

The Experiences and Challenges Faced of the Public School Teachers Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Phenomenological Study in the Philippines

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Abstract

This study explores the lived experiences of the public school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic. The responses were analyzed through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The following were study's findings: (1) Most teachers are significantly challenged by lack of resources, handling of students, and the submission and workloads that contribute to stress and burnout. (2) The occurrence of the digital age limited most public-school teachers. They hardly perform specific tasks for the students virtually, provide an effective learning environment, and communicate with students, given that the resources are inadequate. (3) Public-school teachers cope, resorting to the right communication and understanding in their circumstances. (4) Teachers gain positive experiences despite stress and burnout, it includes their passion, relationships build, and the fulfillment of their duty.

Keywords: Public School Teachers, Online Learning, COVID-19, Philippines

1. INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic of COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally affected nearly every area of life, including education, and Philippines has not been an exception. COVID-19 episode are experiencing issues finishing on the web work without their teachers' in-person direction. It tends to be disappointing when a teacher doesn't react to an email as fast as like, or when understudies don't comprehend a task because their educator isn't there to show the exercise, according to SJ express (2020). Even though separation learning is to be sure muddled for understudies, they are not by any means the only ones battling with online school. Teachers need to manage the entanglements and battle Coronavirus has caused inside the training framework too. The pinnacle of the infection presently can't seem to come, and teachers are experiencing the pressure that causes – they are experiencing a worldwide pandemic as well.

The enormous changes ever, humanity was stunned when COVID-19 ejected, Countless positive is persistently raising. The clash of humankind against the COVID-19 started in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The full civilization influences this unnoticeable and invisible to the oculus infection that spread inside the entire world. Philippines could be a high-risk nation from

the coronavirus outbreak. It's inducing a substantial degree of fear, worry, and stress. 18% of participants and depression are people with poor sleep habits and younger people, according to Schafe (2020). The prevalence of COVID-19 is indiscriminate in life. No one can forestall this infection. Regardless of whether you're rich or helpless, it can move toward you.

The immediate transitions and improved sophistication of today's world existing challenges and establish new demands on our education system, Department of Education (DepEd) generates plenty of problems for students and teachers, but because the government's signed to pursue the school year 2020-2021. The teacher, who considers the second mother of a student, was having a tough time addressing the new normal founded. Simultaneously, the shortage of apparatus and material support at the start of the category, whether or not we Filipinos can handle this new test in our lives. With this, plenty of scholars and even teachers experience stress and burnout while sailing amid the pandemic.

Thus, the present study aims to provide knowledge and investigate the lived experiences of the public school teachers during this new normal amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.1 Research Questions

The present study aimed to describe the lived experiences of public-school teachers amidst the pandemic. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of public-school teachers amidst the pandemic?
2. What are the challenging experiences of public-school teachers amidst the pandemic?
3. What are the coping mechanisms of public-school teachers amidst the pandemic?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A study investigating the stress teachers go through when utilizing technology also depicts the increase in anxiety teachers are susceptible to now that the new learning model has shifted to online forms. The study revealed that many teachers who are not within the "Millennial" and Gen Z timeframe are more prone to distress (Al-Fudail & Mellar, 2008).

"Teachers do not situate well in blended forms of learning" this is what a study on online learning states on the problems in the classes. Teachers are not trained or educated to teach virtually, so blended learning is not their normative teaching platform. This confusion causes distress and frustration across the educating community (Dziuban et al., 2018).

Thus, the stress causes and manifestation to public schools' teachers at the secondary education level. This study proved that one of the primary reasons for teachers' stress is time and concern for students. Many educators feel morally responsible for their students' wellbeing (Nyambongi, 2014).

A work from home analysis done in India showed that teachers must commit to most new educational processes, which renders them incapable of prioritizing their mental health (Pajarianto et al., 2020).

A case study on the stress state of teachers and students in Stockholm, Sweden, revealed that any sudden change in the learning environment causes disparity and even depression across teachers. This is particularly amongst the administrative heads of educational institutions (Ramberg, 2019).

Almost 9 of 10 teachers feel incredibly stressed and anxious, following the shift caused by the pandemic. Additionally, the survey report also revealed that 81% of the educators who were respondents of the study are putting in more than 14 hours a day to finish their professional responsibilities (Schaffhauser, 2020).

UNICEF Thailand (2020) recently published a forthcoming article discussing the adjustments teachers and students are currently undertaking given the pandemic's current situation. It was also concerned that health and education are two critical ideas that must not overlap each other.

A study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania (2016) showed that stress levels might negatively affect teachers' efficacy and ability to educate students properly. Mental and emotional distractions were found to cause improper anger management and procrastination amongst teachers.

According to a study-based report, teachers in the new normal would have to employ new practices and forms of management both professionally and emotionally to adapt to the virus outbreak changes fully. The report provided a structured timeline for response management, such as guidance, utilizing technology, and forming digital re-creational activities (Wyman, 2020).

A study surveying the impact of the virus pandemic on the general population showed that the most implicated the most affected populace are educators. More than stress, trauma is also a prevalent mental disruption brought upon the virus, which is why careful threading to online classes must be widely applied (U.T. Research Showcase, 2020).

