

# Teachers' Perceptions and Stress of Distance Learning: A Feedback to the Educational System's Modality

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**Abstract:** The study investigated the time the teachers were extremely facing the pandemic's devastation. Among the difficulties they encountered were the stressful day-to-day delivery of learning. It also investigated their perceptions of how the modality would be delivered amidst the situation. A descriptive-correlational design was used in the study since the mean and coefficient of correlation were computed. The overall mean of the perceptions of teachers obtained under agreement and so with the stress. It implies that, during those working days, they felt them. It also shows that the study's results didn't prove that there was a relationship, which is what the null hypothesis presumed to have been.

**Keywords:** Distance learning, educational delivery, modular modality, stress, teachers' perceptions.

## 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 has changed everything the world normally offers. Because of epidemiology, clinical pathology and laboratory results, molecular and serological diagnostics, safety concerns, and its capacity to infect human cells (Ciotti, et al., 2020). Businesses, employment, labor forces, and much more on the education system. In fact, in order to flatten the curve and stop the spread of the disease, lockdown and homebound techniques have been implemented (Sintema, 2020). The transition from a typical face-to-face to non-appearance in school has been the scenario. It is to make sure that everybody is safe, and free of contamination. Despite some sound precautionary measures mandated by the World Health Organization (WHO), the death toll increased dramatically, especially during the days the vaccine was unsure of its development. However, as the world is more concerned about people's lives, various stringent protocols have been employed. Most likely, social distancing, wearing of face masks, face shields, regular handwashing, and others most likely controlled the spread. As noted, the situation is quite horrible and terrifying.

The most plausible learning modality that is effective in light of the pandemic was discovered through a series of deliberations with stakeholders. These are online learning, radio-based instruction, and modular learning. Among these recognized modes of delivery, modular is being preferred.

Resources are provided by the Department of Education (DepEd) in each week's distribution. Furthermore, the majority of modules received underwent a series of validation and testing before being distributed in schools. The distributions happen once a week and are retrieved the following week. A time schedule for what subjects to tackle is attached in the modules as a guide to the learners. Only the parents have the chance to do the transactions since learners are prohibited from going out, taking into account the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) strict protocol implementation.

The query now is the teachers' level of stress during this modality and their perceptions, particularly on the context effectivity of the learning, as to whether it yields notable and meaningful improvement in the learners' learning development despite the pandemic era. For the first time ever, teaching and learning are explored and tested using online platforms like Google Classroom, Zoom, virtual learning environments, and social media and various group forums like Telegram, Messenger, WhatsApp, and WeChat (Pokhrel, & Chhetri, 2021).

Stress at this time needs to be determined as these are detrimental to the teachers' work focus and satisfaction. Although there are some claims that the teaching profession is stressful, it was only a mere disclosure of ideas unless proven by this time, especially during the pandemic. Some opened up their dismay, but some disclosed their satisfaction with how the DepEd responded to this pandemic. Thus, this study is timely to be investigated because the opening of classes that come on August 22, 2022 is about to start. It is important to consolidate the teachers' perceptions about whether doing similar things like printing modules or activity sheets for distributions for the first three months of classes remains attributable to learning or not, according to what the teachers perceived about them. All educational levels were directed by the Department of Education. employs more practical and understandable learning delivery methods like distance learning and homeschooling in place of face-to-face interactions with the students (Reyes, 2021).

Now the teachers have nothing to complain about the things the department intends to implement, knowing that each of

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them is compliant. But the question is, have they previously experienced stress? If so, to what extent? These interrogative questions may be usual, but unusually, officials unlisten to these issues that precisely affect their work efficacy in school. The significant implications draw the feedback that might lead to uncertainties in quality learning as these teachers are the prime movers in the transfer of learning. And delving into it as soon as possible tends to resolve issues and the possibility of formulating a workable set of policies at the district or even division level. Thus, today is the right time, with the support of the teachers, principals, school heads, and public school district supervisor, to endeavor this query in the district of Kalawit II, Kalawit, Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines.

## 2. Framework

The self-perception theory is regarded as one of the most significant theories that explains how people perceive themselves. Self-awareness is gained. Daryl Bem (1972) developed the idea, which comprises two assertions as previously stated. People become conscious of their inner states, such as attitudes, according to the first claim. Their ideas by examining their actions and the conditions in which they occur (Bem, 1972).

