

Exploring the Experiences of Graduate School Students on Online Classes

Mary Grace P. Torentera
 Francisco M. Espinosa, EdD
 Jeannet E. Canda, EdD
 Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges, Graduate School
 General Santos City, Philippines

Abstract:- We have investigated what it takes to help the students get interested in an online course built with educators and education researchers in mind based on student reflections and testimonies. The purpose of this study is to tell and retell the experiences of Graduate School Students in Online Class. A qualitative narrative approach using in-depth interview and focus group discussion were conducted to five students of the Graduate School of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges. There were three themes that emerged as experienced by the Graduate School students who are having an online class, namely: mindfulness in embracing the new normal, teamwork, and workable setting. The participants of the study had different approaches in coping with the consequences and challenges brought by online class: no network coverage, poor internet connections, technical interruption and fatigue. They agreed that online classes bring flexibility, reduced cost and comfortable home learning environment.

Keywords:- Educational management, experiences, new normal, teamwork, poor internet connection, online classes, Philippines.

I. INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) opened COVID-19 as a global public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020, and a pandemic on March 11, 2020. In many undertakings of everyday life, COVID-19 has had a severe impact on students, instructors, and educational organizations around the globe. The pandemic caused schools, colleges, and universities worldwide to shut down their campuses so that students could follow social distancing measures (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020; Mailizar, Almanthari, & Bruce, 2020; Toquero, 2020).

Learning can take place in an old-style classroom setting and online. Although these are both methods of educating students, some differences benefit the specific learner. In a conventional classroom setting, students' learning happens, and the teacher provides face-to-face instructional learning to students. Learners can also connect face to face with the teacher and other students in the classroom. On the other hand, online education takes courses through a platform where teachers and students interact or communicate virtually. It may occur in a video chat room, virtual learning class, emails, digital telecommunications, etc. If a student misses a lesson in the traditional classroom, they could ask the teacher or for

notes or assignments forgotten. Students can also ask the Teacher for extra assistance when they do not comprehend a lesson. The learners will still be able to keep up with new notes and assignments; whereas in an online learning environment, they can complete their projects at home on their own time, but they need to comply on the due date (Summers, Waigandt, & Whittaker, 2015; Simonson, Zvacek & Smaldino, 2019; Marquez, Villanueva, Solarte, & Garcia, 2016; Trinder, 2017).

In digitally advanced countries, online learning may be beneficial. However, in the Philippines, many learning and teaching, and administrative activities of academic institutions are handled manually. Lack of access to fast, inexpensive, and reliable internet influences hinder online learning, especially for those living in the rural and marginalized societies in the country. Students who access the internet through smartphones cannot take advantage of online learning, because many online contents are not accessible via smartphones (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020; Vergés Bausili, 2018; Adnan & Anwar, 2020).

A few recent research studies have discovered the challenges and opportunities associated with e-learning during the pandemics. Investigators are trying to explore the advantages and challenges of current e-learning initiatives from the perspective of various stakeholders. This research investigated the students' opinions regarding online learning to inspect the difficulties faced by the pupils. More researches are needed to discover the challenges of utilizing e-learning that hinders students from achieving their learning goals. It also suggested that future research studies should investigate the quality of learning online (Mailizar et al., 2020; Choudhury & Pattnaik, 2020; Queiros & de Villiers, 2016; Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020).

A. Statement of the Problem

Studying learners' narrative stories would benefit the learners who experienced online learning. It is essential to begin to uncover students' experiences with online learning, because doing so can help to show effective online practices, students' perceptions of online learning, and student satisfaction in the online environment. All of these can provide information about the weather students will likely continue to accept online delivery of instruction and factors that will influence their persistence and retention in these courses. In particular, I plan to accomplish the following objectives: (1) identify qualitative studies that have investigated students' experiences in online courses; (2) extract findings from these studies; (3) synthesize findings into a new whole and (4) highlight the challenges and

obstacles of online learning faced by higher education students in the Philippines.

Today, the challenges and responsibilities faced by these schools have led to an initiative to care for the learners in an online class. The researcher conducted this research to realize the continuous improvement and to better serve the learners in an online course. The researcher is a student of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges, assigned in an area with no stable network connections. Most of the students enrolled in their master's degree are having their online classes.

In this context, the researcher is interested in knowing the experiences of these students who have an online class at Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges - Graduate School Department. It concerns on graduate school students who have online courses.

B. Purpose Statement

This qualitative narrative study aimed to tell and retell the students' stories in these online courses through a synthesis of existing evidences. It involved the graduate school students who are studying through online classes at Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges, for the school year 2019 - 2020. This study recorded and highlighted the narrative stories of students taking an online class at Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges, including their online experiences, the network connectivity in their areas, participation in their online course, and the success of online learning.

