

Lived Experiences of Teachers in Implementing Assessment Methods amid Modular Instruction: Phenomenological Study



Allianah Jane A. Mariaca¹, Leonilo T. Orebja Jr.², Ed Christian D. Pitac³, Jingoy A. Mondragon⁴, Rico F. Villones⁵, Ronalyn Montilla⁶, Malyn E. Ragmac⁷

^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7} Undergraduate Program, Leyte Normal University, Leyte, Philippines

ABSTRACT: This phenomenological study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of teachers of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School as well as the challenges they have faced and their coping mechanisms upon the implementation of their assessment methods amidst modular instruction. This research employed the phenomenological method of inquiry as the study's research design to provide a thorough description of the shared experiences of teachers. Through purposive sampling, four teachers from Juan Villablanca Memorial High School were chosen as the participants of this study and were subjected to a face-to-face, semi-structured interview with open-ended questions. After the data analysis, three overall themes emerged from the rich and thick descriptions from key informant interviews: (1) Experiences of Teachers; (2) Challenges faced by Teachers; and (3) Coping Mechanisms. This research is helpful to DepEd policymakers, teachers, and future educational researchers to understand the first-hand experiences, challenges and coping mechanisms teachers have with the implementation of their assessment methods amid modular instruction to create policies and interventions that would address such gaps and struggles. The findings of this research would be valuable for professional development planning, educational training, and especially the creation and usage of appropriate assessment methods wherein teachers can use to transcend the evolving facet of education.

KEYWORDS: Assessment Methods, Phenomenology, Modular Instruction, Challenges, Coping Mechanisms

I. INTRODUCTION

Most countries around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions to contain the spread of the virus and reduce infections (Tria, 2020). With this, one of the sectors greatly affected by this change is the educational sector. As per the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), it has been recognized that the coronavirus pandemic outbreak has impacted the education system in the world (UNESCO, 2020b). Affecting more than 91 percent of students worldwide –around 1.6 billion children and young people (Miks & McIlwaine, 2020). In response to these situations, educational leaders decided to adopt to a new normal in education. In the basic education of the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP), which took effect during the school year 2020-2021, and classes opened on August 24, 2020, instead of June 2020 (DepEd, 2020). The suddenness and uncertainty forced the educational system to quickly respond to addressing the changing learning environment. As a result of the global health crisis, one emerging reality is the shift to flexible learning, specifically distance learning modalities, to reduce the risk brought by face-to-face interaction. Flexible learning focuses on giving students choice in the pace, place, and mode of student learning which can be promoted through appropriate pedagogical practice (Gordon, 2014). The learners are given the option of how he/she will continue with his/her studies, where and when he/she can proceed, and how learners can comply with the requirements and show evidence of learning outcomes. On the other hand, Distance Learning refers to a learning delivery modality, where learning takes place between the teacher and the learners who are geographically remote from each other during instruction. This modality has three types: Modular Distance Learning (MDL), Online Distance Learning (ODL), and TV/Radio-Based Instruction (Quinones, 2020).

Modular learning is the most popular type of Distance Learning. In the Philippines, this learning modality is currently used by all public schools because according to a survey conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd), learning through printed and digital modules emerged as the most preferred distance learning method of parents with children who are enrolled in the academic year 2020-2021 (Bernardo, 2020). This also takes into account learners in rural areas where the internet is not available for online learning. Modular distance learning is the backbone of the Department of Education's distance learning program because access to technology is still an issue for most students (Department of Education, 2020). With this modular distance learning modality, the teacher takes the responsibility of monitoring the progress of the learners. The learners may ask for assistance from the teacher via email, telephone, or text message/instant messaging among others. Where possible, the teacher shall do home visits to learners needing remediation or assistance (Llego, n.d. 2021). Printed modules will be distributed to students, parents, and guardians by

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teachers or local government officials. Since education is no longer confined to the classroom, parents have become partners of teachers. The parents play a vital role as home facilitators. Their primary role in modular learning is to establish a connection and guide the child (FlipScience, 2020). These self-learning modules are already considered learning packages because they include a

Page 1 pre-test, a discussion, and a series of evaluation/assessment questions.

With this new learning modality, teachers play an important role in maintaining high-quality education in the face of the pandemic. According to the study conducted by Lapada et al. (2020), teachers were highly aware of the presence and consequences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the threats of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers continue to serve by formulating modules as the learning guide for students. The teacher thus becomes a facilitator in the development of the student, both as a member of their community and a member of their society (Martineau et al., 2020). Based on the study conducted by Ambayon (2020), modular instruction is more operative in the teaching-learning method as equated to usual teaching approaches because in this modular approach the students learn in their own stride. It is unrestricted self-learning panache in which instantaneous reinforcement, a comment is provided to practice exercise, which stimulates the students and builds curiosity in them. Hence, this type of learning modality promotes a student-centered learning approach. However, Malipot (2020) stressed that teachers also air their problems on modular distance learning.

The study of Dangle & Sumaoang (2020) showed that the main challenges that emerged were lack of school funding in the production and delivery of modules, students' struggle with self-studying, and parents' lack of knowledge to academically guide their child/children. Hence, it is evident that there are struggles associated with the implementation of modular distance learning. In fact, the widespread use of distance learning, and the process of assessment and evaluation in distance education have begun to be discussed. Although activities in distance education are attempted to be continued as in traditional education, it is stated that there have been some issues, especially in the assessment and evaluation process where students cannot be evaluated well enough in the process (Shuey, 2002). Compared to traditional classroom teaching, different educational problems are encountered in distance education. This is why distance educators assess students not only with exams and assignments but also find it useful to collect data with different tools (Altan & Seferoğlu, 2009). In distance learning applications, traditional methods of assessment and evaluation, multiple-choice, fill-in, short answers, or long explanations, are generally used (Simonson et al., 2003). However, Kalelioğlu and Gulbahar (2010) have emphasized the need to use alternative tools to increase the effectiveness of activities and to execute process evaluation in terms of the effectiveness of education and student achievement as the communication between teachers and students is limited in the distance education process. Despite the challenges and experiences, they are encountering, educators continue to make learning possible by doing their best through employing a variety of coping strategies to deal with the difficulties they face. De Villa et al. (2020) stressed coping strategies which include teachers' flexibility, adaptability, and innovativeness amidst modular instruction. These coping mechanisms aid educators in surmounting adversities and are very essential in improving the situation. Despite challenges that may impede their work, teachers manage to cope with the new normal and complete their tasks (De Villa & Manalo, 2020).

The key purpose of this research is to describe the lived experiences of teachers, the challenges they face in their implementation of assessment methods amidst modular instruction, and their coping mechanisms to these challenges. Although there are numerous related studies about this from various researchers, there is still no existing study focusing on the implementation of teachers' assessment methods during the modular instruction especially at Juan Villablanca Memorial High School, Pastrana, Leyte which serves as the locale of this research. In addition, the findings of this research shall benefit educational policymakers, teachers, and students as it will provide possible solutions and recommendations suited to the needs and gaps of modular distance teaching.

