

Impact of New Normal Education to Teachers and Students in Southern Palawan, Philippines

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the impact of New Normal Education brought about by Covid- 19 pandemic to teachers and students in Southern Palawan. This study investigated the advantages and challenges encountered by the students and teachers, as well as the solutions they employed to overcome it. The respondents of this study were students and teachers of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) strand in Southern Palawan. Frequency count, mean, and percentage were the statistical tools employed. Most of the student-respondents were in grade 12 level; while most of the teacher-respondents were teaching grade 12, rendered service for 0 to 5 years, and bachelor's degree holders. New Normal Education helped most of the students in becoming independent and self-reliant learners. It also lessens the expenses of the teachers as to when physical mode of teaching was still practiced. Students experienced problems related to internet connection, lesson delivery, and validation of learning; while teachers struggled on the delivery of quality learning to students in a distance. Doing school works beforehand, and proper managing of time such as doing the household chores in the daytime and answering modules at night time helped them overcome the challenges of meeting the deadlines in their school works and activities; while teachers communicated constantly with the learners and their parents to address school related problems.

Keywords: COVID-19, Challenges, STEM, Solutions, Advantages

Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic has been a threat to education since it negatively affects the entire operation of the education around the world. Because of its savage presence, many schools were forced to suspend classes with the fear of getting infected by the virus. The Philippines' Department of Education implements a new system of education to cope up with the changes, secure the safety and welfare of both teachers and students, and to fill in the gaps on the delivery of basic education by providing alternative learning opportunities.

The Philippines continues to confront different issues brought about by the coronavirus disease 2019, the Department of Education (DepEd) is addressing the challenges in the basic education through its Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BELCP) under DepEd Order No. 012, s. 2020. The BE-LCP aims to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of the learners, teachers, and personnel in the time of COVID-19, while finding ways for education to continue amidst the crisis (Tibon 2020).

Distance learning modalities are new and often unfamiliar approaches for students, parents/caregivers and teachers, so they need to be supported. Teachers require training aligned with the learning modalities

they are engaged in. Even the use of familiar technology – mobile phones and SMS – requires training: not necessarily in the use of the technology, but in the pedagogy of teaching through these methods. Teachers trained in these new learning modalities can better support parents/ caregivers and children on how to effectively learn and engage through such modalities (UNICEF 2020)

Online learning is a more affordable option, as individuals get a high-quality education at a much lower cost due to the lower overhead needed to operate the programs. Not only does tuition tend to be lower, but many additional expenses, such as transportation costs and course materials, are eliminated in an online program (Krakoff 2022).

Challenges that emerged in the implementation of modular distance learning which include lack of school funding in the production and delivery of modules; students struggle with self- studying, and parents' lack of knowledge to academically guide their child/children (Dangle 2020).

Students' perception of emergency distance learning was on one hand affected by how autonomously they could learn and by whether they were academically successful. Specifically, students with teachers holding high expectations were more likely to benefit from distance learning (Garote 2021).

With the goal of determining the impact of new normal education to students and teachers in Southern Palawan, the researchers decided to conduct this study.

Methodology

This study was descriptive in nature. It used the descriptive-explorative as it carefully investigated the impact of new normal education to students and teachers in Southern, Palawan, Philippines.

This study involved 152 students and 21 teachers from Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) strand in Southern Palawan. The researchers used survey questionnaires as instruments in gathering the needed data such as the grade level of the students; the teachers' handled grade level, years in service, and highest educational attainment. It also gathered information such as the advantages, and challenges of the new normal education; as well as the solutions they employed to overcome the challenges.

The study employed several statistical tools which include frequency tables, percentage, weighted mean, and ranking to analyse the data.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. *The Demographic Profile of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Students in Southern Palawan in terms of Grade Level*

Grade Level	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Rank
Grade 11	61	40.13	2
Grade 12	91	59.87	1
TOTAL	152	100.00	

Table 1 shows that 91 Or 59.87% of the students were in grade 11, while 61 or 40.13% were in grade 12. This means that most of the students were enrolled in grade 12.

Table 2. *The Demographic Profile of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Teachers in Southern Palawan in terms of Handled Grade Level*

Handled Grade Level	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Rank
Grade 11	9	42.86	2
Grade 12	12	57.14	1
Total	21	100.00	

Table 2 shows the profile of the teacher in terms of handled grade level. It can be seen from the table that there were 12 teachers or 57.14% who were teaching grade 12 students, while only 9 or 42.86% were teaching grade 11 students. This implies that majority of the teachers were handling grade 12 students.

