

RECOVERING EDUCATION IN 2022: NARRATIVES FROM SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15815370

VIOLA P. BUENAVENTURA

Graduate School of Education, University of the Visayas
viola_buenaventura@umindanao.edu.ph

MARSHA H. MALBAS, EdD

Professor, Graduate School of Education, University of the Visayas

ABSTRACT

This study describes the lived experiences of Social Studies SHS teachers, how they recovered schooling after the pandemic, and their recommendations for teachers who have not yet recovered. The descriptive qualitative research focuses on phenomenological research design. It primarily described teachers' lived experiences and the recovery of quality education in relation to transition and constructivist theories, which provided a clear understanding of Socrates' guiding principles in education that fostered the virtue of knowledge. Using transition and constructivist theories as lenses, the study investigates relationships with Socrates' guiding principle in education as evidenced by the data obtained. The study's findings are organized into three themes: *pent-up emotions, nurturing excellence, and growing together*. In light of Socrates' guiding principles, the participants' stories demonstrate their apprehensions, struggles, and strategies as teachers lived through the pandemic; in recovering education, commitment and professional growth were prioritized; and professional development, innovation and adaptation, and mentorship and support were highlighted as insights for those participants who have not yet recovered from the pandemic. Social studies teachers provide a thorough examination of the adaptive techniques used in a post-pandemic environment for a continuous delivery of quality education.

Keywords: *recovering education, narratives, Social Studies teachers, constructivist theory, Socrates guiding principle, transition theory*

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 disrupted education significantly. Teachers were compelled to transition to and apply distance learning, with their adaptable knowledge serving as their most useful tool. There was no best practice to rely on; thus, judgements were not made on it. The most effective strategy was intuition. Because of the crisis's urgency, teachers needed to be efficient as well as innovative in order to provide learning in a virtual and modern setting. According to Scherman (2020), the COVID-19 epidemic wreaked devastation on the earth in inconceivable ways, with education clearly being one of the hardest-hit areas. Furthermore, according to Johannesburg (2020), over 800 million students from around the world have been affected; one in every five cannot attend school, one in every four students cannot attend higher education classes, and over 102 countries have ordered nationwide school closures, with 11 implementing localized school closures. Educational institutions were closed for on-campus activities, and lectures were recommended to give blended and online learning alternatives, as well as track and trace options, social separation, and high levels of sanitation.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines, both public and private, have also had to adjust to the new situation in which face-to-face interaction is prohibited; everyone from operations and support service units to administrators and teachers has adjusted to work-from-home arrangements. Teachers as well as administrators were given responsibility from the comfort of their own homes for modifying and changing course syllabi and requirements as they migrated to alternative or remote teaching modalities, both synchronous and asynchronous. Learning management systems such as Canvas, Moodle, and Blackboard, as well as applications like Google Hangouts, Zoom, and Skype, have been utilized in classrooms where students and teachers had access to electronic devices and dependable Internet connections, as pointed out by Simbulan (2020).

Many children in the Philippines returned to school buildings today for the 2022-2023 school year, their first return in nearly two years. The Philippines was one of the last countries to return to traditional education following the global disruption brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately 24,000 of the nation's public schools, or slightly under half, will resume five days of face-to-face instruction every week. The remaining institutions will offer a combination of in-person and online classes until November 2, when all 27 million registered students will have the opportunity to return to their classrooms. The Philippines faces significant challenges in compensating for the learning loss experienced during this period. Initiatives like remedial classes and catch-up initiatives are particularly essential for those who are marginalized. Additionally, there is an urgent need to assist teachers in updating their teaching skills so that they can effectively educate the pupils (McDonalds, 2022)

The previously mentioned thoughts and attitudes marked the first steps towards rebuilding quality education following the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers are in an unusual difficulty in which they must make up for significant lost instructional time from the previous school year while delivering the current curriculum. Simply resuming schools following COVID-19 is insufficient; children will require focused and ongoing support to adjust and catch up. It helps to assist schools in planning to provide this support and address the significant problems that will arise in the coming months. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how teachers revitalize education in 2022. The research also seeks to explore the diverse experiences of Social Studies teachers and the obstacles they encountered in restoring a broader perspective of quality education.

This research is significant because it has the potential to explain how Social Studies teachers recover education, as well as their insights for those who are still trying to recover education. School leaders should fully support their teachers' physical and emotional needs. The community will also be informed on the critical needs and support that teachers require to provide effective education in the face of disruptions beyond their control. Future researchers can use the results of this research to discover other variables that contribute to high-quality education. It provides vital insights and displays teachers' techniques for overcoming obstacles, changing teaching styles, and re-engaging students by presenting a clear recovery process. The narratives show unique teaching methods and adaptations that can help shape best practices in instruction. Understanding teachers' points of view helps in developing policies that are relevant to actual classroom demands, hence increasing the success of educational initiatives. By analyzing teachers' experiences in a variety of situations, the study identifies gaps and provides solutions to resolve them, encouraging a more just educational system.

Furthermore, the study has important implications for educators, policymakers, and academics. It provides essential knowledge and shows teachers' strategies for overcoming challenges, modifying teaching approaches, and reconnecting with students by offering a clear image of the recovery process. Narratives demonstrate different teaching methods and adjustments that may help develop effective instructional practices. Understanding teachers' perspectives helps to establish policies that are responsive to actual classroom demands, hence improving instructional program effectiveness. The study sheds light on discrepancies and proposes solutions by looking at teachers' experiences in various situations, creating a more equal educational system. It adds a qualitative viewpoint to quantitative studies, improving our understanding of educational rehabilitation through real-life experiences. The study identifies areas where further investigation is needed, paving the way for future research on educational recovery, teacher resilience, and student engagement in a post-pandemic world.

Philosophical Stance

What matters in the analysis of phenomena is the lived experience as provided, not what someone believes or says about it (Spielberg, 1965). The study focuses on teachers' behavior and how they resume schooling following the pandemic. This study is linked to transition theory, Socratic philosophy, and constructionist theory, as they all forecast how instructors will resume education in 2022. Similarly, with the support of management and colleagues, teachers can be more innovative in the classroom now that face-to-face instruction has been resumed.

