
Teachers' Academic Resilience amid the Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis

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How to cite this article: Karen V. Rendeza (2024) Teachers' Academic Resilience amid the Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis. *Library Progress International*, 44(3), 3811-3819.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the academic resilience of teachers combating the impact of COVID-19 pandemic crisis during the education in the new normal. Explanatory Sequential Research Design was used. Online survey was first conducted having two hundred thirty-six actual respondents, almost all are Licensed Professional Teachers serving the Basic Education in Central Luzon, Philippines. To crystalize vital points in the findings of the survey, online interviews were conducted with eight teacher-participants. The characteristics of the respondents in the survey were identified. The findings were discussed using the themes relevant to the academic resilience of the teachers like teachers as (1) advocates of wellness, (2) multi-taskers, (3) pandemic warriors, (4) pilgrims of resilience, and (5) optimistic role models. Using descriptive statistics, the quantitative part of this study was analyzed. Further, Thematic Analysis was utilized to analyze the data gathered from interviews. Findings reveal that Filipino teachers are highly resilient which is evident in them being able to adapt to the current demands of their teaching profession in the new normal. Learning how to use different computer applications has made teaching online easy for them despite some hesitations before the school year began. Part of the academic resilience of the teachers include being adaptive or flexible, being optimistic, being able to find reasons to succeed, getting back up and carrying on, having a drive to keep fighting, and being courageous. These are the values the teachers possess which enabled them to surpass difficulties and sustained their psychological strength..

Keywords: Teachers' upskilling, psychological strength, Education Frontliners, pandemic crisis, information technology

1) INTRODUCTION

The coming of this unexpected global invasion of Coronavirus Infectious Disease has undeniably challenged the psychological strength of everyone especially that it existed for over a year. This health crisis has brought along the economic crisis as well as mental health crisis for those who have lost their jobs, their freedom to do what they want and go wherever they want, and most especially to those the coronavirus contagion has caused death to family members.

One of the sectors that greatly suffered from the economic crisis the COVID-19 pandemic brought was the education sector. Many schools around the world experienced closure because of the idea of physical distancing and the nature of the coronavirus which infect people through the droplets coming from its host person done by sneezing or coughing. Thus, everyone was advised to stay at home. Business establishments, movie theatres, amusement parks were locked down including schools to control the spread of Coronavirus. Consequently, many teachers and school personnel lost their jobs, and those who remained in their posts had to quickly adapt to this reality that education needed to be migrated to the digital space.

Education was considered to be one among the most stressful professions despite the fact that educators greatly influence the lives of their students [11]. Much more in this time of pandemic when teachers encounter a lot of disruptions and uncertainties in their personal lives and at work. Struggle is real as many of them would jokingly say.

This is where resilience comes in. The teachers from whom the students and parents draw strength also need to be strong themselves. Resilience is a process of bouncing forward after experiences of adversity, trauma, or significant triggers of

stress such as interpersonal relationship problems, serious illness or workplace and financial stressors [1][5]. Bouncing forward from painful experiences involved personal growth as well.

In the context of this study, the focus is on resilience in the educational setting. With the teaching and learning process being made available in the digital space, academic resilience could mean a student's capability to handle difficult academic demands that may cause unlikely pressure to him/her online and offline [18][27]. This is obvious to the life stories of the teachers whom we also call Education Frontliners. Academic resilience may be defined as students performing very satisfactorily in school despite problems they may encounter in school and at home. To promote academic resilience in learning institutions, it should be planned strategically and be implemented consistently within the entire school community with the help of other stakeholders also.

Improving the social-emotional skills of the learners could help them nurture their resilience in dealing with the demands of their student life especially to those differently abled learners [31].

The role of teachers in the academic resilience of the learners is likewise very important. Teachers as defined by Republic Act 7836 which is also known as the Philippine Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994 [23] refers to all individuals teaching in the basic education regardless of employment status as well as those with administrative functions in the learning institutions.

