



## Overcoming Challenges on Modular Teaching Approach: Coping Mechanisms and Best Practices of Educators during the New Normal

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## Overcoming Challenges on Modular Teaching Approach: Coping Mechanisms and Best Practices of Educators during the New Normal

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### Abstract

During this pandemic, Educational Institutions, are obtainable with overcoming challenges in their education system despite this pandemic would still have an impact on its educational provision (Sintema, 2020). To analyze and describe how educators cope up during the pandemic including its best practices in overcoming the challenges of the modular teaching approach, data were collected through an online survey through google forms. Fifty purposely selected teacher respondents across Agusan del Norte and Butuan City Divisions participated in the said survey. Results indicate that educators face obstacles during the pandemic, including stressors (3.412, high level), emotions (3.716, high level), and perceived challenges (3.257, sometimes) on a modular teaching method. On the contrary, educators have also best practices (4.416, very high) and cope up (4.270, very high) on modular teaching approach during his pandemic. The researchers proposed intervention programs that are suitable and applicable to their new normal professional development.

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### Introduction

Since education is believed to continue despite the circumstances, teachers started to prepare for modular and online distance learning (De Villa, 2020). Teaching is possible, but, has challenges as well (De Villa, 2020). If there's one of the most affected sectors brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic it would be the Education sector. Safety and security are very much vulnerable to schools nowadays. Including the health concerns of school personnel, students, parents, and other stakeholders are at stake; thus, temporary closure of schools was enforced to contain the spread of the virus and reduce infections (UNESCO, 2020).

During this pandemic, educational institutions are obtainable with overcoming challenges in their education system despite this pandemic would still have an impact on its educational provision (Hartono & Ozturk, 2022; Sintema, 2020). This critical situation brings to light many concerns such as the weakening of the quality of education and the future of the students (Usak, 2020). With that, there is a larger necessity for educational institutions to strengthen the practices in the curriculum and the use of innovative teaching techniques and approaches will be of top importance (Toquero, 2020). The reason why teachers work from home is mainly because of the community lockdown and quarantine that led students to be engaged through online distance learning (Crawford et al., 2020).

The opening of classes this school year has been delayed from August to October giving more time to schools most especially the Department of Education to prepare continuity plans and being able to manage alternative learning modalities (De Villa, 2020). Most commonly, teaching and learning are much to have happened inside the classroom which becomes the most vulnerable to disturbance. With that notion, education leaders planned to cope and adopt the New Normal education (De Villa, 2020). Globally, many schools have already replaced traditional classroom setups with innovative flexible learning strategies since these are found to improve students' learning outcomes (De Villa, 2020).

In the Philippines, its basic education system had gone so far. Particularly with its basic education, it had adversely faced challenges related to the delivery of learning modalities. Most of its learners belong to marginalized sectors in which tend to be expected to have less access to resources causing social disadvantage and the digital divide. The education sector is recommended to have flexible learning in which it is furtherly subjected to evaluations ad debates in terms of inclusivity and equal opportunity for educational purposes (De Villa, 2020). The Department of Education (DepEd) strongly believes that "Education shall continue despite the situation" in which it has implemented its Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for the Academic year 2020-2021. This continuity plan includes education package interventions that will aid in the basic education challenges brought about by COVID-19 (DepEd Order No. 12, 2020). To prevent the further transmission of the pandemic, DepEd ensures to protect the health, safety, and well-being of learners, teachers, and personnel. The department decided to implement the alternative learning delivery modalities such as modular, television-based, radio-based instruction, blended, and online while face-to-face classes are still prohibited due to the public health situation.

Most essential learning competencies (MELC) are used in which as per the curriculum offer, learning competencies have been decongested but will be also aligned to are aligned to the achievement of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity (De Villa, 2020). Accordingly, in the learning process and teaching, the mode of instruction has changed differently. Most commonly, the subject matter is usually taught in many different ways such as inquiry, hands-on learning, social interaction, and constructivism (Kim, 2020; Or, 2022).

However, such pedagogies seem difficult to implement in distance learning, and teachers do not feel adequately able and prepared to teach the subject remotely (Lichoro, 2015). Teachers need to adapt and cope up with these new trends of education. There will be some teachers who are entirely new to this new kind of education who might feel unprepared to facilitate teaching, thus there is a need for support such as technical, pedagogical, and time management (Downing, 2013). This new normal education heavily relies on technology leaving the teachers not fully prepared and lack of competence (Nilson, 2018). With this, digital literacy must and should be practiced as it is the key skill for lifelong learning and valued ability in Industry 4.0.