Transition Theory. Fawcett (2018) posited that transition theory focuses on the human experiences, the responses, and the consequences of transitions on the well-being of people. This is to help people go through healthy transitions; that includes mastery of behaviors, sentiments, cues, and symbols associated with new roles to enhance quality education. These propositions describe transition properties: awareness, engagement, change and difference, transition time span, and critical points and events.

Socrates' Guiding Principle. Nothing will change unless you make the change yourself because, for him, philosophy is to educate the individual in a way that he or she may endeavor to be perfected gradually, resulting in his or her nobility or virtue (Batista, 2015, p.152).

Teacher's virtue. For Socrates, virtue is nothing more than knowledge, but not just any knowledge, because it deals with something both practical and theoretical; that is, it is made up of a thought and an action that are both cohesive with one another. The Socratic philosophical and pedagogical mission is to employ the appropriate method for teachers, that is, refutation, in order to rout knowledge presumption and drive them to know in essence, not only in appearance, but also in order to offer an education that will be able to become beautiful and good in and of itself.

Constructionist Theory. Constructionist Theory of Hein (1996) states the idea that students construct knowledge and ideas for themselves based upon previous experiences. Learning, according to the constructionist idea, is an active and social process. Students cannot learn from a passive position; rather, they must participate with the world. Furthermore, learning is a social process that is intimately related to our interactions with teachers, peers, and parents.

In conjunction, the study also considered the assumption of Callahan (1966), which states that teachers' personalities have a role in creating and maintaining a classroom or learning atmosphere that encourages students to participate and learn. As a result, student involvement is a sign of a teacher's enviable teaching personality.

Domain of Inquiry

The present study aims to determine the narratives of the Social Studies teachers in recovering education in 2022. Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of a Social Studies teacher in the new normal education?
2. How do Social Studies teachers recover education from the pandemic?
3. What are the teachers' insights into those Social Studies teachers who have not recovered after the pandemic?

Literature Review

During the COVID-19 pandemic, universities across the world have transitioned to distance education, most of which is planned for online delivery, according to Alsoufie et al. (2020). Engaging with these learning methods may be perceived differently from conventional classroom-based teaching. As pointed out by Sandhu et al. (2020), online learning has required adjustment by both teachers and learners to adapt to new learning styles, with a focus on active learning and technological support required for delivery of teaching.

In the study of Onyema et al. (2020) on the Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Education, the results show that COVID-19 adversely affects education, including learning disruptions and decreased access to education and research facilities. However, online education was hindered by poor infrastructures, including network, power, inaccessibility and unavailability issues, and poor digital skills.

The paper by Tarkar (2020) has analyzed that teaching has shifted from physical presence to an online education system. Due to Covid-19, there is a transformation in teaching methodology. Educational institutions are finding ways to solve issues due to Covid-19. Toquero (2020) revealed that education is affected worldwide due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Schools have been closed down, and social distancing has been enforced everywhere. Educational institutions in the Philippines are face planning, implementation, and assessment challenges. The pandemic has opened opportunities to upgrade education mode.

Based on the data analysis that has been carried out, it shows that there has been a learning loss during the COVID-19 pandemic. A decrease in student motivation, participation, and learning outcomes characterizes this. There are several strategies that teachers can use to recover from pandemic learning loss in the new normal era, including 1) using various strategies, media, and learning resources; 2) doing remedial/enrichment; 3) requiring students to actively ask questions; and 4) involving the role of parents (Nurhayati, 2024). Moreover, the effect of virtual professional learning on teacher self-efficacy and student literacy was investigated by Kroog (2022). In the program, teachers participate in virtual learning sessions targeting literacy instruction, whereas a control group receives no such instruction. Analyzing test scores before and after the intervention, the authors find that treated teachers have higher self-efficacy related to literacy instruction and treated students perform significantly better on literacy tests.

As schools reopen, teacher perspectives on face-to-face teaching vary widely, revealing a combination of excitement, worry, and adaptation depending on their experiences and challenges during remote learning periods. Overall, while the return of face-to-face education is widely considered as important, it is accompanied by an understanding that the educational landscape has changed. Teachers aim to use the lessons learned during the epidemic to create more resilient, inclusive, and successful classrooms and learning environments.

METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the qualitative study methodologies used to investigate the experiences of Social Studies teachers of Senior High Schools in Digos City as they faced the difficulties of recovering education. A qualitative research design was used for the study because it focuses on personal narratives and lived experiences of the teachers. This section describes the design, participant selection, instrument utilized, data collection processes, data analysis, and the ethical considerations that assured the trustworthiness and credibility of the results.

Design

The study aimed to look into the loss of learning and the school's efforts when classes returned for in-person instruction. As a result, it was appropriate to record the voices of teachers who experienced the pandemic's impact on learning in their community and were in charge of addressing the learning gap after schools reopened. A phenomenological research design was used in the investigation. A phenomenological investigation, according to Creswell (2007), describes the meaning of a concept or phenomenon for numerous people based on their lived experiences. Giorgi and Giorgi (2003) added that phenomenological inquiry requires researchers to eliminate any

prior assumptions and personal biases, empathize with the participant's situation, and tune into the philosophical dimensions of that situation in order to fully understand the deep structures that drive the conscious thinking, feeling, and behavior of the studied participants. In other words, it concentrates on describing a reality that all participants have encountered in the new normal education and how they reclaim education in 2022. Furthermore, the teacher-respondents' narrations and stories serve as raw data. The narrative approach entails conducting research that creates data in the form of memories about human interactions. This approach has been used in many disciplines to learn more about the culture, historical experiences, identity, and lifestyle of the narrator (Butina, 2015).

Environment

This study was carried out at several private senior high schools in Digos City, Davao del Sur. Digos City, a component city in the Davao Region, is the province's capital and is noted for its numerous educational institutions that serve both urban and rural residents.

