



K-12 online education during COVID-19 pandemic: Private school teachers' perspective

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ABSTRACT

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, most educational institutions had been compelled to make an abrupt transition to online classes, which provided opportunities and challenges for students and teachers. To make sure the validity and reliability of this research study, a descriptive design was used. The researcher utilized an online semi-structured interview to gather the needed data from the participants. The researcher adhered to random sampling in selecting the participants of the study. A total of 17 private school teachers were randomly interviewed using Google Meet and Zoom. After the online semi-structured interview, the researcher analyzed the data using thematic analysis. The three major themes generated from the responses of the participants are perceptions of the private school teachers, the challenges in online teaching amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and coping mechanisms. The study found that online teaching had an impact on the responsibilities and roles of the participants in K-12 education due to the changes in teaching platforms, procedures, and techniques. The study presented that the internet connection of students and teachers is one of the most important tools in online teaching. This study revealed also that pure online teaching will not help K-12 education achieve its goals due to the lack of hands-on activities. The study highlighted that the various challenges in online teaching encourage them to be adaptable and resourceful in their teaching careers. Furthermore, the study consists of coping mechanisms that determine how the participants coped with the changes introduced by the rapid move from face-to-face delivery of lessons to online teaching. The researcher recommends that teachers must regularly attend training and seminars on educational development and students must interact with their teachers to perform effectively in the teaching-learning process.

ARTICLE INFO

Received : May 6, 2022

Revised : May 30, 2022

Accepted : July 21, 2022

KEYWORDS

Coping mechanism, COVID-19 pandemic, K-12 education, Online teaching, Private school teachers

Suggested Citation (APA Style 7th Edition):

Ragpala, E.M. (2022). K-12 online education during COVID-19 pandemic: Private school teachers' perspective. *International Research Journal of Science, Technology, Education, and Management*, 2(2), 139-152. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6951513>

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic is a classic adaptable and transformative challenge for teachers, with no preloaded blueprint to guide effective responses (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2020). A year after COVID-19 pandemic began, approximately half of the world's students are still affected by partial or complete school closures, and over 100 million more students might decline below the essential reading competence level as a result of the pandemic crisis (UNESCO, n.d.). With the immediate shift from the physical classroom to the online classroom in many parts of the world, some are wondering if online education implementation will continue post-pandemic, and how such a shift will influence the global education system (Li & Lalani, 2020). Due to the continued COVID-19 pandemic, all face-to-face classes were stopped under the concept of public distancing (Ferrel & Ryan, 2020).

Due to COVID-19 most educational levels should make an immediate transition to online education, which may be both a potential and a challenge (Toquero, 2020). As a result, some research has been conducted to investigate the need for urgent remote teaching during COVID-19 outbreak. Basilaia and Kvavadze (2020), conducted a study with 950 participants in which the Google Meet platform was used for online education. Their findings revealed that the quick transition to online education was a success and that the knowledge gained could be applied in the future. On the other hand, Owusu-Fordjour et al. (2020), conducted a study on 214 college students' web-based learning and revealed that the global pandemic had a negative influence on their learning because most of them were not used to studying efficiently at their own pace. In Cyprus, Souleles et al. (2020) believed that online education is not a replacement for current education-learning perspectives and that school discipline classifications must be recognized. Even though supplying hastily organized seminars to fill teachers' weak areas is a crucial component, it does not eliminate the need for ongoing training in both pedagogical and technological contexts (Wu S-Y, 2021). According to Adarlo and Jackson (2017), before the implementation of the K-12 educational curriculum, the Philippines' basic education required ten years of schooling: six years in elementary school and four years in high school. They also stated that, in response to other countries' social responsibility toward globalization, the Philippines had also initiated major educational reform plans to change and shift its 10-year basic education into the K-12 education program. The education policies' main features are prepared for higher education, admission to local and international institutions of higher learning, and immediate employment prospects after graduation (Okabe, 2013). According to Trance and Trance (2019), the Philippine Department of Education introduced the K-12 Curriculum for both elementary and high school levels of basic education at the start of the 2012-2013 academic year, and as a result, the current curriculum is to be developed continually. They also stated that this phase is associated with a flexible shift in many stakeholders' views, attitudes, and insights about the new program. They also stated that the study examined numerous witness statements of in-service and pre-service teachers and students in this area to gain an understanding of how they perceive the current educational framework. Since both teachers and students have had the chance to learn about and interact with technology in education such as mobile-based teaching, computer-based education, and online learning, the roadblocks to accessing online learning during the pandemic have been reduced (Pellegrini et al., 2020).

