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Sustaining Work-Life Balance of Teachers During the New Normal

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the lived experiences of the public-school primary teachers and their ways in sustaining work-life balance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research employed a qualitative research design of phenomenology. The responses were analyzed following the steps of Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method. The researcher thoroughly reviewed the transcripts of interviews and used a coding sheet in organizing the codes. The process was repetitively conducted and was evaluated by the researcher's rater and adviser prior to finalizing the main themes relevant to the phenomenon under study. The following were the findings of the study: (1) There had been changes in the workload of teachers during this pandemic; these are: (a) additional workloads due to; instructional planning and preparation; feedbacking and monitoring system, attending webinars, and online meetings, (b) irregular working hours, (c) ICT Capabilities and (d) Internet/Wifi Access (2) The pandemic impacted teachers' constructive experiences because they had opportunity to grow and learn and also it impacted their adverse experiences because it compromised family time and it made them feel stress and anxious. (3) Teachers are significantly challenged by overlapping of activities, limited gadgets and technology, evaluating learning outcomes, fear of acquiring the virus, and engaging pupils into active learning. (4) Teachers coping techniques or interventions prior to the difficulties and challenges are time management and prioritization, embracing changes, flexibility and adaptability, and employing break time. (5) The values and faith strengthened during this pandemic are resiliency, self-appreciation, nurturing spirituality and creativity.

INTRODUCTION

The global COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on practically every aspect of life, including education, and the Philippines is no exception. When COVID-19 was blasted, mankind was astounded, and the number of positives has been steadily increasing. Nobody can stop this infection. It can move toward you whether you are wealthy or poor. But because the government has signed to pursue the school year 2020-2021, the prompt transitions and optimized complexity of today's world present challenges and develop new demands on our education system; Department of Education (DepEd) generates a slew of issues for students and teachers. The teacher, who considered themselves a student's second mother, was having difficulty dealing with the newly established standard. Teachers must also deal with the interferences and conflicts that Coronavirus has produced within the educational system. These sudden changes in the education setting also affect their work-life balance. As a result, many experts and even teachers endure stress and burnout while addressing the pandemic. The present study intends to give knowledge and analyze the lived experiences of public-school primary teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplaces have undergone a paradigm shift in the last seven to eight months as remote working/work from home (WFH) has become a necessity for organizations

to ensure the safety of both employees and management, paving the way for research to understand the major implications on women employees as they stay at home and have to care for both work and family, and balancing the two has become a daunting task. Prior to the pandemic, management viewed remote working/work from home as a perk and a way to provide employees more freedom, but it has now become the new normal for everyone in any company, and we may refer to it as the new future of work in a post-pandemic situation.

Glass ceilings in the workplace have shattered, and times have changed. Work from home used to be considered a perk for a select few employees, but it has now become the new normal for everyone in any organization. As a result, several businesses are considering putting everything online and completing everything through digital workplaces. Work-life balance affects the quality of one's working life; as a result, companies must take this seriously in order to satisfy their legal and ethical duties to safeguard their employees' wellbeing. Working remotely (most typically from home) is regularly included in lists of "family-friendly and flexibility policies," implying that it is a method for companies to assist employees to achieve a good work-life balance. Facilities for improved work-life balance are frequently considered as vital not just for employee welfare and needs but also for corporate success. There have been questions regarding whether promises of increased efficiency and production as a result of remote working can be verified.

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Examining evidence of the linkages between remote working and productivity is also essential in terms of the necessity for businesses to balance the consideration of employee rights and welfare against other organizational goals. These abrupt changes in the workplace affect the work-life balance of teachers.

Employees will contribute more to their job performance if they receive the correct and enough amount of WLB. Women professionals find it difficult to balance family and social responsibilities. Women professionals find it hard to meet family and society demands while also meeting the demands of their profession at work. (Tasnim, et al., 2017) reported that one of the most perplexing challenges that women professors confront is balancing work and life because they are also engaged in doing household responsibilities and taking care of the family, accompanied by office works. Their excessive working hours, job rigidity, work overload, child-care duties, workplace discrimination and bias, a lack of supervisory assistance, a dominant management style are all factors that female employees face in maintaining a work-life balance. The study's findings focus on developing a structured guideline for organizations so that the above-mentioned reasons can be eliminated and female employees can maintain a healthy work-life balance and live in harmony.

Moreover, (Nepali, 2018) stated that individuals' quality of life is also affected by their work-life balance; according to the findings in our traditional culture, where women are still expected to have more home duties, the severity of this problem increases several times in the situations of women employees. She believed that women are also responsible for looking after their children, entertaining guests, caring for their parents, in-laws, and other senior family members, as well as managing the kitchen and other home duties. Their spouses and other male family members will not allow them to ignore any of these obligations in order to complete work in the office or other institutions where they are employed. Finding balance required the organization and coordination of many activities with help from diverse sources. They had a strong feeling of motherhood, and their children were their first priority, but their careers were also important to them, as they sought stimulation, challenges, accomplishment, and enrichment in their job.

In order to find fresh meaning in the work, family, and self-equation, the respondents are seeking more self-care time now that they are in the middle of their careers. The workplace's demographics and culture have evolved dramatically during the previous century. Women in the twenty-first century play critical roles in all fields, whether professional or domestic. Because today's women share equal parental responsibilities, the work-life balance of women's faculties has become a controversial subject.

(Sundaresan's, 2014) findings on her study discussed that a large number of career women are having trouble managing professional and family life as a result of severe job pressure, enough time for themselves, as well as the

desire to meet others expectations. Because they have to work longer hours, the majority of working women face job spill over into their home. According to an evaluation of the relevant literature, working women have more difficulties reconciling their job and family life than males. They also report conflict because employment spillover into the home occurs more frequently than home spillover into work. Working women frequently need to make compromises in order to succeed in one setting, as each workplace places various expectations on them and has different standards to follow.

In addition, poor work-life balance greatly affects either the professional or personal life of an individual, according to the high degree of stress and anxiety, discord at home, job burnout, and the inability to reach one's full potential are all crucial determinants of a bad work-life balance. Due to their failure to reconcile job and family life, they are frequently angry and resentful, (Sundaresan, 2014). It means that we should clearly define the line between work and personal life by conducting work just during work hours and without sacrificing time for family and personal life.

A good work-life balance is especially important for working women in the current climate, in which both the home and the job have presented women with several obstacles and issues. Working women are under great stress as a result of the realities of the workplace since they must juggle two full-time jobs — one at work and one at home. The results have consequences for career women and offer suggestions for achieving a good work-life balance.

In the study of (Sethi, 2015), despite their different demographic profiles, the results showed that Family Support and Organizational Support play an important role in maintaining work-life balance for female employees. The findings demonstrate that long work hours and overtime do not, in general, contribute to lower satisfaction. Increasing working hours and overtime, on the other hand, has a good influence on life and job satisfaction, but a desire to minimize working hours has a negative impact. Moreover, a stressful environment can create an imbalance in work-life. Another reason for an imbalance of work-life is the lack of support of the managers. If the manager does not support their subordinates, most likely, employees' work-life harmony will be affected.

