

# Decoding double shift effects on pupils, parents and teachers' lived experiences: Alternative inputs for policy improvement

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## Abstract

This study explored the impact of a month-long morning and afternoon shifting class sessions for the grade four students and teachers including how the students' parents perceive the double-shift class system to be. It employed an exploratory qualitative case study approach in examining participants' views, adjustments, and experiences toward the morning and afternoon shifting session. Multiple data from teachers' focus group discussions, students' journal entries, and survey of parents' views were both triangulated and thematically analyzed. Outside the context of densely populated areas where double shifts are common, findings relatively revealed more favorable conditions for students' activities and behaviors inside and outside the schools, combination of more positive thoughts than dissenting views of parents, and generally more favorable instructional and preparation related affordances for teachers. Lessons, adjustments and insights found are also shared in the process.

**Keywords:** afternoon class; double sessions; double shift class system; elementary; morning class; parents; public schools

## **Decoding double shift effects on pupils, parents and teachers' lived experiences: Alternative inputs for policy improvement**

### **1. Introduction**

The implementation of double-shift class format, which consists of two groups of students blocked into morning and afternoon class sessions, has become a global trend. Mostly, this system of schooling can be found in developing countries due to the lingering scarcity on teacher and material resources (Ashong-Katai, 2013; Kurebwa & Lumbe, 2015; Sagyndykova, 2013). Double-shifting session is commonly embraced as a response to the ballooning enrolment rate by translating more relevant and responsive educational policies into action in order to enhance social equity (Bray, 2008). Moreover, addressing the inadequacy of educational facilities, policy makers and school managers formulated the double shift policy to cater for more pupils by instituting different teaching sessions (shifts) during the school day. Unfortunately, in some cases particularly in the highly urbanized areas the supposed to be temporary measure that the policy makers and school heads in some countries initially introduced, became a permanent policy.

Few studies related to double shifting were present in recent literature which discussed its complexities and issues. For instance, Katjaita (2011) conducted a case study at Khomas Region in Namibia. The researcher investigated the experiences and perceptions of headmasters about double-shift schooling. Finding suggests that managing double-shift schools is more complex than managing single shift schools. This furthermore impacts negatively on the teacher-learner interaction time. Across continent, Sagyndykova (2013) examined the impact of school-led double session system in Mexico. Using Heckman selection model, the study investigated the academic performance of learners from dissimilar schooling periods. The findings disclosed that teachers exerting more working hours produces undesirable effects on students' performance both on different shifts. Nevertheless, most of the effect of the morning period on academic achievement is due to the difference in the characteristics of students.

Since double-shift schooling systems enable the utilization of the same resources (e.g. textbooks, instructors, facilities), policy makers often cited double-shift system as a way of attaining universal primary and secondary education mainly in developing countries (Bray, 2008). With the annual increase of enrollment in the Philippines, the continuing budget constraints and school building challenges, the problem about insufficient classrooms persists. As a way of addressing the classroom shortage and reducing class sizes in the public schools, double shifting policy becomes a systemic measure as specified on DepEd or the Department of Education Order (DO) No. 62, series (s). 2004 and further reiterated in DO No. 54 s. 2008. However, all schools' divisions are directed to adopt the implementation of single shift class (single shift class refers to one set of learners per classroom for the whole day) for those with available resources (Department of Education, 2012).

Since 2004 public schools have been advised to adopt the double-shifting session particularly for schools which experienced or continually having classroom shortages and swelling class size (Department of Education, 2004). More so, this order is applicable to calamity affected areas where school buildings have been damaged or worse destroyed. For some schools, this practice is not only temporary but also mainstreamed in the long run since repairing damaged classrooms and/or building new ones take longer time. Several studies (e.g. Ashong-Katai, 2013; Bray, 2008; Katjaita, 2011; Kurebwa & Lumbe, 2015) noted that challenges and benefits of double shifting. Currently, there is few or rareness of this study in the Philippines. Similarly, this sustained and at times problematic practice, however, is common in the densely populated areas just like in most public elementary and secondary schools in Metro Manila, Philippine capital city. When opportunity presented itself in a natural and unusual setting in collaborative research approach where access to information was on hand, we found ourselves engaged in a research project of this kind.