Mahyoob (2020), claims that the only option due to the severity of the situations prompted by COVID-19 pandemic was to transform to online education. He went on to say that one additional benefit of online teaching and learning is the key to enabling lectures when students demand to record their lessons and teachers thoroughly evaluate and prepare for recording, which undoubtedly improves the teaching process and practices. COVID-19 pandemic has forced teachers to rapidly move their classrooms to an online environment (van der Spoel et al., 2020). Using communication and information technology in the classroom, according to studies, improves the educational process and increases students' active learning competencies (Jamieson-Procter et al., 2013). For most schools, technical difficulties have become a major demotivating factor for teachers and students, causing disruptions in the teaching-learning process (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). According to one study, some students preferred online learning since it is the most acceptable mode of providing education during a pandemic (Ragpala, 2021). However, even though online learning is more convenient, many students who are excelling in a traditional classroom environment (Kebritchi et al., 2017) are not equitably progressive in an online learning environment

(Cheung & Kan, 2002). Teachers play a crucial role in the effective implementation of online learning (Orhan & Beyhan, 2020). Given that perceptions influence behavior, determining teachers' perspectives is essential to effective online education (Miglani & Awadhiya, 2017). The reliability of virtual learning applications influences people's perceptions of online education (Demirli, 2002). Recognizing teachers' perceptions and taking appropriate steps to improve system quality is critical (Birişçi, 2013).

The theory of change serves as the study's theoretical framework. A theory of change is a method for mapping programs that aim to induce change in a specific setting to increase their effectiveness (de Buck, et al., 2018). A Theory of Change is defined as a hypothesis about how a program provides its influence (Scriven, 1991). The theory of change encompasses both the process and the product (Vogel 2012). The theory of change, according to The Center for Theory of Change, Inc. (n.d.), is a detailed statement and show of strength of how and why the proposed changes are supposed to happen in a particular context. They also stressed that it is associated with mapping out or "filling in" what has been referred to as the "missing middle" between how a program or change effort executes its activities or interventions and how they contribute to the accomplishment of desired results. This study is related to the theory of change since there is a substantial shift in the form of teaching and learning programs in K-12 education during COVID-19 pandemic. The reliance on digital applications in K-12 education was the change. Teachers must adapt to the many challenges of online teaching as the educational system evolves. A theory of change is a technique that evaluates how a certain activity or set of actions is likely to result in a significant development change based on a logical evaluation of available evidence (UNDAF, n.d.). With the studies mentioned focusing on the relationship of online teaching with teachers' involvement in the teaching and learning process, the researcher intended to determine the perceptions of private school teachers in online teaching for K-12 education as well as the various kinds of challenges that they experienced at the peak of COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, this research will add to the body of knowledge, particularly for other teachers who are dealing with similar challenges in online K-12 education. This research study will pave the way for improved and broader information to realize the Philippines' objective of K-12 education.

OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this study is to determine the perceptions of private school teachers in online teaching for K-12 education during COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly, it aims to address the following objectives:

1. Determine the perceptions of private school teachers in online teaching for K-12 education during COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Describe the challenges faced by private school teachers in online teaching for K-12 education during COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Determine the coping mechanisms of the private school teachers with the challenges identified.