Further, the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers, Article VIII, Section 9 [8] emphasizes that the teacher must prioritize bringing out the best in students, providing them a safe space in school where they could be themselves while striving to be better individuals both in academics and character. It means that a teacher must be physically, psychologically and spiritually healthy to be able to effectively assist the students, especially in crises like the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are several research written about the learners' resilience. However, very few literatures about that of the teachers' resilience, specifically on teachers' academic resilience. Thus, this study examined the academic resilience of the teachers combating the COVID-19 pandemic crisis during the education in the new normal.

2) METHODS AND METHODOLOGY:

Research Design

This study used Explanatory Sequential research design. Creswell (2014) and Bowen et al. (2017) described Explanatory Sequential research design as having collected first the quantitative information and then gather next the qualitative data to help explain better the quantitative findings. In this approach, the findings based on the data gathered through survey provided a general scenario on the resilience of the teachers in school. Moreover, the findings collected thru interviews were refined and explained well the overview of the teachers' academic resilience in crisis situations Creswell, 2014 [9]; Bowen et al, 2017[3]. The online survey was first done with two hundred thirty-six actual respondents, followed by the conduct of online interviews with eight participants.

Research Population

This study used random sampling with two hundred thirty-six (236) actual respondents for the survey of which ninety-point three percent (90.3%) are females. Eight teachers participated in the online interview. The respondents are basic education teachers, mostly residing at Central Luzon with age ranging from twenty to sixty years old. Ninety-eight-point seven percent (98.7%) of them are licensed, of which ninety-six-point two percent (96.2%) are Licensed Professional Teacher.

The data were gathered through online survey in May 2020 (respondents were in the second month of Community Quarantine). The online interviews happened on November 2020 when the school year 2020-2021 started just a month ago, and in April 2021 during the third quarter of the school year in the Basic Education of the Department of Education.

Research Instruments

The validated researcher-made questionnaire converted into online survey was used for the quantitative part of this study and the validated Interview Guide was used for the online one-on-one in-depth interviews. The items were crafted based on the existing related studies and on the observations also of the researcher who is a practicing educator and school counselor, considering the context of the education in the new normal.

A Likert scale was used to measure the degree of truthfulness/goodness for the respondents of a certain item or statement. The scale was set at 4 for Very much true to me/Very Good, 3 for Much true to me/Good, 2 for True to Me/Fair, and 1 for Not true to me/Poor. The mean score for each component or dimension was divided into four categories. The range of scores is done by adding the lowest and highest score. The sum was divided by 4 and the resulting interval is 1.25. Hence, the corresponding degree of truthfulness was qualitatively interpreted as very good, good, fair, or poor to reflect the quality of advocacy of the teachers on COVID-19, their School Related Home Activities, Challenges Encountered in Work-from-Home set-up, their Coping Mechanisms and Self-care Practices

during the Community Quarantine and their Hopes and Aspirations. A description for each interpretation was provided. For the qualitative part of this study, a validated interview guide was utilized for interviews.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

The collected data through online survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The data gathered through online interviews were organized and analyzed using Thematic Analysis.

Ethical Considerations

The data were gathered with Informed Consent from the respondents and participants. Code names were used to ensure confidentiality of their real identity. All materials used with the aid of technology and internet access to gather data were deleted after the content has been analyzed and the full paper was written to safeguard data privacy.

3] RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings of this study which investigated the academic resilience of the education frontliners teaching in the context of education in the new normal. Specifically, the following were addressed:

- a.) Profile of the respondents
- b.) Advocacy initiatives of the teachers about COVID-19 phenomenon
- c.) The school related home activities of the teachers
- d.) The challenges encountered by the teachers in Work-From-Home set-up
- e.) The self-care practices of the teachers during the Community Quarantine
- f.) The hopes and aspirations of the teachers

The results of this study were discussed based on the Resilience Doughnut developed by a clinical psychologist Lyn Worsley [2][4][28] utilized as basis for crafting the themes in showcasing the academic resilience of the teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

A. The Characteristics of the Respondents

There were two hundred thirty-six (236) respondents of the survey done online by May of 2020. Ninety-six-point two percent (96.2%) of those who participated in the online survey were Licensed Professional Teachers, serving the basic education department of mostly from the public schools (97.6%) with classes being handled from Kindergarten up to grade 12. Majority of the respondents were females (90.3%) with age ranging from twenty to sixty years old, of which sixty-six-point nine percent (66.9%) of them were married. Further, the ninety-one point nine percent (91.9%) of the teachers who responded to the online survey came from Central Luzon, Philippines.