Finally, double shifting implementation at the elementary level is generally found in densely populated areas or cities. And, it is in this context that studies undertaken in the literature were generally anchored. For instance, Kurebwa and Lumbe (2015) investigated the teachers perceived challenges on double session in Gweru Urban Primary School. Several challenges in the double-shift sessioning were noted by teachers, for instance, the difficulty in classroom management, the short contact time during teaching and learning, the neglect of other curriculum subjects, and poor student's performance. Would a study in less urbanized areas particularly outside the metro or cities yield similar themes or different narratives? Consequently, this study aims to fill such knowledge gap in the literature to provide alternative lens in exploring double shift system in unusual school setting while providing insights and practical lessons.

### *1.1 Research questions*

This study investigated the internal stakeholders' views about the implementation of double-shift sessions in the case school. Specifically, we answered the following questions:

- 1) How do the grade four teachers, students and their parents perceive the month-long double shift sessions in terms of its acceptability?
- 2) What do the lived experiences of teachers, parents and students say about the effects of double-shift session?

## **2. Case school**

The case school which is *Elementary A* (not its real name and is situated in less densely populated area) is approximately 250 kilometers away from Metro Manila. It has been adopting single shift class since its establishment. At the onset of the academic year 2017-2018, however, grade four classes faced unavailability of rooms due to ongoing repair or reconstructions of existing classrooms. Temporary solution was to house four classes in big hall. And so, beginning the school year, four sections held their classes simultaneously in the congested multipurpose hall. Different problems however had been observed. Grade four teachers pointed out that maintaining order in the shared building was difficult. Most of the parents complained that their children could not focus on their class due to high temperature and lingering noise.

In this case, poor classroom condition has been a foremost cause of teachers and students' stress; thus it hinders the teaching and learning experiences which all stakeholders confirmed. To alleviate the problem, the principal of this school decided to implement double shift session on a month-long period. Allowing the use of one set of facilities for two groups is an advantage of double-shifting session (Bray, 2008). In the implementation of double session class, *Chico, Mangga, and Dalandan* (names of class/sections) held their class in the morning (7:00-12:00) while sections *Papaya, Pinya* and *Lanzones* held their class in the afternoon (12:30-5:00). Despite having double session class, the teachers still taught all the sections according to their assigned subjects. This opportunity in a natural setting led the researchers to explore the experiences and views of teachers, students, and parents in double-shift format/sessioning schools in the concerned grade four classes.

## **3. Research design**

Qualitative research allows the acquisition of in-depth information from teachers, students and parents regarding their feelings, emotions and experiences in so far as double-shift sessioning is concerned (Creswell, 2008). The opportunity provided and the revelatory nature of the case school in double session presented a unique and interesting phenomenon. Rather than experimental or plain survey, case study strategy would be most suitable since we investigated current phenomena within the natural context where boundaries and contextual variables are not very much apparent (Yin, 1994). Thus, we opted to undertake an exploratory case study of the school in shifting session. Although undertaken in single case, the presence of multiple sources of information which include the students, parents, and teachers strengthened the rigor of this study.

### 3.1 Data gathering procedure

Multiple data from survey questionnaires, teachers' focus group discussions (FGD), students' journal entries, in-depth interview and survey of parents and students' views were both triangulated and thematically analyzed. To elicit students' feelings and perceptions towards the implementation of double-shift classes, they were asked to write a weekly journal entry about their positive and negative experiences in the shifting. Two hundred thirty-three ( $n=233$ ) grade four students submitted their weekly reflective journal entries. To examine the parents' perspectives about the shifting format, the researchers conducted in-depth interviewing. The researcher purposively selected two parents in every section or class to participate in in-depth interviews with a total of 12 parents from six different sections. With the selected parents' consent to participate, the lead researcher conducted the individual interview which lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes each. Moreover, survey questionnaires were also distributed to all students' and their parents to determine the double shift's acceptability and to further substantiate the data from the interview. After getting the necessary approval from authorities and concerned teachers' consent, focus group discussion was also conducted after one month of having double shift sessions coupled with some individual and casual conversations with the teachers during the double shift period. Audio-recorded FGD took 40-45 minutes and recording was transcribed appropriately.

