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# WOES AND WONDERS OF TEACHERS ON THE TEACHING AND LEARNING TRANSITION

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study explored the lived experiences of elementary teachers in navigating the transition between face-to-face and modular teaching modalities. Conducted at Florentino Catalan Elementary School, it examined the instructional shifts before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on challenges faced, technological proficiency, and the pedagogical strategies employed. Six (6) purposively selected teachers participated through in-depth narrative interviews and classroom observations to gather comprehensive insights. Participants also reviewed the transcriptions to ensure data accuracy and credibility of the findings. Data analysis followed a qualitative narrative approach.*

*Findings revealed five emerging themes: (1) Adaptation and Innovation in Teaching Practices; (2) Personalized and Collaborative Learning Approaches; (3) The Evolution and Adaptation of Instructional Tools; (4) Adapting Teaching Strategies to Enhance Student Engagement; and (5) The Importance of Support Systems and Training in Navigating Educational Challenges. The study highlights the teachers' resilience, creativity, and commitment in overcoming the multifaceted challenges of instructional delivery. An intervention plan is proposed to enhance teacher capacity, resource provision, and student learning engagement for a more adaptive and resilient education system.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Teaching Transitions, Modular Learning, Technological Proficiency, Instructional Strategies, Teacher Resilience*

## INTRODUCTION

"Teachers are the backbone of any education system, and their adaptability during crises ensures the continuity of learning." Teachers play an essential role in ensuring that learners continue receiving quality education even during transition periods during crisis. The transition between face-to-face and modular teaching formats, mainly driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, has highlighted significant challenges and revealed numerous research gaps regarding teachers' experiences globally (Akram et al., 2021). Indeed, one major issue is the varying levels of technological proficiency and access among teachers, which significantly impacts their ability to transition smoothly between teaching formats (PLOS ONE, 2021).

Despite the acknowledged benefits, there is a need to be more understanding regarding how teachers develop technology proficiency during the transition period. While it enhances teaching and learning, little is known about the most effective ways to cultivate this skill (Saad and Sankaran, 2020). Furthermore, Durmanz and Kunt (2022) stated that due to the students' learning loss, many teachers need help transforming their instruction using technology, instructional strategies and tools, pedagogy for content delivery, teaching strategies, learners' management, and assessment for learning.

In Germany, notably, findings revealed that inadequate professional development and support for teachers during these transitions have been problematic, with research often overlooking the specific types of professional development that are most effective in preparing teachers for these abrupt changes in teaching and learning (König et al., 2020). The necessity for pedagogical adjustments to suit different teaching and learning formats is another significant challenge, yet there is insufficient research on adaptable, practical strategies across modalities (Hodges et al., 2020).

In the United Kingdom, Kim & Asbury, (2020) reported the emotional and psychological impact of these frequent transitions on teachers has been profound, affecting their job satisfaction and performance. Still, studies focusing on the long-term psychological effects and coping mechanisms are scarce. Maintaining effective learner-teacher interactions in different teaching modalities also remains challenging, and more research is needed to explore best practices for fostering meaningful interactions across face-to-face and modular formats (Ewing & Cooper, 2021).

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In Saudi Arabia, several studies have revealed that many teachers today are so overwhelmed with duties and responsibilities that they frequently need clarification when delineating the boundaries of their roles (Siddiqui & Ahamed, 2021). Furthermore, adapting curriculum and assessment methods to suit different teaching formats has been complex, with a need for comprehensive research on equitable and effective modification strategies (Harris & Jones, 2020). Ensuring equity and inclusion during transitions has been particularly challenging for students from marginalized backgrounds, necessitating more research to understand and mitigate these impacts (Reimers & Schleicher, 2020).

In the Philippines, as in other countries, there is an abrupt transition in teaching and learning, which poses challenges for teachers and students. Javier (2022) found that teachers found it difficult to address all learning gaps due to time constraints. The key issues the teacher should address immediately are the learners' learning gaps in reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. If not addressed, future generations of Filipinos may have lower intellectual capacities and abilities.

Apparently, the transition period of teaching and learning in Palawan, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, faced significant challenges and required substantial adjustments. Studies such as those by Cebu Normal University highlighted issues like limited access to technology, unstable internet connectivity, and the need for strategic actions to ensure learning continuity. Teachers and students struggled with the sudden shift to online and modular learning (Aguhayon, Tingson, & Pentang, 2023).

In addition to the broader educational challenges during the abrupt transition outlined in reports from UNESCO, the World Bank, and the MICS Foundation (2022), teachers in Region V and the National Capital Region face their struggles. These may include limited instructional tools, access to technology, unstable internet connectivity, and inadequate professional knowledge of teachers using applications. With high student-teacher ratios and limited support, educators often find it challenging to meet their students' diverse learning needs, particularly those struggling with literacy and numeracy caused by remote learning. Despite their dedication and hard work, teachers need more training and instructional tools to address these challenges, further exacerbating the issue effectively. As such, addressing the systemic issues affecting both students and teachers is crucial for improving educational outcomes in these regions (UNESCO, 2022; World Bank; MICS Foundation, 2022).

Teachers struggled during the transition, trying to get used to new technologies, supporting students with different needs, finding suitable teaching methods, checking how students were doing from a distance, dealing with limited teaching materials, and having too much work on their plates. These struggles may have impacted their ability to facilitate student learning effectively and contributed to concerns about student performance in areas such as reading and arithmetic (Dargo & Dimas, 2022).

