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E-VALUES ED: UNFOLDING TEACHERS` EXPERIENCES IN THE INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING VALUES IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

[1]Cherry Mae M. Villaruel, LPT
Kudanding Elementary School

[2]Jaime Boy U. Ngag, PhD
South Cotabato State College

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ABSTRACT

The integration of technology in elementary values education has emerged as a transformative approach to enhance teaching and learning experiences. This qualitative phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into values instruction, examining both its benefits and challenges. Findings reveal that technology significantly enhances learner engagement, motivation, and participation, while supporting student-centered, experiential, and meaningful approaches to moral learning. Teachers reported increased confidence, creativity, and professional growth, facilitated by accessible multimedia resources, interactive tools, and collaborative platforms. Technology also influenced personal values by promoting openness, flexibility, patience, and lifelong learning, while reinforcing digital citizenship and ethical awareness. Despite these positive outcomes, teachers faced notable challenges, including unstable internet connectivity, limited access to devices, varying levels of technological proficiency, digital distractions, and the need to balance screen time with reflective moral discussions. The study highlights that technology functions as both an enabler and a barrier, depending on infrastructural support, teacher preparedness, and guided

implementation. Overall, the integration of technology in values education requires careful planning, ethical guidance, and continuous professional development to ensure that digital tools enhance, rather than overshadow, the holistic formation of learners' moral and ethical competencies.

Keywords: *moral development, learner engagement, teacher preparedness, student-centered pedagogy*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The integration of technology in education has become a global priority as digital tools offer new ways to enhance learning experiences and engagement. In elementary education, technology has been increasingly utilized to teach not just academic subjects but also essential life skills, including values education. Teaching values such as respect, empathy, honesty, and responsibility is a critical part of the elementary curriculum, aiming to build a strong moral foundation for young learners. Integrating technology into values education presents opportunities for more interactive, engaging, and personalized learning experiences that resonate better with the digital generation.

In the Philippines, several legal frameworks, such as Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013), support the integration of technology in education. This act emphasizes the quality of basic education by incorporating 21st-century skills and using information and communication technology (ICT) to facilitate teaching and learning. The law supports the development of digital literacy among students and teachers through ICT across all subjects, including values education. Republic Act No. 10929 (Free Internet Access in Public Places Act) requires public schools, including elementary institutions, to have free internet access, thereby supporting the use of technology as a teaching tool. By providing internet connectivity, schools can utilize various digital platforms and resources to enhance values education. DepEd Order No. 76, s. 2010 (Guidelines on Strengthening Values Education in the Philippine Basic Education Curriculum) mandates the integration of values education across subject areas in the basic education curriculum, emphasizing the holistic development of students. The technology can support the interactive and engaging teaching methods promoted by the Department of Education.

Globally, many countries are actively integrating technology into their education systems, recognizing its potential to make learning accessible and engaging. Finland is known for its progressive education system. It has integrated digital learning tools across subjects, including values education. Digital platforms facilitate discussions on social and emotional learning, diversity, and empathy, allowing students to engage with these concepts interactively. Singapore's Smart Nation initiative encourages the use of technology in education, including the teaching of core values such as responsibility, resilience, and respect. The Ministry of Education has developed digital resources that support character and citizenship education, demonstrating how technology can reinforce traditional values-based teaching.

Integrating technology into teaching values in elementary education represents an opportunity to innovate traditional teaching methods, providing a more interactive and relatable

way to instill essential life skills in young learners. Supported by both international frameworks and national policies, the Philippines explores the potential of digital tools in values education.

Hence, this study aimed to explore the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into the teaching of values education, emphasizing how it shapes their instructional practices, beliefs, and perceptions in the context of 21st-century learning.

Research Questions

The study aimed to explore the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into the teaching of values education, emphasizing how it shapes instructional practices, beliefs, and perceptions in the context of 21st-century learning in Isulan South District, Sultan Kudarat Division, for the school year 2025-2026.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into values education?
2. How do elementary teachers perceive the impact of technology on the delivery and effectiveness of values instruction?
3. What challenges and enablers do teachers encounter when using technology to teach values in the elementary classroom?
4. How does technology integration influence teachers' personal values and pedagogical beliefs in the context of values education?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically phenomenology, to explore and understand the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into the teaching of values education. Phenomenology is appropriate as it seeks to uncover and interpret the meanings that individuals assign to their personal and professional experiences, particularly in complex and evolving contexts such as technology-enhanced learning (Creswell & Poth, 2023). By focusing on teachers' voices, this approach provides deeper insights into how they navigate the challenges and opportunities of using digital tools in fostering values, highlighting the nuances of their beliefs, instructional practices, and perceptions (Neubauer et al., 2020).

