



THE EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The study employed qualitative research, particularly phenomenological study. The experiences of teachers in the implementation of distance learning education focused on making learning convenient, producing MELC-based instruction learning materials, and using available technology in the teaching-learning process. The teachers also fostered a reward system and assessed the learning outcomes for various reasons. The preferred teaching modalities were technology-based, offered diverse and flexible learning, and encouraged independent studies, insight, and skills development. The teachers' reaction to distance learning education and assessment of the learning outcome depended on their ability to adapt to changes. Distance learning education has many challenges, such as a lack of interaction and communication between learners and teachers, physical, mental, and emotional struggles, low-quality learning materials, unreliable and invalid assessment tools, and delayed feedback. To address these challenges, teachers have opted for professional development through online webinars and training and provided quality assurance for LAS/modules before production and distribution. The findings of this study suggest that teachers in distance learning education experience making learning convenient, creative, and innovative course content, rewarding learners for their accomplishments, and assessing learners for learning purposes. They also believe that being proactive and embracing distance education wholeheartedly is a focal solution to these challenges. Innovative learning activities can be proposed based on this study. Challenges encountered by teachers include physical and mental struggles, lack of interaction, poor quality of learning materials, and the professional and personal capacity of the teachers.

KEYWORDS: *DISTANCE LEARNING EDUCATION, TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES, AND CHALLENGES*

INTRODUCTION:

The Department of Education implemented distance education as a temporary solution to

the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused fear and distress among learners, parents, and educators. The researcher was apprehensive

about the implemented modality, but adapted to the changes and ensured that learners received a quality education. Educators continue to seek avenues to provide for the educational needs of the learners amidst challenges, and UNICEF's definition of quality education must be open to change and evolution based on information, changing context, and a new understanding of the nature of education's challenges. Distance education is a type of learning where students and teachers are separated geographically, providing an alternative solution to promoting quality education while ensuring learners' safety against the pandemic. There are different learning modalities in distance education, such as online teaching, remote learning, blended learning, mobile learning, modular instruction, and ERE.

However, the unplanned and rapid transition from traditional in-person or face-to-face learning presents challenges and takes a toll on both learners and teachers alike. Distance Education in the Philippines has been implemented as part of the government's campaign to bring education to learners who cannot afford to enroll in regular classes. The Department of Education implemented distance learning in different modalities to maintain social distancing and avoid further contamination of the pandemic, and the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan was drafted to continue learning. The Department of Education revised the essential competencies of the learners per grade level to Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). Parents are the most important role in distance education, and modular distance education is preferred by most Philippine public schools. The Sorsogon Pilot Elementary School has implemented distance

learning education to cater to learners in rural areas.

ABSTRACT

This study attempted to find out the experiences and challenges of teachers in the implementation of distance learning education. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of teachers on the implementation of distance learning education:
 - a. Teaching learning engagement
 - b. Assessment of learning outcomes
2. How do teachers respond to distance learning education being implemented along:
 - a. Teaching learning engagement
 - b. Assessment of learning outcomes
3. What are the preferred teaching modalities employed by the teachers in distance learning education in terms of:
 - a. Teaching learning engagement
 - b. Learning resource materials
 - c. Assessment of learning outcomes
4. What are the challenges of teachers in distance learning education along with:
 - a. Teaching learning engagement
 - b. Learning resource materials
 - c. Assessment of learning outcomes
5. What innovative teaching-learning activities can be designed to enhance the delivery of distance learning education?

This study utilized the phenomenological method of research. This method is descriptive research which is best suited to provide description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of the experiences of teachers in the implementation of distance learning education.

There are 20 teacher participants involved in this study. These teachers were teaching at Sorsogon Pilot Elementary School.

Findings

From the data gathered, analyzed, and interpreted, the following findings are revealed:

1. The Experiences of the Teachers on the Implementation of Distance Learning Education

a. The experiences of teachers in the implementation of distance learning education along the teaching-learning engagement focus on making the learning convenient through the conduction of online classes, producing MELC-based instruction learning materials, using available technology in the teaching-learning process, and following WHLP. The teachers also make content courses creative by innovating to cater to the learners' needs and adjusting activities according to the learners' level. The teachers likewise foster a reward system through positive feedback and praise for a well-accomplished job.

b. The teachers assessed the learning outcomes for various reasons. Assessment of learning outcomes becomes the basis for creating learning materials, and remedial, reinforcement, and/or intervention activities.