Though, there is still a downside due to its high maintenance and cost, accessibility to online platforms and resources, and incompetence in its use (De Villa, 2020). As this pandemic is slated to exist until the preventive vaccine is discovered, it is essential to know how the educators who are the prime facilitators of the education adjusted to this transition and what challenges they faced while adapting to this transition as their preparedness

for the coming times (Lapada, 2020). Thus, this study was conducted to analyze and describe how educators cope during the pandemic including its best practices in overcoming the challenges of the modular teaching approach. Moreover, the result of the study will be a starting basis for the evaluation and assessment of how educators become resilient during the pandemic.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The main purposes of this qualitative research are to analyze and describe how educators cope up during the pandemic including the best practices done by educators in overcoming the challenges of the modular teaching approach. Especially, it sought the following queries:

1. Determine the respondents' demographic profile in terms of:
  - a. Gender
  - b. Age
  - c. Years of Teaching
  - d. Teacher's School Location (Urban/Rural)
  - e. School Type (Public/Private)
  - f. Level of Education Taught (Kindergarten, Elementary, Junior High School, Senior High School)
2. Analyzing challenges of Educators on Modular Teaching Approach during the pandemic.
  - a. Emotions
  - b. Stressors
  - c. Challenges encountered
3. Identifying the best practices and coping mechanisms done by educators in overcoming the challenges of modular teaching approach.
4. Providing generalizations, and intervention programs to educators that are suitable and applicable for their new normal professional developments.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research is rooted in the framework that educators should build best practices and coping skills to overcome the difficulties facing teachers. Practices of educators have an important role to play in making this modular teaching successful. In this chapter, the theoretical framework was concisely developed by researchers. As seen in the framework, the researchers would like to take into account the independent variables which are the demographic profile of the respondents, and the dependent variable which are the challenges and best practices of teachers. Using a 5-point Likert scale, teachers in this research provided responses that are evaluated by the researchers. Score and means from responses are generated by respondents which are the educators. Having this reference point, the variables stated above are very suitable for a basis in our theoretical framework.

### **Perceived Challenges**

Educational environments have evolved significantly overtime in the last decade and have been more varied and dynamic. The rapid migration of several distinct cultures from pluralistic communities adds to the diverse student body. When they are not comfortable with culturally sensitive education, student diversity poses problems for new teachers (CRT) (Gay, 2002). Teachers in reality do faces multiple challenges and different asks that they find to be difficult to address. Teachers are facing many jobs and tasks that make it hard to adapt to the new inventions and innovations in the fields of education, and technology.

### **Best Practices and Coping Mechanisms**

Teachers should help to sustain the effectiveness of learning for their pupils. For Cheng (2010), Teacher Education Study and Experience Theory 106 and Schools show that the quality of teacher education services will only be increased if teacher educators help students understand the distinction between teaching and theory and seek to enable them to incorporate their learned theory and practice. It is a fact that studying and teaching theories allow teachers to better understand their work. Coping is an approach marked by a constant review and reassessment of a person's interaction with his or her world. This theory is especially useful for researching the coping mechanisms used by agricultural teachers to control and handle stress at work through the eight coping mechanisms defined by coping methods (Folkman, 1986). Coping strategies have their functions to relieve certain individuals of stress and drain emotional health. Providing several mechanisms for new teachers will allow them to further assimilate their new cultures and positions in teaching.

### **Review of Related Literatures and Related Studies**

It has been said that coping mechanisms are viewed that can stabilize and help a person adjust psychosocially from stressful events that happened. Strategies of coping have been utilized more than once to lessen stress which includes time management, constructive reassessment, social help, and commitment. Having tolerance of responsibility can also be considered as strategies that are useful in school.

Challenges, and strategic problem-solving, and intellectual have been the pattern over the years (Amponsah, 2018). Coping mechanisms do help teachers ease their stress and maintain their well-being. To cope up with difficulties during these times is to help themselves to have some time for themselves and not entirely put their full time into school works. However, there are challenges regarding these coping mechanisms. There is a current study in which aimed to assess the emotions, stressors, coping strategies, and motivational factors of private HEI teachers in Southern Philippines that resulted that the low salary scheme was the primary teachers' stressor.

