

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2022, Vol. 3, No. 9, 1737 – 1741

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.03.09.13>

Research Article

Effect of Distance Learning Challenges during Covid19 Pandemic to Teachers' Self – Care

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Article history:

Submission September 2022

Revised September 2022

Accepted September 2022

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ABSTRACT

Positive feelings encourage higher participation in teaching. This study examined the respondents' emotional self-care during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher explored the effect of distance-learning challenges during COVID-19 pandemic to the emotional self-care of the teachers. Descriptive correlational research design was used in the study with a questionnaire as the main tool in gathering the needed data among one-hundred seventy one (171) respondents identified using complete enumeration among elementary school teachers in the Division of Quezon City, Philippines. The data gathered were treated and analyzed using mean, weighted mean, chi – square and Pearson *r*. The mean age of the respondents is 40.43, female dominated at 73 percent. Most of respondents were teaching in the primary level that teaches general content courses. About 20 percent of the respondents had been in the field for about 11 – 15 years. Civil status and challenges, civil status and grade level taught to emotional self – care, grade level taught to teaching performance, challenges to self – care, challenges to teaching performance, and self-care to teaching performance revealed a significant relationship. Findings of the study is deemed contributory to possible adjustments to faculty development plan to adapt to changing roles from physical to virtual set – up.

Keywords: *descriptive-correlational design, distance learning, Education Management, emotion, pandemic, Philippines, Quezon City, self – care*

Background

In teaching and learning, positive emotions promote greater engagement. According to

Tuxford and Bradley, 2014, “emotions is pivotal to attention, memory and learning and teaching is highly emotional and demanding profession”.

How to cite:

Comia, E. L. (2022). Effect of Distance Learning Challenges during Covid19 Pandemic to Teachers' Self – Care. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 3 (9), 1737 – 1741. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.03.09.13

Developing emotional self-care among teachers will benefit not only the teachers themselves, but also their students. Given the current condition of the world today, new and unexpected demands for educators are rising. Teachers' self-care prior to the pandemic is completely different from what it is now (Weibenfel et. al., 2021). Being socially and emotionally well means being able to realize one's own abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and contribute to society.

It is noted that teacher burnout is a common problem around the globe. This is a global issue, and it is likely that it has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Madigan and Kim, 2021). Teachers in the Philippines were also burning out (Carreon et. a., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has required teachers to become experts in online learning almost overnight. As educators become more comfortable with their virtual teaching skillset and students adapt to their new learning environment, teachers can introduce new teaching and learning strategies to their colleagues to foster connections, build relationships, and collaboratively monitor whether these new techniques boost student achievement.

As the world undergoes the extraordinary experience of living through the COVID-19 pandemic, school leaders can support teachers by introducing teacher self-care strategies that establish trust, ensure safety, include teacher voice, empower teachers to make choices that improve both their teaching experiences and their students' learning environments, and increase collaboration among teachers, school leaders, and students and their families (Baker, 2020). The time has come for schools to address the missing link to help educators thrive—a greater focus on all adults' self-care to effectively perform in the teaching and learning process.

The mere reason why this study is conducted is to unpack the self-care aspect of elementary teachers during this COVID-19 crisis. The researcher explored teacher's self-care successes and challenges while implementing distance learning. In this way, teachers can thrive through this pandemic and be physically and emotionally ready to return to school after

the pandemic. Emotional self-care starts with the ability to identify what we feel not only the surface but also the ones that are hidden.

Evaluation of teaching effectiveness includes an evaluation of oneself. In this study, the researcher determined the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on teachers' performance using a self-assessment tool. Self-assessment helps teachers create critical reflective practice in their own actions. Furthermore, self-assessing teachers are likely to value and encourage students' own self-reflection by assisting students in reflecting on and evaluating their learning experiences. Teachers should be a reflective practitioner in their teaching to help improve their teaching practice and performance.

It is the reason why, generally, this study examined the respondents' emotional self-care during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher explored the effects of distance-learning and challenges during the pandemic to the emotional self-care of the elementary teachers.

Methods

Research Design

Descriptive-correlational research design was used in the study. The correlational design part of the study was used to test the relationships between the respondents' profile to the challenges, they experience in implementing distance learning and concurrent teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, between the respondents' profile to the extent which distance learning challenges impact the emotional well-being of the elementary teachers, respectively.

Locale of the Study

San Gabriel Elementary School located in Quezon City, Philippines was be the center of the study. The curricular offerings include kindergarten and elementary education, respectively. A Special Education classes are also offered across the different grade levels. Monograde classes are also employed in the traditional single-grade teaching. The school is one of the largest schools offering special education courses in Quezon City. Moreover, in terms of infrastructures and equipment, the school is fully equipped with several Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

based teaching and learning materials that supports every teacher and learner of the institution.

Respondents and Sampling Procedure

The respondents of this study were the Elementary School Teachers in the select schools in the Division of Quezon City, Philippines. Complete enumeration was used to define the number of respondents to be involved in the study.

Research Instrument

The survey questionnaire was the basic tool used in gathering the data needed for the study.