While many of the respondents served in school for one year to more than two decades already, thirty-point-five percent (30.5%) of them were without a child, and sixty-eight-point-two percent (68.2%) were rearing one child to four children at home. This means that majority of the respondents played multiple roles at home; much more when work from home became part of the education in the new normal. Added to the bulk of responsibilities of the respondents was pursuing their graduate studies wherein sixty-three-point-six percent (63.6%) of them were into master's study and three-point-four percent (3.4%) were pursuing their doctorate.

The eight participants for the unstructured in-depth one-on-one online interview were taken from the same group of respondents. They were subjected to the research orientation prior to the conduct of recorded interview with signed Informed Consent. Four of them were female and another four were male coming from different schools in Region 3, Philippines with varying age range and civil status.

A.1. Teachers as Advocates of Wellness

The teachers played a vital role of being advocates of wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. With the Mean of 3.19 (SD=0.32), this study highlighted the very important role of teachers in information dissemination, and in educating the people about COVID-19. The health protocols like proper hygiene of washing hands with soap, using alcohol and using individual eating utensils to those who were not feeling well were some of the things that teachers reminded the people around them especially their students. Information on how to avoid COVID 19 like staying at home or wearing face mask and face shield when going out greatly helped in the advocacy of the government to control the rapid spread of coronavirus. As teachers were influential by nature, relaying correct information to the public is very helpful to the society. Hence, it was of great importance also for the teachers to be well-informed about factual news and information to be shared.

Technology substituted the in-person transactions during the COVID-19 onset. Many were into the usage of the social media. Ninety-six percent (96%) Filipinos patronized Facebook [26]. It was also reported that the most active social media users in the Philippines spent an average of 3 hours and 53 minutes daily. Of the 2 hours and 24 minutes average daily time spent on social media worldwide, more than one-third of the total internet time was utilized by Filipinos [6].

On the other hand, with the high demand of the use of cyberspace during community quarantine, more trolls came out, and Facebook fake accounts became rampant in the Philippines. Facebook revealed that as of the first quarter of 2020, it removed one-point-seven (1.7) billion fake Facebook accounts globally [16]. Thus, correct information must also be given importance in circulating thru social media like Facebook to be able to reach the majority of Filipinos. The vital role of teachers screening the news and information being passed around in the news feeds must also be recognized. Teachers must as well teach students how to be critical and analytical about the information they access every day.

The noble contribution of teachers in educating the people about COVID-19 was also recognized by the medical experts in the webinar series number 48 of Stop COVID Deaths Clinical Management Updates titled Facts & Fiction on COVID-19 Prevention and Treatments spearheaded by the University of the Philippines. Such webinar was participated also by the researcher and educators. The webinar series was live streamed through social media.

Toquero & Talidong (2020) [29] mentioned that Facebook was instrumental for educating people about COVID-19 like the teacher-respondents in this study are saying. Indeed, technology became a convenient and fast vehicle of the awareness of people as well as for sharing daily updates worldwide. Many webinars were being aired via Facebook Live also.

A.2. Teachers as Multi-taskers

In the Philippines, the teachers' role is not only limited to teaching but extends up to clerical work and home visitations. With the Mean of 2.83 (SD=0.16), the survey revealed that teachers were also put in situations that required multi-tasking. In this study, the schoolwork done at home by the teachers included attending webinars, navigating the cyberspace to learn about teaching online, but not really practicing online teaching yet by the time the survey was administered. Most of the teachers were questioning themselves on how they would go about the new ways of delivering their lessons yet ensure that the learners remained to be engaged in learning, and teachers were meeting the competencies required from them using new teaching modalities [30].