The burnout among elementary, middle school, and secondary teachers in an enormous metropolitan government-funded educational system. Subjects were 939 educators in the San Diego Unified School District. They reacted to another survey that evaluated different teachers' parts and their positions, including segment factors, showing atmosphere, work pressure, disappointment, mental impacts of burnout, and related actual indications. Results demonstrated that there is a wide variety in the level of burnout teachers' experience. No distinctions were found in helplessness to burnout because of segment factors, for example, age, sex, grade level, subject educated, or long stretches of involvement. (Hock, 1988)

The First Look report presents information from a spring 2009 Fast Response Survey System study on the accessibility and utilization of instructive innovation by open rudimentary/auxiliary teachers. The teacher overview remembers data for the utilization of P.C.s and Internet access in the study hall; accessibility and utilization of registering gadgets, programming, and school or area organizations (counting remote access) by educators; understudies' utilization of instructive innovation; educators' readiness to utilize informative design for guidance; and innovation related proficient improvement exercises (Gray, 2010).

According to a survey of school factors related to teacher burnout. The hierarchical qualities of those schools wherein most educators announced significant burnout levels (high-burnout schools) and schools in which most teachers detailed low-burnout story (low-burnout schools) were distinguished and thought about. The discoveries in this investigation showed that four significant school culture factors add to educator burnout: (a) the drive toward quantifiable objective accomplishment conduct forced on teachers by school organization, (b) absence of trust in teachers' expert ampleness, (c) encircling school culture, (d) and upsetting actual climate. Age, sex, level of schooling, and some years in instructing are foundation factors connected with high and low burnout degrees (Friedman, 2010).

According to sources of stress and burnout, indications were inspected in 51 rustics and 46 metropolitan auxiliary teachers from 11 educational systems in Georgia and North Carolina. Metropolitan teachers experienced more pressure from helpless working conditions and weak staff relations than did rustic teachers fundamentally. Braid from understudy bad conduct and time pressures was fundamentally more prominent than stress from vulnerable working conditions and vulnerable staff relations for both country and metropolitan teachers. Helpless working conditions and time pressures anticipated burnout for rustic teachers; student mischief

and weak working conditions anticipated burnout for urban teachers. Results were examined according to planning influential projects to forestall the negative impacts of pressure and burnout (Millicent, 1999).

Teachers from countries over the world are isolated from their understudies just as their associates. The feeling of disconnection and dejection that may emerge from this current condition is one known reason for teacher burnout. As per Christina Maslach, burnout is "a disorder of passionate fatigue, depersonalization, and diminished individual achievement that can happen among people who do 'human work' or some likeness thereof. It is a reaction to the persistent, passionate strain of managing other people, exceedingly when they are grieved or having issues. Notwithstanding sentiments of separation, different reasons for burnout adjusted to current COVID-19 conditions incorporate sensations of inefficacy and an absence of control or debilitation. Not exclusively are educators learning new stages for instructing - Zoom, Canvas, Google Classroom - however, they should likewise plan this new figuring out how to guarantee that understudies generally worried about GPAs keep on getting simple input on their realizing, that the most social understudies have occasions to share their contemplations and take part in real and significant conversation just as community work in a virtual space, and that they utilize best pieces on including socially responsive educating and establish a safe web-based learning climate (Hart, 2020).

According to an article on how approaches to diminish teacher stress and lift their ability to play out their best. School pioneers can help reduce teacher stress by developing working conditions that help educators. Educators experience less pressure and resolve to occupations all the more regularly under agreeable working conditions. Schools can likewise help diminish educator stress by advancing successful teacher understudy connections. One approach to achieve this is by utilizing systems that reward positive understudy practices. Educators additionally need to ensure they deal with themselves so they can deal with others. Without effectively thinking about themselves, educators lose the ability to think about others (Ketchell, 2018).

The assessment of Burnout Syndrome's measure in 100 teachers of six public secondary schools and its relationship with working conditions in Brazil's southeast city. The portrayal of the example happened after the use of a socio-segment poll. Methods for an Ergonomic Working Analysis finished the assessment of the working conditions. Plans for the Maslach Burnout Inventory assessed the presence of Burnout Syndrome. The example introduced ladies' power, with a typical time of 40.4 and the larger part wedded with kids. Generally, half had under ten years of administration, and the more significant part of the teachers showed over 18 classes every week. Dryness after work was revealed among ladies, which required multiple days off for wellbeing treatment (Santana, 2012).

The Teachers associations would assume a restricted part in state-funded instruction, battling for better compensation and working conditions for its individuals. The educators' blends presumably have more impact on state-funded schools than some other gathering in American culture. In joining base up and top-down effect and consolidating them as powerfully as they do, educators' associations are exceptional among instructive entertainers and vital to comprehend America's state-funded schools. This is a momentous situation. My motivation here is to give a raw, useful diagram of the essential jobs that teachers associations play in state-funded training and to propose why, if Americans need to comprehend and improve their state-funded schools, the associations at this point be disregarded (Moe, n.d.).