Similarly, the assessment of learning is also employed by the teachers through the regular evaluation through quizzes and assessment of knowledge acquired.

2. How do Teachers Respond to Distance Learning Education Implementation

a. The learners' skills development is subjected to the way the teachers respond to distance learning education and their ability to adapt to changes. The teachers respond to distance learning education along with teaching-learning engagement by motivating the learners, providing interactive learning, and using appropriate learning materials.

b. The teachers' reaction to distance learning education along with an assessment of the learning outcome depends on the teachers' ability to adapt to changes. The teachers ensure that their assessment tools are valid and reliable as well as generate accurate results.

3. The Preferred Teaching Modalities Employed by Teachers

1. The teachers' preference in teaching modality along with teaching-learning engagement. According to the result, the teachers prefer technology-based, offer diverse and flexible learning, and encourage independent studies, insight, and skills development. Teacher- participants clarified, however, that this does not necessarily mean adhering to the online learning modality, but can be assisted using technology.

2. In terms of learning resource materials, the teachers preferred a modality with an unlimited range of activities. The majority of the respondents preferred sufficient learning resource materials that can be provided by the parents. These materials

are to be used by the learners in supplementing learning at home.

3. In assessing the learning outcome, the teachers implored that the modalities of learning should cater to credit assessment results. It should likewise foster reliable and valid assessment tools. The teachers also preferred a learning modality where they can provide timely feedback to the learners.

4. The Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Distance Education

1. There are challenges in the implementation of distance learning education. The teachers considered the lack of interaction and communication between learners and teachers as a major challenge in teaching-learning engagement in distance education. Along with this, the teacher participants informed that they suffer physical, mental, and emotional struggles as they navigate distance learning education. The teachers considered the latter as a challenge they have to overcome.

2. The learning resource materials in distance learning education had some concerns that the teacher-respondents perceived as major challenges. Among these, the teachers are unable to produce modules on time and low-quality learning materials. The respondents implored that the quality of learning materials has an impact on the learning outcome.

3. One of distance learning education's main concerns is the assessment of learning outcomes. Consequently, the teachers viewed unreliable and invalid assessment tools as major challenges. Accordingly, the purpose of the assessment was not met. The authenticity of the assessment result can be

posed as a challenge for teachers. They contend that the test result is doubtful. Delayed feedback is also a challenge in the assessment of the learning outcome. Compared to face-to-face learning, teachers cannot provide outright feedback to learners.

4. The teachers recognized these challenges. Hence, they opted for professional development through online webinars and training on distance learning education and provide quality assurance for LAS/modules before the production and distribution of modules. They also believe that being proactive and embracing distance education wholeheartedly is a focal solution to these challenges.

5. Proposed Innovative Learning Activities

Innovative learning activities can be proposed based on this study

Conclusion

Considering the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The experiences of teachers in the implementation of distance learning education along with teaching learning engagement include making learning convenient, creative, and innovative course content and rewarding the learners for their accomplishments. Meanwhile, along with the assessment of learning, the teachers assessed the learners for learning purposes and evaluation of their acquired knowledge.

2. The response of teachers in the implementation of distance learning education is discernable in the teaching and

learning context which includes three modes that are influenced by the teachers' adaptability to changes: the teaching-learning engagement, the skills development of the learners which relies on the teaching-learning engagement of the teachers and the assessment of the learning outcomes, and the Assessment of the learning outcomes.

3. The preference modality of teachers in distance learning education offers diverse learning activities, is flexible, and fosters independent learning. It should likewise have sufficient learning materials and can be assessed with reliable and valid tools.

4. The challenges encountered by teachers in distance learning education were the physical and mental struggles of teachers and the lack of interaction with learners. The poor quality of learning materials is likewise considered a challenge. The respondents considered the professional and personal capacity of the teachers as focal solutions to these challenges.

Recommendations

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, the researcher highly recommends the following:

1. Further training is given to teachers for the implementation of distance learning education through the DLAC of SLAC.
2. Technical support is provided to teachers in the implementation of distance learning modalities.
3. Distance learning education be included in the SIP's Key Reform Areas.
4. Innovative learning activities be adopted to enhance the learning outcome in distance learning education.

5. Further studies be conducted with the following proposed topics:

- Remote Education in the Sorsogon: Its impact on the academic performance of the learners
- The Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Distance Education: Basis for Action Plan
- The Competencies of Teachers in the Implementation of Distance Learning Education