

Teachers' challenges amidst the pandemic: Basis for strategic intervention program

Akol, Welmina ✉

Emilio Aguinaldo College, Philippines (welmina.akol@eac.edu.ph)

Received: 1 August 2022

Available Online: 20 October 2022

Revised: 15 September 2022

DOI: 10.5861/ijrse.2022.b033

Accepted: 4 October 2022

ISSN: 2243-7703

Online ISSN: 2243-7711

OPEN ACCESS



Abstract

This study determined to identify challenges of teachers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and addressed those challenges through interventions. This study employed a sequential exploratory mixed-methods strategy. Qualitative analysis of the responses provided by the teacher participants during the first phase and provided intervention based on the results of survey. This was conducted at Bacoor National High School-Main in Bacoor City during the SY 2021-2022 with 68 participants were chosen using purposive sampling technique. The qualitative data were subjected to theme analysis by the researcher and assigned pseudonyms like T1, T2, and so on to protect their privacy. Their responses were classified and categorized by themes. All the challenges encountered during pandemic were provided intervention. In the quantitative data, the researcher utilized frequency and percentage for the descriptive analysis for the results of the different intervention programs. There were nine (9) themes identified as the challenges encountered by the teachers during pandemic namely: communication, submission of output, authenticity of assessment, connectivity, gadgets/tools, use of technology, parental support, learning environment and financial problem. The different programs were implemented by the school which produced a positive result. Among the programs implemented the Oplan Kalinga, produced highest result. Out of 172 identified unreachable learners, 89 or 51.74% responded and 83 or 55.66% % were increased the performance.

Keywords: teachers' challenges, pandemic, strategic intervention program

Teachers' challenges amidst the pandemic: Basis for strategic intervention program

1. Introduction

The world today is in the risk of a COVID 19 pandemic, with cases of infections and death doubling up to millions and thousands by the day, the education sector is in a dilemma. Education is one of the sectors hardest hit by the COVID-19 lockdown. Nevertheless, amidst this unprecedented situation. All school remains strong to its unwavering support to the advocacy of the Department of Education that is to ensure the continuity of education to its transition towards the new normal. Shifting strategy from face to face to remote learning using the power of technology. Thanks to technology, teachers are still able to continue teaching and students don't lag but many educators face new challenges.

Education is very important to everybody. The Department of Education, true to its commitment of providing quality basic education for all, aims that no child will be left behind. (Act. 2010) Education plays a vital role in shaping a community. It gives a child the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to meet the challenges, overcome obstacles, and become a productive member of the society. And in times of challenges and difficulties, education must continue. And continue to be steadfast in our commitment to carrying out the fundamental mandate of providing our children with a quality foundational education. We will use every available tool to provide our students with high-quality education, with the help of the government, the Department of Education's oversight, and adherence to all DOH-established health regulations. Teachers must be able to condition all instructional components, including instructional methods, learning media, teaching time, and the application or platform to be used, as they are the front lines in the implementation of distance learning. It is difficult for teachers as well as students to make the switch from face-to-face instruction to online learning. There were numerous hurdles to overcome. Unknowingly, the learners and their parents/guardians may have been encouraged to choose the most expedient method of passing outputs due to the concept of "academic easiness" and the nature of distance learning. There is some evidence that some learning is occurring, but the emergence of apps, the free availability of some answer keys and Google searches, and the occasionally glaring plagiarism raise questions.

This is made more difficult by the abundance of documentation requirements, which appear to question the mentor's attempts to impart knowledge using constrained means. The tools (gadgets and dependable internet connection) and financial limitations among the students and parents also play a crippling role for the blended learners. Both sides of the modular learners' experience frustration. The teacher is not allowed to talk as much as they would want because they must wait for specific inquiries before they can clarify or explain anything. The truth is that students rarely ask questions that can benefit themselves, even in chat groups set up for that purpose. Instead, they simply respond to teacher questions with emojis. Then, too many people just take the easiest route and find the answers. It's possible that not all the parents or guardians who are supposed to be guiding them will be available or even able to understand the modules and the activities that need to be completed.

Two methods of learning delivery were used at Bacoor National High School- Main: blended distance learning and modular distance learning. Based on the realistic experience of our teachers and learners and on the feedbacks from parents, teachers, and learners, out of 7516 learners 16.93 % or 1272 learner from grades 7 to 10 belong to struggling learners. This figure is quite alarming as the school stand by the principle "No child shall be left behind" especially in this time that extra support shall be extended to them.

During this time of pandemic, several studies have been done to describe the teaching-learning process (e.g., Moralista & Oducado, 2020; Rasmitadila Aliyyah, et. Al, 2020; Lapada et al., 2020; Chin et al., 2022; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho 2020; del Castillo, 2021; Niemi & Kuosa, 2020). While in the study of Barrot et al., (2021) revealed that the COVID-19 pandemic had the greatest impact on the

quality of the learning experience and students' mental health. In their study find out also that their greatest challenge was linked to their learning environment at home, while their least challenge was technological literacy and competency.

