Comparison of Frontline Educational Workers experience Before and During Pandemic

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to get insight into the first-hand experiences of educational frontline workers in the Philippines before to and during the Pandemic. The respondents were from Brgy. Rajal Centro Sta.Rosa Nueva Ecija and Gapan City Nueva Ecija. The participants in this study were selected frontline teachers who worked before and throughout the epidemic. This study focuses solely on the experiences of frontline employees prior to and during Covid-19. To determine if there is a substantial difference in frontline worker experience between covid-19 and before covid-19, or whether there is no significant difference. Taking into account each frontline worker's physical health, mental health, communication, and public perception, the findings of this study will be able to determine how significantly different the life experience has been and what recommendations can the frontline workers make in order to cope with the situation.

INTRODUCTION

As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads, healthcare workers throughout the world are presented with an unusual circumstance in which they must make tough decisions while working under severe pressure The general public has also been severely impacted. The COVID-19 pandemic caught many health-care systems off guard, causing fear and uncertainty in the fight against the infection. This misunderstanding resulted in contentious judgments on who should be treated or tasted with the limited resources available. The pandemic has undoubtedly brought fear to anyone, including us.

Health and social care personnel are particularly vulnerable to the epidemic because they come into contact with a wide range of people while carrying out their duties. Other industries must face the risk of being exposed sooner or later if the economy and nation are to progress. With the commencement of the new academic year, the educational sector must also accept the possibility of the pandemic persisting.

According to Sim , A physically and psychologically fit workforce that is well-equipped is essential to a country's ability to treat COVID-19 cases successfully[1]. Nowadays, working in education has a new and important challenge in the current scenario, with the ongoing epidemic[2]. Contingency preparations are being undertaken in the education sector, such as looking for and developing new ways to adopt with the situation while considering the physical and mental health of the teachers. All on- and off-campus events and activities that would gather students in crowded or confined places and/or involve travel have been prohibited for the safety of the students and the community[3].

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, anybody could go wherever they wanted and talk to anyone, including acquaintances, classmates, coworkers, cousins, and so on[4]. Anyone can go to a salon for a haircut, and we all go to the mall to purchase new things or to reward ourselves. Everyone is laughing at the same moment, and we are all spending time with our loved ones. We may reach out and touch anything without fear, and we can hug the person we genuinely miss. However, an unwanted incident occurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which drastically affected our lives and experiences. We had no clue our routine would be altered.

As our daily lives changed, so is the scenarios and paradigm in the educational sector. Government and non-government groups both support distance learning programs. It is recommended in reaction to the present educational system, which is in the midst of a pandemic. It is recommended that both professors and students use digital technologies. To prevent interruption, new ways of learning are being developed, such as online classrooms, which allow students to communicate with one another from a distance and continue with their academic studies. This has created a new and major problem for educational frontline personnel in terms of how they will cope with the present scenario while performing their assigned responsibilities as instructors.

The present pandemic crisis has had a tremendous influence on our lives in many areas, including our personal life, studies, and jobs. This study is being done to better understand the experiences of educational frontline staff prior to and during the COVID-19 epidemic. The following research problems will be investigated in this study:

1. How may the experiences of educational frontline personnel before and during the COVID-19 outbreak be characterized in terms of: Physical Health, Mental Health, Communication and Public Perception

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[1] Malcolm R Sim, "The COVID-19 Pandemic: Major Risks to Healthcare and Other Workers on the Front Line" (BMJ Publishing Group Ltd, 2020).

[2] Muh Barid Nizarudin Wajdi et al., "Education Policy Overcome Coronavirus, A Study of Indonesians," *EDUTEC: Journal of Education And Technology* 3, no. 2 (2020): 96–106.

[3] Muh Barid Nizarudin Wajdi et al., "Pendampingan Redesign Pembelajaran Masa Pandemi Covid-19 Bagi Tenaga Pendidik Di Lembaga Pendidikan Berbasis Pesantren Di Jawa Timur," *Engagement: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 4, no. 1 (2020): 266–277.