However, teachers tend to utilized resources and helpful strategies to cope up with stress. Private institutions implement and follow several motivational factors that seem to be significant steps. The stress of teachers during the pandemic would affect and influences their emotions towards their workplace and community (Baloran, 2020). Several challenges have been affecting educators during this time. Adaptation to technological practices contributed to teachers' stress in handling classes in modular and virtual classes. It is considered that the senior faculty members will face bigger challenges of adapting to the rapid change of technology. A single platform of

technology is easier for them to use and operate but when two or more things are used for conducting higher education teaching-learning it becomes a complex situation and, in most cases, they face difficulties. Also identifies the technology training of senior teachers is a complex attribute that needs more time than younger teachers (Awal, 2019).

Researches have supported different claims that coping mechanisms help teachers deal with their anxiety. “Research on how Filipino teachers' practices on how they deal with anxiety due to the COVID-19 outbreak.” The results show these are the following practices including; information seeking, preventive measures, and other coping mechanisms to deal with anxiety during the quarantine period. According to Toquerob (2020), teachers should practice virtual learning, get to be engaged with the professional community, adhere to quarantine requirements, and find purposeful activities to deal with anxiety due to the suspension of national school-related activities in the country brought by the pandemic teaching strategies in doing modular classes play an important role in maintaining effective teaching.

Multiple practices help educators to cope up better and not increase the level of difficulty they are experiencing. Communication skills, provision of informative feedback, technological competence, administrative skills, monitoring learning, responsiveness, providing student support are the skills that are necessary to teachers during this pandemic (Roddy et al., 2017). For effective communication for instructors and students in an online school, clear communication should be practiced by both the teachers and students. It includes the usage of email, live class questions, chats/online messages, feedback provision, and assessment. The importance of communication during this time is highly needed (Roddy et al., 2017).

Online or virtual classes should include the methods of feedback for both the students and instructors. Students should be instructed using live messages/ chat or video camera interaction. The fellowship of students differs in online settings as well. Friendship in virtual classes is difficult compared to face-to-face classes. Feedback and assessment can be delivered in many ways in asynchronous classes in online classes. It has been found out that there is a positive influence of transparent assessment practices, for communication about deadlines and assessment requirements (Roddy et al., 2017).

Furthermore, another study on distance education readiness found 90% of the total special education and preschool teachers surveyed got motivated to implement distance education despite having diverse students, lack of specialists, home-schooled, under long medical treatment, attending short stay with group or family and private school (Fedina, 2017). Likewise, in another study, higher education mentors show a positive attitude and motivation to teach university students special needs like hearing and visually impaired despite the risk and challenges in learning materials, pedagogy, monitoring, implementation, and psychological understanding (Movkebayeva, 2018).

## **Method**

This descriptive research was adapted from (Nassaji, 2016) in realizing this study involving the different public

and private schools of Agusan del Norte, Caraga Region. To analyze and describe how educators cope up during the pandemic including its best practices in overcoming the challenges of the modular teaching approach, data were collected through an online survey as developed through Google forms with an attached consent form that was conducted from December 3, 2020- December 7, 2020, which are being disseminated through social media (Facebook messenger and e-mails. Survey link was disseminated to public and private teachers via social media. The purposive random sampling technique was utilized to collect answers from teachers regardless of their age, gender, length of teaching experience, location of school (urban or rural), school type (public or private), and level of affiliated institution (Kindergarten, Elementary, Junior High School and Senior High School) (Lapada, 2020).

The questions and statements were adapted from the study of Khalid (2016) and Baloran (2020). Questions and statements were modified and adjusted to fit the purpose of the study. As per the objective of the study was stated, survey statements were determined according to; Emotions, Stressors, Perceived challenges, Best practices, and Coping mechanisms. There was a total of 50 private and public-school teachers across the division of Agusan del Norte and Butuan City, Caraga Region, Philippines who responded to the online survey, which set the study's sample size limitation. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, standard deviation and mean as statistical tools to interpret the teachers' responses. The table below shows the values of the range of means with descriptive interpretations that will be used in analyzing the data to be obtained after the survey.

Table 1. Range of Means and Descriptive Interpretations

<b>Descriptive Interpretations</b>	<b>Range of Means</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretations</b>	<b>Qualitative Interpretations</b>
Never	1.00 - 1.79	Very Low	The extent of the effect is very low.
Rarely	1.80 - 2.59	Low	The extent of the effect is low.
Sometimes	2.60 - 3.39	Neutral	The extent of the effect is neutral.
Often	3.40 - 4.19	High	The extent of the effect is high
Always	4.20 - 5.00	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.

