EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES, AND COPING MECHANISM OF TEACHERS IN MODULAR DISTANCE LEARNING AND PROGRESSIVE FACE-TO-FACE MODALITY

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Abstract

This study explored teachers' experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms in modular distance learning and progressive face-to-face modality at Pimbalayan National High School in the Municipality of Lambayong. It employed a phenomenological study using thematic analysis in processing the responses of the participants.

On the experiences of teachers handling modular distance learning modality and progressively limited face-to-face, the following themes were generated, challenges in teaching two learning modalities, unable to teach them simultaneously, communication barrier, armed conflict, redo's and inaccessible roads, and school's shortage of resources.

On the challenges of teachers handling modular distance learning modality and progressively limited face-to-face the following themes were generated, work overload, the difficulty of modules transportation and distribution, cognitive disabilities and slow communication skills, and trouble using technology.

Interestingly, the coping mechanism to address those challenges experienced by the teachers handling two learning modalities, the theme generated were, creating lesson plans that were appropriate for two groups of learners, thinking positively and pessimistically, and time management.

Keywords: *Modular Distance Learning, Experiences, Challenges, Coping Mechanism*

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to substantial educational reforms. The shift from traditional classroom teaching to alternative methods such as remote learning is a contributing factor. The COVID-19 pandemic caused by SARS-COV-2 is a significant global public health emergency. The global community has shown significant interest in finding ways to halt the current surge in infections due to its associated risks (Guo, et al., 2020).

The Philippines was declared to be in a state of calamity through Presidential Proclamation No. 929 following the World Health Organization's (WHO) declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic. Business operations are currently suspended. The mobility of individuals, commodities, and amenities was limited both within and beyond the municipal boundaries. The WHO recommends several measures to prevent infection transmission and decrease mortality, such as social distancing, wearing masks, practicing hand hygiene, and self-quarantine (WHO, 2020).

Despite facing hindrances, they can adapt to the new circumstances and fulfill their responsibilities. De Villa (2020) suggests that collaboration between higher offices, school administrators, and teachers is necessary to address training and resource needs before implementing distance learning, in order to ensure effective delivery of high-quality instruction to students.

The Department of Education has adopted various alternative learning delivery methods, including modular, television-based, radio-based, blended, and online instruction, in response to the current public health situation. This is to ensure the protection of the health, safety, and well-being of students, teachers, and staff, and to prevent the further spread of COVID-19, as face-to-face classes remain prohibited. The curriculum has been streamlined to prioritize the most essential learning competencies, known as the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELC), which align with the development of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity.

The school improvement plan for the 2022-2023 academic year uncovered challenges faced by parents and instructors while guiding students through modular distant learning.

Thus, this study was conducted to explore the secondary school teachers' experiences in the implementation of the modular distance learning in the New Normal. Furthermore, it attempted to investigate the teachers' preparation, challenges, and coping mechanisms,

This study is based on Dewey's educational theory's key characteristics. Dewey proposed that personal development occurs through experiential and environmental interactions. Social interactions and experiences facilitate the development of new concepts, ideas, practices, and understandings. These are further refined through ongoing life experiences and interactions.

Traditional teaching strategies are not transferable to online learning. Teachers experience fear as they adopt technology. Lie (2020) suggests that educators should feel responsible for incorporating new technologies into their teaching practices while still fulfilling their professional duties.

The education system has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak and resulting community quarantines, affecting the school calendar and activities for the 2020-2021 academic year. Although progress has been made in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains uncontained and presents ongoing challenges for the United States and the world. The Department of Education remains dedicated to ensuring uninterrupted education despite challenges. Education should prioritize providing stability, normalcy, and development opportunities for students while ensuring their health and safety, especially during times of national instability.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged schools, educators, learners, guardians, and other relevant parties. Several school districts shifted to online activities to ensure continuity of instruction during school closures (OECD, 2020).

The study focused on the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of teachers in modular distance learning and progressive face-to-face.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed qualitative research, which is a research method that permits the researcher to interpret the lives of people in order to gain a better and more profound understanding of their problems and to generate solutions that are pertinent to their circumstances. (Wa-Ambaleka, (2018).

