
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Lived Experiences of Teachers in Coastal Areas toward Modular Instruction amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic

Alona Medalia Cadiz-Gabejan¹ ✉ Malyn L. Mabubay², Aries Paul V. Solis³

¹Assistant Professor II, College of Education, Samar State University, Catbalogan City, Samar Philippines

^{2,3}Student, College of Education, Samar State University, Catbalogan City, Samar Philippines

Corresponding Author: Alona Medalia Cadiz-Gabejan, **E-mail:** alonamedalia.gabejan@ssu.edu.ph

| ABSTRACT

This study explored the lived experiences of elementary teachers who were assigned in schools along coastal areas as they employed modular instruction amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. It inquired into the ways these teachers perceived modular instruction, their experiences with it, and the mechanisms they adopted as they met challenges brought by its abrupt implementation due to the pandemic. As a qualitative study, it utilized a profile questionnaire and in-depth interviews among 12 participants to gather the needed data and applied Colaizzi's method of phenomenological data analysis to interpret the same. Results revealed that the teacher-participants, regardless of age, sex, and the number of years in service, were all dedicated, committed, and passionate about teaching their students despite the new mode of instructional delivery as using modules was the only suitable and appropriate method of teaching in coastal areas. Their lived experiences were very much different from the experiences that they had in the traditional face-to-face classes because, despite the tight schedule and bundles of paperwork they faced every day (e.g., the printing of modules, accomplishing school reports, etc.), they still had to conduct house-to-house visitation to facilitate students' learning while staying at home. Although they considered going to school and to their students' homes as a risk to their health and to their own families, they remained faithful to their profession because they believed that it was only through modules that their students could learn amidst the pandemic. The study also showed that to be able to adapt to the new normal education, teachers in coastal areas should just embrace this peculiar learning setup, develop skills in time management, and be more flexible, resourceful, responsible, patient, and passionate.

| KEYWORDS

Lived Experiences, Coastal Areas, Modular Instruction, COVID-19 Pandemic

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1. Introduction

The novel Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) stunned the world, and the world came into silence. It caused a profound effect on education systems around the globe. Schools closed across every country, which subsequently moved learning to be online and made educators scramble to adapt their curriculum and learn new strategies for teaching students from a distance. In schools that remained open, teachers were coping with heightened stress levels from students, families, and colleagues (Tria, 2020). As a result, teachers developed a skill that would qualify the learning acquisition of students and possess a high level of patience.

Despite the unexpected circumstances and overwhelming consequences, this global condition has also provided an extraordinary time for learning. Teachers and students alike have shown how resilient and adaptable the educational systems, policymakers, and their families can be. Indeed, the role of teachers during the pandemic had rapidly evolved, becoming, in several ways, much more difficult than when the teaching-learning process took place only in person. Throughout our journey in acquiring information about educational aspects, teachers' approaches and strategies affect in contributing learning to its learners.

In the Philippines, where there are over 7,000 islands that are separated by waterways, a lot of challenges are being faced by the country's education system right now. In today's teaching-learning process, teachers must download and print modules for each

of their students and deliver these to their students' residences. Teachers in coastal areas have a bigger struggle to face, for they have to contract a motorboat going to the urban area to buy the needed materials for printing modules, and the same mode of transportation is used in the delivery of the printed modules.

As stated by the Philippine Statistics Authority (2017), Samar, being one of the poor provinces in the country, has places that are archeologically isolated. It is hard for teachers to transport essential materials, especially those which are for educational purposes. The school personnel needs to rent a motorboat and/or a motorcycle to directly deliver these materials to schools. Teachers residing in other places but are assigned to teach in coastal areas are also compelled to use this kind of transportation to meet the needs of their students.

It was in this context that this study was conceptualized by the researchers. They wanted to find out the lived experiences of the elementary teachers who were assigned in coastal area schools during the trying times of the new normal education mainly caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As mentioned, this study explored the lived experiences of elementary teachers who were assigned in schools along coastal areas as they employed modular instruction amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. How do elementary teachers perceive modular instruction?
2. What are the lived experiences of teachers toward modular instruction amidst the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. What are the mechanisms employed by the teachers toward the challenges that they encountered during the modular instruction amidst the COVID-19 pandemic?

2. Literature Review

Modular instruction is one of the self-paced learning approaches where students have to set themselves active in the learning process and utilize their own abilities at their own pace. It is different from the traditional way of learning, where students are kept forth by the teacher instead of focusing on the lecture delivery by the latter. Students normally encounter difficulties in the traditional classroom setting. Whereas the modular approach is a good alternative to traditional teaching because students have the responsibility of learning and maintaining their positive attitude and behavior toward it. They get a chance to participate in enriched interaction among their classmates because the teacher's set of instructions stipulated in the module provides functional teacher-student interaction. This technique involves the educational resources displayed to capture the targeted understanding. Students who use modular cooperative learning, modular self-instruction, and traditional method would significantly differ in their level of understanding of concepts. According to Padmapriya (2015), these perspectives are related to students' development of ideas, concept formation, comprehension, motivation, a habit of practice, reinforcement, and further showing of their better performance.

Modular instruction aids remedial instruction for slow learners and supports the enrichment of materials for fast learners. Through these self-instructional materials, specific topics can best be presented. A student is given ample time and assistance to accomplish the prescribed learning activity at his own pace and time. Students will enjoy the lessons discussed therein, and the experience they will gain will be satisfying.