METHODS

Design

The descriptive method was utilized in this study to gather information and data to better understand the research objectives. The goal of qualitative research is to develop information based on personal experience (Dela Fuente, 2021; Sandelowski, 2004). This design typically comprises searching the data inductively for repeating themes, structures, or ideas, and it characterizes and analyzes to capture the experiences of the participants. In this regard, the descriptive research design is most suitable for this study because the researcher gathers information to acquire a deeper knowledge of the participants, including their experiences and challenges during COVID-19 pandemic. The researchers gathered data qualitatively, inductively discovered repeating patterns, and then documented and interpreted those motifs. Furthermore, the study's design allows for a flexible approach. As a result, if crucial new issues and questions surface throughout the study, further analysis may be conducted.

Participants

In this research, purposive sampling was used in this study. Purposive sampling, according to Dornyei (2007), is a method for locating people who can offer rich and different views on the topic under inquiry to optimize what we may learn. This sampling tool was employed since the researcher relied on his judgment when selecting the participants of the study (Alchemer, 2021). The purpose of this study is to interview private school teachers to understand how they view online K–12 education in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. The participant's inclusion criteria are:

1. employed and full-time teacher in a private school;
2. at least one year of teaching experience;
3. have a bachelor's degree or 18 units in education;
4. have been teaching online when COVID-19 pandemic began;
5. have at least 30 students in their online class.

The number of participants was selected until the saturation point was reached. The number of participants in the study was ten (10) females and seven (7) males ranging in age from 24 to 40 years old, for a total of seventeen (17) private school teachers in the province of La Union, who are conducting online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ethical considerations

Informed consent was given to the participants before the online semi-structured interview. The researcher ensured that the participants are fully informed about the aim of the study in which they are being requested to participate and that they are free to leave the interview at any moment. The study considered the general guidelines in research ethics. The researcher followed all of the necessary procedures and standards for data collection. The researcher created a series of approval letters that were distributed to the research participants. It goes over the objectives, goals, and data confidentiality of the study to ensure that everyone is on the same page and understands everything. The researcher additionally enlisted the assistance of professionals by distributing validation letters for the research questions. Inputs and suggestions were taken note of, acknowledged, and incorporated into the study's progress. After all of the letters were approved, the researcher began collecting data. The participants were advised that the study was entirely voluntary and would have no impact on their lives as teachers, or even in their communities. Furthermore, the researcher assured the participants that their names and personal information, as well as their answers, would be kept private and that the material would be used solely for academic purposes; therefore, confidentiality was ensured.

Data collection

The study's participants were interviewed through an online semi-structured interview. The interview was conducted using online platforms such as Google Meet and Zoom. Due to the pandemic, collecting data online was the safest alternative for protecting the health of the researcher and the participants. The semi-structured interview was used in the study because it allows the researcher to capture the experiences of the participants expressed vividly during the interview (Dela Fuente, 2019). Participants may also be asked to clarify their responses, provide examples, and expand on what they have responded to.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyze and interpret the data gathered from the research participants' responses. Thematic analysis processes were followed by the researcher, which included seven phases: transcribing, reading and familiarization, coding, seeking for themes, reviewing themes, defining and labeling

themes, and ending the analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2013). The researcher was guided in the phases of thematic analysis by Mortensen (2020). During the first phase, the researcher became acquainted with the statements provided by the participants. The data was then coded by the researcher as the second phase, which is concise descriptions of what was said during the interview. For Phase 3, the codes revealed fascinating information in the researcher's data, and the themes were broad, necessitating active interpretation of the codes and data. During Phase 4, the themes identified in phase 3 were studied and developed by the researcher. The researcher recognized and explained each previously generated theme throughout Phase 5. Finally, the researcher gave a comprehensive review of the study and analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

After gathering data from the participants, the researcher had enough evidence to continue with the research. This chapter presents the important data from an online semi-structured interview that the researcher collected, analyzed, and thematized to address the main objective of the study.