### 3.2 Data analysis and interpretation

The data from survey-questionnaire related to double shift acceptability were analyzed quantitatively. Data from individual journal entries, and transcripts of in-depth interview and focus groups were thematically analyzed. Moreover, data analysis comprised chunking the data into codable parts, searching for similarities, contrasts, trends, and integrating them together to form notable categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Themes were formed around the emerging codes; they were also refined, reviewed and discussed by the researchers until the write-up stage to increase consistency. The study results were derived from iterative analytic procedures triangulated from multiple data sources. Aggregated categories are then presented in the findings section which answered the research questions incorporating participants' significant quotes (appropriately translated from Filipino to English language).

## 4. Findings

This study explored the internal stakeholders' voices and diverse experiences about the implementation of double-shift sessions. This section systematically presents the answers to the questions:

### 4.1 Acceptability of the grade four parents, students and teachers' favorability on double shift-session

As indicated in Table 1, a great majority of the parents find the implementation of double-shift session acceptable (69.53%). Almost all students were also very positive on the implementation of the month-long shifting while all their teachers found it favorable. Only six (6) students are not in favor of this double shifting. They pointed out that the time for each subject is not enough. The qualitative findings further explained these overwhelming information.

**Table 1**

*Participants' acceptability of double-shift session*

Responses	Parents		Grade four students		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Yes	162	69.53	227	97.42	7	100
No	46	19.74	6	2.58	0	0
Undecided Response	25	10.73	0	0	0	0
Total	N = 233	100%	N = 233	100%	N = 7	100%

#### 4.2 Multiple stakeholders' lived experiences towards the implementation of double-shift sessions

Intently, we asked students to write a journal to elicit their views or thoughts about double session class. Researchers then surveyed the parents and interview some of them to determine their opinions. Also, the researchers interview their colleagues or co-teachers on their thoughts on the double shifting—the advantages, disadvantages, opportunities and challenges. The resulting categories are further substantiated in the succeeding explanatory parts of the findings.

##### **Learners' view**

This section reports on the six aggregated categories generated from the emerging and common themes of students' journal: household chores aid, parents occupational aid, increased rest and recreation time, quality time to study, less expenses, and reinvigorated family relationship.

**Household chores aid** - Most of the students who belong to the generally low performing sections reported that leaving and coming to school early afternoon for their respective classes gave them more time to help their parents in doing household chores or aids which are not limited to washing the dishes, cleaning the house, fetching water, washing clothes and others.

*I helped my mother in cleaning our home because my mother is very tired of different tasks at home. I like double-shift session. (L02)*

*I fetch my younger sister in their school because my mom is busy doing household chores when I don't have class in the afternoon. (L21)*

*I'm happy in cooking food for my family in the morning. My parents entrusted that responsibility to me. (L10)*

**Parents' occupational aid** - Surprisingly, some students at their young age helped their parents' livelihood. Some pupils harvested vegetables, worked in their store and sold vegetables in the market during their vacant time. This is consistent to what Ashong-Katai (2013) noted that double shifting enabled low income family children to attend school and work in order to help support their family business activities.

*I really like double session class because I help my parents in their work. In the morning, I sell vegetables. In the afternoon, I go to school. We need to work hard so that we could invest other business and support the expenses of our family. (L05)*

**Increased rest and recreation time** - Most of the students expressed that attending class both in the morning and in the afternoon was tiring. With the double-shift session class, they were provided extra time to relax, ride a bike, watch television, listen to music and use their mobile devices.