Particular phenomenological methodology was employed. According to Accad & Accad (2016), the purpose of this design is to describe the structures of experience as they appear to consciousness, without recourse to theory, deduction, or assumptions from their respective disciplines. Furthermore, according to Wa-Ambaleka (2018), this design can be executed from at least two distinct perspectives. Simply characterize the phenomenon in terms of how people experienced it.

Participants' responses to a structured guide survey questionnaire were used to obtain the necessary data for the study.

This study was conducted at Pimbalayan National High School in the Municipality of Lambayong School Year 2022-2023. The researcher preferred this school in Lambayong because many students are working students and those students are from other municipalities specifically in the Municipality of Sultan Sabaronges.

The participants of the study were five Junior High School teachers and five Senior High School teachers at Pimbalayan National High School. Wa-Ambaleka (2018) proposed several participants with a minimum number of participants so that a researcher can get to a data saturation level and phenomenological research design has a minimum of eight (8) participants. The research setting was only one school. It is very important to describe fully the research setting because it helps the readers to visualize and decides on their own whether or not the findings of your study apply to them (Lune & Berg, 2017).

There were ten (10) Junior and Senior high school teachers who served as the participants of the study. A purposive sampling technique was used in the study aside from the minimum number of participants in the phenomenological research design.

Purposive sampling is one commonly used in qualitative research. The researcher selected research participants purposively because the researcher believed that they met the section criteria, has expertise on this research topic, and were willing to share truthfully what they know, (Wa-Ambaleka,2018). The ten teachers were purposively selected because they are handling purely modular distance learning and limited face-to-face learning modality.

The following were the inclusion criteria for the teachers who served as the participants of the study: (a) a teacher of Pimbalayan National High School with a permanent position; (b) at least three (3) years in service; and (c) has rendered services during the implementation of modular and progressive face to face learning modality.

A researcher-made structured-survey guide questionnaire was used and it was based on the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of teacher-participants of the study. It was validated by a panel of evaluators as to the content and grammar using the Good and Scates Validation Instrument, Suggestions and recommendations from the panel of evaluators were incorporated. It was pilot-tested among the teachers from elementary school teachers in Pimbalayan Elementary School.

The instrument for data collection was a 3-part structured guide survey questionnaire.

Part I elicited the experiences of teachers in handling purely modular distance learning and limited face-to-face.

Part II was on the challenges experienced by the teachers handling purely modular distance learning and limited face-to-face.

Part III gathered information from the participants about their coping mechanisms to the challenges that they had encountered in teachers handling purely modular distance learning and limited face-to-face.

In the gathering of the data, the researcher asked permission with notification from her research adviser and the Graduate School Dean, and the Schools Division Superintendent of Sultan Kudarat Division. Upon approval, the researcher coordinated with the principal for the schedule of the in-depth interview and focus group discussion with the participants. Video and audio recordings were also implemented to transcript their responses.

After those processes, the ethical consideration followed, informed or sought consent from the participants of the study that they voluntarily presented themselves as the participants of the study. Lastly, all gathered responses were purposely for academic purposes and not used against the participants and the organization.

After the in-depth interview and focus group, discussion the responses of the participants were processed by Coding, which is the process of assigning meaning to different parts of the data (Miles et al., 2014).

The researcher used the following approach to analyze the data collected: (1) thoroughly read the narratives of each participant; (2) extract substantial statements; (3) formulate meanings; (4) organize the collection of meanings into themes; (5) interpret the themes and; and (6) give recommendations. The researcher interpreted the stories shared in everyday life in the same way that narrative analysis is done (Magulod et al., 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On the Experiences of Teachers Handling Modular Distance Learning and Progressive Limited Face-to-Face

The current COVID-19 crisis has compelled the majority of education systems to adopt alternatives to traditional face-to-face instruction and learning. Many education systems have transferred their activities online in order to continue instruction during school closures (OECD, 2020). The transition from traditional classroom instruction to modular distance learning has made it more difficult for school personnel to provide quality fundamental education. Therefore, DepEd leaders are continually seeking solutions to problems and enhancing the effectiveness of its instructors and school principals in the field of modular distance learning (Bagood, 2020).