The perspectives in online teaching amidst COVID-19 pandemic

During the interview, all the participants shared that K-12 education changes their views and styles when it comes to their teaching strategies. It is more challenging when COVID-19 pandemic came since according to them they will teach online. Moreover, when K-12 education was implemented, most of the participants learned a lot about new modern teaching approaches that are useful in their online teaching. According to Lederman (2020), as a direct consequence of COVID-19 challenges, both teachers and students are expected to adopt the online teaching environment as the ideas or thoughts of the online teaching-learning system. They were introduced to several learning platforms, which assisted them in improving their learning approaches and ensuring that their students were more engaged even though they are delivering their lessons virtually. They also stated that K-12 education taught them to be more imaginative and sophisticated in their teaching, particularly when it comes to the use of technology and online educational tools.

P1: *"The online materials we used in our training during K-12 implementation have proven to be useful in my online teaching."*

P3: *"I can claim that my current teaching skills are improved as a result of this K-12 education."*

P5: *"With my K-12 education experience, I was able to become prepared and ready for my online classes."*

P8: *"My K-12 education equips me to employ technology in the classroom, as well as visualization, cooperative learning, inquiry-based instruction, graphic organizing, and other skills."*

Teaching online using spiral progression approach

There are several challenges in implementing the transformation process in the education system that has developed as a result of COVID-19 situation; these challenges are connected to the fresh views of online education and its technological complications (Mishra et al., 2020). Almost all of the participants agreed that even though they are teaching online they are still using the spiral progression approach. They said that this approach is very useful to unlock the ideas of their students. Most of the participants added that the spiral approach is effective because it considers the cycle of forgetting and remembering between two successive quarters or levels, as well as between elementary and secondary school. A spiral curriculum may be more effective in helping students remember a specific topic they added. The spiral curriculum is built on a continuous revisiting of ideas, concepts, or themes throughout the subject (Masters & Gibbs, 2007). Moreover, when there is a spiral effect in the lessons to be taught, their students' perceptions of a particular lesson from the past will be easier for them to understand what they have now. Some participants, on the other hand, have reservations about the spiral curriculum. They stated that they prefer the traditional curriculum over the spiral

curriculum since it is difficult to feed students with different information in each quarter and this may cause some confusion among students.

P4: *"The spiral curriculum is essential for both online and traditional teaching and learning process."*

P7: *"I believe it is useful in terms of continuous learning for learners in multiple topic areas at different grade levels."*

P16: *"Spiral Curriculum is effective in online teaching. It allows you to review what has been taught."*

P17: *"I employ the spiral approach even in online teaching since the content in my topic is reinforced and solidified each time the student comes to it."*

Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) as a teacher's guide during COVID-19 pandemic

MELCs are defined by the Department of Education as what students require and are acknowledged as necessary in the teaching-learning process of creating skills to empower students for following grade levels and, as a result, for continual progress (Adalin, 2020). During the pandemic, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued the most essential learning competencies (MELCs) to assist teachers in teaching their subjects conveniently online or in a modular method of learning. Most of the participants said that the MELCs provided by DepEd during this time of pandemic are timely because it is hard to accomplish all the competencies that each subject has and some of them require to have a face-to-face class for it to be achieved. Also, they noted that most essential learning competencies remain whether there is a pandemic, or not the student is schooled traditionally or online. MELCs should be constants if considered the most essential and therefore, are easier to determine if the stages of child development are used as a basis. Some participants also emphasized that the most essential learning competencies are a big help for them as teachers because it is designed and suited to the local context and diversity of learners. Besides, in their own opinion, most essential learning competencies (MELCs) are a great tool to reach the utmost learning outcomes for the students during the pandemic. Other participants, on the other hand, claimed that the lessons in the MELCs are lengthy, and they want DepEd to continue simplifying it so that my students may catch up in their classes online.