Statement of the Problem

This study helps to provide a deeper understanding of the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of teachers of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School (JVMHS) in assessing their students amidst a modular learning setup. Specifically, it intended to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School teachers on the implementation of their assessment methods during the modular learning setup?
2. What are the challenges that teachers of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School face upon the implementation of assessment methods amidst modular setup?
3. What are the coping mechanisms of teachers in Juan Villablanca Memorial High School in response to the challenges they face upon the implementation of assessment methods amidst modular learning?

Scope and Delimitation

The general objective of this study focuses on describing and understanding the lived experiences of teachers on the challenges surrounding the delivery and implementation of their assessment methods amidst modular learning and their coping mechanisms to

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the said challenges. It is important to note that the participants of this study are subjected to Juan Villablanca Memorial High School teachers. The researchers concentrated their efforts on a single school, which served as the study's research locale. Moreover, the researchers used and employed the gathered data in an array of techniques and ways that imbued and enhanced the whole study. Additionally, the research study is conducted face-to-face with the participants using semi-structured interviews to gather sufficient and competent sets of information significant to the success of the study.

Despite the current situation brought by the pandemic, the researchers followed numerous rules and regulations mandated by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID) in administering the goals of the research study. Furthermore, due to time constraints, vulnerability to pandemic hazards, a limited number of available participants as well as lack of funds, it was necessary to concentrate solely on one locale. The research shall be done within the Academic Year 2021-2022.

Theoretical Framework

Since the scenario wherein this study is anchored has been unprecedented in recent memory, the academic world suddenly switched to remote learning to maintain academic continuity. There is one particular model to which this study has long been established and is appropriately suitable to the current trend. This study can be primarily connected to the Transactional Distance theory formulated in the 1970s by Dr. Michael G. Moore. The term does not refer to the geographical distance between the teacher and the learner but to the development (or not) of a transaction, which means developing a particular interaction between teacher and learner because of their geographical separation (Giossos, et al., 2009). He advanced this learning theory of distance education in order to scrutinize a couple of concepts or variables: learner autonomy and distance teaching. He attempts to examine the students' autonomy as well as the teacher-student distance. This so-called distance between students and teachers is expounded in his book, *Theory of Transactional Distance* (Hanson et al., 1997; Giossos, et al., 2009). As we all know, distance education developed by Moore (1983) is not a new fact phenomenon. Even before the emergence of the COVID-19 global crisis, its popularity has increased the interest and visibility of distance education as a new method of research and learning to enhance the audience (Gasevic, et al., 2014). The first component of this theory concerns the student's autonomy, independence, or self-sufficiency, considering that the distance between him and his teacher indicates that the student must adopt responsibility and accountability for his learning, particularly during the assessment period. Secondly, this theory describes the learner and the teacher relationship, which is essential because the student's perception is grounded in distance learning within a social structure, not in its traditional form (Abuhassna & Yahaya, 2018), which is mainly characterized by lecture or discussion type, blackboard visuals, classroom group activities, and on a face-to-face scheme. On the other hand, Ekwunife-Orakwue & Teng (2014) emphasize that there was no evident distinctive contrast between online, blended, and traditional environments. However, they recommend blended and online courses with few direct meetings, which could benefit the student more than the archived lecturer.

Almeida and Monteiro (2021), writing in the *Journal of Online Higher Education* about the current significance yet obvious perils of traditional assessment methods, underscore that authorities have recommended maintaining the teleworking directives and the adoption of distance learning even beyond the tolerable level of incidence or within the so-called "flattening the curve" scenario. In the same sense, it was recommended to follow distance assessment approaches and avoid traditional evaluation procedures in a classroom to reduce the risk of infection. In addition to the way of teaching, Almeida & Monteiro (2021) assert that the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the challenge of remote learning assessment, knowing that formative and summative assessment in the teaching-learning processes is critical (p. 5). Both evaluation practices are concurrently responsible for measuring the student's academic performance, calculating his or her evolution throughout classes, and ascertaining the efficacy of the teaching approach being used by the teacher. These classic models that calculate the student's learning based entirely on written assessment had already been subject to disapproval in the context of the existing scenario (Adams, 2021). As remote and flexible learning is an educational reality now, an opportunity arises to rethink these practices and discover new assessment forms suitable for the virtual environment (Almeida & Monteiro, 2021).

In conjunction with the above theory, this study is concerned with the experiences that surfaced during the modular distance learning implementation, the experiences they have undergone while striving hard to provide the quality education goal of the DepEd, and the coping mechanisms to these challenges. Thus, it is imperative that the subject teachers should have the stable personality trait expected of them by the department. Facing all negative issues, surmounting challenges and undesirable experiences requires the teachers to have both psychological and emotional preparation and firmness. In a study by Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997), the concept of Core Self-Evaluation or CSE was explored and found to encompass fundamental evaluations about oneself, own abilities, and own control. This model has four dimensions namely: locus of control, which indicates a tendency for individuals to attribute life's events to their own doing or to outside forces beyond control (Spector, 1982); neuroticism, an enduring tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily (Costa & McCrae, 1988); the generalized self-efficacy, an individual's estimate of his or her own ability to perform well and handle a variety of situations (Bandura, 1982); and self-esteem, which reflects a person's overall appraisal of his or her own worth (Harter, S., 1990). The researchers chose this model in order to correlate the lived experiences of the teachers during the pandemic period of modular instruction. It is important to identify the core values of the teachers in relation

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to coping mechanisms they employ when facing those issues, challenges, and experiences in remote teaching. Core self-evaluation has primarily been studied with two of the most important work outcomes: job satisfaction and job performance. Measuring the parameters of these two work outcomes in the face of adversities brought in by the new normal teaching and learning processes is essential in determining the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching methods. The CSE has its defined measuring scales, most specifically the direct core self-evaluation. This device can appropriately show the coping mechanism utilized by the teachers in the midst of those issues, challenges, and experiences.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic brought a huge impact on educational institutions and their mode of learning, shifting from traditional face-to-face classes into flexible and blended-learning. In this current situation, the teachers need to find an alternative way in order to cater to the needs of the students (Daniel, 2020). In addition, it also threatens the educational outcomes even worse by closing the schools and making an alternative way to assess the students and provide a quality education despite the health crisis. With the shift to a new learning modality, the education system has been affected by several issues and challenges ranging from closing its doors to learners to mitigating the widespread effect of the pandemic and to introducing a new mode of learning in these trying times (Owusu- Fordjour et al., 2015).

Assessing Students in Modular Set-up

The sudden shift of education from face-to-face classes to a new education scheme impacted the way how students learn and how teachers teach. School closure is mandatory and strict protocols were imposed in order to lessen the rapid spread of the said virus. In this aspect, the school administration must make alternative yet effective ways of teaching that will cater students' needs despite the current health emergency. Online classes are mostly used in some private schools and public universities, wherein utilizing different social media sites and platforms by assessing students through class discussion and other related activities are being practiced. On the other hand, public primary and secondary schools employ modular modes of classes. The school administration uses a module wherein it comprised various subjects and activities.