A case study that Eeducator stress through assessment of the encounters of 57 teachers and instructive presiding officers who had left the New South Wales Department of School Education. Information was assembled through open-finished meetings and examined utilizing grounded hypothesis methods. After inspecting 10 of the 57 respondents' encounters, generally speaking, discoveries are identified with the writing followed by suggestions for the instructive framework concerned, which may well have more extensive hugeness. While stress was not discovered to be the primary source of teacher renunciation, it was essential for educators' everyday existence and a huge contributing variable to abdication (Dinham,1993).

According to Angela (2009), a few teachers are significantly more viable than others, yet customary pointers of capability (e.g., affirmation) clarify the insignificant difference in execution. The afflictions of instructing propose that positive characteristics that cushion against misfortune may add to teacher viability. In this planned longitudinal investigation, beginner teachers (N = 390) put in under-resourced state-funded schools finished proportions of hopeful illustrative style, coarseness, and life fulfillment preceding the school year. At the finish of the school year, teacher adequacy was estimated regarding the scholarly gains of understudies. Each of the three positive qualities independently anticipated teacher execution. When entered at the same time, be that as it may, just coarseness and life fulfillment stayed critical indicators. These discoveries recommend that positive qualities ought to be considered in the choice and preparation of teachers (Angela, 2009).

An examination decided the impacts of teacher's study hall adequacy on understudy's scholarly presentation in open auxiliary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. The plan was distinct, and it included 300 teachers, Academic execution records of 50 understudies for each educator, which is 1690 understudies' scores, were likewise utilized. Surveys and rating scales were used to gather information for the investigation. Three speculations were tried at the 0.05 level of criticalness utilizing connection, t-test, and single-factor study of change. The outcomes indicated that influential educators created better performing understudies. In any case, the watched contrasts in understudies' presentation were measurably not huge. This could be because of the impact of understudy and school climate-related elements, which were excluded from this examination. It was presumed that teachers' viability isn't the primary determinant of understudies' academic accomplishment (Akiri, 2013).

Encouraging English in Turkey has its likely issues because of the absence of valid language input. Turkey is an unknown dialect setting. This blocks students in their acing English in a brief timeframe. Besides, different issues brought about by poor instructional arranging add to this cycle adversely. With these likely obstructions, the current examination intends to look for various difficulties cripple grade schools for educating/learning English. Directed with 20-grade teachers working at state-funded schools in Turkey, information was gathered utilizing a semi-organized meeting. Results show that poor institutional arranging is the fundamental driver of difficulties experienced by English language educators. Other than this, instructional and socio-social/monetary issues are different difficulties for educating English. (Kizildag,2009)

According to a study, the reason for the current examination is to decide auxiliary government-funded teachers' observations about hierarchical equity and whether these recognitions vary across sex, age, status, branch, instructive foundation, the number of understudies, and the number of educators. The members of the investigation comprised of 222 optional government-funded teachers chose from Kutahya territory. The information was assembled by utilizing the Organizational Justice Scale. For information investigation, graphic insights, t-test, and one way-ANOVA were used. As per the research findings, the members have positive discernments about

authoritative equity at optional schools. Their discernments varied by age, position, and the number of understudies, though they didn't across sex, branch, instructive foundation, and educators' quantity (Yilmaz, 2010).

According to past examination, studies have shown the positive effect that exploring has upon educators' showing instructional methods and expert development. Be that as it may, a couple of studies concerning the difficulties and advantages of investigating have been led in the Philippines and the ASEAN area. This investigation explores Philippine government-funded teachers' encounters in directing a school or a study hall research venture. The information was gathered through individual meetings controlled by 11 public secondary school English teachers in Mindanao, Philippines. Discoveries propose that even though educators' inspirations to do explore were closer to home than proficient, teachers perceived a few advantages of doing school and study hall-based exploration for their showing practices and professional improvement. Difficulties accounted for include the absence of monetary help, substantial showing load, absence of exploration abilities and information, and absence of examination materials and assets. Suggestions are talked about considering the discoveries and proposals figured for future examination bearings (Mark, 2018).

According to an examination, we asked into optional public teachers' capabilities by looking at whether educators met the No Child Left Behind Act's meaning of "profoundly qualified" quickly preceding the law's authorization. We inspected this by center scholastic subjects (English, social investigations, math, and science) and, especially, in the subfields of (science, geology, life science, actual science, and material science). We also asked into the educators' conveyance recognized as exceptionally qualified in their fundamental showing tasks by school areas (urban, rural, and rustic) and by schools with various degrees of minority understudy enlistment. In this examination, a profoundly qualified educator has, in any event, a four-year college education, full state confirmation, and a sign in the subject instructed. We broke down information extricated from the 1999–2000 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). Results uncovered that the rates of profoundly qualified teachers in the center subjects, particularly in the subfields of technical disciplines, were a long way from palatable. By and large, the level of profoundly qualified educators in their primary tasks was 72.8. Be that as it may, the group of qualified teachers in the geology subfield was just 15.7, when dictated by each subject an educator educates (Xuejin, 2007).

A cross-sectional study is examining the relations of stress and online learning amongst those in the undergraduate populace it revealed that learning alienation is the leading cause for emotional and mental disturbance across students and teacher. The study finds that this particular finding is an essential factor that needs further examination and recognition (Hoang, 2015).