[4] Cynthia Abbott-Gaffney and Karen Jacobs, "Telehealth in School-Based Practice: Perceived Viability to Bridge Global OT Practitioner Shortages Prior to COVID-19 Global Health Emergency," *Work* (2020); Grant Benham, "Stress and Sleep in College Students Prior to and during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Stress and Health* (2021).

2. What action plan may be provided for the educational frontline employees to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Frontline workers are uniquely placed to address some of the most pressing COVID-19 pandemic problems. Their ability to provide professional counseling does not shield them from the psychological toll that it entails. We are unlikely to fully grasp the long-term mental impact of COVID-19 based on previous findings of how earlier pandemics eventually harmed the psychological health of frontline workers. While frontline workers are generally strong, they are nevertheless human and deserve the same psychological support as everyone else during a crisis. It is important to move beyond our current knowledge base and collect and analyze data on how this pandemic impacts our frontline personnel. This information will be critical in directing our actions to improve long-term mental health outcomes linked with COVId-19, as well as affecting our behavior in the case of future pandemics.

Every day since the beginning of the year, humanitarian workers in the Philippines have been on the front lines dealing with the challenges posed by COVID-19 and other disaster events, such as the displacement caused by the Taal Volcano eruption, the damage caused by Typhoon Ambo, as well as continuing relief efforts in Marawi City and responding to those affected by the Cotabato and Davao Del Sur earthquakes. Despite the numerous hazards, humanitarians continue to do their work, patiently and selflessly assisting those in most need.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown a significant number of vulnerabilities as well as our shortcomings in shock prevention[5]. It has also demonstrated that the enormity of the issue beyond the capacity of any one partner or government to respond. COVID-19 may be today's super-villain, but it doesn't stop our real-life heroes from performing their jobs and working diligently to develop ways to battle the treat and finally defeat the unseen adversary.

The new coronavirus outbreak threatens to aggravate work-related stress and amplify severe psychological distress among some healthcare professionals. Other pandemics' emotional impacts on medical professionals have shown that anguish is not confined to the length of the epidemic, but instead lingers long after exposure to victims has ended. Longer shifts are connected with detrimental consequences on both employees and patients, and the mental and physical weariness that healthcare professionals throughout the world are expected to experience as a result of prolonged schedules and increased workloads is not uncommon among frontline workers. The COVID-19 epidemic is hurting many healthcare

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[5] Juan Antonio Duro et al., "Covid-19 and Tourism Vulnerability," *Tourism Management Perspectives* (2021); Güler Boyraz, Dominique N. Legros, and Ashley Tigershtrom, "COVID-19 and Traumatic Stress: The Role of Perceived Vulnerability, COVID-19-Related Worries, and Social Isolation," *Journal of Anxiety Disorders* (2020); Ibraheem M. Karaye and Jennifer A. Horney, "The Impact of Social Vulnerability on COVID-19 in the U.S.: An Analysis of Spatially Varying Relationships," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* (2020).

professionals in novel ways, including increased infection risk, feelings of powerlessness, moral damage, and a lack of social support[6].

METHODS

This methodology reflects the criteria that were used to assess the lives of COVID-19 frontline workers before and throughout the pandemic. Frontline workers' physical and mental health, communication, public perception, and security and protection are all affected by their experiences before and during Covid-19. Communication refers to how humans perceive messages sent between two or more individuals. Communication has an important role in both promoting and disturbing physical well-being. Frontline workers' physical health has an impact on their mental health, and poor physical health can lead to an increase in bad mental health. Mental health has an impact on how people are perceived by the public; it influences how they believe, how things appear, and so on. Security and protection are enhanced via communication and public perception. Communication and public perception engage with people on a regular basis in order to provide information, guidance, or to ease incident reporting, which can improve security and protection.

This study focused on the Experience of COVID-19 Frontline Education Workers; Before and During Pandemic at Rajal Centro Santa Rosa and Gapan City Nueva Ecija. Moreover, the results of this study will be beneficial to the following:

Teachers: As a consequence, they are more conscious of their physical, mental, and social wellbeing during covid-19, which helps them avoid worry and despair.

Frontline Workers: Based on prior experience, they can address the psychological effect of Covid-19.

Researcher: The findings of this study may serve as the foundation for future intervention programs aimed at enhancing frontline employees' experiences during a pandemic, which would eventually enhance their way of life.