The World Bank (2022) stressed the importance of updating teaching materials, goals, and curriculum guidelines to address teachers' concerns regarding the shift in teaching and learning methods for students. Eadens et al. (2022) suggest that future studies explore how early-grade educators effectively utilize online resources and virtual methods and their general familiarity with technologies. Similarly, Alcoran-Alvarez et al. (2021) propose further research into creating educational strategies that facilitate sharing best practices, encourage interactive technologies, enhance student engagement, and streamline the learning process. These researchers aim to examine teachers' real-world experiences during the transition in teaching and learning due to limitations in existing literature. Addressing these issues and filling these research gaps is crucial for developing more effective and supportive transition strategies for teachers, enhancing educational outcomes, and improving the overall teaching and learning experience.

**Research Questions**

This study primarily aims to explore and thoroughly describe the lived experiences of elementary teachers on the teaching-learning transitions before, during, and after the pandemic. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the teachers' experiences in teaching and learning before, during, and after the pandemic?
2. What is the available support for teachers transitioning from face-to-face to virtual/modular and from virtual/modular to face-to-face?
3. What are the teachers' insights into the teaching and learning transitions?

The objectives of the study aim to provide a structured approach to exploring teachers' experiences, assessing support mechanisms, and capturing insights to inform educational practices and policies in the context of teaching and learning transitions before, during, and after the pandemic. The research examines teachers' classroom experiences before, during, and after the pandemic to find significant patterns and changes and evaluate the administrative direction, technology, and training programs offered as transitional support mechanisms. Documenting teachers' perspectives on the difficulties, achievements, and prospects linked to various modes of instruction provides valuable information for the following pedagogies and learning environments.

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**Significance of the Study**

This study delves into the nuanced experiences of teachers navigating the dynamic landscape of education before, during, and after the pandemic, offering significant insights for various stakeholders, including the Department of Education, school heads, teachers, students, and future researchers.

**Department of Education:** The study provides valuable insights into the importance of diverse and effective teaching strategies aligned with student-centered learning approaches. The Department of Education's need to assist teachers in enhancing instructional tools and teaching strategies is also emphasized. It also emphasizes the importance of policies that encourage digital accessibility and adaptability and new trend training for educators on technology as a teaching and learning tool, which is significant regardless of any other factor for education standards maintenance.

**School Heads:** The school heads have been made to see the importance of leadership in building a supportive and cooperative atmosphere. Headteachers need to understand and provide solutions for their teachers' challenges by giving them the resources they need while supporting them in adapting and innovating. The findings show how principals can foster resilience, creating an enabling environment where teachers feel appreciated, motivated, and supported enough to apply classroom learner-centered teaching strategies effectively.

**Teachers:** The study acknowledges the steadfast commitment of teachers to the academic progress and welfare of their students. It stresses that teachers are key players in promoting learning, urging them to employ various teaching methods involving students actively. The study highlights a need for continuous professional development to improve teaching practices to ensure that teachers acquire the necessary skills to survive in this changing educational system and create an enabling atmosphere that is friendly towards student achievement.

**Students:** The study is critical because it shows that student-centered approaches to learning encourage active participation and independent discovery of knowledge. It shows the importance of adaptable and creative teachers who can meet the various needs of their students, thus creating an environment that supports their academic and personal growth. The findings revealed the need for an enabling environment whereby learners are motivated to explore, question, and discover new things, which leads to their all-round development.

**Future Researchers:** This research will enable scholars to investigate how teachers influence their students' lives and the educational milieu. The paper underlines areas for further studies, like the long-term effects of digital access on learner engagement and the effectiveness of diverse teacher training programs. Future researchers can use these insights to develop creative ways of teaching that would make education systems more resilient and flexible.

Finally, this research contains beneficial points meant for the Department of Education, school heads, teachers, students, and future researchers to underscore the necessity for different instructional tactics, enhancement of pedagogical strategies, and support services from other stakeholders.

**Scope And Limitations of the Study**

In researcher exploration, traversing through the experiences of elementary teachers before, during, and after the tumultuous period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The journey unfolds across school settings, capturing the shifts in teaching and learning methodologies. This narrative study focused on one (1) school, the Florentino Catalan Elementary School, Tagum North District of Tagum City Division. Located at Purok Pagkakaisa, Cuambogan, Tagum City. The teachers of FCES from grade 1 to grade 6 selected one (1) participant from each grade level in this study. It was conducted in the third to fourth quarter of the school year 2023-2024 from December to April 2024.

To extract data, the participants shared their lived experiences about their woes and wonders of teaching and learning before, during, and after the pandemic. Accordingly, the participants in this study underwent virtual and face-to-face In-depth Interviews (IDI), considering their safety. The study relied solely on qualitative narrative data gathered through virtual and face-to-face in-depth interviews. While this approach provided rich descriptions of teachers' experiences before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic, it did not quantitatively examine the extent to which limited instructional resources, technology access, and institutional support affected teaching and learning transitions.

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**Definition of Terms**

**Teachers.** They are professionals who facilitate learning by imparting knowledge, skills, and values to students. They play a crucial role in the educational system by creating an engaging learning environment, assessing student progress, and adapting instructional methods to meet the diverse needs of their students.

**Teaching and Learning Transitions.** This refers to the changes and adjustments in instructional methods, educational strategies, and learning environments in response to various factors such as technological advancements, educational reforms, societal shifts, and unexpected events like the COVID-19 pandemic.

## METHODS

In this study, a narrative research design was employed to explore teachers' narratives and experiences surrounding the transition of teaching and learning. The research design focused on individual teachers as the unit of analysis, with data gathered through in-depth interviews, class observations, and document analysis. Participants were purposefully selected to ensure diverse perspectives. Data analysis using Delve approach, identifying recurring patterns and themes. Ethical considerations and trustworthiness were prioritized, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and securing ethical approval.