A study entitled, *Stress and Coping Strategies Among Distance Education Students at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana*, discusses the coping strategies that the educational system can do to manage an increase in stress. This aids the study in examining the recommendations to be proposed at the end of the study. A recent study examining the effects of the online learning system motivated by the pandemic found that student-teacher relations are compromised. This brings stress to both parties because mediated communication poses risks of miscommunication and weakened relationships. Given this, it is crucial to ensure the permanence and conditioned learning atmosphere amongst students (Moawad, 2020). In a web-based study examining the effects of stress on faculty and students' overall psychological well-being, it was found that adjustment by the very system is needed. It is to have a fully functioning and healthy learning environment. This means that the study proposes that systematic reform fully encompasses the

effects of stress (Pertuz & Sebastian, 2017). A study examining the proportional relationship between online learning and its effects on the learning community found that students and teachers tend to have increased stress levels, which prohibits them from functioning correctly. This entails that the mode of learning has a correlational relationship with the stress intensity within educational systems (Silinda & Brubacher, 2016)

In a comprehensive study done here in the Philippines, "stress" and "mental state" showed themselves to be one of the factors influencing the overall preparedness of students and faculties to integrate with online learning for the new normal (Calao & Yazon, 2020).

According to Granthorn (2020). The Philippine-teachers are mostly and adamantly stressed due to lack of budget, and here it revealed that teachers are in distress is looking for ways to ensure that they given an account by their local governments would meet the needs of all of their students.

On its official website, the Philippine Government (2020) showcased the coping guideline designed to help educators cope with the shift and transition to the new normal. Guidance and counseling are still virtually available for students and teachers alike disturbed by the pandemic.

A local study examining how teachers deal with anxiety here in the Philippines showed that the most fundamental reform teachers had done developing different and creative teaching styles. This helped them be more connected to their students, even if interactions are limited (Talidad et al., 2020).

A Philippine-based study viewed the pandemic through education lenses, which revealed that teachers are not psychologically nor skill-prepared for the sudden shift of learning models in the county (Tria, 2020).

Schools' partners are the most influenced during this season of the pandemic. They are generally the ones at a misfortune and are relinquishing, either scholastically, monetarily, or both. The specific accumulated information is expected to clarify the issues and give recommendations on the best way to direct the schools' natural capacities, conceivably during and after the pandemic. In this examination, an aggregate of 220 members originated from 44 different schools. The investigation utilized a simultaneous triangulation research plan in which an online review was shipped off the members. Likewise, educators designing from international schools and schools outside the Philippines were reached to share their encounters with how their schools handle the circumstance. In conclusion, the report examination was additionally used as an information-gathering technique (Gonzales, 2020).

According to a study in March 2020, the Covid infection 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic constrained clinical schools in the Philippines to stop up close and personal learning exercises and unexpectedly moved to an online educational plan. This investigation intended to distinguish obstructions to web-based gaining from the viewpoint of clinical understudies in a non-industrial nation. Technique: The creators conveyed an electronic review to clinical understudies in the Philippines from 11 to 24 May 2020. Utilizing a blend of various decision, Likert scale, and open-finished inquiries, the accompanying information was acquired: socioeconomics, clinical school data, admittance to creative assets, study propensities, everyday environments, self-appraisal of the limit concerning and saw hindrances to web-based learning, and proposed mediations. Illustrative insights were determined. Reactions were looked at between understudy subgroups utilizing nonparametric tests (Ronnie, 2020).

The significant part of setting in the turn of events and practice of educator authority was considered by examining the relevant conditions that either empowered or compelled teacher

administration practice. Information was gathered through semi-organized individual meetings with chiefs and center gathering interviews with educator pioneers and different teachers from seven state-funded schools in the Philippines. The examination found that teacher administration was an essential idea in Philippine state-funded schools regardless of whether the term 'educator initiative' has not been presented officially. Educator initiative comprises of activities attempted by teachers who react decidedly to occasions to improve educating and learning. These teachers have a definite feeling of right reason and imperative educational and authority capabilities (Oracion, 2014).

According to a past study, the all-encompassing target of the exploration is to examine government-funded teachers' momentum budgetary capacity in the Philippines. The flow study zeroed in on the three critical proportions of financial ability: cash the board; power to prepare; and money related literacy. This research followed a clear plan and used the study as its strategy. Frequencies and rates were registered to analyze the three critical proportions of the budgetary capacity of the respondent-teachers. Information accumulated were likewise analyzed as far as locales and school levels. The study was directed among state-funded teachers in two areas: Region IV-An and the NCR (National Capital Region). Results show that state-funded teachers' financial capacity is a long way based on what is wanted and mirrors the negative pattern on money-related ability broadly and globally. Adding to these discoveries are the respondent-teachers' lacking cash the board abilities, low frequency of budgetary arranging, and insufficient information on essential monetary ideas as reflected in their bleak exhibition in the money-related proficiency test (Ferrer, 2018).

