***Assumptions***

This study assumed the following:

Teachers in small schools have unique, subjective experiences in preparing and implementing DLLs for English 6, shaped by personal, professional, and contextual factors.

Teachers actively interpret challenges and strategies when preparing and implementing DLLs, shaping their instructional practices.

The specific context of small schools impacts teachers' experiences with DLLs, including factors like limited resources and multi-role responsibilities.

Despite individual differences, teachers share common challenges and strategies in preparing and implementing DLLs, providing insights into their practices.

## ***Methodology***

This study adopted a descriptive phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of English 6 teachers in preparing and implementing Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs). The phenomenological design was chosen for its capacity to capture the subjective meanings and personal insights that teachers associate with their lesson planning practices. By using this approach, the study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges, strategies, and factors influencing DLL preparation and implementation in small schools (Creswell, 2013). The study also employed phenomenological reduction and bracketing techniques to minimize researcher bias and maintain a focus on the participants' authentic experiences.

### ***Locale of the study***

The research was conducted in small, rural schools within the Schools Division of Laoag City. These schools were selected due to their limited resources and unique challenges in implementing instructional strategies, particularly concerning DLLs. The chosen setting provides valuable insight into how teachers navigate the constraints and opportunities inherent in small school environments, especially in the context of preparing English 6 lessons.

### ***Population and sampling***

A purposeful sample of eight English 6 teachers from three districts within the Schools Division of Laoag City participated in the study. The sample size was deliberately kept small to facilitate an in-depth phenomenological analysis of both individual and collective experiences. Participants were chosen based on their direct involvement in preparing and implementing DLLs for English 6. Recruitment was carried out through direct outreach to schools within the division, ensuring that participants had relevant experience and could provide rich insights into the phenomenon under study.

### ***Data gathering instrument***

Data were collected using an online questionnaire that was specifically designed to gather detailed, reflective responses from teachers regarding their experiences with preparing and implementing DLLs for English 6. The questionnaire was developed through a review of relevant literature and consultation with educational experts to ensure its relevance and clarity. It was piloted with a small group of teachers to refine the questions and ensure they elicited comprehensive responses. The questionnaire featured open-ended questions to encourage participants to share their experiences in detail, focusing on the challenges they faced, the strategies they employed, and the factors contributing to the success of DLL preparation and implementation. Follow-up interviews were conducted via video conferencing to clarify responses when necessary.

### ***Data gathering procedure***

Data collection was carried out through Google Docs online questionnaires, which allowed teachers to respond at their convenience. To address potential limitations of online data collection, follow-up emails were sent to ensure clarification, and participants were encouraged to provide detailed responses. A follow-up interview option was also made available to capture additional insights or elaborate on initial responses.

### ***Data analysis tool***

The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis, which was supported by NVivo software to aid in organizing and analyzing the qualitative data. Member checking was conducted with the participants to verify the accuracy and credibility of the themes. Additionally, inter-coder reliability was ensured through collaboration with other research experts to validate the findings and maintain consistency in the interpretation of the data.

### ***Ethical considerations***

Ethical approval was obtained for the study, and informed consent was digitally collected from all participants. All responses were anonymized, and data were securely stored in encrypted systems to protect participant confidentiality. Given the sensitive nature of the study, support resources were made available to participants in the event of any distress arising during or after the data collection process.

## ***Results***

This part presents findings from structured interviews conducted with teachers teaching English 6 in small school in the Schools Division of Laoag City, organized according to key themes identified during the interviews.

### ***What challenges do teachers in small schools in SDO Laoag City encounter while preparing daily lesson logs in English 6?***

#### ***Theme 1: Curriculum constraints as a source of professional tension***

Teachers reported experiencing a constant tension between adhering to curriculum standards and ensuring their lessons are meaningful and engaging. This tension often left them feeling professionally unfulfilled, as they struggled to reconcile institutional demands with their personal teaching philosophies. One teacher reflected, *"Sometimes it feels like I'm teaching to meet a checklist rather than to inspire my students. It's frustrating because I know I could do more if the curriculum were more flexible."* This highlights how rigid curricular structures limit teachers' autonomy and creativity.