The remote teaching modality during lockdowns challenged not only the skills of the teachers in information technology but also their skill in multi-tasking and harmonizing work and home duties. Expectedly, teachers needed to learn using technology and innovate to establish sustained connection and fruitful interaction with the students [20].

Further, an educational equity expert Julie Gorlewski said that prolonged work-from-home set-up was stressful to teachers who are also mothers with multiple duties at home [25]. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis brought the teachers who were also mothers additional difficulties educating students and their own kids while at home, added to their usual responsibilities before the pandemic.

A.3. Teachers as Pandemic Warriors

There was no other frontliners so brave to traverse far-flung areas like mountains and seas during the pandemic than the teachers, so they were called as the pandemic warriors themselves. This study also captured experiences of teachers in coping with the changes in modality from in-person classes to online teaching. Notably, teachers likewise experienced discomforts, fatigue, fears brought about by different kinds of disruptions and uncertainties, and communication problems due to slow internet connectivity. However, the gravity of such discomforts and unlikely experiences were not much because of their ability to cope well with the demands of their responsibilities in work and at home.

B. Challenges Encountered in Work-From-Home

The data from the survey with a Mean of 1.85 (SD=0.20) showed that teachers encountered a lot of challenges during the work-from-home set up. This was confirmed by the interviews conducted which also revealed that part of the challenges encountered by the teachers in the first month of the SY2020-2021 was adjusting to the new teaching-learning modalities, dealing with the issue of digital divide, unstable and slow internet connection and fear brought about by uncertainties. Digital divide was noted between the private and public-school learners [17]. Teachers found it hard to reach out to learners without gadgets and access to the internet aside from their secluded geographic location.

Flor: "*Naninibago ako sa paraan ng pagtuturo. Nasanay kasi ako sa face to face. Kailangan kong mag-adjust sa pagtuturo online.*" [I was adjusting to the new modalities of teaching during the pandemic. I used to teach in a face-to-face manner. I needed to learn how to teach online.]

Net: "*Majority of my students have no internet access because of their economic and social condition that that their parents or guardian have lost their job.*"

Dane: "*Unstable internet connection and miscommunication with co-teachers happen because of the new mandates in teaching...*"

Anne: "*I am greatly challenged to cope with the technology requirements of the new normal of education including online classes.*"

Earl: "*I am experiencing this fear of the unknown because as of now I see no direction...*"

Moreover, teachers at the middle of this battle for school year 2020-2021 think that:

Bles: *"Teachers, still as facilitators of learning in the new normal, have adjusted to respond to its demands. I have found out that mixture of traditional and digital approaches is helpful in the learning delivery nowadays."*

Ces: *"I have learned more techniques in different cyber platforms to aid me in teaching."*

Tin: *"Teachers should learn to be adaptive to new strategies to reach out to students, to new applications and to the new normal classroom ... This new normal helped me to see their "world" and make more meaningful relationships to them."*

Studies testify about the contributing factors affecting the ability to cope of the teachers in embracing the changes in the education in the new normal. Academic resilience in this manner is displayed by the high motivation the teachers have in augmenting their professional competence in information technology and up-skilling themselves, especially when they know that they have poor know-how on it [13]. This finding is also parallel with the results of other studies.

The participants shared:

"With education being migrated to the digital space, I have learned to double my time to cope with the demand of new modalities in teaching. I took extra effort to learn ICT skills. On the contrary, I have realized that it is easier to deliver lessons with the use of technology. The only problem is the poor connectivity. I became too much flexible in order to cope with the piled-up paper works due to temporary absence of face-to-face classes. I have gained various learnings that made me more creative in preparing my lessons such as Canva application, PPT, excel, etc."

"...My best learning is that I should continue to be positive and creative. To find new ways how I can deliver and connect with my students. Teaching is my life more than just my bread and butter. I will not give up something that gives purpose to my living."

