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# **Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: A Phenomenological Study**

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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education Major in Educational Administration

Bukidnon State University  
Graduate Program  
College of Administration  
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This is to certify that this thesis does not contain any material, which has been accepted for an award from any higher degree in any tertiary institution. To the best of the candidate's knowledge and beliefs, this thesis contains no material previously published by another person, except when due reference is made in the text.

Vanessa Mae E. Cabug



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Vanessa Mae E. Cabug



## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my late father, Venancio S. Cabug, and my late mother, Pacita E. Cabug. To my sister, Neziel C. Pitogo, nieces Miamor Zenith C. Pitogo and Princess Sophia C. Pitogo, brother in-law, Junrel G. Pitogo, and fiancé, Jhonlie James C. Rosales. I treasure their support, understanding, encouragement and inspiration that enabled me to pursue and realize my dreams. They indeed instilled good values in me.



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## Abstract

**“Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: Challenges of Teachers”** unpublished master’s thesis, Bukidnon State University, City of Malaybalay (2023)

This study explored challenges and coping strategies of public elementary school teachers in embracing the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes in Liliongan Schools of Carmen North District, Division of Cotabato During the school year 2022-2023.

There were ten (10) teachers and five (5) school heads purposively selected as the participants of the study. The study utilized the qualitative phenomenological research design. The data were gathered using interview guide question formulated by the researcher. The data were analyzed using Creswell (2013).

The findings revealed that the experiences by the public elementary teachers and school heads generated two major themes were extracted on the challenges of teachers: (1) Compliance with health and safety protocols, and (2) Feelings of stress and anxiety; and three major themes were extracted on the coping strategies of teachers: (1) Following health and safety protocols, (2) Fostering partnership through 3C’s: Communication, Cooperation, and Collaboration, and (3) Framing one’s mindset in accepting and embracing challenges.

The different coping mechanisms in each area were not a solution or direct suggestions. Rather, a technique and strategy employed by the teachers to partially address the challenges encountered.

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## Chapter I The Problem

### Introduction

As the covid-19 pandemic began to kick down, the Department of Education started to embrace the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes with the approval of President Roa Rodrigo Duterte. The learners can now attend school and learn with their teachers and classmates. It took much work to create schools COVID-19-ready. However, the school workforce, the community, nearby governments, and private institutions worked together to prioritize each learner's security to open the limited face-to-face classes. The school workforce prepared the School Safety Security Evaluation before opening the limited face-to-face classes. The planning was challenging, but the shared duty system of the Department of Education made a difference in securing the commitment of barangay officials, guardians, teachers, and the community.

While adapting to the new changes, educators' and learners' readiness must be gauged and supported accordingly. Some learners and their parents or guardians find adapting and adjusting to a unique learning environment difficult. Many learners at home undergo psychological stress and cannot engage productively, which they must adapt to with little or no alternatives available. During the pandemic crises, the Department of Education (DepEd) has adopted Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan with different learning modalities through various online platforms and TV/Radio-based instructions. Teachers adopt a system they must prepare for, like modular distance learning to cope with the changing needs of the time. Using relevant pedagogy for online education and TV or Radio-based instruction may depend on educators' and learners' expertise and communications technology (DepEd Order No. 12 S. 2020). Some have, but they encounter poor internet connection, and parents cannot monitor their child's progress.

After two years without face-to-face classes, the empty halls and corridors of public schools have students. According to Legal Education Board Memorandum Number 002, series 2022, the Department of Education formally implemented limited face-to-face classes to allow students to go to physical classes last February 2022, 4th quarter of the school year 2021-2022, but it is being observed that teachers identified challenges met during the first week of implementation: unreadiness of some students for in-person learning, separation anxiety, and the behavioral issue with regards to keeping up with physical distancing protocols. The teachers also encountered challenges like

the inability to accommodate learning concerns due to limited time and learning gaps.

As a result of teachers' challenges, teachers' routine teaching tasks, such as giving lectures and more appropriate activities to children, constitute the bulk of the teaching effort. Teachers take part in a variety of extracurricular activities, such as setting up parent-student meetings because the level of academic performance of the learners is likely to drop due to the unguided learning instruction because their parents were illiterate, and this leads to the learners being unable to identify numbers, understand basic sentences, and others (Sintema,2020).

Remarkably, quality learning can only partially be guaranteed due to the lack of face-to-face lectures for the last two years and the fact that parents have answered the modules (Anzaldo, 2021). Despite the risk that threatens their lives, teachers continued to serve and teach students to provide quality education for the learners. Indeed, teachers have no choice but to do their jobs regardless of any circumstances on the opening of limited face-to-face classes and the teachers' flexibility and adaptation in times of crisis.

As a result, teachers employ various coping strategies to deal with the difficulties they face. Coping strategies is the strategies for dealing with the challenges of teachers. These coping strategies help teachers overcome challenges and improve the situation. The schools conduct orientation for the parents and let them know their child's performance. It motivates them to develop innovative ways to interact with their learners. Also, teachers underwent training to equip them to provide better teaching. They can adapt to adversity and solve students' learning gaps.

With this phenomenon, the researcher conducted this study to discover the challenges and coping strategies of public elementary school teachers of five (5) public schools of Liliongan, Carmen, and Cotabato of Carmen North District in embracing the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes. This study would help educators address their challenges transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes.

### Framework of the Study

This study is anchored on the Resilience Theory of Polidore (2004), which sought to understand the qualitative-phenomenological study on the teacher's challenges in the transition of limited face-to-face classes, recovery from adversity, and continuing their careers in teaching despite subjugation to adverse experiences. The most crucial factor in keeping teachers in the profession is resilience. More resilient teachers possess the psychological and physical stamina to tackle problems successfully. Teachers more skilled at

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copied will be more productive and lead more fulfilling personal and professional lives. Student performance can improve with greater resilience (Masten, 2001).

According to Walsh (2006), resilience is the ability to grow stronger and more resourceful while dealing with adversity and meeting challenges. As Becker et al. (2000) defined, resilience is positively adjusting in the face of considerable adversity. Furthermore, Fraser et al. (1999) described resilience as the capacity to succeed despite exposure to significant risks and overcoming adversity. Finally, resilience was characterized by Bernard (1991) as possessing a set of traits that enable one to successfully adjust during development, even in the presence of high-risk variables.

With the current crisis, teachers experienced challenges transitioning from limited face-to-face learning to modular distance learning. Teachers were challenged because learners experience difficulty learning due to poor reading comprehension; learners are not mentally prepared and in limited face-to-face (Wang et al., 2001). Teachers observed that they were challenged by learning gaps due to limited instructional times (Bisnar, 2022). Aside from these, teachers experienced stress and anxiety during the transition period and were challenged in preparing the health and safety protocols.

Furthermore, teachers develop coping mechanisms during the transition, like health and safety prevention, and continue to become resilient teachers. Thus, resilience means having qualities that allow one to adapt to adversity and respond to challenges.

Specifically, in times of crisis, the needs of students and families should be paramount. It was incumbent for teachers to adapt to a new reality and various rapidly changing elements (Chis et al., 2020). Therefore, the researcher believed that an in-depth analysis of the teachers' experiences who taught in public education during one of the most challenging times in the nation's history could provide valuable insight into their challenges and coping strategies.

The study used qualitative phenomenology. Creswell (2013) noted that qualitative research is ideal when the researcher determines the explored teachers' challenges and coping strategies to develop a detailed understanding of the central phenomenon. The information gained by this exploration highlights how teachers addressed their challenges during the transition period.

### Statement of the Problem

This study determined the challenges and coping strategies of public elementary school teachers of Carmen North District of the Division of

Cotabato in embracing the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes in the five (5) public schools of Liliongan Carmen, Cotabato of Carmen North District, during the School Year 2022-2023.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes?
2. What coping strategies are employed by the teachers to address the challenges encountered?
3. What intervention plan can be designed to address the challenges the teachers encounter in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes?

### Significance of the Study

The result of this study can be beneficial to the following:

The teachers would benefit from this study by providing knowledge to adjust to the new normal of teaching their students. Teachers are encouraged to implement innovative programs to support not only learning continuity but also the delivery of quality education with the support of school administrators. This study would benefit the teachers by improving teaching styles to help students with difficulty coping with the limited face-to-face classes.

Moreover, through this study, the students may understand their roles and the teachers' needs and challenges. Having identified the teachers' challenges and coping strategies, they will embrace the new normal education, limited face-to-face classes. They can also see the advantages of the limited face-to-face classes.

This study would benefit the school heads and principals as the results can be used to redefine educational objectives, plan relevant programs, and support teachers' needs. They could use this information to plan programs and projects to help the school perform better.

The Department of Education (DepEd) would benefit from this study because it helps them become aware of teachers' challenges during limited face-to-face classes and can create strategies to help them cope.

Furthermore, stakeholders such as parents, community members, and others can be encouraged to support the schools, teachers, and learners, especially in the new education system. It would synergize them to cooperate, help and support the school's activities, programs, and projects through meetings and programs. It would enable them to become more aware of their role as parents and as community members and work cooperatively in molding the young learners of the community.

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Finally, the results of this study can be used by scholars and future researchers to provide them with ideas for future research endeavors.

#### Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited in exploring teachers' challenges and coping strategies in embracing the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes of the five (5) public elementary schools of Liliongan Carmen Cotabato of Carmen North District, the Division of Cotabato. The study participants were ten (10) teachers and five (5) school heads who responded to probing questions in the in-depth interview. The study employed a qualitative-phenomenological research design of Creswell (2013).

#### Definition of Terms

For clarity of presentation, the following terms are defined theoretically and operationally.

*Transition* is the process of embracing the limited face-to-face classes from modular distance learning.

*Modular Distance Learning* is a learning method where students use printed materials or self-learning modules (SLM). This involves individualized instruction that allows learners to utilize Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) in print or digital format, whichever is applicable in the learner's context, and other learning resources like learner's materials, textbooks, activity sheets, study guides, and other study materials. It is a learning strategy that focuses on learning outcomes. Its effectiveness depends on connecting objectives to student learning and course design between geographically remote learners (DepEd-LDM, 2022).

*Limited face-to-face* is a transition between modular learning and face-to-face classes referred to as hybrid learning, in which pupils have scheduled tasks at school. The Department of Education restricts the number of students attending face-to-face classes on any given day in observance of physical distancing and other health and safety protocols. A school safety assessment list must be followed for face-to-face classes to be opened (DepEd, 2022).

*Challenges* are the problems and issues that interfere with the quality of life or the ability to achieve life goals (Stacy, 2022). These are also referred to as the issues experienced by teachers in embracing the limited face-to-face classes from modular distance learning.

*Coping Strategies* are perceived as an integral part of a process in which humans adapt to their living environment (Yiu-Chung Ko et al., 2000). They are also the actions or strategies that deal with teachers' challenges in embracing limited face-to-face classes. Using coping strategies can help one feel better physically and psychologically, and it can impact one's ability to perform one's best.



## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the related literature and relevant studies in the present investigation. The discussions are organized according to these subsections: Legal Bases on Shifting Limited Face-to-face Classes, Challenges of Teachers in Shifting Limited Face-to-face Classes, and Coping Strategies of Teachers in Shifting Limited Face-to-face Classes.

#### *Legal Bases on Shifting Limited Face-to-face Classes*

The COVID-19 outbreak caught the school system off guard. As a result, the education sector in the Philippines is one of the most affected in society, with schools and community learning centers closed for the physical conduct of lessons. In January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a public health emergency of international concern, resulting in school closures. Despite the pandemic, the government worldwide resorted to a learning continuity plan and utilized learning modalities that will not expose the learners to the threat despite the threat.

The Department of Education (DepEd) created the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for 2020–2021. It ensures the learning continuity of learners amid the COVID-19 pandemic through the issuance of DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2020 or the "Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School Year 2020- 2021 in the Light of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency". Under the BE-LCP, new ways of teaching were embraced, specifically on distance learning delivery modalities such as blended learning, distance learning, and homeschooling, as well as other modes of delivery, which will be implemented based on the local COVID Risk Severity Classification and compliance with minimum health standards (Agarin, 2021).

