

# PUPILS' LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND EMOTIONAL REACTIONS OF TEACHERS IN TIMES OF COVID-19

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## ABSTRACT

*This research paper about learning difficulties of the pupils and emotional reactions of the teachers is purposely conducted to identify the category of learning difficulties of the pupils and determine how the teachers react with that problem whether in a positive or a negative way. The paper also described the level of pupils' learning difficulties as well as the extent level of teachers' reaction with regards to that problem. And, it elaborates the correlation of the two variables, the learning difficulties and the emotional reactions. Though the result of dependent variable become controversial, but it can be justifiable also by the theories and results of other studies. However, the results will become a guide and a source of information regarding the influence and significant of this study. As a result, this study comes out that these are significant relationship between the two variables that also affects each other particularly in negative emotions and positive emotions as well as it was identified that reading and listening as predictor for negative emotion and reading and speaking as predictor for positive emotion.*

**Keyword:** - Pupils' learning difficulties, emotional reactions, teachers, COVID-19.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Experience shows that learning difficulties in students can be caused by environmental or physical factors that affect their ability to learn. Reasons for this include extended absence from school, financial disadvantage, undiagnosed visual and hearing impairments, socio-economic factors, and students with learning disabilities may have problems reading, writing, and paying attention in class. And sometimes they can be unmotivated or show signs of deteriorating social and emotional health. Students were struggling as brought by the COVID-19 pandemic which leads to various difficulties (Kudto, Lumapenet, & Guiamalon, 2022; Guiamalon, 2022; Lumapenet & Usop, 2022).

On the other hand, the teacher's emotions during class somehow experienced both extreme joy and joy when the class went according to plan, and intense frustration when working with challenging students.

Teachers' emotion has been shown to be highly important in the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning. That is why they just discrete their emotion of joy, followed by anger, and then anxiety to a lesser degree because their emotions were contagious to the pupils in determining therefore their conduct.

Emotions can also include physical reactions, such as a pounding heart due to excitement, and expressive behavior, such as facial expressions and sounds. It may also include actions such as yelling at someone when angry. Teachers experienced stress and burnout (Tiago & Lumapenet, 2022; Pagocag & Lumapenet, 2022; Santander & Lumapenet, 2022; Villarejo, Mamburao, & Lumapenet, 2022).

Teachers also get angry when they attribute student declines to controllable factors such as laziness and carelessness. Many teachers report that most anger and frustration experiences are not minor, transient emotions, but intense, lasting more than an hour, and accompanied by tangible physical sensations (Sutton, 2007).

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the greatest disruption of the education system in human history, affecting most learners around the world. In most cases, so-called learning difficulties arose among learners, as if teachers also had difficulties in the process of teaching and learning. The teachers were deeply moved by this.

Continuity of teaching and learning is critical to providing a sustainable education for all students. The hardest part of learning a language is always the speaking part (Santhanasamy & Yunus, 2022). The best solution for teachers is not to stop class dynamics, but for teachers to find strategies to address student weaknesses.

As a researcher, I would like to know if there is a significant correlation between students' learning difficulties and teachers' emotional responses. The aim is to identify the causes of learning difficulties in Datu Saudi Ampatuan District and the impact of learning difficulties on the emotions of teachers who are involved in the classroom.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized descriptive-correlational research design in determining the pupils' learning difficulties and teachers' emotional reactions in times of COVID-19 pandemic. A total of five hundred thirty-one pupils and fifteen (15) teachers from Datu Saudi Ampatuan District were surveyed using a questionnaire. The gathered data were analyzed with the use of descriptive and inferential statistics.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that there is a significant relationship between the learning difficulties in terms of reading and both positive and negative emotions of the teachers. But since the correlation coefficient is negative that signifies with the opposite or reverse reactions of the teachers instead of hatred, stress, anxiety, and angry or negative emotions they tend to become partially more lovable, joy, happy, relax, and patience with their pupils. Likewise, the positive reactions in relation to the reading became negative correlation coefficient because of the opposite reactions which is the teachers are angry, hatred, and worried when it comes to the learning difficulties particularly in reading and writing as well as comprehension. Positively significant, teachers anticipate that naturally these pupils will exhibit poor behavior in class, and this leads a teacher to focus on classroom management rather than differentiating or modifying instruction (Bakker & Bosman, 2006). Negatively significant, Sutton (2007) justified that teacher's emotions such as anger and frustration arise from a few sources related to thwarted goals including students' misbehavior and violation of rules, factors outside the classroom that make it difficult to teach well. Teachers also become angry when they believe that students' poor academic work is due to controllable factors, such as laziness or inattention.