The concept of "module" is linked to the idea of the curriculum providing necessary tools that are concerned with education especially the needs of the learners and teachers, also considering the parents, administration, and other stakeholders. Modules had an increasing rate as the most used and the best way of organizing the curriculum. There are some books that are now using the idea of "module" instead of "unit" (Sejpal, 2013).

On the other hand, modular instruction is one of the prominent innovations as a teaching strategy. This mode of instruction enables the students to individualize their tasks as per instruction by the teacher, by this strategy, the students are transformed into independent learners, as they have the power to decide their own learning pace, chose their own mode of learning, and discover more about their strengths and weaknesses (Guido, 2014). With this, most secondary schools use modules as one of their teaching strategies (Ali, R. et al., 2010).

According to Guan and Benavides (2020), modular instruction is the learning modality that is currently used in the Philippines, specifically in public schools as a new alternative mode of learning due to the constraints of the pandemic. According to the survey conducted by the Department of Education (2022), learning through the use of printed modules and digital modules emerged as the most appropriate method for parents with children who are enrolled in the academic year 2020-2021. On the other hand, the implementation of the said distance learning is a response to the "No Child Left Behind Act of 2002" as stated by Dargo and Dimas (2021). This is to imply that children must receive the best education possible leaving no child behind. Thus, the quality of education must be equal and must be learned by all children who choose to continue studying despite the pandemic rather than doing nothing at all.

In terms of assessment, according to Anzaldo (2021), there are various types of assessment methods used in Philippine Education. They are:

Formative Assessment- a kind of assessment that is not usually scored or graded as it is being administered by the end of the lesson, this is to see if the students understand the lesson.

Summative Assessment- a kind of assessment that is used to evaluate the learners' understanding and learning in a specific period of time.

Performance Assessment – a kind of assessment that is used to let the learners complete a particular task about the lesson using their skills and intelligence. It is also called an "authentic assessment" for educators who validate it as a more accurate and meaningful evaluation of learning achievements than traditional tests.

Experience of Teachers in Modular Instruction

One of the experiences of teachers during Modular Distance Learning according to Jamon et al. (2021), is that they gain opportunities such as acquiring skills in writing modules and self-learning kits. This way, they accommodate the lack of resources as well as gadgets in making their own modules and self-learning kits through writing. Some teachers reported being busier than

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they were before the school buildings closed, as they were expected to be present and available all the time. Thus, this shows how teachers committed most of their time to printing and contextualizing modules. Teachers also spend most of their time responding to students who have questions as well as those with concerns and problems that need immediate action. By these, teachers mostly sacrifice time just to give satisfaction to both students and parents (Jones and Kessler, 2020).

Teachers' Challenges in Assessing Students

In the past generation, the usage of technology had been applied to different areas, platforms, and institutions such as education. Per Ghanbari & Nowroozi (2021), education used different social media platforms in school instructions and practices (e.g. online assessment through LMS and Moodle application). Yet, the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of schools paved the way for technology's increased usage in the area of education making remote learning and the teaching process possible even if students are in the comfort of their homes (Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2021). With this, various modes of learning arose (with high or little usage of technology) and were used by educational institutions such as online classes or synchronous and asynchronous sessions in order to accommodate students' learning. However, even with the aid of technology teachers encountered different barriers that affected the teaching process (Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2021).

In a report of DepEd, over 1 million computer devices were distributed in 44, 155 public schools, but half of these cannot be lent as they are in thin clients (Guiamalon et al. 2021). The said number of computers was not distributed to all public schools, rather some may have a problem when it comes to connectivity, especially in secluded areas. Also, according to Guiamalon et al. (2021), the overdependence of students on technology can be a major drawback in the distance learning mode of education, especially in the online environment. Meanwhile, per De Villa and Manalo (2020), instructional delivery is one of the major concerns of teachers with the limited knowledge they have when it comes to the use of technology as well as the absence of relevant training on distance learning. Lack of resources for reproduction and delivery of modules was also a challenge according to Dangle and Sumaoang (2020). The said problem includes having printers that do not function well, which hampers the production and delivery of modules to students. Teachers also find it difficult to produce the target number of modules because they do not have adequate resources such as sufficient number of printers to accommodate all the necessary learning materials to be printed (Dangle and Sumaoang, 2020). Aside from those mentioned above, according to Agayon et al., (2022), teachers are afraid of their health upon distributing and retrieving modules. They are scared that they might contract the virus. But despite risking their health, they don't have a choice but to serve both the parents and the students (Agayon et al., 2022). Thus, even before the pandemic, and until then, being a teacher is no ordinary job and a call of duty (Agayon et al., 2022).

When it comes to the complexity of the assessment, De Villa and Manalo (2020) mentioned in their paper that teachers are worried about the equality of the assessment between distance learning and face-to-face. According to Dangle and Sumaoang (2020), teachers think that students' answers and responses in their modules have no validity, and mastery of the lesson is impossible to attain with this setup. Some students also rely on their parents and siblings to serve as their answering machines (Dangle and Sumaoang, 2020). Moreover, there are also some instances where answers written by students in the module are copy-pasted from the internet, and teachers are left with a big challenge in assessing if their students have truly performed well (Agayon and Agayon, 2022). Aside from academic dishonesty, teachers often received incomplete and unanswered modules from the learners (Cabardo et al., 2022). This, according to Cabardo et al. (2022) implies that some of the activities in the modules are quite difficult for the students to comprehend. Though modules were not the primary source of the learner's grades, the activities and exercises in the modules served as their practice for learning the competencies better (Cabardo et al., 2022). Another challenge arises with learners having difficulty answering the modules without the teachers' supervision (Anzaldo, 2021). Learning to some students is hard without the teacher's guidance to further understand the whole concept.

Aside from the problems mentioned, teachers are also experiencing work overload. According to Hernandez (2021), teachers encountered a lack of focus due to work-related and home-related activities altogether. Since aside from being a teacher, the majority of them have roles outside the classroom as well. In terms of submission, students are not the only ones having the difficulty in submitting their works, but the teachers also experienced this (Robosa et al., 2021). According to Robosa et al. (2021), with their other workloads, tasks like making grades of the students also brought difficulties to teachers, that it became more difficult compared to face-to-face classes. With the overwhelming demands of their work, teachers had experienced role strains and higher levels of distress (Robosa et al., 2021). With this, the emergence of the COVID-19 did just not affect them physiologically but also their mental health and wellbeing.

Coping Mechanism of the Teachers

Robosa et al. (2021) identified two coping mechanisms of teachers amidst modular instruction. First, proper communication and understanding. Misunderstanding is not exempted from the occurrence in the school environment. Thus, proper communication and the ability to understand the situation are one of those ways to cope up with the challenges of the new normal (Robosa et al., 2021). De Villa and Manalo (2020) agreed with this as being flexible and adaptive to change allows teachers to survive and still succeed. The second is being strategic. As an effective teacher, great strategies, approaches, resourcefulness, and giving alternatives

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in terms of difficulty are good coping mechanisms amidst challenges (Robosa et al., 2021). Being strategic also is helpful in times of facing new endeavors and situations. In connection with these, Castroverde and Acala (2021), stated that incorporating alternative plans in various situations helps in addressing issues related to the process of teaching such as in his study, spending their own money when it is necessary for the reproduction of modules.

