



**From Home to School: Experiences of Students towards the
Implementation of Face-To-Face Classes during Post Pandemic**

Jayben P. Locion

Samar National School, Western Samar

Abstract: *Since the day that the Covid-19 (coronavirus) outbreak occurs, many places around the world started to take actions and safety measures to prevent the spread of the said virus. Face-to-face teaching has been in halt to avoid the spread of the disease. Approximately two years since the pandemic happen. In the recent time, the world started to go back on the way of living before pandemic; this includes reopening schools for face-to-face classes. This qualitative study made use of hermeneutic phenomenological research design by getting the lived experiences of students towards the implementation and reopening of face-to-face classes and what are their ways and means in coping and adjusting to the said situation. Hermeneutic phenomenological approach was used in the study to further understand the responses of the participants. Non-probability sampling design is used in the study; specifically the researchers used selection criteria in determining the participants. As the point of saturation is met, the researcher conducted an in-depth analysis of the responses using thematic analysis. Results of the study show that students have different personal experiences as they faced and cope-up regarding of their problems, difficulties & challenges during the progressive face-to-face learning. Generally, most of the participants have common interventions such as seeking help/assistance, proper sleep, prayers, advanced readings/studying of lessons, and most of all, time management. This study will be in great help to students, parents, teachers, school administrators, institutions and future researchers in terms of communicating, adapting, and creating interventions to better adapt with the ever-changing situations.*

Keywords: *progressive face-to-face, covid-19 (coronavirus), pandemic, lived experiences, challenges, interventions.*

Introduction

Students are engaged in learning as it is significant and relevant to their lives, satisfying the presence of education. This standard of excellence is attainable in both traditional and non-traditional educational settings. Due to a variety of factors, including the widespread of the virus covid19 pandemic and the country's recent economic downturn, the non-traditional or online class method of education has emerged as the primary method for teaching and conducting education.

The sudden need to adapt the online teaching-learning process becomes the best option for the situation. According to the Department of Education (DepEd), this is the ideal way to continue the students' started knowledge because of the ongoing high cases of the covid-19 pandemic in the country, as well as to ensure their safety. Even the students are aware to use the technology, they find this method challenging and could not easily adapt the scenario that affects their academic performances. Learning due to the covid-19 pandemic challenged the digital readiness of both teachers and students all over the world.

Distance education is commonly supported by many types of technology. As a result of current and quick improvements in information and communication technology, as well as greater capacity of internet settings instructor demand connection, the use of synchronous solutions for education has been increasingly widespread. Synchronous learning supports various sorts of interaction, and the use of synchronous conferencing systems has educational advantages. For starters, real-time engagement allows for the replication of a real-life classroom learning setting as well as immediate interactive meaning clarification (Steeple et al., 2012). Synchronous conferencing over the Internet also provides participants with a sense of immediate contact, motivation, and even a little fun, which is especially beneficial for distance learners.

With the aforementioned statements, the claim on the usage of internet and the distance modality has been the practice on formal knowledge dissemination of schools to cater the needs of the learners amidst pandemic. However, nothing can beat teaching-learning process through face-to-face delivery. In this regard, the post pandemic era started to shift back to face-to-face modality in catering the learners and to make sure that the education will further improve in the way.

The researcher, to understand the experiences of students during pandemic and their perceived challenges as the shift to progressive face-to-face occurs, further investigated the ways and means of students in terms of approaches and interventions.

Literature Review

Schooling is one of the most impacted aspects of human existence due to the coronavirus disease pandemic. Since the pandemic's emergence and danger, several governments worldwide have opted to temporarily suspend schools, affecting millions of students. Therefore, the epidemic has caused a learning problem among pupils, the majority of whom are youngsters (Sarmiento et al., 2021).