**Research Design**

This study utilized a narrative research design, a qualitative method allowing participants to share their stories, thereby providing researchers with insight from an individualistic standpoint. Narrative inquiry delves into and analyzes stories to comprehend the lived experiences, challenges, and insights of teachers throughout the transitions of teaching and learning, particularly before, during, and after the pandemic. The choice of narrative inquiry stems from its capacity to offer a deeper understanding of these stories from the teachers' own perspectives (Wolgemuth and Agosto, 2019). Narratives, akin to life stories, encapsulate lived experiences and the nuances of experiencing them.

For this study, the research design employed is qualitative narrative inquiry. This method involves capturing individuals lived experiences or perspectives through interviews, which are then recorded and organized into chronological narratives. The objective of narrative research is to enhance both lived experiences and documentation by providing profound insights into individual situations into analyzing narratives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Utilizing qualitative narrative research inquiry will systematically gather essential qualitative data about teachers' experiences, enabling the generation of relevant themes and in-depth generalizations (Delve, 2020). Importantly, this approach will guide the researcher in making sense of information and systematically generating core ideas aimed at better understanding teachers lived experiences throughout the transition of teaching and learning, both before, during, and after the pandemic (Creswell, 2013).

**Participants**

The participants selected for the in-depth interviews (IDI) were chosen based on specific criteria targeting teachers who had encountered significant challenges, experiences, and insights during teaching and learning transitions before, during, and after the pandemic. The inclusion criteria included: (1) being a teacher at Florentino Catalan Elementary School during the School Year 2023-2024; (2) having experience teaching students across grades one through six before, during, and after the pandemic era; and (3) being willing to accurately share lived experiences related to teaching and learning transitions.

However, the exclusion criteria involved: (1) teachers who were not employed at Florentino Catalan Elementary School during the specified academic year; (2) teachers lacking experience teaching across multiple grades before, during, and after the pandemic era; and (3) teachers unwilling to provide detailed accounts of their lived experiences in teaching and learning transitions. This method of participant selection was grounded in purposeful sampling, a technique commonly used in qualitative research to identify and select information-rich cases pertinent to the phenomena of interest (Palinkas, 2015). In narrative research, purposeful sampling aids in selecting cases that are most likely to provide data conducive to theory-building and the identification of patterns and themes within narratives. Moreover, the study considered 6 teachers who represented each grade level of Florentino Catalan Elementary School, Tagum North District, Tagum City Division. Authors Creswell (2007), and Creswell and Poth (2016) supported that interviewing six participants could saturate the data needed for the study. In narrative studies, in-depth interviews with participants are often used to collect data.

The decision to use six participants was likely influenced by considerations such as the depth and richness of data required for narrative inquiry, resource constraints, and the practicalities of conducting in-depth interviews with each participant. A sample size of six participants can often yield substantial and meaningful insights, particularly in studies focused on exploring in-depth experiences and perspectives (Guest et al., 2006). Additionally, in narrative research, the emphasis is often on the depth and detail of individual narratives

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rather than on the quantity of participants. This sample size strikes a balance between breadth and depth, providing enough variation to explore different dimensions of the phenomenon under study without overwhelming the researcher with too much data to analyze thoroughly (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004).

**Research Instruments**

The study employed in-depth interviews to gather and record valuable insights from interviewees on a subject. The IDI elicits more information about challenges, insights, and the experiences of the participants (Stone, et al.,2017). These discussions record participants' personal opinions, allowing researchers to gain a diverse range of viewpoints on the same issue. IDI help the researcher understand the experiences and stories of participants in their respective fields (Levitt, et al.,2017).

However, after the validation stage from the experts, a try-out of these questions will be used to draw information about the experiences of the participants. A draft will be prepared and shown to the adviser for refinement. The refined in-depth interview will be pilot tested with one (1) teacher teaching students before, during, and after pandemic in the transition of teaching and learning. The necessary questions are included in the protocol, and the changes will be made based on the results of the pilot test as well as the nature of the answers and information derived from the interviewee. After the pilot test, the researcher refines the minor revision of the questionnaire and double check by the adviser.

To guarantee that the interview approach is organized and fluid, the researcher will create and employ a single set of interviews for teachers in the language of their choice. The Interviewing strategies undergo content validation and pilot testing before being used as a survey questionnaire and evaluated by an expert.

Most notably, to ensure the study's validity, the researcher must check the correctness of the analysis, interpretations and transcription of the obtained data with the participants. Creswell & Miller (2000) propose this technique as a strategy for ensuring the validity of the generated findings. The replies of the various research participants will also be compared to guarantee the validity of the acquired data.

**Data Gathering Procedure**

Approval was obtained from school authorities. Participants received consent forms and were assured of confidentiality. Interviews were conducted in person and recorded. Transcripts were returned to participants for review. Classroom observations followed after interviews.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethical standards were upheld to maintain the integrity of the study and respect participants' rights. Participants joined voluntarily, with informed consent and the right to withdraw anytime. All data were treated confidentially. Member checking ensured accuracy of the narratives.

**Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using Delve's narrative analysis method. Key steps included transcribing interviews, identifying recurring themes, and organizing responses into meaningful patterns. Observations and transcript reviews supported the reliability of findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the major themes that emerged from the narratives of elementary teachers as they navigated the transitions in teaching and learning before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The results are structured around six key themes that highlight their adaptive strategies, collaborative efforts, and personal reflections. These themes are supported by direct quotations from the participants and are discussed in relation to relevant literature to provide deeper insights into their experiences.