The recent pandemic has, in the opinion of Holmes (2020), had a profound effect on both teachers and students. In this context, as per DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones (2020), amidst the COVID-19 crisis, education must continue. With the health risks that the pandemic is imposing on teachers, they provided guidelines and policies regarding various modalities and approaches to teaching to provide quality education to learners and ensure the health and safety of the well-being of the learners and the teachers. The concern about health in education was once corroborated by James (2022), who stressed that teachers' significant concerns when resuming classes are still health and safety. Teachers must adhere to stringent guidelines that will alter after the place of work (Pitzer, 2020).

After two years of lockdown, the Philippines welcomed one hundred (100) pilot schools for limited face-to-face class after two years of distance learning. The Department of Education identified the following challenges during the first week of implementation: difficulties in understanding students and teachers due to the use of face masks, unreadiness of some students for face-to-face learning, especially those in kindergarten and grade 1 level, separation anxiety, and behavioral problems related to physical distancing protocols.

The educators took on essential responsibilities after realizing their significance in maintaining teaching-learning throughout the pandemic (Karakose, 2022). Additionally, Pitzer (2021) concurred that teachers' main objectives should be to safeguard students' health, safety, and well-being and to keep learning to become more ethical human beings. In his study, Hernando-Malipot (2020) emphasized the importance of parents in the present learning modalities that DepEd employs for learning continuity.

The teachers have also faced challenges such as the inability to accommodate all learning difficulties due to time constraints and learning gaps in reading and writing. More schools followed the suit implementation of Legal Education Board Memorandum Number 002, series 2022, or "Guidelines on the conduct of limited face-to-face classes in legal education institutions during the covid-19 pandemic." The Department of Education formally implements limited face-to-face classes to allow students to attend 3 to 4-day physical classes. Later, the Department of Education released the guidelines for the School Year 2022-2023 under its commitment to resuming five days of in-person classes (DepEd Order No. 034, s.22).

Adhering to the guidelines, procedures, and standards for obtaining and passing the Revised School Safety Assessment Tool (SSAT) with the approval of the Department of Education, the schools of Divisions Office of Cotabato conducted the face-to-face learning modality during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Then, the DepEd Order No. 034, series 2022 or "Guidelines on the School Calendar and Activities for School Year 2022-2023", establishes the start of classes on August 22 and ends on July 7, 2023. There will be 203 school days. The Department of Education also provides direction and guidance on reopening classes and gradually introducing 5-day in-person learning modality classes (DO 034, s. 2022). In 2022, there were no inspections, resources, or additional requirements to reopen schools and implement five (5) days of in-person classes as required by the ordinances. Starting November 2, 2022, DepEd Order No. 034, series 2022, stated that no school should be allowed to implement purely distance learning or blended learning except for those implementing Alternative Delivery Modes as provided



in DO 21, s. 2019 (Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program) and DO 01, s. 2022 or "Revised Policy Guidelines on Homeschooling Program". This study is interested in identifying the challenges and coping mechanisms encountered by Public elementary teachers during the emergent transition of limited face-to-face classes.

Though the Department of Education installed barriers and retrofitted the classrooms to assure safety against Covid-19, not all parents felt comfortable bringing their children back to school. Even though Coronavirus is decreasing, some parents hesitate to bring their children back to school for face-to-face instruction. Some parents said it would only be once the virus had been eliminated or the whole population had been vaccinated. On the other hand, others want to see their children enjoying face-to-face instruction to alleviate the burden of being at home for more than a year. Following the resuming of physical classes, according to the responses of the Philippines News Agency, many parents expressed contrasting views (Moaje, 2021).

### *Challenges of Teachers in the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-face Classes*

Limited face-to-face classes are an instructional method taught in person, depending on the class schedule. It allows for live interaction between a learner and teacher. It is the most traditional type of learning instruction. Students are held accountable for their progress at the class's specific meeting date and time, which ensures a better understanding of lesson content and allows them to bond with one another. Due to the limited face-to-face modality, the teachers faced challenges to the abrupt change of different learning modalities.

One of the challenges faced by shifting the limited face-to-face classes is ensuring public safety and health protocols; It is another dilemma faced by the facilitators of learning. The school year 2022-2023 started the limited face-to-face classes, with the Department of Education, Local Government Unit, and stakeholders adopting the strategies and approaches suited to health situations for the resumption classes in a safer environment. According to Trans (2021), keeping up with health protocols and socially isolated classrooms for the safety prevention and management criteria for covid-19 in educational settings is challenging. If covid-19 protection protocols are implemented improperly, problems still must be solved. Schools must meet their mission and vision (Sintayehu & Hussien, 2021).

Zagalaz (2020) claims that during the epidemic, instructors went through a great deal of worry and anxiety. The alignment of a school's mission and vision despite the pandemic was corroborated by Ng's (2007) claims that stress

has been linked to teachers' symptoms of anxiety and sleep disturbance as well as an increase in workload. Also, Shonert-Reichl (2019) added that many teachers had experienced stress and anxiety associated with the transition to limited face-to-face classes. Teaching is the most stressful profession contributing to a high level of burnout. Teachers were apprehensive about a student struggling academically and felt stressed because they ensured their students needed support during the limited face-to-face classes. Despite the numerous challenges, teachers felt overburdened by the expectations of school leaders in adopting the new safety guidelines.

Teachers face new challenges and dynamic experiences due to ever-changing educational systems, market forces, and political reforms. According to Gewurz (2020), these offer benefits and opportunities but also come with professional risks due to various psychological factors. Research shows that teachers' reportedly burned out and grieving during the pandemic, are trying to make ends meet by developing alternative ways to enable learning despite concerns about health and safety.

Teachers' stress is not a territory-specific issue; instead, it is a universal issue observed by many academics. Stress can come from a variety of causes. Aside from these, Garna (2022) shared the other challenges that the learners need help viewing blackboards because of the implementation of putting barriers in their tables and chairs, paperwork, and workloads. Agreeing with DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones, not as it were, the teachers are enduring an overwhelming workload. Teachers were bombarded with reports, lesson preparations, and classroom preparations, leading to anxiety, depression, and an unhealthy lifestyle (Terrazola, 2018).

The transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face from modular classes led the teachers with so many challenges, such as quality learning, due to different circumstances and difficulties in personal and family security, paucity of time, health risk risks, and transfer of quality learning. Remarkably, quality learning can only partially be guaranteed due to the lack of face-to-face lectures for the last two years and the fact that parents have answered the modules (Anzaldo, 2021). Despite the risk that threatens their lives, teachers continue to serve and teach students to provide quality education for the learners. Indeed, teachers have no choice but to do their jobs regardless of circumstances.

Also, the opening of limited face-to-face tests the teachers' flexibility and adaptation in times of crisis. As a result, it motivates them to devise an innovative way. Teachers needed more time to accommodate them all because of some papers to finish. They need more teaching and learning resources.

They also had challenges sustaining learners' attention since they only had face-to-face classes for almost two (2) years.

Nooruddin and Baig (2014) describe that student behavior management is one of the challenges teachers face during limited face-to-face classes. During this pandemic, students feel new to their environment, which is challenging for the teachers. The routine teaching tasks, like giving lectures, creating lesson plans, grading assignments, and others, can add to the teacher's burden because of the learner's set-up during limited face-to-face classes.

Controlling the students due to the pandemic is crucial, but the school head is responsible for establishing this atmosphere in the teaching and learning process.

Also, teachers must be able to adopt technological advances to prepare their students. Undergoes training being paid for by themselves and the Department of Education. Even if they encounter challenges in their work, they can acclimate to the new regular classes and carry out their duties. Although Covid-19 is spreading, teachers found that most students are prepared and supportive of face-to-face learning (Trabucon, 2022).

The researcher identifies different teachers' challenges due to the transition from modular to limited face-to-face classes that brought challenges they encountered during the pandemic. With the study's outcomes, the researcher will suggest workable remedies that might be shared with other schools with the same problems. The outcomes could inform policy decisions or reexamine current regulations and policies to create potential program adjustments and remedies.

#### *Coping Strategies of Teachers in Shifting to Limited Face-to-face Classes*

Teachers are essential school factors in influencing students' progress and holistic learning. Coping is referred to as active when an individual attempt to deal with a challenge, faces fears, participates in problem-solving, and seeks social support. Coping mechanisms are essential to minimize the impact of stress and determine the degree of resilience or susceptibility. Psychologists distinguish the main types of coping mechanisms; problem-focused, emotional, social, and avoidant coping mechanisms (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; McCarthy, 2019).

According to Mcleod (2015), there are two classifications of coping mechanisms: 1) Action-based Coping Mechanism, which involves directly dealing with the cause of stress and devising a solution to overcome it, and 2) Emotion-based Coping Mechanism, which involves relieving stress through indirect ways like denial, distractions, humor or relaxation.

According to Masten et al. (2001), resilience is one of the coping mechanisms of teachers during the implementation of limited face-to-face classes. Resiliency is a crucial component in retaining teachers in the field. Teachers with a higher level of resilience have the mental and physical energy reserves to deal effectively with challenges. It will help the teachers be more effective and fulfilling professionally and personally. It helps to produce better student results in times of pandemic. As mentioned earlier, resilience is both the process and the result of adapting effectively to harsh or harsh living conditions.

Resilient teachers can retain educational goals and deal with the unforeseeable events inherent to being a teacher (Gu and Day, 2013). Also, the leader must initiate open, transparent communication with the team to articulate the need for change and demonstrate a clear, purposeful direction in guiding the team through the process (Cava & Hopkinson, 2020). Despite challenges, resilient people maintain optimism (Werner & Smith, 1989, 1992).

Also, in dealing with stress, collaboration among peer communities learners (PCL) is a coping mechanism teachers use (Zaalouk et al., 2021) while implementing limited face-to-face classes. Teachers in this scenario develop coping mechanisms to maintain balance in their lives. Teachers also plan and adjust their teaching practices to ensure no children are left behind. Due to the pandemic, learners need help to follow instructions easily. The teachers felt stressed and anxious when they learned about the abrupt transition of limited face-to-face classes (Pozo-Rico, 2022).

Cardullo et al. (2021) added that teachers have flexibility and adaptability in times of crisis. As a result, it motivates them to develop innovative ways to interact with their students. Teachers underwent training to equip them to teach better. Despite the challenges, teachers continue to enable learning and are doing everything they can to get used to the new normal.

According to Bartle (2007), stakeholder engagement comprises cooperating with individuals to accomplish predetermined goals and objectives while maximizing their current resources. Schools should constantly be ready to communicate with community stakeholders to remedy any shortcomings in school plant facilities and resources, as stressed by Cranston (2001). Most people feel that schools cannot operate in isolation from the community, and for schools to be progressive and fulfill their aims, community links must be strengthened (Allawan, 2012).

On the other hand, Werabe administrative town (2012) has focused on the mitigation strategies rather than the negative and positive impacts of the covid-19. The mitigation strategies while reopening schools include temperature checks, hand sanitizing, wearing masks, social/physical



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distancing between students and staff, limiting class size to small cohorts of students, regular cleaning, and promoting remote learning. Also, schools must use plastic barriers in classrooms to increase students' separation, in addition to wearing masks and checking body temperature using thermometers at school entrances.

De Leon (2021) emphasized that regular communication with teachers and other stakeholders is essential for successfully implementing limited face-to-face classrooms. Prior to or throughout the decision-making process, early communication strengthens rather than undermines trust (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). Early outreach helps ease tension and convince the community to accept the new school policies (Carvalho et al., 2020). School leaders need to start having a conversation with the open and transparent team to explain why change is necessary and to show the team that they are being led on the right path (Cava & Hopkinson, 2020). Also, cooperation is coming together to accomplish shared goals (Montagu, 1995).

The researcher gained insights into teachers' challenges and coping strategies during the transition to limited face-to-face classes from this reviewed literature and studies. These materials helped in the analysis of the findings in the present study. Especially during this difficult time, teachers still need to adjust to the new normal. As a result, teachers use different coping strategies to deal with the difficulties they face.