Literatures on teaching in new normal offered mixed results. In the study of Atmojo and Nugroho (2020) noted that the absence of planning and preparation makes online learning ineffective. Rasmita Aliyyah et al. (2020). On the other hand, Niemi & Kuosa (2020) continued to view it as successful based on the technology's readiness in accordance with the national humanist curriculum, as well as the support and cooperation of all stakeholders, including the government, schools, teachers, parents, and the community.

Given the varied perspectives from the existing literature, it seems appropriate to think about how the teaching-learning process operates in this period of epidemic. Despite being aware of the pandemic's presence and implications on the teaching and learning process, most teachers still choose in-person learning to distant learning (Lapada et al., 2020).

In terms of the execution of teaching-learning process, teachers believe that conducting distance learnings is impersonal and lack of feelings(emotions) and it encourages dishonesty among learners, (Moralista & Oducado 2020). The same is true with the study of Niemi & Kuosa (2020) as teachers complain about the non-authentic interaction and a lack of the spontaneity that in-person teaching provides. Also, factors like instructional strategies, challenges, support, and motivation of teachers emerged to be greatly affecting the education landscape this time (Rasmitadila Aliyyah, et. al, 2020)

For teachers teaching online, readiness emerged to be one of the reasons why they do not side with online teaching. Teachers do not have rigid trainings and only few have stable internet connection (Moralista & Oducado, 2020; Muthmainnah et al., 2021). Another, the length of teaching experience and specialization and geographic location can also be a factor as Lapada, et. al (2020) revealed that these are correlated to readiness to distance learning education. Although teachers quickly learned how to use technological platforms, but interaction through it was not of as high quality (Niemi & Kuosa, 2020).

On the other hand, learners also experience difficulties. In Niemi & Kuosa's (2020) study, students expressed weariness and severe workload complaints. Some of them became disinterested. Over time, these challenges persisted. These present significant issues since the lack of interaction and the abrupt shift in environment have a negative impact on the learners' own learning process (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020). Additionally, in the study by Tuson, et al. (2021), the lack of internet/device access by students and teachers' lack of expertise with distant learning were cited by teachers as the biggest issues. Inadequate learning materials, power outages, hazy lesson objectives, too many activities in a lesson, a lack of teacher scaffolds, poor peer communication, conflicts with home obligations, a poor learning environment, financial issues, physical health issues, and mental health issues are also included. Toraman and Korkaz (2020). With these challenges, researchers recommend continued support and training to adapt in the new normal in the higher education landscape and as they embrace the instructional challenges (Moralista & Oducado, 2020).

This study was guided with the theory of social learning by Albert Bandura, which emphasizes the importance of observing, modelling, and imitating the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Social learning theory considers how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behavior. This theory provides authors with most of the formatting specifications needed for preparing electronic versions of their papers.

1.1 Purpose of the research

The study was conducted to identify the challenges of teachers in the delivery of their instruction and provide possible intervention to the problems being encountered. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following sub – problems:1. What is the profile of the respondents with respect to learning area and modality? 2.

What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in implementing the distance learning modality? 3. What will be the proposed interventions of school to cope with the challenges experienced by the teachers and the learners? 4. How effective are the proposed interventions is divided using the numbered sections. Authors should divide the manuscript into clearly defined and numbered sections. Second level section numbering is done automatically; following the upper level's number. Use this numbering also for internal cross-referencing: do not just refer to the text. Any subsection should be given a brief heading.

2. Methodology

This study employed sequential exploratory mixed method research design. The exploratory design begins with the collection and analysis of qualitative data to build subsequent quantitative data (Creswell 2014). This design was used in this study to analyze the qualitative data from the answers of the teacher participants in the first phase and then used the results for the proposing interventions. The results of the proposed interventions were then analyzed quantitatively. To corroborate the data gathered the researcher utilized focus group discussion with the four-grade chairman during the retrieval and submission of output following the IATF protocol. This study employed mixed method analysis. The researcher used thematic analysis for the qualitative data. The participants were given pseudonyms to hide their identity. They were named Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and so on. Their answers were coded and grouped into themes. This study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire which was validated by the experts. The questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions about the profile of the respondents and challenges that the teachers experienced in this new learning delivery. The researcher employed open-ended questions via google forms and the data gathered was tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted through thematic analysis. A focus group discussion was also done with the four chairmen to corroborate the answers of the respondents about the challenges encountered. The researchers followed the research ethical principle and guidelines. The researchers sought permission to conduct the study. The researchers also sought permission from the parents and made sure that the data being collected from the participants would be treated with high confidentiality and would be kept in a safe storage. The participants were reminded that they were free to withdraw anytime as the participation to this study is voluntary. The conduct of this study did not interfere or interrupt classes. Gathering of data undergone two phases. The first phase was administered an open-ended question to the teachers. The administration of questionnaire was done electronically through google forms. The second phase gathered the quantitative data from the proposed interventions. Teams were formed to facilitate each proposed intervention. And to cross validate and corroborate the data gathered, focus group discussion was used with the four-grade chairman following the IATF protocol. The researcher utilized frequency and percentage for the descriptive analysis for the results of the different intervention programs

Participants of the study - The participants in this study were teachers of Bacoor National High School-Molino Main during the school year 2022-2023. The participants were selected through purposive sampling. There were 68 teacher participants who answered the survey.