**Adaptation and Innovation in Teaching Practices**

The lived experiences of the teachers before, during, and after the pandemic highlight how they innovated and adapted their instructional methods to ensure continuity of learning amid difficult transitions.

Before the pandemic, most teachers relied on structured classroom routines, visual aids, and interactive tools to support traditional face-to-face instruction. For instance, Teacher P (1) integrated routines for discipline, while Teachers P (2) and P (3) focused on engaging students through play, spelling activities, and tangible tools.

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During the pandemic, limitations in access to digital technology led many teachers to shift to printed modules, with some incorporating radios or USBs to facilitate learning. Teachers like P (4) and P (5) did not use online tools due to fairness and health concerns, while others like P (3) and P (5) attempted to maintain engagement using Messenger, audio lessons, and carefully designed activities suited to learner levels.

After the pandemic, teachers resumed face-to-face instruction with renewed strategies. They adjusted lesson delivery based on students' learning gaps. P (1) grouped students based on ability, while P (2) emphasized participation and collaborative work. P (4) shifted to oral assessments to accommodate non-readers, and P (5) continued using hands-on activities to boost comprehension and retention. The focus shifted toward remediation, differentiated instruction, and incorporating technology such as videos and PowerPoint to enhance classroom delivery.

Overall, this theme reflects the teachers' resilience and commitment to adapt their pedagogy, materials, and assessment practices to meet students' needs, despite external limitations.

This theme reveals how teachers continuously adapted their teaching methods and used innovative approaches during the transitions before, during, and after the pandemic. These included home visitations, the use of multimedia tools, and integrating game-based and collaborative learning to address educational disruptions and learning gaps.

Participant (1):
"Most of the time, I really like to integrate routine... I collaborate with parents... After the pandemic... I group students... I'll do home visitation too."
Her approach shows her commitment to structure and individualized support to sustain engagement and improve comprehension and reading levels.

Participant (2):
"I used many games before and after the pandemic... I focus more on group activities than individual tasks."
Bea's student-centered methods underscore the value of collaboration and interaction in enhancing learning.

Participant (3):
"Interactive instructional tools could motivate them to participate... I make sure that the activities I use are suitable."
Cam highlights how tailored tools and careful planning can help maintain focus and improve student understanding.

Participant (4):
"Before transition, I use oral questioning... I focus on oral participation, not written..."
Her methods emphasized experiential learning and oral engagement, providing access to all students regardless of reading level.

Participant (5):
"Before the transition, I used differentiated instruction with interactive games... I printed out materials..."
Eon adapted instruction to match learner needs, integrating visual tools and adjusting techniques to meet learners where they were.

Participant (6):
"Of course, multimedia is engaging... group activities where they re-enact... more hands-on activities."
Fey fostered collaboration and real-world understanding through a mix of digital and experiential approaches.

**Personalized and Collaborative Learning Approaches**
The second theme highlights the shift toward personalized and collaborative strategies to meet diverse student needs and bridge learning gaps exacerbated by the pandemic. Teachers prioritized differentiated instruction, guided practice, oral engagement, and interactive tools.

The theme of personalized and collaborative learning was evident in how teachers tailored their instruction to the varied needs of learners and built learning communities involving students and parents.

Before the pandemic, individualized questioning, differentiated instruction, and rewards systems were commonly used. Teacher P (1) emphasized effort over perfection through one-on-one questions. Teacher P (2) used varied visual materials and motivation systems to

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manage classroom behavior and participation. Teacher P (5) ensured that group activities and manipulatives were suited to different learning styles.

During the pandemic, collaboration shifted primarily to parents, as modules became the main instructional tool.
Participant (1):
"I ensure that every child can participate... I prefer effort over perfection."
Ame focused on cultivating independent learning and critical thinking, empowering students through reflective learning.

Participant (2):
"I utilize instructional tools... I need to go back to the basics... I never followed the curriculum."
P (2) adjusted expectations and content delivery, using creative tactics and scaffolding to reach struggling and advanced learners alike.

Participant (3):
"I adapt my teaching methods... I use PowerPoint and online games... individualized approach..."
Cam's strategies focused on matching tools to learners' readiness levels and reinforcing foundational literacy.

Participant (4):
"I use body language to attract attention... experiential learning... hands-on activities."
Dee championed engaging learners through multiple modalities and assessing comprehension through non-traditional means.

Participant (5):
"I always have active teaching methods... individual approach is effective..."

P (5) maintained a learner-focused approach through close monitoring and family collaboration.
Participant (6):
"I employ a personalized approach... multimedia and PPT... more hands-on approach."
Fey used a variety of instructional strategies tailored to learning levels, leveraging technology and realia to make abstract ideas concrete.

**The Evolution and Adaptation of Instructional Tools**
This theme emphasizes the value of maintaining structured routines and reinforcing foundational skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Teachers created predictable classroom environments and utilized routines to foster student discipline, engagement, and understanding.

The lived experiences of elementary teachers revealed a significant evolution in the use and adaptation of instructional tools across the teaching and learning transition before, during, and after the pandemic. Teachers initially relied on traditional yet effective resources such as tarpaulin papers, printed visuals, manipulatives, and PowerPoint presentations to facilitate hands-on and group activities. As Ame shared, "I print pictures that support my lesson. P (5)

Participant (5):
"There should be proper precautions... Modules are a major instructional tool... Routines, collaborative and explicit teaching was always present in my class."

Participant (6):
"I need to apply management with the help of routine every beginning of the class... I give ample time on reading comprehension and reading speed..."

Both teachers emphasized that routines and structure, along with foundational skill instruction, helped their students remain focused and improved their academic performance during difficult times.