*It is a great time to watch my favorite show in the afternoon because I don't have class in the afternoon. (L25)*

*I used my cellphone to explore Facebook and chat with my friends while having free time in the morning. I can relax. (L52)*

*I go to computer shop in the morning to play online games. Then, go to school in the afternoon. I love to play online games. But if I have whole day class, I could not do it. (L46)*

Long free time both in the morning and afternoon provides children plentiful playtime which is essential in this formative stage of their physical and social development. Aside from playing, however, some students noted that they were given more sufficient time to rest or sleep after long period of class in the morning or long day in the afternoon. Hence, the impact of sleeping or rest time for students have significant effects on their

achievement, safety and behavior (Paavonen et al., 2000) which should not be overlooked.

*I wish that the double session will last until March because I could wake up late in the morning since my class is in the afternoon. I need good sleep to perform well in school. (L87)*

*After my class in the morning, I sleep for a long time in the afternoon...I can relax so I'm more active in the school. (L98)*

**Quality time to study** - Double-shift session gives the pupils enough time to study. Since they just attend class half day, they could focus on making their projects, assignment and lesson with their free time.

*Since I don't have class in the morning, I use my time in making my assignment. (L101)*

*I have enough time in studying my lesson in the morning. Before, I used to study my lesson at night and it was tiring. When the class shifted... I could focus on my lesson. (L112)*

**Less expenses** - Several students revealed how their parents saved money while having double session class. Transportation in whole day class takes a lot of money going to and fro in the morning and afternoon from house to school. But when class shifted to half day session, parents spent less on their children's commuting expenses.

*My parents could save their money because we have lots of expenses at home. Before, my parents allotted budget for my daily allowance... My parents wish that this kind of class will last until March. (L219)*

**Reinvigorated family relationship** - Some pupils pointed out the importance of spending more time with their family. They agreed that having double session class created intimate bond between family members.

*I'm happy to have class like this because I could spend time with my baby sister. We play happily. (L31)*

*I just like to go to school in the afternoon only because I could spend more time with my sister... spend more time with our family. (L49)*

### **Parents' positive notes**

Eight aggregated categories were generated from the parents' views. These include: quality time to study, household chores and parents occupational aid, increased rest and recreation, becoming more responsible, reinvigorated family relationship, less expenses, quality of teaching, and efficient preparation.

**Quality time to study** - Majority of the parents reported that their children could focus more on their study. Also, their children spent longer time in doing their assignments and other school related works at home.

*I'm happy to see my son studying... Unlike before, he never paid attention to his assignment because he was so tired after morning and afternoon class. Now, he spends longer time in making his assignment. (P08)*

*She is more focused now. She can do her activity at home neatly, more organized and presentable because of longer time. (P06)*

**Household chores and parents occupational aid** - Home responsibility of their children seems to be more observable. Some parents revealed that their children helped them in doing household chores. They even assisted their parents in their livelihood activities.

*My child helps me in doing household chores. We are not bothered by the time. It makes me comfortable... (P01)*

*My daughter takes care her younger sister on her vacant time while I am busy preparing lots of things at home. I can rely on her...* (P03)

*Much better now. In my case, I have three kids to attend to. When I accompanied my kids in school, my daughter takes charge of our sari-sari store (small convenient store).* (P09)

**Increased rest and recreation** - Most parents pointed out the importance of rest for their children. Double shifting class gives their children enough time to sleep and rest. Moreover, the parents observed that their children enjoyed playing during their free time.

*I can see that my child turned to be active and energetic because she can wake up even late in the morning. Enough sleep can make her healthy.* (P12)

*Life of kids should be balance. This...is great. My child can play, relax, study and sleep.* (P07)

**Becoming more responsible** - The learners showed positive attitude as revealed by their parents' observation. For the morning class, their parents cited that their children developed responsibility to wake up early. Aside from an improved study habit, they learned to be more independent in attending to their personal needs.

