



Navigating Nuances: Intermediate Teachers' Experiences Handling Generation Z Learners

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Abstract

Education in the 21st century is centered on equipping new learners with skills relevant to their daily lives, particularly Generation Z learners. As the backbone of the education system, teachers must have the competence and skills to effectively teach and cater to this cohort's unique needs. This study aimed to explore the specific challenges and coping strategies of teachers handling Generation Z learners at the intermediate level. This study employed a phenomenological research design involving twelve (12) intermediate teachers in District 10 of Ozamiz City. Thematic analysis was used to examine the data revealing commonly faced challenges, including Generation Z learners' disruptive behaviour, inappropriate use of technology, and poor academic performance. Furthermore, it was revealed that intermediate teachers use varied coping strategies in handling Generation Z learners. These strategies include the application of proper classroom discipline, partnership between parents and teachers, and enhancing teachers' ICT literacy. The result of this study offers valuable perspectives for teachers, school administration, and policymakers. In conclusion, addressing these challenges can elevate Generation Z learners' learning experiences and improve their academic performance. Furthermore, it encourages teachers to be more innovative and prepared to meet the demands of 21st-century education.

Keywords *Generation Z Learners; Intermediate Teachers; Experiences; Phenomenology*

INTRODUCTION

Each generation's profile varies from time to time. The new generation of learners means further teacher adjustments regarding the approaches imposed on students to learn. As highlighted by Rothman (2016), there are five recognized generations: traditionalists (1925–1944), known as the silent generation; Baby Boomers (1945–1964); Generation X (1965–1980); Millennials, or Gen Y (1981–1995); and the recent generation, Generation Z (1995–2010). As the Department of Education Secretary Briones mentioned, there are 27.2 million students in this school year 2019–2020 (Ramos, 2019). If it is to be evaluated, the more significant percentage of learners are Gen Z. Generation Z learners are characterized by having attention span, being tech-savvy, and being switch-taskers than previous generations (Rothman, 2016).

Theoretically, the constructivist perspective suggests an opportunity for teachers to create platforms for experiential learning that tap into their tech-savvy nature. The theory of constructivism holds that knowledge is best acquired through active construction in the mind (Mascolo & Fischer, 2005). With this, it becomes evident that educators must adapt their teaching methods to allow Generation Z learners to acquire learning through active teaching and learning, wherein learners can manipulate and work through technologies (Cilliers, 2017).

However, this adaptation comes with challenges. Hill et al. (2017) mentioned that teachers in this generation raised concerns about applying different strategies to adjust how learners learn effectively because iGen learners are so diverse from the previous generations. The manipulation of technology is one of the challenges for teachers (Jansen & Merwe, 2015). Another challenge faced by the beginning teachers in the study of Confait (2015) was enhancing their effectiveness in



teaching by adjusting themselves to their schools' desires. The participants are more teacher-centered rather than learner-centered in their approach to achieving the goal of the school setting.

While most of the studies conducted by other researchers mentioned above focused more on the secondary and tertiary levels, it is equally imperative to know the different challenges encountered and how teachers at the intermediate level can help a lot in enhancing classroom management and teaching skills in providing quality learning for the learners. Intermediate teachers should be able to guide the pupils accordingly to have a strong foundation in their education. Hence, it is vital to investigate the challenges teachers in District 10 of Ozamiz City encountered in handling Generation Z learners and the strategies employed to improve classroom management and teaching skills.

The study aimed to discover teachers' challenges and coping strategies in handling Generation Z learners at the intermediate level. The participants of this study were the intermediate teachers in District 10 of the Ozamiz City division of the school year 2019-2020.

More specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What challenges do intermediate teachers encounter in handling Generation Z learners at the intermediate level?
2. What are the strategies used by the intermediate to cope with the mentioned challenges?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Characteristics of Generation Z Learners

Generation Z learners are unique from previous generations. They are more tech-savvy and more likely to have short attention spans. They enjoy manipulative learning and prefer learning associated with technologies like mobile phones, iPads, and more. This generation communicates more through social media (Torocsik et al., 2014; Carter, 2018).