Part I determined the demographic profile of the respondents. It is in the form of a checklist wherein respondents put a bubble on the appropriate response.

Part II were the challenges that the teachers experience in their online teaching and concurrent teaching. The researcher formulated indicators describing how crucial or pressing these challenges that the respondents experience in implementing distance learning and concurrent teaching during the Covid19 pandemic.

Part III solicits on the extent by concurrent teaching challenges affect the emotional self-care of the elementary teachers in terms of work demands and expectations, working/teaching concurrently and communicating with parents and students which were adapted from the studies of Arora and Chauhan (2021) and Mishra et. al. (2020).

The researcher adapted indicators from the work of Danielson (2020) and the respondents responded using a 4-point Likert Scale for the extent by which concurrent teaching challenges affect teachers' emotional self-care and teaching performance. In addition, Cronbach alpha was used to give a measure on the scale of reliability or internal consistency of each sub-items in the questionnaire given the value of 0.82 this means that the questionnaire is highly reliable. Part IV examined the effect of distance learning to teachers' performance using a self-assessment tool adapted from the work of Saakvitne and Pearlman (1996).

Data Gathering Procedure

After complying with all the requirements and suggestions for the improvement of the research, the researcher submitted a letter of request to the Superintendent of Quezon City Public Schools on the conduct of the study. Upon the approval of the School Superintendent, the researcher sent a letter to the principal and teachers of the different elementary schools to inform them, ask permission to be part of the survey and administer the survey using the Google form. The link of the questionnaire through the Google form was sent to the teachers personally by the researcher and they were given a week to answer and to finish and answer the questionnaire. The accomplished questionnaire was retrieved and was reviewed immediately by the researcher to ensure the completeness of the data needed and subjected for data treatment with the appropriate statistical tools.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered were tallied, tabulated, and summarized for analysis and interpretation using the following statistical tool: Frequency counts, percentages, mean was used in treating the respondents' demographic profile. To describe the challenges that respondents experience in implementing distance learning and concurrent teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, the weighted mean was used. In like manner, the respondents' extent by which distance learning and concurrent challenges effect the emotional self-care of the elementary teachers in terms of work demands and expectations, working teaching concurrently and communicating with parents and students and the extent do distance learning affect the teaching performance of the elementary teachers during the Covid 19 Pandemic also determined using the weighted mean. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Chi square was used to test all the relationships given in the statement of the problems. It was evaluated using the .01 and .05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

On the Profile of the Respondents

The mean age of the respondents is 40.43 years old which means that most of them are in the early Middle Ages and it's dominated by married persons at 73 percent of the whole sample.

As to grade level taught, it is evident in the finding that teaching in the primary grades is where they reside which account to almost 60 percent. The respondents are generalists in terms of course content teaching assignment which clearly explain that they practice high degree of flexibility regardless of the subject / course being taught. Twenty - two percent of the total respondents had been in the teaching profession for about 11- 15 years which makes them perennial in this field.

On the Emotional Self-Care

In terms of emotional self -care, it was found out that the respondents sometimes observe such factor as revealed from the computed overall mean of 3.14. This finding further proves the work of McIntyre et. al. (2020) that teachers take a little bit of time to support emotional self - care. An overall mean of 3.02 shows that challenges that respondents experience in implementing distance learning during the Covid 19 pandemic had been a Moderate Problem. According to Mailizar et al. (2020), teachers are having issues with knowledge, skill, self-confidence, experience, efficacy, and convenience because of the Covid-19 epidemic. As to the assessment of the extent distance learning affect the self-care of the elementary teachers, the overall mean of 3.00 reveals that a moderate effect is seen on the self - care of elementary teachers as they implement distance learning. On the effect of distance learning on the teaching of the elementary teachers during the covid 19 pandemic, an overall mean of 3.18 attained which mean that implementation of distance learning has a "moderate effect" on the teaching of the respondents.

The findings shows that a significant difference exists on the emotional self - care of respondents according to age. The above-mentioned forerunner finding can be linked to the result gathered by Fernandez et. al. (2018),

most educators were unprepared to handle the technological problems brought about since they lacked the necessary digital skills and pedagogical expertise in relation to their age. Also, a significant difference is observed on the challenges experienced by the respondents according to their civil status. It was also found out that challenges that respondents experience in implementing distance learning has a significant relationship with self - care. Another important study conducted by Huang and Zhao (2020) had found that Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers who are adult singles have been especially susceptible to severe psychological problems.

Conclusion

Based from the research findings, it can be concluded that the emotional self - care of the teachers varies accordingly based on their age. And the challenges of teachers differs consequently based on their marital status. The challenges has a direct influence also on the self - care of teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were drawn based from the findings of the study.

1. School heads or administrators must devise recollection activities in support to teachers in improving their self - care.
2. Schools must prioritize on capacity building on the conduct of distance learning and more importantly on the technologies being used in implementing distance learning.
3. School administrators must also plan ways to reduce challenges experienced by teachers in implementing distance learning. Teachers must be self - reflective to be able to adjust to sudden changes in the educational arena.

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