However, the quality of the teacher's work-life balance did not change significantly based on gender or marital status. The models suggest various approaches to living a healthy way of life in three dimensions. The primary emphasis is on personal life. It implies that time and family support are two variables. According to educators (faculty), career advancement, employment security, and being stable financially are all variables. According to work-life research, the two variables to consider are scholarly power and repute. This is due to the time constraints associated with managing the three dimensions (Chandrakala, et. al., 2020). (Mathur, 2017) reported that organizational initiatives

to provide a supportive work environment are lauded because they help to improve work-life balance. Indian businesses are attempting to achieve work-life balance through programs such as flextime, part-time work, and the provision of childcare. Because if the employees have a more pleasant working environment; as a result, their job will be more meaningful, (O'Brien and Hayden, 2008) both agreed to this point, they believed that flexibility in work practices is becoming a standard component of employment, especially in the public sector, which is effectively leading the way on this subject. Employees and companies equally benefit from flexible work strike a balance between the organization's and employees' needs. Training and communication are critical components of the successful adoption of flexible working. According to (Putri and Amran, 2021), the COVID-19 epidemic forced the firm to restructure its operations to allow employees to work from home. Employees' work-life balance may be impacted by a rapid shift in the operational activity system. One of the most difficult aspects of teaching from home is the growing blur between work mode and home mode. Many teachers are struggling to find any semblance of a balance when teaching from home. Oftentimes, teachers tend to attend to personal needs during work hours and while in the workplace and also attend work-related tasks during personal and family time. Thus, affecting their personal and professional lives are intertwined. Cultural expectations and gender issues impact women's work-life balance and social stability from a cultural standpoint (Mushfiqur et al., 2018). They put in long hours in their careers and at home. Because women associate closely with their family role, they may feel guilty when their family needs overlap with their work. In line with this, the researcher intended to further discover

and understand the lived experiences of public school primary and their ways on sustaining work-life balance during Covid-19 in the New Normal set-up in education and workplace.

Conceptual Framework

In this part of the study, the researcher presents a paradigm that graphically represents the phenomenon under study based on the results of data analysis.

The researcher applied a constructivist philosophical underpinning in this study that enabled a new expanded way of thinking about multiple concepts.

The researcher's conceptual paradigm of the study phenomenon graphically represents the five themes (1) shifting educational paradigms (2) realizing impact of the New Normal to teachers (3) encountering challenges of the present time (4) transcending amidst difficulties and (5) strengthening faith and values .

When merged into one, all these themes form the central idea on how the teachers balance act in sustaining work-life balance amidst this pandemic.

In the given figure, it is seen that there had been shifting educational paradigms, where in teachers in the new normal set up in education had changes in their workloads due to instructional planning and preparation, feedbacking and monitoring system and online meetings and webinar. Also, another changes in their work is that they had irregular working hours and they need to upskill in ICT Capabilities. The New Normal provided constructive and adverse experiences to teachers. Through the provisions of seminars and workshops which further equip teachers and develop their creativity in developing and using different strategies in teaching pupils during the pandemic. However, the New Normal adversely impacted teachers' experiences such as they compromised

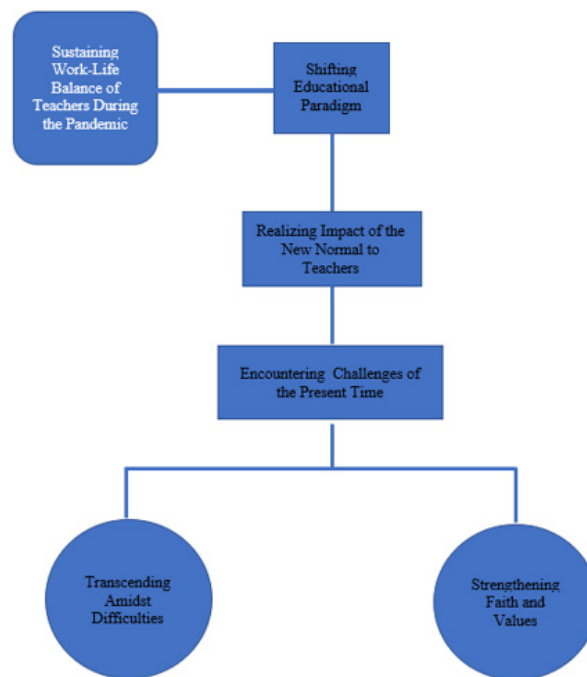


Figure 1: Conceptual Paradigm

time with family and they are stressed and anxious because of the challenges. In addition, teachers encountered different challenges and difficulties as they are shifting in the New Normal set up such as overlapping of activities, limited gadgets and technology, engaging pupils into active learning, fear of acquiring virus and evaluating learning outcomes. To be able to cope up, teachers transcend with these difficulties, which also led them to strengthen their values and faith during this pandemic.

The changes in teachers' workload, their experiences, the challenges and difficulties they are facing, and their coping techniques will be analyzed in the study to be used in developing program, which are used in sustaining work-life balance during this difficult situation.

This type of qualitative research study employed the phenomenology approach which that concentrates on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. The fundamental goal of this method is to arrive at an explanation or interpretation of the nature of the particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, this phenomenological study required the researcher to conduct an in-depth interview that looked into what the individual teacher-participants had experienced in their work and life during this pandemic.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public elementary schools of SDO Quezon Annex, DepEd Nueva Ecija. The researcher chooses the local base and her interest and also the prevalence of issues that concerns the research paper. The researcher's reason for considering those public elementary schools within the locality of the study was the accessibility and proximity of the sample (K-Grade 3).

Respondents

The participants of this study were primary teachers from Kinder to Grade 3 level. The approach of purposive sampling was employed to ascertain the participants. According to (Foley, 2018), purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a form of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on their own judgment when choosing members of the population to take part in their study. Researchers use purposive sampling when they want to access a particular subset of people, as all participants of a study are selected because they fit a particular profile. Teachers at the primary level are responsible to establish a strong foundation for learning; they have to ensure that their pupils will learn the basic, which is writing, reading, and counting, so that they will survive upon entering another higher-grade level. The researcher selected 12 participants that only qualified for the inclusion criteria.

Inclusion Criteria

The researcher used the following inclusion criteria in selecting the teacher-participants:

(1) female participants

(2) primary teachers with more than three years of teaching experience,

(3) combination of neophyte and seasoned/senior teachers

(4) participants can be either single, married without children, or married with children.

Scope and limitation of the Study

This study, "Sustaining Work-Life Balance of Teachers During the Pandemic," focused on understanding teachers' lived experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and their ways in sustaining work life balance in these trying times.

The number of participants was limited to twelve (12) participants only. The study was only centered on public primary teachers within Nueva Ecija for the school year 2020-2021; therefore, the results did not generalize the entire population of primary teachers in the country.

Furthermore, this study was limited to the teacher participants' work-life balance during the pandemic and did not evaluate the overall teacher's condition in the pandemic.

Research Instrument

According to Dr. Karim Abawi (Geneva Workshop 2014), research instruments vary according to the type of research. Methods for gathering data include observation, questioning, document review, and a combination of different methods to be able to gather the information that we would like to collect for the purpose of our study. This study employed an interview using open-ended questions crafted by the researcher to be conducted via recorded or phone call interview—the various questions designed to reveal teachers' quality of work-life balance during Covid-19.

Data Collection/Data Gathering Procedures

Upon securing the permit, the teacher-participants were contacted, and the mechanics were explained for the schedule of the interview depending on the availability of the participants. Participants opted for a recorded interview via voice clips and video calls. For the consistency and reliability of the data, follow-up questions were asked only if necessary.

Data Analysis

This study employed thematic analysis, which is the most extensively used qualitative method for interpreting interviews. The conceptual foundation for the theme analysis of the interviews was largely based on theoretical viewpoints (Braun and Clarke's, 2006) which expounded on the process of detecting, analyzing, and reporting patterns in an extracted qualitative data.

