

Embracing the New Normal Set-Up from Modular to Face-to-Face Learning: A Grounded Theory

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Abstract

Educators bear a great amount of responsibility for taking purposeful actions and ensuring that all learners continue to receive a high-quality, inclusive, and equitable education despite the pandemic. To assure the continuity of learning in the Philippines public basic education system, modular learning has become the most popular distance learning technique as this considers learners in remote locations who do not have access to the internet for online learning. As the education transforms back to face-to-face learning, this qualitative study conducted an in-depth exploration of teachers as an instructional specialist in the education transition using the grounded theory. The in-depth interviews with the participants exposed four emergent themes and a central category on the teachers' experiences as an instructional specialist in the education transition. "Teacher's adaptable determinants" emerged as the core category and entailed four essential themes: (1) Understanding of function; (2) Recognition and acceptance of the inevitability of the circumstance; (3) Efforts made in response to the ongoing difficulties; and (4) Ability to adjust in the face of adversity. The grounded theory of appreciation-accommodation-resilience: teacher's adaptable determinants in educational transition unveils an understanding that being a teacher in this time of transition requires teachers to appreciate their function (recognition and understanding), to accommodate certain initiatives (adjust), and to be resilient in difficult circumstance (efforts) for the learning continuity to thrive amid the prevailing challenges and other adversities of the pandemic. The theory can provide a frame of reference for the educational leaders and institutions for them to come up with regulations and other guidelines that are responsive to the needs and experiences of the teacher's in actualizing the objectives of face-to-face learning in the public basic education system. Overall, the theory highlights the accounts of the teachers as an instruction specialist in the education transition from modular distance learning back to face-to-face learning. Teachers' appreciation, accommodation, and resilience are being magnified as their adaptable determinants in this educational transition

Keywords : face-to-face; new normal set-up; modular; teachers; grounded theory

INTRODUCTION

Over a billion students are at risk of falling behind academically as a result of school closures intended to contain the spread of COVID-19 (UNICEF, 2020). To slow the spread of the virus and prevent infections, most countries have temporarily closed educational

facilities (Tria, 2020). As a result, educators, who are on the front lines of this educational crisis, bear a great amount of responsibility for taking purposeful actions and ensuring that all learners continue to receive a high-quality, inclusive, and equitable education despite the pandemic (UNESCO, 2020).

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the DepEd's flagship response has been the Basic Educational-Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP). The BE-LCP involves the dissemination of self-learning modules along with various learning modalities such as online, blended, television-based, and radio-based instructions in order to give quality education in the "new normal" context. Not only students, but also teachers and staff, have been protected from contracting COVID-19 as a result of this initiative (DepEd, 2020).

To stop the infection from spreading, distance learning has grown popular. As stated by Quinones (2020), distant learning is a kind of instruction in which learning takes place between a teacher and students who are geographically separated during instruction. Modular Distance Learning (MDL), Online Distance Learning (ODL), and TV/Radio-Based Instruction are the three types of this modality.

Modular learning is the most common method of distance learning in the Philippines. Bernardo (2020) asserts that all public schools now use modular learning since studying through printed and digital modules has become the most popular distance learning technique among parents. This also considers learners in remote locations who do not have access to the internet for online learning.

Modular distance learning, on the other hand, has several difficulties, particularly in the Philippines. Many learners in basic education, according to Tibon (2020), are not capable of independent learning. The development and production of high-quality modules to meet the diverse demands of learners necessitates considerable thought. It's possible that the learners' overall growth will be harmed. There may be minimal opportunities for students to engage and mingle. This can be a problem for pupils who are unable to cope with the abrupt changes in the educational environment.

Furthermore, Malipot (2020) emphasized that teachers use modular remote learning to vent their grievances. Teachers have received numerous training and seminars to be more equipped in delivering better education during the COVID-19 epidemic, since it is a departmental rule to train teachers not only for professional growth but also to become ready for unexpected conditions, according to Bagood (2020). The primary obstacles that surfaced, attested by Dangle and Sumaoang (2020), were a lack of school funds in the design and distribution of modules, students' struggles with self-studying, and parents' lack of understanding to academically assist their child/children.

Junio (2021) states, on the other hand, that the United Nations, UNICEF, WHO, and UNESCO support the introduction of limited in-person schooling in the Philippines, praising the Department of Education's leadership and coordination with appropriate institutions, including the Department of Health.