These coping strategies help teachers overcome challenges and are a great help in improving the situation. Teachers must adjust to and accept this reality because it is doubtful that the situation will improve soon. The pandemic crisis calls for understanding and appreciation of providing a secure and inclusive place to make education accessible to everyone.

## Chapter III Methodology

This chapter presents the methods and procedures used to gather the data for the study. It includes the research design, locale, study participants, data gathering tools, data gathering procedure, data analysis, and statement of ethical considerations. A Qualitative-Phenomenological design was used to determine the challenges and coping mechanisms of public elementary school teachers in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes during the school year 2022-2023.

### Research Design

This study explored the phenomenological research design focused on the challenges and coping strategies of public elementary school teachers in transitioning from modular to limited face-to-face in Liliongan Schools of Carmen North District, Division of Cotabato, during the school year 2022-2023. Ten teachers and five school heads were purposively selected as the study participants. The study utilized the qualitative phenomenology research design. The data were gathered using interview guide questions formulated by the researcher. The researcher used probing questions in the in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The data were analyzed using the steps of Creswell et al. (2009).

### Research Locale

The study was conducted in all five elementary schools of Liliongan Carmen Schools of Carmen North District for 2022-2023. Liliongan Carmen is one of the largest barangays of Carmen, Cotabato. It has five (5) elementary schools: Mansamad Saliling Elementary School, Liliongan Elementary School, Makataktak Elementary School, Mainline Elementary School, and Malugasa Elementary School.

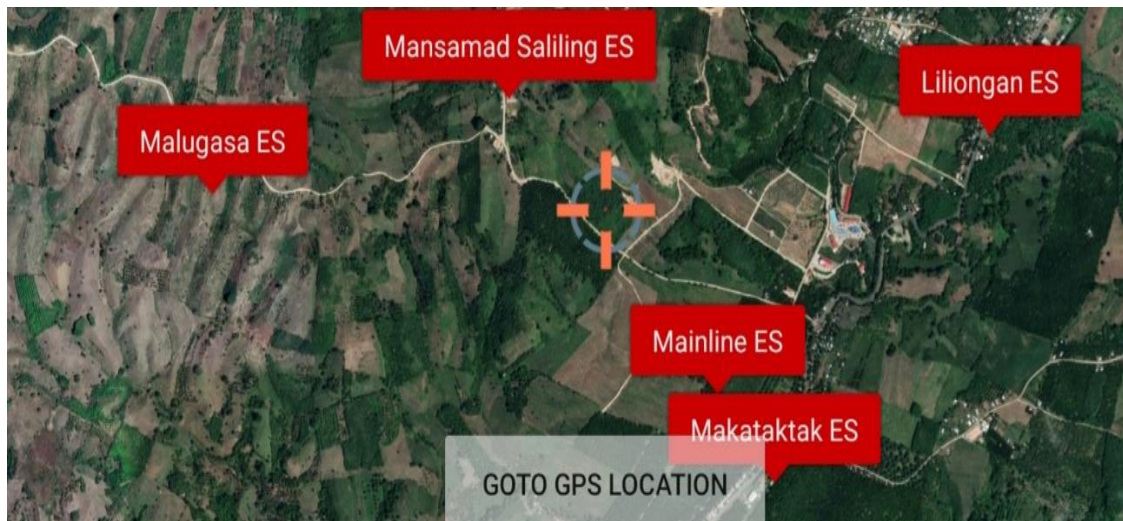
Liliongan comprises three (3) big non-central schools and two (2) small schools. All the schools are implementing the limited face-to-face classes with IATF recommendation and approval of the Local Government Unit. The total population of the teaching force of Liliongan Carmen Cotabato is fifty-five teachers and five school heads. Each school has two teachers who participated in the study based on availability, willingness, and volunteerism. The participants freely completed and signed a consent form while their personal information and school details were treated with utmost confidentiality and anonymity.

The schools located along the national highway and have internet connectivity/signal are Liliongan Elementary School and Makataktak



Elementary School. Liliongan Elementary School is one of the pioneering schools of Liliongan Carmen Cotabato. The other three schools were located in different barrios of Liliongan Carmen Cotabato and did not have an internet connection. Before the school year 2022-2023, the Department of Education conducted an orientation for teachers and revisited the guidelines on opening the classes this school year.

Figure 1 shows the map of the location of schools in Liliongan Carmen Cotabato, where the study was conducted.



*Figure 1.* Map showing the five (5) elementary schools of Liliongan, Carmen, Cotabato.

The Department of Education Schools Divisions Office allocated a budget for preparing limited face-to-face classes. The Local Government Unit (LGU) also provide Special Education Fund (SEF), and they purchase the school's needs. Likewise, the barangay officials, school officials, and the different business sectors of Liliongan Carmen Cotabato provide support during the implementation of limited face-to-face classes to ensure learners' and teachers' health and safety.

### Participants of the Study

The participants in the study were determined using purposive sampling. According to Hyun (2013), purposive sampling is a sampling method based on previous knowledge of a population and the specific purpose of the research where the researcher uses personal judgment to select a sample. Creswell

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(2018) recommends that the participants needed for the interview were fifteen (15) to gather the required information and undergo data analysis.

In this study, the researcher's participants were the following: five (5) lower primary teachers, five (5) upper primary teachers coming from the five (5) different schools of Liliongan Carmen Cotabato, and five (5) school heads for the in-depth interview. The researcher used probing questions in the in-depth interview and focus group discussion.

For the focus group discussion, ten (10) participants were included, five (5) teachers and five (5) school heads. For this study, the following criteria were used to select the participants: a) Transitioning Teachers, teachers who rendered 3-5 years in service for Kindergarten to Grade 3; b) Experienced Teachers, teachers who rendered 6-10 years in service for Grade 4 – 6; c) Teachers that have five (5) and above auxiliary assignments; and d) Teachers with the willingness to participate in the study.

#### Data Gathering Tools

The researcher gathered the narratives of teachers and school heads. An interview guide with probing questions was used to uncover the necessary information needed by the researcher during the in-depth face-to-face interview and focus group discussion. The interview guide comprises twelve (12) motive guide questions for the public school teachers and thirteen (13) motive guide questions for the school heads. Further, the same questions were used in the focus group discussions to strengthen the validity cross-verification of information applied through the gathered information from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

The discussions were recorded upon the participants' approval. The documented interview was transcribed verbatim. This was the basis for the clustering and organizing of themes.

#### Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher observed the proper protocol in conducting the study by asking permission from the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) to conduct the study in the five (5) elementary schools of Liliongan. Then, the same permission was secured from the respective Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS) or District Principal-In-Charge and to the different elementary school heads attaching the approved letter from the Schools Division Superintendent. The researcher also asked permission from the selected teachers of every school. The researcher personally informed the participants, read the consent about the in-depth interview and focus group discussion, asked about their availability, and signed informed consent before data gathering.



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The researcher prepared all the necessary things for the interview in the study. The researcher used a semi-structured questionnaire for the in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The interview proceedings were audio-recorded. After gathering, the data were consolidated, transcribed, and analyzed for the qualitative study.

#### Data Analysis

To determine teachers' challenges and coping strategies during the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes, the researcher utilized the data analysis technique of Creswell et al. (2009). The following steps were followed: (a) Data reduction, (b) Data display, and (c) Data Coding. The first step is data reduction, in which the data that materialized in the transcriptions will be chosen, cut down, and organized using the data coding of core themes. The second step is data display, in which the researcher settles on transcriptions, interpretations, and data presentations. The last step is data coding, categorizing the themes presented following the research questions and referred to as central themes.

The researcher utilized the four steps Craig (2009) for the study's trustworthiness. The four components considered to examine the trustworthiness of this study are the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data. In conducting research, the study's trustworthiness needs to test the validity and reliability. To ensure the trustworthiness and accuracy during data collection, the researcher followed Hamilton & Pinnegar's (2000) prompt verification of information given by the participants. First is ensuring credibility. The credibility of this study is solidified by applying member checking by providing the participants copies of the transcripts, themes, and quotes. The participants were invited to check the data's accuracy by allowing them to add, remove, or clarify their statements.

The second is transferability. This study used understandable language, where no technical words were used to confuse readers. In addition, adequate descriptions of the locale, participants, methods, and procedures used to collect data were provided to show that the study's results are applicable within other contexts, circumstances, and settings.

The third is dependability. The researcher used all the needed parameters and approaches to achieve the objectives of this study. The researcher ensured that the data were correctly transcribed and interpreted by the researcher appropriately. Moreover, the panel in this study took part in the scrutiny of this study, which guarantees the study's dependability. Lastly, to warrant the truthfulness of the results of this study, the raw data and initial interpretation were conferred with the participants to achieve the desired confirmability of the study.

## Statement of Ethical Considerations

In this study, the researcher considered ethical practices. These ethical practices were used as a guide for the researcher in addressing the initial and ongoing issues arising from this study to achieve the goals of this study and maintain the confidentiality of the identity of participants (Morrissette & Gadbois, 2006).

Before gathering the data, the researcher observed the proper protocol for conducting the study by asking permission from the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of the five (5) elementary schools of Liliongan Schools. Then, the same permission was secured from the respective Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS) or District Principal-In-Charge and to the different elementary school heads attaching the approved permission from the Schools Division Superintendent. Also, the researcher asked permission from the selected teachers of every school considered as potential study participants.

The researcher was impartial in choosing the participants of the study. Nobody was disregarded, and anybody who fits the qualifications was taken as a possible participant in the study. All participants were treated equally regardless of their backgrounds. The researcher personally informed the participants, read the consent about the in-depth interview and focus group discussion, asked about their availability, and signed informed consent before data gathering.

They were adequately informed about the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher emphasized that participants' involvement in the study was voluntary and did not force them to answer questions. The researcher was cautious in protecting participants' well-being. For the security of the participants in their psychological and social well-being, the researcher explained to them the effect and significance of the study. The researcher considered that the study's results would positively impact the participants for improving teaching-learning processes. Participants were the first group to benefit from the result of this study.

Time was also crucial in the study, requiring the participants to apportion time from their obligations. In such a situation, the researcher was considerate in following the preferred schedule of the participants for the interview and focus group discussion. To compensate for the time spent during data gathering, the researcher gave tokens of appreciation to all participants.

The participant's right to privacy is also considered. The researcher secured all the data and did not allow the release of any information that could expose the participants' specific identities. In presenting the results, the researcher refrained from revealing the names of the participants.

The researcher safeguarded the proper implementation of the methods used in the study. The researcher included all the necessary documents that supported data analysis and gave the participants access to read through these to give an understanding of the results and findings of the study. Further, the findings were discussed comprehensively, especially the information that may affect the presentation of the results, to give importance to transparency. In addition, the researcher described the extent of her involvement and how it maintained objectivity in analyzing data and presenting the study results.

The researcher was committed to respecting the community, especially the teachers and administrators of public elementary schools. All activities were subjected to the approval of the Division Superintendent, School Heads, and teacher participants. Through this study, the involvement of these stakeholders has generated information that is beneficial to their current practices in preparing the next generation of leaders in their schools through their perception of succession planning and developing a better appreciation of the roles and responsibilities of leaders who will become influential and promote common good within and beyond their context.

## Chapter IV

### Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents the analyses and interpretation of data gathered from the teachers and school heads regarding the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion results. It specifically answered the problems regarding the challenges and coping mechanisms of public elementary school teachers of Carmen North District in embracing the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes in the five (5) public schools of Liliongan Carmen, Cotabato of Carmen North District, during the School Year 2022-2023. The presentation and discussion focused on the problems set in Chapter 1.

Based on the responses of the participants, two major themes were extracted on the challenges of teachers: (1) Compliance with health and safety protocols, and (2) Feelings of stress and anxiety; and three major themes were extracted on the coping strategies of teachers: (1) Following health and safety protocols, (2) Fostering partnership through 3C's: Communication, Cooperation, and Collaboration, and (3) Framing one's mindset in accepting and embracing challenges.