When analyzing this method of teaching, modular instruction can be regarded as a more effective, recent, and technology-based teaching method in the present educational context. Modules are economical and effective in developing specific knowledge and skills. These self-instructional materials induce learning with minimum teacher supervision and direction. Also, as espoused by Rillo (1995), modules develop learning and grading techniques, improve classroom management strategies, and encourage student achievement for greater use of existing learning resources through the establishment of authentic and obtainable learning outcomes within an individualized program of studies.

However, Dangle & Sumaoang (2020) identified challenges encountered by teachers, parents, and students in the implementation of Modular Distance Learning. Through a mixed-method approach to research by conducting surveys of 37 participants in selected schools via quota and purposive sampling and by employing thematic analysis in coding and interpreting the data, the challenges that emerged were a lack of school funding in the production and delivery of modules, students struggled with self-studying, and parents lacked the knowledge to academically guide their children. Although the previous study had a bearing on the current study, the former focused on the implementation of modular instruction among secondary school teachers and explored their experiences with it. Whereas the latter dealt with elementary teachers, who were specifically assigned to teach in schools along coastal areas.

Speaking of coastal areas, Nusantari et al. (2020) analyzed the effectiveness of environmentally-based science learning to enhance the environmentally-friendly character of the elementary students in the coastal areas. This study was only one of the few in which the locale was set in coastal areas similar to the present study. Whereas Paras et al. (2021) study also explored the lived experiences of the public-school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interview responses were analyzed through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), and the results revealed the following: (1) most teachers were significantly challenged by lack of resources, handling of students, submission of school reports, and excessive workloads that contributed to stress and burnout; (2) the occurrence of the digital age-limited most public-school teachers. They could hardly perform specific tasks for the students virtually, provide an effective learning environment, and communicate with students, given that the resources were inadequate; (3) public-school teachers coped, resorting to the right communication and understanding in their circumstances; and (4) teachers gained positive experiences despite stress and burnout; it included their passion, relationships built, and the fulfillment of their duty. Hence, while the study of Nusantari et al. (2020) was only relevant to the current study based on its locale, the studies of Dangle & Sumaoang (2020) and Paras et al. (2021) were, so far, the only studies found to be the most relevant when it comes to exploring the lived experiences of teachers toward modular instruction amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Material and Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study used a qualitative research method and employed a phenomenological research wherein it explained the lived experiences of the elementary teachers along coastal areas toward modular instruction. The data were presented through descriptions based on the elementary teachers' own experiences and perspectives.

3.2. Instrumentation

The researchers used an interview guide to gather the necessary data. This research instrument underwent content validation by three (3) subject matter experts. Their comments and suggestions were applied in the revision of the interview guide, and the whole instrument was pilot-tested among five (5) elementary teachers assigned in coastal area schools that were outside the scope of the actual locale of this study. The interview guide first solicited the needed profile of the participants - name, age, gender, and a number of years in the teaching profession. It also contained the questions that were asked to the participants during the face-to-face interview.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

The study included the elementary schools along coastal areas of Catbalogan City, Samar, Philippines. They were situated 10 to 12.2 kilometers away from the city proper, and the mode of transportation was by sea through motorboat and by land through a jeepney, but a ride via motorcycle and a bit trail would still be needed to reach these barangays.

Purposive sampling was utilized in the research since the study was about the lived experiences of the teachers. The researchers used this sampling procedure to acquire in-depth and detailed information from the participants. Hence, the following were the inclusion criteria, to wit: 1) the participant must be an elementary teacher assigned in a school located in a coastal area; 2) he/she must have at least two (2) years of teaching experience, and 3) he/she must have the willingness to participate in the interview. In the actual interview process, the participants were composed of 12 as it was only until this number of teachers involved when the data saturation was reached by the researchers.

3.4. Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers addressed a communication letter to the elementary school principals whose school assignment was located in coastal areas of Catbalogan City, Samar. This was sent to them to request that they be allowed to conduct their study. When approval was granted, the researchers personally visited each school and conducted individual face-to-face interviews. The researchers followed the Health and Safety Protocol, such as wearing a face mask and face shield, applying alcohol from time to time, and observing physical distancing to ensure their own safety and that of the participants.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Throughout the conduct of the study, the researchers observed the following:

Validity. This study's research design addressed the questions posed in the statement of the problem.

Voluntary Participation and Consent. The researchers sought the consent of the elementary teachers to be the participants in this study.

Sampling. The participants represented the whole population of elementary teachers who were assigned to schools along the

coastal areas of Catbalogan City, Samar.

Confidentiality. The researchers made sure that the anonymity of participants was respected; therefore, the researchers would not publicize personal data.

Risk of Harm. The researchers also made sure that the participants were free from harm and were protected; otherwise, the researchers should redesign the study.

Research Methods. After obtaining the elementary school principals' approval and the teachers' consent, the researchers personally administered the individual in-depth interviews. It was audio-recorded, and such was also approved by the participants. The responses were transcribed, analyzed, and interpreted for discussion, conclusions, and recommendations.

3.6. Data Analysis Procedure

In presenting the profile of the participants, the following statistical tools were used:

Frequency Count. This was used in reporting the number of participants who have the same age, sex, and the number of years in the teaching profession.

Percentage. This was used to present the proportion of participants having the same age, sex, and the number of years in the teaching profession.

Mean. This statistical measure was used to describe representative characteristics of age, sex, and the number of years in the teaching profession.