The following themes were generated from the experiences of teachers handling modular distance learning modality and progressively limited face-to-face. **a. Challenges in teaching two learning modalities; b. Inability to teach them simultaneously; c. communication barriers; d. Armed conflict, rido, and inaccessible road; and e. School's shortage in resources.**

Challenges in teaching two learning modalities is the first theme that was generated. *As one of the participants shared:*

> *"At that that time mam having two modalities ay hindi tlaga Madali, especially sa atin na mga teachers kasi hindi lng pagtuturo ang iniintindi natin so first is one of my experienced in limited face to face is kailangan mong mag prepare ng lesson mo para sa mga students which is isa sa mga ginamit ko noon yung LAS which is the Learning Activity Sheet , na kung saan ginawa ito ng limited or selected teachesr dito po sa Lambayong yun po ang ginamit natin para sa students para mas Madali nilang maintindihan ang lesson po, aside from you have to check lahat po ng activities na ginawa nila sa loob ng classroom at para naman po sa distance learning hindi po xa Madali kasi aside po sa kulang napo tau sa resources dito sa school for example po yung ating printer isa po yun sa nagging mahirap nung time nayun kasi hindi lahat may printer so nagiging parang nagmamadali tayo sapag print kasi nga po limited lang ang printer so kailangan madaliin ang lahat kaya nahihirapan din ang mga teachers yun time nayun, so yun po yung experienced ko and aside jan mam is paano ideliver ang mga modules sa mga bata , so yung first as I remembered yun ang pinaka mahirap kasi talagang buhat buhat namin ang mga modules sa iisang motor na kung saan nd maganda ang daanan lubak lubak, kaialangan naming syang maihatid kasi nga bilang teacher part ng trahabo natin kahit gaano man ito kahirap, talagang gawin so upang*

maihatid sa kanila mga modules so kainlangan gawin yun kahit na hindi Madali. So yun yung mga experiences ko mam" **Participant 7, TI, F**

"Fortunately nabibigay naman on time sa mga bata and then yung mga bata active naman sa pagkuha ng mga module or those na hindi makakuha, hindi makapunta ng school so kinukuha na lng ng mga kaklase nila o kakilala nila yung mga module nila Yung experience mo man sapag collect ng mga module? Napag usapan namn ng school so hindi naman mahirap pag gather ng module per subject nila" **Participant 6, TII, F**

During the height of the pandemic, educational institutions provided a remote learning option. Classes are conducted despite the closure order (Kasrekar, 2020). Since face-to-face courses are more likely to propagate the infection, teaching and learning online is the most effective option. This platform presents both instructors and students with a challenge because it exposes them to something new. This necessitates a "adopt quickly" response to the new standard in teaching and learning in the midst of the pandemic. Academic institutions must strategize and implement new teaching pedagogies because the shift to online education occurred too quickly. Unanswered is the question of whether private and public institutions are equipped with technological infrastructure and instructional pedagogy.

The second theme generated was the inability to teach them simultaneously as one of the participants shared:

"Sa preparation ko sa face to face student, so far wala namn talaga akong challenges or wala naman problema sa pag handle ng face to face, during face to face na kasi meron pa ring distance, meron pa ring safety protocol para di magkalat ang covid19, so meron pa rin silang distance since ang classroom natin hindi sya gaanong malaki dahil doon sa distance nayun kaya yung mga bata nahati sa set a and set b, so ayun lang ang mahirap kasi hindi mo sila sabay maturuan, halimbawan sa preparation nagiging dalawang preparation sya kasi limit lang yung students na makapasok sa classroom, yun lang ang mga experiences or challenges nangyari". **Participant 1, Teachers II, M**

"There are still distance and safety precautions to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 during face-to-face classes, which is why the students were split into sets A and B. Being unable to teach them simultaneously makes that the most difficult aspect. For instance, since the number of students allowed in your classroom was limited, you now need to make two preparations. That concludes my list of experiences and difficulties". **Participant 5, Teacher II, F**

According to Magsambol (2020), there is a large financial gap between those who can and cannot afford to participate in the current educational system. The DepEd's slogan, "no child left behind," delivers a sense of unfairness, given the overall status of students in the public education system. However, regardless of how the economy is doing, training cannot be postponed. Teachers are implementing new policies, procedures, and layouts in an effort to limit the spread of the virus. Others are creating whole new online courses for students who want to study in the comfort of their own homes. They have to accomplish it all at once, and with little resources to spare. The hardest part of online teaching is keeping students engaged. Teachers require instructional technology such as computers, tablets, document cameras, and other tools to effectively conduct classroom demonstrations and maintain their students' attention during the lesson.