On the challenges of teachers, two themes were extracted: (1) Compliance of health and safety protocols, (2) Feelings of stress and anxiety

Theme 1: *Compliance with health and safety protocols*

Based on the Legal Education Board Memorandum Number 002, series 2022, or "Guidelines on the conduct of limited face-to-face classes in legal education institutions during the covid-19 pandemic", the schools of Divisions Office of Cotabato conducted the face-to-face learning modality during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Each of the informants had personal challenges before and during their teaching experiences. Proper implementation of health and safety protocols during the transition of limited face-to-face classes from modular distance learning is paramount to ensure everyone's safety.

Theme 1 described one of the two significant challenges teachers experienced while transitioning to limited face-to-face classes. The teachers shared that compliance with health and safety protocols was one of their challenges. Compliance with health and safety protocols includes school ground and classroom preparation, following and obeying rules, and the provision of health kits and health essentials.

The teachers were challenged in preparing the school ground and classroom preparation because the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) and Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) regularly monitor each school to determine if they followed the guidelines for preparing the school-covid-free environment. According to Terrazola (2018), classroom preparations is one factors causing teachers' anxiety. As described by Teacher 13,

*"...every now and then, our BLGU health personnel check our school..."* (T13, December 9, 2022)

Also, School Head 12 mentioned,

*"... transitioning from modular to limited face-to-face is quite an uncomfortable situation...the work of the entire school has been doubled up, and then the BLGU health personnel monitor from time to time."* (SH12, December 7, 2022)

Even though teachers are challenged during the transition of limited face-to-face, they strive and do their best to provide the necessary things needed in limited face-to-face. They have revealed that they are challenged in preparing their classrooms because they need to maintain the 1-meter social distancing. As School Head 6 observed,

*"The challenges encountered by my teachers are classroom capacity since they have limited space to follow the 1-meter distance from one another to maintain school covid-19 free... school ground preparation also since you need to prepare the ground especially the distance, the entrance, the exits of our learners....materials for ground preparation and the last is classrooms..."*

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*classrooms that are not standard or having substandard classrooms is another challenge.” (SH6, December 6, 2022)*

Teachers needed to prepare their classrooms. They checked the capacity of their classrooms or even removed their tables and cabinets inside the classroom to give more space for distancing. School Head 9 described, *“In limited face-to-face classes, distance with each other in the classroom is given importance ...” (SH9, December 12, 2022)*

Teacher 8 and School Head 15 highlighted the challenges observed in classroom set-ups.

*“The challenges I encountered in modular distance learning to limited face-to-face is the set-up... yun iyong pinakachallenge talaga sa mga teachers.” (T8, December 12, 2022)*

*“The challenges teachers encounter in transitioning to limited face-to-face classes are now to be ready in every classroom in the assurance of covid-free schools and following protocols....” (SH15, December 9, 2022)*

Teacher 13 said she was challenged in preparing preventive measures for covid-19 because teachers must put handwashing facilities, secure thermal scanners, hand sanitizer, and many others that could help prevent covid-19.

*“The challenges that I encountered in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes is that we have so many things to provide for the preventive measures against Covid-19, like installation of handwashing facilities in every room or at the entrance of our gate to mitigate Covid-19. We must secure thermal scanner, hand sanitizer, and many others.” (T13, December 9, 2022)*

To deal with teachers' challenges in compliance with health protocols, teachers' time in teaching the learners was shortened because, at the school entrances, they need to closely monitor whether the learners are wearing face masks and check their temperature. As School Head 6 stated,

*“The challenge encountered by my teachers is time management; the required time was shortened to maintain the safety of our learners during the limited face-to-face.” (SH6, December 6, 2022)*

Teachers monitor learners' temperature every one (1) hour to protect learners' health. Before entering the school premises and classroom, the learners must wash their hands, wear face masks, and check their temperature. It consumes time for the teachers and adds to their tasks. School head 12 confirmed,

*“... during the transitioning, we have encountered many challenges, but the main problem here is entering the school premises and inside the classroom because other children do not know where the entrances are and the exit... The second*



*one is wearing of face mask. Some forget to bring it...."* (SH12, December 7, 2022)

During the transition of limited face-to-face classes from modular distance learning, they were challenged in the provision of health kits and health essentials. School Head 6 pointed out,

*"The challenge encountered by teachers is the provision of health essentials. We need a lot of supplies for basic needs for the classroom like soap, alcohol, and face masks to minimize the case of covid-19."* (SH6, December 6, 2022)

School Head 6 added,

*"The challenges that I observe among my teachers are not enough health essentials. Some learners cannot afford face masks, alcohol, and other basic needs. So, teachers provide these."* (SH6, December 6, 2022)

Teacher 13 narrated,

*"...I, as a teacher, also strive to provide the necessary things needed...."* (T13, December 9, 2022)

Many teachers and school heads identified compliance with health and safety protocols as one of the primary challenges that teachers face during the transition to limited face-to-face classes. During this transition, they prepared the necessary things IATF and BLGU health personnel required in each school for limited face-to-face classes. It is one of the top priorities of teachers during the transition period. This was confirmed by James (2022), who accentuated that health and safety are still top concerns of teachers in reopening classrooms. Teachers need to observe strict guidelines that will significantly change the work environment (Pitzer, 2020).

Similarly, Trans (2021) stated that the challenge of maintaining health protocols and socially distanced classrooms for the safety prevention and management standards for covid-19 in school settings is observed. Schools will succeed in their vision and mission if covid-19 protocol is appropriately implemented and problems still need to be solved (Sintayehu & Hussein, 2021).

The school's implementation of the proper Covid-19 health protocols in schools is paramount since teaching staff plays a vital role in continuing teaching-learning throughout the pandemic. Hence, teachers have undertaken essential responsibilities. Prioritizing mitigation strategies is necessary. Checking temperatures, sanitizing hands, donning masks, maintaining a social/physical distance between learners and staff, limiting class sizes to small groups of students, routine cleaning is among the precautionary measures implemented while reopening schools. In addition to donning masks and checking body temperature with thermometers at school entrances, schools are required to install plastic barriers in classrooms to increase student separation (Werabe Administrative, 2012).

## Theme 2: *Feelings of stress and anxiety*

The constantly evolving educational institutions, market factors, and political reforms present teachers with novel challenges and exciting experiences. Gewurz (2020) asserts that while these present advantages and opportunities, they also carry professional dangers because of a number of psychological variables. When the teachers learned about the rapid transition to limited face-to-face classes, they became concerned and anxious (Pozo-Rico, 2022).

During the transition of limited face-to-face classes from modular distance learning, teachers frequently feel the stress and anxiety of facing the demands of the Department of Education. Stress is an unpleasant emotional experience associated with feelings of anxiety. Teachers' feelings of stress and anxiety are limited teaching resources, adjustment to teaching approaches, learners' unreadiness to limited face-to-face classes, short attention spans, reading problems, and less exposure of learners in teaching and learning.

Teachers having limited teaching resources is one of the sources of their stress. It needs to be improved in delivering lessons because the teacher will find more resources for teaching and learning to provide quality instruction and learning. Teacher 2 stated that, *"Transition time was stressful with limited teaching and learning resources..."* (T2, December 6, 2022)

Some participants stated that limited teaching resources cause teachers' stressors, but some said that the cause of their stress and anxiety is the adjustments of learners to teaching approaches. The teachers said they could not follow the Daily Lesson Log because of most learners' performances. Teacher 11 recounted,

*"You want to teach according to the DLL or quarterly prescribed education program, but the problem is if you write those sentences on the board and let them read on their own, they could not do it."* (T11, December 7, 2022)

Similarly, Teacher 2 supplemented,

*"My experiences with transitioning to limited face-to-face classes are on the adjustments in teaching approaches...I've been stressed in presenting my lessons and providing activities."* (T2, December 6, 2022)

Teacher 8 added a statement about the cause of her stressors and the changed teaching mode.

*"The challenges I encountered in the transition has something to do with the mode of teaching. Iyon yung pinakachallenge talaga sa mga teachers."* (T8, December 12, 2022)

Teacher 8 also narrated how she was stressed about the learners' attitude during limited face-to-face. Some learners are very excited, curious, and anxious, and teachers need to adjust themselves to their learners.

*“Stressed, syempre mga bata dati nasa bahay lang sila pero ngayon meron ng limited face-to-face iba na ang ugali nila. Nadadagdagan naman ang stress namin.”* (T8, December 12, 2022)

School Head 9 agreed with this as she observed that the teachers were stressed and anxious in dealing with learners inside the school premises.

*“In limited face-to-face classes, teachers adjust to students...Teachers adjust on how to deal with pupils...”* (SH9, December 12, 2022)

The participants reported their challenge on managing learners' behavior. According to Nooruddin and Baig (2014), one of the issues teachers confront during limited face-to-face lessons is managing student conduct. During this pandemic, learners are unfamiliar with their surroundings, which makes teaching difficult.

Furthermore, the participants shared that the cause of teachers' stress and anxiety is the unreadiness of learners in limited face-to-face classes. Teachers emphasized that learners in a specific grade level must show the competencies expected to be achieved. However, the participants observed learning gaps and posited that these may be due to the lack of face-to-face classes for two years. Anzaldo (2021) accentuated that quality learning can only partially be guaranteed because of the absence of face-to-face classes for the last two years and the fact that parents were the ones who answered the learners' modules. Additionally, contrary to the findings of Trabucon (2022), the teachers observed that most learners are unprepared for face-to-face classes.

Teacher 2 cited,

*“...stressful, ... during this time, teachers observed the unreadiness of many learners.”* (T2, December 6, 2022)

This statement resonated with Teacher 4,

*“There are various challenges that I encountered from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes like the unreadiness of learners in face-to-face learning.”* (T4, December 12, 2022)

Likewise, Teacher 10 also relayed,

*“Learners are expected to learn and act on their present grade level, but they are behind in their lessons. The readiness of the pupils in their grade level is not that evident.”* (T10, December 7, 2022)

Additionally, some teachers observed that the causes of their stress are short attention spans, learning gaps, and reading problems. Teacher 4 shared



her sentiments about handling learners because of their short attention spans. As observed, learners cannot focus for a more extended period.

*“The challenge I encountered is handling their very short attention span. This may be due to the delay of learning caused by the pandemic, specifically the two years with no face-to-face classes.”* (T10, December 7, 2022)

Teachers 1 and 4 also shared that the learning gaps are another cause of their stress that makes them anxious, as observed in the learners' difficulties in reading and writing. Learners need help to read the words written on the chalkboard quickly.

*“...It’s shocking during these times. I have been with many learners before and now, especially since I have been teaching multi-grade classes. I can see how these children are learning. I can compare it from now and before. There is so much gap between those years regarding how learners perform.”* (T1, December 12, 2022)

*“The challenges I encountered from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face ... observing learning gaps in reading, writing... it is challenging for me since learners can’t read and write due to the delay of learning caused by the pandemic.”* (T1, December 12, 2022)

Teacher 11 confirmed that,

*“... iyong naexperience ko po from transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes is ang mga bata ngayon ay parang nahihirapan na sila bumasa kahit nasa Grade 5 na sila... ang mga bata po ay nahihirapan silang mag recognize ng words, ... at sa kanilang learning competencies ay naapektuhan po talaga. Sa palagay ko ma’am is pagkakaroon po ng matagal na face-to-face classes parang na stagnant po iyong knowledge nila. I considered these as my challenges.”* (T11, December 7, 2022)

The abovementioned narratives echoed with Teacher 11,

*“You want to teach accordingly... but the problem is if you write those sentences on the board and let them read independently, some could read and comprehend, some could just read, and the rest couldn’t hit those two. They are very diverse. It’s stressful because I need to give them extra special treatment. These are just some challenges that need to be taken seriously.”* (T11, December 7, 2022)

Teacher 11 agreed and claimed that these situations would become manageable later on,

*“Stressfull lang po talaga siya dahil medyu may kahinaan ang mga kabataan ngayon sa pag-unawa sa mga topic at sa subject na ating tinuturo sa kanila pero sa palagay ko naman ma’am later on na manage naman ang ganitong situation.”* (T11, December 7, 2022)

Although teaching requires significant flexibility, as learners and schools are anything but predictable, these teachers connect personally to a need for repetition and routine. While describing how stressed teachers are on limited teaching resources, adjustment to teaching approaches, learners' unreadiness to limited face-to-face classes, short attention spans, and reading problems, most participants mentioned that one of the sources of their stress and anxiety is due to the less exposure to learners in teaching and learning. Teacher 1 supported this by highlighting,

*"... I consider these challenges ... because we cannot teach very well because of the modular set-up caused by the pandemic."* (T1, December 12, 2022)

Most teachers said that stress and anxiety are teachers' challenges during the transition from limited face-to-face classes to modular distance learning. These challenges exist in their job-related lives. This pandemic added pressure to the teachers. It was common for teachers to mention how stress and anxiety affect their work-life balance. The recent pandemic has had a long-lasting impact on teachers and learners (Holmes, 2020).