P1: *"MELCs are better for me because it already gives what should be taught in different subjects, although not all subjects with MELCs are good because there are MELCs that need to be shortened."*

P5: *"It's incredibly useful, especially for someone like myself who is new to this type of work."*

P10: *"With the aid of MELCs, I was able to know which topic needs to be provided to the learners of different grade levels. It made my life as a teacher so much easier and organized."*

P12: *"I am grateful that we have the MELCs to help us deliver our lesson online effectively."*

Traditional and online teaching under K-12 education

Most of the participants admitted that they had never considered online learning before the pandemic. As a result, teachers have been forced to devise a range of choices for the glide, ranging from giving daily and weekly classwork that prepares students online to completing courses through Zoom and other online learning applications (Garcia & Weiss, 2020). According to most of the participants, online teaching differs from what they were used to before the pandemic. They battled greatly in the first year of implementation, but if they were to explain online teaching, they say that it is a new way of teaching that allows them to make teaching and learning more engaging, which is timely at this moment. The majority of participants also stated that online teaching is the process of educating others through the use of virtual platforms. This type of teaching makes use of synchronous classes, video conferencing, webinars, and other online resources. On the other hand, traditional teaching is what they have been doing for a long time, meeting students and teaching lessons personally in a classroom. Traditional teaching is still the required mode of instruction in K-12 education for them since students are more engaged when they are in school doing demonstrations, experiments, and other practical activities.

P5: *"Traditional teaching occurs when students and teachers connect on a scheduled timetable in a physical place, whereas online teaching occurs when students and teachers engage at a distance."*

P9: *"Online learning may provide fewer interruptions than traditional classroom instruction, allowing students to concentrate more easily and make the most of their time."*

P14: *"Online expands the use of technology vastly, traditional on the other hand should be faced out."*

Effectivity of K-12 online education during COVID-19 pandemic

Differences in internet connections may influence the form of online and blended models that teachers may give or limit student participation in online learning (Cullinan et al., 2021). Several participants claimed online education in K-12 education is beneficial, but it is inefficient for students who do not have enough access to online resources such as devices and high-speed internet connections. A gap in access to adequate equipment, such as a laptop or desktop computer, a proper place setting to learn and study in, or the digital literacy skills opportunity to excel in online learning can all contribute to such a division (Silva et al., 2018). Moreover, in some respects, online teaching is more suitable for both students and teachers. According to most of the participants, they have time to check paperwork in the afternoon instead of being overloaded with work all day. They also added that some students nowadays may work at their own pace and complete their tasks asynchronously. Some participants shared that K-12 online education can produce an online conducive classroom environment. They also claimed that some students are accustomed to learning on their own but some are not. Because of this, some participants are wary of using the internet for teaching lessons during COVID-19 pandemic since online education will not guarantee a good quality of student engagement. However, all participants agreed that students are still demonstrating interest and growing as they progress through the online instruction throughout the pandemic, and they can notice positive changes in their students through formative and summative assessments.

P3: *"Quite difficult, not effective because there's a lot of barriers to having online teaching."*

P7: *"Despite the difficulty teaching online, teachers should develop ways to make not just teaching but also learning to make learning suitable to the needs of the students even if it is online."*

P14: *"Yes, it is a success because of the use of technological equipment"*

The challenges in online teaching amidst COVID-19 pandemic

Internet connection problem

According to Educause (n.d.), COVID-19 prevents students and teachers from interacting face-to-face in many schools and learning institutions that develop alternate educational delivery systems to transfer the class online. Due to this reason, most of the participants altered to online teaching when COVID-19 came. The participants mentioned five challenges they faced during online teaching during the pandemic. The first one is the internet connection problem. In an online teaching environment, one such concern is the possible gap in access to digital learning resources for students at home rather than in or near a school (Raes et al., 2019). According to some of the participants, it has an impact on their online teaching because they are unable to deliver their lessons adequately if the internet is unstable. This has a significant impact on both students and teachers, as the teaching-learning process is disturbed they said. According to Dogniez (2019), the potential to connect to the internet is key to attaining this future vision; teachers use digital sources to prepare lessons, and students use them to expand their learning prospects. She also stated that collaborative teaching techniques enabled by the internet allow teachers to pay more attention to individual students' needs while still facilitating student engagement.