The study focuses on the learning settings of Social Studies teachers in 2022, a vital moment for education recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. These institutions were specifically chosen because they actively used multiple learning delivery modalities, such as modular distance learning, limited face-to-face sessions, and hybrid approaches, which had a direct impact on how Social Studies was taught and learned during the recovery period. The selected schools provided an ideal setting for investigating teachers' lived experiences and narratives as they navigated curriculum changes, repaired learning gaps, and reestablished student engagement. The participation of school officials, as well as the accessibility of teacher participants, provided the essential support for a thorough qualitative enquiry.

Informants

The study informants were the four Social Studies teachers teaching Senior High School during the School Year 2022-2023. One (1) informant per identified school was chosen as per endorsement by the School Principal. There were five (5) schools chosen and identified as offering Senior High School. Out of five (5) informants, only four (4) gave their consent, and one (1) withdrew due to personal reasons. The chosen teachers (Teacher April, Teacher May, Teacher Jun, and Teacher July) have a greater capacity for sharing their experiences in teaching Social Studies during the new normal education and their ways of recovering education in 2022.

Table 1

Focal Participants

Participant	Age	Year Graduated	Teaching Experience
Teacher April	26	2017	6
Teacher May	25	2018	5
Teacher Jun	27	2015	8
Teacher July	25	2019	3

Moreover, the researcher considered the inclusion and exclusion criteria when selecting study participants. The teacher participants were bachelor's degree holders in secondary education, majoring in social studies and teaching social studies in senior high school for more than two (2) years. These participants were willing to submit themselves and permitted by their school heads to undergo the in-depth interview (IDI). Those teachers who voluntarily agreed with the informed consent were included in the IDI; hence, teachers who clearly confessed their denial were excluded from the study. Also, teachers who did not teach Social Studies were excluded from the study. Further, the research also considers teachers who will decide to withdraw or back out during the actual in-depth interview.

Instrument

The researcher utilized an open-ended question in conducting an in-depth interview with the participants. Before the actual interview, the instrument was submitted to the expert of evaluators. The research instrument deeply evaluated the words or terms that would not harm the participants. The IDI was conducted face-to-face since face-to-face classes were already allowed.

The instrument started with the educational background of the participants. The three (3) main questions and sub-questions followed. The first main question is, "What are your experiences as a Social Studies teacher in the new normal education?" The participants answered this question based on the hardships/difficulties they experienced during the new normal education. A follow-up question was asked, "What about dominant feelings and their apprehensions as social studies teachers?" The participants enthusiastically shared their stories about new normal education. The second main question asked is "How do you recover education in 2022?" In this question, the participants also shared their adjustments to students' behavior after the new normal education. The third main question is "What are teachers' insights for those Social Studies teachers who have not recovered after the pandemic?" The participants shared their own insights on how to deal with those teachers.

Data Gathering Procedure

The following data-gathering procedures were observed by the researcher:

Pre-Data Gathering Phase. Before asking permission to conduct the study, the researcher ensured that the content of the questionnaire aligned with the research process's trustworthiness. According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), trustworthiness is the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study, and it can be achieved through these criteria that include credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and reflexivity. *Credibility* is the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. It establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and are a correct interpretation of the participants' original views. *Transferability* is the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. The researcher facilitates the transferability judgment by a potential user through thick description. *Dependability* is the stability of findings over time. Dependability involves participants' evaluation of the study's findings, interpretation, and recommendations, such that all are supported by the data received from the study participants. *Confirmability* is the degree to which other researchers could confirm the research study's findings. Confirmability is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination but are derived from the data. And *reflexivity* is the process of critical self-reflection about oneself as a researcher (own biases, preferences, and preconceptions) and the research relationship (relationship to the respondent and how the relationship affects the participant's answers to questions).

After passing the design hearing, the researcher submitted her manuscript, proceedings, and other pertinent documents to the Research Ethics Committee (REC) for approval. The participants were identified after being given the notice to proceed with collecting data by the REC and through purposive sampling. Before the conduct of the actual interview, the instrument was submitted to the three (3) expert validators: (1) a part-time faculty member of the Graduate School, and full-time teacher teaching in SHS with a degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Language Teaching; (2) School Director and part-time faculty of the graduate school with a Doctor of Philosophy in Language Teaching; and (3) a visiting professor of American University of Sovereign Nations, a college and graduate school professor, and a Doctor of Philosophy. After the validation of the instrument, a letter of permission to conduct the study through IDI with the identified teacher was addressed to the School Principal of Holy Cross Academy of Digos, UM Digos College, Mary Mediatrix of all Graces Academy, Seventh Day Adventist Academy of Digos, and Polytechnic College of Davao del Sur.

Actual Data Gathering Phase. When a letter of permission was approved, the researcher approached each participant and oriented them on the purpose of the study. After the orientation, a letter of consent was distributed to the participant for voluntary participation in the IDI by affixing their signature. When participants gave their consent, IDI started right away. An audio recording was used to ensure that participants' responses were taken care of with utmost confidentiality. A note writer also accompanied the researcher so that everything that will be happening and observed in the study, especially during IDI, will be in its right place. The researcher followed the health protocols of the COVID-19 pandemic by Resolution No. 12 of IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases.

Post-Data Gathering Phase. After conducting the in-depth interview, the researcher set an appointment again with the participants to present the data gathered and transcriptions of their responses to the questions raised during the discussion. This meeting ensured the validity and reliability of the participants' responses before the final transcription of the responses. In this case, the data from the recorded audio were transcribed into written words for further analysis. After transcribing the interview, statements relating to the topic were separated into core ideas that reflect specific thoughts. After their approval, data were ready for data analysis.

All data collected in this research, comprising audio recordings, interview transcripts, field notes, and pertinent documents, will be securely preserved throughout the duration of the study. Physical documents such as printed transcripts and consent forms will be stored in a secured cabinet accessible solely to the researcher. Digital data, such as audio recordings, will be saved in password-protected files on a safe, encrypted device. All information will be safely disposed of following this five-year retention term. The audio recordings and written materials will be irreversibly destroyed in a way that ensures total erasure.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is the method of making sense of this unstructured information, uncovering patterns, themes, and insights that shed light on the human experience. The goal is to transform raw data into actionable, decision-driving findings that empower us to create products, services, and experiences that truly resonate with the target audience (Oberoi, 2024). The researcher utilized Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase guide as cited by Maguire and Delahunt (2017), which is a very useful framework for conducting this kind of analysis, which involves familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, and

writing up. *Become familiar with the data* involved by reading and re-reading the transcripts from the responses of the participants and classifying them according to their description. The next step applied is to *generate initial codes* by means of organizing the data gathered meaningfully and systematically. When codes have been organized, *search for themes* follows and develop a broader theme out of the codes developed. Further, after themes have been developed, the researcher *defines the themes* and identifies the essence of what each theme is about. Finally, *write up* as the end of the research to answer the three research questions of the study.