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents with Respect to Learning Area

Learning Area	<i>F</i>	Percentage
Filipino	12	17.65
English	8	11.76
Mathematics	9	13.24
Science	12	17.65
AP	9	13.24
TLE	7	10.29
MAPEH	7	10.29
EsP	4	5.88

Table 1 presents the profile of the respondents with respect to learning area and modality. The respondents consist of 12 or 17.65% handling Filipino subject, 8 or 11.76% English, 9 or 13.24% Mathematics, 12 or 17.65%

Science, 9 or 13.24% AP, TLE and MAPEH were both consist of 7 or 10.29 % and 4 or 5.88% handling EsP.

Research instruments - This study employed mixed method analysis. The researcher used thematic analysis for the qualitative data. The participants were given pseudonyms to hide their identity. They were named Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Teacher 3and so on. Their answers were coded and grouped into themes. This study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire which was validated by the experts. The questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions about the profile of the respondents and challenges that the teachers experienced in this new learning delivery. The researcher employed open-ended questions via google forms and the data gathered was tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted through thematic analysis. A focus group discussion was also done with the four chairmen to corroborate the answers of the respondents about the challenges encountered.

Ethical Consideration - The researchers followed the research ethical principle and guidelines. The researchers sought permission to conduct the study. The researchers also sought permission from the parents and made sure that the data being collected from the participants would be treated with high confidentiality and would be kept in a safe storage. The participants were reminded that they were free to withdraw anytime as the participation to this study is voluntary. The conduct of this study did not interfere or interrupt classes.

Data Collection - Gathering of data undergone two phases. The first phase was administered an open-ended question to the teachers. The administration of questionnaire was done electronically through google forms. The second phase gathered the quantitative data from the proposed interventions. Teams were formed to facilitate each proposed intervention. And to cross validate and corroborate the data gathered, focus group discussion was used with the four-grade chairman following the IATF protocol.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized frequency and percentage for the descriptive analysis for the results of the different intervention programs

3. Results and Discussion

Research question 1. *What is the profile of the respondents with respect to learning area and modality used?*

Table 2

Profile of the respondents with respect to learning area and modality used?

Learning Area	F	Percentage
Filipino	12	17.65
English	8	11.76
Mathematics	9	13.24
Science	12	17.65
AP	9	13.24
TLE	7	10.29
MAPEH	7	10.29
EsP	4	5.88
Total	68	100.0
Modality	F	Percentage
Modular	34	50.0
Blended	34	50.0
Total	68	100.0

Table 2 presents the profile of the respondents with respect to learning area and modality. The respondents consist of 12 or 17.65% handling Filipino subject, 8 or 11.76% English, 9 or 13.24% Mathematics, 12 or 17.65% Science, 9 or 13.24% AP, TLE and MAPEH were both consist of 7 or 10.29 % and 4 or 5.88% handling Esp. In terms of modality, there were 34 or 50% Modular and 34 or 50% blended teachers a total of 68 or 100% respondents.

Research Question 2 - What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in implementing the distance learning modality?

Table 3

Challenges encountered by the teachers in implementing the distance learning modality

Code	Statements	Theme
T19	There is no contact with the parents learners.	Communication
T2, T28	Lack of communication with the parents	
T8, T15, T21, T25	One of the challenges that I encountered is the difficulty on how to reach out students because even I tried to reach them out through messenger and text & calls through cellphone/phone, still they are not complying on the task that I told them to do and ended up getting low & failing grades	
T1, T3 T6, T11	Some students are not joining the GC for the instructions on what to do and what to answer and some cannot be reached	
T30	they are accommodating in some of my feedbacks about their child”.	
T7.T18 T49	It is hard to follow-up the students especially when the guardians are not cooperative”. Despite of this, teachers believe that some of these are parents do not really mean to not communicate with the teachers.	
T5, T33	Some parents don't respond to the text messages sent	
T31	There are times where parents are the ones who respond to their children's modules	
T24	Hard to communicate with the students	
T44	Unreachable students	
T35	Reaching students, and communicating with them their incomplete task	
T7, T56	One of the most challenging sequences I encountered is that many students can't be able to communicate with me regards to their unsubmitted output even I already send messages through Gmail/chats	
T23	The number given cannot be reached, others lack of 1 digit.	