The third theme that is being generated was **Communication Barriers.** Shukla (2022) argues that misunderstandings and misinterpretations arise when people have trouble hearing and understanding one another's words and ideas. Information overload, selective perception,

office gossip, semantics, gender disparities, etc. are all instances of communication difficulties. Here are two of the participant's thoughts:

> *"A little challenging on our side because some students were far away and some didn't have a phone number. I, therefore, called the nearby classmates so that I could give them their modules. Because there was no facility to print the modules, my experience was considerably more difficult. The remainder of their session was challenging, and there were less people in the class, making face-to-face learning a little more difficult because it was significantly different from full face-to-face with Set A and Set B. Even though their homes were far away, they still managed to make it to school, and I was still able to visit their homes".* **Participant 8, Teacher I, F**

> *"Mahirap mam kasi mahirap yung dalawa pagsabayin, walang na print na module isa syang challenge na naman sa atin , then track natin mga students kung anu nangyayari sa mga module, merun tayong tinatawag na monitoring sheets. Then may handle pa tayong students para sa face to face so another responsibility. Kumbaga mam nadagdagan ang ating responsibities natin.Naka module may nakaready na monitoring sheets para ma monitor natin yung kukunin nil ana module at yung ibabalik nil ana module.Kagaya din ng dati mam nong wala pang pandemic, ganun din".* **Participant 7, Teacher I, F**

Online distance learning relies on a constant and speedy internet connection to enable the delivery of teaching. However, as of early this year, the average fixed speed in the Philippines was just 26.18 Mbps, placing it at number 108 out of 114 countries for fixed broadband speeds (Ookla, LLC, 2020). Internet reliability and speed issues make it difficult for educators to communicate and use the web.

Moreover, another theme generated from the responses of the participants was **Armed conflict, *rides,* and inaccessible roads.**

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As the teacher participant shared his experiences:

"Prior to the pandemic, we were adopting full face-to-face classes, so when the pandemic came, we shifted to a modular learning modality. However, everyone was somehow unprepared to shift to this new mode of learning, which is the reason we teachers in particular are located in a remote area here at Pimbalayan National High School. We are located in a division between the provinces of Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao, making it challenging to connect with students who were in outlying areas, particularly those who lived close to Ligwasan Marsh. Because of issues like armed warfare, impassable roads, and those existing ridos, we also experience poor or nonexistent internet connections or a lack of signal. These are the issues we ran with when switching to modular learning. Along with printing the modules, one of the difficulties with modular distance learning is that, in the case when I am handling both agricultural and ICT, they are combined into a single section. As a result, I manage about 150 learners in a single load, making a total of 6 loads. Therefore, consider the workload placed on teachers who must print 140 to 150 one-to-one modules in a single week". **Participant 3, Teacher II, M**

More than 1.5 billion people are impacted by war, according to the World Bank's 2011 World Development Report. Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Pakistan, Somalia, Colombia, and the Philippines are just few of the countries where natural catastrophes have occurred during ongoing conflicts. However, little is understood about the effects of armed conflicts on disaster assistance. Policies for responding to and recovering from natural disasters have mostly been designed in safe settings, without adequately considering the operational and institutional issues that arise in the context of armed conflict. While many academic works have focused on how

natural disasters might enhance the likelihood of armed conflicts, far less has been published on how armed conflict can impact disaster relief.

Lastly, the theme generated based on the responses of the participants was **School's shortage in resources.**

Based on his research, Maffea (2020) claims that classrooms in many parts of the globe are under-equipped. The resources available to teachers are insufficient to meet the needs of their pupils. Inadequate funding leads to lower graduation rates, teacher burnout, parent anxiety, and subpar learning experiences for children. Lack of finance or misallocation of funds is to blame for classrooms lacking necessary materials. This complex issue may be addressed in a number of ways, including by increasing funding, reducing expenses, or rethinking current spending patterns at educational institutions. This is a widespread issue that has to be addressed if we wish to see improved educational opportunities for today's youth.