Educating may not be the most well-known calling on the planet; however, it is, without a doubt, the most populated. In reality, precisely 57 million teachers on the earth, around 66% of whom work in the creating scene. Throughout the long term, the educator and the instructing calling in the Philippines have been stood up to by different issues and worries that are legitimately or in a roundabout way influence them. The elements of the calling offer a fruitful ground for discussions and conversations (Agarao, 2005).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). It aims to give definite assessments of personal lived experiences. It delivers a record of lived experiences. It is explicitly idiographic in its obligation to examining at the detailed experience of each case in turn, before the transition to more broad cases and claims (Smith & Osborn, 2015). According to Smith and Osborn, IPA is a particularly useful methodology for inspecting themes which are perplexing, equivocal and emotionally laden. The method is phenomenological as it requires an intensive examination of the participants. It means to examine individual's information and concerns a person's translation or portrayal of an article or event rather than an effort to make an empirical statement of the thing or event itself.

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study consisted of Public School Teacher that was currently working in the public school of the study regardless of their demography, ten (10) participants willing to be the participant and qualified as an interviewee.

3.2 Instrument

The study used an interview guide to facilitate the productive and efficient gathering of responses. The questions from the interview guide have embraced content approval to test its reliability. The interview was essentially pilot tested. Upon collection of data, all responses were considered accordingly. After the tool's verification, revision, and alteration followed prior to interviewing with the ten (10) respondents of this research.

3.3 Procedures

In many conditions, it is significant to establish a connection between the researchers and the participants. The rapport-building can be struggling amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it was ascertained by formulating a sense of reliance towards each other and making assistance for participants' circumstances, terminology, and artistic contexts.

The interview guide was composed of twenty-one (21) questions that may last for one hour. Following the initial stages, participants were encouraged to raise any clarification, concerns, and unclear questions due to the technical interruption that may arise. A thorough transcription and analysis were conducted after an online semi-structured interview to make sense of the gathered data. The interview transcription includes the exact verbatim of each participant to avoid uncertainties of the data collection contents.

4. RESULTS

The following sections will present the analysis of data gathered after following an intricate procedure. Based on the data collected, the following themes were identified in this study; namely, (1) lived experiences, (2) challenges, and (3) coping mechanisms.

4.1 Lived Experiences

Indeed teaching is more than a job to every teacher. According to the participants, education allows them to do things with heart and dedication. Likewise, the following subthemes were identified from the data-gathering and which are based on their own perspectives. As shown in Table 1, the following subthemes include: passion, relationship building, and fulfilled duty.

Table 1. Lived Experiences Themes

Lived Experiences	Frequency
Passion	6
Relation Building	5
Fulfilled Duty	4

4.1.1 Passion

According to the participants, one aspect of teaching that they enjoyed the most was finding interest in their students' eyes and the smile on their faces whenever they were teaching. It became their source of motivation and drove them to continue their passion for teaching. Specifically, Teacher no. 1 said;

“Ang mga sandaling nakikita kong masayang natututo ang aking mag-aaral sa aking subject. Ang kanilang mga ngiti at tawa ang nagbibigay sigla at motibasyon ko sa aking pagtuturo. “

Teacher no. 8 shared the same sentiments;

“Siguro everytime na lahat ay interesado sa tinuturo ko or dun sa topic. Kasi kapag ganon parang nagniningning yung mga mata ng mga estudyante na parang sumisigaw na sige Ma’am mag turo ka pa. Ang sayang tingnan kapag gusto nila matuto at nagagawa ko ang tungkulin ko bilang isang guro. “

Their students strengthen their passion for teaching. It became one of the reasons why they enjoyed every single moment of being in front of their students, discussing the lessons. Teacher no. 4 said that;

“Masayang magturo lalo na’t nakakatuwa ang mga estudyante. “

Likewise, it supported the study conducted by Barnes (2018), who stated that teaching is exhausting, especially in things that are hard to miss or forget. Even when grades are done, attending staff meetings, and preparing students for the next exam was still yet to be done. However, Barnes added that by focusing on passion, the occupations could be stretched and energized. For instance, seeing an older student helping with a younger peer is adorable to observe. It indicates that the things you have done became more meaningful once you witness the result of it. Meaning, it is just about doing the things that the people personally loved.

4.1.2 Relationship Building

According to the participants, students spend most of their time in school. With this, they served as the second parent of their students. Specifically, Teacher no. 1 answered;

“Bahagi ng pagiging guro ay ang pagiging pangalawang magulang. Dahil sa mahaba ang oras ng mga mag-aaral sa paaralan kumpara sa bahay, sinisikap naming gabayan sila sa panahong kami ang kanilang nakakasalamuha. “

Moreover, the experiences they had with their students enables them to build a strong relationship with them. Teacher no. 8 said;

*“Nako Nak! Nakaparami. Siguro everytime na may boodle fight sa klase. *laugh* lumalabas ugali ng mga estudyante eh. Sa mga naubusan at hindi nakapasok, tapos kwentuhan. “*

Concerning these, the article in Waterford.org (NASAAN ANG DATE?) stated that students who have had negative interactions with adults might have a tough time trusting teachers. It is more likely that children from low-income or at-risk families have a poor relationship with their teachers. Teachers are more likely to regard these students as possessing personal prejudices. In some situations, these children do not have access to the transportation or academic help they need to excel. On the other hand, if they know their teacher cares for them and can help them excel, they are more inspired to attend classes. And these partnerships will also boost student performance by enhancing school participation.