In interpreting the qualitative data obtained from the participants, this study used the Collaizi Method (Collaizi, 1978), wherein data analysis was a rigorous and robust process in which the researchers tried to find, understand, describe, and depict the teachers' experiences as well as revealed emergent themes and interwoven relationships.

The transcripts of the audio-recorded conversations in the face-to-face interviews were interpreted in a narrative way. The researchers consolidated all the responses of the teacher-participants to get the main goal of this study, and it was to explore their lived experiences as elementary teachers along coastal areas who were employing modular instruction amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study with the corresponding analysis and interpretation of data. Included are the profiles of the teachers who encountered problems in the new mode of the educational system amidst the pandemic, particularly the implementation of modular instruction.

4.1. Profile of Teacher-Participants

This part presents the profile of teacher-participants in terms of the following variates, namely: age, sex, and the number of years in the teaching profession.

4.1.1. Age and Sex.

Table 1 provides the age and sex disaggregation of the elementary teachers.

Table 1
Age and Sex Disaggregation of Teacher-Participants

Age Bracket	Sex		f	%
	Male	Female		
26-31	1	2	3	25
32-37	1	3	4	33.33
38-43	0	1	1	8.33
44-49	1	0	1	8.33
50-55	1	1	2	16.68
56-60	0	1	1	8.33
Total	4	8	12	100
%	33.33	66.67	100	
Mean	39.17 years old			

The table shows that the oldest teacher-participant was aged 60 years old while the youngest was 26 years old, whereby a number of them, that is, 4 or 33.33 percent, lay between the age bracket of 32-37 years old. Three or 25 percent were aged 26-31 years old, while 2 or 16.67 percent were aged 50-55 years old. The rest of the teacher-participants were distributed to the other identified age brackets.

Most of the teacher-participants were female, accounting for 8 or 66.67 percent. The male counterpart was composed of 4 or 33.33 percent only. This indicated that female dominance existed among the teaching force of the school, a usual scenario in the Department of Education (DepEd), which denoted that most of this sex group embraced the teaching profession more than their male counterpart.

4.1.2. Number of Years in Teaching.

Table 2 presents the number of years accumulated by the teacher-participants in the teaching profession.

Table 2
Number of Years in Teaching of Teacher-Participants

Years in Teaching	f	%
23-26	1	8.33
19-22	1	8.33
14-18	2	16.67
10-13	4	33.33
6-9	2	16.67
2-5	2	16.67
Total	12	100

Table 2 presents that the longest number of years in the teaching of the teacher-participants was 26 years, while the shortest was 2 years in the teaching profession, that is, 4 or 33.33 percent had been teachers for 13-10 years, while the rest were distributed to the other identified brackets of years of service in the teaching profession.

4.2. Perceptions on Modular Instruction

Due to the pandemic, education stops just for the safety of the teachers and the students. As the DepEd Secretary said, “education must continue even in the midst of pandemic”. There had been many proposed modes depending on the location of the school.

The modular approach situated Filipino students to learn in the comfort of their homes. Limited contact with teachers and parents or guardians becoming teachers served as the learners’ model (Manlangit et al., 2020). Though this new system of education was only new to the department, all of the teacher-participants already understood the modular instruction.

According to P1, modular instruction is the delivery of lessons through modules to the learners.

"The lesson will be delivered to the learners through modules wherein all the instruction that would be discussed depends on what is in the modules."

One of the main problems in the coastal areas was having a poor internet connection, and the most suitable was only modular instruction, as said by P3 and P6.

"Under distance learning, modular instruction is the best choice that is very suitable in our area," as said by P3.

According to P4 and P12, the new normal education introduced a new norm of educating the learners in order to build independent learning in the learners.

P4 said, *"Modular instruction is introducing self-learning or having independent learning of the learners through modules in their home."*

P12: *"Modular instruction for me is the use of the module in giving learning to the students. Using modules is not only teaching them the lesson; it also helps them develop to learn independently."*

P5 stated that as a teacher, modular instruction was not suited for elementary students. However, instead of complaining, acceptance was the best option to choose.

"For me, modular instruction really is not for the students in Elementary; it is only suited for the ALS (Alternative Learning System) students. It's hard, but we don't have any choice but to accept and embrace it is for the safety of everyone," as said by P5.

In order for the learners to learn at their own pace, modular instruction was the prerequisite design to boost the ability of the learner, as said by P7, P9, and P10.

According to P7, *"Modular instruction is an alternative instructional design and a form of distance learning. Modular instruction allows the learners to learn at their own pace."*

"Alternative way of giving instructional lessons to the students with the use of modules," says P9.

According to P10, *"Alternative instruction design that uses developed instructional material that is in the needs of the students."*

One way of extending learning that the learner needed was through the use of modules, as said by P8 and P11.

According to P8, *"Modular instruction taken from the word module, meaning we are going to use modules to give instructions or learning's to our students to extend the learning that they need through modules."*

"One way of extending knowledge to the students in the time of the pandemic," as said by P11.

4.3. Situation during Modular Instruction amidst the Pandemic

Teaching is really a big challenge. There are a lot of things to consider, and one of them is what would be the best technique or material the teacher should use in daily instruction – if the technique or material really would help them impart knowledge to the learners. However, these things are the old normal. Out of 12 participants, two (2) of them said that modular instruction was helpful. Here are the teacher-participants' experiences at the time of the pandemic using modules as a mode of instruction.