Meanwhile, Agayon et al. (2022) distinguished six themes under the coping mechanisms of teachers during the new scheme of learning. First is “money matters,” wherein teachers use their own money to cope and provide lacking resources. Collaboration among colleagues and community stakeholders is also one of the coping mechanisms of teachers. As most schools do not have the capacity to provide all the needed materials and resources for the teachers, gaps are filled through the continuous support of community engagement and partnership with stakeholders (De Villa and Manalo, 2020). The second theme is “find ways!” Here, teachers use alternative ways to easily assess the learners according to their level of knowledge wherein the teacher aligns the activities to the most essential and effective learning competencies. Third, “internet.” Teachers must know if the learners are capable of online learning in their area and location as a stable internet connection should be considered in fostering a healthy remote learning environment (Agayon et al., 2022). Fourth, “communicare.” From the word community and care, teachers with his/her students are in a community in which care should be fostered especially if they have some questions or clarification with regards to accomplishing the modules. Fifth, “moni- tour.” In this theme, teachers monitor and tour their student’s development and performances by the use of answer sheets, retrieval of modules, and feedback forms. The sixth theme is called “times up!” Here, teachers remain consistent in setting the schedule when it comes to the retrieval and distribution of modules (Agayon et al., 2022).

Also, positivity and a positive outlook help teachers bring solutions to the challenges brought by the changes in the educational landscape (Castroverde & Acala, 2021). This was supported by De Villa and Manalo (2020), as according to them a positive outlook and positive well-being contribute to addressing the challenges of the new normal education. The encouragement and motivation, healthy lifestyle, and stress reduction give teachers the self-confidence which allows them to continue performing their duties and responsibilities despite the challenges of these trying times (De Villa and Manalo, 2020).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study aims to describe and understand the lived experiences of teachers on the challenges surrounding the delivery and implementation of their assessment methods amidst modular learning and their coping mechanisms on the said challenges. Hence, this paper utilized a phenomenological research design to provide a thorough description and indication of the subject under investigation and to reach the aim of the study. Phenomenology, according to Husserl (2012) is “the science of the essence of consciousness.” It studies the “consciousness” in the absence of limiting the objective and shared understanding formed in the experiences that are wholly subjective (Husserl, 2012). It is a philosophy that examines how people “make sense of the world around them” and how philosophers must “bracket out” preconceived notions on their view of the world (Bryman, 2008). Also, it is integrated within the bounds of qualitative inquiry as it seeks to understand the physiological, emotional, and societal implications that the lived experiences of individuals mean to them (Guest, Namey and Mitchell, 2013). Although it is identified as a philosophy, Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2011) emphasizes phenomenology as not just a philosophy but can also be used as a research method for describing and understanding the lived experiences of various people. With this, a phenomenological research design is one of the approaches of a qualitative study that describes the shared understanding among different people of their experiences on an occurrence or happening (Creswell, 2013). In addition, Lichtman (2013) stated that the purpose of the selected design is to describe the experiences of individuals who have gone through a particular phenomenon. With this, the researchers believe that this design is appropriate to the aims and purpose of the study.

To reduce the harmful effects of pre-existing assumptions that may influence the process of the study, the researchers particularly employed the transcendental phenomenological approach to collect authentic and subjective data from participants. This also liberates participants from the researchers’ preconceptions and prejudices. According to Moustakas (1994), transcendental phenomenology is less concerned with the researcher’s ideas and more interested in the participants’ experiences. As a result, the researchers must set aside as much of their assumptions and experiences as possible and approach the phenomenon under examination from a fresh viewpoint based on the experiences presented by the participants (Moustakas, 1994).

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Juan Villablanca Memorial High School located at Brgy. District IV Osmena Street Pastrana Leyte with an approximate 20 kilometers distance from the City of Tacloban. Apparently, the school offers senior high school academic strands namely, Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) and Technical Vocational Livelihood strands (TVL) such as Carpentry, Garments, Cookery, Food and Beverages, and the newly offered Automotive course. The school has a total of 74 regular teaching personnel from both Junior and Senior High School. The Junior High School teachers are composed of 9 males and 39 female teachers. On the other hand, the senior high school faculty is composed of 8 males and 18 female regular teachers.

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Juan Villablanca Memorial High School was chosen as the locale of the study as it is one of the DepEd Public Schools in the Philippines which have implemented modular instruction and learning from 2020 to the present. The selected locale in its almost 6 decades of history, has been the center of education not only in Pastrana but also among the neighboring towns such as Dagami, Palo, Jaro, and Sta. Fe. Being one of the earliest learning institutions in the locality, it has become a steppingstone for producing numerous professionals like educators, law enforcers, politicians, and to name a few. However, the school lacks the opportunity of being the venue for various research and studies. One common reason is that student researchers mostly choose to have their studies in cities and their suburbs considering the fact that Pastrana is located in the interior of the province. It is therefore very timely for the researchers, especially at this period of the pandemic to study the impact of the new normal teaching scheme on the employed teachers of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School, to know their experiences and interventions made to adjust to the changing new normal system.

Participants of the Study

The identified participants of the study are teachers of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School. The sampling method that the researchers used is purposive sampling as it is the best way to accomplish the aim of this paper. According to Black (2010), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that takes place when the chosen participants for the sample are selected by the judgment of the researcher. In this method, researchers often believe that through using competent and sound judgment, they can acquire a representative sample, thus reducing cost, and saving time and resources (Black, 2010). Following the sample size guideline and suggestion by Creswell (2013), the study have a total of four (4) participants. Once the saturation point is not yet reached and established the researchers will further look for more participants to partake in the study. With this, the selection of participants was entirely based on the judgment of the researchers following the criteria below:

- (1) the participants are teachers or instructors of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School from 2020 to the present; and
- (2) willing to participate regardless of their gender and specialization.

Data Collection Method

This study utilized a semi-structured interview to gather data from the participants. A semi-structured interview is a form of an interview that only asks a few predefined questions, and the rest of the questions are unscripted, which according to Cook (2008) encourages the participants to respond in detail about the subject of interest without resorting to a fixed set of established questions. With this, researchers prepared questions prior to the commencement of the actual interview and were given the chance to ask unplanned questions- an opportunity to address unclarified responses through follow-up questions until data saturation is reached. Questions that were employed in the semi-structured interview are open-ended in nature as per Creswell (2013), it is in hopes of obtaining impartial answers.