Furthermore, the researcher tried to let the study participants tell and retell their experiences. The researcher listened to the stories they shared. Finally, in this study, the intention is to work closely, listen and grasp the stories as unveiled by the online learners of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges Graduate School Department.

C. Research Question:

How do the participants' experiences in online class be described?

D. Significance of the Study

This study would benefit the administrators and professors to understand the situation of the graduate school students who have online classes to integrate them socially and professionally. The study sees the factors that determine the students' behavior in online courses. The study uses a qualitative approach and applies the following methods of research: interview, observation, and file analysis. I interviewed five students in the Graduate School Program of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges who have online classes.

E. Delimitations and Limitations

The study involved only five graduate school students of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges with an online course. Purposive sampling was used in choosing the five subjects of the study, such that they all have an online class since the new normal setting started. The term new normal has become one of the most commonly used words in the pandemic aftermath. The rising use of online learning tools has become the new normal in education. The COVID-19

pandemic has encouraged innovative approaches to education. Educational organizations worldwide are turning to online learning platforms to continue educating the students. The new normal is a modified educational concept, with online learning at its heart. Students and universities worldwide now use digital learning as a crucial resource (Berwick, 2020; Gros, & García-Peñalvo, 2016; Torda, 2020; Bozkurt, & Sharma, 2020).

The study is dependent on the ability of the five participants to describe their experiences and to answer the interview questions. The informants have varied degrees of knowledge and distressing backgrounds, and therefore, it is subjective. Since the administrative permission is necessary to gain access, the informants were informed of the study's purpose. In finding out what the students stated during the interview, avoid negative public perception, and pseudonyms must be used to protect their identities.

We may have been entirely in-cognizant of certain prior beliefs as well as their influence on our perspective. We may have heard from my informants what we wanted to hear and to interpret their remarks to get the outcomes we sought. I am the one collecting data for this study, there are no questions that our personal bias may be present to some degrees in every stage of this study. The informants' thoughts and ideas were far more substantial than mine, and their voices resonated out.

The study was based on open-ended questions through one-on-one in-depth interviews. There were five informants for the in-depth interviews; the investigation results may not be generalized to the other regions of the country. This study is descriptive in its investigation.

Technology enables a more consistently abstract mode of engagement with the world. It allows social addition to shifting from face-to-face communication to more disembodied forms of communication, so the participants in the online environment can engage separately with one another presence (co-presence). Therefore, Cooper emphasized that though technology can make social relations more abstract, the physical disconnection simultaneously can make for more close connections. I will employ the theoretical framework to help us interpret our data and develop the themes (Peng, Sergis, Wang, & Sampson, 2017; Chun, Kern, & Smith, 2016).

II. PROCEDURES

In presenting the flow of the study, I organized the ideas and different concepts accordingly. Each part has its corresponding views to be discussed. The readers will be able to comprehend the details since they are presented clearly. This study is organized into three sections.

Section 1 introduces the problem and phenomenon to be studied. This chapter emphasizes the importance of the study. It explains what has been researched in the past and recent times and shows the gaps identified in the existing research. It is followed by the discussion of the researcher's purpose of the study, which aims to describe the online

experiences of the students in taking their master's degree, especially in this pandemic time.

Next, is the presentation of the research questions utilized for the interview of the participants. It's also critical to have a firm grasp of the words. Thus, crucial terms in the study are operationally defined. The last part of this chapter is the delimitation and limitation of the study. There is also the presentation of the participants of the study. The weaknesses and validity of the study are also presented in this section.

Section 2 discusses the design and methodology used in the study, including the research design, research site, and purposeful sampling, data analysis procedures, researcher's role and potential ethical issues, and methods of validation: trustworthiness which explains the four criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability and lastly, the ethical considerations of the study.

Section 3 includes the literature and other research studies related to the main problem that support the study's need. Topics addressed in the review include E-Learning concepts about learning outcome, student's satisfaction, engagement, and the efficacy of online learning courses—the experiences of the students having their online class, especially in internet connectivity, and their virtual experiences.

A. *Qualitative Methodology and Design*

The narrative approach research collects and tells a story or stories (in detail). I write narratives about the experiences of individuals, describe life experiences, and discuss the meaning of the knowledge with the individuals. Usually, a narrative research design is focused on studying a person. The researcher develops the individual's stories instead of a community.