"As a teacher in the new normal of education, I can say that I learned a lot in terms of technology. Before this new normal that we are now facing, I did not have any idea about online matters because this is not my cup of tea being one of my weaknesses. That is why when this pandemic suddenly happened and the DepEd announced that distance learning could be resorted to instead of the usual face to face, I was almost shocked because I was not prepared. I did not have any idea how to comply with the demand of my profession. But as the opening of classes was approaching, I gradually learned how to cope. I am now thankful that unlike my apprehensions before, I never anticipate that I could attain this sort of achievement. I can now proudly say that I am one of the teachers in the new normal who can deliver learnings to my students despite a lot of limitations brought about by this pandemic."

Ces: *"I have learned how to use video conferencing apps like zoom and google meet in my online distance learning class. I also learned to make a video lesson that I am using for asynchronous learning. I can also easily get feedback from my students whether they understand the lesson or if an enhancement activity is needed."*

Aside from coping with the transition in the modality of the delivery of education, teachers also face the challenge of how to reach out to the learners most especially to those who have very limited or no means at all to access to the digital classroom.

Flor: *"I learned as a teacher that there are both pros and cons with education being migrated to the digital space in this time of pandemic. Pros are it is safer, faster and there are some visual learners, who learn more by watching video lessons. Cons are that not everyone have access in a stable and reliable internet connection. Due to financial situation, some doesn't even have a gadget to use during online class. I find it challenging to reach out and make sure that learnings are instilled in those students."*

Dane: *"...Unfortunately, at the back of my mind, it doesn't leave me thinking of my students who are not able to attend online classes."*

Earl: *"...I have realized that it is easier to deliver lessons with the use of technology. The only problem is the poor connectivity."*

Tin: *"...not everyone has access in a stable and reliable internet connection. Due to financial situation, some don't even have a gadget to use during online class. I find it challenging to reach out and make sure that learnings are instilled in those students."*

The present study is parallel with that of Jain et al, 2020[17]. They likewise said that economically disadvantaged students were difficult to reach. Teachers did not know how to support those who were also severely affected by the pandemic. Jones (2019) [18] pointed out that digital divide was highlighted during the pandemic wherein only those who 'haves' could enjoy the use of gadgets and internet access while many students were not privileged to access online classes like them. There were around forty-five percent (45%) Filipinos (46 million) and 74% (34,500) of public schools did not have internet connection. The issue of digital divide and the poor provision of internet connectivity in the country could be some of the reasons for the low competence on technology usage of teachers despite the numerous conducts of trainings for them. The teachers perceived that providing them with high performing gadgets and fast internet connectivity would allow them to effectively deliver their lessons to students [13].

The teaching-learning process during pandemic relied mostly on the level of expertise of the teachers and level of exposure of students to information technology. During the pandemic when classes were conducted using online platforms, the teachers had no other choice but to learn to teach using Google Workspace, Microsoft Teams, Canva and others in the cyberspace for the continuity of education [21]. Teaching modalities that vary from synchronous online learning to asynchronous to modular allowed the teachers to update themselves in using technology-driven innovations like making educational videos and writing different kinds of modules. Facebook messenger and Facebook live helped most of the Filipino teachers in delivering their lessons online even in far-flung areas because it is the most accessible to many. The digital space made video conferencing and file storage easily available to all which brought an ease to working mothers. Educational assessment like quizzes was made easy by the Google forms and Microsoft Teams, providing relevant data to teachers on the performance of the students [22].

C. The Teachers' Journey of Resilience

Revealed in this study is the ability of teachers to take good care of themselves so that they will also be able to take care of others. Eating healthy foods was the top-most way for the teachers to combat illnesses like COVID-19. Likewise, less time for playing online games or not playing online games at all helped the teachers maximize their time for resting accordingly. The respondents were not fond of doing physical exercise and volunteer work. They seem not to be inclined to music as well.

The very essential role of communication also reinforces the resilience among the teachers. Spending time for reading inspirational books, talking to inspiring people, and for praying help the teachers sustain their energy during community quarantine.

The significance of academic resilience among teachers served as being the model to their students on how to bounce forward amid difficulties encountered in pursuing their education. Harding et al., 2019 [15] found the correlation between teacher depression and student wellbeing, the importance of teacher's presence and the quality of the relationship of teachers to students. Teachers with positive disposition would be most likely to influence students to be optimistic as well.