Ethical Consideration

Throughout the conduct of the study, the researchers strictly followed ethical considerations that should be taken into account as the research process commences. The ethical considerations safeguard both the researchers' and participants' safety and rights. Firstly, the participants in the study were not subjected to any kind of harm. The procedures, hazards, and advantages of this study was clearly described to the participants. Prioritizing the dignity of the participants is the foremost concern of the researchers. The researchers also obtained the participants' full consent prior to the study. In addition, the privacy of the participants was protected as proper confidentiality of research data is assured. The confidentiality of individuals and organizations participating in the study are maintained as well. As the researchers recognize and respect the rights to privacy as prescribed under Republic Act no. 10173 or otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, any personal details were not disclosed in the survey and was solely used for the purpose of this study, and not for any malicious intent. Any misrepresentation or exaggeration about the research's goals and objectives were avoided. Affiliations of any kind, sources of foundation, and any potential conflicts of interest are mentioned. Any research-related communication was conducted with honesty and transparency. The interview transcripts were kept private, the audio recordings were erased following transcription, and no personal information was revealed to anyone, including the researchers of this study. Finally, any type of misleading information, as well as biased and prejudiced representation of primary data findings were avoided at any cost.

Research Reflexivity

With the aim of providing an understanding of the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School (JVMHS) Teachers in the implementation of their assessment methods amidst modular learning, researchers intend and anticipate that this study will provide participants with an outlet to freely share their experiences and thoughts. Moreover, it should be stated and addressed that the researchers are students of Leyte Normal University taking Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Social Studies, who have studied the assessment process and different methods of assessment, with biases and preferences that could influence the treatment of the data gathered. Other than that, one of the researchers is an alumna of the chosen research locale and with his personal affiliations to the participants, could potentially have an impact on how the data obtained will

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be handled and treated. Nonetheless, to eliminate biases and partiality, researchers established themselves as facilitators of data collection; their ideas and views were not considered for data interpretation. Also, the researchers double-checked their findings using additional data sources, look for alternative explanations, and performed member checking. In addition, to evaluate the results, interview transcripts were transcribed verbatim and returned to the participants for consistency and cross-checking.

Data Analysis

Colaizzi's phenomenological method of inquiry was utilized to analyze the gathered data. This method is a development of Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological 5-step method which delivers a brief and thorough description of the subject or phenomenon explored, which has been corroborated by people who lived it. Colaizzi's method is based on detailed first-person narratives of experience and integrates the procedure of verifying results. Any important data that may emerge as a result of participant review and validation is critical for the ultimate interpretation of the findings.

The method offers seven steps, described by Morrow, Rodriguez & King (2015) as a method that includes a comprehensive and thorough analysis with each phase remaining closely related to the data, resulting in a succinct yet detailed account of the phenomenon- validated by the participants themselves. Here are the seven steps of Colaizzi's phenomenological method (adapted from Colaizzi, 1978; as cited in Morrow, Rodriguez & King, 2015 and Abu Sosh, 2012):

1. Researchers must acquire a general understanding and establish familiarization of the data through reading the transcript and participants' accounts multiple times;
2. Significant remarks that are pertinent to the phenomenon under investigation should be documented in a separate sheet with their respective page lines and numbers;
3. From those significant remarks, researchers shall derive interpretations and form meanings. To stay near to the reality as observed, researchers should "bracket" automatically their preconceived notions;
4. The derived interpretations and meanings must be organized into categories, clusters of themes, and themes;
5. Researchers must compose a comprehensive description integrating all the themes generated.
6. The comprehensive description, then, will be compressed into a compact statement conveying the essential characteristics considered crucial to the phenomenon's fundamental structure; and
7. Finally, researchers will validate the findings by returning the composed comprehensive description to the participants to inquire whether it accurately depicts their experience. From the feedback accumulated from the participants, the researcher can go back and adjust earlier phases in the analysis.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion has been organized into three (3) main sections to present the findings and address the research questions, resulting from the three overall themes created through using the Colaizzi's Method of Phenomenological Inquiry, particularly:

- Experiences of teachers;
- Challenges faced by teachers; and
- Coping Mechanisms

Utilized Assessment Methods and Their Effectiveness

Before delving into the three overall themes of this study, it is important to address the assessment methods used by teachers amidst modular instruction. Teachers of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School who are the participants of the study utilized various assessment methods to determine the level of knowledge of their students. The informants of the research study shared their thoughts regarding the methodologies they anchored in assessing their students following the guidelines of the Department of Education. The diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments are fastened to the assessment tools which are the Modules and Learning Activity Sheets. The Learning Activity Sheets (LAS) is a modified and contextualized version of the module, it encompasses pre-test, quizzes, performance tasks, and written outputs. Moreover, the above-mentioned assessments are composed of multiple-choice, word puzzles, and various activities like standardized paper and pencil tests. The informants also follow the concept of parallel assessment which helps to identify whether students understand the lesson/topics. Subsequently, the participants give the summative test to the learners at the end of each quarter.

Key Informant 3: *"I utilized the assessment tool given to us by the Division of Leyte which are already prepared, tested, standardized, then they're actually given many times already. So those are actually simplified assessment tools given to us.."*

Key Informant 2: *"Every after each lesson, for example after the lesson is done, we give parallel assessment to students. This is through quizzes prior to periodical tests which are summative assessments."*

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Key informant 2: *“For the assessment usually aside from the modules, we prepare the LAS or the learning activity sheets to the students... quizzes...performance task was already included in the learning activity sheets because we have different parts in our LAS, where you can give evaluations.”*

Key Informant 1: *“Sometimes, I gave them word puzzles to enhance their minds in understanding figurative language.”*

Moreover, the informants are not 100% certain about the effectiveness of the assessment methods they are utilizing. This is because participants doubt if it is really the students who are the ones answering and performing the activities in the modules or the parents themselves.

Key Informant 4: *“In our part as teachers, this is not actually effective. We cannot guarantee that the learners are the actual learners this time. We cannot say.”*

Key Informant 2: *“Effective in a way if the students are the ones who answers their modules or LAS. We could not set aside the doubt that they have siblings, they have their parents as well. I could not say it’s 100% since I couldn’t see, or we don’t see who really answers their modules or LAS.”*

Experiences of Teachers

Interviewing the informants, teachers insinuated various experiences in assessing students during the modular instruction. Under these set of experiences, four (4) sub-existing cluster themes emerge, namely: 1) Uncooperative Attitude of Students Towards the Distribution and Retrieval of Modules; 2) Parent-related experiences; 3) Integrity of Learners; and (4) Newness of the Learning Modality. These cluster themes, which were developed through the explication process, answer the first research question of this study, *“What are the experiences of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School teachers on the implementation of their assessment methods during the modular learning setup?”*

