

## Job-Related Issues of Distance Learning to Teachers' Coping Response and Attitude towards Change

Renz Mariane B. Mendoza<sup>1</sup>, Karen Chris B. Latade<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Sulpoc Elementary School, Department of Education, Tanauan City, Batangas, Philippines

<sup>2</sup>Instructor of Laguna State Polytechnic University – San Pablo City Campus, Philippines

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**ABSTRACT:** The Covid-19 virus has affected everyone, and some are still getting better. The changes the pandemic brought about pushed us to use conventional survival methods. It is necessary for both teachers and students to quickly switch to an entirely new method to carry on with their school program. This study aims to ascertain the elementary teachers' attitude toward changes and how it mediates the job-related issues that the pandemic brought about, particularly in the mode of delivery of learning during these times, as well as its impact on the coping response that the teachers use to cope up with these changes. To assess the current state of the variable, the research employs a descriptive survey methodology.

The study revealed that teacher respondents' profiles were significantly influenced by the coping response; the data presented that age is the only variable with a significant relationship with the coping response, while between job-related issues and coping strategies, the data show that the distribution/retrieval of modules influences all facets of coping strategy. It is also found that the respondent's job-related issues significantly correlate with all the attitudes toward change. Most evidently the effect of the authentic assessment and students' engagement with the teacher's resistance to these changes in distance learning.

This study recommends that school conduct seminars promoting work-life balance as well as administrators assisting teachers when it comes to the use of technology.

**KEYWORDS:** change, coping, distance learning, job-related issues, pandemic

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 global pandemic has brought on a severe health emergency. The burden of these changes was most evident in our educational system. The Department of Education (DepEd) adjusted the competencies in response to these changes. It adopted distance learning to deliver education even outside the four walls of the classrooms according to the DepEd Order 13, s. 2020.

Students, parents, and teachers are all trying their best to adapt. Teachers and students do not have a choice but to quickly shift to an entirely new method to continue their school program by relying on any means they have available at the time [1].

Amid the pandemic, teachers experienced many job-related challenges [2] as they were coping with the remnants of the changes caused by the pandemic. The setbacks because of the disruption of classes for three years have been a big problem for teachers, especially in elementary grades [3].

Teachers were preparing their learning materials using different kinds of technology that can cause them to feel stress.

It has been proposed that stress is a response, a stimulus, and a transaction [4]. How people view stress affects how they react, adapt, or use coping mechanisms. Coping is a reaction to an emotion, predominantly negative sensations [5].

Teachers may understand the requirement for remote teaching and learning during these times on a cognitive level; however, they may oppose it emotionally [6] based on factors such as their endowment to face-to-face or feelings of concern that they are fewer effective teachers when teaching remotely [7].

We have our own opinion about what these experiences are worth, and the sudden change in the direction of education in most parts of the world may give teachers a hard time accepting them. Since attitude toward organizational change is specific consistencies of a person's sentiments, thoughts, and inclinations toward change started by the organization like the shift to distance learning [8].

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## II. METHODOLOGY

This study was a quantitative type of research. It used a descriptive-correlational research method to determine the relationship between the coping responses, namely Problem-Focused Coping, Emotion-Focused Coping, and Avoidant Coping, as well as the teacher during the pandemic and teachers' attitude toward change (Embracing, Acceptance, Indifference, and Resistance) and its relation to the job-related issues encountered.

Using random sampling the respondents are selected with no specific range of age, sex, marital status, or experience. However, they should be elementary teachers teaching in Tanauan City West District and should have taught during distance learning

The researcher made and adopted a questionnaire that was used in this study. To accomplish the research, the researcher secured a written permit from the administrators of the Division of Tanauan City to conduct the research in the district.

Once the research approval was signed, the researcher needed the Informed Consent of the study's respondents. Informed consent is a voluntary agreement to participate in research as per the Data Privacy Act 2012. It was not merely a signed form but a process in which the respondents understood the study and its limitations.

Succeeding this is the distribution and answering of the research instruments. After the allotted time, these were retrieved for data analysis. The gathered data was checked, analysed, interpreted, and treated with the utmost confidentiality by the researcher and the study's statistician.

Guided by the study's specific objectives, the researchers used a four-part questionnaire. The first part was the profile of the respondents as to their age, sex, year in service, and marital status. It was followed by a 25-item researcher-made questionnaire with a four-point Likert-type scale on job-related issues. This tool was validated, has undergone pilot testing, and has been tested using Cronbach's Alpha for its reliability.