The researcher thoroughly reviewed the transcripts of interviews and used a coding sheet in organizing the codes. The process was repetitively conducted and was evaluated by the researcher's rater and adviser prior to finalizing the main themes relevant to the phenomenon

Table 1: Steps in Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method

Step	Description
1. Familiarization	The researcher becomes acquainted with the data by going over all of the participant accounts numerous times.
2. Identifying significant statements	All remarks in the interviews that are directly relevant to the phenomena under inquiry are identified by the researcher.
3. Formulating meanings	A comprehensive examination of the important statements leads to the discovery of meanings relevant to the phenomena by the researcher. To stay as near to the phenomena as feasible, the researcher must "frame" his or her preconceptions reflexively (though Colaizzi recognizes that complete bracketing is never possible).
4. Clustering themes	The researcher groups the discovered meanings into themes that appear in all of the narratives. Again, presupposition bracketing is critical, especially to eliminate any potential effect of current theory.
5. Developing an exhaustive description	The researcher composes a comprehensive account of the phenomena that incorporates all of the topics generated in step 4.
6. Producing the fundamental structure	The researcher condenses the lengthy explanation into a brief, dense statement that retains just the components believed to be critical to the phenomenon's structure.
7. Seeking verification of the fundamental structure	The researcher asks all participants (or a sub-sample in bigger studies) if the essential structural statement accurately describes their experience. In light of this input, he or she may go back and change earlier phases in the analysis.

under study. The researcher used Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method following the steps:

Ethical Consideration

To practice ethical considerations in this study, the participant's full consent was asked by the researcher. The researcher provided sufficient information through a short orientation of the interview procedure. Concerns of the participants were addressed, and their demands were respected. Proper protocols from the advice of the Inter-Agency Task Force for COVID 19 were followed. Anonymity and confidentiality. The participants were assured that the data they have shared would be kept strictly confidential and was for the objective of this research. In addition, the participants were assured that their names and other potentially identifying information would not be written in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the discussion, analysis of data, conclusions based on the discussion, and the recommendations offered by the researcher.

Significant Findings

After careful analysis of the responses, the result indicates five major categories or themes emerged which apparently

recurred from the narrations of the primary teachers, namely: (1) Shifting educational paradigms refers to changes in teachers workloads during the pandemic, (2) Realizing impact of the New Normal to teachers refers encountering challenges of the present times refers to the challenges and difficulties that the participants had to face day to day during the pandemic, (4) Transcending amidst difficulties refers to how do the participants balance their work-life and how do they cope up with the difficulties and challenges in their workload during the pandemic, (5) strengthening faith and values refers to the valuable learnings they have realized.

The first theme is Shifting Educational Paradigms refers to changes in teachers' workloads during the pandemic, which is subdivided such as additional workloads, Irregular Working Hours, ICT capabilities and Internet/ WIFI Access. The second theme is Realizing Impact of the New Normal to Teachers, which is subdivided such as constructive experience includes opportunity to grow professionally, and adverse experiences includes Compromised Family Time and Stress and Anxious. The third theme is encountering challenges of the present times refers to the challenges and difficulties that the participant had to face day by day, which is subdivided such as overlapping of activities, limited gadgets and technology, evaluating learning outcomes,

fear of acquiring virus, engaging pupils into active learning. The fourth theme is transcending amidst difficulties which refer to how participants balance their work and life and how do they cope up with the challenges and difficulties during the pandemic, which are subdivided such as time management and prioritization,

embracing changes, flexibility and adaptability and employing break time. Moreover, the fifth theme and the last theme is strengthening faith and values refers to the valuable learnings they have realized, which are subdivided such as resiliency, nurturing spiritually, self-appreciation and creativity.

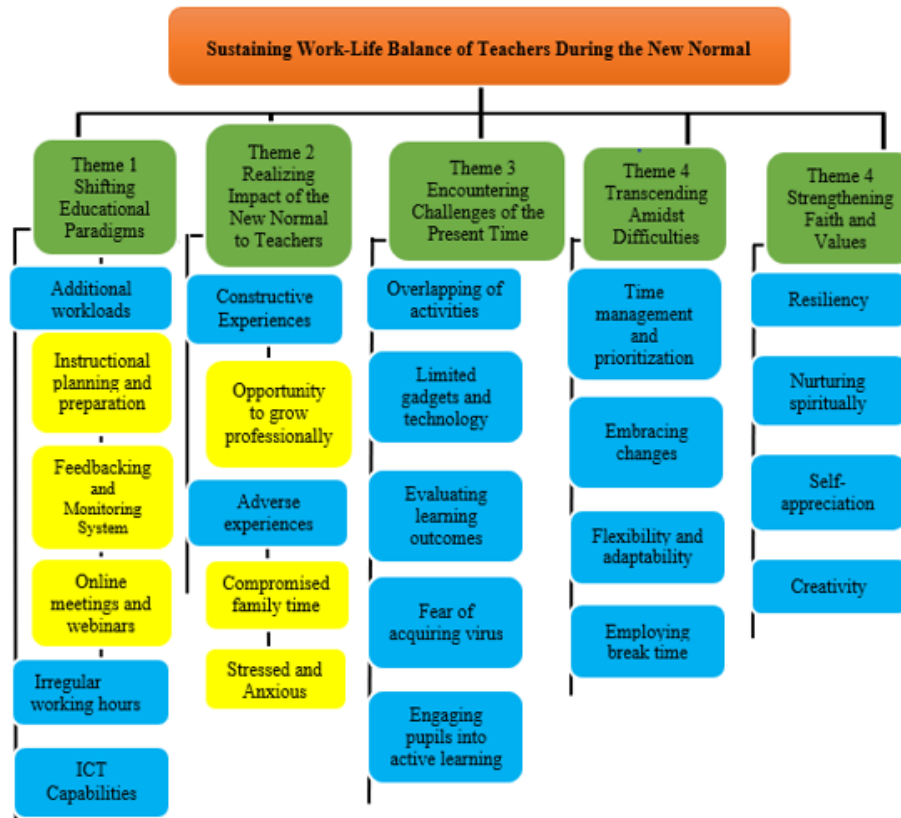


Figure 2: Sustaining Work-Life Balance of Teachers During the New Normal

Figure 2 shows the major themes and its sub-themes excerpted from the verbatim transcripts.

Theme 1 Shifting Educational Paradigms

The personal experiences shared by the Primary Teachers regarding how do you they compare their workload and their life before and during this pandemic and what changes

they have to take in their life and in their work as a teacher during this pandemic highlighted four (4) subthemes: Additional workloads, Irregular Working Hours, ICT capabilities and Internet/WIFI Access. Additional workloads comprised of the following sub-categories: Instructional Planning and Preparation, Online Meetings and Webinars, Feedbacking and Monitoring System.

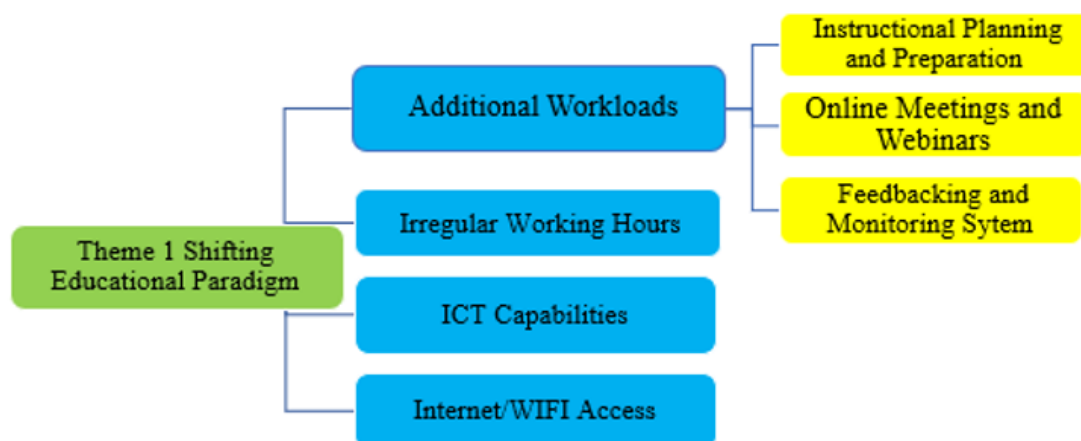


Figure 3: Shifting Educational Paradigms

Figure 3 shows the illustration of the first major theme, its sub-themes, and the sub-categories of sub-theme 1.