## **Results**

This descriptive research was adapted from (Nassaji, 2016) in realizing this study. The mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) were used as the bases to interpret the teachers' responses describing their perceived challenges and best practices to the modular teaching approach. The SD describes how data were being spread out. A high standard deviation means that the responses are consistent and spread out (Lapada, 2020).

### **Teachers' Demographic Profile**

A total of 50 public and private school teachers across the division of Agusan del Norte and Butuan City, Caraga Region responded to the survey questionnaire. As Table 2 shows, the majority of the respondents are female (74%), while only it consists of male (26%). More female-teacher responses than male-teacher respondents were predicted because, according to Deped records (Esplada, 2010), 86 percent of the total teacher population in the

Philippines is mostly female. In terms of age, most of the respondents who normally belong to the Millennial generation are 23-30 years old (58 percent).

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Teacher Participants

<b>Demographic Profile</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	13	26
	Female	37	74
<b>Age</b>	23-30	29	58
	31-39	9	18
	40-49	6	12
	50 above	6	12
<b>Years of Teaching</b>	0-2	14	28
	3-5	16	32
	6-10	7	14
	10-15	4	8
<b>Teachers Location</b>	Rural	31	62
	Urban	19	38
<b>School Type</b>	Public	42	84
	Private	8	16
<b>Level of Education Taught</b>	Kindergarten	3	6
	Elementary	10	20
	Junior High School	17	34
	Senior High School	20	40

Teacher respondents are mostly located in rural areas (62%) while the remaining came from urban areas (38%). The majority of the respondents work in public (84%) while the remaining (16%) came from private schools in the area. Teacher-respondents are distributed as per the level of education they have taught; most of them are Senior High School teachers (40%), then followed by Junior High School teachers (34%), Elementary teachers are (20%) and Kindergarten teachers comprising (6%). As for years of teaching, most of the teachers have an average of 3-5 years of teaching experience (32%).

### **Perceived Challenges of Educators on Modular Teaching Approach during the Pandemic**

Teaching is certainly one of the most stressful when it comes to work-related pressures. Teachers struggle with a lot of tension during the day the way a person can handle the stress depends on the result of their day, but also the students. Well-being is a crucial component of everyday life, there is a multitude of problems that can impact the day, and the methods that are used to cope depend on the person. The majority of teachers are not just teaching students, they also maintain positive relationships with parents, other teachers, other support staff, and the administration, which may cause a great deal of anxiety and stress to some individuals. Concerning the cause of stress of teachers, Table 3 shows the three most causes of stress to teachers. These are; poor internet connection



and lack of ICT equipment for flexible learning, webinars, and online meetings are affecting my performance ( $\bar{X}$ =3.860, high), the lack of supply for modular teaching ( $\bar{X}$ =3.740, high), and conflicts between their duty and their safety ( $\bar{X}$ =3.720, high). Criticisms influence educators. Typically, they contributed to their problems. The management of so much feedback influences their job and concentration. Poor pay does not benefit them either. Teachers often have to pick money from their own pockets without the guarantee that they will profit from it.

Table 3. Stressors of Educators on Modular Teaching Approach during the New Normal

<b>Stressors</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>	<b>Qualitative Interpretation</b>
1. The poor internet connection and lack of ICT equipment for flexible learning, webinars, and online meetings are affecting my performance.	3.86	High	The extent of the effect is high.
2. I cannot sleep at night due to nature, demands, and concerns, unexpected changes at school work	2.90	Neutral	The extent of the effect is neutral.
3. Every time I communicate with parents and students who have school-related concerns, it is difficult to address.	2.88	Neutral	The extent of the effect is neutral.
4. Seeing my colleagues being stressed out or afraid during the pandemic makes me feel the same.	3.06	Neutral	The extent of the effect is neutral.
5. Without the assurance of when will the COVID – 19 pandemics be under control has added to my stress as to how am I going to address the existing problems.	3.44	High	The extent of the effect is high.
6. There are conflicts between my duty and my safety.	3.72	High	The extent of the effect is high.
7. The idea of getting tested/screened for COVID-19 infection is making me feel worried.	3.44	High	The extent of the effect is high.
8. No pay or low salary for teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic affects my financial status that is stressful to handle.	3.44	High	The extent of the effect is high.
9. It is hard to handle criticisms against the teachers on social media during the pandemic.	3.64	High	The extent of the effect is high.
10. The lack of supply for modular teaching is stressing me out.	3.74	High	The extent of the effect is high.
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>The extent of the effect is high.</b>