According to P7, *"Modular instruction for me is helpful amidst this pandemic; it is the only mode of learning suitable to the majority of the learners. TBI (Television Broadcast Information), RBI (Radio Broadcast Information), and online learning are not applicable in our area because of poor internet connectivity."*

"Modules can help the teacher in teaching with online supplementary activities, both remedial and extension. If there are no available modules, we search it online, and we make our own Learning Activity Sheet (LAS)," as said by P10.

However, eight (8) of the participants said that it was hard, and here are the teacher-participants' experiences in using modular instruction.

According to P1, *"Modular instruction is very crucial amidst pandemic because you will give instruction to your learners through monitoring or you will conduct face to face instruction but will limited learners to follow the health protocols being implemented by the government, if we didn't do this we could not meet our objectives."*

"It's hard that through parents or guardians learning must start; we know that not all parents are knowledgeable enough to impart learning to their students. They need to go to school to get modules, and they are the ones who take action of giving instruction based on the modules given. To assist these parents, we have to go house to house visitation to monitor the progress of the learning of the student," that is according to P8.

Participants 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, and 12 shared the same answers – that this modular instruction was hard and there were a lot of paper works. The time to accomplish this was just too tight since teachers were also tasked to go monitor the students' performance one by one. Before, the students were the ones who would go to school. During the new normal, the teachers were the ones going to their houses. With the passage of time, other teachers have already adjusted to the educational situation today, but not P3.

"I am still in the process of adjusting, but I think I can overcome it; unlike before, it was very chaotic because of this new mode of teaching," P3 said.

4.4. Adjustments in Implementing Modular Instruction

Educators are bound to face adjustments in this new normal education. As mentioned, there is a lot to consider in today's mode of learning. Teachers have to recourse to their path to new and suitable techniques or methods just to fit in the new education system amidst the pandemic.

According to P1, P5, and P10, there were a lot of adjustments that they had to consider in today's situation, such as conducting house-to-house monitoring and ensuring that the General Health and Safety Protocol was being implemented.

"There are a lot of adjustments, specifically that we are now in new normal education. We, teachers, are the ones to go to the houses of our learners to conduct monitoring, but we have to make sure that we follow the health and safety protocol," as said by P10.

However, the mode of learning was different from what teachers were used to before in terms of giving instruction, and modular instruction gave them a lot and big adjustments, according to P2, P3, P8, and P9.

According to P2, *"There are big adjustments in terms of instructional and it is very hard for us now because we have to conduct house to house monitoring and it was not like the traditional way of giving instruction that you will give it in one shot. Now, you should instruct every learner, and it is limited in time and day because we also have things to do in school aside from teaching one on one with our learners."*

"I had extra adjustments because we are not into roaming around, particularly to the respective houses of our learners. It is very hard for us to think of what should be the strategies that we are going to use for our learners and how we will going to use this module because we are not into it, and it is different from what we used before. We are following the lesson planning not like this that it was made our shock because, in the module, lessons are all summarized, and yes it was hard for us, but so far we are used to it now," as said by P3.

P8 explained further how the process was being done in giving instruction in the school that they were in.

According to P8, *"Very big and heavy adjustments, we are used in giving instruction in our classroom since the beginning it is the first time that was going to adopt this new kind of learning because of this pandemic. In just one click, everything change, and it is not okay that there are no adjustments. It was really difficult because we're going to one-on-one and house-to-house instruction to teach our learners, and how we are going to maximize the time and the quality of learning to our pupils in just 20 minutes in eleven subjects. We're going to cater 27 or more pupils in just 20 minutes per student in one day; that's*

a big challenge for us roaming around. Each week we have to go to our learners. In our normal classrooms, we have 50 minutes in one subject, and it is for all the students, but this time 20 minutes for one pupil in how many subjects. Now, teachers are wonder person, wonder women, and wonder men because they're doing the impossible one, but aside from that, we are thinking of our own health, but we are obliged to go out while others are hiding the teachers is going out."

Being a teacher is not an easy task. There are several things to accomplish by the teachers – lesson plans, making of instructional materials, and other paper works. And in today's mode of instruction, there were many changes that they needed to adapt, and P6 and P7 felt that the new education system was more exhausting than the pre-pandemic.

"One of the adjustments is on the printing modules, which are very tiring and time-consuming and plenty of paper works to be accomplished compared before the pandemic arises."

Parents are one of the stakeholders, and they now serve as facilitators in today's mode of learning. According to P4, parents also need to adjust to modular instruction.

"If there are learners their parents could not understand the questions and lessons in the modules, we are going to give additional activity sheets, and we contextualize the lesson to be able for their better understanding."

Reading is the most crucial part of teaching for a Grade 1 teacher, especially in today's mode of learning, according to P11.

"As a Grade1 teacher, I know that my students still don't know how to read, it is challenging for us, but we are trying our best to bridge the gap," according to P11.

However, P12 compared the teacher to an innocent child who could not tell about the next steps to follow.

"At the beginning of modular instruction, we are like an innocent child; we don't know what the next step is but eventually, as time goes by, we are used to what we are doing."

4.5. Challenges Encountered in Modular Instruction amidst the Pandemic

Everyone was being tested on how far their patience would take them. Life is challenging, but when the pandemic struck, it became more challenging for everyone. Everything came into a pause, even the education system; however, the government tried its best not to be left behind because education must continue. The DepEd proposed different modes of instruction for the schools to choose from. Blended learning is the use of the internet and module as part of the instruction where it can also utilize radio and television broadcasts, online learning, and, lastly, modular instruction. The research locale of this study did not fit to use blended radio, television, and online learning. Hence, below are the challenges that the teacher-participants had experienced.