Sub-theme 1 Additional Workloads

Almost all the participants stated that they work had changes and work responsibilities were different compared to what they experienced before. There had been changes and additional workload in both teaching load and ancillary services of participants.

"....teaching loads before were not complicated because I have all the resources needed for my subject. When the pandemic came, it brought a drastic change in everyone's life, specifically for the lives of the teachers. I need to adjust my time, preparing modules, printing and sorting needed modules, packing them, checking notebooks, sorting test papers and checking them, while at the same time making activity sheets reproduce them, doing reports, and attending virtual seminars."

This pandemic brought a drastic change affecting teachers' lives. One of these changes happens in the education setting. Teachers need to adapt to this sudden change in the education setting in order to cater to the needs of the learner despite the pandemic. Because learning must continue, DepEd crafted different learning modalities to be used by teachers as their Learning Continuity Plan (e.g., Online Delivery Modality, Modular Learning Delivery (Printed, Digitized), Blended Delivery Modality, Radio / Television Based Instruction). In line with this, teachers had to deal with these changes in their day-to-day lives, and it is not an easy experience for them, but teachers always find means in adjusting to the new normal.

New Normal in education setting resulted in changes in teachers work, before they had to teach physically in the classroom unlike today that they could only teach their pupils virtually utilizing different online platforms or through the distribution of printed modules, however this new normal way of teaching caused teachers to have additional work responsibilities.

Adopting Modular Distance Delivery and Online Learning Delivery adds burdens to teachers, because aside from thinking, designing, and implementing teaching strategies they have to use for their pupils and what assessment tool would best fit their pupils' knowledge and capabilities, they still exert a great amount of their time and effort in preparing instructional materials such as printing modules, self-learning materials, and learning activity sheets.

According to (Long, 2020), as the pandemic continues, many teachers are altering their schedules and curricula to allow for both in-person and remote instruction as more schools reopen with models. Their efforts are heroic, and their working hours are long and difficult, and sometimes unacknowledged.

Participants also reiterated additional webinars and online meeting. It was clearly stated in their interview answers that the new normal setting had incurred additional online training and webinar compared to the face-to-face activities. Online activities are also time-consuming and overlapping. Moreover, they also added that most of the

time, they have to attend two to three online seminars at the same time.

"Webinars and meetings were scheduled one after another; most of the time, I am doing paper works while attending webinars, which is not okay with me because I cannot focus on a specific task I was assigned to do."

oreover, participant also claimed that feedbacking and monitoring added to their work responsibilities since meeting face to face was not possible; it is very important to give feedback and monitor the learning of their students. *"Because there is no face to face, it is necessary to monitor the students, to find out if they understand the lesson or which part of the lessons, they have difficulty, because often there is no knowledge provider in their home, I felt sorry for the pupils if they are not guided."*

Because pupils are not taught physically, providing timely feedbacks to monitor their progress is necessary. Providing timely feedbacks and follow-ups helps both teachers and pupils. It helps the teacher to know the standing of his/her pupils and what reinforcement should be done and given whenever there is a student who lags behind. Constant, helpful feedback is essential for ensuring that students understand where they are now, what they require, and where they intend to go in the process of learning, not just for transparency but also in order for them to establish ownership in the learning process. We need to include constant, reliable, and relevant feedback into our teaching, especially when many of us are geographically separated from our students. Ensuring that feedbacks were given from time to time, teachers allotted their time in doing so, aside from preparing different instructional materials, causing them to have less time spent with family.

Sub-theme 2 Irregular Working Hours

Three out of 12 participants stated that they also had irregular working hours/schedules because of the New Normal set-up. This causes teachers to bring work even at home and expected to answer pupils' and parents' queries anytime. In line with this, participants experienced answering queries and concerns regardless of the time and day. There are instances that they are required to comply and submit school reports even during weekends, even outside working hours.

"Keeping a regular schedule before the pandemic probably looks significantly different than keeping a schedule now. Even at home, I am working regardless if it is weekend or night time, I still need to attend to my pupils and parents queries about the lesson. Most of the time, there are ASAP reports that need to be done outside working hours and days."

Sub-theme 3 ICT Capabilities

Some participants said that upskilling in ICT and digital access also added to their work responsibilities. It should be stressed out that the adaptation to new forms of teaching regarding the technical skills and learning the new platforms and apps have a significant issue in the work-life balance of the teachers. P4 and P10 have stated:

"Teachers are encouraged to level up their skills when it comes to technology because of the implementation of different learning delivery modalities."

According to the participants, this pandemic demanded them to upskill in ICT use and Digital access, as traditional face-to-face learning shifted to Online Learning Delivery and Modular Learning Delivery. Because face-to-face interactions are limited, reports of teachers are done through online submission. Therefore, it requires them to be knowledgeable enough in using and incorporating ICT in their work and, most especially in the education process. Also, they need to be equipped to use different online platforms to reach their student and deliver learning through the virtual classroom.

Incorporating technology in the process of teaching and learning is one of the effective ways to deliver learning. According to (Toquero, 2020), technology has aided in the effective communication required to combat the epidemic that the globe is currently experiencing. It also redefined how the educational system may spread the teaching-learning process in the face of COVID-19. Computers, laptops, cellphones, and tablets have all become essential in today's modern world. These are no longer only for entertainment. Our educational system is now largely reliant on them. Because Filipino students demand access to education even in times of crisis, the importance and power of technology in education are more apparent than ever before. The use of technology helps to bridge the gap between quarantine and teaching. We can look back on how our education industry handled online programs in the second quarter of 2020. Many LGUs provided students with mobile devices, teachers were trained to optimize digital learning, and educational programming was introduced to our television channels. Zoom has become a popular tool for virtual classrooms not only in the United States but across the world. Smartphones have evolved into more than simply a luxury item. Nowadays, digital technology is a must-have for everyone. Teachers can personalize learning for their pupils due to technological advances. It allows them to enhance their teaching techniques and customize learning, allowing them to be more productive and efficient as teachers. Teachers can create engaging activities using these useful resources. These activities involve viewing videos to learn more about the subject and It's also excellent content for kindling and enhancing children's interest.

Sub-theme 4 Internet/WIFI Access

Participant also reiterated that one of the changes that this pandemic caused their work is that they required to have an internet or WIFI Access. The importance of the internet in distance learning and teaching was addressed.

"This pandemic required me to have internet access because transactions, communications, meetings and seminars are all conducted online."

The Internet offers several chances to improve educational quality. New modes of teaching and learning, greater access to a far larger range of information and resources, and new skills for the digital era may all contribute to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals, including education for all. Improved connection and the numerous learning materials accessible on the Internet may be used to improve educational access and quality.