Table 1: Code Book for Experiences of Teachers

Significant Statements	Formulated Meanings	Cluster Themes	Overall Theme
<i>“I haven’t experienced that all of the modules were being distributed.”</i>	Modules are not being distributed to all learners.	Uncooperative Attitude of Students towards the	Teachers’ Experiences
<i>“In the first year of implementation, we teachers are the ones who bring all the modules to the locality where the learners reside.”</i>	Teachers as distributors of knowledge	Distribution and Retrieval of Modules	
<i>“There are some cases that the students are no longer performing at home but they [parents] are still enrolling their children because of the 4ps...”</i>	Parents use their children for government subsidies	Parent-related experiences	
<i>“There are some students who can barely even read, surprisingly, during the last quarter, in the first, second, and third quarter they become the top-performing in the class. So, we are assessing probably the parents.”</i>	Maybe, parents are answering the modules		
<i>“I have seen that some students are performing consistently in both in modular and limited face-to-face classes based on their outputs and performances.”</i>	No discrepancies in performance in both modular and face-to-face	Integrity of Learners	

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<p><i>"We are not used to this type of learning setup... we are having a trial and error... home school will not be an effective way of this type of educational setup."</i></p>	<p>Not used to the new learning scheme</p>	<p>Newness of the learning modality</p>	
<p><i>"Assessment is still hanging...we cannot actually assess if the said student possesses that kind of learning, if learning really happened because we don't see them on flesh."</i></p>	<p>The assessment is still hanging</p>		

One of the factors that the informants experience in the implementation of their assessment methods amidst modular instruction is the unbearable attitude of the learners towards the distribution and retrieval of the modules. There are a lot of instances wherein modules are not properly distributed because learners are not claiming their Learning Activity Sheets and Modules.

Key Informant 1: *"I haven't experienced that all of the modules were being distributed."*

Key Informant 2: *"In the first year of implementation, we teachers are the ones who bring all the modules to the locality where the learners reside."*

Key Informant 4: *"Early in the morning at exactly 7 o'clock we are already on-site distributing and at the same time retrieving the modules until 12 o'clock. Sometimes, we take our lunch at 1 o'clock waiting for the parents and learners to claim their modules and Learning Activity Sheets."*

Additionally, despite the undying effort of the teachers to bring the modules into the houses or barangays of the learners, they still lack interest in the new scheme of learning. The informants also noticed that learners are obligated by their parents to enroll in school because of the benefits of the government program such as the Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program (4Ps).

Key Informant 1: *"We have students on vacation in Manila but can submit their modules every week. Who is actually doing those parallel assessments?"*

Key Informant 3: *"There are some cases that the students are no longer performing at home but they [parents] are still enrolling their children because of the 4ps..."*

Key Informant 4: *"There are some students who can barely even read. Surprisingly, during the last quarter, in the first, second, and third quarter they became the top-performing in the class. So, we are assessing probably the parents."*

However, the participants experienced students who practice honesty in answering the modules. Despite the experience of academic dishonesty, other students are practicing academic integrity.

Key Informant 2: *"To be honest there are still students who are religiously answering their own modules."*

Key Informant 4: *"I have seen that some students are performing both in modular and limited face-to-face classes based on their outputs and performances."*

The last cluster that emanated from the key informant was their experiences with the new scheme of learning.

Key Informant 1: *"Assessing students are quite difficult this time as we cannot measure the learning of our students depending on the paper or the evidence that they are submitting to us."*

Key Informant 2: *"We are not used to this type of learning setup... we are having a trial and error... home school will not be an effective way of this type of educational setup."*

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Key Informant 3: *“In the early part of modular...it is very hard for my part again because I check [the modules] on my own.”*

Key Informant 4: *“Assessment is still hanging...we cannot actually assess if the said student possesses that kind of learning, if learning really happened because we don't see them on flesh.”*

Challenges Faced by Teachers

Another overarching theme that emerged from the data analysis was the challenges faced by teachers. This theme resulted from the statements made by the informants following their accounts and narratives. It is just necessary to unroll and explain the significant phrases and statements that compose the development of the aforementioned theme. This section also gave information on the study's second research question: *“What are the challenges that teachers of Juan Villablanca Memorial High School face upon the implementation of assessment methods amidst modular setup?”*

Various emergent themes transpired from the narratives of the informants: (1) Student-related challenges; (2) Challenges related to assessment methods; (3) Teacher-related challenges; (4) Challenges related on the identification, distribution, and retrieval of module; and (5) Challenges related on Limited Resources and Technology. Under student-related challenges, cluster themes were students' lack of interest and seriousness, and learners' academic dishonesty. Challenges related to assessment methods have one cluster theme namely limitations of used assessment methods. Cluster themes such as coping up with the demanding workloads and struggles in commuting are under the teacher-related challenges. Meanwhile, the challenges related on the identification, distribution, and retrieval of modules has two cluster themes: identification of the owner and problems in distributing and retrieving modules. Finally, the cluster theme such as unavailability of technological devices, stable internet, and other resources are under the emergent theme- challenges related to limited resources and technology.

Table 2: Code Book for Challenges of Teachers

Significant Statements	Formulated Meanings	Cluster Themes	Emergent Themes	Overall Theme
<i>“Firstly, some students are not serious in answering their modules.”</i>	Not serious in answering	Students lack of interest and seriousness	Student-Related Challenges	Challenges Faced by Teachers
<i>“The lack of interest greatly affects the response. We give those modules to the parents, and we are receiving them without answers at all, there is no assessment done.”</i>	Receiving module with no answer			
<i>“Secondly, there are answers in the modules that we know they are not the ones who answered it; hence, we are not certain about the authenticity of the answer.”</i>	Teachers are not totally sure with the authenticity of the scores	Learners' Academic Dishonesty		
<i>“Even in multiple-choice, they just have to select the letter of their choice. That's the struggle for us teachers because we are giving a type of assessment tool that we don't require explanation.”</i>	Easy test yet there is still no answer	Limitations of used Assessment methods	Challenges related on Assessment methods	
<i>“The validity of the answer was also another problem. Because the scores of those papers submitted to us is not a guarantee for us to judge or to assess our students as a whole of their grades.”</i>	Answers/scores from the students are not a guarantee			
<i>“On our part, we are very much busy. It's the workload especially since we have numerous students.”</i>	Busy schedule due to workloads	Coping up with the demanding workloads	Teacher-related challenges	

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<i>"I'm not actually a bonafide resident of this municipality, I'm not from Pastrana. So, it was a big struggle for me commuting every day going home from school back and forth every day to always come here to school."</i>	Struggling in commuting from home to school	Struggles in commuting	
<i>"No writing of names that is the first struggle of the teachers, not only me."</i>	Unknown learners	Identification of the owner	Challenges related on the identification, distribution, and retrieval of module
<i>"Students that are not interested, its effect on me when distributing modules is that instead of distributing it regularly it became irregular since there are students who submit their modules very late."</i>	Irregularity of module's distribution and retrieval	Problems in distributing and retrieving modules	
<i>"Printers are still our concern today because our two printers are having problems, only one is functioning. We still need printers, because our heavy-duty printers are broken already."</i>	Malfunction of various printers – demand.	Unavailability of Technological Devices, Stable Internet, and Other Resources	Challenges related on Limited Resources and Technology
<i>"Problems in implementing like students who don't have cellphones, no stable internet connection, and students who live in remote places."</i>	Students without gadgets and stable internet connections, especially those in far-flung places.		