It is a suitable instrument for my study, wherein I need to envision and explore the actual experiences of my participants who have perceived the dynamics or factors of an online class of the Graduate School Students of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges. In narrative research, bracketing is applied to minimize presuppositions to prevent potential harmful effects of beliefs that may affect the research process, thereby educating the precision of the research study. The researcher must be attentive at all times, be aware of her views and the pre-existing beliefs of the study, set aside her prior knowledge and involvements to fully capture the experiences being told by the participants with an awareness (Taylor, 2015). In leading this qualitative study, I am interested in knowing how things happened and how the individuals interpret their experiences and find meaning in these experiences (Castillo & Clores, 2015; Taylor, 2015; Dimaggio & Lysaker, 2015).

It followed a chronology, and the researcher transcribed it. The writer wrote it in a practical, literary form using a qualitative approach. The researcher sought out data through interviews, family stories, journals, field notes, letters, autobiography, discussions, photos, and other artifacts. Through narrative reduction, the researcher simply reduced the realm from naturally perceived, with all biases

and judgment, to a realm of pure phenomena. Thus, the essence of the phenomena allowed the experience to surface. The participants' own words were used through data analysis and narrative description. The process of bracketing was employed through the study. To fully grasp the personal experiences and opinions, the phenomena was examined and scrutinized through the subjective eyes of the participants. It focused on the subjectivity of reality and continually pointing out the need to understand how humans view themselves. The world around them, and in the procedure, the researcher set aside the participants' experiences, identifying their essence (Creswell, 2017; Weger & Wagemann, 2015; Moser, A., & Korstjens, 2018).

Nonetheless, qualitative data sources included interviews, observations, and documents, emphasizing two ways of collecting the data if one wanted information about the lived knowledge of a phenomenon from another person. The traditional face-to-face interview and the written account of the incident could nonetheless be broken down quickly by statistical software. In this study, I used specific methodologies such as in-depth interviews and note-taking, giving much attention to the details and importance of the expressive content to open up an array of human experiences of the subjects involved in the process. In phenomenological research, the goal of a research interview is to describe the knowledge that a participant has experienced as feasible (Suter, 2015; Van Manen, 2016; Burt, E. 2020; Vaidya & Fellows, 2015).

Writers from numerous fields of Social Science studies claim it, including education. Several trends have influenced its development within the field of education. Three factors that influenced development were suggested by Cortazzi (2015): 1) an increased emphasis on teacher reflection; 2) more emphasis placed on teachers' knowledge. 3) educators seek to bring teachers' voices to the forefront by empowering teachers to talk about their experiences (Creswell, 2017; Prain & Hand, 2016; Cortazzi, 2015).

In this study, the researcher classified themes of the phenomena with five informants for in-depth interviews. According to Creswell (2017), in qualitative research such as narrative, it is recommended that for in-depth discussions, the researcher could interview 5 participants who had experienced the online class to achieve the goal. Nevertheless, sample sizes of 3 to 15 are adequate, provided that the participants gave detailed descriptions of the phenomena.

B. *Research Site and Purposeful Samples*

This kind of research captures the critical phenomenon of the students who have online classes in the Graduate School. Since this study has a particular meaning for the researcher as a student of the department, as a teacher in the public school, conducting this study augmented the focal point of the students.

I first identified the study participants and invited them to be part of this professional endeavor. The data were collected through an in-depth interview with all the five students having online classes, with the assistance of a

colleague who took notes during the interviews and served as one of our independent readers and analysts. I analyzed the gathered data from the audio recordings of the interviews. After that, we ended up with the same findings. I used the expertise of a professional data analyst for data analysis and interpretation and, after that, formed our insights.

Before the conduct of our study, the informants were identified. The identified informants were the students in the Graduate School of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges who are having their online classes. Purposive sampling was used to determine the participants based on a pre-determined criterion of the research study. In this case, they were 25 to 35 years old, Teacher I position, with three to ten years of teaching experience, first and the second year in the Graduate School studies, residing at different places in Region XII. I asked some referrals who could be the informants in this study. After contacting these prospects, I explained to them the drive of this study and they agreed to participate (Saunders, 2015).

To obtain excellence of qualitative research, considerable numbers of participants were selected, with five informants for the in-depth interview. The participants were already substantial and adequate to provide credible information and significant results and findings. With due consideration, Creswell (2016) suggested that the researcher may adopt 5 to 25 people who had been through the same phenomenon for an in-depth interview. It stated that in qualitative research, the researcher seeks knowledge by profoundly getting into the core of the experience, to look for the essence of a phenomenon, not “how many” people have experienced such phenomena. Furthermore, important figures in the development of Psychology such as Freud, Piaget, and Skinner built their theories based on research, including only a minimal number of subjects without relying on statistical analysis. (Creswell 2016; Englander 2015; Coleman, G. 2015; Richelle, 2016).