Table 3. *The Advantages of New Normal Education to Students*

Advantage/s of new normal education	Frequency (n=168)	Relative Frequency	Rank
Can manage my own time	21	13.82	2
Become independent and self-reliant	49	32.24	1
Have quality time with the family	8	5.26	8.5
Develop technical skills	12	7.89	4.5
Develop critical thinking skills	13	8.55	3
Have time to help parents in doing household chores	6	3.95	11
Learning is more accessible	5	3.29	13
Students are safe from Covid infection	12	7.89	4.5
Learn at their own pace	11	7.24	6
Continue education despite the pandemic	6	3.95	11
Grow personally as an individual	2	1.32	15.5
Fewer Expenses	6	3.95	11
Can do help with household chores	10	6.58	7
Can have part-time jobs	3	1.97	14
Become active and productive	8	5.26	8.5
Understand the lesson better	2	1.32	15.5

Table 3 presents the advantage/s of the new normal education to the students. It can be gleaned from the table that 49 (32.34%) of the students stated that they become independent and self-reliant; 21 (13.82%) mentioned that they can manage their own time; 13 (8.55%) said that they develop critical thinking skills and were safe from Covid 19 infection; 11 (7.24%) emphasized that they learn at their own pace; 10 (6.58%) declared that they can help in the household chores; 9 (5.26%) said that they have quality time with their family and they become active and productive; 6 (3.95%) stated that they have time to help their parents in the household chores, that they can continue education despite pandemic, and that the new normal education is less expensive; 5 (3.29%) mentioned that learning in the new normal education is more accessible; 3 (1.97%) said that they were able to

acquire part-time jobs while studying, and 2 (1.32%) stated that they grow personally and understand the lesson better. Results imply that the implementation of new normal education was helping the majority of the students in becoming independent and self-reliant learners.

Winstead (2022) affirmed the above findings by stating that blended learning has some kind of personal approach. He said that blended learning can cater each student's pace and learning styles, and create a more comfortable environment for all kinds of learners regardless of their cognitive abilities.

Table 4. *Advantage/s of New Normal Education to Teachers*

<i>Advantage/s of new normal education</i>	<i>Frequency (n=168)</i>	<i>Relative Frequency</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Less expenses	3	14.29	2.5
Students are not pressured to wake up early	2	9.52	5.5
Have quality time with the family	1	4.76	8.5
Students learn at their own pace	1	4.76	8.5
Opportunity for the students to learn new things by themselves	1	4.76	8.5
Students can learn amidst pandemic	2	9.52	5.5
Students are safe	3	14.29	2.5
Students can help their parents in doing chores and other part-time jobs	3	14.29	2.5
Parents can monitor their children while answering modules	1	4.76	8.5
Both teachers and students become adaptive to changes in response to new normal teaching and learning	3	14.29	2.5

Table 4 presents the advantage/s of the new normal education to the teachers. It can be seen from the table that 3 (14.29%) teachers stated that in the new normal education, expenses were less, students were safe, students could help their parents in doing chores and other part-time jobs, and both teachers and students became adaptive of changes in response to new normal teaching and learning; 2 (9.52%) mentioned that students were not pressured to wake up early, and students could learn amidst pandemic; 1 (4.76%) said that they had quality time with their family, their students learned at their own pace, it was an opportunity for the learners to learn new things by themselves, and parents were able to monitor their children while answering modules. Results imply that the advantages of the implementation of the new normal education to teachers were less expenses as compared to the physical mode of the learning experience, and much safer on the part of the students as they had to stay in their respective homes, monitoring is much easier for the parents, and both teachers and students become flexible in their

responses toward the new normal education.

The findings were supported by an article written by Krakoff (2022) where she stated that online learning is a more affordable option, as you'll get a high-quality education at a much lower cost due to the lower overhead needed to operate the programs. Not only does tuition tend to be lower, but many additional expenses, such as transportation costs and course materials, are eliminated in an online program.

Table 5. *The Challenges Encountered by the Students in the New Normal Education*

<i>Challenges Encountered in the New Normal Education</i>	<i>Frequency (n=166)</i>	<i>Relative Frequency</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Lack of Financial Support	2	1.32	14.5
Poor internet connection	48	31.58	1
Blurred images and unclear directions on modules	5	3.29	6.5
Management of responsibilities	1	0.66	17.5
Lessons are difficult to comprehend without the face-to-face discussion	41	26.97	2
Temptation of using the cellphone for social media and gaming	5	3.29	6.5
Answering modules while doing household chores	2	1.32	14.5
Anxiety, lack of sleep	5	3.29	6.5
Unavailability/lack of learning resources	4	2.63	10.5
Brown out	1	0.66	17.5
Submitting modules without validation of learning	23	15.13	3
Missing submitted outputs	1	0.66	17.5
The learning environment is not conducive	4	2.63	10.5
Late submission of modules	4	2.63	10.5
Ineffective time management	4	2.63	10.5
Exposure to radiation	1	0.66	17.5
Limited time is given to answering the modules	5	3.29	6.5
Lack of quality learning	7	4.61	4
Limitation of movements due to health protocols	3	1.97	13

