

Goal, Reality, Options, Way Forward (Grow) Model: Bridging Content Knowledge and Pedagogy on Coaching and Mentoring Strategy

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop and implement coaching and mentoring strategies for teachers' content knowledge and pedagogy using GROW model in Jose Panganiban National High School. It measures teachers' performance in terms of applying knowledge within and across curriculum teaching areas, using a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills, and ensuring the positive use of ICT to facilitate the teaching and learning process, before and after the implementation of coaching and mentoring using the GROW model. It identifies coaching and mentoring strategies to be designed and implemented for the content knowledge and pedagogy of teachers; determines the significant difference between teachers' performance before and after the implementation of coaching and mentoring; gauges the level of effectiveness of the coaching and mentoring strategies in terms of goal setting, reflection, feedback and support, action planning; determines the challenges encountered; and designs an intervention to improve the proposed coaching and mentoring strategies. Using qualitative and quantitative-experimental design, the study involved eight proficient teachers with no more five years of teaching experience who served as mentees, and eight highly proficient teachers as mentors. The study reveals a significant difference between the teachers' performance before and after mentoring and coaching. Findings further show that that coaching and mentoring using GROW model is extremely effective in terms of goal-setting, reflection, feedback and support, and action planning. Lack of time was deemed to be a challenge commonly encountered by the respondents. To fill the gaps, the researcher proposes an intervention called Project COACH: Collaborative Opportunities for Advancing Classroom Teaching Horizons aiming to provide continuous support and assistance to all proficient teachers and promote the use of GROW model in coaching and mentoring.

Keywords: Coaching and mentoring, GROW model, Teachers' content knowledge and pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

Teaching and lifelong learning are essential components of quality education, emphasizing the need for teachers to engage in continuous professional development. This commitment not only enhances instructional effectiveness but also aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4, which advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

The Asian Development Bank (2021) highlights the importance of ongoing training, practice, feedback, and support for teachers as critical elements of effective professional development. Teacher professional development (TPD) encompasses various educational efforts, including workshops, conferences, and mentoring, with a particular focus on coaching as a foundational strategy for improving classroom practices.

These activities help teachers address gaps in expertise, adapt to changing educational environments, and develop problem-solving skills in complex educational contexts. However, challenges persist, particularly in developing countries like the Philippines, where issues such as inadequate training and support hinder teacher

effectiveness. The Philippines Professional Standards for Teachers outline expectations for educators, emphasizing the need for mastery of content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional engagement.

The study focuses on teachers classified as Teacher I, who are in the Proficient Teachers stage, and their collaboration with more experienced Master Teachers and Head Teachers. This collaboration aims to address the challenges identified in the Global Partnership Education Report, particularly regarding weak subject content and pedagogical knowledge.

Mentoring involves experienced educators guiding novice teachers, while coaching focuses on assisting individuals in achieving their professional goals. The concept of transforming schools into learning organizations is gaining traction, with initiatives like School Learning Action Cells (SLAC) facilitating collaborative learning among teachers. However, current SLAC sessions often overlook individual teacher needs.

To address this gap, the researcher proposes implementing the coaching and mentoring strategies using Grow, Reality, Options, Way Forward (GROW) model by Graham Alexander, Alan Fine, and Sir John Whitmore. This involves setting goals, examining current realities, exploring options, and establishing action plans. Ultimately, the study underscores the necessity of continuous professional development in teaching, highlighting the collaborative support required from experienced educators to enhance teaching quality and meet evolving educational standards.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilizes both quantitative and qualitative research methods. An experimental single-group pretest-posttest method was utilized to observe changes in the respondents' level of content knowledge and pedagogy in terms of applying knowledge within and across curriculum teaching areas, using a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills, and ensuring the positive use of ICT to facilitate the teaching and learning process, before and after the implementation of the mentoring and coaching strategies using the GROW model. Descriptive-evaluative method was also used to describe and measure the effectiveness of the coaching and mentoring in terms of developing goals, reflection, feedback and support, and action planning. While qualitative data was analyzed using thematic reflexive approach. Research instruments such as the standardized classroom observation tool (COT), validated research-made questionnaire, and adopted checklist were used for data gathering. Data collection follows ethical standards, with permissions obtained from relevant educational authorities.