Additionally, UNICEF (2021) states that beginning in-person classes as soon as possible has more advantages than disadvantages. School closures that last for a long time have a negative influence on children's physical and emotional health. Children are more vulnerable to domestic abuse, gender-based violence, such as sexual exploitation and child marriage, and child labor, particularly in the stressful environment of the epidemic. Furthermore, WHO (2021) warns that the most vulnerable children, as well as those who are unable to access remote learning, are at risk of never returning to the classroom.

The role of teachers in this educational shift is critical. However, Magsambol (2021) has classified issues with the start of in-person lessons, including insufficient health facilities at the school, such as a clinic and handwashing, as well as other resource gaps, such as classroom shortages, a lack of water supply, and the obvious absence of a school nurse. Consequently, the Department of Education (2022) emphasizes that educators should

continue to be a top focus in public health and safety initiatives.

Hence, this study emphasizes the importance of teachers as instructional specialists in the new normal set-up. The purpose of this study is to learn about teachers' experiences as they move from modular distance learning to face-to-face learning. This clarifies the themes and major categories of teachers' experiences as instructional experts in the new normal of education. The goal of this study is to uncover themes from the informants' accounts that may be used to develop a grounded construct for understanding what it's like to be on the frontlines of the new normal education transformation.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

It is the intention of the study to generate a theory on understanding teachers as an instruction specialist in the new normal set-up that can elucidate knowledge on (1) teachers' perceptions, (2) challenges and (3) opportunities that the teachers encounter in the education transition teaching and learning from modular distance learning back to limited face-to-face learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

COVID-19 has turned into a global health emergency. Nearly 36 million individuals have been infected and over one million have died as of October 6, 2020. (Worldometer, 2020). Most countries have chosen to use quarantine protocols and temporarily close their educational institutions in order to stop COVID-19 from spreading. As a result, over a billion students around the world have been impacted. Over 28 million Filipino students across all academic levels are among those who must remain at home and adhere to the Philippine government's quarantine regulations (UNESCO, 2020).

Maintaining uninterrupted learning has become a monumental task for the worldwide education sector as COVID-19 continues to spread in various places throughout the world. To ensure learning continuity, several ways such as hi-tech, low-tech, and even no-tech solutions are being

presented (Huang, et al, 2020). Officials in charge of education respond quickly and with specific situations in mind. As the pandemic spreads, numerous lawmakers are enacting regulations that limit the amount of people who can congregate in public settings. These initiatives also had an impact on the day-to-day operations of schools and other educational institutions (OECD, 2020).

Southeast Asian neighbors have responded creatively to similar challenges and have begun to pivot to a new era of education. As early as May 2020, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam have started some type of distance learning. Thailand's Education Ministry had intended to use a Distance Learning Television (DLTV) platform to implement a learning program. Educational courses, vocational education, non-formal and informal education were broadcast on seventeen television channels (Praphornkul, 2020). The method combines on-air or television learning with online learning. However, due to transmission issues and inadequate connectivity, the rollout was met with criticism (Bangkok Post, 2020). After a survey revealed that 60–70 percent of kids are not ready for TV education, the ministry shifted its focus to preparing for schools to reopen across the country (Bangkok Post, 2020).

As Thai universities migrate their activities online, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI) has offered Microsoft software to over 60,000 educators and 2 million students (Microsoft, 2020). Universities have also taken important steps and formed collaborations to enable a smooth transition to digital. The Learning Innovation Center (LIC) at Chulalongkorn University has established its own learning platform, which contains resources, information, tools, and methodologies to enhance online learning (Chulalongkorn University, 2020). Mahidol University and Siam Commercial Bank have teamed up to build a better virtual platform for students and teachers (Siam Commercial Bank, 2020). Thammasat University has teamed with Skilllane to develop a data science degree program. MOOCs are offered by several universities, such as Chiang Mai University, to

encourage online learning (**Phongsathorn, 2020**).

