

Examining Teachers' Communicative Interactions During Covid-19: Message Content, Client Response, Sector Challenges, and Mitigation Strategies

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Abstract

Teachers were one of the frontline workers ensuring the continuation of delivering quality education to the students during covid-19 pandemic. This unprecedented event gave challenges that impacted the educational sector in the country. It also forced the educational leaders to adopt to the new normal education system, thus, this study aimed to explore the teachers' communicative interactions during the crisis. This study utilized qualitative approach using a descriptive phenomenology design. Using purposive sampling, the researcher also chose the participants and conducted in-depth interview based on its representation such as elementary, high school, and college teachers. In analyzing the qualitative data, the researcher used the reflexive thematic analysis that guided by the different interpersonal theories. The data were saturated into three (3) participants of the study representing elementary, high school, and college teacher. Results showed that teachers focus their contents on the work-related works and in relation to their family members. Teachers extend their patience and understanding in dealing with the students and their parents. More so, they faced a lot of challenges in work and in their respective family members. However, teachers had their own coping mechanisms to address those challenges. Thus, given the challenges faced by teachers both at work and in their family lives, it is essential that professional development programs for teachers include strategies for enhancing interactive communication and resilience.

Keywords: teachers, academe, covid19 pandemic, Biliran Province, communication

INTRODUCTION

"Education is the only inheritance which nobody can take away from you." This statement has never been more accurate than it was during the COVID-19 outbreak that hit the nation. Despite the pandemic's financial and physical impact, students managed to continue their education (Palis, 2022). This resilience was made possible by the unwavering commitment of educators who adapted swiftly to the rapidly changing circumstances. Teachers, as frontline workers, played a crucial role in ensuring the continuity of education amidst unprecedented challenges. This study aims to examine the communicative interactions among teachers during this period, focusing on the contents of their messages, their responses to clients, the challenges encountered, and the strategies employed to address these challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges and impacted the educational sector (Tria, 2020). In response, education leaders have opted to embrace the new norm. The Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) at the basic education level, postponing the start of classes from June 2020 to August 24, 2020 for the School Year 2020-2021 (DepEd, 2020). Concurrently, the

Commission on Higher Education (CHED) mandated higher education institutions (HEIs) to utilize available distance learning, e-learning, and other alternative modes of delivery while granting academic freedom to students (CHED, 2020). These measures were critical in maintaining educational engagement but also highlighted significant disparities in access and resources among students.

Students' varying socio-economic conditions have affected their access to these modes of learning, and some colleges were compelled to terminate remote or online classes. Concerns about the mental health of both students and teachers who were affected by the uncertainty were also a reason for stopping online lessons. The educational sector faced immense challenges, from technological barriers and lack of resources to psychological stress and inequity. Teachers, often the direct line of communication with students and parents, had to navigate these issues while providing support and maintaining educational standards. Their role as communicators became even more critical as they mediated between institutional policies and the unique needs of their students.

The inventiveness and resiliency of the Filipino people were on display in the middle of the epidemic, despite all these difficulties (Simbulan, 2020). Teachers demonstrated remarkable adaptability, employing various communication strategies to address the diverse needs of their students. They utilized different platforms to ensure lessons were accessible and provided emotional support to help students cope with the stresses of the pandemic. This study will delve into the specifics of these communicative interactions, analyzing the content of messages exchanged, the responses given to clients (students and parents), the challenges faced by different sectors within education, and the innovative strategies implemented to overcome these obstacles. By understanding these dynamics, this study contributes to the gap of knowledge in gaining insights into the resilience of the educational system and the pivotal role of teachers during times of crisis.

This paper analyzed the communicative interactions among teachers during the covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, it answers as to (1) what are the contents of the messages of the teachers during pandemic, (2) how do they respond to their respective clients, (3) what challenges does each sector encounter, and (4) how do they address each challenge.

FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This study is anchored with interpersonal communication theories. The theories are the following: Uncertainty Reduction Theory, Symbolic Interaction Theory, Coordinated Management of Meaning Theory, and Attribution Theory. These theories help this study explain and understand the interactive communication of teachers during pandemic.

Uncertainty Reduction theory explains how people use communication strategies to minimize ambiguity about other people, as demonstrated in this study. Meanwhile, Symbolic Interaction Theory (SIT) contends that facts are shaped and guided by symbols, with meanings forming their foundation. Also, Coordinated Management of Meaning theory helps the frontline workers determine how much others affect the meanings they create and how that affects their self-esteem.

In addition, Expectancy Violation Theory suggests that when people perceive a deviation from expected behavior, they tend to safeguard their personal space. Moreso, attribution theory posits that people make sense of behavior by interpreting it in terms of causes, and these interpretations play a significant role in shaping reactions to the behavior. It tries to describe the interpretative process by which individuals make decisions about the reasons for their own and others' actions (Kelley and Michela, 1980).

METHODOLOGY

Study Design and Population

The study used a qualitative approach using a descriptive phenomenology design. Phenomenology, as explained by Neubauer et al. (2019) is a form of qualitative research that centers on an individual's personal encounters in their surroundings. Its primary objective is to expound on the significance of these experiences, encompassing both the events that transpired and the way they occurred, as stated by Teherani (2015). Edmund Husserl developed descriptive phenomenology in 1970.

Using purposive sampling, the researcher chose the participants based on the following criteria: (1) part of the classification mentioned above, (2) work as a frontline worker during the covid-19 pandemic, (3) willingness to participate in a video-recorded interview. The researcher also chose the participants based on its representation such as elementary, high school, and college teachers.

Study Tool and Data Collection

Prior to the data gathering process, the researcher provided an informed consent letter to the participants. The researcher gathered the data through a face-to-face in-depth interview on the vacant time of the participants. All participants that were invited agreed to participate in the study. No participant withdrew from the study. The in-depth interviews were conducted that lasted between 30 - 45 minutes, allowing for the openness in sharing of experiences. The interviews were done from May to August 2022. The interviews were audio recorded using a digital audio recorder, after obtaining their consent. Subsequently, the transcription was done after each interview. This helped the researcher to identify data saturation on their responses.

Data Analysis

The researcher used the reflexive thematic analysis of Braun and Clark in 2019. A technique called reflexive thematic analysis is used to interpret qualitative data, and it is simple, conceptually flexible, and enables researchers to identify and analyze patterns or themes in a data set (Braun and Clarke, 2013 cited in Byrne, 2021).

Moreover, the researcher used an inductive essentialist approach in the analysis of this study. By adhering to essentialism, which posits that language directly mirrors our expressed meanings and experiences, the researcher takes a unidirectional stance on the relationship between language and communicated experience (Widdicombe and Wooffitt, 1995). Conversely, an inductive or 'data-driven' researcher may prefer to create codes that purely reflect the content of the data, without any pre-existing theory or conceptual framework. In this scenario, the data is 'open-coded,' rather than coded to fit an established coding frame, to effectively capture the meaning as conveyed by the participants (Braun and Clarke, 2019). The researcher also used semantic and latent codes to be utilized in this study.

Ethical Consideration

This research adhered to the ethical standards in conducting research. The participants were informed through an informed consent form and transmittal letter before the conduct of the study. The participation of the participants was voluntary and not forced to participate and does not include physically or psychologically harming human participants. The researcher also declared no conflict of interest in the study. Moreover, the researcher ensures the rigor of the study. Lincoln and Guba's criteria were utilized to establish the scientific rigor of the study. These include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Furthermore, the researcher secured the anonymity of the participants, and their answers will remain confidential and will only be served for this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were saturated for the three (3) teachers as frontline workers in Biliran Province during pandemic. Results focused on a total of 16 themes with four (4) themes per objectives:

Table 1
Themes of the Interactive Communication Among Teachers

Contents of Messages	Responses to Clients	Challenges	Ways of Addressing Challenges
Prevention Measures	Positive Client Attitude	Covid-19 Impact	Adapting Online Activities
Teaching Learning Process	Understanding and Supporting	Communication and Relationships	Support and Communication
Personal Well-being and Relationships	Effective Communication and Engagement	Teaching and Learning	Student Welfare
Changes and Support	Advising and Empowering	Personal and Emotional	Acceptance and Accountability

Content of Messages

Prevention Measures. This theme indicates to the reminders of the teachers towards their clients who are their respective students and parents, as well as their colleagues.

Participant 1 instructed her students to stay at home and to follow minimum health protocols.

"naghatag mig mga information sa mga, sa mga estudyante. Oo ...na magstay la sila sa kuan, ug wa ug wa silay importante nga, paliton didto sa gawas magstay lang sila sa balay." (We provided information to the students. Yes, they can stay at the dormitory, and they don't have any important things to buy outside, they can just stay at home.) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

Other than the students, participant 2 also reminded his colleagues to take care of themselves. As a covid-19 survivor, he advocated that the virus is no joke, and it is real unlike the doubts of many individuals.

". . .ingat lang jud mo. Kay tinuod jud ang COVID-19 dili mo, dili ni joke, tinuod jud siya" (. . .take care always. Because COVID-19 is real, it's not a joke, it's true.) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

Personal Well-being and Relationship. This theme signifies the messages to sustain the relationship between the teachers and students, as well as to their family members.

Participants 2 and 3 advise their students to be patient on the existing problem during their online classes. They also gave personal counsel and guidance to their students as clients.

". . .antos lang kay kini tanan, mawala dili man ni hangtod sa hangtod. Antos lang kay muabot gihapon ta sa – kanang hinay hinay ba. Kanang mubalik ta sa face-to-face wala na siyay problema" (. . .just endure all of these, they won't last forever. Just endure because we will eventually get back to face-to-face interactions without any problems) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

"Asking for advice or direction personal pod to niya na story..." (Asking for advice or direction is also a personal matter for him/her in this story...) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

Aside from the students, also part of the contents are follow-ups of their family members on their state of being and the planning of bonding of their friends.

This theme supports what Cohn- Vargas (2020) stated that with hybrid and remote learning, instructors must work harder to build connections with their students. Several people have come up with creative approaches to establish identity safety and foster an environment where each student feels welcomed and appreciated. Also, they improved collegial ties with their peers.

Changes and Support. This theme refers to the adjustment of the teachers, students, and the parents on their respective workloads in achieving quality education during the pandemic.

Participant 1, who is an elementary teacher, encouraged the parents to collaborate with them in helping educate their children by teaching on their respective modules. The Department of Education is implementing Learning Continuity Plan where pupils are given learning activities and modules to answer.

"Sige lang kaya rani nato ahh kani nga crisis ato rani siya ma-overcome. Ahh magtinabangay lang ta kay dili man pwede ang bata muari sa school." (We can handle this crisis. We can overcome this. Let's help each other because children cannot come to school) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

On the other hand, participant 3, who worked at the High School, shared his contents are more on the adjustment of the documents' processes.

"Naka-experience tag work from home though pila lang to ka buwan. That's my usual messages to my kuan, "how will I submit my outputs?", "what's the deadline of those outputs?", then "the mode of submitting the DTR's?" or "meron bang dtrs?" or "papano kukunin ang salary knowing the

restrictions?" (I have experienced working from home for a few months. That's my usual message to my colleagues, asking about how to submit my outputs, the deadlines for those outputs, the mode of submitting Daily Time Records (DTRs), or how to receive my salary considering the restrictions) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

Teaching- Learning Process. This theme shows that contents of the teachers during pandemic are the instructional materials, follow-ups on the activities, and the submission of the students.