Table 5 presents the challenges encountered by the students in the implementation of new normal education. It can be seen from the table that 48 (31.58%) of the students were challenged by poor internet connection; 41 (26.97%) with the difficulty of the lesson to understand; 23 (15.13%) with the submission of modules without learning validation; 7 (4.61%) by the lack of quality learning; 5 (3.29%) with the blurred images and unclear directions in modules, the temptation of using the cellphone for social media and gaming, anxiety, lack of sleep, and limited time to answer the modules; 4 (2.63%) by the unavailability/lack of learning resources, the unconducive learning environment, late submission of modules, and ineffective time management; 2 (1.32%) of the lack of financial support, and answering modules while doing household chores; and 1 (0.66%) by the management of responsibilities, brownout, and exposure to radiation. Results signify that majority of

the students who were engaged in the new normal education experienced problems related to the internet connection, lesson delivery, and validation of learning.

It affirms the statement of Suryaman et al. (2020) where they revealed that students faced many obstacles in a home learning environment, such as lack of mastery of technology, high internet cost, and limited interaction/socialization between and among students.

Further, it negates the statement of Lynch (2018) that modern classrooms are slowly taking a new approach to imparting wisdom and knowledge to the upcoming generation. Lynch noted that blended learning improves the efficacy and efficiency of the entire learning process. He added that blended learning makes education more accessible, that students can pace themselves, and that teachers can become more engaged with the learners.

Table 6. *The Challenges Encountered by the Teachers in the New Normal Education*

Challenges Encountered in the New Normal Education	Frequency (n=166)	Relative Frequency	Rank
Lacks school's budget for purchasing printing materials	3	14.29	2.5
The difficulty of students to comprehend lessons, especially in Math	2	9.52	4.5
Not sure if the students learned from the modules	2	9.52	4.5
Not sure if the students are the ones who answered their modules	1	4.76	8
Students do not answer the activities.	3	14.29	2.5
Lacks quality learning since students do not fully understand the content of the modules.	4	19.05	1
Stressful on the part of teachers especially bombarded with paper works.	1	4.76	8
Struggling learners find it difficult to adjust especially since their parents could not assist them also.	1	4.76	8
Poor internet connection	1	4.76	8
Late submission of modules	1	4.76	8

Table 6 presents the challenges encountered by the teachers in the implementation of the new normal education. It can be noticed on the table that 4 (19.05%) of the teachers were challenged by the lack of quality learning since students did not fully understand the content of the modules; 3 (14.29%) with the lack of school's budget in purchasing printing materials, and students do not answer the activities; 2 (9.52%) by the difficulty of students to comprehend lessons especially in Math, and not being sure if the students learned from the modules; and 1 (4.76%) by the unsureness if the students were the ones who answered their modules, stress on the part of teachers especially because they were bombarded with paper works, struggling learners who find it difficult to

adjust especially that their parents could not assist them, poor internet connection, and late submission of modules. Results imply that most of the teachers' encountered challenges or problems related to the delivery of quality learning as many students had difficulties in understanding the lessons found in their modules, lack of budget for school supplies, and the taking-for-granted attitude of the learners toward their modules.

The result is affirmed by Tibon (2020) who stressed that the Basic Education-Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) is confronted with different challenges including the incapability of some learners to learn independently in any of the modes of distance learning or blended learning. Also, he mentioned that the Department of Education would need substantial and additional financial resources to meet the objectives of the BE-LCP. In his statement, it is apparent that the school supplies to produce needed learning materials must be taken into consideration. Moreover, he underscored that the learning outcomes in the implementation of the BE-LCP by embracing the new normal education may be affected, and there might be negative impacts on the students who cannot easily cope with the change.

Table 7. *Solutions Employed by the Students to the Challenges They Encountered in the New Normal Education*

Solutions to Overcome Challenges in the New Normal Education	Frequency (n=166)	Relative Frequency	Rank
Managing the finances wisely	4	2.63	13
Acquiring Wi-Fi/internet booster	9	5.92	5.5
Asking the teachers about difficult lessons	6	3.95	9
Doing school works ahead of time	23	15.13	2
Time management	6	3.95	9
Deleting other unnecessary applications from the cellphone	1	0.66	19
Doing household chores in the daytime, answering modules at night	18	11.84	3
Self-discipline	5	3.29	11.5
Self-care	3	1.97	14.5
Having a positive mindset	5	3.29	11.5
Surfing the net for difficult lessons	28	18.42	1
Trusting and helping myself	8	5.26	7
Trusting God	11	7.24	4
Asking for help from the members of the family and other people	9	5.92	5.5
Relying on the solutions employed by the school and the government	6	3.95	9
Going to a place with an internet connection	2	1.32	16.5
Facing the problem and embracing the changes	1	0.66	19
Becoming responsible	2	1.32	16.5
Answering the modules immediately or before the deadline	3	1.97	14.5
Reading research and watching video tutorials	1	0.66	19

Table 7 presents the solutions employed by the students to overcome the challenges they encountered in the implementation of the new normal education.