Ethical Considerations

In the conduct of this study, ethical issues and considerations were dealt with mainly before the data were gathered. The researcher closely looks into all aspects that no rights will be violated while conducting the study. Protecting participants' rights is a fundamental feature of an interview, and problems such as informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality are critical. Potential participants were fully informed about the nature of the research and the interview format. Before the interview, written consent was obtained, and potential interviewees were given adequate time to consider whether or not to participate.

While performing this study, it conformed to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, especially in the use of privileged information and sensitive personal information in accordance with the stipulation of the National Privacy Commission, where confidentiality is a priority in the process of lawful rights. It safeguarded and protected the study participants' rights. The participants' safety was secured by adopting pseudonyms throughout the process of in-depth interviews to hide their identities. The researcher observed proper protocol to respect the participant's personal answers and opinions. As a sign of respect, respondents' names will not appear anywhere, and no one except the researcher will know about respondents' specific answers. The participation of the respondents was completely voluntary and anonymous to give respect and privacy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section describes the qualitative research inquiries conducted using in-depth interviews (IDIs) to get meaningful data from participants. The researcher focused primarily on key clauses and phrases in the interview transcripts when identifying themes within the study. There were three (3) distinctive themes developed based on the statement of the purpose of this study as follows: *Pent-up Emotions* for lived experiences, *Cultivating Excellence* on how Social Studies teachers recover education in 2022, and *Growing Together* for teachers' insights for those who have not yet recovered from pandemic.

Lived Experiences During Pandemic

Reflecting on the past two years, it's evident that the ongoing impact of the pandemic severely affected education. The swift shift to online learning platforms caught the world and educational institutions off guard. The teachers' shared experiences during the pandemic led to developing two (2) composite themes. The final theme was also formulated from the composite theme.

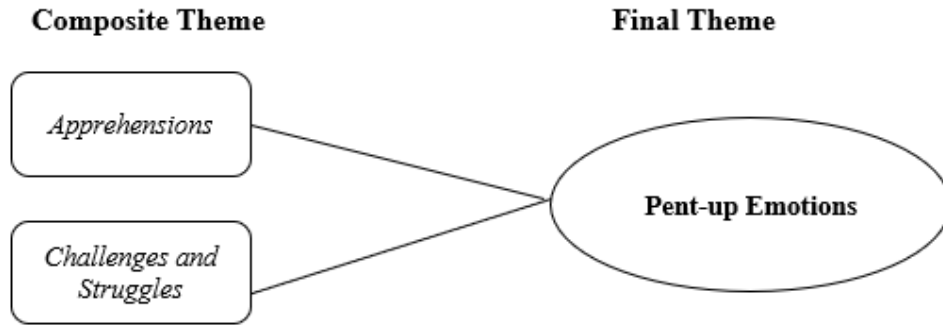
Theme: Pent-up Emotions

The first discovered theme is pent-up emotions, which represent feelings that teachers have suppressed or refused to express for an extended period. These sensations build up inside, resulting in a variety of experiences or ongoing tensions. Those emotions dive into the apprehensions and obstacles that Social Studies teachers have in providing quality instruction with limited resources. It demonstrates educators' resilience and inventiveness in adapting to remote teaching, engaging students from a distance, and redesigning courses for an online format. The theme includes instructors' concerns and challenges, as well as the strategies they utilized to ensure that learning continued effectively despite significant disruptions.

Apprehensions. Apprehensions, typically defined as feelings of anxiety or fear about the future, have a significant impact on teachers' daily lives. Teachers' feelings are frequently motivated by anticipated negative outcomes or the unknown and are influenced by both individual and group responses. Apprehensions can arise in a variety of situations, including the learning modality best suited for online teaching, anxiety about conducting online classes, limited resources, and homework-related activities. Fear of negative evaluation or failure runs through all of teachers' encounters.

Figure 1

Thematic Diagram on Lived Experiences during Pandemic



*"ang fear gamay mahibal an ang studyante lalo na sa application,
(less learnings for the student, particularly in application)"*
- Teacher April, Line 9

*"teaching in the new learning modality makes me feel anxious.
I doubted myself as a teacher if my responsibilities during
that time were good enough since I couldn't monitor and assure
if they were really satisfied with my performance"*
- Teacher May, Line 1

*"there is lack or limited resources, so learning activities are limited
also only to what is available"*
- Teacher Jun, Line 11

*"dili naku Makita ang ilang mga expressions kung nakasabut
ba sila o wala sa akung discussion. Hesitant ko sa akung
kaugalingon kung effective ba ko sa akung gitudlo atu nga time.
(Effectivity of the activities bother me most)"*
- Teacher July, Line 7

Challenges and Struggles. Discussing barriers and adversities as lived experiences of Social Studies instructors includes diving into the subjective nature of adversity, as well as the many ways these teachers handled and navigated their challenges. Challenges and struggles are universal, yet each teacher's experience is unique, shaped by their specific circumstances, experiences, and perspectives. Teachers revealed these:

*"gina correlate lng naku ang subjects naku into a real life situations,
in short mura gud siya mahulog ug story telling lang sa lessons"*
- Teacher April, Line 2

*"One of my struggles in the new normal education is how to deliver
the content. Because of the limited time, interaction with the
students was also limited, which is why it was difficult for me to
summarize and provide the lesson knowing that teaching social
studies content takes a lot of time and classroom discussions."*
- Teacher May, Line 2

*"Fear that I cannot be understood by the students, fear on how
to design an activity online"*
- Teacher Jun, Line 3