Participant 1 recalled that she taught parents on how to teach the pupils on their own.

"ang hinanaing sa ubang parents nga, "Ma'am di jud mi kamao unsaon pagtudlo sa mga bata." (The concern of other parents is that, 'Ma'am, we really don't know how to teach our children.') [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

Implementing online classes, participant 3 usually do follow-ups on the students' learning activities and remind them on the submissions of the outputs.

"Siyempre I am in the academe, usually the messages are more on the follow-ups of the tawag niyan, submission of the learning activities . . ." (Of course, being in the academe, usually the messages are more on follow-ups, calling for submission of learning activities . . .) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

Responses to Clients

Fostering Positive Client Attitude. This denotes that teachers encourage positive attitude to their respective clients. Participant 1 encourages the parents and pupils to be positive and have patience in facing pandemic.

"I just encourage my pupils, the parents na you just stay at home ahh we will be able to overcome this crisis ahm... for now you will just stay at home mao rana." (I just encourage my pupils and parents to stay at home. We will be able to overcome this crisis. For now, it's best to stay at home.) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

Meanwhile, participant 2 advises them to follow minimum health protocols to prevent the spread of the virus.

". . . ako silang gi-advice-an na kinahanglan ug mugawas mo sa balay, importante, naka wear jud ug mask, aware jud mo sa mga IATF protocol; kadtong social distancing, muadto sa mga Department Store" (. . . I advised them that if they need to go out of the house, it's important to wear a mask and be aware of the IATF protocols, such as practicing social distancing, when going to department stores.) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

Understanding and Supporting Clients. This describes that teachers understand the plight of the students and their parents and have been supporting them in achieving quality education.

This includes understanding their socio-demographic and economic status in joining online classes, inspiring them to finish their assignments and tasks, and soliciting feedback and comments to them in order to improve their teaching- learning activities.

Participant 2 understood the difficulty of the students in the online classes. It is noted by Simbulan (2020) that the accessibility of flexible learning was affected by the diverse socioeconomic status of students, as some of them lacked access to the internet. The teachers responded it with understanding as they humanize education to their students.

"...Musabot man ko sa estudyante ug wala jud, kung wala jud so wa koy. Accept ta nga kana nga panahon, lisod jud siya, lisod jud. Lisod ang kuan, lisod ang.. kabutang sa mga tawo" (I understand the students, and it's really difficult during these times, really difficult. It's difficult for them, difficult for people's situations.) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

On the other hand, participant 3 recognized the importance of feedback in giving quality education. This helps teachers to know the comments on their learning- teaching delivery as well as what things that they can still improve on their teaching pedagogies.

" . . . I don't know if they listen to the topics, sa client nato mga student man. So I don't know if na kuan nila. Knowing the feedback of comments, positive man pud." (I don't know if they pay attention to the topics, as our clients are students. So I don't know if they understand. Based on feedback and comments, it's mostly positive.) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

He also noted that they motivate students to continue learning amid pandemic and be approachable whenever students had queries and concerns. However, he also pointed out that as teacher, being firm against the students who didn't reach out shall also face their consequences.

Effective Communication and Engagement. This refers to the approach of communicating by the teachers to their respective students and their parents.

Participant 1 noted that she understands first before explaining on the queries of the parents.

"Kabalo ko sa imong side kabalo ko sa imong part pero ah nagsunod raman jud ta kay kami we are just instructed also nga we will just distribute the modules sa pagkakaran you are the teachers" (I know your side, I know your part, but we just have to follow instructions because we are just tasked with distributing the modules for now, since you are the teachers.") [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

She also pointed out that allot time for queries. And most importantly, avoid arguing to them. She shared her experience of having bad arguments with one of the parents in the group chat and she responded on calling the attention of the parent.

Speaking of calling out, participant 3 stressed that he avoided scolding specific individuals in a group chat with the students. He noted that he just had a general reminder to them.