T10,T36,	Parents are working in other places	Parental Support
T 41, T 51	Lack of time of parents to assist their children	
T 42	Lack of parental support	
T55	Not all parents have the desire and ability to support their children in their studies.	
T 29	Some parents lack of the ability to teach their children	
T17	Students who do not have parents/guardians to assist them in studying.	Learning Environment
T31	There is no proper space for learning at home. I cannot focus and concentrate.	
T4	I have small house so difficult during class hours.	
T14	There are barriers while attending online class	
T47, T53	Limited space/noisy	
T20	My students have financial problem due to pandemic so, they have no load	Financial related problems
T32, T26	My students do not have financial assistance for the internet load that they needed for the online class	
T48	No Enough load to view the messages /task.	

Theme 1: Communication

As face-to-face learning is prohibited this time, teaching, and learning process has become a challenge especially in terms of communication. On communication with learners, the main challenge emerged is the unresponsiveness of learners to the teachers' calls and messages. Out of 68 respondents ,24 or 35.29% teachers encountered challenges in terms of communication.

Teachers 8,15,21 and 25 answered: “One of the challenges that I encountered is the difficulty on how to

reach out students because even I tried to reach them out through messenger and also text & calls through cellphone/phone, still they are not complying on the task that I told them to do and ended up getting low & failing grades". Even the teachers and learners have a Facebook group chat, there are learners who ignore messages. Teacher 1,3,6,11 ,28,42 said: "Some students are not joining the GC for the instructions on what to do and what to answer and [some] cannot be reached". Other teacher said that the contact number given cannot be reached and other incomplete number (T23) while in other teachers like T19, T2, T24, T28, and T44 said "There is no contact with the parents, lack of communication with the parents and unreachable students/ hard to communicate with the students

In case of the communication of teachers to parents, there are parents that are responsive and working hand in hand with the teacher just like the case of Teachers 4,9,14,20,27,32and 40 who said: "they are accommodating in some of my feedbacks about their child". However, there are parents who are not responsive as Teachers 7,18, 49 answered: "It is hard to follow-up the students especially when the guardians are not cooperative". Also, in the case of T7 and T56 said "One of the most challenging sequences I encountered is that many students can't be able to communicate with me with regards to the unsubmitted output even I already text them, send messages via Gmail. And in some instances, like T31 said that "There are times where parents are the ones who respond to the children's module during class hour.

Despite of this, teachers believe that some of these are parents do not really mean to not communicate with the teachers. as Teachers 5 and 33 said: "Some parents don't respond to the text messages sent. They probably don't have load, or they are busy". Same with Teachers 10,29,36,41,51 and 55 who shared that when asked the learner of their parents: "The learners' reason out that their parents have work". The findings of this study supported by the study of Castroverde (2021) that the contact numbers given by the students are difficult to contact and sometimes they give inactive phone numbers that create problems in communicating with them. This also happens with the interaction between parents and teachers. There are also parents who are not responsive to the queries of the teachers and there are also inactive contact details given by the parents that compromise the scheduled time in the distribution and retrieval of the modules.

Theme 2: Submission of Outputs/Tasks

Since movement in quarantine periods is limited, teachers had a challenge in terms of submission of outputs. The teacher participants had the same experience. Teachers T 41, T43, T58 said: "Most of the students do not pass their outputs on time. Some of the students pass their outputs without answers and some students do not pass any outputs at all". Teacher T6, T46, T 52 and T 59 said: "Most of the outputs were late and most of the students don't do their task." Teachers 61 and 68 said: "some students do not comply in some worksheets and weekly home learning plan" and lot of missing output. So, teachers hard to get their output like T5 and T58 said "Difficulties in collecting output. which is a big burden to teacher like T50 said "Very stressful not only in collecting but also in checking and recording the outputs. While in the case of T9, T27 and T40 said "They are accommodating in some of my feedbacks to their child's output.

Theme 3: Authenticity of Assessment

With the situation of the teaching-learning process, the authenticity of the assessment is being questioned. Teachers 13, and 45 said: "It is a big question mark if the answers to all activities given to the student was answered by them." Teacher 21 and 22 answered: "Some of the submitted outputs were copied and pasted from google. Students also can share their answers to others." This is true because you do not see them face-to-face. As Teacher 12 and 64 said "The challenge that I am facing right now in this LDM (Modular) is that it is hard in this time of pandemic because you do not see, and you do not know your learners personally. Same with T26 said "In modular, there's no proof if the students are the one answering the task given. Some teachers said "The answers are copied on the answer key at the back of their module like T16, T19 and T34. So, in this time of pandemic, we can never say we can produce quality students and quality education even we did our best but still there's a big question mark in our mind.