According to Kyriacou, who has conducted numerous studies on teacher stress, teachers are stressed when they experience unpleasant emotions including anger, worry, pressure, and disappointment as a result of their work as teachers (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978). High levels of stress among teachers have been linked to work absences and job dissatisfaction in the past. A person in distress will typically exhibit the following traits: being excessively aroused, tense or unable to relax; being touchy, easily agitated or irritable; being quickly startled or fidgety; and displaying intolerance of any interruption or delay (Waghachavare, 2013). In the end, many teachers decide to quit their jobs (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978). Recent research has shown that one out of three teachers report teaching as being very or extremely stressful, causing the teaching profession to have the highest annual turnover rate. The annual turnover rate for teachers is 15.7% while other professions have an average annual turnover rate of 11%. You are aware of the inevitability of stress as a teacher. Lessons will need to be scheduled, papers will pile up, and pupils will misbehave.

Nevertheless, even if stress is unavoidable, how you handle it might be the difference between a long, fruitful career and one that is cut short by burnout. Some unexpected (and even counter-intuitive) methods for dealing with stress have emerged as a result of recent study.

## 3. Statement of the Problem

The study delves to determine the level of stress and teachers' perceptions of the modality adopted by the Deped particularly in the Division of Zamboanga del Norte. This investigation serves as the feedback from the teachers' side during the pandemic.

Specifically, it answers the following research questions:

1. What is the level of teachers' stress during the modular

learning delivery amidst the pandemic?

2. What is the teachers' perception of distance learning through the modular learning delivery of the respondents?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the stress and perceptions of distance learning being utilized among the respondents?

### A. Null Hypothesis

The study is predicated on this hypothesis:

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the stress and perceptions of distance learning being utilized among the respondents.

## 4. Scope and Limitation

The study covers the teachers of Kalawit II District, Kalawit, Zamboanga del Norte. It uses simple random sampling to identify the respondents. Possibly, the categorical compositions are from teachers I-III and master teachers I-II. Head teachers and principals are excluded since they are non-teaching positions with job descriptions solely for school administration and managerial in nature. Although the study tends to investigate past phenomena such as their stress, it is significant for further interventions and development to mitigate the personal discomfort experiences rather than take them for granted, which will soon cause adversities in the field of teaching.

## 5. Methodology

This section of the study outlines the sampling, data collection, ethical issues, and data analysis plan.

### A. Sampling

The study's respondents were the teachers of Kalawit II District, province of Zamboanga del Norte. It has a total of 128 teachers in the district, and to follow the special rules in taking the sample, 100 of them were subject to the study. In taking from them, stratified sampling was used, and follows a simple random sampling in each group of similar characteristics of the population. They were grouped into elementary and secondary and were presented in the frequency table under results and discussions.

### B. Data Collection

A questionnaire was the tool used to gather the data. But this tool needed to be validated and tested for reliability before it can be given to each of the sampled respondents. This is to ensure quality and unquestionable data is gathered and used for analyses and statistical calculations. To initiate the conduct, the researcher visited each school with the guidance of the school head and do the sampling according to the sampling method principle. Once respondents are found, they were given instructions, especially about the purpose of the research, and then given enough time to fill out the tool.

### C. Ethical Issues

Before the data gathering will commence, all the necessary

consents and protocols must be observed throughout the process. A letter asking permission from the office of the school's division superintendent through the research and planning section was secured. During the conduct, other consent was needed, like the approval of the public school's district supervisor and school heads of each school to be visited. Taking into consideration that the data is confidentially treated and can be anonymously represented.

**D. Plan for Data Analysis**

The primary data for the study was organized, computed, and assessed. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used as appropriate statistical methods. Each statement's weighted mean is determined, and a description is provided. In order to establish the significance of the relationship between the study's primary variables, correlational inferential statistics were also used.

**6. Results and Discussions**

This section of the study contains the results and findings that originated from the calculations that were performed on the data using the relevant techniques.

Table 1 shows in descending order the teachers' perceptions of the DepEd's distance learning modality. Among the array of statements, 9 obtained a 4.70 WM with a VD of Strongly Agree (SA). The prior teachers' presumptions that the parents once

answered the modules on behalf of their children, the result shows the evidence that is really through the fact that they responded to SA. Statements 1, 4, 7, 8, 3, 2, & 10 exhibit Agree VD. They perceive that the modules are not enough to competence development, online difficulty in teaching, rarely communication with the parents, unserious learners' responses, leniency towards school's initiatives, ineffectiveness in reaching them, and the decrease in attendance of those learners who attended the limited face-to-face are reflected in the same table. There are only two statements such as 6 and 5, which do neither agree nor disagree, like learners' misbehaviors in the class and the school's health protocols are not implemented properly. The implication shown in the two statements is that they are undecided on which to favor. The overall mean is 3.80 and has given Agree VD.