Dabrowski (2020) [10] pointed out that COVID-19 had exacerbated the stresses the teachers had been facing. Over and above navigating periods of work-from-home set-up, recognizing and promoting wellbeing among teachers should be the first to be done. As the common saying goes, we can only give what we have.

C.1. Self-care Practices of the Teachers during Community Quarantine

With the Mean of 2.83 (SD=0.67), the survey results depicted efforts from the respondents to take care of themselves especially during the community quarantine when lockdowns lasted for some time to control the spread of Coronavirus.

The themes identified from the interviews relevant to the teachers' academic resilience include (1) finding reasons to succeed; (2) having a reason/a drive to keep fighting; (3) being adaptive or flexible; (4) getting back up and carrying on; (5) Optimism; and being courageous or brave. The components of the Resilience Doughnut both the internal and the external [2] were utilized in presenting the stories of the research participants.

In interviews, the teachers shared their joys in being a teacher serving the youth in this new normal. Their joys include (1) being able to listen to the stories of their students through the requirements being submitted to them which is also instrumental for teachers not just to impart knowledge but to learn also from their students; and (2) having the chance to learn how to teach online as the current situation demands for the education in the new normal. The teachers shared:

Anne: *"I am teaching creative writing. My subject became a way for my students to release their anxieties brought about by the pandemic and that's what makes me happy being a teacher in this new normal... I also learn from my students as they learn from me."*

Bles: *"I am happy to get a chance to learn how to teach online in this education in the new normal... There are a lot of free learning seminars to equip us in teaching as well as new knowledge about Web accessing or applications."*

Part of the constructs identified in this study is getting back up and carrying on.

Ces: *"I get words of encouragement and appreciation from my boyfriend, family, and churchmates."*

Earl: *"Primarily, my strength comes from God through my relatives, friends, and colleagues in DepEd."*

Dane: *"DepEd provided us financial ease."*

The study of Gorsy, Panwar & Kumar (2015) [14] revealed that male teachers in the government service had better mental health status than their female counterparts, and those who lived in urban area had better mental health compared to teachers in rural areas. The study of Cezar-Vaz et al. (2015) [7] showed low remuneration and excessive workload that the teachers needed to bring work at home were very stressful to teachers and caused them anxiety and problem in sleep. Further, having harmonious relationship with fellow teachers promote wellbeing in the workplace. This study also highlights the importance of having a support system to sustain resilience. Relative to resilience is the self-care practices of the teachers as narrated in the following statements:

Net: *"I write my feelings to release them. I also play kalimba and stay connected to God."*

Flor: *"I find time to rest to energize my enthusiasm to perform my duties as a teacher."*

Dane: *"My coping mechanism every single day to keep me sane is to watch K-dramas. It calms me down and recharges me in handling everyday classes."*

Tin: *"Keeping abreast with the latest updates on technology and other DepEd teaching requirements are my ways of coping... Stay healthy."*

Earl: *"I manage my thoughts. I avoid negative thoughts and situations, but I am aware why sometimes anxiety is there."*

Ces, Bles & Anne: *The pandemic has taught me to be resilient and flexible on using several social networking sites, to make it user & academic friendly, and in innovating ways to teach as well as to reach my students who come from different social status.*

The pandemic left a long-lasting effect on the quality of life of the teachers especially those who got infected by coronavirus. The teachers needed provision of care and support from their family members and school administrators while into efforts of adapting to the effects brought about by Coronavirus pandemic crisis to the education sector [24]. The study of De Vera (2020) [12] emphasized the building of resilience to surpass the difficulties on the post-pandemic era thru re-evaluation of the teachers' own practice, improving their competencies, and thinking positively. Likewise, Torres (n.d.) [30] also attest that Filipino teachers are resilient as evident in their zeal, selflessness and deep commitment to being able to deliver education to the poorest of their students despite the threat of COVID-19 around.