The research involved eight (8) proficient teachers (Teacher I) with no more than five years of teaching experience who served as mentees/ coachees, and eight (8) mentors composed of one (1) distinguished teacher (Head Teacher), and seven (7) highly proficient teachers (Master Teachers) of Jose Panganiban National High School who engaged in a minimum of three mentoring sessions over a three-month period. Statistical analysis involving paired t-test, weighted mean, and percentage were administered using SPSS software. The study aims to develop and implement coaching and mentoring strategies for teachers' content knowledge and pedagogy using GROW model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Teachers' Level of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy Before the Implementation of the Coaching and Mentoring Using GROW Model.

Indicator 1, applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas, and indicator 3, ensured the positive use of ICT to facilitate the teaching and learning process have a weighted mean of 5.00, interpreted as satisfactory. This means that teachers demonstrate a range of associated pedagogical aspects of the indicator that usually are aligned with the learners' developmental needs. Indicator 2, which focuses on improving learners' literacy skills, received the lowest weighted mean of 4.63, still interpreted as satisfactory.

The overall weighted mean of 4.875 indicates that teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical practices are at an applying level, suggesting areas for improvement in cross-curricular content knowledge, numeracy skill enhancement, and ICT utilization.

Table 1 Level of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy of Teachers Before the Implementation of Coaching and Mentoring using GROW Model

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas.	5	Satisfactory
Used a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills.	4.63	Satisfactory
Ensured the positive use of ICT to facilitate the teaching and learning process.	5	Satisfactory
Overall Weighted Mean	4.88	Satisfactory

Rating Scale	Descriptive Interpretation
6.21 – 7.00	Outstanding
5.41 – 6.20	Very Satisfactory
4.61 – 5.40	Satisfactory
3.81 – 4.60	Unsatisfactory
3.00 – 3.80	Poor

The current study's findings contradict with previous research by Banua (2022), which indicated that proficient teachers demonstrate highly effective performance in content knowledge and pedagogy. The discrepancy may stem from differences in the experience levels of the respondents, as the current study focused on less experienced teachers (Teacher I position with under five years of experience). This suggests that ongoing collaboration and support from more experienced colleagues are essential for the professional growth of novice teachers.

Strategies Designed and Implemented for Teachers' Content Knowledge and Pedagogy.

Table 2 presents the themes and strategies that emerged during the coaching and mentoring sessions. The pre-classroom observation resulted in various suggestions from the master teachers and head teachers acting as mentors and coaches.

Table 2 Strategies Designed and Implemented for Teachers' Content Knowledge and Pedagogy

Indicators	Themes	Strategies
Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas.	Curriculum Integration	Inquiry Based Approach
		Collaborative Planning
		Team Teaching and Cross-Disciplinary Projects
		Reflective Teaching
		Regular Individualized Mentorship
	Improving Learners' Numeracy Skills	Use of Score Sheet/ Peer Evaluation
		Incorporating Math Problems
Ensured the positive use of ICT to facilitate the teaching and learning process.	Limited Use of ICT Resources	Combining the use of traditional (printed texts and images) and modern (audio-visual presentation) instructional materials
		Interactive Games

Curriculum Integration. Evidence from coaching and mentoring sessions indicates that many educators face challenges in incorporating multiple subjects into their teaching practices. Curriculum integration is essential in modern education, as it seeks to combine various disciplines into a cohesive learning experience. This approach not only enhances students' comprehension of how different subjects relate to one another but also emphasizes their applicability in real-world situations. To enhance teaching effectiveness, mentors recommend collaborative planning, team teaching, cross-disciplinary projects, reflective teaching practices, and individualized mentorship for teachers. These strategies aim to strengthen educators' ability to convey content across various subjects, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes.

Improving Learners' Numeracy Skills. Indicator 2, using a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills, appeared to pose significant challenges for most teachers. Literacy and numeracy are complex skills, and there's no one-size-fits-all approach. Different learners respond to different methods. Understanding the variety of effective strategies and knowing when and how to use them is definitely demanding. Hence, various suggestions were extracted from the annotations made during the coaching and mentoring sessions. A master teacher suggested the use of score sheets for class participation. The teacher may also let the students give marks to other groups' performance, or let them compute their scores to improve numeracy skills. If possible, teachers may consider incorporating math problems into the lesson to target applying knowledge across the curriculum and improve learners' numeracy skills at the same time.

Limited Use of ICT Resources. To enhance teaching performance in terms of indicator 3, ensuring the positive use of ICT to facilitate the teaching and learning process, a master teacher suggested combining the use of traditional and modern instructional materials (IMs). The initial may include charts, printed images, and texts, while the latter includes the use of PowerPoint presentations, audio-visual presentations, and other digital materials. A mentor also suggested that when using slides presentations, teachers must make sure that the characters or letters are large enough so that learners can read them even from the back rows. The use of clear images was also suggested. To demonstrate the responsible and ethical use of ICT, teachers shall not forget to acknowledge the source of digital materials they used. Moreover, Master Teachers/ Head Teachers highly encouraged the use of interactive games to boost learners' engagement. By embracing this valuable resource, educators can create more effective, and personalized learning experiences that empower students to thrive in the 21st century and beyond.