" . . . Sa gc ra nako murag general reminder lang ba" (I just want to give a general reminder, if I may) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

This theme corresponds to what Tricia Jones, a lecturer at Temple University's Klein Faculty of Media and Communication, claims that the pandemic has given rise to a new etiquette requiring people to be told why they are being treated in a particular way. She believes that one of the solutions to this issue is to upgrade technology so that it more closely resembles the experience of face-to-face interaction. It is essential for employees to comprehend and utilize numerous communication techniques in order to forge interactions with their clientele (Reddy and Gupta, 2020).

Advising And Empowering Clients. This theme corresponds to the mechanisms of advising and empowering pupils and parents by the teachers to achieve the goal of providing quality education.

Participant 1 recalled her experience as she extends visiting the household of her pupils to teach them if the parents cannot understand the lesson. This mechanism is a respond to the complaints of the parents that they cannot teach.

"Sa pagka karon Ma'am, sorry lang jud kay murag dili pa jud pwede ang bata." So kato pud with the consent pud nila na pwede raba ko mukuan kay at least makamao jud ang bata. Kay ug di ka kamao, ako mismo movisit sa imo. Ana ra, oo, visit sa bata." (For now, Ma'am, I'm sorry but it seems like it's not yet possible for the child." So, with their consent, they allowed me to teach the child myself so that the child can learn properly. Because if you don't know how to, I will personally visit you. That's it, yes, I will visit the child.) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

She also encouraged the parents to work hand-in-hand in providing education to their children. Moreover, participant 3 noted that in teaching research, one of the courses that badly needs face-to-face interaction, he created mechanisms for students to learn and understands every situation of every student.

"I announce kasi, nga ang akong kasi research groups sa ilaha para dili sila maglakaw-lakaw. Ang groupings naay tulo ka kuan, ang akong mechanism ba. Dapat ang groupings naa mo sa one barangay, in one municipality. In one municipality there should be atleast one working laptop. Unya naay usa ka member naay strong internet connection. " (I announced that my research groups are assigned to specific areas to prevent them from moving around. The groupings are divided into three, based on my mechanism. Each group should be assigned to one barangay, in one municipality. In one municipality, there should be at least one working laptop. And one member should have a strong internet connection.) [Participant 3, High School]

Challenges

Covid-19 Impact. This theme describes what impact and how the pandemic changed the lives of the teachers. This includes the fear of being infected of the virus, cancellation of the graduation rites, and transition struggles on the protocols.

According to Participant 1, adjusting to the transition phase of the pandemic was challenging since leaving the house meant adhering to strict health protocols to ensure personal and family safety. Teachers had to navigate this new normal and take all necessary precautions to reduce the risk of transmission.

"kasagsagan sa pandemic magkuan paka sa gawas kinahanglan magkuan paka sa health protocols kay para safety sad ang imonhang... ang member sa imong sulod." (During the peak of the pandemic, if you need to go outside, you have to follow health protocols for your own safety and the safety of those around you, including the members of your household) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

However, the impact of the pandemic extended beyond physical health. Many teachers struggled with emotional and mental well-being. Participant 2, as a covid-19 positive, admitted that he was discriminated even after being positive.

"murag ubos na jud kaayo ko. Na prejudice jud ako self during that time" (I felt really down during that time. I was prejudiced against myself.) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

The burden of additional responsibilities, such as remote teaching and managing virtual classrooms, added to their workload, leaving them drained and overwhelmed. Even the simplest tasks, like enrolling for professional development programs or furthering their education, became more challenging.

Participant 3 shared his experience that he had to deal with the added pressure of meeting requirements amidst the chaos and uncertainties brought about by the pandemic. Juggling multiple responsibilities, including their own academic pursuits, while managing the demands of remote teaching, posed significant challenges.