(Dogniez, 2019) stated that teachers utilize internet resources to plan classes, and students use them to broaden their horizons. Teachers may provide more attention to individual students' needs and enhance shared learning by using interactive teaching methods, which are made possible by the Internet. Internet also plays a vital role in keeping the communication in times of pandemic. To combat the COVID-19 epidemic, governments and public health organizations all over the world have implemented social distancing and stay-at-home policies. With fewer opportunities to spend time together in person, being socially engaged has become more difficult. But through the use of internet and different online apps and platforms one can easily communicate to others, access information and read news about what's happening outside.

Theme 2 Realizing Impact of the New Normal to Teachers

The personal experiences recounted by the primary teachers on how these changes brought by pandemic affect their life as a person and as a professional emerged two (2) sub-themes: Constructive Experiences and Adverse Experience. The first sub-theme which is constructive experience comprises of opportunity to grow professionally. The second sub-theme which is adverse experiences includes comprised family time and stress and anxious.

Figure 4 shows the illustration of the second major theme and its sub-themes.

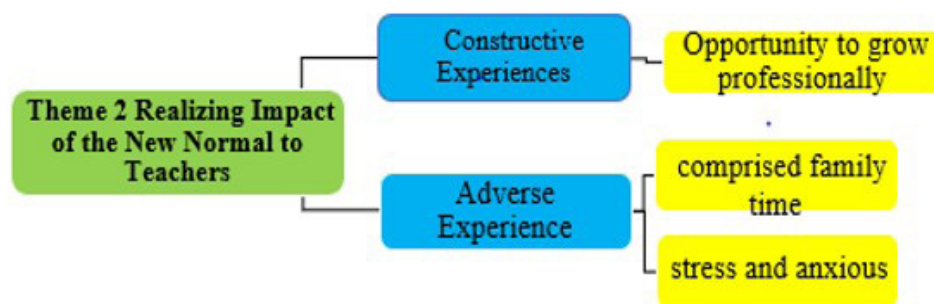


Figure 4: Realizing Impact of the New Normal to Teachers

Sub-theme 1 Constructive Experiences

Opportunity to grow and learn professionally

Participants believed that these changes impacted their personal and professional life positively. The changes brought by Covid-19 gave them an additional venue and opportunity to grow and learn.

“Change is an integral part of our personal development journey, and for the most part, we should embrace it. Change touches all aspects of life, but embracing change in our career can contribute enormously towards positive personal development.”

Teachers become more creative and resourceful in thinking of new teaching strategies and techniques to be used in the Learning Delivery Modality they opted to use. Moreover, they see these changes as an opportunity to grow and learn because of the different webinars conducted to develop and enhance teacher knowledge and skills in creating video lessons and incorporating ICT in the teaching-learning process, as well as the opportunity to have time for family because of the work from home setup. (Gura, 2019) claimed that change could open up many doors and opportunities that normally would not have been there without change. Change makes many things possible. It can help you meet new people, have new experiences, develop new skills and ideas, gain new information, and accomplish amazing things. Change may assist you in transforming and breaking through. You will never know what you are capable of unless you try it. The possibilities with change become endless. All governments are increasing up efforts to offer teachers training and resources to help them adjust to this new learning environment. Department of Education conducted different webinars and training to help and guide teachers in the context of New Normal in teaching. (Malipot, 2020) stated that public school teachers in the New Normal setting undergo numerous trainings on a continuous basis to assist them meet the demand of their work during the epidemic.

Sub-theme 2 Adverse Experiences

Comprised Family Time

These changes in the education setting affect not only the work of teachers but also their personal lives. The majority of the participants claimed that they lack time spent with their families. (Strauss, 2020) commented that teachers are busier this time of pandemic; they need to prepare and record the online discussion and send learning materials to the student. According to (See et. al., 2020), according to their research during the lockdown, instructors noted losing touch and relationships with family, colleagues, and students, as well as experiencing uncertainty, worry, and anxiety.

“Because I spent most of the time in preparing learner’s material and doing reports, I seldom help my own child in doing her modules, and she cannot pass her module on time because I cannot assist her, sometimes she studies alone.”

Stressed and Anxious

The result also showed that these changes during Covid-19

caused stress to participants. The pandemic of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the participants’ lives. Many teachers are confronted with difficulties that may be stressful, overwhelming, and provoke powerful emotions. Based on the findings, stress affects both teacher’s personal and professional life.

“All of the teachers I work with were completely exhausted. We are all exhausted because of the sudden changes

“It was stressful. I think about work all the time. Often, I still have work to finish, but then, new task/work was about to be given.”

The above-stated qualitative remarks of participants imply that the abrupt changes in the education setting, as well as their additional task in preparing learning materials for students, reports, along with their responsibilities at home, stress them out.

In the study of (Klapproth et al., 2020), during Covid-19, instructors in remote learning reported medium to high levels of stress. (Aperribai, 2020) stated that despite governments’ attempts to provide resources and training to assist teachers in adjusting to this new learning environment, switching from a face-to-face to a virtual classroom in such a short period of time Has proven difficult since few teachers have strong digital and ICT abilities. Therefore, in such unexpected and difficult times, it is reasonable for teachers to suffer increased levels of stress and worry. Teachers need, certainly, socio-emotional assistance to handle the increased strain being put on them to offer to learn in a time of crisis (UNESCO, 2020). In addition, stress may influence your health, vitality, well-being, mental alertness, and personal and professional relationships by causing physical, emotional, and behavioral difficulties. Defensiveness, a lack of motivation, trouble concentrating, accidents, lower productivity, and interpersonal conflict between typically peaceful coworkers are all possible consequences (Robinson et al., 2020).

Theme 3 Encountering Challenges of the Present Times

The experiences articulated by the primary teachers on what are the difficulties or challenges they have to face day to day highlighted five (5) sub-themes: overlapping of activities, limited gadgets and technology, evaluating learning outcomes, fear of acquiring virus, and engaging pupils into active learning.

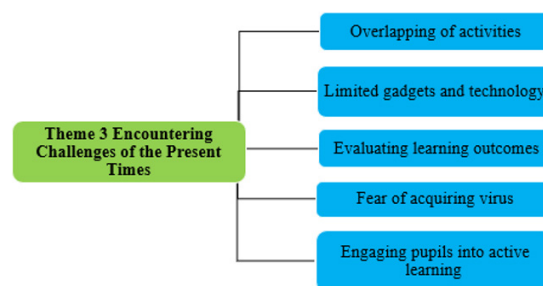


Figure 5: Encountering Challenges of the Present Times

Figure 5 shows the illustration of the third major theme and its sub-themes.

Sub-theme 1 Overlapping of activities

The majority of the participants encountered difficulties submitting paperwork and other tasks assigned to them. Aside from teaching, preparing, and reproducing modules, teachers need to submit different urgent reports and attend webinars/seminars which overlap with their responsibilities at home (e.g. doing household chores, taking care of the family and etc.) The following discourses were noted by the researcher regarding work-related and family-related activities and demands.

“My difficulties are on how to finish my work along with others while doing the work for the coming week, how to finish checking test papers received from the past week while doing virtual seminars, classroom chores, and reports at the same time.”

Sub-theme 2 Limited gadgets and technology

Participants also claimed that they struggled with the availability and use of gadgets and technology. Transitioning from traditional teaching to the new normal really challenged the participants.

“The first one is an internet connection, and there were times that when I am in a middle of the virtual class my Internet connection lost all of a sudden, and it repeats almost every day.”, “and lastly, communication, there are some pupils/parents which do not have any gadget to use for a virtual class that’s why they find it hard to cope up with the lesson.”