According to Bettis (2020) surmises that whilst there are new challenges when traditional universities adopt online teaching, the Covid-19 pandemic can be an opportunity to enhance student experience by providing students with flexible deliveries via recorded lectures. Baber (2021) shows that South Korean students have adapted to e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, implying that the change from F2F to online was not perceived negatively by students.

On the other hand, using a case study approach, Yang and Huang (2020) said that, while the sudden change to teaching has disadvantages, the pandemic can expedite the development of new online materials. They also interpret that blended learning has the potential to accommodate different learning styles to become the 'new normal'. The researchers write case study in order to find out the very reasons why certain things or certain cases happen to a person or a group of people or to an organization. Hence, in the Philippines, the government's Department of Education has come up with guidelines to implement online and modular distance learning delivery of instruction. This is to safeguard students from being infected by the disease. However, plans to conduct the pilot implementation of progressive face-to-face delivery in low-risk areas of COVID-19 transmission for January 2021 have been approved by the president but later recalled due to the threat of the new strain of COVID-19. Predicaments are raised whether the country is ready to open its schools for students to go for face-to-face learning despite having been one of the longest and strictest lockdowns in the world (Sarmiento et al, 2021).

Moreover, the school reopening for face-to-face interactions must be carefully planned to ensure the safety of students as well as teachers and school staff in a staged fashion especially in following physical distancing (Locion et al., 2022). Planning and execution of school health protocols during this pandemic must be supported by the truthful data being given by various institutions.

A knowledge gap exists because the preference of students towards F2F during the pandemic is not well-established. Thus, the researcher is motivated to report student voice to offer insights to educators about strategies to enhance students' experiences.

Methodology

A qualitative research approach is used in this study to investigate and determine the experiences of the study's informants, as well as to extract meaning from their responses. The research technique will be phenomenological research, which focuses on how people articulate and understand their lived experiences as a result of occurrences. Phenomenological techniques are founded on a basic paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, emphasizing the importance of human experience, personal perspective, and interpretation in relation to the commonalities shared by all participants.

Furthermore, phenomenological research might describe the meaning of a phenomenon for numerous persons (Creswell and Poth, 2016). The researcher used hermeneutic phenomenology in this study to further investigate the real-life experiences of students.

In this study, the researcher used a non-probability sampling design, specifically purposive sampling with the help of selection criteria that aided the researcher locate the informants. Six (6) participants were interviewed in this study as it meets the saturation point. Upon identifying the participants, the researcher ensured proper consent which follows necessary ethical considerations.

Research Instruments and Data Gathering Techniques

In collecting the data, the researcher used an in-depth interview using a semi-structured Interview Guide. Overall, the interview process was anchored to the interview stages and strategies presented by Braun and Clarke (2013). By defining what should be included in the interview questions as reflected in the interview guide and by following the interview protocol, the researcher observed proper interview methods. A checklist, record book, and a cellphone (to record the scene) were used to document the interviews with the informants. The researcher ensured that the video recording will be deleted after needed information have been generated.

Treatment of Data

A thematic analysis using Van Manen (2016) framework was used in interpreting and understanding the data that was interviewed from the informants. The framework that was utilized followed these six steps: (1) Familiarization; (2) Coding; (3) Generating themes; (4) Reviewing themes; (5) Defining and naming themes; and (6) Writing up.

The analysis started by collecting and sorting the responses of the informants and the researchers compiled and organized the obtained information according to their codes. The codes were eventually grouped according to the themes that the researcher created. After finalizing and interpreting the sorted data, the researcher made sure that the process was systematically and orderly followed through highlighting the rigor in qualitative research by integrating trustworthiness which constitutes these four (4) areas: (1) Credibility; (2) Dependability; (3) Confirmability; and (4) Transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Results and Discussions

This chapter presents the answers to the sub questions in the statement of the problem. It conveys the responses of grade-10 students to the interview questions formulated. Important parts of their responses were highlighted and written here in verbatim to carefully form interpretations and ensure authenticity. Intendedly, this painted a clearer picture for the experiences of grade 10 students assigned in the progressive face-to-face classes.