In conjunction with TVRI, a state-owned broadcaster, Indonesia's Education and Culture Ministry launched their own distance learning program named "Learning from Home" (**Jakarta Globe, 2020**). For all levels of elementary and secondary schools, the curriculum focuses on boosting reading, numeracy, and character development. However, challenges such as inconsistent internet connection, disparities in teacher qualifications and education quality, and a lack of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) abilities made implementation difficult (**Azzahra, 2020**). A poll of 1,045 students indicated that 53.7 percent of those who replied expressed worries regarding online learning due to inadequate streaming, network quota limitations, and reception. Despite varied opinions, there appears to be a favourable response to online learning in Indonesia (**Yamin, 2020**). The Online Learning System Program (SPADA) is used by 95% of Indonesian universities for online learning (**Yamin, 2020**). SPADA is a supporter of learning management systems (LMS) in all levels of tertiary education, where online lectures and course materials are made freely available to students.

Before beginning its educational program, Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) organized a national online conference with 300 live meeting hubs to find ways to improve online learning (**Nguyen and Pham, 2020**). HEI leaders, technology and technical service providers such as Viettel Group, VNPT, MobiFone, Vietnamobile, Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and FPT attended the conference (**Nguyen and Pham, 2020**). According to the Ministry of Education and Training, 110 of Vietnam's 240 higher education institutions have started offering online courses. However, not every HEI has a completely functional LMS (**Nguyen and Pham, 2020**). Recognizing that they have a unique opportunity to collaborate and improve digital teaching and learning, the delegates began formulating plans to deploy online education in the long run, rather than just

as a response to COVID-19. MOET's partnership with Microsoft, which provided education institutions with digital tools to implement remote learning (**Microsoft, 2020**), Viettel's offer of free 3G and 4G data to teachers and students using their e-learning platform called Viettel Study, and VNPT's launch of its online learning solution called VNPT E-Learning, which also comes with free 3G and 4G data, appear to have been inspired by this collaborative discourse (**Lich, 2020**).

After months of trial and error, online teaching is now acknowledged as a formal technique in Vietnam, which is an unusual development given that any request to formally conduct online learning prior to COVID-19 was regarded with skepticism by the academic community (**Nguyen and Pham, 2020**). Minister of Education and Training Phung Xuan Nha acknowledged, however, that difficulties such as connection, particularly in rural regions, as well as some pedagogical concerns, such as student performance management, must be addressed if the initiative is to thrive.

According to **Ragandang (2020)**, the Philippines placed tenth in upload speed and sixteenth in download speed among 87 nations, while ranking 21st in terms of 4G availability, trailing Albania, Brazil, and Tunisia, among others (**Mercurio, 2020**). Out of the 22.2 million enrollees, 8.8 million (39.6% of total respondents) opted modular distance learning for the following school year, according to data collected through DepEd's National Learner Enrolment and Survey Forms (LESFs). Meanwhile, 3.9 million students (17.6%) preferred blended learning (which combines many modalities), 3.8 million (17.1%) preferred online learning, and 1.4 million and 900,000 students selected TV-based and radio-based learning, respectively. As a result of this concern, all public schools in the Philippines have adopted the modular learning paradigm.

Modular learning is a type of remote learning that makes use of Self-Learning Modules (SLM) and is very handy for the majority of Filipino students. It was also the majority of parents/guardians' preferred learning system for their children. The SLM is based on the

Department of Education's most essential learning competencies (MELCS).

In modular distance learning, the teachers are in charge of keeping track of the students' progress. Students can contact the teacher by email, phone, or text message/instant messaging for help. The teacher will provide remedial activities to kids who are having difficulty (**Flip Science, 2020**). Distance education is as successful as classroom instruction, according to a meta-analysis on the effects of distance learning on K-12 student outcomes (**Cavanaugh, Gillan, Kromrey, Hess, Blomeyer, 2004**). To put it another way, students who participate in online or modular distance learning can receive a good education as long as their essential needs are addressed.

Parents claimed that time allotment in the completion of learning activities was insufficient in the study done by (**Olivo, 2021**) since the activities were so many. Furthermore, some parents stated that some themes in the modules are too difficult for them to understand, and that they are unable to assist and guide their children in completing the learning assignments.

According to **Ali et al. (2010)** study, "Effectiveness of modular teaching at Secondary level," modular learning groups perform much better than traditional learning groups. Modularization also resulted in beneficial modifications in teaching methods.

In addition, **Sadiq and Zamir (2014)** shown that modular teaching is a more successful strategy in teaching master's students in educational planning and management at universities. This method may be used in a variety of sectors and courses, as well as at different levels of education, because it can meet the diverse learning demands of students at all levels.

Furthermore, **Sadiq (2014)** claims in her study that modular teaching is more effective in the teaching-learning process for university students than traditional teaching techniques. Because kids study at their own pace with this modular method.