A study shows that teenagers in this generation had uplifting mentalities towards utilizing cell phones for pervasive learning. They saw that cell phones could be utilized for gaming diversion and learning since they are advantageous, have quick reactions, and are simple to use to access data (Kee & Samssudin, 2014).

Furthermore, Gen Z learners are observers who strive for equal human rights yet have this "we-centered mentality," are innovative, and prefer to explore independently (Seemiller and Grace, 2017). In their study, Izzah et al. (2019) revealed that Generation Z learners have a positive perspective on using the Internet of Things (LOT) as part of higher education information and communication technology to aid learning.

In addition, Generation Z can lead well, possessing excellent leadership skills (Sladek & Grabinger, 2014). As Carter (2018) mentioned in his study, generation Z has indicated a desire to engage in their world's transformation rather than transactional activities. He also added that these learners in this generation tend to be more financially conservative and pragmatic and would prefer to address root causes rather than symptoms of problems that mirror Generation X features. IGen learners are self-confident, happy, team-fit, and enjoy social service operations as well as interested in activities than previous generations (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015).

Gen Z learners' different characteristics and ways of learning let teachers in the 21st century adjust and apply strategies best suited for these types of learners. However, because these learners are digitally dependent and inclined, there is a generation gap between students and teachers. Teachers' ability to use technological tools for learning in the classroom effectively incorporates technology into their pedagogy (Lisenbee, 2016). He also added that many teachers need more time to allow students to explore independently and construct their knowledge through multimodal interactions with technology. Teachers need to be more experts in various technological tools, so learner expectations make a gap between teachers and students.

Challenges of Handling Generation Z Learners

Generation Z challenges society with the most radical views about people of all ages. One of the six forces mentioned by Koulopoulos & Keldsen (2016) is the adaptation of the world as a classroom, wherein Gen Z pushes worldwide accessibility of training at different levels of learning. This generation is profoundly different from previous cohorts, and their unique characteristics make engaging them challenging. This challenge necessitates the application of different innovative teaching strategies (Hill, 2017).

21st Century learning stresses learners to be dynamic and responsive, and the emergence of technology played a significant role in this transformation (Arulchelvan, 2019). Taleb (2015) explored mobile learning (m-learning) and found that mobile learning is sufficient to motivate and increase the learners' academic performance, particularly in Mathematics. The teachers should learn literacy in technology usage because of the nature of Generation Z learners. However, many educators still need more confidence in manipulating technologies affecting their ability to teach Generation Z learners (Jansen & Merwe, 2015).

In Iran, language learning is a severe challenge many high school learners face. They need help to smoothly convey what needs to be in a foreign language, specifically English (Akbari, 2015).

As per specialists, to help and continue significant changes in instructing and learning, educator training projects should proceed with aptitude improvement and execute the accompanying three segments: building cooperative structures, displaying great innovation, and considering current practices and convictions (Philomina, 2016).

In the United States, there was a significant achievement gap due to the learners' poor test scores. Factors were teachers facing more poverty, large class sizes, and spending long days in school (Darling-Hammond, 2015). In the study conducted by Gaikhorst (2017), urban primary teachers in European countries faced the challenge of having a high workload, stress, and insufficient guidance and support. They added the following significant concerns in teaching the learners: failure to give enough time to them would lead to academic disappointment, an adaptation of the variation in language and cognitive development, and parents' different cultural orientations.

Furthermore, preschool teachers need help with curriculum unfamiliarity, shortage of instructional materials to implement the preschool curriculum, and parents' limited involvement in nurturing their children (Ntumi, 2016).