*I can see that my child is more persistence and excited in going to school unlike before she was so lazy. She is more interested...she is not pressured to wake up early.* (P08)

*As parent, I have seen how he has changed. Since he has longer time before going to school, she can now attend his personal things... I observed that he's becoming more independent in studying her lesson because of longer time.* (P01)

**Reinvigorated family relationship** - Most parents noted that double shifting system provided an opportunity for them to strengthen family ties because their children could help them in their work, take care of their sisters/brothers, talk with them, and learn from them.

*We had great bonding. I can assist my child in doing his assignment and teach him lessons also. I can spend more time in teaching him.* (P03)

*That's better! More time is spent with kid however my child has less time in school. My eldest has the same schedule. There is time for bonding.* (P09)

**Less expenses** - Having less expenses is one of the benefits of double-shift session. The parents could save money because allowance of their kids are lessened.

*It has good effect in financial aspect of our family. We could save money because the fare and allowance are lessened... double shifting class is a great help to our family.* (P11)

**Quality of teaching** - Although it was too early to state at this point, it had been perceived by most parents that the quality of teaching has improved because the teachers were more focused and their children paid more attention; thus their children's scholastic performance could improve more.

*I believe that having this double shift session improved the quality of teaching because the teachers could focus now on their lessons unlike before when the classes were congested my daughter could not understand. My daughter even suffered from headache. Now, it's more comfortable.* (P12)

**Efficient preparation** - Having double shift class resulted to more efficient preparation time for the parents. They reported that they could have longer time in preparing the meals and personal things of their children before going to school particularly for classes held in the afternoon.

*I am not in a hurry now because I could prepare all the things that my son needed. Example, when he needs school supplies, I could purchase it even late in the morning without time pressure.... I could attend all his need because the schedule is not the same with my other children. I hope to continue this time. (P05)*

The survey also included open-ended questions related to double shifting. Data culled from the questionnaire also confirmed the results of the interview. Majority of them revealed favorable acceptance on the implementation of the double-shift session because of the good effects of the double-shift session to their children and whole family.

### **Dissenting parents' views and challenges of double shifting**

Not everyone was positive about the double session. Some parents were not in favor in the implementation of the double-shift session. Information gathered from the interview revealed why they were not in favor due to some extent and circumstances. The following issues were raised by the parents: less contact time for each subject, lack of focus, preparation management issues, and children's safety.

**Less contact time for each subject** - Some parents pointed out that having limited time in their subjects has negative effect in the quality of learning. Similar to the findings of Ashong-Katai (2013), limited instructional hours could not meet the objectives of instruction in the classroom setting.

*I believe that the essence of being students is felt when classes are whole day. Less time in their subjects may affect the quality of learning. (P03)*

**Lack of focus** - Some parents had observed that their children were bored and became lazy during their free time. Some children spent most of their time in playing and neglected their study. They tended to be forgetful of their assignments and activities because they focus on recreational activities.

*Sleep very late. Wake up very late. He always tells, "later" because his class is in the afternoon. He even skipped his meals. Lazy in doing his assignments. (P08)*

*I'm worried in honing his mind. Lots of time are wasted in playing, using gadgets and internet. He became easy go lucky child and not interested to study. (P10)*

Similarly, Ashong-Katai (2013) reported that some parents perceived double-shift as a mechanism that influenced many children to become lazy in their schooling. It is hard for a few students to focus on their study because they used the shifting as an excuse to dodge classes and had time to do other things.

**Preparation management Issues** - This study also confirms what Bray (2008) noted related to the problems of working parents. They solve the problem by asking relatives to take care of their wards or they employ child-minding agencies. The time is not ideal for the students. Working parents in this study pointed out that they needed to wake up early to prepare the needs of their children. However, in the afternoon class, too early lunch is difficult to prepare. They also cited the differences in schedule of their children (with morning and afternoon shifts) made it harder.