Moreover, qualitative phenomenological research allows for the exploration of subjective realities, which is essential when examining how values education—an inherently reflective and contextual process—is reshaped in the digital era (Sloan & Bowe, 2020).

Respondents of the Study

Table 1 displays the qualifications of the participants based on the criteria set by the researcher prior to the selection of qualified informants of the study.

Table 1

Participants' Inclusion Criteria

Qualifications
Participants: 15 Elementary Teachers
The group will include: **1. Currently teaching in the elementary level** within Isulan District, Sultan Kudarat Division during the school year 2025–2026, ensuring participants have direct and relevant classroom experiences. **2. Actively handling Values Education classes,** either as a major subject or integrated within other learning areas, to align with the study's focus on technology use in teaching values. **3. With at least three years of teaching experience,** to ensure that participants have sufficient professional background and reflective insights on both traditional and technology-integrated teaching practices. **4. Have prior or current experience in integrating technology** (e.g., digital platforms, multimedia tools, or online resources) in teaching, to provide meaningful perspectives on its influence in Values Education.

The participants in this study comprised 15 carefully selected elementary school teachers from selected elementary schools in Isulan South District, Sultan Kudarat, during the 2025–2026 school year.

Sampling Technique

During the conduct of this study, a Purposive Sampling Technique was used to select fifteen (15) elementary school teachers from the selected schools in Isulan South District, Sultan Kudarat, during the school year 2025–2026 who met the specific inclusion criteria established by the researcher.

Purposive sampling, alternately referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, constitutes a variant of non-probability sampling. Within this approach, researchers exercise their own judgment and discretion in selecting individuals from the population to participate in their surveys (Alchemer, 2021). This sampling method requires researchers to have prior knowledge of the study's objectives to identify and contact eligible participants via online survey platforms effectively. Researchers resort to purposive sampling to secure access to a

distinct subgroup of individuals, whereby all survey respondents are meticulously selected based on their alignment with a specific demographic criterion.

Research Instruments

In this study, a semi-structured interview served as an exploratory instrument in both in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to examine the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into the teaching of values education.

The validity and appropriateness of this tool were substantiated through a rigorous evaluation conducted by a panel of experts with expertise in developing relevant research instruments.

Data Gathering Procedure

To ensure the reliability of the research, the researcher adhered strictly to a predefined set of procedures. The primary objective of this study was to explore and understand the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into the teaching of values education.

In the initial phase, the researcher diligently sought formal authorization from both the Superintendent of DepEd-Sultan Kudarat and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies (CGS). This authorization was essential to obtain the necessary permissions for the researcher to conduct the study, emphasizing the importance of ethical considerations.

Following this, a secondary authorization letter was sent to the District Supervisor, explicitly requesting access to the specific data required for this research. A meticulously crafted survey questionnaire was developed, rigorously evaluated, and administered to the target participants.

The researcher employed purposive sampling to select elementary school teachers as participants in this study. In accordance with the established EWMCI-Research Ethics Committee guidelines, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

Ultimately, the data collected from interviews and FGDs were systematically organized, subjected to comprehensive analysis, and interpreted using thematic analysis. This approach was expected to provide a deeper understanding of the issues under investigation.

Data Transcription Process

To execute this analytical process, a series of essential steps was diligently followed:

Initially, all data sources, such as interview transcripts, notes from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and relevant documents, were meticulously organized and prepared for analysis. This phase ensured the systematic arrangement and accessibility of the data.

Subsequently, the researcher engaged with the data by conducting a thorough review of interview transcripts and FGD notes. This immersive process facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the content and context embedded in the collected information.

The third step involved initiating a systematic coding process. Initial codes were generated by identifying meaningful segments or patterns within the data. These codes captured essential concepts, ideas, or themes related to teachers' narratives regarding their professional development and its outcomes for their teaching effectiveness.

Following coding, the identified codes were grouped into preliminary themes based on shared meaning or relevance. This step established an initial structure for organizing the data.

Next, the emerging themes and their corresponding codes underwent review and refinement. The researcher ensured the consistency and clarity of these themes, making necessary adjustments. Each refined theme was assigned a descriptive name that succinctly represents the content it encapsulates, facilitating easy identification and interpretation.