While much research on Generation Z learners has focused on undergraduates, only a few focus on the primary level. From the researcher's point of view, there should also be further research about the recent challenges faced by the teachers at the level, for it is essential to discuss and give remedies for teaching-learning failure. Learners in this stage will also be given attention for the preparation sooner in junior high school. Aside from the characteristics of these learners, it is also essential to know how teachers handle the challenges that they meet like literacy in the manipulation of technology (Taleb, 2015; Jansen & Merwe, 2015), cultural diversity, and language barrier (Akbari, 2015), standardization of the curriculum and most notably large achievement gap (Gaikhorst, 2017).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a phenomenological research design. Phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that aims to provide detailed narratives of everyday human experiences while investigating the essence of these experiences (Bliss, 2016). The researcher conducted a semi-structured interview to investigate the challenges experienced by intermediate teachers in handling Generation Z learners and the coping strategies they imposed. This method strengthens participants' responses and, therefore, draws up participants' thorough experiences.

Research Environment

The research was conducted in selected District 10 schools of Ozamiz City Division, Misamis Occidental. The schools were strategically chosen because they are far from the city, approximately 9.8–14.3 kilometers from it. The schools are situated in the three neighbouring barangays of Ozamiz City, with ample access to technology. However, they became limited due to the economic status of the learners' families. Furthermore, these schools are located within the proximity of the researcher to avoid constraints of the schedule of the participants and the researcher during the interview.

Research Participants

The participants of this study were twelve (12) intermediate teachers of the selected schools of District 10 of the Ozamiz City Division, Misamis Occidental. Only those teachers who handled grades 4-6 levels in District 10 of Ozamiz City were interviewed based on their challenges and coping strategies. They were handling Generation Z learners for at most three (3) years. Seven (7) teachers were from small schools, and five (5) were from medium schools. They were also advisers and subject teachers at their respective schools. This study utilized purposive sampling as a sampling technique. Purposive sampling targets individuals with specific experience. The participants were selected based on their years of teaching Generation Z learners. Only intermediate teachers with over three years of experience were included. In addition, none of the participants belonged to the Generation Z cohort to minimize potential biases in their responses.

Research Instruments

The main instrument of the study was the researcher herself, aided by an interview guide. The interview guide was composed of five (5) questions: one (1) engaging, two (2) exploratory, and another two (2) exit questions. To capture the richness of the participants' experiences, the researcher used an audio recorder to record the responses of the intermediate teachers. The interviews were accomplished following a predefined interview schedule. After the interview, the teachers' responses were transcribed to allow for a preliminary data analysis. The research then extracted the characteristics of Generation Z learners, challenges encountered, and different strategies of the teachers to cope with the challenges they faced in handling Generation Z learners. This method provided valuable data for analysis and interpretation.

Data Gathering Procedure

To begin the data-gathering procedure, the researcher sought approval from Saint Columban College, Graduate School Department to conduct the study within District 10 of the Ozamiz City Division. After securing approval, the researcher also sought permission from the Public Schools District Supervisor of District 10 and the respective school principals. The researcher then conducted face-to-face interviews with the participants following the predefined schedule. During the interview, the researcher observed ethical considerations such as confidentiality and respect for the rights of the participants. The participants were able to provide valuable insights into their experiences. The data gathered was then meticulously analyzed, focusing on identifying recurring challenges. Additionally, the strategies teachers utilized to address these challenges were examined, laying the groundwork for practical recommendations on improving the teaching of Generation Z learners at the intermediate level.

Data Analysis

The research employed a thematic analysis approach, as Braun and Clarke (2012) outlined. This method facilitated the systematic identification, analysis, and reporting of discernible patterns within the data. Each transcript from the twelve (12) research participants was meticulously analyzed to extract salient and shared experiences. Typical responses were thoughtfully categorized into thematic clusters, prioritizing the themes based on the frequency of occurrence. This analytical process enabled a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and coping strategies, ultimately contributing to the study's insightful findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges of Intermediate Teachers in Handling Generation Z Learners

Based on the data gathered from the participants' challenges, there were three (3) themes created name: Learners' Disruptive Behaviors: *Hyperactive, Disrespectful, Violent* (8), which turned out to be the main challenge that they were facing in handling Generation Z Learners. While there were seven (6), teachers mentioned the problem of having technophile learners and six (5) of learners' low academic performance.