*"nag struggle jud pud mi mga teachers sa paggamit ug technology
labi na ng amay mga gipang introduce sa amu nga hantud lng
sa introduction pero wala magamit. Mostly sa nagagamit ug
Google classroom. (I experienced difficulty in using technology
and how it will be integrated in my lesson. We are taught of the
introductory parts but sad to say no more support orientation or
activities or shall we say follow up done)"*
- Teacher July, Line 1

The lived experience of the teachers determined problems and struggles as a complex interaction of internal and environmental elements. Dealing with pent-up emotions takes courage and support. Each teacher's journey through adversity is unique, but there are certain common features that they all share. Understanding these experiences will

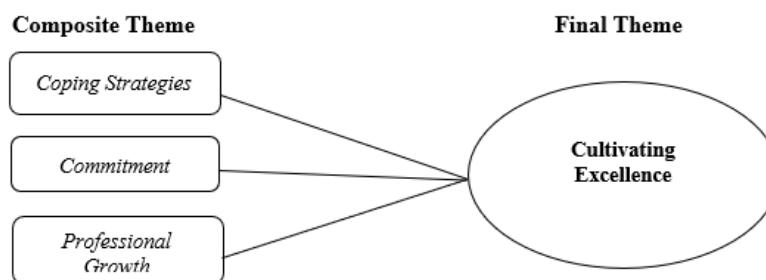
build empathy and gain insights into the human condition. As a result of this knowledge, they will be able to better support one another and establish stronger communities.

Teaching online classes during a crisis was difficult for teachers because of the stress of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated uncertainty and dread. Teachers, despite a variety of difficulties and crises, implemented coping strategies that reduced their stress and burnout. The study recommends comprehensive capacity building towards enhancing the teacher's competency in online learning. Interventions to prevent teacher stress should be adapted to support their mental health and well-being (Doctolero & Guira, 2022).

Recovering Education After Pandemic

Recovering education refers to a variety of initiatives aimed at improving educational outcomes, particularly in the aftermath of disruptions or the recognition of the need to return to fundamental educational ideals. This technique focuses on bridging learning gaps that may have arisen owing to disruptions. There are three (3) composite themes developed from the responses of the participants. A final theme was also formulated from the composite theme.

Figure 2
Thematic Diagram on Recovering Education



Theme: Cultivating Excellence

Cultivating excellence is the process of cultivating and developing high-quality talents, behaviors, or traits in a variety of aspects of life, including personal growth, professional work, and academic endeavors. The goal is to maximize potential and perform at the best possible level. Cultivating excellence is a continuous process that may be applied to any profession, including education, and adds greatly to personal satisfaction and achievement. The findings revealed that simply reopening schools in a face-to-face method is not sufficient. Students require specific and ongoing support to help them adjust and catch up after the pandemic.

This concept emphasizes that brilliance is not a static state but rather a constant process of growth, adaptation, and learning. It entails updating Social Studies instructors' abilities, knowledge, and methodologies on a regular basis in order to adapt to new difficulties and opportunities following the global outbreak of COVID-19. Findings provided evidence that these four teachers shared their experiences about how they recovered education after the pandemic that best described commitment and professional growth.

Coping Strategies. Coping methods are the techniques people employ to deal with the stresses, problems, and emotional upheavals that life unavoidably delivers. These tactics differ significantly from person to person, depending on their histories, experiences, and temperaments. When examining coping strategies as a lived experience, it is critical to consider not only the various methods accessible but also how teachers tailor these approaches to their specific living circumstances.

"for me mam, drills, ginabalik balik lang naku para at least ang mga bata easy pud sila maka adapt sa environment ug ipa feel naku ang belongingness as a teacher sa akung mga students"
- Teacher April, Line 1

"I have to reteach the basic concepts of the subject. I also conducted collaborative activities with the integration of ICT to make social studies subject relevant, relevant, excitingly, and engagingly"
- Teacher May, Lines 4 & 9

"removal kung wala kasabut and bata and oral recitations jud mam para mkita naku kung as jud siya galisud"
- Teacher June, Line 6

"a combination of lecture and activities like role playing kasi mas nakita naku kaayo sila basta ang activity mag involve ug drama2x."
- Teacher July, Line 1

Teacher and student relationships are essential to ensuring a positive school classroom atmosphere, as Santhanam (2022) concluded in her study "Classroom Management." Classroom management discipline problems can be dealt with either on an individual basis (between teacher and student) or by group problem solving (class meetings). As mutual trust builds up between teacher and students, the latter are gradually released from teacher supervision by becoming individually responsible. This is how both educators and students become co-participants in the teaching-learning process, striving to make the most of themselves and their collective experience.

Commitment. Commitment is a key component in the quest for excellence. It represents a strong commitment to meeting high standards and sustaining excellence in all aspects of life or work. It is a motivating factor that motivates

individual teachers to excellence. It ensures that activities are sustained over time while remaining focused, resilient, and meeting the highest quality standards.

"I enjoyed teaching now. I'm just bringing my passion being a teacher and I'm just applying it to my students so that at least one subject is more interesting"

- Teacher April, Line 1

"As a teacher, I don't have any choice but to go along with changes and continue my responsibilities. My passion and dedication to teaching are even more intensified because I have to get back what I have missed and build rapport with my students. My experiences were memorable and significant because I learned many things, not just about teaching but it's a passion"

- Teacher May, Line 1

"Culture shock has affected everyone. This inspires me to improve as a teacher, especially for students eager to learn from me. Their enthusiasm motivates me to adapt my teaching methods to better align with their interests. I am committed to fulfilling my role as a teacher by effectively serving students with various attitudes"

- Teacher Jun, Line 3

"Which teaching strategies should I adopt for hybrid classes? Should I stick with the traditional methods, or is it time for new approaches? Ultimately, whether I choose old or new strategies, what's crucial is my dedication to providing my students with high-quality education."