At the individual level, the participants highlighted their experience with stress and anxiety related to the professional demand and expectations of their role. According to Zagalaz (2020), teachers experienced high stress and anxiety during the pandemic. This was supported by the statements of Ng (2007) that stress has been accompanied by the symptoms of anxiety and sleep disturbance in teachers and an increase in teachers' workloads.

The participants' narratives support Schonert (2017), who stated that teaching is the most stressful profession.

On the coping strategies of teachers, three themes were extracted: (1) Following health and safety protocols, (2) Fostering partnership through 3C's: Communication, Cooperation, and Collaboration, and (3) Framing one's mindset in accepting and embracing challenges.

Themes 1 to 3 described the coping strategies employed by the teachers in dealing with their challenges. Coping techniques are critical for mitigating the effects of stress and determining one's level of resilience or vulnerability. Psychologists classify coping techniques into four categories: problem-focused, emotional, social, and avoidant (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; McCarthy, 2019). The coping strategies utilized by the participants significantly fall under action-based coping strategy of Mcleod (2015). The participants dealt with their challenges by dealing with the cause of stress and devising a solution to overcome it.

#### Theme 1: *Following health and safety protocols*

Themed 1 emerged from the participants' responses as one of their three coping strategies. Health and safety protocols in and outside the classroom are

fundamental as schools reopen. Many parents depend on teachers to ensure their children can continue their education in a safe and healthy environment and make up for the knowledge and skills that may have been lost. The participants of this study identified compliance with health and safety protocols as one of the primary challenges experienced in transitioning to limited face-to-face classes. Nevertheless, they cope with it by following health and safety protocols inside the school premises and following and obeying rules, following classroom set-ups and school ground preparation, and providing health kits and essentials.

Teachers always make it a habit to practice health and safety protocols to mitigate the spread of covid-19. The schools constantly remind the learners and stakeholders to strictly follow the health and safety protocols and guidelines when entering the school premises. Teacher 2 stated,

*"...health protocols are strictly observed because teachers are concerned about the health of the learners and colleagues as well."* (T2, December 6, 2022)

Teacher 8 said,

*"So, namanage naming thru following safety protocols, naa pud siyay safety precautionary measures para iyong mga bata hindi magkasakit"* (T8, December 12, 2022)

School Head 9 added,

*"To cope with challenges, they strictly follow health protocols, follow the class schedules strictly."* (SH9, December 12, 2022)

It is best for schools to strictly follow the health and safety protocols because if they are improperly implemented, they will fail to meet their mission and vision. School Head 12 stated that they strictly enforce the guidelines on entering and exiting the premises.

*"Yes, specific strategy. Number 1 here is the orientation of parents and the learners. At the same time, the conduct of the dry run will be the entrance when you go inside the school and classroom, and this would be the way to exit when we go out from your classroom on the school premises. The teachers guided the learners properly on what to do until such time they can manage themselves independently. What we did, is we just said to the parents that we are in a public school and we need to follow the basic rules because it's for our own good and safety. Iyon, so on and on, as time went by they were able to adopt the process."* (SH15, December 9, 2022)

Also, School Head 15 added,

*"... to manage or overcome the challenges, health protocols are imposed by teachers ..."* (SH15, December 9, 2022)

The participants emphasized strictly following the rules for preventing covid-19. Then, the participants also stated that they comply with the classroom set-ups and school ground preparation to follow the health and safety protocols during the transition of limited face-to-face classes from modular distance learning. Teacher 13 said,

*"We overcame the challenges we experienced in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes with the help of our health personnel. They conducted advocacies in our school on how to handle and manage our children on health and safety to all of us. Now and then, our BLGU health personnel closely monitor our school, and I, as a teacher, also provide all the necessary things our pupils need. We have so many things to provide for the preventive measures against Covid-19. We need to conduct awareness activities for our parents and stakeholders. We have many things to do, like installing handwashing facilities in every room or at the gate entrance to mitigate COVID-19. We must secure thermal scanner, hand sanitizer, and many others."*

School Head 6 also stated that teachers prepared their classrooms and the school ground to mitigate covid-19.

*"... We need to have a lot of supplies for basic needs for the classroom like soap, alcohol, and face masks to minimize the case of covid-19. We prepared the ground, especially the distance, the entrance, and the exits of our learners..."* (SH6, December 6, 2022)

After complying with the school ground and classroom set-ups, teachers provide health essentials to the learners because some of the learners cannot afford or provide the necessary health kits and essentials to avoid the spread of covid-19.

School Heads 6 and 12 confirmed that they provide the learners with health essentials like soaps, facemasks, and others to help mitigate the spread of covid-19.

*"We provide health essentials like soap, alcohol, and face masks to minimize the case of covid-19."* (SH6, December 6, 2022)

*"...the solution I've made is the wearing of face mask... what we did is the provision of health essentials, so we did not just give face mask, but we also give toothbrush, toothpaste, towels, or in short we give hygiene kits..."* (SH12, December 7, 2022)

The teachers provide health kits for their learners because some parents cannot support or buy the necessary things for their children to avoid the spread of covid-19 pandemic. Also, they install designated handwashing areas, provide kits for learners, and limit the entry of their learners and parents with the strict implementation of health and safety protocols.

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Therefore, proper implementation of Covid-19 health protocols during the limited face-to-face classes done by the teachers. The teachers recognized their important role in continuing teaching-learning throughout the pandemic and have undertaken essential responsibilities (Karakose, 2022). Also, Pitzer (2021) agreed that the primary goals of teachers are to protect the health, safety, and well-being of learners and continue to educate themselves as socially responsible citizens of the world.

Theme 2: *Fostering partnership through 3C's: Communication, Cooperation, and Collaboration.*

Teachers realized that the challenges they encountered in transitioning to limited face-to-face classes from modular learning were alleviated through the 3Cs a) Communication, b) cooperation, and c) collaboration.

Communication

Many participants affirmed that consistent communication with parents and students through a variety of media could assist in decreasing if not completely eradicating, the problem. Many teachers also mentioned how their ongoing interactions with parents and students aided their instruction because they could quickly offer advice and support to the students if they ran into problems.

It also provides them with insights into students' current situation and position, particularly those without parents who can constantly aid them in their studies or those whose parents are working but need more time to help them with their school work. School Head 12 described using orientation as a communication strategy,

*"During the limited face-to-face, I used the orientation of parents and learners since they are new to the guidelines or programs."* (SH12, December 7, 2022)

The participants in this study recognized the importance of keeping parents and learners informed about the current situation of the schools. Hernando-Malipot (2020) highlighted parents' role in the current learning modalities DepEd uses for learning continuity in his paper.

Additionally, the school heads emphasized how communication aided in ensuring that teachers, parents, and learners were well-informed on the do's and don'ts during limited face-to-face classes. One of the school heads reported,

*"Making sure that primary stakeholders like teachers, parents, and learners are well-informed on the guidelines and protocols to follow is important. Hence, orientations were done."* (SH15, December 9, 2022)

School head 6 described how words of encouragement helped the teachers as well in dealing with the challenges they encountered,



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*“The ability to cope may vary from one individual to another, but through constant communication and good words of encouragement, we just made it...”* (SH6, December 6, 2022)

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, regular and constant communication is essential to keep parents, teachers, and students informed. Teachers must regularly contact both groups of people. De Leon (2021) also mentioned that regular communication with teachers and other stakeholders is helpful in effectively implementing limited face-to-face classes. Early communication, before or during decision-making, strengthens rather than erodes trust (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). Early communication can help alleviate fear and urge the community to support the new school rules (Carvalho et al., 2020). It is notable for school leaders to initiate open, transparent communication with the team to articulate the need for change and demonstrate a clear, purposeful direction in guiding the team through the process (Cava & Hopkinson, 2020).

### Cooperation

The participants acknowledged the value of cooperation if the successful implementation of limited face-to-face classes is aimed. Teacher 1 shared, *“I managed to overcome those challenges through the assistance and guidance of my co-teachers because I believed together we struggle, together we conquer.”* (T1, December 12, 2022)

School Head 3 shared that cooperation was achieved through the help of stakeholders who donated materials teachers lacked in their classrooms.

*“I have to know the needs of my school in terms of armchairs, facilities, school buildings, and classrooms, and of course, to tap our best friends in the community, the PTA, SGC, BLGU, and there are some private people who gave some and shared their blessings to fulfill the dream catering our learners for the school year 2022-2023.”* (SH3, December 6, 2022)

School Head 15 shared that stakeholders' cooperation has helped them manage the challenges they face.

*“We managed or overcame the challenges experienced in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes by promoting cooperation among internal and external stakeholders. Everyone involved in the implementation of limited face-to-face must cooperate.”* (SH15, December 9, 2022)

Therefore, the school has lasted because its members' cooperation makes survival possible. Without the cooperation of its members, society cannot survive. Working together to achieve common aims is cooperation (Montagu, 1995).

## Collaboration

One way in coping challenges of teachers is by promoting collaboration. Collaboration is teachers working together to solve problems, share knowledge, tap stakeholders, and use evidence-based techniques to accomplish a common objective.

Teacher 2 said,

*"I think I slowly overcome those challenges with the help of my family, friends, and co-teachers."* (T2, December 6, 2022)

Teacher 2 added that she is resourceful, asks for help from her colleagues, and maintains emotional support.

*"The specific coping strategy that I have utilized is to become resourceful. Use things that I have learned in social media, asking my colleagues or ask help from others and maintain emotionally supportive relationships."* (T2, December 6, 2022)

Teacher 13 added statements on how to collaborate by conducting advocacies to parents and stakeholders.

*"We overcome the challenges we experienced in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes with the help of our health personnel. They conducted advocacies in our school about health and safety protocols for all of us. Our BLGU health personnel closely monitors our school. They provide us with relevant information about this pandemic. It has increased our awareness about it."* (T13, December 9, 2022)

School Heads 9 and 15 shared that promoting collaboration is imperative and that collaboration with training providers is vital for teachers to upskill and cope with the new normal of education.

*"... promoting collaboration with providers of seminars and workshops is important so teachers were provided additional information to upskill and cope with the new normal of education."* (SH9, December 12, 2022)

*"Teachers undergo seminars on how to cope with the challenges encountered in the new normal."* (SH15, December 9, 2022)

Collaboration with internal and external stakeholders has helped the participants overcome challenges and minimize task stress.

According to Bartle (2007), stakeholder engagement entails working with people, utilizing their existing resources, and assisting them in collaborating to achieve predetermined purposes and objectives. In order to elevate the school to a level that is suitable for all learners in the 21st century, assistance from various sectors of the community is required. The primary roles should be rotated based on the necessity and emphasis of each aspect of the school's transformation.

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As Cranston (2001) emphasized, schools should always be prepared to connect with community stakeholders to address school plant facilities and resource deficiencies. The majority agrees that schools cannot exist in isolation from the community, and for schools to be progressive and achieve their objectives, community ties must be strengthened (Allawan, 2012).