The first theme cited by 8 intermediate teachers is *Learners' Disruptive Behaviors*. As the responses of the teacher-participants were reviewed and analyzed, it turned out that most of the intermediate teachers interviewed about the challenges they met were about the difficult behaviours of the learners. They describe learners as hyperactive/restless, disrespectful, rowdy and violent.

The responses were generated as follows;

"Ang usual gyud kay kanang bata nga restless. Dili sila maka stay or mag sit down while mag work...mo ki-at gyud sila, kinahanglan pa madako ang imong tingog". [The usual problem is the restlessness of the children. They do not stay in their seats while doing the activity. They do not behave accordingly, and there's a need to modulate your voice for them to listen.] – TP1

"..medyo nabug-atan na sa kina-iyang sa mga bata kay lahi gyud kayo ang deperesiya sa mga kina-iyang sa mga bata karon kaysa sa mga niaging years...ako gyud silang ma describe nga hyper-active.." [I have difficulty in handling them since their attitude is much different from the attitudes of the children before. I can describe them as hyper-active.] – TP3

"Kuan sila karon pasayon, dili na kayo sila respectful. Ang ilang behaviors ng different gyud kay sa akong nakita, hyper-active maning mga bataa uy..magbuot ug ila, magbangag ug lahi." [Learners are easy-going lucky, and they are not that respectful. Their behaviours are much different; they are hyperactive and used to do things unrelated to the task given.] - TP2

"ang ilang behavior karon kay lahi..langas sila. Ang behavior nga kung unsa ilang gustong buhaton, buhaton gyud" [Their behaviour nowadays is different..they are rowdy. They will really do what they want to do.] – TP4

"Lahi ra gyud ang ilang attitude ug behavior kay ang mga bata karon kay alampuonon..need gyud ug enough time para ma mold ilang character kay very active then sugu-on murag wala lang." [Their attitude and behaviour are much different. I think, only prayer can change them. There should be enough time allotted to mold their character because they are so

much active, and if you ask something for them to do, they are not taking it seriously.] – TP7

“It is their behavior, kabala ka anang mga kuan bitaw...violent kayo ilang Makita so madala nila sa ilahang klase..kanang magsinumbagay. Magsinumbagay pud ni sila base sa ilang nakita pud...ilang awaton bitaw” [It's about their behavior. They bring in school the violent actions that they saw on the television like punching, and they will also imitate it and do it in school.] – TP11

“Behavior problem sa mga bata because sa karon, lahi nagyud kayo ang mga bata.” [It is the behaviour problem since the children nowadays are so much different.] – TP5

“Kana gyung ilang behavior.” [It is their behaviour.] – TP9

Based on the data gathered, teachers at the intermediate level viewed learners' behaviours as the main challenge in handling Generation Z learners. Since teacher participants' length of service was not less than three years, they more likely compared the learners before and as of these days. They evaluated learners nowadays having challenging behaviours in class. They described them as hyperactive/restless, inattentive, disrespectful, and rowdy. Yet, two of the teacher-participants considered the behaviour of the learners as their challenge. However, they did not mention specifically the kind of behaviour problem that they encountered among their learners as of the present.

In a school environment, the unproductive behaviours of the learners are tough to handle (Sullivan et al., 2014), and this challenging behaviour has immediate effects on learners' performances (Flower et al., 2014).