P2: *"I've had internet connectivity concerns, especially when doing online teaching in work-from-home circumstances."*

P11: *"I have experienced internet connectivity issues most especially when teaching online at home."*

P15: *"Poor internet connectivity was one of the biggest problems during online teaching."*

Unresponsive students

The second challenge that the participants shared is unresponsive students. According to the participants, some of their students are not replying to their messages about their online output. Communication is the process of passing on knowledge and public understanding from one individual to another (Keyton, 2011). Communication is defined as the exchange of information, whether written or spoken (Velentzas & Borni, 2014), particularly in the teaching and learning process. According to the participants, they communicate with their students using Messenger and Gmail. The participants also stated that while sending emails or messages to their students, they need to wait for an hour, a day, or even a week for them to receive a response. Also, student-teacher communication is particularly important, according to the participants since it allows them to track their students' progress in their online learning and also reminds them to submit their outputs on time. Communication, notably in the education industry, should be explored, according to Mohammad Alawamleh et al., (2020) since communication between teachers and students can increase learning and build a positive atmosphere. They also underlined that successful communication is the process of expressing ideas, thoughts, expertise, and information in the most effective method to achieve the intended aim. For most online students, communicating with teachers is their primary interaction with an institution (Betts, 2009). The participants said that online teaching amidst COVID-19 pandemic needs to be flexible and understandable when it comes to communicating with the students.

P3: *"My students who have a lot of unfinished work are the ones who are not replying immediately to my messages."*

P6: *"There is only a little collaboration and interaction between students and the teacher."*

P11: *"I always remind my students to submit their outputs thru email and messenger but most of them are not replying."*

P5: *"Communication, both with the parents and the students. There are times that some of them are hard to reach."*

Late submission of students' output

Late submission of students' output is the third challenge stated by the participants. According to them, some students are submitting their output late. The participants are always waiting for the students' output to be submitted. Since the participants teach online, they need to be flexible to give justice to those students who have valid reasons for their late submissions. According to Browning (2013), things come up from time to time that prevents students from submitting their assignments on time and it might be anything from computer problems to employment or family obligations, sickness, or even an emergency.

P4: *"I allow my students to submit their outputs late but remind if possible to always follow the deadline."*

P13: *"The most challenging one I've experienced was the way I communicate with my students. Unlike in face-to-face, you can see your students doing their requirements but now, it is very difficult to keep in touch with the students who have an unstable connection."*

P16: *"I need to wait for 2-3 weeks after the due date for the submissions of my students."*

Checking outputs online

Checking outputs online is the fourth challenge faced by the participants. Some participants said that they are using their laptops for almost 8 hrs a day just to check the submission of the students. Unlike face-to-face classes, they can check the student's output on paper but online is different. They check the output in front of their laptop which caused them to have eye pain and feel dizzy most of the time. As per UPMC Susquehanna (2019), focusing on a screen for an extended period can induce eye strain, and excessive screen use may harm sleep. They also noted that research found that when used around bedtime, blue light interrupts the brain's sleep rhythms and that the brain misinterprets the screen brightness as daylight, causing the body's sleep schedule to alter.

P1: *"I spend almost the normal screen time checking the outputs of my students."*

P10: *"Spending too much time in front of the computer for both online teaching and monitoring outputs, causing my eyes to be strained most of the time."*

P12: *"Suffering from eyes strains and migraine due to too much exposure to the computer."*

Pure online teaching in K-12 education

The last challenge raised by the participants is pure online teaching in K-12 education. Most participants said that hands-on tasks that should be completed as part of the K-12 curriculum are not being accomplished due to the online teaching platform used during the pandemic. They claimed that although some students may participate in some of these activities, others without access to learning tools struggle considerably. According to International Consultants for Education and Fairs (ICEF, 2013), K-12 education seeks to provide Filipino students ample time to develop skills and concepts so that they are ready for higher education when the time comes. However, some participants stated that they are unable to personally observe their students, which has an impact on the students' mastery of the lesson. This might be one of the reasons why some students cheat and others fail to learn effectively during online teaching-learning sessions. According to the responses, as a result, the objectives of K-12 education would be taken for granted.