". . . Muenroll man gani di kasubmit ug requirements. Busy na gani sa school unya naa pay mga requirements sa Masters." (. . . Even enrolling was difficult because of the submission of requirements. I was already busy with school and there were still requirements for my Masters.) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

Locion *et al.* (2022) noted that due to the change in the teaching approach, some individuals had a hard time adapting to the new learning setting as it was unfamiliar to them. In addition to pre-existing academic challenges, the alteration in teaching methods resulted in mental health issues for several people.

Personal and Emotional. This theme denotes the personal challenges that the teachers faced. This includes being guilty as a teacher of not teaching enough the pupils due to pandemic set-up, missing family members, and working on additional workloads.

Participant 1 noted that to the usual face-to-face process, it had shifted to online enrollment, making it difficult for us to access the internet due to the additional tasks we had to handle. They were overwhelmed and unsure of how to proceed.

"daghan na noon kaayo nga kami naglibog nami unsa man atong unahon ani ang enrollment instead na pwede rato face-to-face, online na so maglisod na pud hinoon mi ug access sa internet kay daghan na gadugang-dugang ba na mga tasks sa amoa." (We were very confused back then on what to prioritize for enrollment. Instead of having face-to-face enrollment, it's now online, which makes it difficult for us to access the internet because we have additional tasks to do.) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

On the other hand, participant 3 revealed that the pandemic disrupted not only our work routines but also our personal lives, as evident in the changes to their body clocks.

"... Kadtong pandemic kasi naguba ang akong body clock..." (. . . During the pandemic, my body clock got disrupted...) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

Teaching and Learning. This theme refers to the struggle of the teachers on the teaching- learning process during pandemic. This includes the transition period of online classes, adjustment of time for classes due to intermittent internet connection of the students, and the responsibility of parents to teach the pupils.

During the pandemic, the Department of Education which implemented modular mode of learning delivery forced the parents to teach their own children at their respective households. The teachers made modules and learning activities as they facilitated the learning process. However, participant 1, an elementary teacher, expressed her problem in teaching and learning delivery stating the struggles of the teachers such as understanding the lessons, managing time on their busy schedules, and delivering learning pedagogies on their children.

"the problem also with the parents because some of the parents do not know how to teach their children the lessons" (The problem also lies with the parents because some of the parents do not know how to teach their children the lessons.) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

Some parents are unable to effectively teach their children the lessons due to their own limitations or lack of knowledge. This highlights how some parents may struggle to provide adequate support to their children's remote learning, which puts additional pressure on teachers to bridge the gap.

Meanwhile, participant 2, a college instructor, had a hard time adjusting their online classes to evening as students claimed that they are experiencing intermittent internet connection on morning and afternoon. The higher education is implementing a flexible learning set-up where teachers can deliver synchronous and asynchronous online classes.

"Gabie nalang ang ilang, ang among usahay klase, kay morning lisod man kaayo ang internet." (Let's just have evening time in some of our classes, because the internet is really difficult in the morning.) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

This shows how unreliable internet access during certain times of the day can disrupt online classes and hinder effective teaching and learning.

Furthermore, participant 3 admitted that during pandemic, he finds it hard to contact the students, especially not all students don't have mobile phones. This highlights how not all students have access to mobile phones or reliable communication methods, making it harder for teachers to establish contact and provide necessary support.

"pahirapan yung pag reach out sa students, because dili tanan dunay mobile phones mao ng wala ko kasabot sa ilang contact numbers" (It's challenging to reach out to students because not all of them have mobile phones, so I don't understand their contact numbers) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

Communication and Relationships. This theme refers to the challenges of teachers in terms of communication and relationship towards the parents, students, and even their colleagues. This includes having conflicts with

parents, limited time with family members, and the communication barriers that they experienced during the pandemic.

Participant 1 shared how physical contact and close interactions with parents, which were once common, have become distant due to the need for social distancing and safety precautions.