Theme 4: Gadget/ Tools

Teachers underscored the importance of tools and internet in this new learning set-up. Teacher 37 and 43 and 63 replied to the question: In as much as I want to give my best in teaching my learners and utilized teaching strategies for them, it is difficult for them to follow the lessons because of the lack of gadgets, more so that I am in a modular modality”. Teachers 50,65 ,67 said “(Not all parents or students have gadgets. If they do have one, they are sharing it with their siblings)” Teachers 37, 39 and 67 said: “I’m struggling in monitoring my students because some of my students do not have cellular phones to use.” According to her students T63 said that “My gadget in not upgraded, it’s only basic phone. So, this means they cannot see all the tasks given especially if there are videos or pictures or need to download lessons.

Theme 5- Connectivity

Connection is very important and essential in this time of pandemic since the education today is distance learning. But this is big challenge to our learners and teachers if we do not have internet connection or even, we have internet connection we experienced problem also like T14, T17, T29, T47, T51 and T63 said “They have unstable internet connection or poor internet connection like T 19, T48, T61, T63 and T66. In the case of T7, T22 and T53 said “There are times in which internet connection is down and there are also days in which there are power interruption”.

Theme 6- Use of Technology

We are living in the world of technology today wherein it is a major factor influencing education today. Teachers need to be literate of using technology and in this time of pandemic the transition of education from face to face to distance learning is really a big challenge not only in the part of students as well as teachers. In this study, the researcher find out that out of 68 respondents, there were (10) ten or 14.71% teachers who have encountered problem in using technology , which is reflected to the answers of Teachers 2,13 and 36 said “ As teacher, I have limited knowledge on different application”, same with T62 said “ My knowledge in technology is quite limited” On the other hand, T32 and T50 said, “ Mismatched of applications with the students”, So it’s very challenging for the teachers and students.

While T57 said “I don’t know how to use different platforms” same with T62 said” “lack of knowledge and training in the use of technology. Therefore, to solve this problem, teachers need to capacitate them on using technology and the result of this study is similar to the study of Hollebrands,(2020) stated that teachers must know how and when to use technology which, when used appropriately, is an important tool in the classroom. And according to the “ The National Literacy Trust “ Picton (2019) found out that most teachers supported using technology but cited lack of training as the major barrier. It’s almost a quarter (23.3%) had no training in using technology in literacy teaching.

Theme 7- Parental Support

The strongest factor to improve the academic performance of learners is the support of parents. Based on the study of Shahzad, (2020) there is a significant association among parental support and student’s academic progress. Students showed higher academic performance whose parents were more supportive and involved in academic activities as compared to those whose parents were less supportive.

In this research study, the researcher found out that there were 8 teachers out of 68 or 11.76% had encountered problems on parental support like T41 and 51 said “lack of time of parents to assist their children, T10 and T36 said “Parents are working in other places”. Other teachers said like T29 and T55 that “Some parents have lack of the ability to teach their children, “Not all parents have the desire and ability to support their children in their studies”. And T17 said” Students have no parents /guardians who will assist in their studies. Online schooling system with parental support guidelines could help in improving the bond between children and their parents. The findings corroborate to the result of the study of Dangle & Sumaoang (2020) showed that

one of main challenges that emerged is students struggle with self-studying, and parents' lack of knowledge to academically guide their children.

Theme 8 - Learning Environment

Learning environment is very important in the educative process. Most teachers and students preferred classroom as the best place for studying and productive but in our case today, the home is their learning environment in conducting classes whether modular or online. Now, teachers and students experienced a problem with it, out of sixty-eight (68) respondents 5 teachers or 7.35% had a problem on learning environment like T47 and T53 said "Limited space/noisy", other teachers said, "There is no proper space for learning at home, I cannot focus and concentrate". In the case of T14 said "There are barriers while attending online class" while T4 said "I have small house so difficult during class hours".

Learning environment can be a significant factor in the success of learning, the lesser the distractions, the higher the focus and information retention. It must be conducive for learning, well lighted and ventilated to improve or enhance their performance. This time of pandemic, through the directives of the Department of Education (DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2020) to find ways for learning to continue amidst the threat and uncertainties brought by COVID-19 pandemic and that is through home learning and the shifting of f2f classes to online learning which is conducted at home had a big challenge in the part of learners, teachers, and parents.

Theme 9 - Financial Related Problems

Covid 19 pandemic had a great impact on economy and education, so many people experienced problem on financial because of continuous rising of infected people that many cannot work or lose their jobs. To this situation the education of learners are affected, out of sixty -eight respondents, four (4) teachers or 5. 88% experienced this as in the case of T20 said "My students have financial problem due to pandemic, so they cannot afford to buy gadgets and load, other teachers said like T32 and T26 "My students do not have financial assistance for the internet load that they needed for the online class" T48 said "No enough load to view the messages/task in the group chat"

And based on the focus group discussion with the four grade chairmen during the retrieval and submission of outputs, all the nine (9) themes that gathered were true to all grade chairmen and they said " Ma'am all of us experienced those problems, when I asked and monitor them in our gc/ messenger, all their answers were the same like unstable internet connection, problem in submission of output due to unreachable learners, parents did not respond to the text/messages, financial problem and there are teachers find difficulty in using technology. So, what we need Ma'am is how can we help them, what intervention will be given?"