The data revealed that in order to surpass the challenges 28 (18.42%) of the students surf the net for difficult lessons; 23 (15.13%) did school works in advance; 18 (11.84%) did household chores in the daytime, and answered modules at night; 11 (7.24%) trusted God; 9 (5.92%) acquired wifi or an internet booster, and asked help from other members of the family and other people; 8 (5.26%) trusted and did self- help; 6 (3.95%) asked the teachers about difficult lessons, managed their time; and relied on the solutions employed by the school and the government; 5 (3.29%) did self- discipline, and developed positive mindset; 4 (2.63%) managed their finances wisely; 3 (1.97%) did self-care, and answered the modules immediately or before the deadline; 2 (1.32%) went to a place with an internet connection, and became responsible; and 1 (0.66%) deleted other unnecessary applications from the cellphone, faced the problem and embraced the changes, and read researches and watched video tutorials. Results imply that a great majority of the respondents depend heavily on the internet for surfing and finding understanding for difficult lessons. Doing school works ahead of time and proper budgeting of time such as doing the household chores in the daytime and answering modules at night time helped them overcome the challenges of meeting the deadlines in their school works and activities. Winstead (2022) gave a sort of reminder about the solution employed by the students on the challenges they encountered in the implementation of the new normal education like surfing the net for difficult lessons. Winstead stated that among the disadvantages of blended learning are plagiarism and credibility concerns. He explained that once a learner is already internet-friendly, it would be hard to resist the temptation of always consulting the web for their school-related works and activities including their assignments. He added that this may affect fair assessment and quality of work. He also said that teachers must need make learners aware of the consequences of using unverified online resources.

Table 8. *Solutions Employed by the Teachers to the Challenges They Encountered in the New Normal Education*

Solutions to Overcome Challenges in the New Normal Education	Frequency (n=166)	Relative Frequency	Rank
Personal loan to meet the needed materials.	1	4.76	5.5
Watching YouTube or having a private tutor	1	4.76	5.5
Give questions other than from their modules.	1	4.76	5.5
Use meaningful strategies especially in recording students' outputs.	3	14.29	2
Follow the implemented school policies.	1	4.76	5.5
Project SHARE (Offline Library) to sustain the school's incapacity to print modules.	1	4.76	5.5
Communicate with the students and parents through home visitation and online kumustahan.	8	38.10	1
Conducted a study on the reasons why students are not able to submit their modules on time.	1	4.76	5.5

Table 8 presents the solutions employed by the teachers to overcome the challenges they encountered in the implementation of the new normal education. The data revealed that in order to beat the challenges 8 (38.10%) of the teachers communicated with the students and parents through home visitation and online kumustahan; 3 (14.29%) did use meaningful strategies especially in recording of students' outputs; and 1 (4.76%) got personal loan to meet the needed materials, watched YouTube or hired a private tutor, gave questions other than from their modules, followed the implemented school policies, utilized the Project SHARE (Offline Library) to sustain school's incapacity to print modules, and conducted study on the reasons why students were not able to submit their modules on time. Results imply that majority of the respondents had constant communication with the learners and their parents in the implementation of the new normal education which allowed the learners to ask for assistance from their teachers, especially in their difficult lessons.

UNICEF (2020) supports the findings by stressing that the children need continued interaction with their teachers, including guidance and feedback on their work. Additionally, UNICEF underscored that continued teacher involvement is a critical factor for learning continuity so students would feel supported during school closures, and to help reform a sense of routine and normality for students and their parents.

Conclusion

The implementation of new normal education was helping the majority of the students in becoming independent and self-reliant learners. It also lessens the expenses of the teachers as to when physical mode of teaching was still practiced. Students who were engaged in the new normal education experienced problems related to the internet connection, lesson

delivery, and validation of learning. Teachers encountered challenges or problems related to the delivery of quality learning as many students had difficulties in understanding the lessons found in their modules. The predominant challenges and problems of parents relative to the implementation of the new normal education were attributed to having no or poor internet connection. Students depend heavily on the internet in finding understanding for difficult lessons. Doing school works beforehand and proper managing of time such as doing the household chores in the daytime and answering modules at night time helped them overcome the challenges of meeting the deadlines in their school works and activities. Teachers communicated constantly with the learners and their parents to give them assistance especially in their difficult lessons.

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