Considering the transition of a typical classroom set up to Online Learning and Modular learning, both teachers and pupils were required to prolong usage of technological devices such as laptops and smartphones, as well as accessing different online apps. Being said that, a secure internet connection, gadgets, and technological skills are very important especially, that transactions, communications, meetings, reports, seminars, and workshops are online. Gadget and technology also help pupils to cope with their lesson because through the use of it, they can search and utilize Google in their study. Digital technology plays a significant role because it enables teachers to teach students at a distance using different online platforms that allow them to teach synchronously and asynchronously; it also helps the teacher to access learning materials; interactive and collaborative activities.

Sub-theme 3 Evaluating learning outcomes

Another challenge faced by the primary teachers in the New Normal in education brought by Covid 19 is the reliability of students’ assessment results. It was clearly stated from their responses some pupils let their older siblings or parents answer their self-learning materials for them.

“One of the major challenges that I have encountered is the reliability of the students’ assessment. The problem is, a lot of students let their sister/brother/parents do their tasks. They are not motivated enough to finish it without the help of others. Sometimes, you will notice that the handwritten is different. It is indeed that our students need someone to help them in finishing their tasks. However, we

should teach them to learn independently so that they can discover their strengths and weaknesses.”

The printed modular learning delivery allows the student to continue learning while at home, but this only applies when pupils are properly guided by his/her parents or other members of the family. However, a participant stated that the handwriting and answers in the module were undeniably handwriting of parent or older sibling of the students. As a result, the assessment result was unreliable. According to (Arnold, 2012), the likeness of a non-proctored online test to a take-home or open-book exam is a major factor that can influence its reliability. The test-taker is overseen in a face-to-face or proctored situation. It is possible to have additional in-person tests for context with the take-home scenario utilized in normal face-to-face sessions. Furthermore, the teacher maintains regular in-person communication with the pupils, which allows for verbal discussion of the lesson. However, in a completely online environment, it is difficult to tell who is working on the same exam and how many individuals are working on it. As a result, test reliability is compromised (Watson & Sottile, 2010).

Sub-theme 4 Fear of acquiring virus

To ensure that learning must continue, teachers have to do their work responsibilities despite the covid-19 threat. Participants shared that one of the challenges and difficulties they had to face day today was the fear of acquiring viruses while doing their work.

“The most difficult challenge I am facing day today is how to protect myself from the virus. Since we do not know who has the virus or where we can get it, safety protocols and sanitation should always be considered. I always have this doubt that I might harm the health of my loved ones while performing my duties and obligations as a teacher.”

Challenges are something new and tough that needs a lot of work and perseverance. As participants still experiencing the pandemic, one of the toughest challenges teachers need to face as one of the front liners in delivering education is the fear of acquiring a virus while working. Teachers tend to expose their self in viruses while going to work, taking public transportation. Also, they might acquire the virus while distributing and retrieving modules and doing house visits regardless of how careful they are. It seems that modular learning - an alternative to traditional face-to-face sessions ostensibly designed to reduce the danger of catching the fatal virus – may be risky after all (Magsambol, 2020).

However, according to the Center for Disease Control, based on data from COVID-19 lab experiments and what we know about comparable respiratory illnesses, it is plausible that a person can contract COVID-19 by contacting a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or perhaps their eyes. In line with these, teachers had always doubted and feared that they might acquire the virus while working.

Sub-theme 5 Engaging pupils into active learning

The result also showed that primary teachers also had

difficulties engaging pupils and parents in the teaching-learning process. One of the most challenging problems of distance learning during the COVID-19 crisis is keeping learners motivated. The loss of face-to-face interaction, the limitations of communicating on digital devices, and the necessity to self-organize can all provide extra hurdles for learners in absorbing new knowledge and keeping track of the learning process. The job of the teacher becomes critical in ensuring that students remain interested and motivated.

“Because face to face was not possible, there are pupils who are too lazy to study, they did not want to continue studying, even after talking with them and their parents.”

Pupils and parents’ engagement in the process of teaching and learning is very vital. For if it were not for the joint effort of teacher, pupil, and parent, teaching and learning are not possible during this pandemic. The amount to which families promote learning at home and participate in their children’s education is the best predictor of student achievement. Pupils will develop a lifelong love of learning if their parents are engaged in their school life. At the same time, pupils learn easier if she or he is motivated enough and eager to learn despite the circumstances everybody is facing (Waterford.Org 2020).

Students who are required to complete their education from the comfort of their own homes confront a new set

of distractions that may prevent them from finishing the learning materials. Inline with this teachers are continuously doing their best and think of any strategies that would help them engage their pupils into active learning even they’re at home. In order for the new normal of learning to operate, constant contact between parents

and teachers will be required. It is critical for parents to work with teachers in reaching pupils’ learning goals because they will function as facilitators in ensuring that their children are learning from the resources offered. That is why teachers also devoted their time in monitoring and providing support to their pupils from time to time to know their standing and provide reinforcements needed to pupils who are still having trouble adjusting to this new learning environment.

Theme 4 Transcending Amidst Difficulties

The experiences of primary teachers regarding how do they balance their work-life during this pandemic and how do they cope up with the difficulties and challenges in their workload during this pandemic yielded four (4) subthemes: Time management and prioritization; Embracing changes; Flexibility and adaptability and Employing break time.

Figure 6 shows an illustration of the fourth major theme and its sub-themes.

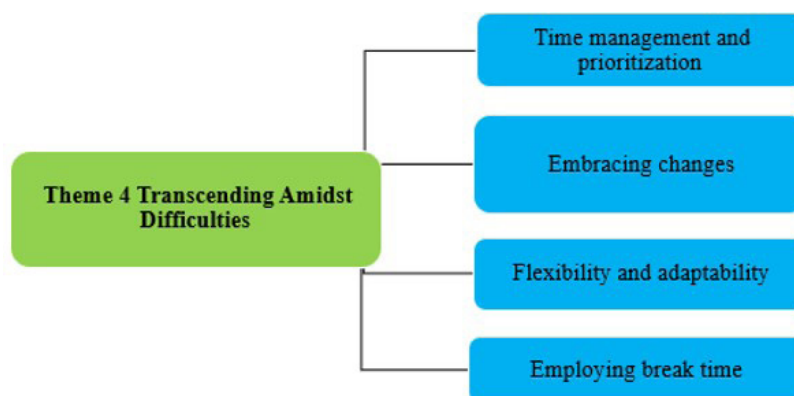


Figure 6: Transcending Amidst Difficulties

Sub-theme 1 Time Management and prioritization

Proper time management is important in learning how to use time wisely. The following discourse pertaining to time management of primary teachers as one of their coping techniques on balancing their work and life during Covid-19 were noted by the researcher. P2, P3, and P5 reported:

“I usually balance my work and life during this pandemic by managing my time efficiently. Most of the time, I do and finish all my school works during work hours only, especially when I am at school. Then when I go home, it is now the time to my family and myself.”

MIT School of Distance Education claimed that to master time management, you must be dedicated, persistent, and highly driven. A strong-willed individual prepares his or her schedule well and is determined to stick to it so that time is used efficiently.

According to some participants, another way of managing time effectively is knowing how to prioritize tasks according to their importance and urgency.

“I prioritized what is needed to be done first while ensuring that other works and responsibilities will not be sacrificed.”