Theme 3: *Framing one's mindset in accepting and embracing challenges*

Theme 3 is another coping strategy teachers employed to deal with the challenges they encountered during the transition. This theme encompasses resilience among teachers by framing their mindset to accept and embrace the challenges. Resilient individuals remain optimistic despite difficulties (Werner & Smith, 1989, 1992).

As implied by the definition of resilience, the ability to shift and adapt to change is the most crucial attribute enabling one to resist the most demanding and challenging circumstances. This resilience helps people develop grit, resolve, strength, and tenacity.

Changing is difficult but necessary. It disrupts the flow of operations but opens the possibility for improvement. It can bring chaos but also progress. The beauty of change is that it brings new opportunities through encouraging outlook, healthy lifestyle, flexibility, and adaptability to allow survival and success.

The participants mentioned that teachers are trying to embrace the actual scenario and the new set-up of teaching and learning. Effective teachers can adjust, change, and modify teaching methodologies depending on the student's needs, the availability of resources, and the context of the environment.

The participants of this study stated that framing one's mindset in accepting and embracing challenges during the transition to limited face-to-face classes entails resilience, flexibility, and multi-tasking.

School Head 12 confirmed that resiliency is one of the coping strategies demonstrated by the teachers. Resiliency is the ability of a person to withstand challenges and recover from these difficulties.

*"... Resilience is the sense that amidst pandemic, educational services must go on and in whatever circumstances may come in, education and learning must never be compromised...deal with it in whatever way we can, we need to cope with the challenges and the test of times."* (SH12, December 7, 2022)

Teacher 1, Teacher 5, and Teacher 10 stated that their coping strategies for overcoming challenges are multi-tasking, time management, and being flexible at all times. Multi-tasking because teachers have different responsibilities, especially in preparing the school to be a covid-free environment.



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*“for me...time management resolve effective and efficient classroom management, especially in multi-grade class.” (T1, December 12, 2022)*

*“Time management and multi-tasking. Yes, because in multi-tasking, a lot was accomplished.” (T5, December 7, 2022)*

*“Multi-tasking and time management. Yes, because multi-tasking is effective with the many tasks needed to accomplish along with the actual learning session.” (T10, December 7, 2022)*

Teacher 4 stated that in order to adjust, teachers must be flexible because a flexible teacher can cope easily with all the challenges they experience.

*“As they said, teachers must be flexible. It is one of the ways to deal with changes...” (T4, December 6, 2022)*

Teachers coping strategies make teachers more effective and have more fulfilling professional and personal lives. Teachers' resilience, flexibility, and multi-tasking are the participants' ways of framing their mindset to accept the challenges they experienced in transitioning to limited face-to-face classes from modular distance learning. They believed that by doing these, they could finish their task as soon as possible and lighten their mood towards all the difficulties confronting them. Resilience is the process and the result of effectively adjusting to harsh or challenging life circumstances. The American Psychological Association (APA) defines it as the flexibility of one's ideas, feelings, and behaviors and the capacity to adjust to internal and external factors.

Moreover, Cardullo et al. (2021) added that teachers are adaptable and flexible during times of crisis. Despite the obstacles, they continue to facilitate learning and are making every effort to adapt to the new normal.

Further, participants expressed that accepting and embracing challenges is necessary. Teacher 4 declared,

*“... we have to accept that the teacher needs to be very versatile. We have to embrace what is being imposed by the DepEd for us, not for our learners only but for us facilitators of learning.” (P4, December 6, 2022)*

Also, Teacher 7 added,

*“Accept and embrace challenges because we cannot do anything to improve our situation unless we acknowledge these difficulties. It is through acknowledgment that we are able to devise ways to solve the problems.” (P7, December 12, 2022)*

Teacher 14 agreed by stressing that the teachers need to embrace the problems and love their job because it helps feed them and their families.

*“Namamanage ko naman iyong challenges ko ma'am sa pamamagitan ng pag-embrace ko sa problema na maaring makaapekto sa aking emotional state at sa aking attitude. Dapat na ma-embrace ang mag challenges kasi part ito sa*

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*trabaho. Mahalin dapat ang trabaho dahil diyan naman po tayo nabubuhay.”*  
(P14, December 9, 2022)

School Head 12 affirmed,

*“We are the members of a fast-changing world. We need to keep abreast and be willing to accept the challenges that may come along our way. Change is permanent. All we need to do is accept the reality that everything changes. Be resilient.”* (SH12, December 7, 2022)

Therefore, surviving and thriving in the face of adversity is just one aspect of a teacher's resilience and accepting and embracing challenges. One of the most important factors keeping teachers in the profession is resilience. Resilience retains educational goals and deals with the unforeseeable events inherent to being a teacher (Gu and Day, 2013). In addition, resilience is one of the coping techniques used by teachers while implementing face-to-face classes. It is one the most important factors in keeping teachers in the profession. Teachers with greater levels of resilience have the mental and physical stamina to handle difficulties successfully. It will assist them in having more success both professionally and personally. In pandemic situations, it helps to achieve higher student outcomes. Resilience, as previously established, is both the process and the outcome of successfully adapting to challenging or challenging life circumstances (Masten et al. (2001). In general, resilience is the ability of a person to adapt quickly and successfully to overcome difficulty.

#### Intervention Plan

The following intervention plan was designed to address the primary challenge of teachers in transitioning to limited face-to-face learning from modular distance learning, the compliance of health and safety protocols, learning gaps and feelings of stress and anxiety. Hence this action plan has been configured.



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Education  
Region XII  
Division of Cotabato  
School-based Intervention Plan  
S.Y. 2023-2024

Challenges	Objectives	Activities/Strategies	Persons Involved	Resources Needed	Time Frame	Success Indicator
<p>Compliance with health and safety protocols</p> <p>Heavy classroom preparation in adherence to IATF</p> <p>Lack of support from parents</p>	<p>To tap the stakeholders and parents in the preparation and maintenance of classroom preparations</p>	<p>Conduct and orient parents on highlighting the importance of preparation and maintenance of classroom preparations in adherence to IATF.</p> <p>Create committees on health and safety management comprised of the school head, teachers, parents, and stakeholders.</p> <p>Invite stakeholders during the PTA meeting and giving solicitation letter to the nearest</p>	<p>School Head, Teacher, parents, and others</p>	<p>Approved Letter in conducting orientation on highlighting the importance of preparation and maintenance of classroom preparations in adherence to IATF</p>	<p>August 2023</p>	<p>Follow health and safety protocols in and outside the classrooms in adherence to IATF</p>

Inadequate learner hygiene kits	To tap stakeholders in the provision of learner hygiene kits	business sectors, professionals, alumni and others				Provision of learner hygiene kits
Learning Gaps						
Unpreparedness of learners in limited face-to-face classes	To encourage parents' involvement in teaching their children to read	Give orientation on the nature, scope, and rationale of the remedial reading to students and parents for familiarity and to stimulate students' love for reading	School Head, Teacher, parents, and learners	Approved Letter in conducting orientation on highlighting the importance of reading	Whole year round	Increased reading proficiency level of the learners
Short Attention Span of the learners	Encourage students to read at home with their families, and small group reading with their classmates					Develop a positive and supportive learning environment
An Increased number of non-readers	To reorient teachers during LAC session on the available reading materials given by the Division	To reorient teachers on the available reading materials given by the Division. Present classroom rules in an engaging way to get the creativity flowing on the first day of school.				
Learner's behavior	Establish classroom rules and procedures to help teachers maintain class routines and learners' expectations for	Ask students to help make classroom rules because when students are involved with presenting the rules, they're more likely to				Effective classroom behavior management



	classwork and behaviors	remember and uphold them.				strategies
Teachers stress and anxiety	To develop health and wellness program for teachers	To alleviate teachers' stress and anxiety, every Friday in the afternoon there will be educational sessions on support mental health and practices through play, games, SLAC session and others	Teachers and School Head		Every Friday of the week	To create more resilient and mentally supportive workplace To help reduce job-related stress and anxiety

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## Chapter V

### Summary, Findings, Conclusion & Recommendations

This chapter presents a summary of the objectives and contents of the study. It also presents the summary of the formulated findings, conclusions drawn, and proposed recommendations based on the research outcomes.

#### *Summary*

This study explored public elementary school teachers' challenges and coping strategies in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes of the five (5) elementary schools of Liliongan Carmen Cotabato of Carmen North District in the Division of Cotabato. The research employed the qualitative-phenomenological research of Creswell (2013).

The researcher used a researcher-made interview guide with probing questions and conducted the one-on-one, in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The discussions were recorded upon the participants' approval. The researcher gathered the data based on the narrative experiences of teachers. After gathering, the data were consolidated, transcribed, translated, and analyzed for the qualitative study.

#### *Findings*

Based on the results, two major themes were extracted on the challenges of teachers: (1) Compliance with health and safety protocols, and (2) Feelings of stress and anxiety; and three major themes were extracted on the coping strategies of teachers: (1) Following health and safety protocols, (2) Fostering partnership through 3C's: Communication, Cooperation, and Collaboration, and (3) Framing one's mindset in accepting and embracing challenges.

#### *Generalization*

The phenomenological research aimed to identify public elementary teachers' challenges and coping strategies on the transition to limited face-to-face classes. Emerging themes were derived related to challenges and coping strategies. Based on the findings, the following conclusions were hereby drawn:

Two core themes related to challenges were derived such as compliance with health and safety protocols, and feelings of stress and anxiety; and three core themes related to coping strategies were derived such as following health and safety protocols, fostering partnership through the 3C's: Communication, Cooperation, and Collaboration, and Framing one's mindset in accepting and embracing challenges. As teachers migrate and prepare for the new normal classes, they face challenges that hinder the successful implementation of limited face-to-face classes.



These challenges must be addressed to help teachers mitigate problems and continue their tasks. Preparations in complying with health and safety preventions help teachers plan what is best for their classrooms. This led teachers to equip themselves with sufficient knowledge and skills and acquire relevant materials and resources. Though barriers exist during the transition of limited face-to-face classes, teachers employ ways to overcome them.

These coping strategies help them to meet the demands of the Department of Education and their responsibilities as facilitators of learning. An intervention plan that includes seminars, workshops, training, and collaborations shall strengthen teachers' overall competence.

### *Recommendations*

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the preceding recommendations are given:

1. Teachers may formulate appropriate plans and strategies to meet the standards of teaching and learning in new normal classes. They need to explore possibilities by getting out of their comfort zones.
2. Teachers may keep the focus on the needs, share knowledge, issues, and problem, actively participate in different activities, and have the confidence development of students.
3. School heads may encourage teachers to enroll in graduate and advanced professional studies to enhance their learning in various educational and pedagogical aspects of teaching and learning and the new educational trends.
4. School heads may continue to extend their instructional support to teachers by conducting regular clinical supervision through class observation to determine the strengths and weaknesses of teachers in the delivery of learning.
5. School heads and teachers must conduct home visits, meetings, and conferences to better communicate with parents and enhance rapport.
6. School heads need to develop health and wellness programs in their respective school to help reduce job-related stress and anxiety.
7. School heads and teachers may revisit the current standards and practices in teaching during the transition to face-to-face classes.
8. The higher offices and schools may work together in addressing the challenges they face in new normal classes. They may provide relevant training and learning resources to deliver quality education.
9. Teachers are encouraged to sustain their resilience and tenacity in dealing with these challenges, and schools are highly encouraged to implement the intervention plan. Researchers can also focus their study on determining specific classroom-based or school-based interventions.

10. The Division School-based Coordinators may conduct intensive monitoring and evaluation of challenges encountered by school teachers in the new normal to identify the areas that need improvement. This can be tackled during the In-service training and Learning Action Cell (LAC).