4.1.3 Fulfilled Duty

Another subtheme identified in the study is fulfilled duty. According to the participants, more than teaching their students, another reason for their happiness was whenever they saw their students earned an accomplishment outside the four corners of the room. They added that they were happy to be part of those accomplishments. Specifically, Teacher no. 8 said;

"Alam mo everytime na may contest sa school tapos kailangan ko mag mentor ng estudyante tapos nananalo yung estudyante grabe yung galak ng puso ko noon... "

Teacher no. 2 shared the same thoughts;

“Ang paborito kong memorya bilang isang guro ng pampubliko ay ng maging isa akong adviser at maging coach din. Lalo na ang mga pagkakataon na may mga kompetisyon sa loob at labas ng paaralan at kami ay nananalo. “

Even though there were things that they did not know at first, this challenge became their stepping stone to become a better teacher for their students. Teacher no. 6 said;

“Nuong simula ay maraming bagay akong hindi alam. Sinubok ng pagtuturo ang aking pasensiya, sipag, at tiyaga, marahil sa pagtuturo ito ay katambal na ng isang guro. Ang tumayo sa harap ng mga estudyante at magbahagi ng makabuluhang bagay ay isa nang kahanga-hangang karanasan para sa akin. “

These experiences of the respondents supported the frontier in Psychology (2019), which said that happy individuals are more likely to live happier lives. The article also included that happiness in the workplace is frequently impaired by incidents that involve one's own job activities. Compared to their baselines, there is evidence that people will experience a higher degree of satisfaction than average days when they feel satisfied in their fundamental requirements for integrity, autonomy, and connectedness in main tasks in their workplace. Likewise, it only indicates how the teachers' job in and out of the classroom brought happiness to their over-all duty and enabled it to be fulfilled meaningfully.

4.2 Challenges

This subordinate theme discusses the struggles encountered by the participants. Likewise, the following subthemes were identified from the data-gathering and which are based on their own perspectives. As shown in Table 2, the following subthemes include lack of resources, handling students, and submission and workload.

Table 2. Challenges themes

Challenges	Frequency
Lack of resources	6
Handling students	3
Submission and Workload	2

4.2.1 Lack of resources

According to the participants, the public school system, such as lack of necessary equipment, brought hardship to the school's key indicators, specifically, teachers and students. Teacher no. 1 said;

“Ang sistema sa pampublikong paaralan ang ilan sa nagiging hamon sa isang guro. Ang kakulangan ng gamit tulad ng libro, upuan, at silid-aralan na nagiging sanhi ng kahirapan sa pag-aaral. “

This particular problem limits them from conducting certain activities. As stated by Teacher no. 6;

“Sa tingin ko ay sa kakulangan ng kagamitan. Sapagkat may mga bagay kang nais na gawin ngunit hindi mo magawa dahil nga kulang sa gamit pampaaralan. “

These findings supported the study of Granthorn (2020). According to the latter, the Philippine teachers are mostly and adamantly stressed due to a lack of budget. The study revealed that teachers are in distress, looking for ways to ensure that their local governments' given account would meet all of their students' needs.

4.2.2 Handling Students

Aside from the number of students, another problem encountered by the participants was getting the trust of their students and making them realize the importance of education. Teacher no. 1 said;

“Bahagi na ng pang araw-araw naming gawain ang humarap sa mga mapanghamong ugali ng mga mag-aaral. Kung minsan, may mga mag-aaral na mahirap turuan dahilan sa kawalan nila ng interes sa pag-aaral. Ito marahil ay bahagi ng kapaligiran na kanilang nilakihan. Mas nagiging mapanghamon sa amin ang kuhain ang kanilang loob at imulat sila sa kahalagahan ng edukasyon. “

This finding supported the statement of Wentzel during the episode of All4Ed's podcast. Specifically, Wentzel's statement highlighted the necessity of building a trusting relationship between students and their teachers; through this, it will never be hard to motivate students to engage themselves in things that the teachers would like them to do (All4Ed, 2018).

Moreover, in this time of the pandemic, it is getting harder for them to facilitate the output given to their students. Specifically, Teacher no. 3 said that;

“Ngayon talaga nahihirapan ako sa paghagilap ng mga estudyante kung bakit hindi sila gumagawa o nagpapasa ng module at kung bakit minsan ay hindi tapos. “

Problems were already encountered at school; however, studying in the time of pandemic was not different; in fact, it was given worst according to the participants.

According to American Psychological Association [APA] (2020), the students' inter and intrapersonal behavior can significantly affect their ability to learn, thus, their academic skills in general. In a classroom environment, it is a good thing that the teachers could manage the students' day-to-day behavior. However, they added that handling the students' behavior at home is not easy, specifically, because many parents and caregivers find behavior management challenges while adjusting to virtual or at-home education.