One of the challenges perceived by the informants are related to student's attitude towards the module such as their lack of interest and unseriousness in answering them.

Key Informant 2: *"The lack of interest greatly affects the response. We give those modules to the parents, and we are receiving them without answers at all, there is no assessment done."*

Key Informant 3: *"Firstly, some students are not serious in answering their modules."*

Another challenge that is related to students is their academic dishonesty. According to Dangle and Sumaoang (2020), teachers think that students' answers and responses in their modules have no validity, and some students also rely on their parents and siblings to serve as their answering machines. Moreover, there are also some instances where answers written by students in the module is copy-pasted from the internet, and teachers are left with a big challenge in assessing if their students have truly performed well (Agayon and Agayon, 2022). This is also one of the challenges perceived by the informants as an issue arises in knowing the authenticity of the responses of the students in their submitted module.

Key Informant 2: *"Secondly, there are answers in the modules that we know they are not the ones who answered it; hence, we are not certain about the authenticity of the answer."*

Key Informant 4: *"The validity of the answer was also another problem. Because the scores of those papers submitted to us is not a guarantee for us to judge or to assess our students as a whole of their grades."*

As described by De Villa and Manalo (2020) teachers are worried about the equality of the assessment between distance learning and face-to-face classes. With this, teachers also struggle in assessing students with only multiple-choice tests as their assessment tool.

Key Informant 4: *"Even in multiple-choice, they just have to select the letter of their choice. That's the struggle for us teachers because we are giving a type of assessment tool that we don't require explanation."*

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Key Informant 3: *“Those modules that require explanations, they just tend to omit it and left it hanging.”*

Aside from the student-related challenges, teachers also faced challenges in terms of demanding workloads and commuting from work to home, vice versa.

Key Informant 1: *“Checking their modules. We are checking them alone, all the subject teachers will check the modules and the LAS, even at home I still have modules with us and LAS. It’s like 24/7 working that’s how the modular approach is.”*

Key Informant 2: *“On our part, we are very much busy. It’s the workload, especially that we have numerous students.”*

Key Informant 3: *“In the early part of modular...it is very hard for my part again because I check [the modules] on my own.”*

Key Informant 4: *“I’m not actually a bonafide resident of this municipality, I’m not from Pastrana. So it was a big struggle for me commuting every day going home from school back and forth every day to always come here in school.”*

Informants have also shared that upon their implementation of the modular instruction, they encountered challenges as they distribute and retrieve modules from the students ranging from modules with no identification and late submissions delaying the whole process of covering all competencies in the curriculum.

Key Informant 4: *“No writing of names that is the first struggle of the teachers, not only me.”*

Key Informant 4: *“Sometimes, there are students who tend to forget to write their names on their modules. So, if we were not able to follow up in distributing it, there is a tendency that we are having difficulty in identifying the owner of the modules.”*

Key Informant 2: *“Collecting of their modules is also one of our struggles.”*

Key Informant 3: *“Students that are not interested, its effect on me when distributing modules is that instead of distributing it regularly it became irregular since there are students who submit their modules very late.”*

Other than that, teachers have also struggled in connecting with their students with the unavailability of technological devices such as smartphones and stable internet connections on the students' end. Because of limited resources such as printers, teachers also faced difficulty in the reproduction of modules.

Key Informant 1: *“First is the reproduction, that is the main problem, especially during the first year of implementation of the modular instruction, we need to work 24/7. Because here in our school we only have two printers in the faculty, there were eight subjects that need to reproduce their modules.”*

Key Informant 3: *“Printers is still our concern today because our two printers are having problems, only one is functioning. We still need printers, because our heavy-duty printers are broken already.”*

Key Informant 4: *“Problems in implementing like students who don’t have cellphones, no stable internet connection, and students who live in remote places.”*

Coping Mechanism of the Teachers

To deal with and manage the challenges perceived by the informants, another overall theme emerged which is the Coping Mechanisms. Four emergent themes surface which are the following: (1) Personal Coping Mechanisms with cluster theme namely positive mindset/thinking; (2) Good Working Environment and Professional Collaboration with cluster themes of supporting colleagues and professional collaboration; (3) Learned Adjustments and Resourcefulness with the creation of learning assessment sheets and giving of special assessments as the cluster theme; and (4) Coping with Technology with computer literacy development as its cluster theme. Further, this part of the discussion shed light on the third research question, *“What are the coping mechanisms*

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of teachers in Juan Villablanca Memorial High School in response to the challenges they face upon the implementation of assessment methods amidst modular learning?"

Table 3: Book of Codes of Coping Mechanism

Significant Statements	Formulated Meanings	Cluster Themes	Emergent Themes	Overall Theme
<i>"I just think on the positive side. Have a good vibe...Always think on the bright side."</i>	Teachers look at the good things and the positive side to cope with the challenges.	Positive Mindset/ Thinking	Personal Coping Mechanisms	Coping Mechanisms
<i>"But for me, it did not greatly affect me because it seems like I have the mindset not to be affected."</i>	Good mindset is the key	Good mindset		
<i>"We try much better like, in circumstances where I feel weak, I strive to cheer up my mind to avoid myself from giving up to difficulties."</i>	Striving to cheer up whatever circumstances	Cheering up oneself		
<i>"So actually one thing, my only strategy was always having a good sleep. Good sleep, always, health is always wealth, right? Health is wealth and then I don't smoke actually, that is one."</i>	Having a good sleep, health is always wealth	Taking Care of one's Health	Good Working Environment and Professional Collaboration	
<i>"When you have this kind of work or colleagues or co-workers, the environment is the most essential because if the workplace became toxic, with an added burden of toxic colleagues, that would be a complete mess. In my case with my colleagues, if the responsibility is beyond my capability, there are other workmates that will work for it, especially if I am not available. There would be someone who's going to make the work for me. Same, it's a helping hand."</i>	A good working environment where trust, cooperation, and support are fostered among colleagues is essential for teachers to cope with the demands of modular instruction.	Supporting colleagues		
<i>"I try to do remedies by asking for assistance from the principal, school heads, and teachers. We do LAC (Learning Action Cell) sessions in order to ask if they have better interventions."</i>	Asking for help and directives from school heads and other colleagues for an appropriate modular implementation.	Professional Collaboration		
<i>"We prepare the LAS, or the learning activity sheets for the students. In my case in Science, since I can see that the students can hardly understand the modules, I need to use assessments where I could assess their knowledge because we are on modular."</i>	Preparing learning activity sheets to assess students' understanding and the need for special assessments.	Creation of Learning Assessment Sheets and giving of special assessments.	Learned Adjustments and Resourcefulness	
<i>"Another thing, I only possess little knowledge about computers. This pandemic greatly helps me, I became literate in using the computer by exploring it personally and I no longer need assistance."</i>	Modular instruction serves as leeway for developing teachers' computer skills.	Computer Literacy Development	Coping with Technology	

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Folkman and Lazarus (1984) describe coping mechanisms as constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person.