Attitudes towards change, an adapted tool from Teacher's Attitude Towards Change (TATC), was the second part of the questionnaire. It was a six-point Likert-type scale with 18 items. Lastly, the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE) determined the teachers' coping responses.

To answer the problems in this study, the following statistical tools were used to handle the collected data:

Mean and standard deviation was used to compute, collate, and interpret the data from the Profile of the respondents, Job-related Issues questionnaire, Attitudes towards change, and Brief COPE.

A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to compare the results of all three parts and determine whether the profile and job-related issues significantly impact the teacher's coping response and attitude toward change.

The collected data were organized chronologically and thematically to provide in-depth analysis and interpretation.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Profile of the Respondents

Respondents are dominated mainly by females. Even though this profession allows both males and females, according to the data presented most of the respondents are female in sex. It may be because women are mothers and nurturers that they apply for this position.

In terms of age, many teachers are millennials (Ages 27 – 42) as observed in the district practitioners already have established careers. Teachers who fall within the millennial age range of 36 to 45 years old are more prevalent. Additionally, most of the teachers were young and middle-aged people.

The year in service is significantly higher at six to fifteen years of teaching in public school. The long-serving teacher was defined as one with 10 years or more of teaching experience. This may relate to the data posited under the age of the respondents as mentioned; during this time the respondents' careers are already established, and they have felt the security of being in this government institution.

It is noticeable that most of the elementary teachers are married in the teacher profile in terms of their marital status. It may imply that using the data from years of service, having the security of stable income and benefits from the department more teachers may have been encouraged to settle down.

It is also evident in the data that married teachers tend to stick and have a long-standing relationship with their spouses proven by only 1% of the teachers are separated, and none are single parents.

### Job-Related Issues

**Table 1. Summary Result of Teachers' Job-Related Issues**

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Workload	3.48	Slightly Agree
Authentic Assessment	3.19	Slightly Agree
Student Engagement	3.46	Slightly Agree
Module Distribution	3.46	Slightly Agree
Use of Technology	3.40	Slightly Agree
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>

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Legend: 4.50 – 5.0 – strongly agree, 3.50 – 4.49 agree, 2.50 – 3.49 Slightly agree, 1.50 – 2.49 disagree, 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

This summary of teachers' perception of job-related issues concludes that the teacher "Slightly Agrees" that the workload is one of the challenges they have experienced during distance learning. This variable has a mean of 3.48, the highest of all the variables. Workload has been the biggest challenge the teachers have encountered regarding the job-related issues presented in this study. In the Philippines, public school teachers lament their excessive workload [9]. In addition to their obligations in their personal lives, their stated tremendous workload causes them stress. However, in several studies, not all people react to stressful situations similarly [10].

On the other hand, authentic assessment received the lowest average of 3.10; the teacher "slightly agreed" that authentic assessment is a difficulty they encountered during a pandemic.

Some teachers had difficulty assessing the students, while some did not experience the same. The teachers may have utilized different types of assessment to measure the students' learning during distance learning, which is why some teachers agree on this variable and some do not.

The issue is that there hasn't been an instructional design for authentic online assessments found up to this point [11].

Teachers must adapt their teaching strategies by incorporating innovative approaches into their teaching pedagogy to appropriately prepare students for authentic assessment.

### Coping Response

**Table 2. Summary of Teachers' Coping Response**

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Problem-Focused	2.96	Sometimes
Emotion-Focused	2.51	Sometimes
Avoidant	2.21	Seldom
<i>Overall</i>	2.58	Sometimes

Legend: 3.50- 4.00 Always, 2.50 - 3.49

Sometimes, 1.50 – 2.49 Seldom, 1.00 – 1.49 Never

This table tackles the summary of teacher respondents coping responses. The problem-focused variables were the highest among the three with ( $\bar{X}= 2.96$ ); it verbally interprets "sometimes." This indicates that the teacher only employs this kind of coping from time to time not as frequently but sometimes.

According to the data available the respondents are mostly female, millennials, and married and they are stable and secure in terms of their personal and professional lives. Even with the presence of these characteristics they sometimes consider being problem-focused in responding to their difficulties in life.

Avoidant strategies are seldom used by the respondents in coping responses to adjust to problems and situations which is also connected in the study of [12].

In total, the teacher in Tanauan City West occasionally employs problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant to cope with the changes in the school. It has an overall mean of 2.58 and a normal distribution of 0.39.