Another challenge that was raised by the participants, which got the second-highest response, was all about the Negative Impact of Technology on Learners/Learners' Inappropriate Use of Technology. The responses were generated as follows:

“...kusog kayo sila mogamit ug gadgets.” [The learners extremely use gadgets.] – TP1

“Balewala na nila ang effort sa teacher nga mag lesson kay ang ilang mind naa sa gadgets.” [They do not see the effort of the teacher teaching because they are more focus on gadgets.] – TP4

“Ang mga bata karon kay more on gadgets.” [The children in this generation are more on gadgets.] – TP5

“...kanang ilang routine nga inig uli cellphone ug tv...” [They have this routine of using cellphones and watching tv shows when they get home.] – TP10

“...pag-abot sa balay, kwaon ang cellphone ni mama, kwaon ang cellphone ni papa, naan a silay kaugalingong computer sa ilaha...ang attention na divert sa gadget.” [When they got home, they will use the cellphone either of their mother or father, and they also have their own computer, so the attention is already diverted to gadgets.] – TP11

“...they (learners) are more on gadgets...” – TP12

Based on the responses of the teacher participants, they consider learners' manipulation of gadgets, especially cellphones, as a challenge, for it turned out to be one of the factors of the diversion of attention instead of focusing on their studies. It was found out that Generation Z learners have more interest in manipulating technology, and with this, they were considered technophile learners. Technophiles are those who have keen attention to the new technology (Bazeley & Shrimplin, 2014). The theory of "technological determinism" explains the attraction of the learners towards technology. The approach emphasizes that human society does not have the power to resist technological forces (Osiceanu, 2015). Learners' fascination with gadgets became one of the concerns in handling Gen Z learners.

Another difficulty in handling Gen Z learners was about Learners Poor Academic Performance. Below are the responses that were generated:

"Ang mga bata murag wala lang...maskin zero ra ang makuha, mukatawa lang gihapon."
[The children this days do not mind getting low scores, even getting zero in class activities.]
- TP4

"Very short gyud ang ilang attention span especially kung mag chalk-talk lang ka or chart lang gigamit kay dili na sila ma arouse...dili na sila maminaw kayo" [They have a short attention span, especially if the teacher is more on chalk-talk or only chart is used in the discussion.] - TP6

"Ang ilang reading kay inig abot sa Grade 5, kinahanglan pagyud silang tudluan ug basa..kay ug mag remedial mi nga mag sulat 2x lang, wala kayo silay retention pero pag gamitan ug laptop, ganahan kayo sila mobasa." [Reading skill of the learners in the fifth grade needs remedial, and during the remedial time, they are much eager to read with the use of laptop than barely using printed or traditional materials.] - TP8

"Ang comprehension kay dili kayo sila active in reading." [It is with their comprehension because they are not active in reading.] - TP9

"Sauna ang mga bata naa pay retention, dayon inig magklase attentive pa sila pero pagkadugayan nawala na...nawala pud ilang study habit." [The children before have this retention and attention in class, but these were no longer observed at present...as well as their study habit.] - TP10

The above responses of the participants typically addressed the challenge of having learners in this generation with difficulty in comprehension, retention, reading, and study habits no longer observed. Teacher-participant 6 also emphasized that due to the traditional way of teaching (chalk-talk teaching), learners are no longer interested and no longer listen to the teacher during the discussion. Attention span was also stressed in the study of Rothman (2016), wherein the attention span of this generation will last only for 7 to 10 minutes compared to previous generations. It was also emphasized that because of this, they usually get information through "key spotting," in which they barely read texts but simply scan the hypertext.

Reading comprehension also was affected because of the inactiveness of learners in reading. This situation was mentioned by teacher participant 9, wherein the participant observed the phenomenon among learners in this generation.

Based on the data gathered, the challenges intermediate teachers encounter in handling

Gen Z learners are a common focus among researchers. In the study of Trussell et al. (2016) and DiPerna et al. (2015), the behaviour problem of learners is important to resolve. Dealing with learners' diversity was also supported by the study of Gaikhorst et al. (2017), wherein the character, behaviour, norms and values, and attitudes were acknowledged and perceived as a challenge. It was mentioned by Hill et al. (2017) that learners made them challenging to engage since they are profoundly different from previous generations.