Finishing a great number of tasks and responsibilities is very challenging. That is why listing task based on their importance is one means for teachers in organizing their schedules. This study showed that one of the teacher’s coping techniques to balance their work-life is through prioritizing tasks. According to (Watson, 2015), prioritizing tasks is the basis of making effective use of your time and increasing your productivity. She reiterated that *“You can do anything, but you cannot do everything.”* Prioritize your tasks and responsibilities as you make your list so you know what has to be done right now and what can wait. Take some time to think about what you need

to accomplish, how long it will take, and when you need to do it, and then prioritize. It includes your personal, professional, and household needs.

Participants also added that setting boundaries is one of the ways to manage time effectively. In line with this, teachers should manage their time properly so that they can finish all their tasks in a certain period of time.

"When working at home, I make sure that I can finish my paper works and reach me anytime within office hours just like I am in the school. When in the school, I also make sure to perform my duties as a teacher that cannot bring at home."

The above qualitative remark show how the participant keeps a border between work and personal life, assuring that she used her time efficiently to have a work-life balance. Setting Boundaries between work life is very important. Setting a good boundary between work and regular life is going to help more people and more stakeholders. Overall, it is critical that individuals manage their work-life boundaries for their own health and well-being, but also for their own productivity and their colleagues' productivity (Gaskell, 2020 & McClintock, 2021) shared that by regulating and designating certain times when students or colleagues can reach you, you will be able to both set boundaries during remote teaching and offer a specified time when students know they can contact you during distance learning.

Sub-theme 2 Embracing changes

Participants claimed that embracing changes positively was their coping technique to balance their work-life during these trying times. This pandemic will eventually pass, and teachers should always be positive and open to change in order to free themselves from stress thinking about the current situation they are into.

"I always try to be optimistic; it helps me to cope up with the challenges and difficulties during this pandemic. In this new reality that we all live in, it is vital that we see this pandemic as a temporary disruption to our lives. We, as a teacher, must evaluate things positively so that we can provide our students with a lifelong learning and meaningful learning experience during a pandemic. Although optimists are more resilient to adversity, I won't deny the fact that it is really hard to balance life and career in times of pandemic because I have to strive for excellence for the growth of my career while risking my health."

Accepting and embracing change enables us to adapt better. Change may be a bit harder for someone when they oppose and reject it. Accepting change makes it much simpler to deal with it. The more we deal with change, the more accustomed we get to it, and the simpler it becomes to cope. Our willingness to embrace change allows us to grow as individuals and will aid us in our development and transformation. Life's changes make us stronger. When we seize the opportunity to step outside of our comfort zone, it demonstrates our readiness to deal with adversity (Gura, 2019).

Sub-theme 3 Flexibility and Adaptability

Everyone can positively embrace and welcome change but being able to adapt to what was new is way harder

than the latter. Participants reported that being flexible and being able to adapt to the New Normal helped them to cope up with the changes that the pandemic brought. It also helped them to strike a balance between work and personal life.

"...and also, I can say that learning to adapt to what is new helps me to cope up with the challenges that the pandemic brought. It is our ability to adjust to this New normal that make us more efficient and effective in these trying times. By learning how technology works, it helps me to make my work faster, thus giving me more time to spend with family."

"No matter how difficult something is when we learn to adapt and go with the flow our work will be easier, instead of complaining I tried to learn difficult things for me. Like using a computer and various apps that help me make my job easier."

Being able to employ a range of teaching approaches and tactics is referred to as flexibility. This skill is especially useful in the classroom when the teacher has to change her plans for a given day for a number of reasons. Under certain conditions, a flexible teacher can make changes to the plan. This pandemic led teachers to develop their flexibility, despite of the challenges and difficulties they went through they manage to adjust and be flexible enough to deliver education. Being able to adapt to what we called New Normal, helped them to coe up and rise from difficult situations.

Sub-theme 4 Employing break time

Some participants also shared that taking breaks is one of their coping techniques or intervention in order to balance their personal/family life and work life. Covid-19 brought an abrupt change in people's lives which caused them stress. According to participants, it is finding space for something they love to do: listening to music, chatting with their friends, having snacks, and going out for a while. In conclusion, taking breaks is very vital to avoid the feeling of burnout and exhaustion.

"And mostly, if I feel exhausted, stressed and tired, I make sure to take a break, having snacks with co-teachers, going out for a while, listening to each other story will help us to refresh our mind. Learning how to handle stress and giving myself enough time to rest is the key for me to balance my work life during this pandemic."

According to CDCP (Center for Disease Control and Prevention), learning to manage stress in a healthy way can make you, your loved ones, and those around you more resilient. Taking breaks is one of the ways in helping yourself, others, and your community manage stress. Vidra (2020) reiterated that even though we are dealing with a public health emergency, we can also remind each other to take breaks and that it is fine to log off of email every now and then. In addition, taking a break enhances attention and concentration while also allowing employees to recharge their minds. Work might restart with renewed vigor and drive after a vacation. Working without taking a break results in mental and physical exhaustion. In the long term, it may even lead to burnout.

Theme 5 Strengthening Faith and Values

The stories recounted by the primary teachers about the valuable learnings they have realized during Covid-19 disclosed four (4) sub-themes: resiliency, self-appreciation nurturing spiritually; and creativity. Figure 7 shows the fifth major theme and its sub-themes.

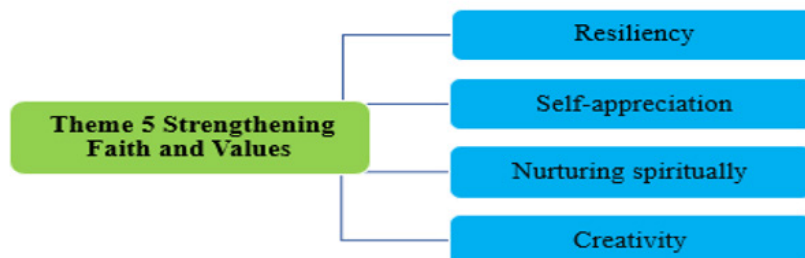


Figure 7: Strengthening Faith and Values

because I have children who depends on me.”

According to (Guru, 2019), resilience makes us stronger and more equipped to deal with life’s challenges. You realize that a change in your life, no matter how significant, is not the end of the world and that you will get through it, perhaps better than before. Because of the changes we have faced previously, we are better prepared and effective in dealing with whatever life throws at us.

In this new normal, flexibility, adjustments, and considerations are needed based on how one understands, respond, and manage an ever-changing environment. According to the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, flexibility is defined as the ability to effectively incorporate input into one’s activities. It also involves responding positively to compliments, failures, and critiques. As a teacher, you will frequently encounter situations that need a high level of adaptability, creativity, and the ability to modify plans. Because anything may happen in the classroom, at school, or even at home, flexibility is an essential ability for every teacher. A flexible teacher adapts to and adjusts to various classroom conditions.

Sub-theme 2 Self-appreciation

Some participants believed that during this pandemic, they learned to appreciate themselves even more, especially the nature of their work.

“Appreciate the value of yourself as an individual or as a typical person, not merely as a teacher. Due to the transition from face-to-face learning to online delivery and modular learning delivery, parents fully understood and saw the importance of a teacher. Because they find it hard teaching their children, how much more a teacher with 35-45 pupils in one classroom. We teachers are worthy, we should appreciate ourselves more, for self-appreciation led to self-love, and when we love ourselves, we could also extend that love to others most importantly to our pupils.”

The teachers’ role becomes crucial for making sure that the learners stay engaged and do not lose their motivation. Through this pandemic, many have uncovered on the reality of what teachers have faced on doing their job. *“In this crisis, teachers have demonstrated incredible leadership and creativity, as they have done so many times before, in ensuring that*

Sub-theme 1 Resiliency

Most of the participants claimed that the pandemic strengthened their resiliency in both work and life situations. *“Despite the fact that I have a lot of work to do and I’m having a hard time, I patiently doing my works, I never thought giving up*

learning never stops and that no student is left behind.” They have worked

independently and collectively throughout the world to discover solutions and build new learning environments for their pupils, allowing education to continue. Their role in advising on school reopening preparations and assisting students with the transition back to school is crucial (UNICEF, 2020).