4.2.3 Submission and Workload

It is not just the students but also teachers who encountered difficulties submitting paperwork and other tasks assigned to them. As stated by Teacher no. 2;

“Kapag nagkasabay-sabay ang napakaraming paperworks at deadlines pero at the same time ay kailangan pa ring magturo. “

Moreover, tasks such as the grades of the students also brought difficulties to them, especially in the time of pandemic where communication was limited and challenged. Teacher no. 8 said that;

"Siguro sa deadline ng submission ng mga grades tapos may mga bata na mababa ang grades. Syempre as an adviser ayaw ko naman na may naiiwan kaya as much as possible ginagawan ko ng paraan. Ngayong may pandemya ang hirap nila kontakin through online tapos minsan dalawa lang kami sa google meeting. "

Despite this, Teacher no. 8 cannot complain because adjusting is what the pandemic really is all about. With this, the participant added that;

“Hindi ko naman sila masisisi or mapipilit kasi nga diba lahat tayo nag aadjust kaya sana mabalik na yung dating normal. “

These findings supported the study conducted by Aperribai (2020), which used an online survey to collect quantitative and qualitative data necessary to explore how teachers have been affected by the lockdown. Specifically, its impact on their mental health and their relationships in three main fields: work, family, and social relationships, and identify the role of physical activity

among these three. The results revealed in the study included that the teachers had experienced higher levels of distress due to the workload generated during the lockdown.

4.3 Coping Mechanisms of the Teachers

This superordinate theme shows the coping mechanisms of teachers to handle stress and burnout. Table 3 contains subordinate themes perceived in the interview. The study shows that seven participants utilize the right communication and understanding, whether towards their students or with the parents. There are four of the teachers who are being strategic in ways to cope up with the problems. Furthermore, three participants employ adjustments and considerations, and one participant felt comfortable asking for assistance.

Table 3. Coping Mechanisms of the Teachers

Coping Mechanisms	Frequency
Right Communication and Understanding	7
Being Strategic	4
Adjustment and considerations	3
Asking for Assistance	1

4.3.1 Right Communication and Understanding

Misunderstandings are not exempted from the occurrences in the school environment. This may be one of the factors that lead to stress and burnout. However, despite the challenges, the participants showed that there are still ways to cope up. Right communication and the ability to understand the situation are one of those ways. This reflected in Teacher 1's statement below:

“Walang bagay na hindi nadadaan sa magandang usapan, sabi nga nila. Kaya sinisikap kong kausapin at alamin ang ugat ng problema. Nililinaw ko ang aking punto at humihingi ng dispensa kung malaman kong nasa akin ang pagkukulang. Dahil hindi naman kawalan ang pagpapakumbaba lalo na’t alam mong ikaw ang may pagkakasala. “

Also, these coping mechanisms are not just applicable to students but are also implemented when it is necessary to talk to parents. Teacher 2 said:

“Kakausapin at aalamin muna ang dahilan kung bakit niya nagawa iyun at saka ko pa lang pagsasabihan at pangangaralan. Kapag kailangan malaman ng kaniyang mga magulang ay pinapatawag ko sila at kinakausap din. “

According to Bharti (2015), teachers must learn the art of engaging and communicating with students effectively, especially in this digital age. Despite the difficulty in proximity, they should still understand and read the minds of their students to have a healthy classroom atmosphere and student-teacher relationship.

4.3.2 Being Strategic

As an effective teacher, great strategies, approaches, resourcefulness, and giving alternatives in times of difficulty inside the classroom can help reduce stress and burnout. These ways allow the teachers to play out their best. This supported by Teacher 1's statement below:

“Madalas itong nangyayari lalo na at ako ay isang ICT teacher. Kulang ang bilang ng mga computer kumpara sa bilang ng mga mag-aaral. Dahil dito, mas nagiging maparaan kaming mga guro kung paano didiskartihan ang ganitong sitwasyon. Iginu-

grupo ko na lamang sila sa kung ilan ang bilang ng computer. Pero sinisugurado ko na lahat sila ay nakakagamit at nakagagawa ng mga Gawain. "

Moreover, even strategic setting of rules and regulations inside the classroom to prevent misunderstandings and disputes are applied. Teacher 6 stated:

"Magsagawa ng rules and regulations sa loob ng kwarto katuwang ang mga bata na siyang mapagkakasunduan ng lahat. "

Being strategic in ways are helpful in times of facing new stages and situations, especially this global pandemic. With new platforms in instructing students, like Zoom, Canvas, Google Classroom, etc., teachers should learn how to be strategic and plan out ways to guarantee meaningful conversations and good learning outputs to take place in a virtual system (Hart, 2020). Educators should include a socially responsive education and a safe web-based learning environment.

4.3.3 Adjustment and Consideration

In this new normal, flexibility, adjustments, and considerations are needed based on how one understand, respond, and manage an ever-changing environment. Even in the new learning system, educators learned to adjust for those students who hardly keep up online to maintain effective learning. Teacher 1 conveyed:

"Pangunahing tungkulin ng guro ang makapagturo ng maayos. Dapat masigurado niya na lahat ng mag-aaral ay natuto ng kanilang aralin. Sinisikap niyang padaliin ang mga mahihirap na paksa para sa mga mahihinang bata o mentally challenge at binibigyan ng hamon ang mga nangungunang mag-aaral o fast learner. Ang tungkulin ng isang guro ay hindi lang din natatapos sa kanyang pagtuturo sa silid-aralin, mahalaga rin na tuloy-tuloy pa rin ang kanyang patnubay upang masigurado na maisasabuhay ng mga mag-aaral ang mga aral na kanilang natutunan. "

Teachers learned how to be considerate of students' differences, and this supported by Teacher 2's statement below:

"Ang tungkulin ng isang guro ay magturo ng buong puso, isip at kakayahan na may konsiderasyon sa pagkakaiba-iba ng kaniyang mga tinuturuan at maging gabay sa lubusang pagkatuto nila. "

According to Pertuz and Sebastian (2017), to avoid inappropriate functioning and have a healthy learning community, adjusting to the system is needed.