Relevant data excerpts, such as quotations or interview and FGD segments, were selected and associated with the corresponding themes. These excerpts served as supporting evidence for the identified themes.

Finally, the thematic analysis extended beyond surface-level identification. The researcher interpreted the meaning and implications of each theme in the context of the study's objectives and sought patterns, connections, and variations across themes to provide a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' narratives.

This meticulous, structured thematic analysis will enable researchers to systematically explore and understand the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into the teaching of values education.

Data Analysis

In this study, which focused on the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into the teaching of values education, a thematic content analysis was employed to examine the collected data.

Thematic analysis, as described by Flick (2014), Ngag (2023), and Braun (2009), involves the systematic categorization of textual components, including statements, phrases, and words, into organized groupings or categories. These categories will be either derived from established frameworks or custom-developed to align with the study's specific objectives.

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on unfolding teachers' experiences in integrating technology into the teaching of Values Education in selected elementary schools in Isulan South District, Division of Sultan Kudarat, during the school year 2025–2026. The participants were elementary teachers directly involved in teaching Values Education, whose insights were gathered through qualitative

methods, specifically a phenomenological research design, to capture the depth and meaning of their lived experiences.

The inquiry was conducted with teachers within the district to ensure contextual relevance, excluding learners and administrators. It examined what technologies were being used, how they were applied in teaching, and the challenges and opportunities encountered. By doing so, the study sought to understand why and how technology shapes the delivery of Values Education, context-based strategies that enhance teaching effectiveness and learner formation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The integration of technology in education has become a global priority as digital tools offer new ways to enhance learning experiences and engagement. This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically phenomenology, to explore and understand the lived experiences of elementary teachers in integrating technology into the teaching of values education.

The findings indicate that integrating technology into values education significantly enhanced learner engagement, motivation, and participation, enriching instructional delivery through multimedia and interactive tools. Teachers shifted toward more experiential, student-centered, and meaningful approaches to moral learning, supported by accessible and diverse digital resources. Despite these benefits, challenges such as unstable internet connectivity, limited access to devices, varying levels of technological proficiency, and the need to balance screen time with reflective moral discussions remained key concerns in effective implementation.

Also, the results showed that elementary teachers generally perceived technology integration as significantly enhancing the delivery and effectiveness of values instruction by increasing student engagement, promoting meaningful and contextualized learning, improving access to instructional resources, and supporting professional growth and innovation. However, teachers also recognized challenges related to digital distractions, varying levels of ICT competence, and the need for proper guidance to ensure that technology use remains aligned with the core objectives of values education.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that teachers encountered significant structural and pedagogical challenges when integrating technology into values education, particularly due to unstable internet connectivity, limited access to devices, insufficient training, and issues related to student distraction and overreliance on digital tools. Despite these constraints, teachers recognized the strong instructional potential of technology, especially in enhancing engagement, collaboration, visual storytelling, and meaningful moral reflection. Overall, technology served as both a barrier and an enabler, depending largely on infrastructure support, teacher preparedness, and guided implementation.

Finally, the study revealed that technology integration significantly influenced teachers' personal values and pedagogical beliefs in values education. Teachers reported a clear shift toward student-centered pedagogy, moving from traditional teacher-led approaches to constructivist and learner-focused instruction. Technology enhanced professional growth, confidence, creativity, and the effectiveness of lesson delivery, enabling differentiated and meaningful learning experiences. It also promoted transformation in values by fostering openness, flexibility, patience, and a commitment to lifelong learning. Additionally, technology reinforced

digital citizenship and ethical awareness, shaping teachers' understanding and embodiment of moral and ethical principles while emphasizing the teachers' role in values formation.

Conclusion

The following inferences were made in light of this study's findings:

Technology can serve as a transformative tool in values education when thoughtfully integrated with sound pedagogy and ethical guidance. While it opens new pathways for engagement and experiential learning, its effectiveness ultimately depends on teacher preparedness, infrastructural support, and a balanced approach that preserves the human and reflective core of moral formation.

It is also concluded that technology, when thoughtfully and responsibly integrated, can strengthen values education by making it more interactive, relevant, and impactful. However, its success depends not merely on access to tools but on teachers' preparedness, ethical awareness, and continuous professional development, ensuring that digital innovation consistently supports rather than overshadows the formation of learners' moral and character development.