Emotions play an important part in balancing the day-to-day jobs of teachers to ensure the well-being of students. It gives them the power to step ahead with their department with whatever objectives and mission I need to be. Emotions impact the lives of teachers not only in the workplace but outside of classes. During this time, assessing their mental state will convey how they feel, regardless of the endless obstacles they face today. Concerning the

emotions felt by teachers, Table 4 shows the 3 most emotions felt by the teachers. Topmost is; the feeling that "I still have to do my job regardless of the difficulties of the new normal education setting as it is my professional and ethical duty" ( $\bar{X}$ =4.620, very high), followed by the feeling that "I have the obligation and dedication to doing my work as a frontline educator" ( $\bar{X}$ =4.600, very high), and the feeling of trying limiting my physical contact with other people especially with my co-workers, parents, and students ( $\bar{X}$ =4.200, very high). While teachers often find it daunting to work far away from their pupils and their jobs, they find it more comfortable at these periods than dangerous work in face-to-face classrooms. For all the sentiments that teachers feel, they value the compensation they earn and they have regular needs that they need to meet.

Table 4. Emotions of Educators on Modular Teaching Approach during the New Normal

<b>Emotions</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>	<b>Qualitative Interpretation</b>
1. I feel that I still have to do my job regardless of the difficulties of the new normal education setting as it is my professional and ethical duty.	4.62	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
2. I try limiting my physical contact with other people, especially with my co-workers, parents, and students.	4.28	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
3. I feel that I have the obligation and dedication to do my work as a frontline educator.	4.60	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
4. I prefer to work at home than in school during this pandemic.	4.06	High	The extent of the effect is high.
5. I expect financial assistance after the pandemic.	3.26	High	The extent of the effect is high.
6. I appreciate the financial compensation I received during the pandemic.	3.88	High	The extent of the effect is high.
7. I appreciate special recognition for my job by the administration and the parents/students I serve despite the pandemic situation.	3.86	High	The extent of the effect is high.
8. I feel nervous and scared.	3.22	High	The extent of the effect is high.
9. I feel sad that my workload increased because of the shift to flexible learning.	3.42	High	The extent of the effect is high.
10. I thought of quitting my job due to compensation issues.	1.96	Low	The extent of the effect is high.
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>The extent of the effect is high.</b>

Problems are common when it comes to work-related topics. Teachers face challenges regularly, as other employees. As for the challenges perceived by teachers, Table 5 shows the 5 most challenges faced by teachers. Topmost is; the challenges of having stable internet access intended for distance learning education ( $\bar{X}$ =3.600,

often), followed by challenges on checking and evaluating students' output from modules ( $\bar{X}$ =3.580, often), then the challenges on modular learning modalities ( $\bar{X}$ =3.500, often). Also, the challenges of establishing communication with my students ( $\bar{X}$ =3.440, often). Included also, challenges on establishing a network of communication among stakeholders such as parents for support at home ( $\bar{X}$ =3.440, sometimes). These problems are familiar to educators. It is also dominant that teachers find it difficult and challenging to pass outputs on time, knowing that time is very difficult to manage, especially when multiple woks have to be completed.

Table 5. Perceived Challenges of Educators on Modular Teaching Approach during the New Normal

<b>Perceived Challenges</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>	<b>Qualitative Interpretation</b>
11. I am facing challenges in the knowledge and skills required in delivering distance learning education classes.	3.16	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
12. I am facing challenges in having stable internet access intended for distance learning education.	3.60	Often	The extent of the effect is low.
13. I am facing challenges in establishing communication with my students.	3.44	Often	The extent of the effect is low.
14. I am facing challenges with the use of phones, laptops, and tablets, or any devices for distance learning education.	3.02	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
15. I am facing challenges in the use of social media, e-mails, and other platforms of distance learning education.	2.82	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
16. I am facing challenges in giving instruction and responding to queries through e-mail and messages.	3.16	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
17. I am facing challenges in encouraging participation and utilization of features in online classes.	3.10	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
18. I am facing challenges on time management in the conduct of classes, monitoring of responses, availability of students, and other online class issues.	3.28	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
19. I am facing challenges on the sudden shift from face-to-face to online classes.	3.10	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
20. I am facing challenges in managing the stress caused by community quarantine at home and in between online class demands.	3.22	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
21. I am facing challenges in beating the deadlines and requirements set by the school administrators.	3.30	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.