The teachers' stress of the distance learning modality adopted by the DepEd is presented in table 2 in descending order. Statement 2 that states "During the time the modules were not arriving on time, preparing the LAS was very tiring" obtained a Weighted Mean (WM) of 4.50 with Verbal description of Strongly Agree (SA). For statements 4,9,1,10,3, 7 & 8 have a WM that belongs to a VD of Agree. They convey that LAS preparation, finding resources, working with the modality, calling attention to the learners to improve school performance, limited face-to-face, giving updates to parents and paper work are stressful in the time of the pandemic. Items 6

Table 1  
Teachers' perceptions of the distance learning modality

Statement	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
9. There were parents who answered the modules rather than the learners.	4.70	Strongly Agree
1. The modular approach being used is not enough to develop the competencies aimed at each particular level.	4.10	Agree
4. Utilizing various initiatives to teach, particularly through online education, sounds impossible.	3.80	Agree
7. Both the teachers and the parents could communicate only rarely.	3.80	Agree
8. The learners' responses were not serious	3.80	Agree
3. The parents during the pandemic are lenient towards supporting the school's initiative.	3.70	Agree
2. The initiative to reach them out to improve their skills is ineffective.	3.50	Agree
10. The attendance of the learners, those who attended face-to-face, is decreasing.	3.50	Agree
6. The learners during the class were not behaving in a way that learning would take place.	3.40	Neither Agree nor Disagree
5. The health protocols implemented by the school were not followed properly.	3.20	Neither Agree nor Disagree

Legend: 1.00-1.80 - Strongly Disagree, 1.81-2.60- Disagree, 2.61-3.40- Neither Agree nor Disagree, 3.41-4.20, Agree, 4.21-5.00 Agree  
Overall Mean = 3.80, Verbal Description = Agree

Table 2  
Teachers' stress of the distance learning modality

Statement	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
2. During the time the modules were not arriving on time, preparing the LAS was very tiring.	4.50	Strongly Agree
4. My LAS preparation for those who chose modular learning requires adequate time and it is stressful.	4.00	Agree
9. Finding the resources, like printed and online, for the LAS is stressful.	3.80	Agree
1. Working with the modality adopted by the DepEd is stressful	3.60	Agree
10. Calling attention to the learners that need to improve their school performance is stressful.	3.60	Agree
3. Limited face-to-face gave me a stressful moment in my teaching.	3.50	Agree
7. Reaching the learners' parents for updates and involvement in school is stressful.	3.50	Agree
8. Working with the paper during the pandemic is stressful.	3.50	Agree
6. Learners' behaviors are stressful to manage.	3.30	Neither Agree nor Disagree
5. Adhering to health protocols in school gives me discomfort and stress	3.20	Neither Agree nor Disagree

Legend: 1.00-1.80 - Strongly Disagree, 1.81-2.60- Disagree, 2.61-3.40- Neither Agree nor Disagree, 3.41-4.20, Agree, 4.21-5.00 Agree  
Overall Mean = 3.70, Verbal Description = Agree

Table 3  
The relationship between teachers' perceptions and stress during the distance learning modality

Variables	Coefficient of Correlation	p-values
Teachers' Perceptions and Stress	$r_s = .515$	.127

\*  $p < .05$ , significant

and 5 belong to neither agree nor disagree, which the WM covers under the level of 2.61–3.40. It gives the statements that the learner's behaviors are stressful to manage and the health protocols implementation are somewhat undecided for them as to which they will favor. The overall mean is 3.70 with the VD of Agree.

Table 3 presents the relationship between the teachers' perceptions and stress. The evidence fails to suggest the rejection of the null hypothesis. Thus, the two variables pose no significant relationship based on the details,  $r(98) = [.515]$ ,  $p = [.127]$ . This explains further that regardless of how the teachers experience stressful moments in the light of the pandemic, their perceptions remain unaffected and they tend to make significant contributions to the improvement of learning despite the adversities being confronted.

As teachers, parents, and children share similar experiences, there are unparalleled chances for collaboration, innovative solutions, and a readiness to learn from others and try new methods (Doucet *et al.*, 2020).

## 7. Conclusions

When the pandemic has horribly affected the department of education's learning delivery, teachers and stakeholders have hardly delivered the learning to its fullest. However, the DepEd was able to strategize a meaningful approach that exhibited a positive impact on the department. These are online, radio-based instruction, and modular mode. The COVID-19 pandemic has given us the chance to set the stage for the introduction of digital learning (Dhawan, 2020). Among those who adopted mechanisms, most divisions opted to embrace the modular due to the internet accessibility that is incompletely available in some places. Besides, it needs a budget that burdens each family having a child in school. For the part of the teachers, it has been shown and proven based on data that these

are stressful delivery in the teaching and learning aspects. On the other hand, they also agree on the perception that the pandemic implies a challenging task to accomplish. However, the inference shows the no correlation between these variables, namely, teachers' perceptions and stress, in the distance learning modality.

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