*My wife and I are working. Since my daughter go to school in the afternoon, our problem is the place where our daughter can stay. My wife goes back to our home at 11:30 and she still needs to prepare the lunch of our daughter. We have only 30 minutes preparation because my daughter goes to school at 12:00 p.m. (P07)*

*It's very stressful! Very difficult to prepare everything when your children have different schedule in the school. I hope this shifting of class will end soon. (P04)*

**Children's safety** - Few parents were so worried because their children going back home very late in the



afternoon. They pointed out that double shifting class might put their children at risk due to bad elements inside and outside school to include inclement weather usually occurring in the afternoon. This further confirms the safety issue of double shifting. Safety of the pupils is not fully guaranteed under this system (Ashong-Katai, 2013).

*I'm very nervous one afternoon when my daughter is not home yet. Her class ends at 5:10 in the afternoon and that's a bit late. This double-shift session could not assure the safety of my daughter. I hope it will end.* (P02)

*Weather is very bad in the afternoon. I'm worried when heavy rains pour, flood may occur.* (P05)

### **Teachers' takes on the shifting issues**

Teacher's perceptions regarding the double shifting implementation and its challenges emerged during the focus group discussion. As a whole, the following categories were generated: optimizing compacted contact time, classroom management and privacy issues, improving learning performance, and adequate instructional time.

**Optimizing compacted contact time** - All of the seven teachers indicated that contact time is one of the challenges in the shifting system because the time for all the subjects were lessened by 10 minutes; however, they personally reasoned that the quality of teaching and learning has never been taken for granted.

*Although we have only 40 minutes in teaching our subjects, we could still teach effectively the lessons. It's the strategy of the teacher to carry out the lesson without compromising the quality.* (T04)

*We failed to include Values Education Subject in the schedule of our class but it doesn't affect the learning because we have our own way of integrating this subject.* (T06)

This circumstances further confirm Kurebwa and Lumbe's (2015) findings. Similarly, the teachers contact time was one of the downside of double-shifting format since most of the teachers mentioned that covering all the subjects was a difficult job due to the shortage in contact time.

**Classroom management and privacy issues** - Teachers had no sense of belongingness in terms of the ownership of the classrooms so in turn the classroom physical management could be compromised. More so, since there were various and sometimes unwieldy students using the same area, disorganization and sometimes broken equipment or materials could be a common scenario.

*The students in the morning session played my chalk. They grind it and throw the dust to their classmates. As a result, nothing left in my chalk box. My thrash bin also was broken because the playful kids made it basketball ring.* (T06)

Double shifting may encroach on teachers' classroom privacy and limit equipment usage. One teacher narrated that it was difficult for her to prepare audio materials daily in such setup.

*In the morning I get the television from the neighbor's room then, bring it to my class at big hall. In the afternoon, I leave again my television to the other room. If I just leave my television at that Hall, it may be lost. It is not safe there.* (T3)

However, some teachers emphasized that it is not that problematic to sustain order in shared classroom because it depends on how the teacher impose discipline to the students. Still, they observed that students behaved well compared to the whole day session.

**Improving learners' performance** - All the teachers agreed that learners' performance tend to improve more as a result of double-shift sessioning. It was emphasized that the learners could easily understand the lesson, because they could focus on the activity, and got higher marks in their quizzes. Both morning and afternoon

sessions seem to have the same performance despite of the differences in time although it is premature to generalize in this exploratory stage.

*The pupils understand better the lesson. Unlike before, they could not understand the lesson whole day because four sections are holding classes in Social Hall. (T07)*

*The pupils are very active in the discussion and got high grades compared before. Double shift session is more effective than single session. (T05)*

On the contrary, Bray (2008) pointed out that the participation of the students was affected by the double-shift sessioning. Since the time was short, most of the lessons and activities were cut to make it fit. So it was viewed that time was the major cause of low passing rate. However, a longitudinal study of double shifting system is warranted to further confirm such case.

**Adequate instructional time** - All the teachers noted that shifting session provided them more time to prepare adequately for their class. Moreover, teachers noted that they used their vacant time in between shifts to prepare instructional materials, accomplish forms and make their daily lesson plans. Most of them pointed out that single shift session is very tiring however double shift session could give them time to rest.