Since this generation was described as techno-savvy, innovations in classroom instruction were the participants' focus to deal with the poor academic performance of learners. In fact, in the Philippines, there were also several technologies, approaches, and policies based on societal changes. Some of these improvements involve a technical solution that typically presents difficulties because, like other developing countries, the nation is ill-prepared and unable to tackle any academic problem as it arises immediately (Acosta, 2016).

The study also revealed that teacher participants have difficulty handling Generation Z learners' poor academic performance. The same thing was revealed by Darling-Hammond (2015) that the United States faced a significant achievement gap due to poor test scores of the learners.

Based on the data gathered, the challenges intermediate teachers encounter in handling Gen Z learners are a common focus among researchers. With this, strategies and approaches are studied to address these difficult behaviours.

Coping Strategies

The responses gathered from the participants' coping strategies were ICT Integration in Teaching (5), Applying Proper Discipline (4), Teacher-Parent Partnership (3), and Enhancing ICT Literacy (2).

The first coping strategy of intermediate teachers in order to address learners' needs in enhancing learners' poor academic performance is *ICT integration in teaching*. There were five (5) participants responded to this. The generated responses were as follows;

"Kuan gyud ma'am, mo enroll gyud sa SEMEO, para sa akoo SEMEO is very effective kay ma discuss man gud kung unsaon pag deal ang mga bata nga 21st century learners...kinahanglan pud maningkamot ug being computer literate...kinahanglan gyud mo adapt sa new trend karon." [I think there is a need to enroll on courses related to handling Generation Z learners like SEMEO. It is very effective since that course discusses dealing with 21st-century learners. There is a need also to be computer literate and adapt to new trends.] – TP2

Magklase mi more on powerpoint kay mas interesado saila maminaw kung ang teachers maggamit ug ICT gani, so ma arouse ilang interest kaysa libro lang." [I use PowerPoint presentation, for they are much attentive in class than barely using the book.] – TP5

"Kuan...gi apply nako ang mga bag-o nga gipang introduce nga methods sa teaching nga more on ICT kay engagement gyuud sa mga bata ang gi focus." [I apply the newly introduced methods of teaching, which is on the use of ICT to maximize the engagement of the pupils in the class.] – TP6

"Para ma meet ilang mga needs, during my daily teaching, I use powerpoints, videos then collaborative learning mostly para mo participate para ma meet ang ilang pagka 21st century learners." [In order to meet the needs of 21st-century learners, I use PowerPoint presentations, videos, and collaborative learning for them to participate well.] – TP7

"Ni adapt ko sa generation ICT kay abtik kayo sila sa PowerPoint." [I adapt this generation on the use of ICT through using PowerPoint presentation.] – TP9

The participants' responses focused on the learners' interest in technology. They have coped with the challenge of poor academic performance by adapting innovations through technology. Participants mentioned Gen Z learners' active participation in PowerPoint, videos, and any form of technology integration in-class activities. The study conducted by Philomina and Amutha (2016) mentioned that displaying powerful usage of innovations is one of the segments to cater to the changes in instructing and learning.

The participants of this study adapted the learner-centred approach wherein they dealt with the poor academic performance of the learners by using technologies to aid the dilemma. Using innovative instructional materials, they observed the learners' wide range of participation in the class. In this case, teachers' literacy in technology usage should be imposed to adapt to the nature of Generation Z learners' way of learning (Jansen & Merwe, 2015). Another coping strategy is Applying Proper Discipline. The generated responses were as follows:

"Kinahanglan gyud sila e reprimand. Maong para nako dili gyud e tolerate ang ilang gi buhat nga dili mao." [There is a need to reprimand them. For me, those bad deeds should not be tolerated.] – TP1