Also, effective technology integration in values education is not solely dependent on access to digital tools but on the readiness of systems, schools, and teachers to use them responsibly and purposefully. Addressing infrastructure gaps, strengthening professional development, and promoting balanced pedagogical practices are essential to ensure that technology enhances rather than hinders moral and character formation in the elementary classroom.

Finally, it has been concluded that technology serves not merely as a teaching tool but as a catalyst for holistic professional and personal development. While it enhances instructional methods and learner engagement, it simultaneously challenges educators to integrate ethical considerations and reflective practices in their teaching. The study highlights the importance of balancing technological use with moral guidance, ensuring that digital tools support both effective pedagogy and values education.

Recommendations

Considering the findings, the following were recommended:

1. **Department of Education (DepEd)** can develop and implement a structured program that provides elementary teachers with ongoing professional development on technology integration in values education. This should include scenario-based workshops on managing digital distractions, promoting student-centered learning, and leveraging multimedia tools. Policies that support stable internet connectivity and equitable access to devices across schools, particularly in rural areas, would address structural barriers.
2. **School Administrators** can prioritize the provision of accessible technological resources, such as tablets, laptops, and multimedia platforms, and ensure that infrastructure issues like unstable internet or electricity interruptions are minimized. Administrators can support teachers by creating mentorship programs, peer collaboration opportunities, and shared repositories of interactive, ethically aligned instructional materials.

3. **Policy Makers** may advocate investments in digital infrastructure in public elementary schools and establish funding programs to bridge the digital divide. Policies should also incentivize teacher training in digital pedagogy, emphasizing student-centered approaches, multimedia learning, and digital citizenship. Integrating technology standards into values education curricula will encourage schools to adopt guided and reflective use of digital tools.
4. **Future Researchers** can explore the long-term effects of technology integration on learners' moral development and ethical reasoning, including comparative analyses across schools with differing levels of infrastructure and teacher readiness. Research can also investigate effective strategies for balancing interactive digital learning with reflective and discussion-based moral instruction, ensuring technology enhances rather than distracts values education.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

In preparation for this study, all plans and recommendations were presented to East-West Mindanao Colleges, Inc. to ensure compliance with prescribed procedures and protocols. In research on the lived experiences of elementary teachers integrating technology into values education, it was imperative to emphasize the paramount importance of ethical considerations. Before commencing this study, the following ethical principles were highlighted:

Informed Consent: Before participation, consent was obtained from all school heads involved in the study. They must possess a comprehensive understanding of the study's objectives, methodologies, potential risks, and benefits. Furthermore, participation remained entirely voluntary, allowing the participants to withdraw from the study at any juncture without adverse consequences.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: To safeguard identities and responses, rigorous measures were followed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Rather than using actual names, pseudonyms or codes were used to uphold the participants' privacy. The collected data was securely stored with access restricted solely to the research team.

Avoiding Harm: Delicate subjects, such as the challenges inherent in their roles, were discussed with potential emotional and psychological impact on participants. Strategies were in place to minimize distress, and a support system was readily available to assist participants.

Researcher-Participant Relationship: The researcher maintained a professional and respectful rapport when engaging with the school heads. Any actions that might harm the participants were scrupulously avoided, ensuring their utmost dignity and respect throughout the research process.

Data Protection: Adherence to data protection regulations and laws was observed to safeguard the participants' personal information. Stringent measures were employed to ensure the secure storage and transmission of data.

Voluntary Participation: Participants were assured that their participation in the study was devoid of any coercion or external pressure.

Researcher Bias: The researcher remained vigilant regarding potential biases that might influence data collection and analysis, upholding objectivity and transparency throughout the research endeavor.

Institutional Approval: Before initiating the study, the researcher sought ethical clearance from the pertinent institutional review boards or ethics committees.

Honesty and Integrity: The research findings were reported truthfully and accurately, free from manipulation or distortion to align with preconceived notions or biases.

Beneficence: The potential benefits of the research in educational practices and policies were thoughtfully considered, ensuring that the study contributes to the education system.

Cultural Sensitivity: The researcher displayed cultural sensitivity by respecting local customs, beliefs, and practices within the research setting, refraining from imposing external values on the participants.

Inclusion and Diversity: The study's structure prioritized inclusivity and diversity, encompassing a wide spectrum of elementary teachers' lived experiences in integrating technology into the teaching of values education.

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AI Tools Declaration

I do hereby declare the use AI tools, such as Chat GPT and Grammarly for grammar checking and sentence organization purposes only.

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