*I could prepare my visual materials, work on school forms, and lesson plans during my vacant time. If that is single whole day format, I could not do these works. (T03)*

*Single session is really tiring. It takes much time in teaching our loads. In double shift session, we could rest and prepare our works in between. (T01)*

## 5. Concluding discussions

This study explored the impacts of a month-long morning and afternoon shifting class sessions of the grade four students and teachers including how the students' parents view such arrangements in response to the school's temporary classroom shortage. Findings relatively revealed more favorable conditions for students' engagements and behaviors inside and outside the schools, combination of more positive thoughts than dissenting views of parents, and generally more favorable instructional and preparation related affordances for teachers. Undeniably, initial quantitative acceptability results were further substantiated by the qualitative findings.

Interestingly, parents, students and teachers acknowledged the opportunities and challenges of double session. Although parents seemingly noted more of the disadvantages than the teachers, students and teachers however were able to adjust with the changed schedule blocks of which family engagement, rest and recreation, cost-efficiency measures and initially thought improved learning outcomes appear to be the vital contribution of such structural change. Similarly, this suggests the concerned participants' resiliency in times of changing the class setup. Also, optimizing teaching strategies like integrating Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao (Value Education subject) in different subjects based on the content of the curriculum was creatively devised by teachers. Teachers in the short run were able to reasonably make the most of their limited time and resources.

In this study, emerging categories and concerns from double shift system are also consistent with the literature (e.g. Ashong-Katai, 2013; Bray, 2008) but to some extent where contradictory to the major findings of Katjaita (2011) and Kurebwa and Lumbe (2015) because more substantial positive notes or perceptions were found. Perhaps, the month-long implementation was a critical factor. Nonetheless, triangulation of information and meaning from and among the school participants has strengthened the study's rigor. More stimulating findings and insights however could be generated to support and/or go against what the current paper offers if the double shifting session was extended for a longer period of time which could be a subject of another paper.

This study however should be taken with caution because such findings are generated through an

exploratory stage. Looking forward, other schools that experience classroom shortage in unforeseen eventualities or not, may build on the confirmed and emerging benefits of having shifting classes. Moreover, shortcomings or challenges that arose in the process as observed by teachers, students and parents could be proactively addressed head on; hence, anticipated issues could be counter-acted even before they unfold. Since this study was circumstantially made possible serving as school's relief and intervention due to classroom availability issues, activities and lessons from such situations could also be useful to other schools having similar concerns. Elsewhere, studies conducted in the double sessions are generally concentrated to the secondary levels in highly urbanized countries; hence, this may serve as key literature for future investigations at the Philippine public school environment. Equally important is that school leaders, teachers and parents will be much aware and ready to address the shifting issues the next time it inevitably occurs.

### 5.1 Limitations and future directions

The generalizability of this study is delimited by its single case qualitative orientation. Also, researchers' bias may not be avoided since two of them work in the school where this study was conducted. This was however mediated with the presence of external researcher in a collaborative project. Moreover, double shifting was only implemented in one grade level; thus, conducting comparative-longitudinal cross cases studies with two or more school sites across grade levels level could be pursued in the long run comparing both performance of schools in urban and rural areas. Such future directions should not just be limited in the elementary level but also to include junior and senior high school levels which at present are challenged by inadequate classrooms and swelling class size in the evolving environment of DepEd's K to 12 curriculum.

A mixed-method approach is further encouraged to definitively determine learning outcomes effect in content area subjects and exploration of other interventions which could be integrated in double sessions like team teaching, reduced teaching, cross-disciplines and impact of extra-curricular activities, etc. Aside from exploratory baseline information, this study yielded more prospects than solutions toward piloting and/or institutionalizing full academic year double sessions at parallel district setting to determine its greater viability and learning gain differences in specific and/or across grade levels outside the context of densely populated areas. It may have not answered in full what it initially embarked on to explore. But, it contributed alternative inputs and multiple perspectives which policy makers, researchers, school heads and teachers could build on and/or relate with in their planning, implementation and evaluation of double shift system in the Philippine context or even in diverse settings.

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