- Teacher July, Line 4

Teacher commitment has been considered as a passion for the work. For passion is at the core of effective learning and teaching, according to Altun (2017). Likewise, Serin (2017) stated that one of the most important elements in the development of passion for teaching is the commitment and dedication of teachers to students and their learning. Passionate teachers are strongly committed to their work and can inspire their students and awaken their desire to learn. According to his perspective, committed teachers can create a difference thanks to their dedication to their profession.

Professional Growth. Professional growth in education refers to the ongoing development of teachers and educators in their fields. This includes a variety of learning and advancement opportunities that allow educators to improve their teaching abilities, stay updated with the latest educational research and approaches, and increase their effectiveness in the classroom. This is about instructors embracing lifelong learning and continuously working to improve themselves and their careers. This not only benefits educators, but it also dramatically improves students' learning experiences.

"I must go over the educational materials and participate in lectures on recovering education post-pandemic. Additionally, I have teamed up with my fellow teachers to enhance our teaching strategies. I also do Drills."

- Teacher April, Line 2

"I have to reteach the basic concepts of the subject. Through this strategy, my students can refresh their knowledge and relate it to the new topic/discussion. Effective classroom management is also observed during classes to ensure students pay attention to the class discussion. During our lessons, I always processed my students by asking questions. I also conducted collaborative activities with the integration of ICT to make social studies subject relevant, excitingly, and engagingly"

- Teacher May, Line 3

"I participated in training sessions and seminars to better understand student behavior and to learn which strategies are most effective for students who have experienced online teaching."

- Teacher Jun, Line 1

"Additionally, through seminars, orientations, or debriefing, counseling, we explore the necessary adjustments for transitioning back to face-to-face classes"

- Teacher July, Line 2

Cultivating excellence via coping strategies, commitment, and professional growth emphasizes that meeting high standards in any subject, particularly in professions such as education, necessitates a determined and constant effort to improve oneself professionally, as seen by the Social Studies teachers' testimonials. This is the outcome of combining commitment with professional development for instructors. It entails not only completing duties but doing so to the highest possible standard. Excellence is achieved by purposeful and consistent attempts to improve, guided by feedback, self-reflection, and a desire to fulfill one's greatest potential.

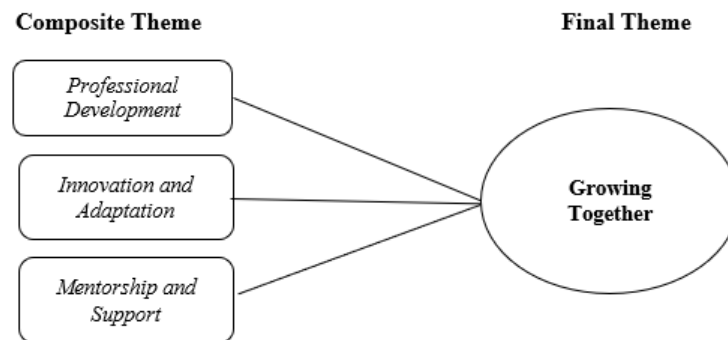
Moreover, teaching is a process in which educators have an inevitable role. It is even true to say that the awareness and curiosity of some educated people about their environment and the events happening around them have created the act of teaching, because they have wished to share their own experiences on the objects or phenomena with the people around them (Cilik & Yildiz, 2017).

Teachers Insights for those Teachers Who Have not yet Recovered

Recovering education requires taking several steps to improve educational achievements, particularly after disruptions or recognizing the need to reconnect to core educational values. Teachers experiencing continuous pandemic issues devised a variety of ways to aid in their recovery and resilience. Schools might support activities by offering resources or organizing workshops on mental health and well-being. From the statements of the participants, a composite theme was developed, leading to the final theme.

Figure 3

Thematic Diagram on the Recommendations for Teachers who have not yet recovered from Pandemic



Theme: Growing Together

The theme emphasizes the need for ongoing development and collaboration among teachers, students, and the community. It contributes to the development of a good and proactive environment that focuses on continual improvement and collective success in the classroom. Furthermore, the school will create a framework in which teachers can learn from one another through shared experiences. Encourage the idea that teaching and learning are continuous processes in which everyone grows together. Similarly, emphasize the value of collaboration and mutual assistance among teachers.

Findings provided evidence that these four teachers shared their recommendations for those Social Studies teachers who have not yet recovered from pandemic. The final theme developed is growing and the composite themes are professional development and learning, innovation and adaptation, and mentorship and support.

Professional Development. Professional development and learning are critical components in the lives of professionals from numerous disciplines, with the goal of improving skills, knowledge, and abilities, particularly among educators who have yet to recover from the epidemic. The ideal solution is to provide repetitive training and development opportunities for teachers to keep them up to date on the newest educational theories, technology, and practices. The professional learnings designed for those teachers emphasize constant learning, with a focus on acquiring new knowledge or developing existing skills through a variety of formats and situations. Similarly, effective professional development and learning are critical for keeping workforce competency and establishing a culture of constant growth and innovation. These are what those teachers revealed:

"Refresher for at least two months; we cannot only provide youngsters surface information because social studies is such

an important subject. What you educate the kids, they already apply it outside."

- Teacher April, Line 2

"I believe that as teachers, we must work beyond the extra mile in dealing with the changes. Teachers must be knowledgeable about the content matter and possess technological and pedagogical skills in delivering lessons. Also, seeking advice from colleagues during informal forums or brainstorming inside the faculty room could help open our minds to dealing with changes in our system."

- Teacher May, Line 1

"Try to go out with your comfort zone and feel what is the essence of recovering education. Just perform your profession and accept the truth that teaching is part of our body system. Start within yourself to be the role model of the students. Always be active in body and mind"

- Teacher Jun, Line 3

"Participating in structured learning environments to gain new knowledge to become an effective teacher".

- Teacher July, Line 2

Innovation and Adaptation. Innovation and adaptation have been extensively studied in a variety of domains. Understanding both can provide unrecovered teachers a significant advantage while leading and flourishing in a dynamic environment. Thus, innovation can be considered as a method of adjusting to shifting technological landscapes or market situations. According to Social Studies professors, the adaptation process may need fresh approaches to overcoming new challenges. Both are essential for long-term sustainability and advancement in today's fast-paced world, enabling individuals, corporations, and communities to effectively adapt to opportunities and threats. This is clearly seen in the responses of the respondents.