Through the data gathered by the researcher the following intervention were planned and introduced to solve the problems encountered by the teachers.

Research question 3. What will be the proposed intervention to cope with the challenges experienced by the teachers?

The following intervention were introduced:

On Communication - Communication between learners and teachers was the major challenge in this new normal set-up. To address the communication gap, Oplan Kalinga was launched. Oplan Kalinga aimed to reach learners who were not reachable. These are learners who did not respond to the teachers at all. Hence, their parents were sent letters thru the barangay officials. Some were invited over to the barangay office to talk with the proponents and relay the message of the advisers.

Table 4*Number of Unreachable Learners per Grade Level*

Grade level	Number of learners	With response		No response		Promoted		NLPA		Withdraw		Transferred out	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
7	96	46	49.82	50	52.08	35	36.35	30	31.25	7	7.29	0	0
8	16	9	56.25	7	43.75	9	56.25	0	0	1	6.25	1	6.25
9	29	15	51.72	14	48.28	19	65.52	2	69	1	3.45	1	3.45
10	31	19	61.29	12	38.71	20	64.52	10	32.26	2	6.45	2	6.45
Total	172	89	51.74	83	48.26	83	55.66	42	33.13	11	6.4	4	2.33

The table shows that there were 172 identified unreachable learners- 96 from Grade 7, 16 from Grade 8, 29 from Grade 9 and 31 from Grade 10. Through the said Oplan, 89 or 51.74% of the learners were reached through the help of the barangay officials. This comprises 46 or 47.92% from Grade 7, 9 or 56.25% from Grade 8, 15 or 51.72% from Grade 9 and 19 or 61.29% from Grade 10. It should be noticed that Grade 7 learners had the least percentage or response rate. There were 83 or 55.66% learners saved from dropping out and passed for the first quarter. This was comprised of 35 or 36.35 % from Grade 7, 9 or 56.25% from Grade 8, 19 or 65.52 % from Grade 9 and 20 or 64.52 % from Grade 10. However, there were a total of 83 or 48.26% learners who did not respond to the letter sent to them thru the barangays. They either gave wrong address or phone numbers. These will be contributed no longer participating in learning activities. Based on this Oplan Kalinga results revealed that it has a positive effect on the performance of the learners. At present situation, this program is continuous up to the last quarter of classes.

On Submission of Output - Since teachers identified non-submission or late submission of learners of outputs. Oplan Pasabay, Pasakay and Drop-Box were proposed. In these Oplans, parents need not go to the school to submit their outputs. They just can drop off the finished outputs to the drop box in barangay halls. The drop boxes were then picked-up by the Oplan project coordinators.

Table 5*Number of Learners in Oplan Pasakay at Pasabay and Dropbox*

Grade Level	No. of Learners	Passed		Not responsive		NLPA	
		f	Percentage (%)	f	Percentage (%)	f	Percentage (%)
Grade 7	28	24	85.71	4	14.29	0	0
Grade 8	8	4	50	4	50	0	0
Grade 9	10	6	60	3	30	1	10
Grade 10	7	1	14.29	2	28.57	4	57.14
Total	53	35	66.04	13	24.53	5	9.43

Table 5 presents the number of learners in Oplan Pasakay/Pasabay and Dropbox. The table shows that 53 learners were not able to go to school to submit their outputs. This was comprised of 28 learners from Grade 7, 8 learners from Grade 8, 10 learners from Grade 9 and 7 learners from Grade 10. Oplan Pasakay and Pasabay and Dropbox helped these learners to submit their outputs thru the barangays. From these number of learners, 35 or 66.04% learners were passed in the first quarter. This number was made up of 24 or 85.71% learners from Grade 7, 4 or 50% learners from Grade 8, 6 or 60% learners from Grade 9 and 1 or 14.29% learner from Grade 10. However, there were still 13 learners who were not responsive and 5 no longer participating in school. This means that this Oplan Pasakay/Pasabay and Dropbox had a positive effect on the learners' performance.