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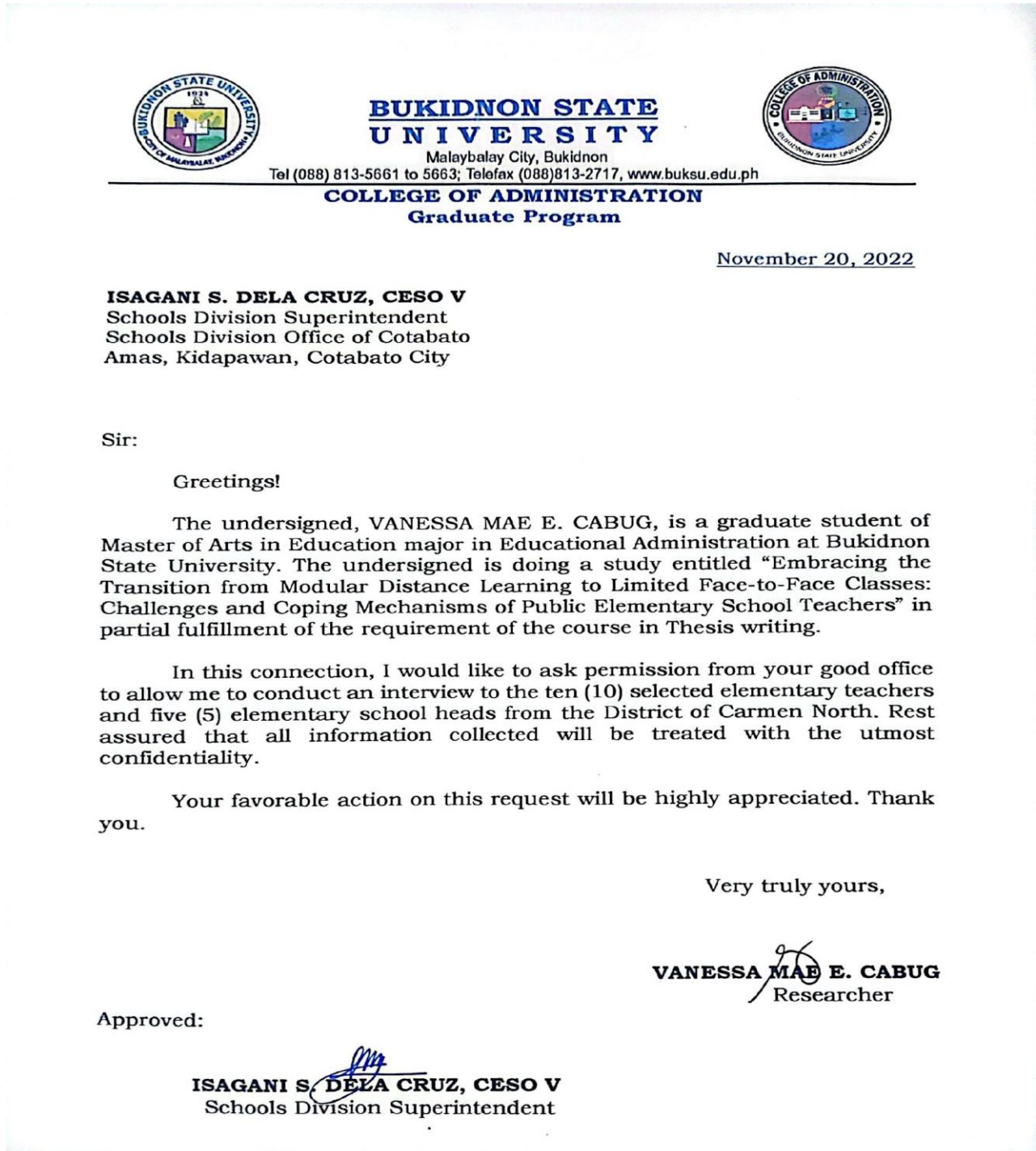
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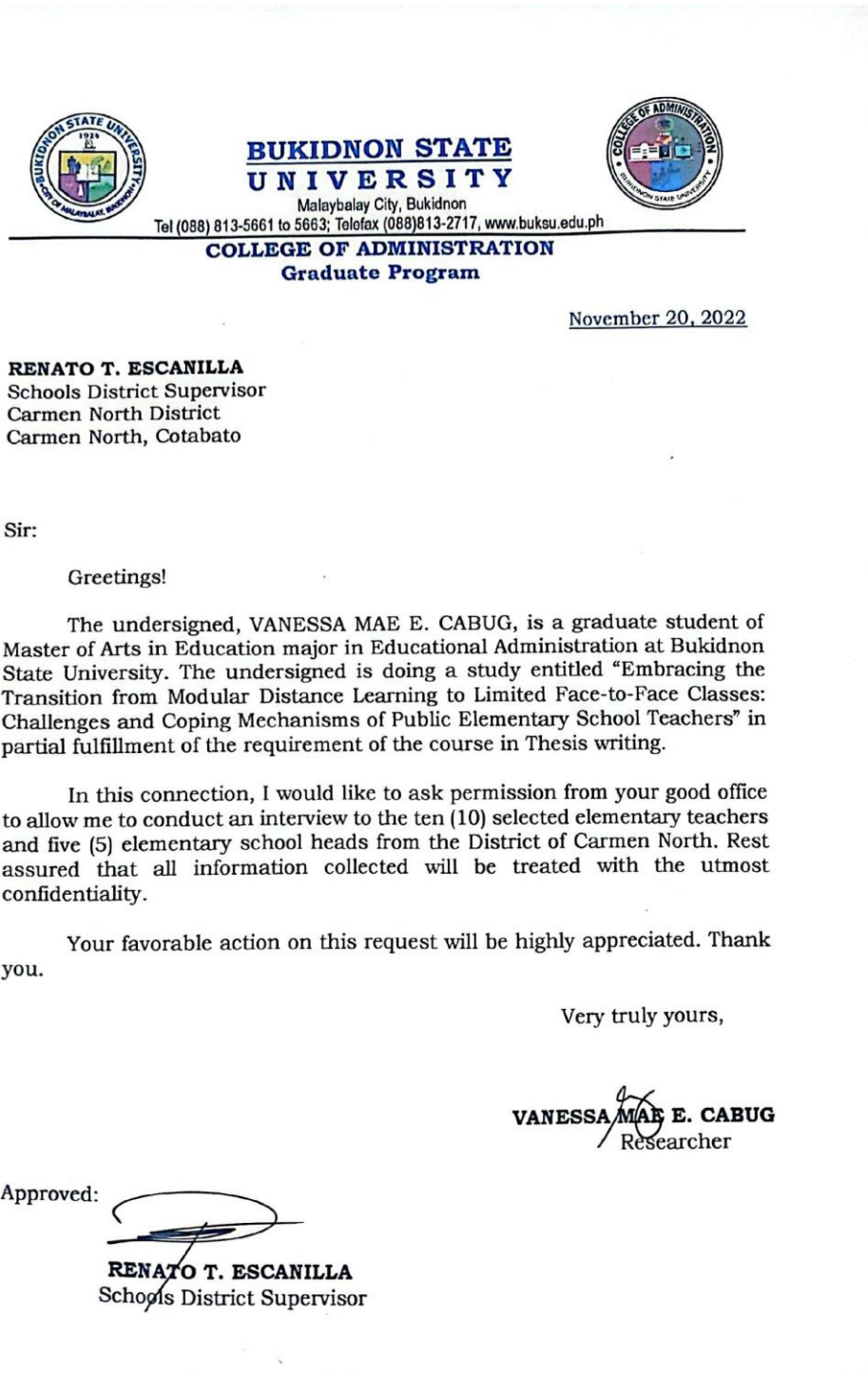


Appendix A: Approved letter of Schools Division Superintendent for the conduct of the study

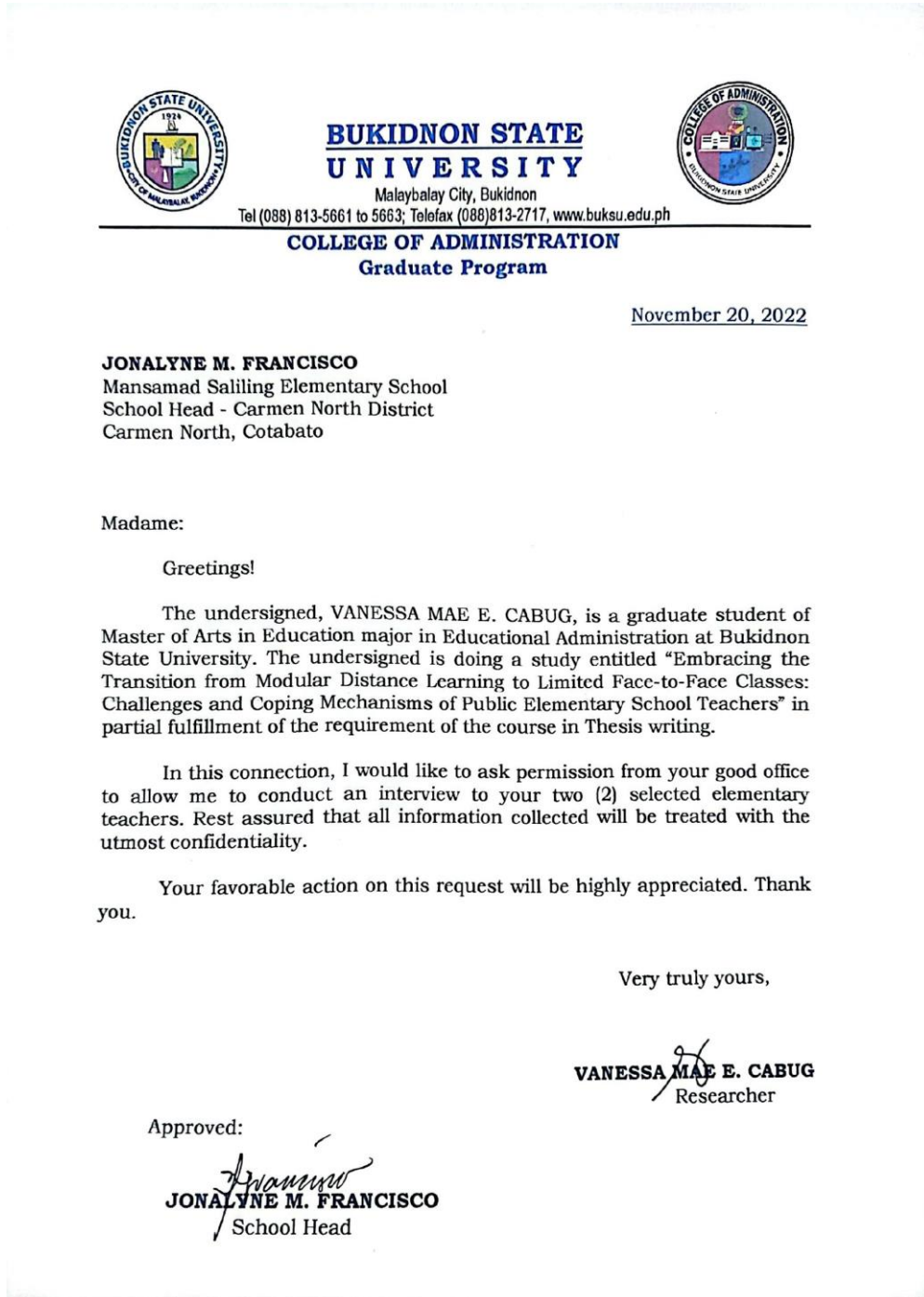




Appendix B: Approved letter of School District Supervisor for the conduct of the study



Appendix C: Approved letter of Public School Heads for the conduct of the study





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**COLLEGE OF ADMINISTRATION  
Graduate Program**

November 20, 2022

**ARNEL F. BADONG**

Makataktak Elementary School  
School Head - Carmen North District  
Carmen North, Cotabato

Sir:

Greetings!

The undersigned, VANESSA MAE E. CABUG, is a graduate student of Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Administration at Bukidnon State University. The undersigned is doing a study entitled "Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Public Elementary School Teachers" in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the course in Thesis writing.