The effect of modular distance learning approach on academic performance in mathematics of students in Mindanao State University- Sulu Senior High School was revealed in the article "The Effect of Modular Distance Learning

Approach on Academic Performance in Mathematics of Students in Mindanao State University- Sulu Senior High School" by (**Aksan, 2021**). Despite the constraints of the COVID-19 epidemic, the study proved the efficiency of the modular distance learning technique in learning Math.

Similarly, **Gonzales (2015)** found that using a modular teaching strategy was more beneficial than using a traditional way of instruction in his study. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, where face-to-face classes are no longer possible, as well as issues with the internet and technology, modular distance learning is the best option for continuing to deliver education with positive outcomes.

On the other hand, according to the findings of **Dargo & Dimas (2021)**, learners' academic performance decreased after the implementation of Modular Distance Learning (MDL). This simply means that face-to-face instruction is more effective and beneficial to the students. It was also discovered that MDL had more negative effects than positive effects. According to the study's respondents, there are several reasons why modular distance learning has a detrimental impact on students' learning. First, there is a lack of engagement between the teacher and the students. Finally, there are too many tasks/activities in the modules.

According to **Agarin (2021)** in his article "The Challenges and Status of Modular Learning: Its Effect on Students' Academic Behavior and Performance," "the teacher's physical relationship with the students has an impact on the students' academic performance".

Following the discovery of this information on the use of modular distant learning as a means of delivering high-quality education during the epidemic, there has been a vacuum in understanding of its implications for basic education and the role that teachers play in achieving the modality's goals. The goal of the study is to highlight the importance of teachers as instructional experts in the new normal set-up and to learn about the teachers' experiences as they transition from modular distant learning to face-to-face learning. Hence, the research is carried out.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The grounded theory, which is widely used in educational research, was used in this paper. Grounded theory, according to **Glaser and Strauss (1967)**, is the discovery of a theory based on data that has been collected and analyzed in a systematic manner. According to **Kaiser and Presmeg (2019)**, grounded theory is a unique set of systematic methods that support the analysis and abstraction of data in order to construct a theory based on empirical data. These methods use the constant comparison technique to implement unique coding procedures such as open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. There will be a huge potential for contribution to the refinement and advancement of an evolving theory as new data is gathered and new cases are revealed in the analysis.

Participants: The main participants of the study were the teachers who use Modular Distance Learning through self-learning modules, who were chosen through purposive sampling. The researcher took data saturation into account when determining the number of participants for the study. The study took place in the DepEd District of Pinamungajan 1, Cebu Province.

Instrument: The main instrument for this study was an interview, which was conducted in either English or Cebuano, depending on the respondents' comfort level. The interview was conducted online using a Facebook Messenger app, a Google form, or face-to-face while adhering to safety protocols.

Data Gathering Procedure: The respondents who were chosen through purposive sampling were asked for permission to conduct the study. The chosen respondents were given an informed consent form. They were given plenty of time to think over their decision to participate in the study. After consent is acquired, participants were informed about the study's nature, scope of participation, risks and rewards, as well as the participants' rights, benefits, and confidentiality. Face-to-face interviews were conducted at the convenience of the participants, according to health protocols. Data were coded using Strauss and Corbin's triadic coding process when the appropriate information has been gathered.

Data Analysis: Numerous and different characteristics serve to maintain the "groundedness" of the Grounded Theory methodology. **Davidson (2001)** states that data collection and analysis are combined on purpose, and that primary data analysis is used to construct a profile of ongoing data collecting. It is believed that interweaving data collecting and analysis will amplify the insights and clarify the limits of the emerging theory by posing different questions that account for the real phenomenon relevant to the respondents. **Kaiser and Presmeg (2019)** explain that the collected data are assessed using various coding approaches as the central procedure. Coding is a form of conceptual abstraction in grounded theory that assigns broad concepts (codes) to specific data occurrences.

Coding and continual comparative approach are crucial for discovering a grounded theory in this circumstance (**Charmaz, 2006**). The continual comparative methodology is a continuous and inductive method of data classification that involves constant recoding. During the coding phase, the information or incidents are compared and examined with the other data (**Glaser & Strauss, 1967**).