**Adapting Teaching Strategies to Enhance Student Engagement**
Teachers shared that across the transition periods, maintaining student engagement—particularly in reading and foundational skills—was a constant struggle. Before the pandemic, educators like P (1) and P (2) implemented fun, multisensory learning strategies such as games and manipulative tools to introduce the ABCs, numbers, and basic literacy, recognizing the importance of engagement as a foundation for understanding. As P (2) expressed, *"It is easy to find ways to cure non-readers because you see the students and can approach them."*

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During the pandemic, engagement was hampered by distance, lack of resources, and unresponsive learners. P(3) and P(4) both highlighted the frustration of minimal student interaction and parental involvement. *"No students, no intervention, and no assessment,"* P (2) noted. Despite these barriers, teachers like P(5) applied explicit teaching strategies (I do, We do, You do) even remotely, while others focused on home visits and module monitoring to maintain continuity.

After the pandemic, a return to face-to-face revealed significant learning losses and behavioral changes. Students were described as disoriented and unmotivated, often functioning at pre-primary levels despite their grade. As P (3) mentioned, *"I feel pressure on what to do and what to apply—it's hard!"* Teachers leaned heavily on collaborative group activities, individualized instruction, videos, and real-life tasks to rebuild routines and rekindle engagement. Across all participants, there was a strong emphasis on differentiated instruction, hands-on learning, and peer collaboration to bring students back into the learning process.

Teachers highlighted the widespread decline in literacy and basic numeracy following the pandemic and emphasized efforts to reteach foundational skills through fun, engaging, and individualized instruction.
Participant (1):
"I focused on reading... I applied differentiated instruction and collaboration to enhance their engagement."

Participant (2):
"The challenge in reading alone was significant... I focused on their reading; I couldn't understand their reading level."

Participant (3):
"I have to focus on these skills because it is essential in the lower grade to have a big foundation..."

Participant (4):
"Disciplining children again all over again... Their engagement is highly focused due to the fact that they didn't listen attentively, so body language is my best strategy."

Their narratives show an intense focus on literacy, behavior management, and instructional adjustments to reach learners with diverse skill levels.

**The Importance of Support Systems and Training in Navigating Educational Challenges**
This theme covers the critical role of school, community, and parental support during and after the pandemic. It also underscores the importance of professional development, access to teaching resources, and technology training. Teacher narratives revealed that support systems from colleagues, parents, schools, and the Department of Education were vital—though often unequal between learners and teachers. Before the pandemic, training was mostly limited and selective. P(2) commented that seminars were often reserved for "those already known in the division office," though coordinators like P (1) conducted local training sessions.

During the pandemic, training shifted online, focusing on digital tools like Google Meet, Zoom, and Vocaroo. Support materials such as bond papers, modules, radios, and tablets were distributed, though their quality and functionality varied. P (3) humorously noted, *"When we try to open the tablets, they are broken…what a waste!*
Participant (1):
"I had a lot of online training... I trained to use technology online teaching like Google Meet, Zoom..."

Participant (2):
"Plenty of training... to adopt technology... The division always provides something for the teachers."

Participant (3):
"Bond papers, and other school supplies... Parents also supply bond papers..."

Participant (4):
"Parents supported and gave bond papers... supported their children with schooling."

Participant (5):
"We have no books... No donations... Multimedia helps a lot..."

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Participant (6):
"Support is adequate for the learners but lacking for teachers..."
These stories show how critical it was to have both material and emotional support, professional growth opportunities, and collaborative systems to ensure the continuation of quality education.

This theme explores how teachers bounced back from the disruptions of the pandemic through resilience and motivational strategies. They tackled learning gaps, built positive behavior, and re-established engaging classroom cultures.

Participant (1):
"Maintaining discipline and a structured routine... Collaboration of teacher and parent... Home visitation..."

Participant (5):
"I decided to visit my students at home... Focused on basic concepts and skills... assessed their prior knowledge."

Participant (2):
"Fast-tracking was crucial when they returned... Anxiety was present..."

Participant (3):
"We were very resilient... post-pandemic effort was much greater... I feel pressure on what to do and what to apply."
Their persistence, creativity, and adaptability illustrate the vital role of resilience in educational recovery and progress.
These six themes highlight how teachers responded to the evolving educational landscape with empathy, innovation, and resilience, ensuring that learning remained inclusive and effective despite the many challenges they faced.

**Synthesis of Themes with Embedded Participant Narratives**
The lived experiences of elementary teachers during the teaching and learning transitions before, during, and after the pandemic reflect resilience, innovation, and a deep sense of commitment to student learning. Five core themes emerged from the narratives: the evolution of instructional tools, adaptation of strategies, support systems, collaboration with stakeholders, and student-centered interventions. These themes are interwoven with direct participant quotes and supported by relevant literature to elevate the research's credibility and scholarly impact.