"For teachers who have the fear to adopt new approaches in teaching, I think they practice collaborative teaching"

- Teacher April, Line 1

"I think the only thing that I can suggest and recommend to my fellow social studies teachers who are not recovered yet from the new normal education is to have the courage to adapt to the change".

- Teacher May, Line 1

"Working with others to teach, which can lead to innovative practices is a good recommendation for me. They need to develop their skills also that will incorporate both teaching and technology."

- Teacher Jun, Line 3

"Teacher should discover something unique in themselves to create/develop new approaches in teaching"

- Teacher July, Line 2

Mentorship and Support. These two phrases refer to interconnected components of teacher self-improvement, focusing on teachers' abilities, knowledge, and quality of life. Teachers showed that personal development will help one acquire professional abilities or reach work goals. It includes a wide range of activities and experiences that all lead to increased self-awareness, identity, talent, and potential. Mentorship and support are important for personal development and success in school and work, as revealed by the participants.

"Teachers should have a strong drive and commitment to the teaching profession...should also work beyond the extra mile".

- Teacher April, Line 2

"We should not be afraid of the failures and challenges that may occur in our responsibilities. Failures and challenges are part of our journey as teachers to be more effective and responsible in our careers. We must keep on striving."

- Teacher May, Line 3

"They need to develop their skills also that will incorporate both teaching and technology. Upgrade our role as teacher to utilize our critical thinking to generate ideas and share it with colleagues."

- Teacher Jun, Line 2

"Teachers should also be given an access to instructional coaches or educational consultants and regular feedback sessions and collaborative planning will also help. No teachers should not be left behind"

- Teacher July, Line 1

Based on the participants' revelations, it was clearly stated that empowering teaching excellence entails creating an environment and implementing activities that will improve their effectiveness as teachers. As a result, the overall quality of education and student success were influenced by the teachers' instructional practices or classroom management. The theme represents not only how teachers adjust to blended teaching and learning but also the creation of a culture of professional development for teachers, increased access to resources, and, most importantly, the support and mentorship provided by their co-teachers and the school.

The statements of teachers supported the study of Amar et al. (2024), who emphasized that even after the pandemic, the teachers had significantly faced problems regarding students' learning and academic progress. The researchers suggest that teachers should develop reinforcements for the enhancement of their teaching pedagogy and techniques through active participation in educational seminars and training that are highly b advancement and effectiveness of their teaching and to give an efficient and effective remedy to problems they are continuously facing after the COVID-19 pandemic.

EPILOGUE

As we conclude "Recovering Education in 2022: Narratives from Social Studies Teachers," it is vital to recognize educators' global resilience and adaptability. The year 2022 was more than just a period of recuperation, but it was a watershed moment in education, marked by a determined effort to rethink teaching and learning in the face of enduring challenges. Social Studies instructors, who were typically at the forefront of managing complex historical, cultural, and sociopolitical contexts, were altering the script for their classes. We've learned a lot from their stories with pent-up emotions, interacted with varied student perspectives, and used digital technology to enhance learning opportunities.

The road was challenging, but it was also filled with incredible breakthroughs. Teachers made courses more inclusive, making sure that all perspectives were heard and represented. They encouraged critical thinking by challenging students to question and explore the narratives that shape our society. Furthermore, the transition to hybrid learning environments resulted in innovative teaching approaches that are expected to have long-term implications for educational practices.

As we look ahead, the lessons learned in 2022 will serve as a beacon for ongoing educational reform. The perseverance of social studies teachers sends a powerful message that education is about more than just imparting knowledge; it is also about inspiring change and forming communities. Teachers' experiences are more than just reflections on the last year, but they serve as blueprints for a more educated, deliberate, and inclusive approach to education.

Let us carry on these educators' spirit of innovation and commitment as we seek to create an educational environment that welcomes change, supports diversity, and fosters global citizenship. "Recovering Education in 2022" is more than a collection of anecdotes; it is a call to action for all education stakeholders to keep striving for greatness, regardless of the circumstances.

Let us carry on these educators' spirit of innovation, commitment, and professional growth as we seek to create an educational environment that welcomes change, supports diversity, and fosters a global outlook. "Recovering Education in 2022" is more than a collection of anecdotes; but it is a call to action for all education stakeholders to keep striving for greatness, regardless of the circumstances.

Conclusion

Social studies teachers investigate the adaptive techniques used in a post-pandemic environment. This meditation allows us to delve deeper into the themes and insights provided by social studies teachers while also addressing the broader implications for the education profession. A common thread appears throughout the stories of teachers' persistence and resourcefulness. Teachers have not only adapted to new learning environments and technologies, but they have also altered their teaching approaches. Incorporating digital technologies, which was formerly required, has evolved into a considerable asset, enriching the educational experience and enabling access to a wide range of information and perspectives.

Another important factor emphasized in the comments of Social Studies instructors is their dedication to addressing and incorporating current social issues into their curriculum. This strategy has proven critical in assisting pupils to manage today's complicated and political atmosphere. By creating an atmosphere in which students may discuss and critically assess these topics, social studies educators have played a key role in forming informed and conscientious future citizens.

Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of emotional and psychological support for students. The stories demonstrate how teachers have gone above and beyond their regular responsibilities to provide a safe space for students to express their concerns and fears about the world around them. This complete educational approach is crucial for students' well-being. It has improved the teacher-student relationship, which is critical for rehabilitation and advancement in education. Reflecting on their stories also initiates a discussion on the future of education. The novel strategies developed in response to the pandemic's challenges have the potential to permanently transform teaching methodologies. Combining traditional and digital educational approaches, emphasizing critical thinking and empathy, and actively participating in all activities that can help to improve education in the future.

Finally, "Recovering Education in 2022" depicts a difficult year and highlights instructors' adaptability and dedication. It teaches critical lessons about the value of flexibility and the power of education to impact societal change, and it urges all stakeholders in the educational sector to continue implementing these innovations to create a more engaging and responsive educational system.