The data was analyzed using a four-point Likert Scale by the researcher. A four-point Likert scale represents a collection of numeric or verbal answers and alternatives that span a variety of perspectives on a topic. It's always included in open-ended inquiries. It is a four-point scale ranging from severe to extreme. It consists of a mild or neutral middle. The crucial value for the Wilcoxon test will be utilized by the researcher. The crucial value must be less than or equal to the result in order to reject the null hypotheses. In conducting this study,

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[6] Faruk Bozdağ and Naif Ergün, "Psychological Resilience of Healthcare Professionals During COVID-19 Pandemic," *Psychological Reports* (2020); Baiwen Qi et al., "Protecting Healthcare Professionals during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *BioMed Research International* (2020); Usman Rashid Malik et al., "Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of Healthcare Professionals on Covid-19 and Risk Assessment to Prevent the Epidemic Spread: A Multicenter Cross-Sectional Study from Punjab, Pakistan," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (2020); Murat Yıldırım, Gökmen Arslan, and Ahmet Özaslan, "Perceived Risk and Mental Health Problems among Healthcare Professionals during COVID-19 Pandemic: Exploring the Mediating Effects of Resilience and Coronavirus Fear," *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* (2020).

the assumption below was employed by the researchers. COVID-19 pandemic experience has serious bad effects on the frontline worker's personality.

- Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the experience of frontline workers before and during covid-19 pandemic.
- Alternative Hypothesis: Is there significant difference between the experience of frontline workers (teacher) before and during Covid-19 pandemic.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

COVID-19 Frontline Workers' Experiences Before and During the Pandemic This chapter contains a summary of the study's results, conclusions, and recommendations titled "experience of covid-19 frontline workers: before and during pandemic."

Table 1 - Physical Health

	1. Physical Health	**4**		**3**		**2**		**1**		**WM**	**VI**
	Before Pandemic	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1.1	I have enough sleep every day.	6	30%	13	65%	1	5%	0	0%	3.25	SA
1.2	I exercise once a week when I wanted.	7	35%	6	30%	5	25%	2	10%	2.9	A
	GWM									**3.08**	A
	During Pandemic	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1.3	I have enough sleep every day.	4	20%	4	20%	8	40%	4	20%	2.6	A
1.4	I exercise once a week when I wanted.	10	50%	6	30%	2	10%	2	10%	3.2	SA
	GWM									**2.9**	A

The over - all weighted mean for the component physical health is 3.08 before pandemic and 2.9 during epidemic, with the verbal interpretation of agree, indicating that respondents are only slightly agreeing that covid-19 experience has an influence on their physical aspect before and during pandemic.

Table 2 - Mental Health

	2. Mental Health	4		3		2		1		WM	VI
	Before Pandemic	F	%	F	%			F	%		
2.1	When I'm sick it feels like normal thing.	13	65%	6	30%	1	5%	0	0%	3.55	SA
2.2	I don't tolerate negative thoughts.	13	65%	6	30%	1	5%	0	0%	3.55	SA
	GWM									**3.55**	SA
	During Pandemic	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
2.3	When I'm sick it feels like normal thing.	1	5%	2	10%	3	15%	14	70%	1.5	SD
2.4	I don't tolerate negative thoughts.	1	5%	3	15%	5	25%	11	55%	1.7	SD
	GWM									**1.6**	SD

The over - all weighted mean for the factor mental health is 3.55 before and 1.6 during the pandemic, with the verbal interpretation of strongly agree and strongly disagree, indicating that respondents are only somewhat agreeing and do not agree that the covid-19 experience has an impact on their mental health before and during the pandemic.

Table 3 - Communication

	3. Communication	4		3		2		1		WM	VI
	Before Pandemic	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
3.1	I don't need some distance when talking to my family/neighbor/friend. We can talk freely.	15	75%	4	20%	1	5%	0	0%	3.7	SA

		4		3		2		1		WM	VI
3.2	I visit my families and friends to hang out, whenever I miss them.	17	85%	3	15%	0	0%	0	0%	3.85	SA
	GWM									**3.88**	SA
During Pandemic		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
3.3	I don't need some distance when talking to my family/neighbor/friend. We can talk freely.	0	0%	1	5%	6	30%	13	65%	1.4	SD
3.4	I visit my families and friends to hang out, whenever I miss them.	0	0%	0	0%	8	40%	12	60%	1.4	SD
	GWM									**1.4**	SD

The over - all weighted mean for the factor communication is 3.88 before and 1.4 during the pandemic, with the verbal interpretation of strongly agree and strongly disagree, indicating that respondents are only somewhat agreeing and not agreeing that covid-19 experience has an impact on their communication aspect before and during the pandemic.