Teacher participant (1) embodied a strategic fusion of consistent classroom routines, parent-teacher collaboration, and home visitation. Her narrative illustrates that maintaining structure in class is not only for discipline but also for shaping a learner-centered environment amid disruption. As she explained:
*"I used a routine to set the class's mode… maintaining discipline and a structured approach is crucial with these kinds of learners – the Non-readers and those with behavioral problems."*

Her commitment to visiting students at home for follow-ups represents an adaptive and compassionate response to learning gaps. Research supports this strategy. Brown et al. (2021) emphasize that routines reduce anxiety and enhance learning behavior, while Sheldon and Epstein (2005) highlight that home visits can significantly increase academic success by building stronger family-school connections. P (1) story shows how a teacher's proactive stance can bridge instructional divides when classroom presence is disrupted.
Teacher participant (2) approach was marked by humility and pedagogical clarity—emphasizing foundational concepts and student motivation post-pandemic. His method, centered on assessing prior knowledge and reintroducing core skills like reading and arithmetic, reveals a commitment to ensuring meaningful learning recovery:
*"After the pandemic... oh, it's like going back to basics, right? I assessed their prior knowledge to understand what I should provide."*
*"When students returned, their enthusiasm was palpable… once a child is motivated, learning becomes easier."*

His emphasis on learner motivation is echoed by Connell and Wellborn (1991), who underscore how self-determination and teacher encouragement improve learning engagement. Eon's practical, student-focused techniques align with the recovery-focused pedagogies highlighted by Mokhtar (2018), which advocate for rebuilding learning through individualized assessment and targeted remediation.

Teacher participant (3) story is a powerful account of resilience under extreme educational disruption. Her experience speaks of intense labor, innovative instructional adaptation, and a deep-seated commitment to her students despite overwhelming limitations:
*"I needed to fast-track learning because, although they were Grade 2 students, their learning level was at a Kindergarten level… Anxiety was also present, especially on the first day of school."*

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She implemented grouping strategies and visual behavior management, proving how simple tools can yield powerful results. As Hattie and Clarke (2019) argue, structured group work and feedback loops help address varied student needs while maintaining order. Her candid acknowledgment of setbacks and creative adaptations resonates with Brookhart's (2017) framework on formative assessments, which stresses the need for frequent evaluation and realignment of instruction.

*"Parents provided three to four reams of bond paper every week for the printing of modules and reading materials."* (Ame)
*"No books, no fans, no modules… I bought my own teaching materials… but I continued teaching."* (Eon)

The Review of Related Literature reinforces these themes. Angrist (2022) notes that during global disruptions, creative, remote education thrives only when local communities and governments support educators adequately. Similarly, Bryant et al. (2020) emphasized that sustainable school re-entry depends on holistic preparedness, including mental health support, resources, and classroom infrastructure. The sudden shift in learning environments before, during, and after the pandemic compelled teachers to innovate and adapt their teaching strategies to sustain student engagement. Teachers transitioned from traditional face-to-face instruction to remote modalities, and finally to a blended setup requiring differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, and interactive tools. Participants emphasized the urgency to reengage learners who had regressed due to prolonged isolation.

Teacher P (1) noted the decline in reading levels:
*"Everyone needs to enhance their reading skills… I used fun activities with manipulative tools and games… while they have fun, they learn a lot."*

This reflects constructivist teaching principles where hands-on learning enhances cognition (Carbonaro et al., 2008).
Teacher participant (2) described regressing from Grade 2 to kindergarten-level instruction, emphasizing that:
*"The struggle in reading alone was significant… I am like a kindergarten teacher now. Engagement and collaboration this time had no hassle—very easy and manageable."*

The shift to differentiated instruction and explicit teaching, as emphasized by Tomlinson (2017), enabled teachers to tailor instruction based on students' current levels, providing both remediation and acceleration.

Teacher participant (3) echoed this, balancing traditional explicit instruction with group interaction:
*"I need to cultivate and adapt different teaching and learning strategies… sharing ideas in a group is more effective than working alone."*

These findings mirror Devi (2022), who highlights that learning loss demands innovative, student-centered recovery strategies to re-establish core competencies.

Support systems—school administration, government units, co-teachers, and parents—played a pivotal role in empowering teachers to navigate the uncertainties of teaching transitions. The presence (or absence) of these supports influenced teacher resilience, instructional effectiveness, and emotional well-being.

Teacher participant (1) expressed gratitude:
*"Parents provide me 3 to 4 reams of bond papers every week… the school supported us with resources. I received enough support from stakeholders."*

Conversely, Teacher participant (4) pointed to systemic gaps:
*"Support for children is okay, but for teachers, it's really lacking… I didn't buy anything, hehehe, thanks to VP Sara's directive on decorations."*

Research by the Asia Development Bank (2022) reinforces that teacher training, technical resources, and psychosocial support are essential for effective learning recovery and sustainability in crisis-affected systems.

Teacher participant (6) underscored how family and peers became her strongest allies:
*"Support from my co-teachers, parents, and family is our first priority. The school gave some supplies quarterly… but not always."*
This theme also reflects the findings of Bryant et al. (2020), who stress the necessity of decentralized but coordinated support during school re-openings to ensure safety, continuity, and motivation.

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Teachers became frontline responders to an educational crisis, tasked not only with instruction but also with healing the cognitive and emotional trauma students carried. The post-pandemic classroom demanded a return to foundation skills—reading, writing, arithmetic—accompanied by teacher empathy, resourcefulness, and innovation.

Teacher participant (5) provided a powerful narrative of recovery:
*"After the pandemic, I realized students were struggling not just academically but emotionally… I basically assessed their prior knowledge. Once a child is motivated, learning becomes easier."*

This theme exemplifies resilient pedagogy (Angrist, 2022), where educators leverage flexible strategies grounded in care, assessment, and relevance.

Teacher participant (2) aligned with this:
*"Fast-tracking was crucial when they returned to school… I needed to address reading, writing, and arithmetic which required a long time to fix."*

Their narratives support Ames et al. (2019), who argue for purposive interventions in post-crisis education that prioritize foundational learning, consistent assessments, and community partnership.

Teacher participant (4) shared her strategy:
*"I kept my approach consistent, using short activities and hands-on exploration. Multimedia and PowerPoint were very good—I testify! They learned and were content."*

Such instructional persistence reflects the grounded application of what Braun and Clarke (2013) call "responsive teaching", where evolving student needs guide pedagogical adaptations.