In this time of new normal, everyone went to stop and abrupt. According to P2 and P12, they were not used in this mode of learning, and it was far from what they had studied before, but they needed to embrace it.

P2: *"There are a lot of challenges in modular, which is new normal education. The things I studied before are different from now, and it was really hard for me, for us teachers. We don't know how to deliver this, but we have Learning Delivery Mode (LDM), but yes, it was very shocking for us, but we are embracing it."*

Adjusting time to be able to accommodate all of the learners in one whole day was the greatest challenge for P1 and P3.

P3: *"It was exhausting adjusting our time because we cannot accommodate to teach all of the learners for the whole day. There are big adjustments; our schedule was messy before, dividing the learners of what are the ways we are going to take to roam around in order for us to get accommodated the number of students. We set our monitoring if how many learners will get accommodated for the whole week."*

One of the teachers' roles is to motivate and encourage their learners to study, but for P4 and P7, it was a challenge for them in today's new normal education.

"There are students who are not motivated to answer modules because they need guidance coming from parents and teacher in answering their modules," P4 said.

According to P8, P9, and P10, building a good relationship with their parents was a challenge for them. Specifically, the parents became the facilitators of the learning progress of their children in their home in today's learning modality.

"First, the relationship to the parents of our learners because not all the time the parents are in their mood when we go to their respective houses you can feel the essence of culture shock. There are some whose going to entertain you very well, and there are some that are not going to entertain you like you are invisible to them. How are we going to handle and settle that way? You need to have the hard face as you can; even when the parents don't want you to be there, they don't have the choice because we are there to impart learning to their kids. You have to show your charm even if you are not. There have been a lot of challenges since the beginning because we are not used to this kind of work; we used to be the four walls of a classroom in the school, but now the whole community serves as a classroom, and at the same time as a school," as said by P8.

While it is true that no one could hinder the passion of a teacher from educating the learner, not even the weather, time, and paper works were the biggest challenge of today's new normal education, according to P11.

"No matter the weather is, we have to be there to help them to read, write and count, especially in Grade 1. Sometimes the learners are not in their house when we visit them, so we keep on waiting even though we still have some paperwork to attend to. Time and paper works are our biggest challenges in today's new normal education." says P11.

However, P5 did not encounter a lot of challenges since the beginning of modular instruction.

"So far, a teacher like me who lived here, I don't encounter lots of problems and challenges aside from reports that only a few times are allotted."

4.6. Comparison between Traditional and Modular Instruction

The most effective way of teaching was through the traditional way of giving instruction, according to P2.

"Yes, there is a big difference in terms of learning because the traditional way of teaching is more effective than modular but is based only on my own experience, and I am not generalizing," says P2.

Assessments are the tools used by the teacher to measure the learning of the learner. According to P8, they could not measure and balance the exact progress of the students because of the given answer key provided in the module.

P8. "Traditional Instruction, you are inside the classroom giving instructions to your pupils altogether, while in the modular of giving instruction, you're not there to explain. The students are the ones who read and understand it until the teacher does not come to their houses; the topic or the lesson in the module will not be discussed unless the teacher comes. Whereas in a traditional classroom, you are inside the classroom together with your students, and you are not going to give instruction repeatedly, and if there are some who left behind the discussion, it will be easy for us to handle. While in modular instruction, you give so much heavy time because sometimes they are just copying the answers from the answers key, and when we check it, we don't have the choice but to correct it all. You couldn't give exact measures, not just like in the classroom; you can balance those who excel and those who do not. Mostly in modules, the students are the ones who answer their modules because most of the time the parents can't handle their kids."

When you see that your students are enjoying learning, no one can ever measure the satisfaction and fulfillment that teachers will receive. This was justified by P9.

"Yes, there is, in face to face the students enjoy learning because they got to see their friends, especially in group activities unlike in today's learning the students study alone comfortable in their home. When we visit them, the learning that they got are few and also for the limited time given," says P9.

No one can ever hinder you when you want to learn, not even the distance. However, in today's mode of learning, the situation changed. The teacher were the ones who would roam around and go to the respective homes of their learners. According to P11, the distance between students' houses was another challenge.

"Yes, there is a big difference between traditional ways of teaching and the new normal teaching situation. In traditional teaching, the stand in front of the class, 30/50 learners when you give instruction everybody will listen if there is somebody who did not then there are few. Before, there were only a few who underwent remedial enrichment; now, you have to repeat every instruction to all of your students. The distance of their houses is another challenge for us."

One way to motivate your students to actively participate during the discussion is to think of effective and motivational strategies in the classroom. P3 also did these outside the classroom.

According to P3, "I use the traditional way of giving instruction outside because I am also teaching like reading to my learners and the strategies I was used in the classroom I bring it with me and I apply it to each of my learner I even brought my instructional materials to be used to my students."

However, participants 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 12 shared common answers. According to them, Traditional and Modular Modes of Instruction had a big difference in terms of learning. In the traditional way of giving instruction, they could accommodate their entire students in a classroom setting; interactions happened between the teacher and the students. While in the modular instruction, the teacher were the ones who would distribute the modules and conduct house-to-house monitoring which was time-consuming. Also, as they espoused, there was no assurance that their learners gained learning.