Teachers' Level of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy After the Implementation of the Coaching and Mentoring Using GROW Model.

Table 3 presents the teachers' overall level of content knowledge and pedagogy after the implementation of coaching and mentoring. The first indicator applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas, has the highest weighted mean of 7.00, interpreted as outstanding. This means that the teacher applies accurate, in-depth, and broad knowledge of content and pedagogy that creates a conducive learning environment that enables an in-depth and sophisticated understanding of the teaching and learning process to meet individual or group learning needs within and across the curriculum. The teacher applies extensive knowledge of content beyond his/her area of specialization; motivates learners to investigate the teaching area to expand their knowledge and satisfy their curiosity; cites intra and interdisciplinary content relationships; shows expertise in the content and uses appropriate pedagogy in delivering the lesson.

Table 3 Level of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy of Teachers After the Implementation of Coaching and Mentoring using GROW Model

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas.	7	Outstanding
Used a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills.	6.75	Outstanding

Ensured the positive use of ICT to facilitate the teaching and learning process.	6.88	Outstanding
Overall Weighted Mean	6.88	Outstanding

Rating scale:	Descriptive Interpretation
6.21 – 7.00	Outstanding
5.41 – 6.20	Very Satisfactory
4.61 – 5.40	Satisfactory
3.81 – 4.60	Unsatisfactory
3.00 – 3.80	Poor

Test of Significant Difference.

Table 4 shows the test of significant difference between the level of content knowledge and pedagogy before and after the implementation of coaching and mentoring using GROW Model. For indicator 1, the mean increased from 5.00 to 7.00, with $t=-5.292$ and $p=0.001$. Therefore, there is a significant improvement in applied content knowledge after coaching and mentoring. For indicator 2, the mean increased from 4.63 to 6.75, with $t=-9.379$ and $p=0.000$. The p -value of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05 level of significance means that there is a highly significant improvement in the use of teaching strategies after the intervention. For indicator 3, the mean increased from 5.00 to 6.88, with $t=-4.710$ and $p=0.002$. Since the p -value that is lower than 0.05 level of significance, this means that there is a significant improvement in the positive use of ICT after the GROW model was implemented. The noticeable increase in the scores proves the value of continuous professional development. This is supported by the study of Kho, et al. (2020) who observed coaching conferences involving four coach-teacher pairs. The structured nature of coaching conversations was highlighted as a crucial aspect of providing support to teachers. They suggested to conduct researches that are grounded in comprehensive theories and empirical evidence to develop firm models of instructional coaching tailored to their local context. Indeed, the development of models and the structured nature of coaching and mentoring help teachers share their best practices, improve their teaching strategies, and encourage them to reflect on their own teaching.

Table 4 Test of Significant Difference Between the Level of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy Before and After the Implementation of Coaching and Mentoring using GROW Model

Indicators	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	T computed value	P-value	Interpretation
Applied knowledge of content within and across curriculum teaching areas.	5	7	2	-5.292	0.001	Significant
Used a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills.	4.63	6.75	2.12	-9.379	0	Highly Significant
Ensured the positive use of ICT to facilitate the teaching and learning process.	5	6.88	1.88	-4.71	0.002	Significant

*Significance at 5% p - value

Level of Effectiveness of the GROW Model.

The data indicates that feedback and support are the most effective components of coaching and mentoring, achieving a weighted mean of 4.90. This suggests that providing teachers with appropriate resources significantly enhances their instructional capabilities. Coaches and mentors play a vital role in this process by

sharing essential materials such as lesson plans and assessment tools, which help teachers to create diverse strategies tailored to their students' needs. In contrast, goal setting received the lowest weighted mean of 4.77, although it is still considered extremely effective. This lower score may stem from the lack of specificity in the goals set by teachers. It is essential for goals to be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound to foster a stronger sense of purpose during the coaching and mentoring process.

