



**EXPERIENCES OF STAYING-IN AND STAYING-OUT TEACHERS
IN MODULAR DISTANCE LEARNING (MDL) TOWARDS
SERVICE RECOGNITION RECOMMENDATION**

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological-qualitative research was conducted to find out the experiences of staying-in and staying-out teachers in Modular Distance Learning towards service recognition recommendation in the District of Leon II for the school year 2021-2022. It was found out based on the information gathered during the in-depth interview with ten participants that most of the teachers were married who ages thirty years old and above. They were all assigned in a far-flung school with almost thirty-five kilometers away from the town which five of them were staying-in and 5 were staying-out. These teachers had varied experienced like downloading at home, downloading in learning resource portals, printing at night time, printing at home, involvement of parents, learning facilitators, parent's participation, late submission of modules and observing safety health protocols were the experiences of staying-in and staying-out teachers in modular distance learning.

Keywords: *Experience, Staying-in Teachers, Staying-out Teachers, Modular Distance Learning (MDL), Service Recognition, Recommendation*

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INTRODUCTION

The education systems here and abroad have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. And while we sometimes hear about the difficulties of parents and students with modular learning, teachers often have a fair share of experiences and challenges. Teachers must ensure that the quality of learning remains, even with the absence of face-to-face experiences.

Preparing lessons through printed modules during this pandemic is way more challenging than before since the concern is not just limited to making sure that the learning will be transferred to the learners, but also to making sure that this is actually delivered to them.

The role of our teachers in shaping the minds of the nation is, in itself, a sacrifice and an act of love, for it takes time, attention, and patience. They've doubled, maybe even tripled, or more this pandemic. Clearly, teachers have been seeking ways to continue the learning process of pupils, refusing to give up on their vocations.

The country's health crisis raises difficulties in teaching where teachers are part of the current normal education system. These problems have an effect on their success in the preparation of modules. There are times where teachers are stressful from time to time because of a lot of things to do. As a result, they are also withdrawing from group talks with their friends.

Just like with other districts in the Division of Iloilo, teachers in the district of Leon II also experienced different problems and difficulties in the implementation of modular distance

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learning in their respective schools. One of the major factors is the distance of school from the town proper and to the community. Teachers who were not residing to where the school is located are more affected with this situation than other stakeholders. Due to the distance of schools to their home and difficulty of the road they are going to pass through, there were teachers who preferred to stay overnight in school during weekdays even without face to face classes just to relatively deliver quality education in this time of pandemic. They stayed in school and worked even during night time just to prepare all the expected outputs in the implementation of the MDL. Most of these teachers are assigned to far flung schools with the distance of almost 35 kilometers from the town. And so, they prefer to stay than to go home.

With many possible areas to study, experiences of staying-in and staying-out teachers was chosen because the researcher wanted to know the problems and difficulties they have experienced in the implementation of Modular Distance Learning (MDL). Through this, one may know the different experiences they have encountered that could give an idea to other teachers in other schools in the district. The researcher also wanted to know how these experiences help them to cope with the expectations of the Department of Education (DepEd) amidst COVID-19 pandemic and for that they could be recommended for the service recognition that they have rendered all throughout.

The researcher once assigned in one of these far-flung school with 38 kilometers away from the town. For almost 4 years, he really experienced these things which pushed him to conduct this study because he believes that through this, DepEd officials will be made aware

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of what is really happening on the ground in the implementation of Modular Distance Learning

(MDL) in the far-flung areas of the country specifically in the District of Leon II.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, respondents of the study, data gathering procedures, research instrument, and data analysis used in this study. The purpose of this study is to determine the experiences of staying-in and staying-out teachers in modular distance learning towards service recognition recommendation in the District of Leon II, Schools Division of Iloilo for the school year 2021-2022.

Research Method

The study used descriptive research method using in-depth interview. The interviewer during the interview was allowed to sit and to think about the series of questions about a certain issue. The aim was to get the main or the necessary views of the participants in a certain issue in a social context through the responses of the participants to the questions.

Research Design

The research design used in the study was qualitative research using phenomenology. Phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a group. The fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at the description of the nature of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

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Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were selected teachers of the District of Leon II, Schools Division of Iloilo for the school year 2021-2022. In which, five (5) of them were staying-in teachers in their respective school and five (5) were staying-out teachers with the total of ten (10) participants. Three (3) teachers came from Bulwang Camandag Elementary School which is 38 kilometers away from the town, two (2) teachers from Danao Elementary School with 32 kilometers, two (2) teachers from Ingay Elementary School with 36 kilometers, two (2) teachers from Bucari Elementary School which is 26 kilometers, and one (1) teacher from Tuog Elementary School with 22 kilometers away from the town.

Sampling Design

Purposive sampling design was used in the study. A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on the characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. (Alchemer.com, 2021)

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in the study was a researcher-made interview schedule. Included in the interview schedule were the experiences of the staying-in and staying-out teachers in modular distance learning in terms of reproduction, distribution and retrieval of modules.