Table 4 - Public Perception

	4. Public Perception	4		3		2		1		WM	VI
	Before Pandemic	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
4.1	I make sure I am well aware where my family is going before they go out.	15	75%	5	25%	0	0%	0	0%	3.75	SA
4.2	I make sure that my family came home safe.	17	85%	3	15%	0	0%	0	0%	3.85	SA
	GWM									**3.8**	SA
	During Pandemic	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		

4.3	I make sure I am well aware where my family is going before they go out.	16	80%	3	15%	0	0%	1	5%	3.7	SA
4.4	I make sure that my family came home safe.	17	85%	2	10%	0	0%	1	5%	3.75	SA
	GWM									**3.73**	SA

The overall weighted mean for the component public perception is 3.8 before and 3.37 during the pandemic, with the verbal interpretation of strongly agree, indicating that respondents agreed that the covid-19 experience had an influence on their public perception before and during the pandemic.

Table 5 - Summary Table on the Types of Experience of Respondents

Types of Experience	General Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Physical Health		
Before Pandemic	3.08	Agree
During Pandemic	2.9	Agree
2. Mental Health		
Before Pandemic	3.55	Strongly Agree
During Pandemic	1.6	Strongly Disagree
3. Communication		
Before Pandemic	3.88	Strongly Agree
During Pandemic	1.4	Strongly Disagree
4. Public Perception		
Before Pandemic	3.8	Strongly Agree
During Pandemic	3.73	Strongly Agree

The findings of a summary of the responses for each component of the educational frontline employee's experience reveal that there is no significant difference between the physical health component and public perception prior to and after the pandemic. While instructors were well aware of the mental health and communication issues when the pandemic began.

Table 6 – Hypothesis Test Summary for Related-Samples Sign Test and Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The median of differences between Before COVID and After COVID equals 0.	Related-Samples Sign Test	.000[a]	Reject the null hypothesis.
2	The median of differences between Before COVID and After COVID equals 0.	Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

The findings demonstrated, using two separate statistical tests, that there is a substantial difference between the life of a teacher before and after the pandemic in terms of general physical health, mental health, communication, and public perception.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this investigation led to the following conclusion:

1. Educational frontline employees are likely to require a flexible system of support that includes peer, organizational, and professional assistance. This includes provisions for safety, wellness, and health.

2. Social distance is particularly essential in avoiding illnesses in confined areas such as buildings and workplaces. Every school building should be designed to be a working environment during the pandemic. At the same time, safety protocols should be issued by the immediate supervisors or the management of school facilities.

3. Frontline employees might occasionally experience suffering, not just physically, but also emotionally, mentally, and socially. It is important to always check-up on the teachers by doing meetings, trainings, webinars that would help improve the overall health and well-being of the teachers.

4. Changes in behavioral patterns are most likely to occur during this pandemic, particularly among frontline workers who, for their own safety, must be safeguarded. There should

be contingencies and flexible work arrangement for teachers that would help them maintain balance on their behavioral patterns.

Based on the findings of this investigation, the following recommendations have been made:
1. That parents, or anybody else, become aware of the frontline worker throughout this pandemic. Giving appreciation and raises could help further encourage the frontline workers in doing their work and being mentally supported.
2. That local government unit should become more actively involved by establishing action response centers for frontline worker protection situations. They may be able to help in organizing programs and webinars that are allocated for the teacher's preparation and conduct of work during the pandemic.
3. That police stations follow suit and ensure that offenders are arrested immediately and subjected to due procedure. There should be implementing rules and regulations that would help the people be informed so that they may be able to follow basic and minimum help standards.
4. Individual care organizations should have social distancing techniques in place in the event of an infectious pandemic.

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