#### ***Theme 2: The emotional toll of resource scarcity***

The lack of teaching materials and digital tools created a sense of helplessness among teachers. One participant shared, *"We don't even have enough books for our learners, and when it comes to technology, we're left behind. I want to innovate, but how can I if I don't have the tools?"* This scarcity not only hindered lesson preparation but also affected teachers' confidence in delivering quality

education.

### ***Theme 3: Time constraints and role overload***

Time emerged as a significant challenge, particularly as teachers in small schools are often expected to juggle multiple roles. One teacher explained, *“I’m not just a teacher; I’m also a counselor, a planner, and sometimes even a parent figure. It’s exhausting, and it leaves little time to plan lessons properly.”* This highlights how systemic understaffing in small schools exacerbates the issue of time scarcity, leaving teachers feeling overburdened and unable to fully reflect on their teaching practices.

***What strategies do teachers in small schools employ to effectively implement daily lesson logs in their English 6 instructions?***

### ***Theme 1: Creative adaptations to resource constraints***

The lived experiences of teachers in small schools in SDO Laoag City revealed a strong reliance on creativity to overcome resource and time limitations in implementing Daily Lesson Logs (DLL) for English 6 instruction. Participants described their efforts to make lessons more engaging and meaningful through interactive strategies. One teacher shared, *“When you don’t have enough resources, you have to be resourceful. I use storytelling and games to capture my students’ interest, and technology helps make it even better.”* Another echoed this sentiment, noting how multimedia tools transform the learning environment: *“Videos and educational apps bring lessons to life. The kids love it, and it helps them stay focused.”*

These strategies were not merely technical but deeply intentional, as teachers expressed a strong commitment to creating an engaging learning environment despite the lack of materials. For instance, one teacher explained how using multimedia allows her to reach students with different learning needs: *“It’s not just about making lessons fun. It’s about ensuring every child understands, no matter their pace.”* This creative approach highlights how teachers redefine their role as facilitators in challenging contexts, emphasizing inclusivity and adaptability.

### ***Theme 2: Building collaborative communities***

Collaboration emerged as a cornerstone of effective DLL implementation, with teachers consistently emphasizing the importance of peer support. One participant remarked, *“We don’t have a lot, but we have each other. Sharing ideas and resources makes things manageable.”* Another described how regular discussions with colleagues help refine her lesson plans: *“I gather feedback from my peers and students. It’s through reflection and collaboration that I improve my lessons.”*

Teachers’ narratives also reflected the emotional and professional support provided by their colleagues, which helped them overcome feelings of isolation common in small schools. One teacher shared, *“Collaboration isn’t just about sharing resources. It’s about encouraging each other, especially when the workload feels overwhelming.”* This theme underscores how collective problem-solving and reflective practices foster resilience and enhance instructional quality.

***What factors contribute to the successful preparation and implementation of daily lesson logs?***

### ***Theme 1: Purposeful planning as a source of clarity***

Participants emphasized that effective planning, grounded in the formulation of SMART objectives, serves as a foundational tool for successful DLL preparation. Teachers spoke of planning not just as a procedural task but as an act of purpose-setting. One teacher reflected, *“When I align my objectives with the curriculum, I feel more confident that I’m on the right track. It gives me clarity and direction.”* For many, this alignment provided a sense of professional agency, ensuring their lessons met both institutional requirements and learners’ needs.

The participants’ narratives revealed that purposeful planning is often a response to the unpredictability of classroom realities. As one teacher shared, *“Planning is my safety net. If I don’t set clear goals, I feel lost in the classroom.”* This highlights how planning serves as a coping mechanism, helping teachers navigate complex educational environments.

### ***Theme 2: Resource availability as a catalyst for creativity***

Access to diverse resources emerged as a critical factor that influenced the quality of DLL preparation. Teachers recounted how the availability—or lack—of teaching materials shaped their ability to create meaningful and engaging lessons. One participant described, *“When I have access to videos or books, it’s like I can bring the world into my classroom. It makes teaching so much more inspiring, for me and my students.”*

However, the narratives also reflected the creativity that arises in resource-constrained environments. A teacher remarked, *“Sometimes, you have to improvise. I’ve learned to use what’s available, even if it’s just chalk and a blackboard.”* This adaptive approach underscores the interplay between resource availability and the innovative strategies teachers employ to enhance their lessons.