On Authenticity of Assessment - Assessment of student learning is the process of gathering and evaluating information on what students know, understand, and can do to make an informed decision about the next steps in the educational process. Whether it is given synchronously or asynchronously in online class, still there is a question in the mind of teachers if the students are one answering on it, or do they really understand the lesson same with the modular learners and this was a challenge to teachers. So, the school head together with the head teachers and master teachers agreed to have a unified rubrics on how to check the output submitted by the

learners and attached in their WHLP their quizzes every week, summative test every two weeks and performance task. Students need to have a reflective journal every week signed by the parents and attached the feedback of parents and learners. Then, there is a monitoring tool for assessing what topic or competency is not mastered by the learners. Students were provided an intervention via online for blended modality and additional activity sheets for modular. Still, we cannot assure the 100% authenticity of assessment. We are focusing on the feedback of students and parents. That is one way of helping students if they learn or not. The strategy being used by the school is the same with what Guskey said in their education week magazine that when it comes to assessments, they focus on feedback of student instead of a score or grade. In this way, we can help the learners for what competency is not achieved.

On Connectivity - For the teachers, the school upgrade the internet connection in the online building and constructed a multimedia room. And for the learners the school launched the Project ALL- Adopt Learners Load. This project is only to those less fortunate learners that has no capability to buy load that they will be given load per week that will be used in communicating with the teachers.

On Gadgets and Tools - The LGU provided grades tablets for grades 8 to 10 learners to be used in their classes. The module, task, test, and quiz were installed already in the tablet aside from they have a copy of module if in case they have a power interruption.

On Parental Support - For learners who has no parental support, teachers advise them to have a tutorial every Friday. The school initiated the Online tutorial, Project Turo Ko, Gabay Mo, wherein this program is for modular learners to enhance their learning in the least mastered competencies. This project is still on going and true to all grade levels.

On Using Technology - Since this is a problem of teachers based on the survey, they need assistance, the school with the help of learning development coordinator and SLAC coordinator conducted SLAC for limited teachers who need assistance of using technology in teaching. Also, the school is planning to have an INSET- In service training for teachers will be conducted during academic break about upskilling of teachers on how to make video assisted lesson, TV -based programs, scriptwriting and editing as support materials for learners especially to the least mastered competencies. Based on the evaluation survey regarding the conducted SLAC, sixteen (16) teachers undergone assistance of using technology in teaching and out of sixteen (16) teachers, fifteen (15) or 93.75% said that they were "very satisfied" on SLAC session, they learned a lot, refresh their mind on how to use the different apps, how to use excel in computing grades and making interactive power point presentation. Only one teacher or 6.25% said he is "satisfied". All in all, 100% or 16 teachers said "they will use all the learning in teaching. Therefore, having knowledge in technology can influence on student's performance

On Learning Environment - Based on the survey, few teachers have problem on this, so, the school suggested or advise teachers, thy can conduct their online class in school and to the learners experiencing that, the teacher advised the learners to seek for a place that he /she will feel comfortable, and if the students experienced disconnected, just reconnect again and there is a buffer hard copy module to study. Learning environment is a needed for the learners for it helped to improve their performance. Research has shown that an engaged learning environment increases students' attention and focus, promotes meaningful learning experiences, encourages higher levels of student performance, and motivates students to practice higher-level critical thinking skills. Based on the research study of Usman, et al., (2019) revealed that learning environment plays a significant student academic performance.

On Financial Problem - This is a problem today because of pandemic many people lose their jobs, so the education of their children is affected. To help learners having financial problem or the less fortunate learners, the school conducted school pantry wherein they were giving basic foods that they need, assists/ have a sponsor them for financial assistance through GPTA and the LGU.

Research Question 4. How effective are the proposed interventions?

Based on the results of the survey and the conducted intervention program given have positive effects on addressing the challenges of the teachers and the learners amidst the pandemic.

Summary of Findings - This study attempted to identify challenges of teachers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and addressed those challenges through interventions. There were two phases of the study. In the first phase, the challenges of the teachers and the learners were identified through an open-ended question. The results of the survey questionnaire served as the basis for interventions. The second phase of the study is the implementation of the proposed interventions. Each proposed intervention was rolled out as school projects. There were nine (9) themes identified as the challenges encountered by the teachers during pandemic namely: communication, submission of output, authenticity of assessment, connectivity, gadgets/tools, use of technology, parental support, learning environment and financial problem. Then different programs were implemented by the school which produced a positive result on the first quarter. In Oplan Kalinga, out of 172 identified unreachable learners, 89 or 51.74% responded. They communicated with the advisers. And out of 89 learners who responded, 83 or 55.66% % were passed in quarter one. In Oplan Pasakay, Pasabay and Oplan Drop box, 53 learners were identified to be having difficulty submitting outputs. With these figures, 35 or 66.04% were passed in the first quarter. In using technology, SLAC was conducted that shows positive effect based on the evaluation survey stated that 93.75% or 15 teachers out of 16 teachers were very satisfied. For other challenges encountered by teachers, intervention program was also introduced.

4. Conclusions

This study concludes that communication and submission of outputs of learners are the major challenges of the learners and the teachers. Oplan Kalinga and Oplan Pasabay, Pasakay and Dropbox, have positive effects on addressing the challenges of the teachers and the learners amidst the pandemic.