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Research instrument was first submitted to the adviser for correction and improvement then forwarded to a panel of experts for validation. The researcher considered all comments and suggestions relative to the validation of the tool.

The researcher conducted a face-to-face interview with the participants in the different schools in the District of Leon II namely, Bulwang Camandag Elementary School, Danao Elementary School, Ingay Elementary School, Bucari Elementary School and Tu-og Elementary School.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Research instrument was submitted to the adviser for correction and improvement. It was then forwarded to a panel of experts for validation. All comments and suggestions for the finalization of the research instruments were incorporated in the final interview schedule.

Data Gathering Procedures

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the adviser, from the Dean of the Graduate School, from the Schools Division Superintendent, School District Supervisor of Leon II. Permission to conduct was also secured from the school heads where the teachers are assigned.

Permits from the individual participants were also obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/community/place convenient to the part of the participants to conduct the interview following the minimum health protocols of the Department of Health and the Inter Agency Task Force including the Health protocols of the Local Government Units of the Municipality of Leon.

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The researcher went to concerned authorities to personally hand-in the letter for permission. After that, the researcher requested the participants to sign a consent form. The researcher and the participants conducted an in-depth interview. During the interview, the researcher conducted a face-to-face interview with the participants.

The researcher consolidated all the collected answers and information after series of interviews and manually transcribed the whole interview.

Data Analyses

The information gathered was analyzed using thematic approach.

Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data. It is usually applied to a set of texts such as interview transcripts. The researcher closely examines the data to identify common themes-topics, ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly (Caulfield, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study aimed to find out the experiences of staying-in and staying-out teachers in modular distance learning towards service recognition recommendation in the district of Leon II, Schools Division of Iloilo for the School Year 2021-2022.

The study used phenomenological approach under the qualitative research. This approach was appropriate because the researcher wanted to study a group of people to gain

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a larger understanding of their lives or specific aspects of their lives focusing on the study of their experiences.

The participants in the study were staying-in and staying-out teachers in the District of Leon II. Most of them are assigned in a far flung areas with approximately 35 kilometers away from the town.

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview schedule.

Research instruments was first submitted to the adviser for correction and improvement then forwarded to a panel of experts for validation. The researcher considered all comments and suggestions relative to the validation of the tool.

All permits especially from the individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/community/place convenient to the part of the participants to conduct the interview.

Minimum health protocols mandated by the Inter Agency Task Force (IATF), Department of Health (DOH) guidelines amidst the pandemic, DepEd orders on the health protocols, Local Government Units (LGU) and the Barangay health protocols were strictly observed and followed during the conduct of the study.

Using in-depth interview, the researcher conducted a face-to-face interview. The participants were asked individually to get the response to the questions. The objective is to get the respondents' view about the study. The researcher consolidated all of the collected data after a series of interviews and manually transcribed the whole interview.

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INSTABRIGHT e-GAZETTE

ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume VI, Issue II

November 2024

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The information gathered was analyzed using thematic approach.

The following are the findings of the study:

Based on the profile of teachers, most of them are married with ages 30 years old and above. They were all assigned in a far-flung school with almost 35 kilometers away from the town with whom 5 of them were staying-in and 5 were staying-out.

Based on the information gathered during the in-depth interview with 10 participants they have different experiences as to the access of modules. Staying-in teachers downloaded the modules during weekends in their home or in town where there is good internet connection and they see to it that all the modules and other learning materials are prepared before they went back to their respective schools since they are staying there for the whole week and don't have any internet connectivity. Whereas, staying-out teachers could download the modules anytime as they needed through LR Portals since they went home after working hours and internet connectivity is readily available.

In reproduction of modules, staying-in teachers do it in school for the whole weekdays as to their scheduled time and even until late at night. While staying-out teachers print modules also in school but mostly at home since they went home every day after working hours. If they could not finish in school they bring it home so they could finish printing in a targeted time.

The same schedule and process of distribution and retrieval of modules in both staying-in and staying-out teachers. They all do this during Monday but if there is conflict of activities, they scheduled it on the next day ahead. There were assigned parent-leader as well as

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learning facilitator to get and return the modules and other learning materials in school since learners are not allowed in the school premises. In case the learners' module will not be submitted on the schedules time, the concerned parent will be the one to return the module to the adviser so that he/she could explain the reason and make some adjustments for improvement.

In checking the modules, answer sheets and other outputs, staying-in teachers accomplished all these things in school for the whole week before they went home on a Friday while staying-out teachers do it both in school or at home depending upon their availability as long as they could also finish it before Friday so that they could have time for their family during weekend.

Adherence to health protocols were really observed and practiced by both staying-in and staying-out teachers in school or even outside the school premises. This includes wearing of face mask, physical distancing, hand washing and sanitizing. They also installed in school foot bath, digital thermal scanner and additional washing area for the parents and other visitors who came in school. Observing safety health protocols are really observed during distribution and retrieval of modules. For the staying-out teachers since they are going home every day, they also see to it that they are safe as they travel since they meet people along the way as they travel on the public jeepney.