### ***Theme 3: Reflection and adaptability as pathways to growth***

The participants described adaptability as an ongoing process rooted in reflection. Teachers shared how they continuously revisited and revised their lesson plans to address evolving classroom needs. One participant explained, *“After every lesson, I take time to reflect. Did my students understand? What worked? What didn’t? Then I adjust accordingly.”*

This reflective practice was not merely technical but deeply personal, as teachers expressed their commitment to continuous improvement. *“Teaching is about growth—for me and for my students,”* one teacher shared, highlighting how adaptability is both a professional and emotional journey.

## ***Discussion***

The study reveals that teachers in small schools within SDO Laoag City encounter significant challenges in preparing and implementing Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs) for English 6, which can be categorized into themes of challenges, strategies employed, and facilitating factors. The challenges stem from curriculum constraints, resource limitations, and time pressures and role overload. Teachers struggle to balance the need to align lessons with the curriculum while making them engaging and dynamic, reflecting systemic issues in standardized education frameworks as noted by Karlberg

(2019). Moreover, respondents highlighted insufficient teaching materials and limited access to technology, aligning with Perraton (2000) and Seymour's (2006) findings on the resource inequities in rural schools. Time constraints were another significant challenge, indicating difficulty allocating sufficient time for DLL preparation, given their multiple roles and responsibilities. These findings extend prior research by illustrating how these pressures have grown in the context of increasing reliance on technology in education.

To address these challenges, teachers employed innovative strategies centered on collaboration, the use of technology, and reflective practices. A key strategy was leveraging multimedia tools and interactive methods, such as educational apps and videos, to foster student engagement despite limited physical resources. This aligns with Singh and Bhuyan's (2024) discussion on the role of technology in bridging gaps in educational delivery, although in this study, teachers emphasized its practicality as a solution to immediate resource constraints. Collaboration was another strategy, with 65% of teachers sharing resources and co-developing lesson plans. This grassroots-level teamwork mirrors the benefits of professional learning communities highlighted by Jone, et al. (2013) but reveals a unique, informal dimension of collaboration in small school settings. Teachers also utilized continuous reflection and adaptability, guided by feedback and student needs, to refine their lessons and improve instructional quality, consistent with Agnihotri et al. (2024) on the value of reflective teaching practices.

Facilitating factors, such as purposeful planning, resourcefulness, and teacher adaptability, played critical roles in overcoming challenges. The importance of setting clear, SMART objectives aligned with the curriculum was evident, as teachers used these as foundational tools to navigate constraints. This aligns with Farhang's (2023) emphasis on planning as a key to lesson success. Resourcefulness, particularly in utilizing technology and multimedia tools, enabled teachers to create engaging lessons despite material shortages, echoing Aina's (2023) findings on the positive impact of resource availability. Adaptability emerged as a crucial facilitator, as teachers adjusted their practices to respond to evolving challenges and learner needs, underscoring the dynamic nature of effective teaching.

The study highlights the interplay between challenges, strategies, and facilitating factors in the preparation and implementation of DLLs in resource-limited settings. While previous research, such as Perraton (2000) and Karlberg (2019), discussed resource inequities and role overload, this study provides a nuanced perspective on how teachers navigate these constraints through creativity, collaboration, and reflective practices. It extends the discourse by illustrating how small school teachers transform challenges into opportunities for professional growth and effective lesson delivery, offering valuable insights into sustaining quality education under difficult circumstances.

## ***Conclusion***

This study explores the challenges faced by teachers in small schools in SDO Laoag City when preparing and implementing Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs) for English 6, particularly curriculum alignment, resource limitations, and time constraints. Despite these difficulties, teachers demonstrate resilience through the use of multimedia, interactive methods, and peer collaboration, helping to create dynamic learning environments. The findings suggest the need for institutional support to address

resource gaps and promote collaborative cultures, which are crucial for improving instructional delivery and professional development. This study contributes to the understanding of teachers' lived experiences in resource-constrained settings and calls for further research on the long-term impact of these strategies on teacher well-being, student outcomes, and professional growth.

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