With regards to difficulties in writing there is also a significant relationship with the negative reactions and positive reactions of the teachers since the teachers are moderately satisfied with the moderately easy performance of the pupils in terms writing. It was cited by Saavedra and Opfer (2012), that the difficulty in spelling, grammar and sentence construction are the reasons why many elementary pupils have poor writing skills in English and Filipino. Despite the effort of teachers, they acknowledged that elementary pupils' writing skills still did not meet the standard in writing. Pishghadam, et al (2016), also found out that pupils experience anger and mostly over listening skills, enjoyment and pride over speaking, hope, boredom and hopelessness over writing and listening, and anxiety over all language skills. Positively significant, teachers anticipate that naturally these pupils will exhibit poor behavior in class, and this leads a teacher to focus on classroom management rather than differentiating or modifying instruction (Bakker & Bosman, 2006). Negatively significant, Sutton (2007) justified that teacher's emotions such as anger and frustration arise from a few sources related to thwarted goals including students' misbehavior and violation of rules, factors outside the classroom that make it difficult to teach well. Teachers also become angry when they believe that students' poor academic work is due to controllable factors, such as laziness or inattention

In terms of difficulties in speaking there is also a significant relationship with both negative and positive emotions because they are significantly satisfied moderately with the performance of the pupils. Meaning, their emotions are both negatively and positively become significant. Pishghadam, et al (2016), found out that pupils experience anger and mostly over listening skills, enjoyment and pride over speaking, hope, boredom and hopelessness over writing and listening, and anxiety over all language skills. Positively significant, teachers

anticipate that naturally these pupils will exhibit poor behavior in class, and this leads a teacher to focus on classroom management rather than differentiating or modifying instruction.

In accordance with the listening difficulties of the pupils relatively to both negative and positive reactions of the teachers, there was also a high significant relationship between the two variables because as when the pupils performed moderately easy in such category, the teachers' emotions become negatively and positively significant reactions because they are both satisfied moderately.

There is also a significant relationship of learning difficulties in relation to comprehension in compared to the negative and positive reactions of the teachers because both are negative and positive significant reactions because they are moderately satisfied with the performance of the pupils in such category. Positively significant, teachers anticipate that naturally these pupils will exhibit poor behavior in class, and this leads a teacher to focus on classroom management rather than differentiating or modifying instruction.

Macintyre and Gregersen 2012, emphasized that positive emotion has a different function from negative emotion, they are not opposite ends of the same spectrum. In short, both positive and negative emotions of the teacher are just because naturally as a human being there is always a reason why they felt negative emotions in the same way they are also felt positive emotions. Cajurao, Lumapenet, and Galladora (2022) mentioned that learners who have good socialization are expected to perform better in their studies.

Dreer (2021) also emphasized that positive emotions in the workplace, play an important role in teachers' job satisfaction and their subsequent retention.

**Table 1** Correlation matrix showing the relationship of the pupils' learning difficulties and teachers' emotional reactions.

<i>Spearman Rho</i>			
	Learning Difficulties	Negative Reactions	Positive Reactions
<b>Reading</b>	Corr. coef.	<b>-0.558*</b>	<b>-0.665*</b>
	Probability	0.013	0.011
<b>Writing</b>	Corr. coef.	<b>0.979**</b>	<b>0.975**</b>
	Probability	0.002	0.002
<b>Speaking</b>	Corr. coef.	<b>0.803**</b>	<b>0.889**</b>
	Probability	0.010	0.005
<b>Listening</b>	Corr. coef.	<b>0.644*</b>	<b>0.624*</b>
	Probability	0.013	0.016
<b>Comprehension</b>	Corr. coef.	<b>0.648*</b>	<b>0.652*</b>
	Probability	0.013	0.014

\*. Correlation is Significant at 0.05 level.

\*\* . Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic brought learning difficulties on the students and emotional complexity for the teachers. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers, administrators, policymakers, and others advocate on behalf of teachers to be mindful of the outsized expectations that may be placed on teachers, and the resourcing necessary to support them. Guidelines for reopening schools, for example, should weigh equally the concerns of teachers and community members.

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