4.3.4 Asking for Assistance

Asking for assistance is not a sign of weakness. There are many challenges in this new normal that one can encounter, even in the education field. Asking for assistance is a sign of strength and confidence to face reality. Having someone of support means not letting the burden overwhelms oneself. One participant, Teacher 4, stated:

"Maraming kapartner ang pagdidisiplina, kasama mo ang lahat ng katuwang, magulang komunidad, eskwelahan. Huwag maging one sided. "

According to Ketchell (2018), to reduce educators' stress is by developing working conditions. With pleasant working conditions and people, this helps the teachers experience less pressure and more determination. Successful understudy connections allow for effective and successful practice and thinking of educators towards themselves and others.

5. DISCUSSION

This study aims to explore the lived experiences of public-school teachers amidst online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To elaborate on these matters, it was sorted into three themes: the positive experiences of public-school teachers, the challenges of public-school teachers, and the coping mechanism used by public-school teachers toward online learning. Moreover, the findings of this study were fulfilled by conducting an in-depth interview. The responses from the participants expanded these three significant themes into corresponding subthemes. The results from the previous chapter will be interpreted and discussed further in this section.

Regarding the participants' experience with the new normal set up, most of them had difficulties addressing the new normal. However, their students became their motivation to continue their passion for teaching regardless of all the challenges. Besides, because the students spend most of their time in school, they tend to be their students' second parents. Consequently, the experiences they had with them enables them to build a strong relationship with their students. Moreover, according to the participants, the efforts they exert on their students have fulfilled their duty. More than being part of the students' life in the four corners of a room, it also brings happiness to watch them accomplish a goal outside of the school, particularly in a school competition.

However, challenges still emerged despite these desirable experiences. One thing is the lack of resources. According to the participants, this problem has always been a challenge to the school, teachers, and students' critical indicators. Specifically, it limits their capability to conduct certain activities. Another thing was in terms of handling their students. Even before, conflict in passing the students' output and activities is already common; however, studying amidst pandemic made it more challenging. Considering that technology was the only way for them to keep in touch, it limits their ability to communicate with each other. As stated by a participant, she has difficulties finding her students and asking them regarding their unfinished activities.

Additionally, like the students, they also have paperwork to do aside from teaching in the current situation. Thus, submission and workload became a problem. These occurrences made the public-school teacher's coping mechanisms essential in helping them get through all the difficulties. Most of the participants said that the right communication and the ability to understand the situation would make things work despite the challenging set-up of the new normal. As the participants shared, having a positive mind will have a positive outcome. Moreover, most of the participants said that despite the challenges they were facing, it is still essential to conduct efficient strategies and approaches, allowing them to play out their best. Both adjustment and considerations and asking for assistance also helped them to cope with the burnout and stress that took place as a part of their lived experiences amidst pandemic.

Overall, each subtheme of this study served as a glimpse of public-school teachers' lived experiences toward online learning during the pandemic. The rage of the Coronavirus pandemic paused the planet. It was an enormous challenge because the online courses persisted as the pandemic began. Likewise, these coping mechanisms made them capable of facing online learning struggles and continue teaching amidst pandemic.

6. CONCLUSION

The study emphasized the optimistic sides of being public-school teachers, which is rarely studied, especially during pandemics. This study perceived the coping mechanisms and strategies of teachers. The researchers have interviewed ten public-school teachers. The

following conclusions are met based on the study's findings: (1) Most teachers are significantly challenged by lack of resources, handling of students, and the submission and workloads that contribute to stress and burnout. (2) The occurrence of the digital age limited most public-school teachers. They hardly perform specific tasks for the students virtually, provide an effective learning environment, and communicate with students, given that the resources are inadequate. (3) Public-school teachers cope, resorting to the right communication and understanding in their circumstances. (4) Teachers gain positive experiences despite stress and burnout. This includes their passion, relationships build, and the fulfillment of their duty.

Furthermore, the researchers recommend that the government must provide assistance and funds in education. It's not only for the private schools, but also for the public schools that cannot provide enough resources for the teachers and students, such as schools with limited internet connection or data, and schools that lack modules, technologies, and gadgets in this new learning system. This assistance or fund will allow teachers and students to have an effective learning system despite pandemic. This will give positivity to public-schools that they will not be left behind. Teachers must be more supportive and dedicated to teaching the students, despite the difficulty in proximity and communication. This will help form and maintain healthy relationships that promote perseverance, significance, and optimism in the learning environment. Students must have active participation with their teachers. This may help to build proper communication and understanding and to establish a sense of liaison. Consequently, future researchers can use these findings to support their potential investigation, mainly in public-school teachers' live experiences during a pandemic.

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