Overarching Insights from the Data
Across all narratives, the importance of instructional tool adaptation, community and parent engagement, and teacher professional support systems emerges as essential in managing the transitions. Teachers universally shared that technology—particularly multimedia tools, PowerPoint presentations, and educational videos—became indispensable, yet these alone could not replace the value of face-to-face instruction.
Stakeholder support played a vital role in empowering teachers. As participants highlighted, training in digital tools and donations from parents, though sometimes unequal, greatly contributed to sustaining learning.

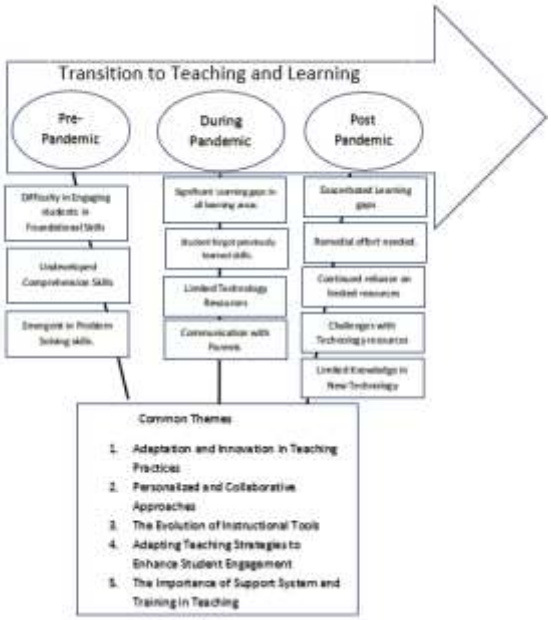


Figure 2 Transition on Teaching and Learning Diagram

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**Summary Explanation of the Conceptual Flow Diagram**
The *Transition to Teaching and Learning Diagram* illustrates the evolving educational landscape across three phases: **Pre-Pandemic**,

**During the Pandemic**, and **Post-Pandemic**. It highlights how existing teaching challenges intensified during the global health crisis and how they continue to shape current classroom practices.

In the **Pre-Pandemic** stage, educators already encountered difficulties in teaching foundational skills, comprehension, and problem-solving. These pre-existing gaps revealed limitations in traditional teaching strategies, which were often ill-equipped to meet the diverse needs of learners.

As schools shifted to remote learning during the pandemic, these foundational issues deepened. Learning gaps widened across all subjects, students struggled to retain previously learned skills, and limited access to technology—especially among disadvantaged communities—further disrupted the continuity of instruction. Communication with parents, vital for distance learning support, also posted significant challenges.

In the **post-pandemic** period, the effects of these disruptions continue to resonate. Remedial efforts are now critical, as learning deficits have become more evident. The education system continues to face resource constraints, with both teachers and students needing further support and training in effectively using educational technologies. Issues such as insufficient digital infrastructure and lack of familiarity with new tools still hinder teaching effectiveness.
The diagram synthesizes these challenges into **five core themes**:

1. **Adaptation and Innovation in Teaching Practices**
2. **Personalized and Collaborative Approaches**
3. **The Evolution of Instructional Tools**
4. **Adapting Teaching Strategies to Enhance Student Engagement**
5. **The Importance of Support Systems and Training in Teaching**

These themes collectively showcase how teachers have responded to these transitions with resilience and creativity. Innovative pedagogical approaches, enhanced use of technology, and strong school-community collaboration have been key in mitigating learning losses and re-engaging students. Professional development and systemic support remain crucial to sustain these improvements.
In essence, the diagram offers a clear visual narrative of the trajectory of teaching and learning across crises, emphasizing that educational recovery is a process requiring adaptability, equity in resources, and continuous support for both educators and learners.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

This study delved into the lived experiences of teachers during the teaching and learning transition of school children before, during, and after the pandemic. The research, involving six (6) teachers from 1 participants unutilized in-depth interview and supplemented by triangulation data from class observations tools and the review of the transcription done by the participants, and came up with intervention program design for schools based on the findings of the study.

The lived experiences of elementary teachers revealed their stories which yielded the following five (5) common themes that capture the essence of educators' experiences during the transition period. These themes revolve around the Adaptation and Innovation in Teaching Practices, Personalized and Collaborative Approaches, The Evolution of Instructional Tools, Adapting Teaching Strategies to Enhance Student Engagement, and The Importance of Support System and Training in Teaching in navigating educational challenges.
In summary from the narratives reveal several key insights into the challenges and responses in education before, during, and after the pandemic. Before the pandemic, teachers like Teacher Cam faced significant difficulties in engaging young students with foundational skills such as reading, writing, and counting, highlighting a pre-existing gap in early childhood education that requires effective engagement strategies. During the pandemic, severe learning disruptions became evident, as noted by Teacher Eon, with previously high-achieving students regressing in their abilities. This underscores the profound and uneven impact of the pandemic in education, particularly in retaining and acquiring essential skills. Additionally, limited technological resources exacerbated the situation. Teachers like Dee and Cam encountered significant challenges due to the digital gap, demonstrating the necessity for equitable access to technology in education.

In response to these challenges, teachers employed innovative strategies to maintain educational continuity. Teacher Cam's use of Messenger and USB radios for lessons exemplifies the resilience and creativity needed to adapt to resource constraints. Furthermore, the narratives underscore the crucial role of support systems from schools, parents, and communities. Teachers such as Dee benefited

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from parental support in providing materials, highlighting the importance of a collaborative approach to education, especially during crises. After the pandemic, the need for significant remedial efforts to address learning losses was evident. Teachers like Eon and Cam had to implement new teaching strategies to re-engage students and bridge the widened learning gaps, necessitating intensive recovery programs.