4.1 Recommendations

This study recommends the following:

- The interventions should continue to help teachers and learners have a better communication and for learners to be able to submit their outputs.
- There should be a close monitoring and evaluation of the interventions. It may be done monthly or quarterly in a regular basis.
- The study may be replicated considering other challenges of teachers and learners.

Acknowledgment - The researcher would like to thank our Almighty God for the wisdom, power, and strength, without Him this research study will not be possible. Deepest and sincerest gratitude and inspiration are given to the following person who in one way or another contributed to the success of this undertakings: Dr. Norita Encisa Manly, for the unlimited knowledge, suggestions, support, and considerations given to us. Dr. Teodoro A. Gloriani, my beloved principal for the unending support, guidance, words of encouragement and approved my letter to conduct this action research. My friends, for the pieces of advice and encouragement to push me to pursue my study. And my family, for the endless love and support to make my dream possible.

6. References

- Atmojo, A. E. P., & Nugroho, A. (2020). EFL classes must go online! teaching activities and challenges during COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia. *Register Journal*, 13(1), 49–76.
<https://doi.org/10.18326/rjt.v13i1.49-76>

- Barrot, J. S., Llenares, I. I., & del Rosario, L. S. (2021). Students' online learning challenges during the pandemic and how they cope with them: The case of the Philippines. *Educ Inf Technol*, 26, 7321–7338. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10589-x>
- Castroverde, F. (2021) Modular distance learning modality: Challenges of teachers in teaching amid the Covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 10(8), 7-15.
- Chin, J. M.-C., Ching, G. S., del Castillo, F., Wen, T.-H., Huang, Y.-C., del Castillo, C. D., Gungon, J. L., & Trajera, S. M. (2022). Perspectives on the barriers to and needs of teachers' professional development in the Philippines during COVID-19. *Sustainability*, 14, 470. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14010470>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods Approaches*. Fourth Edition. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Dangle, Y. R. P., & Sumaoang J. D. (2020). The implementation of modular distance learning in the Philippine secondary public schools. *3rd International Conference on Advanced Research in Teaching and Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.dpublication.com/abstract-of-3rd-icate/27-427/>
- Del Castillo, F. (2021). COVID-19 impact on learners: challenges and responses. *Journal of Public Health*, 43(3), 539–540. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdab126>
- Hollebrands, K. (2020). How can teachers use technology in the classroom. *Ask the Expert Series*. <https://ced.ncsu/news>
- Lapada, A. A., Miguel, F. F., Robledo, D. A. R., & Alam, Z. F. (2020). Teachers' Covid-19 awareness, distance learning education experiences and perceptions towards institutional readiness and challenges. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(6), 127–144. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.19.6.8>
- Mishra, L., Gupta, T., & Shree, A. (2020). Online teaching-learning in higher education during lockdown period of COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 1(August), 100012. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2020.100012>
- Moralista, R. B., & Oducado, R. M. F. (2020). Faculty perception toward online education in a state college in the Philippines during the coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) pandemic. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(10), 4736–4742. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.081044>
- Muthmainnah, A. N., Galal, M., Varghese, K. J., Castillo, F. D., & Ghofur, A. (2021). The students' needs in developing EFL materials ICT Based. *Okara: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 15(2), 235–247. <https://doi.org/10.19105/ojbs.v15i2.4679>
- Niemi, H. M., & Kousa, P. (2020). A case study of students' and teachers' perceptions in a Finnish High School during the COVID Pandemic. *International Journal of Technology in Education and Science*, 4(4), 352–369. <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijtes.v4i4.167>
- Picton, I. (2019). *Teachers' use of technology to support literacy*. London: National Literacy Trust.
- Rasmitadila, A. R. R., Rachmadtullah, R., Samsudin, A., Syaodih, E., Nurtanto, M., & Tambunan, A. R. S. (2020). The perceptions of primary school teachers of online learning during the covid-19 pandemic period: A case study in Indonesia. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 7(2), 90–109. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/388>
- Sepulveda-Escobar, P., & Morrison, A. (2020). Online teaching placement during the COVID-19 pandemic in Chile: challenges and opportunities. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 587–607. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1820981>
- Shahzad, M., Abdullah, F., Fatima, S., Riaz, F., & Mehmood, S. (2020). *Impacts of parental support on academic performance among secondary school students in Islamabad*.
- Usmani, et al. (2009). Evaluation of the effect of learning environment on student's academic performance in Nigeria.
- Wan Hassan, W. A. S., Ariffin, A., Ahmad, F., Sharberi, S. N. M., Nor Azizi, M. I., & Zulkiflee, S. N. (2020). Covid-19 pandemic: Langkawi vocational college student challenge in using google classroom for teaching and learning (t&l). *International Journal of Advanced Trends in Computer Science and Engineering*, 9(3), 3299–3307. <https://doi.org/10.30534/ijatcse/2020/127932020>