The participants shared their thought as:

"It was difficult for us teachers at the time when we had two modalities since we had to focus on both teaching and our face-to-face classes. I learned from my face-to-face classes that you should plan your lessons in advance; one of the tools I used was LAS, or Learning Activity Sheets. A few carefully chosen teachers were employing the technique to help the students comprehend the lessons. In addition to reviewing all the assignments that the students completed inside the classroom Additionally, remote learning is highly challenging due to our school's resource shortage. For instance, not all teachers had printers, so we had to print our modules quickly so that others could do the same. That was my experience, ma'am, and in addition to that, the distribution of modules to the children. The route was incredibly bad when we initially delivered the modules, and we had to carry the majority of them on one motorcycle, but we had to do it since it was our responsibility as teachers to do so, despite how difficult it was. notwithstanding how challenging it was, to deliver the modules. That's all I have to say, ma'am". **Participant 7, Teacher I, F**

On the Challenges Encountered by Teachers Handling Modular Distance Learning and Progressive Limited Face-to-Face.

As a result, the task of delivering instruction has transferred to a new phase of the educational process. Inquiry, hands-on experience, socialization, and constructivism are just few of the pedagogical approaches that have been used to instruct students. Teachers may not feel confident in their ability to teach the topic remotely while using these pedagogies (Lichoro, 2015), and many students may not benefit from them. Teachers who are new to facilitating instruction through distance learning may feel unprepared to do so and, as a result, need assistance with technical, pedagogical, and time management issues (Dyment, 2013). Teachers' reliance on technology in the classroom, however, often leaves them unprepared and underqualified (Nilson & Goodson, 2018). In this context, digital literacy is increasingly seen as an essential skill for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. But it still has drawbacks, such as expensive upkeep and usage, easy access to digital tools and materials, and user inexperience.

The following sub-themes were generated from the challenges of teachers handling modular distance learning modality and progressively limited face-to-face. **a. work overload, b. the difficulty of modules transportation and distribution, c. cognitive disabilities and slow communication skills, and d. trouble using technology.**

The first theme generated by the challenges of the teachers handling two learning modalities was **work overload**. Thus, work overload happens when job demands exceed an individual's ability to deal with them.

The participants shared their thoughts:

"You must be a flexible teacher if you want to teach these two modalities, in my opinion. When we say versatile, we mean that you had to deal with face-to-face classes and the printing of modules. Being able to accept that kind of challenge during the pandemic was made much easier for me by my ability to be a flexible instructor.

That was the difficulty I encountered; even with a large workload, teachers had to put in their time. You worry too much about whether you can print every module, especially when printing modules. The printer would occasionally break down, forcing you to adjust your schedule and sometimes stay late at home". **Participant 3, Teacher II, M**

The second theme generated in the responses of the participants was the **Difficulty of modules' transportation and distribution.**

Some students will have other options than distance learning. If a student has trouble focusing in a classroom setting, they may find success with an online course (Ma & Wei, 2016). The structure of the emerging curriculum is determined by students' needs as expressed in dialogue with their instructors.

As the participant shared their experiences on this issue;

"Printing of modules, aside from printing of modules is also the transportation of modules since the students were not able to go here, go to school so it's also to become challenge supposedly their parents where the one who get the modules. But since the parents actually will not go to school, we teachers were force to be one who will give the modules at their door step so that became the transportation of modules, and also the retrieval of modules as well because, too ng ana nabibigay sa knya ang modules the questions is nababalik ba ang modules. At kung nabalik ba , nasagot ba? Kung may sagot ba, merun ba talagang learning na nangyari so yun yung pika challenges na nag mixed up during the implementation of modules distance learning.Cguro yung transportation of module talaga kasi yung una kasi, di ba nag barangay barangay and then it was found out na parang hindi sya masyadong effective na nag barangay kasi hindi kumukuha lahat tapos naisip ng admin with the suggestion ng mga teachers also na yung ganito every week gagawin so parang napaka hassel , once lng ginawa or twice so how much more kung yun ang maging routine mo so yun yung major challenges dito yung pag transport ng module along with the printing of module". **Participant 3, Teacher II.M**

"In my experience, it was challenging to gather modules during the modular period because some students failed to do so. I must conduct a home visitation there, so I must go to inquire about the student's development. For me, that was a very difficult experience". **Participant 4, F**

When it comes to building targeted knowledge and skills, tailored training through modules is among the most efficient and cost-effective methods available. Learning is induced by modules with little involvement from the instructor. Also, by setting attainable learning objectives within a personalized study plan, these help students learn and grade more effectively, enhance classroom management, and make better use of the school's current resources.