P2: *"Online teaching in K-12 education is not that effective. Sometimes students who don't have any materials to use in online learning like gadgets and internet connections are the ones who suffer most when it comes to academic performance. But learners and teachers need to adjust in this kind of learning situation."*

P6: *"It's not quite effective since there are a lot of problems and challenges I encountered in my class while teaching online."*

P8: *"Quite difficult, not effective because there's a lot of barriers to having an online teaching for K-12 education."*

Coping mechanisms

According to Sincero (2012), although coping mechanisms are established by a person's rational awareness, this does not mean that all of them result in appropriate coping; certain coping methods are maladaptive. He also added that maladaptive coping is comparable to "non-coping," since a person who reacts to a source of stress with a coping technique and is unable to successfully ward off the stressor or fix the stressful scenario has not coped with the stress at all. Most participants stated that they adjusted to the new learning modality and study additional learning online applications to teach online. They also stated that they installed and updated their internet connection at home to teach well their lesson and have a faster engagement with their students. In addition, some participants purchased educational material to use in their online classes. Some participants also mentioned that they recorded some of their lectures to save time and be prepared in case of an unexpected internet outage. The participants said that they need to become flexible while teaching online to address the needs of their students. Flexible learning aims at giving students the ability to pick their own pace,

place, and type of learning, which may be assisted by appropriate educational practices (Gordon, 2014). As per Good Therapy (2018), suitable coping skills can regularly enable the betterment of mental and emotional health, and individuals who can adapt to stressful life interactions through constructive coping methods may be less likely to experience anxiety, feelings of hopelessness, and other mental issues as a consequence of unfortunate or challenging events.

P6: *“Explore more online platforms that can catch up with their interests.”*

P9: *“I bought equipment that I will be utilizing for my online class at home and in school. I also updated and upgraded to a higher-quality home fiber for faster internet connectivity. Had to check updates on scheduled power interruptions are given earlier for notification.”*

P11: *“Since not all of the students have the means of having all of the required devices, I still go back to the traditional way. Contacting them thru text or call.”*

P14: *“Always plan before conducting the lesson.”*

P15: *“Opened frequent communications to each of my problematic students 24/7.”*

P16: *“Teachers should be the ones encouraging the students to learn during this time. We should inspire them more despite the situation that we have that being able to adapt to this type of situations means that they can survive for the future.”*

P17: *“Be adaptive and flexible. Only by that, I will be able to adjust and learn more things.”*

CONCLUSIONS

The primary goal of the study is to determine private school teachers' perceptions of online teaching for K-12 education during the pandemic. Thematic analysis was employed in the study, and data from participants was collected via an online semi-structured interview. Random sampling was used to choose participants for the study. As per the findings, every participant reported that their K-12 curriculum and online teaching experiences influenced their teaching methods.

The study showed that online teaching for K-12 education affected the teaching roles of private school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, the participants were guided by the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) and the spiral progression approach to make their teaching relevant to the new platform of learning and teaching in K-12 education. According to the study, participants maintain a suitable time balance and planned their activities ahead of time. Even during a pandemic, the participants showed themselves that teaching is more than a profession; it is a vocation. Even though there are numerous challenges in the teaching and learning process, online classes and the K-12 education pandemic did not discourage participants from teaching their subjects effectively. The study also revealed that student participation was crucial in enhancing teachers' satisfaction with online learning. Because communication is the major priority of the participants, they made every effort to connect and communicate with their students using various online platforms. The various online problems that private school teachers experienced had an impact on their online teaching performance. It has been shown that participants become more adaptable and flexible in their class preparation and delivery. Furthermore, the conclusion is based on data collected from participants in the study by the researcher. This suggests that a different conclusion may be reached if other participants were selected.