Recommendations

Based on the narratives and lived experiences of Social Studies teachers during and after the educational disruptions brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is recommended that institutions should give ongoing emotional, psychological, and educational support to teachers that will include monthly wellness programs, peer mentoring, and access to counseling services to assist with the recovery from burnout and pandemic-related stress. Social Studies curriculum should be reviewed and redesigned by integrating real-world situations like crisis response, resilience, and civic participation during emergencies. This will develop students' ability to respond to emergencies and critical thinking.

Further, for future studies: Blended Learning in Social Studies Education: A Comparative Study of Student Performance Before and After the Pandemic; Cultivating Excellence among Social Studies Teachers: An Exploratory Factor Analysis; The Moderating Role of Pent-Up Emotions in Cultivating Excellence and Growing Together Professionally among Social Studies Teachers.

REFERENCES

- Alsoufi, A., Alsuyihili, A., Msherghi, A., Elhadi, A., Atiyah, H., Ashini, A., et al. (2020). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on medical education: Medica students' knowledge, attitude, and practices regarding electronic learning. *PLoS one*. 15(11):e0242905, doi :10.1371/ journal.pone. 0242905. eCollection 2020
- Altun, M. (2017). The role of passion in effective teaching and learning. *International Journal of SocialSciences & Educational Studies*, 3(3), 155-158 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320644177_Commitment_to_the_Teaching_Profession [accessed Jul 09 2024].
- Amar, Karyl Mae, Badrina, A.R., Bulan, Ma. Khasila, G., Cabanilla Jr., Angelito B., Senillo, Elieza, J. L (2024). Experiences and adjustments of elementary teachers after the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation* 05(01):763768https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378311845_Experiences_and_Adjustments_of_Elementary_Teachers_After_the_COVID-19_Pandemic
- Batista, Gustavo A. (2015). Socrates: Philosophy applied to Education - Search for Virtue. *Athens Journal of Education* - Volume 2, Issue 2 - Pages 149-156 <https://doi.org/10.30958/ aje.2-2-5> doi=10.30958/aje.2-2-5
- Butina, M. (2015). A narrative approach to qualitative inquiry. *American Society for American Labor...*28(3);190-196. DOI: 10.29074/ascls.28.3.190
- Celik, Bunjamin & Yildiz, Yunus (2017). Commitment to the Teaching Profession: 4(2 (Special Issue)):93-97 (PDF) *Commitment to the Teaching Profession*. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320644177_Commitment_to_the_Teaching_Profession
- Creswell, J.W. (2007). Five qualitative approaches to inquiry. In J.W. Creswell (Eds), *qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches* (pp53-84). Thousands Oaks: Sage Publication

- Doctolero, A. & Guira, G. (2022). Lived experiences of teachers implementing online learning: springboard to quality basic education. *E-Dawa an International Multidiscip...2*(1). DOI: 10.56901/CAVG1584
- Fawcett, Jacqueline (2018). Transitions framework/transitions theory. <https://nursology.net/nurse-theories/transitions-framework-transitions-theory/>
- Giorgi, A. P., & Giorgi, B. M. (2003). The descriptive phenomenological psychological method. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 243–273). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10595-013> on November 25, 2021.
- Hein, G. (1996). Constructionist learning theory. In G. Durbin (Ed), *Developing museum exhibits for life-long learners* (pp. 30–34). London, UK: The Stationary Office.
- Johannesburg, C. (2020). Corona virus: Don't let our children down! Africa <https://campaignforeducation.org/en/press-centre/coronavirus-dont-let-our-children-down>
- Korstjens, Irene & Moser, Albin (2018). Practical guidance to qualitative research. *European Journal of General Practice*. United Kingdom
- Kroog, K J. (2022). The effects of virtual professional learning on teacher self-efficacy and student achievement. *Fordham University ProQuest Dissertations and Theses 2022*. 29168252.
- Maguire, Moira & Delahunt, Brid (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: a practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *AISHE-J Volume Number 3*, 3351 from URL: <http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/335>
- McDonald, Joshua (2022). Philippines: Statement as one of world' longest COVID-19. <https://www.savethechildren.org.au/MEDIA/MEDIA-releases/Philippines-statement-as-one-of-world-longest> on June 20, 2023
- Nurhayati, Aziza (2024). Pandemic Learning Loss Recovery Strategy in the New Normal Period *Europena Journal of Education*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377121635_Pandemic_Learning_Loss_Recovery_Strategy_in_the_New_Normal_Period
- Oberoi, K. (2024). Qualitative data analysis: a complete guide (2024). <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/qualitative-data-analysis-complete-guide-2024-kritika-oberoi-bwvsf>
- Onyema, Edeh Michael, Nwafor, C., Obafemi, F., Alyased, AO., Sen, Shuvro, Atonye, FG., & Sharma, A., (2020). Impact of Coronavirus Pandemic on Education. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341787426_Impact_of_Coronavirus_Pandemic_on_Education
- Sandhu P, de Wolf M. The impact of COVID-19 on the undergraduate medical curriculum. *Med Educ Online*. 2020;25(1):1764740. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32400298/>
- Santhanam, Vidhya (2022). Classroom management: Conference paper. *Current Perspectives in Education Psychology*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363406317_CLASSROOM_MANAGEMENT
- Scherman, R. (2020). COVID 19 and beyond. From (Forced) remote teaching and learning to the "New Normal" in higher education. Lausanne, Switzerland: *Frontiers Research Foundations*. <https://www.frontiersin.org> (Accessed June 20, 2023)
- Serin, H. (2017). The Role of Passion in Learning and Teaching. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, 4(1), 60-64
- Simbulan, Nymia Pimentel (2020). The Philippines COVID-19 and its impact on higher education in the Philippines. The Head Foundation <https://headfoundation.org/2020/06/04/covid-19-and-its-impact-on-higher-education-in-the-philippines/> (Accessed June 27, 2023)
- Tarkar, P. (2020). Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic On Education System. *International Journal Of Advanced Science & Technology*, 3812-3814.
- Toquero, C. M. (2020). Challenges and opportunities for higher education amid the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippine context. *Pedagogical Research*: DOI: 10.29333/pr/7947