C.2. Teachers' Optimism

Results show how the teachers radiate great hope during the health crisis to end soon for everybody to go back to the usual life's routine. There is nothing much optimistic to look forward to than hoping that everything will be well soon especially in the education sector. But looking back, this pandemic has also brought good things about the teachers. The one size fits all system in the Department of Education seems to have recognized the uniqueness of its sub-systems in every locality and culture and became accommodating of the differences between and among teachers and learners considering the issue of digital divide aside from the geographic location of the public schools in the basic education where some are not being reached by internet connection.

The values of sense of family and sense of community were highlighted during this crisis situation that teamwork among people is highly regarded to lessen if not really connect the gap between those who have and those who have none or less. The teamwork among parents and teachers in the human formation of the learners has been awakened in this trying episode in our country's history. Education in the new normal is being enriched as well by the active presence of both the parents and teachers. At home, while in community quarantine, assisting their children in accomplishing school requirements may also be the family's bonding time.

D. The teachers' Hopes and Aspirations for the Transition

The survey showed that teachers were hopeful for COVID-19 to end soon, and that they could properly adjust with the transitions (Mean 3.47; SD=0.37).

The teachers' optimism anchored from their being prayerful is shown in their narratives.

Earl & Dane: *I am grateful to God that He guided me in coping with my waterloo. I am also grateful to some of my co-teachers who have generously helped me out whenever I encounter problems about online matters.*

Anne, Bles, Net, Flor & Ces: *I stay connected with God.*

The teachers also need a support system while trying their very best to perform their duties in faithfully delivering education to the learners amid this crisis. Learning continuously how to effectively teach in digital classrooms had become the teachers' life-long commitment. Using traditional visual aids must also be supplemented with innovative digital videos and other instructional materials even in face-to-face classes, hence part of the expertise of teachers nowadays must be using the advanced technology in educating people, supported by the school administrators and other stake holders [20].

Furthermore, Pokhrel & Chhetri (2021) [22] pointed out that more studies about the effective digital teaching tools must be conducted to better equip the teachers in using them and to bring convenience also to the students while learning difficult subjects. The education sector must promote preventive measures in addressing the uncertainties calamities and other public health crises would bring in the future. With such very memorable experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the digital classrooms remained to be part of the educational experiences of the teachers and the students. With the technology that we have, students have less regard now in traditional teaching, and put more importance in innovative and interactive accessible digital teaching tools and platforms.

4] CONCLUSION

The present study shows high resilience among the Filipino teachers. They exude such ability to effectively deal with difficulties, stress and pressure in the academic setting even amid this more than a year-long health, economic and mental health crises due to the coronavirus infectious disease. Their undying commitment to deliver education even to the far-flung areas where internet connection and computers are rarely or not even known amid this threat of COVID-19 is indeed a priceless gift to humanity. That regardless of age, the teachers tried their very best to learn new things, upskilling themselves to the lingo of today's generation because it is the demand of the situation. That despite worries and hesitations to be able to learn the new trends in education nowadays which is the height of information technology in the realm of education, still, the teachers triumphantly made it. They delivered their lessons in the digital classroom, even beyond their imagination of learning how to use the Google Classroom, Google Meet, Google forms and other important features of the Google workspace, the Zoom for webinars and online classes, and Microsoft Teams for meetings and conferences among many other computer applications the teachers studied and learned to utilize.

The energy, resourcefulness, diligence and patience the teachers exhibited in this time of pandemic are truly applaudable. It is never easy to rear children at home and at the same time do work at home. The home, which is supposedly the sacred space for the teachers to rest and sleep became their instant workplace where education must be delivered over and above the noise of the people and things around the community.

The important role of teachers in educating the people about COVID-19 and training the students to be critical and analytical enough about the information they receive from different sources every day is a great help for the medical frontliners and the policy makers and implementers. While advocating for everybody to observe proper health protocols, the teachers also are mindful of their self-care practices, knowing that they can only give what they have. The optimism, prayerfulness and hope that they have allowed them to surpass all those difficult experiences and sustain their energy up to this moment. Teachers never quit. They just inspire and move on to life no matter what.

5] CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

The author declares **no conflict of interest**.

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