4.7. Overcoming Difficult Experiences

All of the participants from 1 to 12 shared common thoughts about overcoming the experiences they had by accepting the fact and embracing the situation as a part of a teacher's job and profession. Finding the effective techniques and strategies that would let their learners encourage and gain learning was their target as they were trying to overcome the challenges brought by the new normal education. They took it as a challenge and as a part of their chosen career.

"Embrace, adjust, and accept because God knows a perfect time, and it will come to its end," says P2.

4.8. Learning through Modules amidst the Pandemic is Important

Reading molds you to become intelligent. According to P3, reading is the most important part of learning, specifically for the Grade 1 learner.

"It is very important, particularly for me as a Grade 1 teacher, when it comes to their reading, and it was very hard for us because it was not like before we could give instruction and strategy in just one setting. Now, we can't please the learner because not all the time you can get their attention, and it is different at home than in the classroom. At home, the parents were there; the environment was noisy. It is important for us that our learners will learn, so the things that we do is to create and bring IM's to their respective houses, particularly in reading," as said by P3.

According to P8, printing modules, roaming around, and exerting extra effort are the pieces of evidence that would show how it was very important for them to impart knowledge and skills to their students so that the latter could still learn even amidst the pandemic.

"Very important, even there is pandemic we do our obligation as a teacher. If learning is not important for us, why are we going to do this for them? We will not go to print modules, roaming around and exerting effort if it is not important. Giving learning to them is very important also that's why doing and trying the impossible, and everything that we can," says P8.

The things you have done for the learners will reflect how good you are as a teacher. This was according to P4.

"It is important that our learners will learn because it will reflect us as a teacher and in order that the learning of the students would continue," says P4.

Using modular instruction at home is really not as good and as effective as traditional teaching. According to P2, no one could say that using modules as an instructional material could be as effective as was in the face-to-face setting in terms of learning.

“It is very important, but we couldn’t say that through modular students will learn particularly when it is done at home. Sometimes there are parents who really don’t know about something, and they can’t follow the instruction and the progress of their child. Studying is very much important, and modular is a difficult challenge in studying,” P2 said.

The importance of learning is to ensure that no one will be left behind. This was according to P5.

“It is important for us teachers because we don’t want anyone left behind even this time of the pandemic. Sometimes even if we give our full effort in printing modules, there are still parents who didn’t get the modules for their children. I have this one parent who only gets the module for the first quarter, and for the second and third, she didn’t come back to get the remaining. Whatever we do, if the parents are not interested in getting the module, we don’t have the time to insist it to them.” says P5.

However, the rest of the participants shared the same answer. Since it was important for them that their learners would learn, they conducted house-to-house monitoring and thought of effective strategies. They had different monitoring plans and different kinds of forms that they used in their day-to-day monitoring.

4.9. Qualities Teachers must Possess in the New Normal Education

A good teacher can make a difference in the world of students, impacting everything – from their classroom learning to their long-term success. Based on research, those good teachers are the single most factors that contribute to students’ achievement in the classroom. They are more important than the facilities, school resources, and even school leadership. Bravery is one of the criteria of our current real-life hero, and this is one that teachers should possess. This notion was supported by P2 and P11.

“Having the passion, determination, and taking risks such as health and time,” says P2.

Filipinos are known for being resilient individuals, as resilience symbolizes the culture they have. A teacher must be resilient, according to P8 and P10.

“Being a resilient teacher, camouflage others may resign from their job when they think they don’t need and like it if they want to be in office only then they can, but the teachers can’t because we don’t have the choice, we don’t have the choice if it is new normal then so be it if the DepEd says that it is the curriculum to be followed then teacher suit and change and used to it and turn to camouflage. That’s the essence and power of being a teacher because you can’t say no to a challenge; even if you can’t do it, you said yes, and that’s a teacher,” P8 said.

According to P4 and P12, during this time of the pandemic, a teacher should be a positive thinker to overcome this kind of situation.

“A teacher should be self-motivated, passionate, and have a positive attitude.”

Furthermore, participants 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9 shared the same answer that a teacher should also be patient, hardworking, courageous, flexible, and resourceful during this new normal education.

Table 3. Theme 1: Perceptions of Modular Instruction

Representative Significant Statement	Formulated Meanings	Theme Cluster
1. “The lesson will be delivered to the learners is through modules wherein all the instruction that would be discussed depends on what is in the modules.” (Participant 1, 2021) 2. “Modular instruction for me is the use of the module in giving learning to the students. Using modules is not only teaching them the lesson it also helps them develop to learn independently.”(Participant 11, 2021)	Lessons are delivered through modules.	Personal Understanding

Table 4 Theme 2: Situation during Modular Instruction amidst the Pandemic

Representative Significant Statement	Formulated Meanings	Theme Cluster
<p>1. "Modular instruction for me is helpful amidst this pandemic; it is the only mode of learning suitable to the majority of the learners. TBI (Television Broadcast Information), RBI (Radio Broadcast Information), and online learning are not applicable in our area because of poor internet connectivity." (Participant 7, 2020)</p> <p>2. Modular instruction is very crucial amidst a pandemic because you will give instruction to your learners through monitoring, or you will conduct face-to-face instruction but will limit learners to follow the health protocols being implemented by the government; if we didn't do this, we could not meet our objectives." (Participant 1,2020)</p>	<p>To prevent the spread of the virus, Modular instruction is being implemented to ensure that the learners can still learn in the safety of their homes. At first, it is hard, but as the days go by, everyone learns to embrace and accept the situation</p>	<p>Personal Experience</p>