Dili ko mo syagit nila, magtudlo ko nga settle down na sila...moingon pud ko nila nga iwas2x lang sa pag use ug gadgets" [I don't shout at them, and I make sure that they are settled down before starting my teaching...I also tell them to minimize their use of gadgets.] – TP4

"Discipline. Gi allow lang sila mag cellphone inig wala'y klase." [I impose discipline also by allowing them to use cell phones only if there is no class.] – TP5

"...sa other subjects, e integrate gyud and mga good values and manners para ma guide sila." [There should be an integration of good manners and values in other subjects so that they will be guided accordingly.] – TP8

Based on the participants' responses, they addressed the dilemma of handling learners with challenging behaviour by integrating moral values in different subject areas and not only in Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao. Aside from that, teacher participant 1 mentioned that reprimanding was one of her coping strategies wherein she corrected the behaviour by communicating the importance of practising good values inside and outside the class. Imposing friendly discipline among learners was the coping strategy as well of teacher participants 4&5 so that Gen Z learners would act appropriately in class.

Another response that came out as a coping strategy addressing the behaviour and poor academic performance was a Teacher-Parent Partnership. The responses of the participants were as follows:

"...pag talk sa ilang parents about sa ilang behavior" [I talk to their parents about their behavior in class.] – TP4

"Gi apil sa homeroom meeting nay rules gi impose sa klase." [I communicate the rules imposed in the class in our homeroom PTA meeting.] – TP9

“Sa katong una nga akong gimention nga study habit, dili man na makaya nako nga ako ra. Kinahanglan nga naa jud ang Ginikanan so nangayo kog tabang sa ginikanan pinaagi sa pagmeeting so akong gi explain sa ilaha nga ang study habit sa mga anak nga kinahanglan nga naa jud sa mga bata kay nay acvtivities nga buhaton man sa balay.” [The one that mentioned a while ago about the study habit of the learners, I cannot do it on my own that's why I communicated the parents during the Homeroom PTA meeting and explain to them the importance of study habit of their children since there are also activities that should be done at home.] – TP11

The participants emphasized the importance of teacher-parent partnership in molding the learners in academics and behaviour. For them, the involvement of the parents will help the learners be more efficient in class. The idea of the contribution of the parents towards their children's success was emphasized by the participants. As teacher participant 11 mentioned, some activities were done at home, and with that, the involvement of the parents in assisting the learners contributed a lot to the learners' better performance in school. Most participants communicated the behaviour concerns and rules imposed in class during the Homeroom PTA meeting.

The response in which appeared two (2) out of twelve (12) participants' strategy in handling the challenges that they met was Enhancing ICT Literacy. The responses generated as follows:

“Kinahanglan ang pagpaningkamot ug being computer literate...kinahanglan gyud mo adapt sa mga new trend karon.” [There is a need to persevere to be computer literate, and there is a need to adapt to the trends.] – TP2

“...pag apil sa seminar kay daghang innovations dira ug kaning kuan pag enhance sa skill sa paggamit ug ICT” [It is through joining seminars since there are lots of innovations learned of it and also through enhancing my skill in using ICT.] – TP3

These participants' responses focused on enhancing their skills in manipulating technologies. The first question asked by the researcher talked about the generation to which they belong; it was revealed that these teachers both belong to the baby boomers generation and were born between 1946 and 1964. It was discussed by Swanzen (2018) that the attributes of each generation vary, and different strategies should be applied. The flipped classroom strategy focuses on the learners' new trend of learning. It minimizes the traditional way of handling the learners to address the gap between the teacher and learner (Gillispie, 2016).

Implications of the Study

The study focused on intermediate teachers' challenges and coping strategies in handling Generation Z learners. This study revealed three (3) common challenges intermediate teachers face: students' disruptive behaviours, the negative impact of technology on learners' inappropriate use of technology, and learners' poor academic performance. With this, the Department of Education must heed to the mentioned challenges that most of the teachers in the intermediate level handling Generation Z Learners were having these dilemmas in their respective classes that hinder learner's success in achieving quality and meaningful learning.