One of the basic coping mechanisms mentioned by the participants revolves around the concept of having a good and positive attitude towards interacting with students, parents, teachers, and the community.

Key Informant 3: *“I just think on the positive side. Have a good vibe....Always think on the bright side.”*

Key Informant 4: *“But for me, it did not greatly affect me because it seems like I have the mindset not to be affected.”*

Key Informant 1: *“We try much better like, in circumstances where I feel weak, I strive to cheer up my mind to avoid myself from giving up to difficulties.”*

More than that, given the immense pressure, demand for time, and huge responsibilities, teachers were still able to become health-conscious to cope up with emotional stress from work.

Key Informant 4: *“So actually, one thing that, my only strategy was always having a good sleep. Good sleep, always, health is always wealth, right? Health is wealth and then I don't smoke actually, that is one.”*

Key Informant 3: *“We divert it because we observed that although we delivered the modules to their respective barangay, parents are still lazy in claiming their child's module. We did all the convenience for them, on our side, it's very tiring and frustrating. What we did, instead of the former where the teacher delivers the module to the barangay, now parents are the ones to get them in school. At least we get some little rest.”*

Another thing, teachers maintain good working relations in an environment of cooperation and professional collaboration to make the tasks easier and manageable. One of these is through LAC (Learning Action Cell) sessions which according to Department of Education (2016) are sessions led by a group of teachers who participates in collaborative learning sessions to address and tackle commonly shared school concerns and difficulties.

Key Informant 1: *“I try to do remedies by asking for assistance from the principal, school heads, and teachers. We do LAC sessions in order to ask if they have better interventions.”*

Key Informant 4: *“When you have kind of work or colleagues, or co-workers, the environment is the most essential because if the workplace became toxic, with an added burden of toxic colleagues, that would be a complete mess. In my case with my colleagues, if the responsibility is beyond my capability, there are other workmates that will work for it, especially if I am not available. There would be someone who's going to make the work for me. Same, it's a helping hand.”*

Another coping mechanism that came out as evident was the fact that at present, teachers are lucky enough to experience a surge in technological advancement in terms of telecommunications, computers, digital printers, internet, social media, and the numerous gadgets. Otherwise, it would be truly difficult to reach out to learners and to parents without these present-day innovations. It was also found out that teachers who have no knowledge of computer technologically became instant IT literates because of the opportunity given for them to learn the trade. This is a simple reward for those teachers who are especially coming from the old school.

Key Informant 4: *“We prepares the LAS, or the learning activity sheets to the students. In my case in Science, since I can see the students can hardly understand the modules, I need to use assessments where I could assess their knowledge because we are on modular.”*

Key Informant 1: *“Another thing, I only possess little knowledge about computers. This pandemic greatly helped me, I became literate in using the computer by exploring it personally and I no longer need assistance.”*

To top it all, this study reveals that teachers have truly meet difficulties that are somehow unparalleled during their entire teaching profession. However, the pandemic has indeed gave them opportunities at being resilient, innovative, creative, and flexible in their tasks. The management support was enormously provided; hence, it lessened the stressful situations. The workplace was transformed

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into a venue filled with an atmosphere cooperation from and support for each and everyone in the school. These are the basic reasons that made their lived experience truly emulating and worthwhile.

CONCLUSIONS

Stating that teaching is an arduous profession is an understatement. In addition, educational paradigms and learning processes are constantly evolving. These statements ring true when the pandemic hits the world, and the educational sector was affected. With the sudden shift to a new learning modality, teachers were greatly impacted and faced various experiences, issues, and challenges, especially in the implementation of assessment methods. Based on the findings of this study, modules serve as the main assessment tool, and this supposed to be major assessment method is limited mostly to multiple choice tests. With this, the process of assessment is compromised together with evaluating if students have really attained the competencies they are expected to achieve. The teacherparticipants have also emphasized how they are not sure of the effectiveness of the assessment methods they are utilizing due to the challenges they have faced during modular instruction. These difficulties include the reproduction, distribution, and retrieval of modules, students' lack of interest and unseriousness in giving their answers, academic dishonesty, limitations of assessment methods used, demanding workloads, and lack of resources and technological devices. Teachers were able to deal with these struggles by fostering a positive mentality and outlook and taking care of their health. In terms of difficulties in terms of distribution and retrieval of modules, teachers resorted to adjustments such as scheduling parent and student school visits and home visitations.

With students' lack of interest and to follow up retrieval of modules, teachers used technology through smartphones in the form of creating group chats and calling and texting students directly. Through the use of technology, teachers developed computer literacy to aid them in the modification of modules. Moreover, the findings of the study showed that teachers in order to cope up with the said challenges need the cooperation and support of stakeholders such as parents, barangay officials, their colleagues, and the students themselves. Another key strategy to face the challenges stated above was to enhance professional collaboration and nurture a good and positive working environment.

Even though teachers were able to come up with adjustments and strategies to cope up with the challenges they are facing, these are never enough. Teachers still need assistance from the department concerned and educational policymakers that would provide them with the appropriate resources, furnishing reward management systems and pieces of training (retooling and upskilling), lessening workloads, and prioritizing mental health, and extending stress management programs as they traverse to the ever-changing educational landscape. Moreover, the findings also showed how little is the regard for the creation of assessment methods beyond multiple-choice tests. With this, teachers must be encouraged and supported in the creation of authentic assessments that will not only pique students' interests but would give teachers ample data to evaluate their students' performance.

To survive and cope with the sudden changes, teachers need great support from all stakeholders as well as from the government to adapt to the current needs of the new learning modality and the students to transcend the challenges of the pandemic or any changes that may occur in the educational sector.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and results of this study, here are the following recommendations:

To the Department of Education:

- Creation of assessment methods beyond multiple-choice tests wherein authentic assessments are also highlighted.
- Facilities and resources that will help aid the gaps in modular instruction, especially in terms of limited equipment should be provided to teachers.
- Assigning workloads and additional administrative responsibilities in addition to teachers' academic load should be carefully considered to not overwork and strain teachers.
- Giving reimbursements to teachers who have spent their money on the production and distribution of modules should be taken into consideration.
- Mental health and stress management seminars, programs, and allowances can also benefit teachers who are struggling to cope with modular instruction.
- Offer innovative and flexible training to teachers for retooling and upskilling aligned to the demands of the current setup and the needs of learners.

To the Teachers:

- Seek professional development, especially in areas that would offer growth and development in Information and Communication Technology skills, pedagogical thrusts and methods, and usage of appropriate assessment methods so that teachers can transcend to the evolving facet of education.
- Form mechanisms and strategies to detect any forms of academic dishonesties.

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- Allotment for destressing activities that would help in coping with the challenges of modular instruction. This would include a time to bond with family members and friends.

To the Future Researchers:

- Conduct phenomenological studies focusing on the lived experiences of teachers in utilizing assessment methods beyond multiple-choice tests amidst modular instruction. Also, comparative studies on the teacher's lived experiences before and after the pandemic.
- Investigate relevant issues in various research locations that may aid or even refute the study's results and findings

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