"usually man gud sauna ahh labi na ug kaila nimo ang parent naa pay mga maghugs pa mo, magbeso-beso pa. Pero karon murag layo na jud." (Usually before, you would still have parents who would hug and kiss you, especially if you know them. But now it seems like it's really far off.) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

Another challenge is the misconception or assumptions about teachers who may have contracted COVID-19. As a covid-19 positive, participant 2 revealed that people even his friends and colleagues discriminated him due to the no anonymity of the covid-19 victims. This illustrates that people publicly know who the patients and that were created a judgement and stigma towards them.

"Naay mga sulti sa ako na, 'uy nag ka COVID baya ka'" (I've had people tell me, 'Hey, you had COVID) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

Furthermore, the emotional toll of the pandemic can also impact teachers. Participant 3 shared his conflict with colleagues during pandemic. This reveals how the stress and challenges of the pandemic, including concerns about health and safety, can take a toll on teachers' emotional well-being.

". . .Siyempre kay napuno pud ko tingale adto na time. I don't know nganong naa man koy ganang mapuno nga ako man ang naka sah no" Of course, maybe because I was also overwhelmed at that time. I don't know why I had the urge to be overwhelmed when I was the one who got the mistake [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

Ways of Addressing the Challenges

Acceptance And Accountability. This addresses the challenges of teachers on conflict with their friends and colleagues. This includes accepting the discriminatory remarks against them and accepting their own flaws in the workplace.

Participant 2 who received discrimination to his peers and colleagues admitted that he accepted what people say against him to avoid conflicts with them.

"Ako lang siya gi-luom kay accept man ka, di pud ko makig argue nga wa ko mapositive. So positive accepted ko, na positive ko. So unsa man akong mabati didto sa akong mga colleagues, co-teacher nako, na accept lang nako" (I just kept it to myself because you accepted it, and I didn't want to argue that I wasn't positive. So I accepted it as positive, and I was positive. So how would my colleagues, my co-teachers, feel about me? I just accepted it.) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

Meanwhile, participant 3 accepted his flaws on the conflict with his colleagues citing he prioritized his backlogs and comply the requirements from their boss. He noted that the fight is nothing personal as he maintained friendship after the conflict. He also apologized on the mistake that he had done.

"Gihimo man gud nako dayon ang iyahang task, syempre pag submit nako ngadto nakalma naman pud siya. Siyempre ning sorry pod ko." (I immediately completed the task, and of course, when I submitted it, they also calmed down. Of course, I also said sorry) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

Student Welfare. This theme corresponds to how teachers addressed the problem on teaching and learning process.

As an elementary teacher whose challenges is on the parents that cannot teach their children, participant 1 shared her mechanism to address the problem.

"oo murag naestablish jud na siya nga relationship namo kay mutuo naman ang bata sa ako nga, 'ingon ani Ma'am. Ingon anion nimo pagtudlo imong bata para makantigo siya or maminaw siya"

nimo" ana." (Yes, it seems like our relationship has been established so I taught them on how the child believed on them saying, 'Like this, Ma'am. Teach your child like this so they can understand or listen to you) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

On the other hand, participant 2 noted that aside from adjusting his time for evening classes due to the problem of having intermittent internet connection, the university also established a kiosk where students can get their modules in their respective barangays for those who don't have mobile phones and internet.

"nagbutang man tag kiosk didto sa kada barangay, na kanang modular na ngadto sila na ngadto sila mu-mu idownload nil anga module nga nga among giassign sa ila" (We set up kiosks in each barangay, where they can download the modules that we assigned to them, which are in modular format.) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

This shows the passion and determination of the teachers to extend their hand and sacrifice their time to achieve quality education for their students. They have shown unwavering commitment to their profession and their students, going beyond the call of duty to ensure that education continues to thrive even in the face of adversity. Their resilience, creativity, and unwavering dedication serve as a testament to the invaluable role that teachers play in shaping the future of our society.