This research emphasizes that for teachers to overcome the challenges met in the classroom in handling Generation Z intermediate learners, they should understand the nature of these learners nowadays. Apply appropriate discipline in the class to mold learners' unwanted

behaviours, attitudes and practices. This appropriate discipline involves reminding learners calmly of the proper behaviours being the model by consistently practising the values learned in their Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao learning area.

Teachers must also remember that technology usage has both negative and positive impacts on the learners. Using educational technology in a classroom allows the learners to be interactive and effectively acquire a better concept or idea. On the other hand, technology, specifically cellular phones, television, and computers, captivated much interest of the learners and led to excessive usage not educationally related (e.g. using mobile phones for their Facebook status updates). Their attention was diverted to these technologies just for entertainment.

In addition, parents and guardians also take a big role in helping teachers cope with the mentioned challenges above. Parents and guardians support improving their children's academic performance by guiding them in the proper usage of technologies (e.g., a cellphone is used for educational purposes only) and correcting their inappropriate behaviours and attitudes. The teacher-parent partnership should be strengthened in order to overcome the said challenges met by the teachers in the class.

Summary of Findings

This study focused on intermediate teachers' challenges and coping strategies in handling Generation Z learners in District 10, Ozamiz City Division, Ozamiz City.

Stated below are the important findings of the study:

1. What challenges do intermediate teachers encounter in handling Generation Z learners at the intermediate level?

Teachers' common challenges in handling Generation Z learners at the intermediate level are Generation Z's Difficult Behavior, the Negative Impact of Technology to Learners/Learners' Inappropriate Use of Technology and Poor Academic Performance.

2. What are the strategies used by the intermediate to cope with the mentioned challenges?

The teachers' strategies to cope with the mentioned challenges are ICT integration in teaching, applying proper discipline, teacher-parent partnership, and enhancing ICT literacy. These strategies were applied by the participants in coping with the dilemmas in handling Gen Z learners and they added that the strategies mentioned were effective enough to address the difficulties in handling such situations.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study's findings, it is concluded that teachers face several challenges in handling learners in today's generation. Students' difficult behaviour was the main problem raised by them. It was found that learners are most likely not behaving appropriately on school premises. Different behaviours were observed, like being restless, rowdy, hyperactive, disrespectful, and inattentive in class. Aside from difficult behaviours, challenges like the negative impact of technology on learners as they inappropriately use the technology and their poor academic performance were encountered by the participants.

The coping strategies that were accumulated in this study were the following: (1) ICT integration in Teaching. It is helpful to catch learners' attention and engage more in class activities. (2) Applying proper discipline among learners wherein participants emphasized having an appropriate approach in disciplining learners' difficult behaviour. They highlighted the importance of being calm and using a natural talking voice when reprimanding or correcting them because doing the opposite will make the learners' behaviour worse. Furthermore, lastly, (3) Teacher-parent partnership would greatly help molding the totality of the learners not just in school but also practice at home. Through this, there will be consistency of right practice with the guidance of

parents and teachers.

Looking at these different challenges and coping strategies, teachers handling Generation Z learners will be guided and aware of possible challenges in the field. It also improves teachers' strategies in class for the learners to learn better.

LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

After analyzing the participants' responses concerning the challenges they encountered in the classroom and how they coped with them, this research has some limitations to consider. The results of the study may be somewhat generalizable. It is primarily the generation gap between intermediate teachers and Gen Z learners. Secondly, the environment and background of learners vary; and lastly, the responses were solely from twelve (12) intermediate teachers in some selected schools in District 10 of the Division of Ozamiz City.

Due to the limitations of this study, future research should consider the generational background of the teacher participants as well as the environmental background of the learners. The number of participants should also be increased in order to have more generalized responses.

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