<b>Perceived Challenges</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>	<b>Qualitative Interpretation</b>
22. I am facing challenges in establishing a network of communication among stakeholders such as parents for support at home.	3.38	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
23. I am facing challenges in checking and evaluating students' output from modules.	3.58	Often	The extent of the effect is low.
24. I am facing challenges in building a positive environment through online classes through emotional support among my students aside from content-based teaching and learning.	3.20	Sometimes	The extent of the effect is neutral.
25. I am facing challenges with modular learning modalities.	3.50	Often	The extent of the effect is low.
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>The extent of the effect is neutral.</b>

As for Lapada (2020), the education system lacks face-to-face contact, the school/institutions would have to play a crucial role in this journey of transformation, as they are the ones that provide instruction and seminars for teachers to be trained with distance learning skills and information. Besides, schools/institutions are those who schedule, execute, and assess student events or services such as distance learning to ensure their effectiveness. Challenges are intended to be faced by educators to enhance their capacity when it comes to addressing school-related problems. Problems are often hereditary, and procedures should be combined with these issues to be resolved.

### **Best Practices and Coping Mechanisms did by Educators in overcoming the Challenges of Modular Teaching Approach**

To essentially complete and resolve challenges faced by teachers, best practices to overcome these challenges are practiced as effective or work-related concerns. Given the pandemic, best practices in the administration of education should be present. The first best practice was best to manage properly the releasing and retrieval of modules to avoid confusions ( $\bar{X}$ =4.560, very high), followed by the practice of best to value parental and familial involvement in distance modular learning ( $\bar{X}$ =4.500, very high), and the practice of best to have quality control of the modules before printing ( $\bar{X}$ =4.480, very high). Apart from these practices, teachers are also actively advised to identify opportunities for students to learn successfully as DepEd Commons does. It's good for students to think individually as well. The pick-up and drop modules are also convenient.

Amid a pandemic, teachers among private higher education institutions (HEIs) in the southern Philippines continue to aspire to preserve quality teaching and learning delivery to students and achieve school quality targets facing psychological difficulties triggered by the socio-economic and health crisis (Baloran, 2020). That being said, teachers still need to step ahead to sustain quality education for the good of the community. Educators should

strive for their utmost to have an education that is always professional for all, regardless of the country's condition.

Table 6. Best Practices of Educators on Modular Teaching Approach during the New Normal

<b>Best Practices</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>	<b>Qualitative Interpretation</b>
1. It is best to check paper works on time.	4.28	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
2. It is best to monitor students regularly.	4.46	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
3. It is best to manage properly the releasing and retrieval of modules to avoid confusion.	4.56	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
4. It is best to instruct the parent of the students to follow the pick-up, answer, and drop modules protocol.	4.44	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
5. It is best to encourage students who have stable internet access to use online education platforms such as DepEd Commons.	4.44	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
6. It is best to value parental and familial involvement in distance modular learning.	4.50	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
7. It is best to explain modules especially if it consists of different units at a time.	4.40	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
8. It is best to ask for feedback and reinforcement as modular learning is self-instructional and lacks face to face interactions.	4.48	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
9. It is best to instruct students to learn through radio or television shows.	4.12	High	The extent of the effect is very high.
10. It is best to have quality control of the modules before printing.	4.48	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.42</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>The extent of the effect is very high.</b>

Coping mechanisms are critical for educators to cope with the challenges mentioned above. It is also important to deal with issues to handle them in their ways. In the previous table, here are the coping mechanisms being done by educators. The topmost coping mechanism was to attend online webinars for professional development ( $\bar{X}$ =4.520, very high), followed by to read about COVID-19 with its prevention and mechanism of transmission ( $\bar{X}$ =4.500, very high), and both have the same mean the practice of best "to cope up with stress by talking and motivating myself to face the COVID-19 pandemic with a positive attitude" and "to be busy at home with different activities such as cooking and cleaning that would keep my mind away from COVID-19 issues." ( $\bar{X}$ =4.460, very

high). According to teachers, it is a must to speak or open up to family and friends. With all the tensions they are facing, it makes them relaxed. When it comes to jobs, avoiding overtime let them deal with stress as well. In today's global health scenario, where teachers in the public education system are challenged to respond to the paradigm change in the teaching and learning process, strengthening crisis self-efficiency is critical to sustaining and growing the engagement of teachers at work (Baloran, 2020). Coping up is a must to cope with multiple hurdles. Teaching is a noble career. There should still be complete devotion and patience.