According to **Glaser & Strauss**, as quoted by **Kolb (2012)**, continual comparative technique involves four activities: (1) analyzing occurrences related to each category, (2) combining categories and their characteristics, (3) defining and delimiting the emergent theory, and (4) building the theory. Throughout the steps of this methodology, the researcher continually determines data collection, provides analysis and codes for the collected data, and strengthens the development of the theory by theoretical sampling.

This method is advantageous to the researcher because the exploration is based on raw data and actual participant remarks, while similarities and contrasts in the responses are noted. By meticulously comparing and analyzing the evidence, a significant theory will emerge.

OPEN CODING: After gathering the data, although not necessarily all of them, the review procedure can begin. **Strauss and Corbin (1990)** differentiate "open, axial, and selective coding" as the three types of coding processes required to construct a grounded theory. **LaRossa (2015)** notes that when these three phases are implemented, this triadic coding process strengthens the grounded theory.

Initial data analysis is conducted using open code. A comprehensive data analysis will be conducted for the conceptualization and classification of the phenomenon. In this initial step of open coding, the fragmented information is minimized and thoroughly studied. This procedure aims to comprehend the basic concept

of each component and devise a code that best defines it (**Kaiser and Presmeg, 2019**). These informational pieces are compared in terms of their similarities and differences. Similar parts will be assigned the same code (**Mey and Mruck, 2011**).

The ultimate goal of open coding is to generate an abundance of codes to define data until saturation is reached (**Strauss and Corbin, 1990**). The "concepts" are revealed by "indicators" in the form of phrases, idioms, data assertions, or important observations (**Feeler, 2012**). This would pave the door for revealing a certain degree of the stories' or experiences' originality.

Table 1. Open Coding

Perturbations	Continues discovery	Embrace changes	Move forward
Prayed to God for Guidance	Teach and guide one by one	Prepare materials needed	Adjust teaching style
Update readings	Very important	Identify	Connect
Follow-up progress	Establish new routine	Time management	Step by step
Concern to the learning	Study the lessons	Professional Development	

AXIAL CODING: The next step is axial coding. It is considered to be the method of linking concepts and categories. To build a grounded theory, **Kaiser and Presmeg (2019)** suggest that changing relationships between the different concepts must be combined into an overarching structure with one fundamental category. According to **Strauss and Corbin (1990)**, this second phase of coding is essential to study and explore the connections between and among the categories and to formulate ties between them. **Strauss (1987)** implies further that a thorough investigation must be conducted in order to identify a primary category for the causes and effects.

Axial coding emphasizes inductive and deductive reasoning approaches when connecting subcategories to a category by continuing to ask questions and make comparisons (**Mills et al., 2006**). In this sense, the researcher is observing emerging innovative concepts that capture the many categories in order to develop a holistic narrative.

Table 2. Axial Coding

Perturbations Concern to the learning Very important	Understanding of the function
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Prayed God for guidance Adjust teaching style Establish new routine Embrace changes Time management Step by step Move forward	Recognition and acceptance of the inevitability of the circumstance
Update readings Continues discovery Study the lessons Prepare materials needed Professional Development	Efforts made in response to the ongoing difficulties
Follow-up progress Teach and guide one by one Connect Identify	Ability to adjust in the face of adversity

SELECTIVE CODING: At this stage of coding, categories are streamlined and refined, as the core category is systematically linked to other categories (Strauss, 1987). The researcher will determine or choose the primary narrative underlying the analysis. In other words, the researcher's collected narrative should be introspective, consistent, and preferably captivating (LaRossa, 2005).

When the core category is identified, the trajectory of the research is determined. The researcher identifies the primary phenomenon of the study and is then able to answer the research question. The grounded theory will eventually emerge from the meticulously collected, examined, and interpreted raw evidence (Vollstedt, 2015).

Results and Discussion: After the analysis, the core category that emerged was the **teacher's adaptable determinants** in the new normal of teaching. There are four essential themes under this category, namely:

Theme 1: Understanding of the function

Theme 2: Recognition and acceptance of the inevitability of the circumstance

Theme 3: Efforts made in response to the ongoing difficulties

Theme 4: Ability to adjust in the face of adversity

Out of these themes, propositions are formulated. Based on these propositions, hypotheses are created and evaluated. For each topic, an exhaustive discussion is provided.