1. What are the difficulties that the students' experiences during progressive face-to-face learning?

1.1. Difficult subject/s

All respondent interpreted that their having difficulties at math subject. Respondent 2 tells that he's also having a hard time in English subject as well as respondent 6, it is hard for them to construct and comprehend English. And respondent 1 is having a hard time as well in terms of science subject.

R1: "An math ngan science talaga an makuri (laughs)"

R2: *“There are subject that Im having difficulties ngan math adto”*

R3: *“If for me la, my hardest subject is an mathematics and this subject is where Im struggling tikang yana.”*

R4: *“It’s hard for me to understand uhm mathematics subject grabe ang paghihirap nakaka krazy.”*

R5: *“Mathematics is my weakness specially now because of pandemic its hard for me to understand math”*

R6: *“Ageeeh, ginukurian akot math nga subject bagat na huhubya ako pag aanswer activities labi na kun math na tapus subject gihapon nga may English kakuri ha akon labi na kun mga easy it papatrabaho”*

1.2. Reasons why the subject/s is/are difficult

Respondent 1 thinks that when it comes to science and math, she can understand the lessons, but she feels lazy answering those activities that relates to this subject. Respondent 2 and 4 comprehend that it is hard for them to understand Math and English. Respondent 3 and 6 interpret that just by looking at the numbers she already concluded that Mathematics is a difficult subject, respondent 6 also thinks that making a sentence is hard when it comes to English. And respondents 5 thinks that Mathematics is difficult for her because she is not good with it.

R1: *“I think it’s the laziness for me kasi maraming nagsasabi nam an na madali yung math uhm naintindihan molang at yung science ay pag intindi lang talaga sadyang lazy person lang ako.”*

R2: *“I just to some researching and reading in overcoming my difficulties in Math.”*

R3: *“Uhhmm, para akon kakuri hit math bagat Nakita pala akot numbers makuri na hiya dayon”*

R4: *“Uhm... For me mahirap po ang pag understand ng mathematics kahit gaano ako kasikap mag solve tapos the end mali yung sagot ko.”*

R5: *“Maybe because I’m not good with this subject that’s why it is difficult for me”*

R6: *“Nakita pala akot numbers hinuhubya na ako pag answer siguro kay makuri tapus hit Englisuh nakakahimo ako sentence pero kakuri pag himo madaliay.”*

2.3. Suggestions in overcoming the subject subject difficulties

According to all the respondents researching and reading more resources will help you to overcome your diffeulties to the subject matter you are having difficulty.

R1: *“I think when you read tapus haloan mop ag intindi and you do some rearch hito you can understand the lesson siguro”*

R2: *“I just to some researching and reading in overcoming my difficulties in Math.”*

R3: *“Nagrereseach ako ha internet tas youtube pag drek nakakaintindi han akon assignment.”*

R4: *“I think pag mag research ako pag katapos i give myself a time to read comprehensively, mauunawaan at mamahalin ko ang paksa..”*

S5: *“Reading & gathering more information about those subjects that I think is difficult for me so that it is not hard for me to understand and study the subjects”*

S6: *“Nag reresearch ako, danay nag babsa ako han mga answers han iba or discussions han iba sugad han Brainly.. hehehe.”*

2. How does the students strategically cope up with the problems they encounter during progressive face-to-face classes?

2.1. Using strategies to face the difficulties.

In respondent 1’s case, she believes that the strategies will help a person think easier in any ways.

The researchers interviewed respondent 2 and 3 thru social media. In respondent 2, he was able to adapt his strategy by being a resilient and adjust in new type of learning mechanism by being patience even though there are hard times for him to face the implemented face-to-face learning on the other hand respondent 3, her strategy is seeking God as center of prayer like, she prays for God to face the difficulties and suffering, praying for her is the most effective way to motivate herself.