As the result of the in-depth interview, almost all schools in the district of Leon II were being supported by the stakeholders for all the programs and projects since the start of modular distance learning. They helped the school both physically and financially. There were

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ISSN: 2704-3010

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also private individuals who contributed an amount for the materials needed in the MDL program.

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

Staying-in and staying-out teachers in the district of Leon II were very dedicated in their work despite of the experiences and challenges they have encountered in modular distance learning without counting the risk along the way.

They were able to find ways in order to access and download modules and other learning materials needed despite of poor internet access and long distance of school from their home. They were also able to reproduce those modules and learning materials completely despite of the hindrances they encountered such as printer malfunction, lack of inks and bond papers, power interruption and busy schedules.

Staying-in and staying-out teachers were able to distribute and retrieve modules and other outputs weekly with the help of parent-leader and learning facilitator. Parents involvement and participations and who also served as the learning facilitator were really a big help in the success of the distribution and retrieval of modules. Sometimes they may experience late submission of modules due to unfinished outputs of learners, busy schedules of parents and long distance between home and school but they were also able to solve this problem successfully.

Despite of the busy schedules in attending webinars, accomplishing online reports, and other school related activities they still manage to check the modules and other outputs of the learners just to accomplish the grades in every quarter in order to monitor their

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performance as basis for the reinforcement activities and making some adjustments for learner's improvement.

Staying-in and staying-out teachers were able to safeguard themselves by observing safety health protocols both in school and outside the school at all times. They also observed the safety of parents and other stakeholders who came in to school by installing all the things prescribed by the IATF and DOH inside the school premises.

Staying-in and staying-out teachers believed that through the establishment of partnership with local officials and other stakeholders, they were able to provide funds for their operational expenses in printing of modules and other learning materials.

Through their experiences, they were able to develop the sense of responsibility despite of the many challenges they had encountered along the way. They became more effective and efficient teachers in their respective stations, willing to take a risk just to continue the education of our children amidst the pandemic.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the findings and insights arrived in this study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

Staying-in and staying-out teachers should be provided with printed modules and other learning materials by the central office or division office since most of the school have no internet connections in accessing those modules and other learning materials. In that way,

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ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume VI, Issue II

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they can have time in developing learning activity sheets for learners and they could also spend time for their family during weekend especially for staying-in teachers.

There should be an allocation of fund for the far-flung schools for the program and projects from the Special Education Fund (SEF) to sustain the effective implementation of the MDL program.

School heads may top other stakeholders especially the Local Government Unit (LGU) to improve the accessibility of the road going to school so that private and public vehicles could reach the area and so teachers will not anymore spend so much time in walking.

School heads may also allocate certain amount from their Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) to install internet connection since most of the schools don't have internet connectivity and this is one of the common problems of the staying-in and staying-out teachers. This could also be incorporated in the School Improvement Plan of the school heads.

Seminars and trainings on strategies on linkages and partnership should be conducted to both school heads and teachers so that they will have enough knowledge on broadening the partnership and linkages not just on government organizations but on private and non-government organizations as well.

School heads together with the supervisor in the district should come up with functional standing committees and include awards and recognition committee to function for the recognition and appreciation of the services rendered and extended by the staying-in and

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staying-out teachers not just on the district level only but they could also be recommended for division and regional recognition as well.

Privileges and benefits of staying-in and staying-out teachers should be given attention by the DepEd central office, given on time, and satisfactorily accepted by the concerned teachers. Such as hardship allowance, performance-based bonus (PBB), service recognition incentives (SRI) and others.

Rewards and recognition for teachers especially those who are assigned in the far-flung areas of the schools district should be given in public especially to the place where they are serving as teachers. This recommendation provides a service award while creating the most positive impact and increasing the teachers' morale and feelings of appreciation.

Giving of a school plaque or laminated certificate that the teachers can look at for years. This will give a lasting value as a positive teacher memory.

Giving of plaque in the Municipality or District level with the teacher's name will make the service award a proud memory. The title to this award will be "MAESTRANG MAUKOD" award. This will be given during District Pasidungog or Municipal Pasidungog.

Criteria for choosing "MAESTRANG MAUKOD" award:

- a. Number of years as staying-in teacher – 40%
- b. Number of years as staying-out teacher – 30%
- c. Number of years in service – 20%
- d. Number of years assigned in far flung school – 10%

Present a service award in an all-teachers or Parents-Teachers Association (PTA)

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ISSN: 2704-3010

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meeting or ceremony to enhance and publicize the value of the service award recognition.

A service recognition should be accompanied by a written acknowledgment of the teachers' performance different from the regular and normal performance. This recognition letter should state the exemplary services rendered by the teacher assigned in the far-flung areas, and provide memorable details about why the teacher is receiving the service award.

The service recognition should be consistent, fair, and equitable.

Another research study is encouraged to be conducted and considered other variables not mentioned and used in this study.

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