In this connection, I would like to ask permission from your good office to allow me to conduct an interview to your two (2) selected elementary teachers. Rest assured that all information collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Your favorable action on this request will be highly appreciated. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

**VANESSA MAE E. CABUG**  
Researcher

Approved:

  
**ARNEL F. BADONG**  
School Head



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**COLLEGE OF ADMINISTRATION  
Graduate Program**

November 20, 2022

**JUN B. ESTO**  
Malugasa Elementary School  
School Head - Carmen North District  
Carmen North, Cotabato

Sir:

Greetings!

The undersigned, VANESSA MAE E. CABUG, is a graduate student of Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Administration at Bukidnon State University. The undersigned is doing a study entitled "Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Public Elementary School Teachers" in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the course in Thesis writing.

In this connection, I would like to ask permission from your good office to allow me to conduct an interview to your two (2) selected elementary teachers. Rest assured that all information collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Your favorable action on this request will be highly appreciated. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

  
**VANESSA MAE E. CABUG**  
Researcher

Approved:

  
**JUN B. ESTO**  
School Head



**BUKIDNON STATE UNIVERSITY**

Malaybalay City, Bukidnon

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**COLLEGE OF ADMINISTRATION  
Graduate Program**

November 20, 2022

**HELEN P. PAJARILLO**  
Liliongan Elementary School  
School Head - Carmen North District  
Carmen North, Cotabato

Madame:

Greetings!

The undersigned, VANESSA MAE E. CABUG, is a graduate student of Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Administration at Bukidnon State University. The undersigned is doing a study entitled "Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Public Elementary School Teachers" in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the course in Thesis writing.

In this connection, I would like to ask permission from your good office to allow me to conduct an interview to your two (2) selected elementary teachers. Rest assured that all information collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Your favorable action on this request will be highly appreciated. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

**VANESSA MAE E. CABUG**  
Researcher

Approved:

  
**HELEN P. PAJARILLO**  
School Head





**BUKIDNON STATE UNIVERSITY**

Malaybalay City, Bukidnon  
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**COLLEGE OF ADMINISTRATION  
Graduate Program**

November 20, 2022

**SUNBEAM F. CONDE**  
Mainline Elementary School  
School Head - Carmen North District  
Carmen North, Cotabato

Sir:

Greetings!

The undersigned, VANESSA MAE E. CABUG, is a graduate student of Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Administration at Bukidnon State University. The undersigned is doing a study entitled "Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Public Elementary School Teachers" in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the course in Thesis writing.

In this connection, I would like to ask permission from your good office to allow me to conduct an interview to your two (2) selected elementary teachers. Rest assured that all information collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Your favorable action on this request will be highly appreciated. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

**VANESSA MAE E. CABUG**  
Researcher

Approved:

  
**SUNBEAM F. CONDE**  
School Head





## Appendix D: Interview Guide for School Heads and Teachers

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

#### Part I- Personal Information

This section requires you to provide your personal information. Please provide the needed information.

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Civil Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

District Assigned/Station: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level Taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest Degree Earned: \_\_\_\_\_

Seminars and training attended related to the new normal of education:

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## INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

Thank you for voluntarily participating in this undertaking. Your participation is a great help in shedding light on your reactions towards “Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: A Phenomenological Study.” The interview should take at least an hour. The interview proceedings will be recorded to ensure accuracy in the transcription of your responses. All responses will be kept confidential. This means that I will ensure that any information I include in my report does not identify you as informant.

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Motive Guide Questions</b>
<p>What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes?</p>	<p>Do you agree with the limited face-to-face classes imposed by the DepEd? Why?</p> <p>Do you believe that limited face-to-face classes is helpful to you and your students? Why?</p> <p>What are your experiences about transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes?</p> <p>Describe the challenges you have encountered in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes.</p> <p>What are the factors that caused these challenges? Why do you consider these as your challenges?</p> <p>How have your experiences affected you and the significant others in your life (e.g. your wife/husband/children, etc.)?</p> <p>What bodily or socio-emotional changes have you experienced?</p>
<p>What are the coping strategies employed by the teachers to address the challenges encountered?</p>	<p>How do you manage or overcome the challenges you have experienced in transitioning from</p>



	<p>modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? What specific coping strategies have you utilized to address the challenges you encountered? Note: If possible, one to one correspondence, 1 challenge:1 strategy, unless if generic strategies apply to the various challenges identified Were the strategies used effective in addressing the challenges? Why or why not? What thoughts and feelings stood out for you about your experiences? Have you shared all that is significant with reference to the experience or phenomenon (on transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes)?</p>
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## INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE SCHOOL HEADS

### Part I- Personal Information

This section requires you to provide your personal information. Please provide the needed information.

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Civil Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

District Assigned/Station: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level Taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest Degree Earned: \_\_\_\_\_

Seminars and training attended related to the new normal of education:

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Awards received:

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### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE SCHOOL HEADS

Thank you for voluntarily participating in this undertaking. Your participation is a great help in shedding light on your reactions towards “Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: A Phenomenological Study.” The interview should take at least an hour. The interview proceedings will be recorded to ensure accuracy in the transcription of your responses. All responses will be kept confidential. This means that I will ensure that any information I include in my report does not identify you as informant.

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Motive Guide Questions</b>
<p>What are the challenges countered by the teachers in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes?</p>	<p>Do you agree with the limited face-to-face classes imposed by the DepEd? Why? Do you believe that implementation of limited face-to-face classes is helpful to you, your teachers, and students? Why? What are your experiences about transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? Describe the challenges you have encountered as school head in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes. What are the factors that caused these challenges? Why do you consider these as your challenges? What challenges have you observed among the teachers in your school on the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? How have your experiences affected you and the significant others in your life (e.g. your wife/husband/children, etc.)? What bodily or socio-emotional changes have you experienced?</p>



<p>What are the coping strategies employed by the teachers to address the challenges encountered?</p>	<p>How do you manage or overcome the challenges you have experienced in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? What specific coping strategies have you utilized to address the challenges you encountered as school head? Were the strategies used effective? Why or why not?</p> <p>Note: If possible, one to one correspondence, 1 challenge:1 strategy, unless if generic strategies apply to the various challenges identified</p> <p>What specific actions have you taken to address the challenges encountered by your teachers on the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? Were the actions taken effective? Why or why not?</p> <p>What thoughts and feelings stood out for you about your experiences?</p> <p>Have you shared all that is significant with reference to the experience or phenomenon (on transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes)?</p>
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Appendix E: Focus Group Discussion Guide for School Heads and Teachers

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS**

Thank you for voluntarily participating in this undertaking. Your participation is a great help in shedding light on your reactions towards “Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: A Phenomenological Study.” The interview should take at least an hour. The interview proceedings will be recorded to ensure accuracy in the transcription of your responses. All responses will be kept confidential. This means that I will ensure that any information I include in my report does not identify you as informant.

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Motive Guide Questions</b>
<p>What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes?</p>	<p>Do you agree with the limited face-to-face classes imposed by the DepEd? Why?            Do you believe that limited face-to-face classes is helpful to you and your students? Why?            What are your experiences about transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes?            Describe the challenges you have encountered in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes.            What are the factors that caused these challenges? Why do you consider these as your challenges?            How have your experiences affected you and the significant others in your life (e.g. your wife/husband/children, etc.)?            What bodily or socio-emotional changes have you experienced?</p>
<p>What are the coping strategies employed by the teachers to address the challenges encountered?</p>	<p>How do you manage or overcome the challenges you have experienced in transitioning from modular distance learning to</p>

	<p>limited face-to-face classes?          What specific coping strategies have you utilized to address the challenges you encountered?          Note: If possible, one to one correspondence, 1 challenge:1 strategy, unless if generic strategies apply to the various challenges identified          Were the strategies used effective in addressing the challenges? Why or why not?          What thoughts and feelings stood out for you about your experiences?          Have you shared all that is significant with reference to the experience or phenomenon (on transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes)?</p>
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**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE SCHOOL HEADS**

Thank you for voluntarily participating in this undertaking. Your participation is a great help in shedding light on your reactions towards “Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: A Phenomenological Study.” The interview should take at least an hour. The interview proceedings will be recorded to ensure accuracy in the transcription of your responses. All responses will be kept confidential. This means that I will ensure that any information I include in my report does not identify you as informant.

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Motive Guide Questions</b>
What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes?	<p>Do you agree with the limited face-to-face classes imposed by the DepEd?            Why?            Do you believe that implementation of limited face-to-face classes is helpful to you, your teachers, and students?</p>

	<p>Why?</p> <p>What are your experiences about transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? Describe the challenges you have encountered as school head in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes. What are the factors that caused these challenges? Why do you consider these as your challenges?</p> <p>What challenges have you observed among the teachers in your school on the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? How have your experiences affected you and the significant others in your life (e.g. your wife/husband/children, etc.?) What bodily or socio-emotional changes have you experienced?</p>
<p>What are the coping strategies employed by the teachers to address the challenges encountered?</p>	<p>How do you manage or overcome the challenges you have experienced in transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? What specific coping strategies have you utilized to address the challenges you encountered as school head? Were the strategies used effective? Why or why not?</p> <p>Note: If possible, one to one correspondence, 1 challenge:1 strategy, unless if generic strategies apply to the various challenges identified</p> <p>What specific actions have you taken to address the challenges encountered by your teachers on the transition from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes? Were the actions taken effective? Why or why not? What thoughts and feelings stood out</p>



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	<p>for you about your experiences? Have you shared all that is significant with reference to the experience or phenomenon (on transitioning from modular distance learning to limited face-to-face classes)?</p>
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### CERTIFICATION FOR GRAMMARLY AND PLAGIARISM TESTS

This is to certify that the study entitled "Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-Face Classes: Challenges and Coping Strategies of Public Elementary School Teachers", authored by "Vanessa Mae Cabug", has undergone "Grammarly and Plagiarism Tests" in our office with the following results:

	Grammarly Score	Remark	Similarity Index	Remark
Chapter 1-3	97	Passed	7%	Passed
Chapter 4-5	91	Passed	1%	Passed

Note:  
 \* Passing score for grammarly is 90 and above.  
 \* Passing percentage for plagiarism is 20% and below for undergrad and MMA students.  
 \* Passing percentage for plagiarism is 10% and below for Ph.D students.

Course : MAED  
 Adviser : Dr. Hannah T. Castillon  
 Date Submitted : May 1, 2023  
 Date Claimed : May 3, 2023  
 Pass No. : 1

Certified by:

UNIVERSITY STATISTICAL CENTER  
University Statistician



[cognizancejournal.com](http://cognizancejournal.com)

Vanessa Mae E. Cabug, Cognizance Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, Vol.3, Issue.7, July 2023, pg. 148-218

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ISSN: 0976-7797

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#### CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the manuscript of **Ms. Vanessa Mae Cabug**, titled "Embracing the Transition from Modular Distance Learning to Limited Face-to-face Classes: Challenges and Coping Strategies of Public Elementary School Teachers" has undergone editing for the final printing of her paper.

This certification is issued upon the request of **Ms. Cabug** as required by the graduate school.

Given this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "GEM AIAH BOLIVIA-BLANCO".

GEM AIAH BOLIVIA-BLANCO  
Editor



## Curriculum Vitae

### Personal Information

Name : Vanessa Mae E. Cabug  
Nickname : Van  
Date of Birth : July 12, 1998  
Place of Birth : Cabanglasan Bukidnon  
Address : Purok 5, Liliongan, Carmen, Cotabato  
Father's Name : Venancio S. Cabug  
Mother's Name : Pacita E. Cabug

### Educational Background

Primary : Kibawe Central Elementary School  
Kibawe Bukidnon

Secondary : Stella Matutina Academy  
Kibawe Bukidnon

College : Bachelor of Elementary Education  
Bukidnon State University  
Malaybalay City

Advance Studies : Master of Arts in Arts in Education  
Major in Educational Administration  
Bukidnon State University  
Malaybalay City

### Work Experience

Primary School Teacher  
BUGEMCO Learning Center  
June 2017- October 2019

Elementary Grade Teacher  
Mansamad Saliling Elementary School  
Upper Malugasa, Liliongan, Carmen, Cotabato