Theme 1: Understanding of the function

As revealed in the study of **Sudarwan and Danim (2010)**, the teacher is one of the important elements that must exist besides students. Becoming a teacher is not an easy task. This is because the teacher has a very important role in the education process. The teacher is a central figure, in the hands of the teacher lies the possibility of success or failure in the achievement of learning and teaching goals in school. Therefore, the task and role of the teacher is not only to educate, teach and train, but also how the teacher can also read the class situation and conditions of students in receiving lessons. Hence, there is an increasing understanding of their function in the education transition. **Wijaya (2013)** states that the function of teachers as educators in the classroom is very many, namely: (1) educators; (2) instructors; (3) mentor; (4) trainers; (5) advisor; (6) class manager; (7) demonstrators; (8) corrector; (9) inspirators; (10) informator; (11) organizer; (12) motivator; (13) initiator; (14) facilitator; (15) innovators; (16) mediators; and (17) evaluator. Teachers wear different hats in the educative process more importantly in the transition of education from modular to face- to-face learning. It was revealed

in this study that the teachers demonstrated perturbations, concern for learning, and the significance of their function but all these things are condensed that teachers are fully aware of the “important” role as an instructional specialist in the education transition.

Here are some statements of the participants that manifested perturbations in this education transition.

“I was terrified because the school will never be ready for the limited face to face classes...” **PE**

“The limited face -to- face classes and the continuation of the modular delivery burdened us so much unexpectedly...” **PF**

“I’d say I was not surprised as there were already rumors that it’s going to happen...” **PG**

“Since typhoon Odette devastated our school, I was worried and frustrated because we only have 2 classrooms to use for the face-to face classes...” **PK**

Some participants demonstrated concern for the learning of their students leading them to appreciate the education transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes.

“Overwhelmed with joy and excitement because at last we’ll be able to meet the learners whose hunger for learning is very evident” **PA**

“I’m thankful to the government because they allow us to have a limited face-to-face class” **PD**

“I feel happy knowing that I can teach the students personally, that I can give the instructions to them thoroughly” **PF**

“I was actually planning to maximize my time with my pupils so that I can give what they need. They need to cope a lot of topics they missed in our class...” **PH**

“Exciting. Because I know that learners would definitely learn a lot in face-to-face set-up” **PL**

The importance of their role as instructional specialist in the education transition was unveiled in some of the statements of the participants.

“Teacher is still the best facilitator of learning. Being one, makes learning meaningful and effective” **PB**

“The most important role that I see is still to facilitate the building of the prerequisite skills that were possibly not developed because of almost two years of self- learning” **PE**

“As an educator my presence in front of my pupils is very important in the learning of my pupils...” **PH**

“...teachers play a very important role specially in imparting knowledge ensuring that the students understand what is being taught” **PJ**

“...my role as an educator is very important... it’s my responsibility also for them to feel comfortable and to double time just to cover up the missed learning competencies” **PL**

Hypothesis 1: Teachers that use modular remote learning realize the significance of their role in the educational transformation.

Proposition 1: Teachers’ understanding of their function is necessitated in this education transition from modular to face-to-face learning through the Modular Distance Learning modality.

Theme 2: Recognition and acceptance of the inevitability of the circumstance

The participants’ positive well-being contributes to addressing the challenges of the new normal education. Encouraging outlook, self-confidence gained from guidance and embracing changes, establishing new routines and effective planning, and making adjustments allows them to continue performing their duties and responsibilities despite the challenges of these trying times. When teachers create a positive environment and well-being among themselves, it could foster improved academic performance and promote social and emotional progress among students even outside the classroom (Loveless, 2020). It was exposed in this inquiry that teachers recognized and accepted the setbacks of the inevitability of the situation. This implies that recognition and acceptance of the effects of the pandemic is the teachers’ way of conveying that they are at the helm of the learning continuity for their learners.

“I just keep in mind that we should move forward despite the debacles that may come along this education transition” **PA**

“I just prepare myself and embrace changes in the system” **PD**

“Time management and organization of works” **PF**

“I prayed to God for guidance in everything I do” **PI**

“Establishing a new routine and effective planning” PJ

“Gradual... Step by step in embracing the changes...” PK

“...adjusting my teaching style from modular to face-to-face learning, focus on active learning and implement regular assessments and readiness checks” PL

Hypothesis 2: Recognition and acceptance of the inevitability of circumstance surrounding the education shift brought about by the pandemic is essential for the continuity and transition of learning.

Proposition 2: Teachers recognize and accept the effects of the inevitable situation in the educational shift for continuity and transition of learning to proliferate.