### Attitude towards Change

**Table 3. Summary of Teachers' Attitude toward Change**

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Embracing	4.64	Agree
Acceptance	4.57	Agree
Indifference	4.51	Agree
Resistance	3.40	Slightly Agree
<i>Overall</i>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 5.50 - 6.00 Strongly Agree, 4.50 – 5.49 Agree, 3.50 – 4.4

Slightly Agree, 2.50 – 3.49 Slightly Disagree, 1.50 – 2.49 Disagree, 1.00 – 1.49

The data presented that the highest mean over this variable is Embracing with a mean of 4.64. Teachers are found to firmly believe that change will improve school performance and benefit the education system. Since most of the teachers in this study are millennials, they are more willing to accept changes and turn this situation into an opportunity to self-growth and development.

On the other hand, resistance scored lowest among the 4 variables. They slightly agree that changes are unnecessary and inappropriate for the school. This situation can sometimes be present. However, most of the time they tend to embrace change.

Teachers of Tanauan City West are reluctant to refuse and resist changes in the workplace. At the same time, they agree that the change should be embraced and accepted because it brings positive results for the school and the department. They also agree that change should be supported, and they should also take the initiative for the school to change. The total mean of all four indicators the respondents gave is 4.35. Most teachers agree with the indicators that are in the questionnaire tool.

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### Profile and Coping Response

**Table 4. Correlation between Profile of the Respondents and Coping Response**

	Coping response		
	Problem-focused	Emotional-Focused	Avoidant
<b>Profile</b>			
Sex	-0.168	-0.116	-0.058
Age	-.229*	-0.041	0.153
Years in service	-0.154	-0.032	0.125
Marital status	-0.095	-0.092	-0.084

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As shown in the table, sex in the profile of the respondents in both 1% and 5% of the margin of error does not affect all three coping responses. Regarding age, only the problem-focused coping response has a significant correlation in 0.05 alpha level of .229.

The result shows an inverse correlation as most respondents are 36-55. Therefore, it is also noticeable in the data that they sometimes tend not always to utilize positive framing when facing life challenges.

The respondents of the study mainly belong to millennials. Millennials like the study's respondents are well-known for favoring work-life balance to value the demand of the workplace and personal life equally.

Work-life balance delivers positive effects like lowering the risk of stress and burnout. The millennial respondents may prefer to face the problem head-on to make plans for resolving the difficulty.

However, this study implies that as most respondents mature and age, problem-focused coping like seeing the positive side of the problems, taking action to improve everything, thinking about the next step, and getting help and advice from others may decline. It is reported in a study that older individuals had lower levels of positive affect and were less likely than younger persons to adopt problem-focused coping techniques [13].

In addition, even if most of the studies found out that females (most of the respondents) will tend to use emotion-coping when facing difficulty, there is still evidence to find the answer [14].

Moreover, since a large portion of the respondents is married and have a family of their own, the results of this research are contradictory to [15] study with the conclusion that the mother used a variety of coping mechanisms, such as positive framing, active coping, planning (Problem-focused), and use of emotional, social support (Emotion-focused).

### Job-Related Issues and Coping Response

**Table 5. Correlation between Job-Related Issues of the Respondents and Coping Response**

	Coping response		
	Problem-focused	Emotion -Focused	Avoidant
<b>Job-Related issues</b>			
Workload	0.276*	0.174	0.248*
Authentic assessment	0.236*	0.267*	0.279*
Students' engagement	0.233*	0.183	0.278*
Module distribution/retrieval	0.229*	0.218*	0.371**
Use of technology	0.153	0.192	0.309**

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table shows that workload correlates with the emotion-focused of .232 in a 5% margin of error and an R-value of .352 in avoidant. Job-related issues as to the workload have the highest correlation to coping response avoidant which has a value of 0.352 which means the variables were moderately related.

According to the previous discussions of emotion-coping in this chapter, females are more likely to use this kind of coping response. Since most of the respondents are female, this may suggest that when the teachers encounter problems in the workplace such as extending their time to finish a task or being physically and mentally exhausted because of too much work teacher may just accept and learn to adjust to the situations or turn to other people such as their husband and children (as most of the respondents are married) for emotional support.

Moreover, workload also has a significant correlation with avoidant coping. This may imply that the higher the teachers' perceived workload such as spending the weekends doing paperwork and having to spend less time with the family, the more avoidant coping like making fun of the situations and turning to their family for comfort and understanding when faced with these difficulties.

Authentic assessments significantly correlate with emotion-focused and avoidant coping. This may mean that as the problem of authentic assessment output of the students arises like suspecting that the students' output is made by their parents, the teacher

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may use emotion-focused coping like accepting the realities of a certain situation and learning to live with it. They may also look for something enjoyable in certain situations that they are in for them to cope with.