Table 5. Theme 3: Adjustments in Implementing Modular Instruction

Representative Significant Statement	Formulated Meanings	Theme Cluster
<p>1. There are big adjustments in terms of instruction, and it is very hard for us now because we have to conduct house-to-house monitoring, and it is not like the traditional way of giving instruction that you will give it in one shot. Now, you should instruct every learner, and it is limited in time and day because we also have things to do in school aside from teaching one on one with our learners."(Participant 2, 2020)</p> <p>2. "It's hard that through parents or guardians learning must start; we know that not all parents are knowledgeable enough to impart learning to their students. They need to go to school to get modules, and they are the ones who take action of giving instruction based on the modules given. To assist these parents, we have to go house to house visitation to monitor the progress of the learning of the student," that is according to P8."</p>	<p>Teachers have to conduct house-to-house monitoring, and they have to give instruction to the students one by one.</p>	<p>Personal Experience</p>

Table 6. Theme 4: Challenges Encountered in Modular Instruction amidst the Pandemic

Representative Significant Statement	Formulated Meanings	Theme Cluster
<p>1. "There are a lot of challenges in modular, which is new normal education. The things I studied before are different from now, and it was really hard for me, for us teachers. We don't know how to deliver this, but we have Learning Delivery Mode (LDM), but yes, it was very shocking for us, but we are embracing it." According to P2</p>	<p>Teachers didn't learn at school how to deal with this kind of situation; as a teacher, they have to adjust to the new normal educational setup. The teachers must cooperate with the parents or the guardians of their learners</p>	<p>Personal Experience</p>

<p>2. "One of the adjustments is on the printing modules, which are very tiring and time-consuming and plenty of paper works to be accomplished compared before the pandemic arise." P8.</p>	<p>for them to assess their learners at home.</p>	
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Table 7. Theme 5: Comparison between Traditional and Modular Instruction

Representative Significant Statement	Formulated Meanings	Theme Cluster
<p>1. "Yes, there is a big difference between traditional ways of teaching and the new normal teaching situation. In traditional teaching, the stand in front of the class, 30/50 learners when you give instruction everybody will listen if there is somebody who did not then there are few. Before, there were only a few who underwent remedial enrichment; now, you have to repeat every instruction to all of your students. The distance of their houses is another challenge for us."P3</p> <p>2. Yes, there is, in face to face the students enjoy learning because they got to see their friends, especially in group activities unlike in today's learning the students study alone comfortable in their home. When we visit them, the learning that they got are few and also for the limited time given." says P9.</p>	<p>In traditional learning, the teacher gives the instructions to his or her students in one shot. While in the modular instruction, the teacher will give the instruction one by one to each of his or her students. The students enjoy the company of their classmates during face-to-face classes; now, they have to do their module in the company of their elders.</p>	<p>Personal Experience</p>

Table 8. Theme 6: Overcoming Difficult Experiences

Representative Significant Statement	Formulated Meanings	Theme Cluster
<p>"Observe time management in order to visit all the learners in my advisory class and give quality time in conducting home visitation and monitoring.</p> <p>"Embrace, adjust, and accept because God knows a perfect time, and it will come to its end," says P2.</p>	<p>The teacher must use his/her time wisely to meet the objective and help the students learn at their own pace.</p>	<p>Personal Experience</p>

Table 9. Theme 7: Learning through Modules amidst the Pandemic is Important

Representative Significant Statement	Formulated Meanings	Theme Cluster
<p>"Very important, even there is pandemic we do our obligation as a teacher. If learning is not important for us, why are we going to do this for them? We will not go to print modules, roaming around and exerting effort if it is not important. Giving learning to them is very important also that's why doing and trying the impossible, and everything that we can." says P8.</p> <p>2. "It is very important, but we couldn't say that through modular students will learn particularly when it is done at home. Sometimes there are parents who really don't know about something, and they can't follow the instruction and the progress of their child. Studying is very much important and modular is a difficult challenge in studying." says P2.</p>	<p>Teachers and students must embrace the situation because this is just temporary, and soon with the help of God, we all go back to normal.</p>	<p>Personal Experience</p>

Table 10. Theme 8: Qualities Teachers must Possess in the New Normal Education

Representative Significant Statement	Formulated Meanings	Theme Cluster
<p>"Being a resilient teacher, camouflage others may resign from their job when they think they don't need and like it if they want to be in office only then they can, but the teachers can't because we don't have the choice, we don't have the choice if it is new normal then so be it if the DepEd says that it is the curriculum to be followed then teacher suit and change and used to it and turn to camouflage. That's the essence and power of being a teacher because you can't say no to a challenge even if you can't do it; you said yes, and that's a teacher," says P8.</p> <p>"A teacher should be self-motivated, passionate, and have a positive attitude."</p>	<p>Teachers must adapt or possess good traits for them to manage the class. Especially being passionate and loving what they are doing for them to meet the main goal, and it is to help the students learn.</p>	<p>Personal Experiences</p>

According to Fox (1964), a committed teacher has the following characteristics: (a) desires to be a good teacher; (b) is more than a purveyor of facts; (c) recognizes and accepts the worth of an individual, and (d) fulfills his/her professional responsibilities. The teacher-participants had shown their commitment to their responsibilities as elementary teachers. Even though there were additional tasks that they needed to accomplish, they still continued to do their job, and it was to impart knowledge and skills to their students, whatever the situation.