The overall weighted mean of 4.82 reflects the overall effectiveness of the coaching and mentoring initiatives. However, it highlights the necessity for clear orientation regarding the features and models used in these processes. The findings align with previous research by Kho et al. (2020), which underscored the importance of understanding instructional coaching and establishing robust frameworks. Additionally, the results corroborate Mogonea's (2022) study on the GROW model, emphasizing the critical role of mentorship in education and the need for ongoing, meaningful interactions between mentors and mentees to enhance effectiveness. Overall, these insights emphasize the importance of strategic planning and resource allocation in coaching and mentoring initiatives to overcome identified challenges and improve overall effectiveness.

Table 5 Level of Effectiveness of Coaching and Mentoring Strategies

Strategies	WM	Descriptive Interpretation
A. Goal Setting		
The coaching and mentoring give way to personalized goals.	4.88	Extremely Effective
The coaching and mentoring encourage teachers to set clear goals.	4.88	Extremely Effective
The coaching and mentoring allow for the formulation of goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound.	4.63	Extremely Effective
Sub-mean	4.8	Extremely Effective
B. Reflection		
The coaching and mentoring provide reflective questions.	4.63	Extremely Effective
The coaching and mentoring allow teachers to assess and reflect on their teaching performance.	4.81	Extremely Effective
The coaching and mentoring allow teachers to reflect on strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and obstacles.	4.88	Extremely Effective
Sub-mean	4.77	Extremely Effective
C. Feedback and Support		
The coaching and mentoring encourage active listening.	4.88	Extremely Effective
The coaching and mentoring give way to empathetic responses.	4.88	Extremely Effective
The coaching and mentoring allow mentor/coach and mentees/coachees to collaborate in formulating appropriate solutions.	4.94	Extremely Effective
Sub-mean	4.9	Extremely Effective
D. Action Planning		
The coaching and mentoring establish personalized plan of action.	4.75	Extremely Effective
The coaching and mentoring allow the mentor/coach and mentees/coachees to agree on future tasks to meet the desired goals.	4.81	Extremely Effective
The coaching and mentoring identify possible obstacles and how it will be overcome.	4.88	Extremely Effective
Sub-mean	4.81	Extremely Effective
Overall Weighted Mean	4.82	Extremely Effective

Rating Scale	Descriptive Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Extremely Effective
3.41-4.20	Very Effective
2.61-3.40	Effective

1.81-2.60 Somewhat Effective
1.00-1.80 Not Effective

Challenges in the Implementation of Coaching and Mentoring.

Table 6 presents the challenges encountered during the implementation of coaching and mentoring. Lack of time has the highest response rate of 13. Factors such as work overload, and other interfering responsibilities must have contributed to this aforementioned data. Difficulty in setting the time for classroom observations was also observed due to conflicting schedules. While ‘other responsibilities interfering with mentoring such as journalism, coaching in sports, BSP/GSP and among others’, ‘personality conflicts between mentee and mentor’, and ‘low level of commitment from mentee’ has the lowest response rate. The findings underscore the complexity of coaching and mentoring, highlighting the necessity for organizations to recognize these challenges in order to enhance the effectiveness of their development programs. Specifically, addressing the time constraints is crucial, as it emerged as the most significant barrier to effective mentoring. Supporting this perspective, Ewing (2021) identified similar challenges faced by internal mentors, such as limited time and unclear roles, and suggested the potential benefits of involving external mentors who are compensated for their contributions. Additionally, Rahman (2023) explored the challenges associated with implementing the GROW coaching model, identifying six key obstacles, including the need for time to adapt to the new model, the necessity of introducing it to governing bodies, and ensuring that it does not disrupt existing class schedules.

Table 6 Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of Mentoring and Coaching Strategies

Challenges	F	Rank
Work overload	8	2
Lack of time	13	1
Other responsibilities interfering with mentoring such as Journalism, Coaching in sports, BSP/GSP, and among others	1	7
Negative attitudes of other teachers or administrators toward mentoring	4	3
Vague structure of mentoring program/ session	2	4.5
Personality conflicts between mentee and mentor	1	7
Mismatch between the mentees and mentors with respect to teaching ideology	2	4.5
Low level of commitment from mentee	1	7

Intervention for the Improvement of the Proposed Coaching and Mentoring Strategies.