While student engagement, like not being able to attend online classes as well as scheduled calls and doing activities other than the modules has significance with only one coping response, which is emotion-focused coping.

Teachers may be more accepting of these situations because most teachers are married with family and children, and they can sympathize with the situation of the students as they also have chores to do since they are at home. When teachers face challenges to the students’ engagement, the teachers are more likely to accept the situation that may pose challenges.

There is a significant correlation between modular distribution/retrieval and coping response. This has been observed with all the indicators present. This may mean that the teachers employ different coping responses when dealing with the problems of module distribution/retrieval. This shows that upon the students' compliance to their task teachers may see it positively, they may accept the reality and create distraction in coping with the present challenges.

Finally, regarding the use of technology, the correlation is between the use of technology and avoidant coping response with a positively low correlation between the two variables. As the problem of using technologies such as making videos, using different platforms to teach, and asking for help in teaching and navigating through distance learning arises, they tend to avoid the situations.

### Job-Related Issues and Attitude toward Change

**Table 6. Correlation between Job-Related Issues of the Respondents and Attitude toward Change**

	Attitude towards change			
	Embracing	Acceptance	Indifference	Resistance
<i>Job-Related issues</i>				
Workload	0.276*	0.174	0.248*	0.279*
Authentic assessment	0.236*	0.267*	0.279*	0.475**
Students’ engagement	0.233*	0.183	0.278*	0.446**
Module distribution/retrieval	0.229*	0.218*	0.371**	0.412**
Use of technology	0.153	0.192	0.309**	0.454**

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table shows that workload correlates at 0.05 to all the attitude variables except for acceptance. This may imply that when a teacher encounters issues about extending time to work and being mentally and physically tired because of too much workload, the teacher may see these changes as stimulating and something to look forwards to; in addition, some teachers may feel reluctant to explore the challenges of changes in workload during distance learning. Moreover, the teacher may also resent and get irritated with the change in the workload during the pandemic.

On the other hand, authentic assessment has a significant relationship with all four attitude variables toward change. Correlation is especially important in resistance. This may imply that when teachers counter problems such as doubting the student’s output, these changes often bother and irritate the teachers. Maybe the cause of this irritation and frustration stems from the work the teacher put into making worksheets /activity sheets only to find that the parents are the ones answering them.

Students’ engagement with embracing, indifference, and resistance. A more significant relationship exists between students’ engagement and resistance with an R-value of 0.446.

As the teachers experience students not attending online classes, answering the scheduled phone calls, as well as submitting incomplete output, the teacher may feel frustrated and bothered because this may lead to extra work for the teacher just so the students can keep up with the lessons.

Module distribution and retrieval significantly influence all the variables of attitude toward change. It is most evident in indifference and resistance. This may suggest that when faced with problems such as constantly reminding the parents but still failing to submit the students’ work and not being available during module distribution/retrieval, the respondents may be reluctant just to accept the situations or may feel frustrated for they are aware that the students work will pile up if they fail to get their activities on time. However, some teachers may see it as a challenge that can lead to improvement.

Lastly, the use of technology significantly correlates with indifference and resistance. When teachers have trouble using different platforms and making instructional videos for the students, they may feel reluctant to explore new applications and platforms and just stick to what they already know. This may also frustrate teachers to do these kinds of tasks.

In summary, all the variables of job-related issues have a significant relationship with the attitude toward change, but it is most evident in authentic assessment and resistance. On the other hand, the use of technology has the least correlation with attitude toward change. It is only significant in indifference and resistance. The variable does not indicate correlations between embracing and resistance.

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### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study revealed that among the profile of the respondents, only age has a significant yet inversely relationship with the coping response. Regarding the correlation between job-related issues and coping strategies, the data implies that module distributions/retrieval affect all three coping styles the most. The study also tells us that all job-related issues significantly correlate with all attitude variables. However, it is most noticeable in the effect of authentic assessment and students' engagement in resisting the change.

As teachers faced the issues brought on by the pandemic, the teacher employed different coping strategies to adjust to these changes. It is also found that teachers are more likely to accept change, but some still resist to some extent. It has rejected the null hypothesis that the variables profile and job-related issue presented do not have a significant relationship with coping response and attitude toward change.

The researcher suggests that schools may conduct seminars promoting work-life balance as well as administrators assisting teachers when it comes to the use of technology, as teachers' mental health is as important as the service they can provide for students and the department.

This study is not an exception to the rule that every research has limitations. The researcher uses the respondents near the area and just included public school elementary teachers; having more varied respondents including high school teachers and teachers in private schools may lead to a more diverse and exciting data pool.

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