The teacher-participants had shown how they understood the Modular Instruction as this was what they used in transferring learning to their students during the pandemic. The teachers used individualized instruction that would provide bases for close interaction between them and their learners and the subject matter.

There were a lot of teaching modes that the DepEd introduced amidst the pandemic for the schools to choose from. However, the only mode that was suitable or applicable in the teacher-participants' schools was using modules as the mode of instruction. Implementing modular instruction as the new way of imparting knowledge to the students was the alternative way of teaching students amidst the pandemic. The teacher-participants had a hard and crucial time perceiving this new normal way of giving

instruction to the learners because they did not experience this before. According to the teacher-participants, they did not have any choice but to embrace it.

Using the new way of imparting knowledge to the students was the biggest challenge for them. There were a lot of adjustments to consider, especially in shifting to modular instruction from the traditional face-to-face teaching inside the classroom. According to the teacher-participants, they had to roam around the barangay to monitor the progress of their students, and they also needed to bring a lot of patience along the way.

Giving self-learning modules to the parents in their respective homes was a good way to prevent the spread of the virus, but there were a lot of distractions that the teachers were facing. The students had to attend to many household chores, and they were already tired before they got to start answering their modules, especially when their parents or guardians were out fishing or for a living. Also, the students were easily distracted by their neighbors or their playmates. All these kinds of challenges had been accepted by the teacher-participants just to fulfill their duty as a teacher.

The teacher-participants of this study totally agreed that there was a big difference between traditional teaching and modular instruction. Home visitation was very time-consuming for them, and they needed to bring instructional materials for their learners to fully understand their lesson. They also needed to attend lots of paperwork.

At any rate, the teacher-participants were very passionate about what they were doing. At first, it was hard for them, but as time went by, they learned to embrace it and did everything they could to help their students learn. They needed to consume their time properly to meet everything that was needed to accomplish, and they could finish them on time.

As DepEd said that education must continue whatever the nation is facing amidst the pandemic, the teacher-participants, indeed, continued teaching their students. It was very important for them that their students were still learning even in the comfort of their homes. Through self-learning modules that were provided by the teachers, the students could still learn something.

The teacher-participants shared that a teacher must possess a lot of good qualities, but with this new mode of teaching, the qualities they had before must be doubled to fulfill their duties.

Hence, Table 11 below shows the summary of the teacher-participants lived experiences while teaching in schools located in the coastal areas during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 11: Lived Experiences of Elementary Teachers along Coastal Areas toward Modular Instruction amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

	Theme 2: Situation during Modular Instruction amidst the Pandemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of modules as the medium of instruction. A new mode of instructional delivery Suitable mode of instruction in coastal areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tight schedule More paperwork, school reports, etc.
Theme 3: Adjustments in Implementing Modular Instruction	Theme 4: Challenges Encountered in Modular Instruction amidst the Pandemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module instead of face-to-face classes Distance learning House-to-house visitation Facilitate homeschooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making and printing modules almost every day Bundles of paperwork House-to-house visitation is risky for health
Theme 5: Comparison between Traditional and Modular Instruction	Theme 6: Overcoming Difficult Experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional face-to-face classes are more convenient Modular instruction needs extra effort and doubles time consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embrace the new way of instruction as mandated by the Department of Education Time management
Theme 7: Learning through Modules amidst the Pandemic is Important	Theme 8: Qualities Teachers must Possess in the New Normal Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students must learn through modules amidst the pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible Resourceful Responsible Patient Passionate

5. Conclusion

The teachers who were assigned to the coastal area schools, regardless of age, sex, and the number of years in service, were all dedicated, committed, and passionate about teaching their students despite the new mode of instructional delivery as using modules was the only suitable and appropriate method of teaching in coastal areas. Their lived experiences were very much different from the experiences that they had in the traditional face-to-face classes because, despite the tight schedule and bundles of paperwork they faced every day (e.g., the printing of modules, accomplishing school reports, etc.), they still had to conduct house-to-house visitation to facilitate students' learning while staying at home. Although they considered going to school and to their students' homes as a risk to their health and to their own families, they remained faithful to their profession because they believed that it was only through modules that their students could learn amidst the pandemic. The study also showed that to be able to adapt to the new normal education, teachers in coastal areas should just embrace this peculiar learning setup, develop skills in time management, and be flexible, resourceful, responsible, patient, and passionate.

Anchored to the findings of this study, the researchers recommend that there should be good cooperation from the students' parents so they could help the teachers in successfully conducting the modular instruction. The use of modules as a medium of instruction is maybe more beneficial if the parents could discipline their children to focus on their modules for them to learn.

On the other hand, the researchers also recommend that the implementers of the new normal education allow the schools, such as those with a very low risk of spreading the virus, to hold face-to-face classes even with a limited number of students per day as long as they follow the health and safety protocols like wearing face masks and physical distancing. These would help the teachers do their job better while teaching the learners.

The researchers also recommend that future researchers may use this study as a source of empirical data that would guide them in conducting useful studies for teachers to come up with new strategies for teaching students amidst a pandemic. Moreover, since the current study only employed in-depth interviews among teacher-participants, future researchers may use a bigger sample from other coastal areas to obtain quantitative data that would depict the generalizability of the study's results. Triangulation is also advised; hence, parents, students, and the community stakeholders' perceptions of modular instruction along coastal areas amidst the COVID-19 pandemic may also be explored.

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ORCID iD (if any) <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6552-1611>

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