It is believed to be overwhelming when someone appreciate and recognizes teachers effort. Teachers have the right to be recognized and appreciate by others. But before others appreciate them, they have to learn to appreciate themselves first. Be grounded on their contributions to the welfare of their pupils especially in these trying times. Teaching in the New Normal was never an easy job, in response to the pandemic, teachers should identified remote education strategies that will help them educate their pupils remotely. Despite of the changes and challenges they went through, they always find means to help their students learn.

Sub-theme 3 Nurturing spiritually

Some participants also shared that this pandemic strengthened their faith in God; keeping faith in God helps them face these changes positively.

“I realized that everything in this world that we had is not permanent as it is; everything will eventually change, so we need to know how to balance everything in our lives and don’t forget to always prioritize God in every decision we made to make us stronger for all the challenges we are facing. We just have to share all our worries with God because somehow it will make us feel better.”

(Sabay, 2020) stated that it is time to serve the Lord; seeing how the people show their generosity, support, help, perform charitable service, and show their love for others, I can see the real church – a church that is concerned with others in need; the church that prays for one another.

She added that *“This time of crisis is the opportunity for people to put into action what they have gained from going to church and participating in church services. I think this pandemic is strengthening the faith of the people. It is bringing them closer to God. It brings out the love of God in them. This crisis shall pass.”*

Sub-theme 4 Creativity

Participants also shared that this pandemic led them to discover their creative side. Through their initiative that learning must continue despite of the pandemic, they continuously explore and discover different strategies that would cater the needs and arouse the interest of pupils to learn.

“Personally, this pandemic and this change also taught me to think of different strategies and approaches when it comes to the teaching-learning process so that the learning experience of my students will be more meaningful and interactive even though they are not physically present in the school. I provided interactive video lesson to arouse th interest of pupils.”

Teachers have been able to be more conscious of their class preparation and material delivery as a result of today’s innovations, which require creativity from them. It allows them to explore all possible means and be resourceful to provide new ways of learning. Their willingness and openness to change help them to overcome and combat the difficulties they are facing.

A creative teacher possesses the following characteristics: Fluency is the ability to generate a large number of thoughts, replies, and problem-solving solutions from one’s head, as well as providing many suggestions for accomplishing different things. 2) Adaptability, or the ability to solve problems using a variety of approaches, examine numerous options, and alter one’s way of thinking. 3) originality, or the capacity to give birth to fresh and creative expressions, to conceive of unexpected methods to transmit oneself, and to mix elements or components; and 4) elaboration, or the ability to produce an idea or product and describe an object, idea, or scenario to make it more appealing or pleasant, (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004).

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Work-Life Balance of Public-School Primary Teachers During Covid-19 encompasses five major themes (a) Encountering Challenges of the Present Times (b) : Realizing Impact of the New Normal to Teachers (c) Encountering Challenges of the Present Times (d) Transcending Amidst Difficulties (e) : Strengthening Faith and Values. The pandemic brought about changes changes in almost all diverse workforce including the driving work-life balance of the teachers. There appears to be an increasing concern amongst teachers that their work should leave them with the time and energy to pursue interests and responsibilities outside work and their family. The teachers now recognised that this pandemic had created a lot of changes that one way or another affected their overall conditions.
2. The new normal in the education setting caused changes and additional workloads for teachers during this pandemic due to: planning for instruction, feedbacking and monitoring, attending webinars and online meetings; irregular working hours; ICT Capabilities and internet/

WIFI access. This new set up are now an included in the overall conditions of appropriate work-load for teachers and suitable workload are now emerging to consider employees working in different ways in this present phenomena.

3. The pandemic impacted both teachers’ professional and personal lives it affected them positively because through provisions of the different work-related seminars, they had the opportunity to grow professionally. However, this pandemic affects them negatively because of compromised family time, and the pandemic causes them stressed and anxious. For work-life balance to work effectively, individuals need to be supported to get over some of these barriers or challenges, through for instance effective internal communication and easily accessible information about the practices to offer and a change in the organization culture, so that new ways of iposing balance in the work becomes the new norm especially in this time of pandemic.

4. Teachers are significantly challenged by overlapping of activities, limited gadgets and technology, evaluating learning outcomes, fear of acquiring the virus, and engaging pupils into active learning. Within all of this present conditions teachers accepted their responsibility for work-life balance or diversity issues. They were committed to apply work-life balance initiatives in order for them to ace up the challenges.

5. Teachers coping techniques or interventions prior to the difficulties and challenges they are facing are time management and prioritization, embracing changes, flexibility and adaptability, and employing break time. Teachers faced difficulties and challenges during the pandemic but they manage to be resilient in the face of adversities through the aforementioned coping techniques, which helps them to sustain a work-life balance in these trying times.

6. The values and faith strengthened during this pandemic are resiliency and self-appreciation, nurturing spiritually and creativity. Filipino are known with good traits and values. That is why they always make way to become more resilient and creative even they are facing difficulties and challenges. Filipinos have grown to appreciate what they have, to make the moof it, and to bear adversity. Also, Filipino are known with their strong religious faith even in the midst of pandemic they never loose their faith. These traits promotes a feeling of solidarity and compassion and it helps them embrace changes with a positive mindset.

7. Overall, this study revealed that New Normal impacted teachers’ work-life balance in both ways. There were negative impacts such as having additional workloads, causing them to have a lesser time with their family and additional stress because of the various challenges. However, it also brought about initiatives of flexibility and adaptability, self-appreciation, nurturing spiritually and resourcefulness.

Recommendation

The following are the recommendations offered by the

researcher based on the results of the study.

1. Teachers may establish a routine and timetable that they strictly follow at school and at home. In this way, they could manage their time properly and ensure that they can do their responsibilities both in their work and at home.
2. Teachers may learn to unplug or exercise the “right to disconnect” by disregarding work-related communications after working hours. Cutting ties with the outer world enables teachers to recover from everyday stress and creates space for new ideas and thoughts.
3. Teachers may set boundaries and work hours. When leaving at work, avoid thinking of work and answering work-related emails or chats. Moreover, it is important to know when to work and when will stop working.
4. Teachers should make time for themselves and their loved ones. While the teaching profession is vital, it should not be the focus of a teacher’s life. To guarantee that they spend quality time with their loved ones, they should learn to schedule personal and family time. They should have control over their job and lives, no matter how hectic their schedule may be, in order to foster and strengthen family ties.
5. The agency should consider giving vacation to teachers without doing work-related responsibilities. It entails taking vacation time and turning off all work for a period of time. It is vital for teachers to take time off to physically and mentally recharge.
6. The agency may provide needed and necessary training to teachers to further equip them on the different pedagogical approaches utilized in educating pupils during the New Normal, especially in assessing and engaging students in the New Normal education set-up.
7. The school may consider developing and implementing a program for ECED teachers which will help them attain and maintain life balance, especially in these trying times.
8. Lastly, a similar study can be conducted by other researchers to validate the results of this research. Also, a larger sample from a broader target population and inclusion of other variables that affect and are essential in measuring teachers work-life balance such as in-depth study of everyday routines in relations to the involvement of teachers and school; additional Family background such as specific life style, cohabitation status, and amount of workload may be considered.

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