Theme 3: Efforts made in response to the ongoing difficulties

Teachers today are faced with increasingly heavy demands, especially to prepare students to be able to face the dynamics of change that are developing rapidly (Gunawan, 2013). The changes that occur are not only related to changes in science and technology, but also touches on the shifting aspects of values and morals in social life. Learning does not stop at the cognitive level, but touches on the level of internalization, and real practice in the daily lives of students in the community. Hence, teachers made efforts in response to the ongoing difficulties amid the pandemic in the educational transition from modular distance learning back to face-to-face learning. This study revealed that the teachers made great efforts to deal with the transition.

“I empower myself through continues discovery of effective ways to bring back learner's eagerness and willingness to learn” PA

“I do some readings to keep myself updated” PB

“I studied the lessons, how to deliver or impart it to them locally” PI

“Continuing professional development or attending virtual trainings. Set learning goals and strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners” PJ

“I prepared the necessary instructional materials needed for my learners” PL

Hypothesis 3: Teachers are taking individual actions in order to cater the needs of learners in the face-to-face learning.

Proposition 3: Teachers made efforts toward the prevailing challenges of the educational transition.

Theme 4: Ability to adjust in the face of adversity

Nothing in this world is constant. Being flexible and adaptive to changes allows us to survive and still succeed. One participant mentioned that teachers are engaged in never ending learning, thus, we should be open to learn new things which would help us grow. Flexibility and adaptability are important qualities that every teacher must acquire. Effective teachers can adjust, change, and modify teaching methodologies depending on the students' needs, availability of resources, and context of environment. They value students' achievement, rather than rigid practices (Christenbury, 2011). Teachers' presence, importance, and impact to learners' achievement and learning strengthened in the transition back to face-to-face learning. Findings in this study revealed that regardless of the adversities, teachers have adapted and justified the great effect of face-to-face learning to the success of the learners. Teachers gained more insights into their learners' well-being and learning. Seemingly, teachers as an instructional specialist in the new normal set-up from modular to face-to-face learning is being well acknowledged.

“Shows interest and determination despite of the complexity of some lessons” PA

“Learning becomes more effective than modular learning” PB

“I can facilitate pupil's learning better” PE

“Student questions are answered, concepts are explained and personally, I can say that the grades the students earned are really worth it and something that they really deserved” PG

“I can identify those learners that needs a one-on-one teaching or remediation” PI

“We have the chance to connect directly to our learners” PJ

“I can follow up the progress of my students. In the modular I was doubtful if children answer

their modules, now I can see that the children do tasks and activities” PK

“I was able to teach and guide my learners one-by-one specially in their reading skills” PL

Hypothesis 4: Teachers’ ability to adjust in the face of adversity have acknowledged them as an instructional specialist in the educational transition back to face-to-face learning.

Proposition 4: Teachers’ presence and impact to learners’ success in school is greatly identified.

Theory Generation:

When the experiences of the teachers in this educational transition were studied, **teachers’ adaptable determinants**, as the core category, emerged. Unveiled in the interview responses of the participants are their understanding of the function, recognition and acceptance of the inevitability of the circumstance, efforts made in response to the ongoing difficulties, and ability to adjust in the face of adversity all in relation to their experiences in the educational transition from modular distance learning back to face-to-face learning. After thoroughly analyzing the data, the experiences of the teachers in this educational transition can be described as follows:

As the COVID-19 pandemic instigated the closures of the schools and moved learning to homes, teachers have adapted modular distance learning to adhere to the continuity of learning amid the pandemic. These uncertain times brought much pressure on teacher’s end as they have several responsibilities to fulfill. As the education transitions back to face-to-face learning, this led them to generate some perturbations in the transition. Bearing this as a responsibility, teachers understand their function in the transition and their function is important. Teachers’ understanding of their function is

necessitated in this education transition to face-to-face learning through the Modular Distance Learning modality (**Theme 1**). For the transition back to face-to-face learning to thrive, recognition and acceptance of the inevitability of the circumstance is essential.