Table 7. Coping Mechanisms of Educators on Modular Teaching Approach during the New Normal

<b>Coping Mechanisms</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>	<b>Qualitative Interpretation</b>
1. It is easy to follow strict personal protective measures (e.g., mask, hand washing, social distancing, etc.)	4.20	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
2. It is a must to read about COVID-19 with its prevention and mechanism of transmission.	4.50	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
3. It is better to use virtual/online platforms to communicate with my school administrator and co-workers for information and updates	4.12	High	The extent of the effect is high.
4. It is better to chat with family and friends to relieve stress and obtain support.	4.34	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
5. It helps me cope up with stress by talking and motivating myself to face the COVID-19 pandemic with a positive attitude.	4.46	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
6. It is a good idea to be busy at home with different activities such as cooking and cleaning that would keep my mind away from COVID-19 issues.	4.46	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
7. It is highly encouraged to use social media or social networking sites for enjoyment and entertainment.	3.82	High	The extent of the effect is high.
8. It is best if you look for ways to earn extra income during lockdown such as online selling, online tutor, etc.	4.02	High	The extent of the effect is high.
9. It is best to attend online webinars for professional development.	4.52	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
10. It is recommended to avoid doing overtime school-related works.	4.26	Very High	The extent of the effect is very high.
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>The extent of the effect</b>

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**is very high.**

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## **Discussion**

It is the goal of this study to identify and present the perceived difficulties, best practices, and coping mechanisms of the modular teaching method carried out during the pandemic by educators. The teacher-respondent population profile is linked to the problems facing them, including the stressors and feelings they faced during the pandemic. Since most respondents (58%) are at the age of 23-30 years, they are called teachers who are 'tech-savvy' by using the most important teaching technology. However, teachers with more years of teaching experience are older demographic by default and are thus generally less tech-savvy (Lapada, 2020). In specific, this community of teachers needs more support to execute their lessons using online resources (Lapada, 2020).

The researchers in this analysis concentrate on the teachers' perspectives directly in the difficulties and how they handled their personal and institutional issues. When it comes to teaching, the pandemic has brought so many problems. It has created further work-related efforts to be carried out. Darling-Hammond (2019) even suggested that teachers have to re-think an intervention to deliver their lessons for these tough moments rather than face-to-face experiences. In this journey, the school plays a crucial role as they offer instruction and seminars for teachers to be trained with the expertise and experience of distance learning education. The findings of the study indicate that the key stressors and challenges among educators are weak internet access and lack of ICT equipment for portable learning webinars and online meetings, the tension between duty and protection, lack of supply for modular teaching, stable internet connection, communication with stakeholders and students, and evaluation of students. Online pieces of training do help educators to acquire the new skills set needed for this new normal educational setting. One article supported this by stating that institutions will achieve this by the provision of training sets and workshops; schools can also spend on distance learning services and equipment. It is evolving constantly; to cater to a changing learning environment, it is a must to be modified (Bozkurt, 2019).

Emotions, however, are also important variables that influence the success of teachers, in addition to the physical difficulties faced by teachers. Also, Sincero,(2020) pointed out in her article that as a result of a particular driven action, feelings could be perceived. Data indicated that support for teachers especially among private educational institutions should be strengthened by the government in its efforts to continue providing quality teaching in higher education. During the pandemic, it is important to resolve teachers' stress-related issues and help them improve their coping practices and encouragement at work. They feel that teachers need to do their job regardless of the difficulties, limiting physical contact with other people, they feel to have the obligation and dedication to doing work as a frontline educator are the main emotions that affect educators during the pandemic. The results from the study of the researchers were supported by the findings of Toquerob (2020), which suggested that anxiety or psychological stress that COVID-19 has brought made the Filipino teachers feel stressed.