The third theme generated as **Cognitive disabilities and slow communication skills.**

K-12 students adopting modular distant learning faced unprecedented difficulties due to the COVID-19 epidemic. This research develops a theoretical framework for measuring student

satisfaction using Transactional Distance Theory (TDT), which is defined as comprehending the effects of distance learning in the cognitive domain, and employs Bloom's Taxonomy Theory (BTT) for gauging academic performance.

As the participants shared their challenges they met;

"As a teacher mam ,the challenges that i have experienced in our school of course education is really important to us mam, for our individual improvement, it allow us to be prepare for our future and for life experiences the challenges that I have encountered is balancing the needs of every student, some of the students cannot comprehend and also lack of instant communication. Of course, lalo na sa grade 7, fisrt I identify non-readers". **Participant 6, Teacher I, F**

"Sa face to face namn malaking adjustment sa akin as a teacher kasi especially sa Math wala talaga sila masyadong learning noong pandemic so kahit yung mga basic na lang yung like factoring or basic operation ng mathematics mahirapan sila , in my case ang ginagawa ko is back to basic talaga ako , so hindi ako pwedeng magpatuloy or mag continue sa topic ko na hindi muna mag review ng dating topic kasi hindi yung tinuturo ko , ginagawa ko minsan ako na mag adjust para sa mga bata and then sa mga naga module naman may mga bata na ngtatanong medyo adjust naman ako kung anu yung nagawa nila ng answer yun na alng pag tiyagaan ng mga teachers , kapg may question sila yun na lng din ang sagot. So ngayun review muna bago magturo".

The last theme generated based on the responses of the participants was **Trouble using technology.**

In online distance learning (ODL), the teacher takes on the role of a guide, encouraging student participation via the use of a variety of internet-based technologies. The Internet facilitates communication between educators and students. Online education makes synchronous instruction possible. Participants must have access to a reliable, safe internet connection. Getting immediate feedback makes this kind of distant education more engaging than others. The course materials, assignments, and even classes themselves may all be accessed by the students online. A learning management system (LMS) or comparable technology makes this easy and fast (Llego, 2020).

Students' capacity for discovery and their learning abilities seem to have been affected by this innovative platform, modular remote learning. Distance learning studies have also received a lot of attention from academics, who have utilized a variety of theoretical frameworks to evaluate student happiness and success in the classroom.

As the participant shared their experiences as:

"One of the difficulties I faced was the fact that I had no idea how to use devices. the weak signal, too. I approached my coworkers for aid because I have trouble using technology. I sought the assistance of my colleague instructor to learn how to print a booklet-style module because printing them on a single sheet of paper would be a waste of paper. And that makes me pleased because they're also prepared to offer me their assistance and impart information. I had encountered a paper jam and was unsure of what to do, so I called my fellow instructor, ma'am Norma. Naturally, the students missed two years of face-to-face classes during which time some of them displayed a lack of interest in their studies and others found employment. But I was able to persuade them to return to school and pick up their studies. I'm more pleased that they heed my guidance and words of encouragement". **Participant 10, Teacher I, F**

When instructors have greater expertise with online teaching and learning, there is a

shift toward collaborative activities via online integration (Campos, Laferriere, & Harasim, 2001). They also thought about the shift in responsibilities that would be placed on teachers and students should they decide to create such a setting. Collaborative benefits were also highlighted in other research on the internet. Learning is facilitated by online collaborative actions, as documented by Stacey (1999) in an earlier ethnographic study of three collaborative groups of distance-education students pursuing a Master of Business Administration degree. These activities included electronic and non-electronic means of seeking feedback and clarifying ideas generated via electronic group communication, as well as sharing the many viewpoints of group members.

On the Coping Mechanism, to address those challenges experienced by the teachers handling two learning modalities

The theme generated were, **a. created lesson plans that were appropriate for my two groups of learners, b. thinking positively and pessimistically, and c. time management.**

Numerous studies have shown that teachers experience stress at alarming rates (He et al., 2000; Ravichandran and Rajendran, 2007; Ling, 1995; Jamal and Baba, 2001; Jamal, 1999; Nhundu, 1998). Many things may be stressful. Stress sufferers generally agree that it is on the rise in modern society and is responsible for a wide range of negative outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. Educators are not exempt from this (Anderson, 1997).