**Implications**

**Implications for Practice**

The findings of this study have brought several identifications of implications. These implications have been thoroughly drawn based on the results of the study. Henceforth, significant implications are the following:

***Implications for theory.*** The findings of this study affirmed the Constructivism Theory of Vygotsky (1978). The theory explained in the context of teachers that teach on the teaching and learning transition of school children should act as facilitators, guiding students to construct their understanding through active exploration, developing problem-solving skills, and making learners engaged. Schlossberg (1984) highlights transition theory and its benefits, especially in the complex support system of the environments, individual psychological resources, and coping resources. These theories understand the adaptation and innovation in teaching practices, personalized and collaborative approaches, the evolution of instructional tools, adapting teaching strategies to enhance student engagement, and the importance of support system and training in teaching in navigating educational challenges.

***Implications for Practice.*** The implications of these findings are clear. There is an urgent need for enhanced early childhood education programs necessary for strong foundational skills, requiring specialized training for teachers. Equitable access to technology must be prioritized to ensure all students have equal learning opportunities, involving government and private sector partnerships to bridge the digital divide. Professional development programs may focus on training teachers in innovative and adaptable teaching methods, including low-tech solutions and effective multimedia tool integration. Strengthening support systems through strong school-parent-community partnerships is essential to provide critical resources and emotional support. Focused remedial programs post-crisis are necessary to address learning gaps, with a data-driven approach tailored to students' specific needs. Lastly, policymakers must prioritize education, ensuring infrastructure supports both traditional and digital learning environments, with investments in educational technology infrastructure to enhance future resilience.

In conclusion, the narratives of teachers during the pandemic reveal significant challenges but also highlight the resilience and adaptability of educators. The findings underscore the urgent need for improved support systems, equitable access to technology, and innovative teaching strategies to ensure that all students can continue to learn effectively, regardless of circumstances. By addressing these areas, we can create a more resilient and inclusive education system capable of withstanding future disruptions.

***Implications for Future Researchers.*** The findings from this study have several implications for future researchers. First, there is a need to explore further the long-term impact of the pandemic on student learning outcomes and educational equity. Future research may investigate how the gaps identified in foundational skills and overall learning progression have evolved, and what specific interventions have proven most effective in mitigating these impacts.

Additionally, researchers may focus on the efficacy of various teaching strategies employed that could help identify best practices and scalable solutions that can be adapted in different educational contexts, particularly in resource-constrained environments. Another important area for future research is the role of support systems, including the collaboration between schools, parents, and communities. Investigating how these partnerships can be strengthened and sustained beyond crisis periods would provide valuable insights into building more resilient educational ecosystems.

The digital divide remains a critical issue, and future studies may examine the impact of technology access and digital literacy on educational outcomes. Researchers could explore innovative ways to bridge this divide, potentially leveraging public-private partnerships and community-based initiatives. Finally, there is a need for longitudinal studies that track the professional development and adaptive strategies of teachers over time. Understanding how teachers continue to evolve their practices in response to ongoing and future challenges will inform the design of more effective professional development programs and educational policies.

In conclusion, the implications for future researchers may consider a focus on the long-term effects of the transition of learning on education, the evaluation of adaptive teaching strategies, the strengthening of support systems, addressing the digital divide, and tracking the professional growth of educators. These areas of research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how to create a more resilient and equitable education system for all students.

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**Recommendations**

Based on the findings and implications of this study, several recommendations are made to various stakeholders in the educational ecosystem.

**Department of Education (DepEd).** Enhancing the provision of resources and support for both teachers and students, including digital infrastructure, training programs, and mental health resources. Investing in continuous professional development programs that focus on adaptive teaching strategies, integrating technology, and addressing learning gaps is also crucial. Additionally, DepEd should develop policies that support blended learning models and ensure flexibility to adapt to future crises, ensuring no student is left behind.

**Schools.** Ensure equitable distribution of resources, including learning materials and technological tools, to support both online and face-to-face instructions. Fostering strong partnerships with local communities and parents to create a supportive learning environment and implement robust systems for monitoring student progress and providing targeted interventions for those who are falling behind are also recommended. Schools may prioritize classroom improvement to make this area conducive to learning.

**Teachers.** They are encouraged to continue employing and refining innovative teaching methods, such as hands-on activities, collaborative projects, explicit teaching, and the use of multimedia tools to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Engaging in ongoing professional development to stay updated with the latest educational practices and technologies and focusing on personalized learning approaches to address the diverse needs of students, especially those who have experienced significant learning gaps due to the abrupt transition of learning, is essential.

**Students.** They may take an active role in the learning process by participating in various learning activities, seeking help when needed, and utilizing available resources. Developing adaptability and resilience skills to navigate changes in learning environments and overcome challenges, as well as engaging in collaborative learning with peers to enhance understanding and foster a supportive learning community, is also important. Resilient and adaptive to the fast-changing environment and attentive to the technology and the new trend to connect to the world.

**Parents.** They have a pivotal role in creating a conducive home environment for learning by providing necessary resources and support. Staying involved in their children's education poses a greater result. This may be done through communicating regularly with teachers and participating in school activities and initiatives, as well as encouraging and motivating their children to engage actively in their studies and consequently develop a positive attitude towards learning.

Overall, the entire educational community needs to prioritize collaboration and communication. By working together, the Department of Education, schools, teachers, students, and parents can create a more resilient and equitable educational system that can effectively respond to current challenges and future crises.

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