IMPLICATIONS

This study discussed K-12 online education during COVID-19 pandemic based on the perceptions of private school teachers. The participants of the study strived to master various current teaching strategies for online teaching, particularly the new educational software and applications which are being employed to provide collaborative and engaging lessons online. The participants challenged themselves to acquire these skills to be prepared for the abrupt change in the teaching and learning platform. K-12 education was difficult for them during the pandemic, but their enthusiasm for teaching helped them adjust to change. The spiral progression approach was also noted by the

participants in their online teaching. The study found that the spiral progression is still applicable to their online instruction. This approach is used in K-12 education to boost students' acquisition of ideas in the following years by allowing the repeating of previously taught subject matter. This study also emphasized the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) as a teacher's guide during COVID-19 Pandemic. The competencies listed there aided the participants in achieving the purpose of their topic. However, some participants said that it was hard for them to teach efficiently the topic because they teach online, and some competencies require hands-on assessments. The participants also compared traditional and online teaching for K-12 education. And some believe that traditional education, which primarily of face-to-face classes, is still the best since it is more interactive, and engaging, and allow the participants to individually guide and assist their students.

In addition, internet connectivity was one of the issues raised by participants that has a significant influence on their online instruction delivery. The study found that participants' internet connectivity varies; some have stable and others have unstable connections. The participants with good connections reported that they delivered their lessons effectively, but this was dependent on whether the students were adequately engaged in their synchronous and asynchronous classes. For the participants that have unstable connections, they stated that they cannot teach properly so they decided to upgrade their internet connections, especially while they were teaching at home owing to the pandemic restrictions. Participants also mentioned that some of their students were unresponsive. The participants tried their best to teach the lessons effectively, but occasionally students do not do their daily activities and summative online so the participants have to message their students privately to find out why some of them were not performing well. Some were replying, while others were ignoring them. As a result, some participants tried to contact the student's parents for appropriate assistance. Late submission of students' outputs was also mentioned by the participants that causing delays in computing quarterly grades. The participants were also challenged with the checking of students' outputs online since they were used to checking outputs physically. Due to the pandemic, when it comes to students' work submissions, the participants need to be considerate and flexible.

Moreover, during the pandemic, pure online teaching in K-12 education was one of the major challenges for the participants. The study found that private school teachers who participated in the study were encouraged to adapt throughout the pandemic. It was difficult for them to adjust because it was their first-time teaching through online platforms. The participants went through a series of training provided by their institutions to appropriately teach their lessons online. Participants mentioned that self-determination is one of the factors that contribute to online teaching success. It was noted that the private school teachers experienced a lot of challenges in teaching online in the guide of the K-12 curriculum. Furthermore, according to the participants, online teaching in K-12 education during COVID-19 pandemic has advantages and disadvantages. The pandemic did not hinder them to participate in professional and personal development just to adjust to the sudden shift in teaching and learning platforms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To be competent in the teaching-learning process, teachers must constantly attend training and seminars on educational changes. Students must engage with their teachers to learn effectively in class. Parents should also monitor their child's academic progress to assist teachers in achieving the goal of the subject that they are teaching. Future researchers must conduct comparable studies using a qualitative study that fosters broader and more complex data collecting, and they might suggest new studies to explore the same research topic in other contexts, circumstances, regions, and cultures. Furthermore, this might lead to more in-depth analysis and findings, as well as emphasize the adaptability and comprehensiveness of online teaching for K-12 education throughout the pandemic.

LIMITATIONS

This research has certain limitations, including the fact that the schools and participants were all chosen for convenience. And as a result, the researcher does not venture to claim that his findings and conclusions are universally valid and accepted; rather, he provides this research topic to allow for comparisons with other research studies situated in contexts different than the one in this study. This study only interviewed 17 private school teachers, and the information obtained is solely based on their perceptions of online teaching for K-12 education during COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, the results cannot be generalized to other teachers or any educational institutions.

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