Support And Communication. This theme addresses the concern of the communication conflicts, missing their family members, and interaction between parents, students, and their colleagues.

In a problem where complaints arise in the group chat, participant 1 noted that it is better not to escalate tension and avoid conflicts.

"ayaw lang siguro patuli. Pwede ra mo magstorya kamo ahh rang duha at least dili na mudako ang issue kay mao mag gud na kasagaran na-encounter nila " (They probably just don't want to get involved. You two can still talk at least, so that the issue doesn't escalate because that's usually what they encounter.) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

Also, one of the challenges encountered is the struggle of communication due to the distance between the sender and receiver. Participant 2 noted that the importance of non-verbal communication during the pandemic.

"Oo dagko siyag tabang, kay dili man ta kaduol, layo man jud siya (uses both his hands to indicate distance). Naay 2 to 3 meters, so dili ta, unya nakakuan sad ta mask ka, dili jud siya kaayo, dili jud ang imo voice murag ma-kuan ba dili makaabot sa iya. So mugamit kag mga sign, mga sign language" (Yeah, he's a big help, because we're not close, he's really far away (uses both his hands to indicate distance). It's about 2 to 3 meters, so we're not close, and then we're also wearing masks, so your voice doesn't really reach him. It's like you can't communicate properly. So we use signs, sign language.) [Participant 2, College Teacher]

This contradicts to what Tricia Jones, a lecturer at Temple University's Klein College of Media and Communication said, that the epidemic interrupted nonverbal communication, which many people take for granted.

All participants also acknowledged using social media and gadgets on addressing the gap of communication during pandemic. This prompt participant 3 to highlight that face-to-face interaction is far way better than using this technological advancement.

"Mas maayo gud na in person magstorya" (It's really better to talk in person.) [FW12: D137]

This finding supports that the pandemic mandates application leaders to improve their technology alternatives to allow all stakeholders to communicate and engage with their community in a proactive manner (Gotta and Preset, 2020). Talya et al. (2020) noted that inadequate communication can contribute to the escalation of public concerns and polarization among groups. Although social and digital media are expected to remain significant in the future, they cannot entirely replace in-person interaction, as emphasized by Taunton (2020).

Adapting Online Activities. This theme addresses the concerns of teachers towards their adjustments during the pandemic. This includes adapting to the new learning system, having time management, and adjusting to the workloads that the pandemic brought.

Participant 1 stressed the adaptability of coping up on the challenges to go with the flow.

"Dali rata maka-cope up with the situation kani na crisis dili gyud lalim pero dali ra nato na adjust ang atong kaugalingon ahh para mo go with the flow nalang ta." (Dealing with the situation during a crisis is not easy, but we can quickly adjust ourselves to go with the flow) [Participant 1, Elementary Teacher]

Meanwhile, participant 3 shared the capacity building made by the schools on the flexible learning deliveries.

"Along the way thanks to my colleagues, there are most especially to the institution. Naa ang university nag offer man ug mga trainings to cope up with these challenges." (Thanks to my colleagues along the way, especially to the institution. The university offers trainings to help cope with these challenges.) [Participant 3, High School Teacher]

This conforms to the study of Hodges *et al.* (2020) that states numerous educators had to hastily come up with makeshift online learning solutions amid the pandemic.

While delivering content through online methods can be efficient, it may not be effective in promoting active learning and engagement (Bates and Galloway, 2012). A fully online course without any active learning activities, such as peer interaction, can make it feel more like an interactive book than a classroom, according to Sutterlin.

Conclusion

Teachers have been disrupted by the impact of the covid-19 pandemic and clients' attitude; however, they have employed different strategies in the communication process; thus, being able to convey understanding during the interactions. Given the challenges faced by teachers both at work and in their family lives, it is essential that professional development programs for teachers include strategies for enhancing interactive communication and resilience.

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