The researcher proposes an intervention titled Project COACH: Collaborative Opportunities for Advancing Classroom Teaching Horizons. Project COACH is a proposed scheme for School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) sessions concerned with providing technical assistance to proficient teachers (Teacher I) with no more than five years of experience in teaching using the suggested collaborative approaches. Based on the results of the pre-classroom observation, teachers’ performance in terms of content knowledge and pedagogy falls within the satisfactory level. This suggests an urgent need for sessions that would strengthen teachers’ foundation in each key indicator. Sessions will focus on the three indicators such as applying knowledge within and across curriculum, enhancing learner achievement in literacy and numeracy, and ensuring the positive use of ICT. The project involves as instructional coaching, reflective teaching, and collaboration to supplement coaching and mentoring sessions. The study conducted by Laureano (2023) corroborates the findings of the current research, focusing on the coaching and mentoring practices of master teachers within the Schools Division of Pangasinan. The author advocates for the establishment of a structured coaching and mentoring framework. This framework is intended to leverage the experiences of master teachers, thereby enhancing the support provided to less experienced educators and ensuring a solid foundation for the implementation of effective coaching and mentoring practices.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results obtained, the researcher formulated the following conclusions.

1. Mentoring and coaching shall focus on improving teachers' knowledge of content across curriculum, application of strategies that enhance numeracy skills, and the use of ICT in the teaching and learning process. Teachers' satisfactory teaching performance means that their content knowledge and pedagogy operate at the applying level. At this stage, teachers exhibit various pedagogical elements related to the indicator, which are generally in sync with the developmental needs of the learners.
2. It is essential for educators to participate in professional development approaches, including collaborative planning, reflective teaching, and individualized mentoring. Collaborative planning provides a platform for teachers to share creative ideas and effective teaching methods, exchange resources, and create detailed lesson plans that address diverse learning requirements. Reflective teaching promotes self-assessment of teaching practices, enabling educators to improve their effectiveness in the classroom. Additionally, individualized mentorship supports teachers in crafting lessons that align with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) indicators.
3. Mentoring and coaching are effective in enhancing teaching strategies, particularly as teachers' level of content knowledge and pedagogy progresses from applying to integrating level. This means that the teacher uses well-connected pedagogical aspects of the indicator to create an environment that addresses individual and group learning goals.
4. Teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills before and after the introduction of coaching and mentoring underscores the indispensable role that structured coaching and mentoring play in improving teaching effectiveness. These relationships not only prompt educators to reflect on their practices and the rationale for improvement but also foster collaboration within the profession. It is essential to implement coaching and mentoring programs that are both necessary and sufficient to achieve effective teaching performance and, consequently, enhance learning outcomes.
5. The mentoring and coaching using GROW model is extremely effective in terms of goal-setting, reflection, feedback and support, and action planning, implying the success of the coaching and mentoring in all its aspects. However, proper and clear orientation of the features of the coaching and mentoring process, especially the model used, must still be ensured.
6. The implementation of coaching and mentoring comes with different challenges that could affect its effectiveness. It is often impacted by lack of time and work overload. By recognizing these obstacles and understanding their implications, organizations can take proactive measures to enhance the effectiveness of their development initiatives.
7. Project COACH: Collaborative Opportunities for Advancing Classroom Teaching Horizons is an innovative intervention that can be implemented during SLAC sessions. It underscores the objective of the study, which aims to introduce a systematic coaching and mentoring framework, promote and facilitate dedicated time for these activities, and cultivate an atmosphere that values and encourages constructive feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions lead to the following proposed recommendations:

1. Proficient teachers from various disciplines is encouraged to exchange effective practices and create interdisciplinary lesson plans. Teachers may also consider attending educational conferences that emphasize innovative teaching methods, the integration of technology, and interdisciplinary strategies.
2. Master teachers and head teachers may take the initiative to evaluate teachers' lesson plans regularly and provide constructive feedback on their instructional methods.
3. Master Teachers and Head Teachers may consistently initiate coaching and mentoring techniques such as collaborative planning, reflective teaching practices, and individualized mentoring sessions.
4. Master teachers and head teachers may attend comprehensive training programs for coaches and mentors to equip them with the necessary skills and resources to facilitate effective learning experiences.

Furthermore, it is important to prioritize the establishment of dedicated time for coaching and mentoring activities.

5. Schools may adopt the GROW model as a valuable framework for coaching and mentoring initiatives, as it is successful in guiding teachers to set their goals, reflect on their teaching practice, draw feedback and support, and plan future course of action.
6. Schools may implement Project COACH: Collaborative Opportunities for Advancing Classroom Teaching Horizons to strengthen coaching and mentoring relationships, thereby enhancing teachers' content knowledge and pedagogy. Considering that the project will be implemented at a scheduled time, particularly during SLAC sessions, the main problem identified which is lack of time can be addressed.
7. Future researchers may focus on designing and implementing strategies that will enhance other observable PPST indicators included in the classroom observation tool. They may also include more respondents and design a longer series of coaching and mentoring using the GROW model to further validate its effects.

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