For these problems to be addressed, best practices of teachers to handle stress are always there to maintain teachers' well-being. The results from the study suggested that it is highly encouraged to involve the parent in the modular teaching to seek support and have familial involvement. This is a dominant base for Uslu (2018) because according to her, elementary teachers should interact with their pupils through their guardians. For high school students,

though, teachers can use internet tools and they use technology such as email and social media to be tech-savvy. Besides, that, she mentioned that teachers should plan a policy for how to stay in contact with students concerning connecting with students, such as the use of online platforms; however, it would also be beneficial to include print-based modules due to unstable internet access in rural areas. Elementary teachers can interact with their pupils through their guardians. For high school students, though, teachers can use internet tools and they use technology such as email and social media to be tech-savvy.

To work well, coping strategies are also very vital. Educators need to develop their means of dealing with work-related problems. It is safe for them to deal with it once in a while and not be exhausted by just worrying about work-related concerns. For all assignments, teachers should be prepared. In addition, coping strategies are required for these demands to be carried out effectively. The study proposed that teachers cope up through reading the prevention and transmission process of COVID-19 during this period. Protection is a better coping strategy for them than any other form. As proven by previous authors (Baloran, 2020; Khalid, 2016) who have investigated the management techniques during the pandemic, strict personal security initiatives, such as decreased media visibility, are important. In addition, Schivano (2014) said that in times of pandemics, workplaces should also concentrate on enhancing contact and delivering social assistance to workers to mitigate negative encounters. While challenges are becoming difficult to cope with during his time teachers need to reinforce their hearts to carry out their work and duties. They need to make a complete effort to excel and become a successful frontline instructor. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic scenario, teachers are also struggling to maintain the standard of teaching and learning for students and to meet school quality goals amid the psychological pressures of the socio-economic and health crisis (Baloran, 2020).

## **Conclusion**

This research study defined and explained the challenges faced by educators, including their best practices and the framework for dealing with the modular teaching methodology during the pandemic. Accordingly, there is a gap between the significant relationships of the demographic profile of teachers (Gender, Age, Years of Teaching, Teachers' Location, School Type, and Level of Education Taught) to the challenges, best practices, and coping mechanisms. This is supported by Kini and Podolsky (2016) by stating that teachers who have taught for many years have more experience coping with tough times such as pandemics or natural calamities, the length of teaching experience impacts the preparation for distance learning education.

Results indicate that educators face obstacles during the pandemic, including stressors ( $\bar{X}$ =3.412, high level), emotions ( $\bar{X}$ =3.716, high level), and perceived challenges ( $\bar{X}$ =3.257, sometimes) on a modular teaching method. The key source of their stress is mostly bad internet connectivity ( $\bar{X}$ =3.860, high level). The poor internet and unreliable ties impact their success in the handling of modular teaching. Emotionally, educators believe that they do need to do their job, regardless of the challenges of the current standard education setting, since it is their technical and ethical responsibility ( $\bar{X}$ =4.620, very high). Meanwhile, educators have reacted with 3.600 mean suggesting that when it comes to providing reliable internet connectivity for distance learning education, they often face challenges. On the contrary, educators have also best practices ( $\bar{X}$ =4.416, very high) and cope up



( $\bar{X}$ =4.270, very high) on modular teaching approach during his pandemic. The result indicates that they handled the proper release and retrieval of modules to prevent misunderstanding ( $\bar{X}$ =4.560, very high). In dealing with this, educators replied that it is best to cope up by engaging in online webinars for professional growth ( $\bar{X}$ =4.520, very high).

Therefore, the teaching group is psychologically prepared to adapt to new and creative forms of teaching skills, provided that they are well assisted by their institutions (Lapada, 2020). Although the modular approach to teaching has brought many new problems and confusions to the educational environment, the teaching and school community are ready to deal with these situations. The education of young children or young people shall continue and shall not be disrupted by any barrier whatsoever. The teaching and school are breaking the boundaries to establish more flexible and quality education during the pandemic.

## **Recommendations**

The researchers recommend the following intervention programs to address the results that have been gathered. The proposed intervention programs are suitable and applicable for their new normal professional development namely: Conflict Resolutions for Duty and Personal Safety, Establishing Proper Communication and Collaboration between the Stakeholders and Parents, Quality Control of Instructional Materials, Emotional and Psychological Support for Teachers' Well-being, and Professional Work-related Growth and Development.

Moreover, a specific population and sampling technique should be implied to gather more specific numerical results for future research. To determine the relationship between the demographic profile of the teachers' respondents (Gender, Age, Years of Teaching, School Location, Level of Education Taught) to the different challenges (emotions and stressors) coping mechanisms and best practices using statistical parameters including Analysis of Co-variance.

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