Lastly, for the respondents 4,5,6. Respondents 4 and 6 believe that we are now encountering problems such as we need to accept this fact, such as, we need to follow health protocols in avoiding this virus. And for the respondent 6, she believes that having a time management in this time of pandemic is important because it will be your guide as to accomplish things for that day.

R1: *"..uhm,I guess makakabulig an strategies since they tend to make things easier diba (laughs)"*

R2: *"The strategies that I used to cope up with the problems during progressive f2f classes was to be resilient and to adjust to the new strategy of learning in education. By this, I was able to adapt to the new learning mechanism of the education system nowadays even though there are times that it was really tough for me to adjust. But having a lot patience help me to conquer the problems that I've faced during f2f classes in this time of pandemic."*

R3: *"Dako talaga an naibulig ha akon it pananalig sa diyos kay tikang hini, mas nadedevelop am aton pananampalataya. Tapos, those of my problems in school like mga tambak na school works pr any na related of my studies, he heard and now I'd already finished"*

R4: *"Sa panahon ng progressive face-to-face ay ang mga struggles na kinakaharap namin ay uhm kailangan magsuot ng facemask everywhere at saka sumunod sa social distancing para maiwasan ang pag spread ng virus."*

R5: *"Students cope up the problems during progressive face – to – face by having big adjustment, accepting the fact that even if it is difficult, we are going to adapt the life of new normal"*

R6: *"An akon gin himo during hini yana nga pandemiya,nagkaada ako han sinisiring nga time management... hehehe. Dako in inga bolig kay nagkaada ako guide kun anot akon hmuon or bubuhaton para hito na adlaw"*

2.2. Using strategies as an improvement during face-to-face classes.

In respondent 1's case she interprets that the advantage of the strategies in coping up problems makes her work easier. Respondent 2 thinks that, strategies will be a tool in improving oneself attitude towards facing problems specially in limited face-to-face classes. For respondent 3, her strategy really helpful at all times, it will help her enrich herself to become more good person as well as to others. It's not just respondent 3, to have strong relationship with God but all of us too.

Respondent 4 thinks that following safety protocols is important in this time of pandemic, he also concluded that, it is a good strategy since it will keep yourself healthy as to having yourself a vaccine. For respondent 5, she stated that, strategies are the key for the students to realize how important education is. Lastly, respondent 6 thinks that time management is important specially in adjusting oneself in any unexpected situation.

R1: *"Sa pamamagitan ng ano sa pag-gamit ko nito bilang advantage sa mga bagay na pwede kong gamitan ng strategies para sa sarili ko at para mapadali yung ginagawa ko."*

R2: *"I will use these strategies of mine to be able to surpass the current predicaments and problems that I faced during limited f2f classes and by this I will be able to improve my attitudes towards facing these inevitable problems in this time of pandemic"*

R3: *"I will use this kind of strategy to become a model as a good person, having a good personality and sharing anything about God so that, they will seek him and by trusting him theres no need to worry about your problems wpecially in our study"*

R4: *"Sa pamamagitan ng uhm pagiging disiplinado at pag take ng bakuna upang hinde mag spread ang virus, makakatulong ang pagiging disiplinado upang mapabuti ang progressive face-to-face.."*

R5: *“It helps the students realize that no matter what problem will come, education is most important to everyone we are just going to be careful by nowadays by following the Covid – 19 protocols.”*

R6: *“Natuuod gud ako, para akon its time management maupay kay nakakabulig pag adjust tim kalugaringon kun ano man it problema nga imo ma encounter XD”*

The following were the salient findings derived from the study:

1. The strategies that help the respondents face the problems and the difficulties during progressive face-to-face classes. In respondent 1's case, he/she believes that the strategies will help a person thing easier in any ways. Moreover, respondent 2, he/she was able to adapt his/her strategy by being a resilient and adjust in new type of learning mechanism by being patience even though there are hard times for him/her to face the implemented face-to-face learning on the other hand respondent 3, his/her strategy is seeking God as center of prayer like, she prays for God to face the difficulties and suffering, praying for her is the most effective way to motivate herself. Lastly, for the respondents 4,5,6. Respondents 4 and 6 believe that we are now encountering problems such as we need to accept this fact, such as, we need to follow health protocols in avoiding this virus. And for the respondent 6, he/she believes that having a time management in this time of pandemic is important because it will be your guide as to accomplish things for that day.
2. The respondents will use their strategies to make an improvement to their self during progressive face-to-face classes, in which the respondent 1 interprets that the advantage of the strategies in coping up problems it will make his/her work easier. On the other hand, respondent 2 stated that strategies will be a tool in improving oneself attitude towards facing problems specially during the progressive face-to-face classes and respondent 3 stated as well that strategy really helpful at all times, it will help enrich himself/herself to become a good person as well as to others. Moreover, respondent 4 stated that safety protocols is important in this time of pandemic and respondent 5 said that strategy it will make students realize how important education is. And lastly, according to respondent 6, time management is important specially in adjusting oneself in any unexpected situation.
3. It shows that all respondent interprets that their having difficulties at math subject. Respondent 2 tells that she's also having a hard time in English subject as well as respondent 6, it is hard for them to construct and comprehend English. And respondent 1 is having a hard time as well in terms of science subject. Respondent 1 thinks that when it comes to science and math, he/she can understand the lesson, but he/she feels lazy answering those activities that relates to this subject. On the other hand, according to respondent 2 it is hard for him/her to understand Math and English and respondent 3 said by just looking at the numbers he/she already concluded that Mathematics is a difficult subject. Meanwhile, respondent 5 stated that Mathematics is difficult for him/her because he/she is not good with it. And lastly, respondent 6 thought by just looking at the numbers he/she is not interested already answering the activities in Mathematics and though he/she can make a sentence in English, but it will make time.
4. It shows that respondents 1 and 2 it is hard for them to adjust right away from modular distance learning to progressive face-to-face learning. For respondent 3, 4 and 5 it is an advantage because of the limited face-to-face classes it is easy for them to understand the lesson. Lastly, according to respondent 6, he/she is in the process in processing all these things, but he/she is happy because progressive face-to-face classes shows that we are now stable in adjusting with this pandemic.
5. The respondent 1 said that by making his thoughts strong and everything happens for a reason he/she can surpass that problems and challenges during the progressive face-to-face classes. And according to the respondent 2 doing his/her best can cope up all the problems and challenges during the progressive face – to face classes. Moreover, respondent 3 said that researching, studying, and doing his best to all the activities is one of the keys in accomplishing his/her

activities where in it is one of his/her problem. Furthermore, the respondents 4 think positively in all the problems and challenges that he/she encountered and According to the respondent one of the keys in coping up problems and respondent 5 stated those challenges during the progressive face-to-face classes are being optimist. Lastly, respondent 6 said that he/she always thinks for a solution on his/her problems and do his best in solving it.

Conclusion

Based on the results, the study concluded that students have different personal experiences as they faced and cope-up regarding of their problems, difficulties & challenges during the progressive face-to-face learning. Generally, most of the participants have common interventions such as seeking help/assistance, proper sleep, prayers, advanced readings/studying of lessons, and most of all, time management.

Recommendations

The shift between various teaching-learning modalities in the delivery of lessons gives difficulty to both teachers and learners especially in adapting and adjusting with the situation. In line with this, to support the results of the study, it is much better to have communication, interventions and coordination between parents, teachers, students and school administrators. Parents may supervise the learners through assisting and giving moral support to the learners. Teachers and students may have a conducive environment through open communication and sharing of knowledge and information during face-to-face classes. Administrators can give school activities such as mental health support and awareness, students' welfare and assistance, and the like that can help develop students esteem and confidence as they cope with the shift to progressive face-to-face learning.

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