The first coping mechanism of the teachers handling two learning modalities was **to create lesson plans that were appropriate for my two groups of learners.**

I used improvised modules or LAS- Learning Activity Sheets in modular distance learning as there was already a printed module available last year because the student was unable to attend class due to the fear of COVID-19 because LAS was more participatory, so the students will readily understand their lectures. Modules were more general, while LAS was more focused. To be reminded if I was teaching set B and set A the proper lesson, I also update my weekly lesson plan. A least with synchronized learning no students will be left behind". Participant 1, Teacher II, M

The second theme generated was **thinking positively and pessimistically.**

As the participant shared:

"The finest part was that you must first adjust yourself because something unexpected would happen. There have been many changes, but you should remain optimistic rather than stressed. Then, adopt a cheerful outlook. Don't worry instead, keep your attention on the task at hand as you still have a young child to raise. I believe it worked for me because I handled the difficulties, I encountered throughout the epidemic by doing my job and carrying out my obligations. Okay, the best coping strategy was unquestionably to think positively because it's challenging to do so when you're pessimistic. If you had a bad attitude, you would view everything negatively. But if you're in a good frame of mind, go with the flow. Spend less time worrying. Manage your time wisely because your family still needs you. You must control your time because of the demand for printing modules. I appreciate you very much, ma'am, sharing your experiences and difficulties. I appreciate you giving your tool to help me become a capable teacher who can instruct the children. God bless you and thank you". Participant 2, Teacher I,F

Lastly, another theme generated was **time management.**

Time management means organizing your time intelligently – so that you use it more effectively. The benefits of good time management include greater productivity, less stress, and more opportunities to do the things that matter. Mind Tools offers a wealth of resources to improve your time-management skills.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS

The study aimed to explore the experiences of teachers handling modular distance learning and progressive limited face-to-face, to describe the challenges encountered by teachers handling modular distance learning and progressive limited face-to-face, and lastly, to narrate their coping mechanism to address those challenges they experienced.

This research used qualitative research which is a research approach that allows the researcher to interpret the life of people to understand their problems better and deeper to generate solutions that are relevant to their situations. The participants of the study were 10 teachers handling limited face-to-face and modular distance learning. A structured guide survey questionnaire was utilized to collect the necessary information and responses come from the participants of the study. Thematic analysis was employed to process the responses of the participants.

The salient findings of the study are:

On the experiences of teachers handling modular distance learning modality and progressively limited face-to-face, the following themes were generated: (a) Challenging in teaching two learning modalities; (b) unable to teach them simultaneously; (c) communication barrier; (d) armed conflict, redo's and inaccessible road; and (e) school's shortage of resources.

On the challenges of teachers handling modular distance learning modality and progressive limited face-to-face, the following themes were generated: (a) work overload; (b) difficulty of modules transportation and distribution; (c) cognitive disabilities and slow communication skills; and (d) trouble using technology.

Interestingly, the coping mechanism to address those challenges handling two learning modalities, the themes generated were: (a) creating lesson plans that were appropriate for my two groups of learners; (b) thinking positively and pessimistically; (c) and time management.

5. CONCLUSION

The following themes were generated, (a.) Challenging in teaching two learning modalities, unable to teach them simultaneously, (b) communication barrier, (c) Armed conflict (d) redo's and inaccessible roads, and school's shortage of resources.

For teachers handling modular distance learning modality and progressively limited face-to-face, the following themes were generated, (a) work overload, (b)the difficulty of modules transportation and distribution, (c)cognitive disabilities, and (d) slow communication skills, and trouble using technology.

The coping mechanism to address those challenges they experienced by the teachers handling two learning modalities, the theme generated were, (a)creating lesson plans that were appropriate for my two groups of learners, (b)thinking positively, and (c) pessimistically, and time management.

From the salient findings of this study and conclusion, the following recommendations were suggested:

1. The school may continue its school health program or protocols that will protect teachers, students and schoolgoers.

2. The teachers may sustain their best practices in handling in-person classes.
3. That this study be replicated in wide scope to have a clearer picture of in-person classes quantitatively.

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