Revealed in this study were the following indicators such as prayed God for guidance, adjust teaching style, establish new routine, embrace changes, time management, step by step, move forward. Hence, teachers recognize and accept the effects of the inevitable situation in the educational shift for continuity and transition of learning to proliferate (**Theme 2**). Teachers made efforts in response to the ongoing difficulties such as update readings, continues discovery, study the lessons, prepare materials needed and continues professional development. Teachers are taking individual actions in order to cater the needs of learners in the face-to-face learning (**Theme 3**). Additionally, teachers as an instructional specialist in the new normal set-up from modular to face-to-face learning is being well acknowledged. These are follow-up progress, teach and guide one by one, connect and identify. Indeed, teachers’ presence and impact to learners’ success in school is greatly acknowledged (**Theme 4**).

APPRECIATION – ACCOMMODATION – RESILIENCE:

Teachers’ Adaptable Determinants in the Education Transition Theory

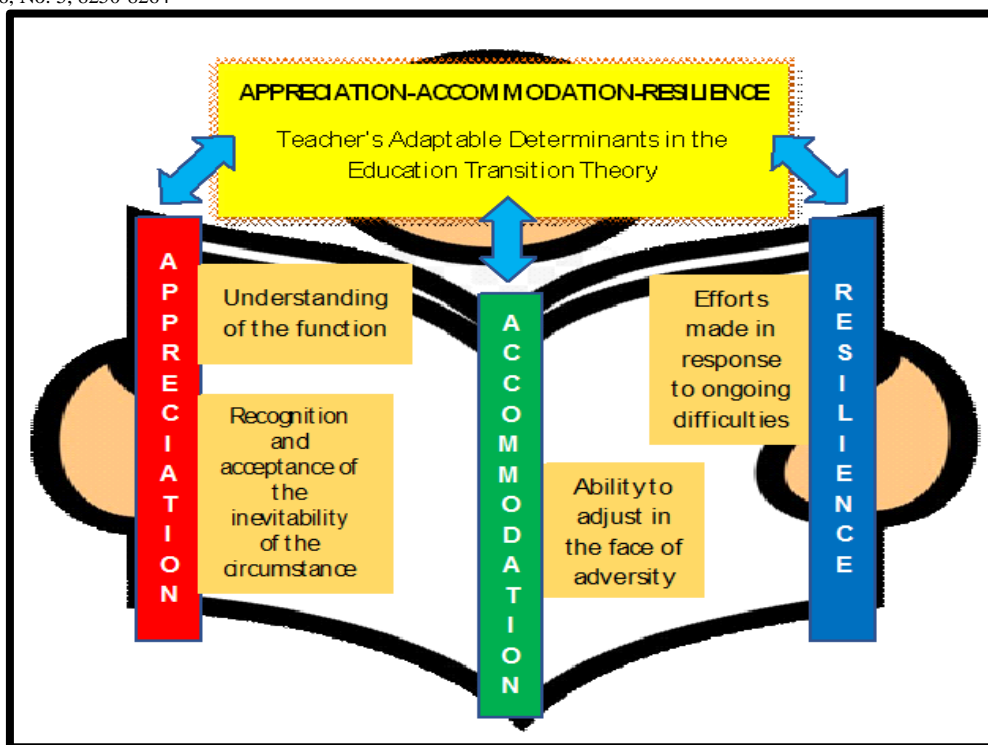


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Secuya's

APPRECIATION – ACCOMMODATION – RESILIENCE: Teachers' Adaptable Determinants in the Education Transition Theory

Secuya's Theory simply states that appreciation, accommodation, and resilience are considered to be the teacher's adaptable determinants as an instructional specialist in the education transition. Being a teacher in this time of transition requires teachers to appreciate their function (*recognition and understanding*), to accommodate certain initiatives (*adjust*), and to be resilient in difficult circumstance (*efforts*) for the learning continuity to thrive amid the prevailing challenges and other adversities of the pandemic.

The theory can provide a frame of reference for the educational leaders and institutions for them to come up with regulations and other guidelines that are responsive to the needs and experiences of the teacher's in actualizing the objectives of face-to-face learning in the public basic education system. This can also provide a better understanding of how the teachers understand their function, accommodate certain measures and initiatives, and be resilient to fulfill their role as an instructional specialist in the education transition amid the uncertainties in the time of crisis.

Overall, the theory highlights the accounts of the teachers as an instruction specialist in the education transition from modular distance learning back to face-to-face learning. Teachers' appreciation, accommodation, and resilience are being magnified as their adaptable determinants in this educational transition.

Similar studies on teachers' experiences on other types of teaching and learning modalities are being recommended by the researcher.

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