Before the actual interviews, as the researcher, I met some of the participants and informants, I had a little chat with them to gain their trust and confidence and develop camaraderie. It was also an opportunity to explain the purpose of the study, the importance of their role in consequence of the research study, address their questions and concerns, review some ethical considerations, and complete the consent forms. It was also an excellent chance to review the research questions with the participants. In this way, they would have the time to ponder their experiences before the actual in-depth interview. It is essential in qualitative research because establishing good rapport and empathy is critical to develop a positive relationship during in-depth interviews and, consequentially, gain in depth information, particularly on the issues where the participants have personal experiences.

I emphasized to them that they might encounter problems along the way. Still, the study's outcome would be very relevant in solving the negative influence of peers related to school attainment, which most people are not aware that the problem exists. It was emphasized that their

contribution to this study could make a difference in their lives as students having online classes.

C. Data Analyses Procedures

In the collection of data of the study, the following process was observed: in-depth interview with the study informants.

Before conducting the actual in-depth interview, I made clear that ethical considerations were observed correctly. I took these fundamental principles of ethical issues considered in any research study: consent and confidentiality (Bloom and Crabtree, 2016; Bricki and Green, 2017; Kaiser 2019; Mack, 2015). Since establishing rapport is essential in an interview, a preliminary meeting with the participants was made. I explained the details of the study, which made the participants understand that everything would be done in confidentiality. After gaining their trust, the participants were asked to sign a written consent. Rapport includes trust and respect for the interviewees and the information they shared. It is essential to provide them with a safe and comfortable environment for sharing their personal experiences. I assured them that the interview will be in a quiet room with privacy and away from distractions to comply with this requirement (Bloom 2016; Bricki and Green, 2017; Kaiser 2019; Mack, 2015).

An in-depth interview was undertaken to gather information from the study informants. An in-depth interview is a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspective on the research topic. It is more than just a method to understand the participants' experiences. It also goes deeper into their thoughts and behavior, listening to their inner voice to explore new issues. The researcher listened to the respondents' descriptions and then repetitively reviewed and considered the information as they were transcribed through the interview process. This strategy required time and space to draw portions of experienced and insights from the informants. The participants felt comfortable during the interview. It is essential to closely internalize what the informants would share, particularly on the problems encountered and the coping mechanisms they adapted.

In the process of in-depth interviews, the participants were asked if they can write their responses in as much as there was a survey questionnaire prepared in this special event. During the interviews, there might have been instances those specific details were inadequately expressed or missed out because the informants were inarticulate or they are not well-equipped to communicate with people. It might have created misconception and ambiguity. If necessary, questions should not be repeated (Bloom and Crabtree, 2016) and confirmed with these participants about their answers to the questions to grasp the information they provided. The researcher should be flexible and should adjust to the interviewees' moods in every instance. Note-taking was applied to ensure that all the data were documented thoroughly and no crucial details were missed (Fink, A. 2015; Gutsche Jr, 2015; Bensley & Lilienfeld, 2015; Bloom and Crabtree, 2016).

Relevant data were collected through audio recordings of interviews since audio or video recording improves the accuracy of the content shared in-depth discussion and the speaker's intonations with the participants in a private location either in their respective private schoolroom. This audio recording of the interviews was transcribed verbatim and were checked by the participants for confirmation if everything was taken. Confidentiality was observed in all sessions and the respondents, were consistently addressed with pseudonyms to conceal their real identity. To have a constant flow during the in-depth interview, the researcher prepared open-ended research questions as indicated in the interview guide and informed them that there could be additional questions aside from the interview guide. They might think of necessary insights to the study. This promoted trust and openness with my participants.

In summary, during the data collection, the principles of listening were observed. It gave freedom for the participants to unveil their feelings, especially those who were first year and second year with their peer group. Sympathy was shown to the participants when they shared their experiences. Of course, during their revelation, some issues were clarified. It was done in a good way so that when it is being asked again, it will be done to win the trust I desired.

The participants were asked to sign in the certificate of consent that all the equipment like audio-tapes will be used in the study with the assurance that the details in the interview will be held in its highest level of confidentiality. The researcher strengthened the participant's trust and confidence. All the recorded tapes were played to determine their answers to the questions asked. They were asked if they wish to delete any details for their recorded answers. Even the notes recorded were shown to them for scrutiny and affirmation.

With all the confidence and trust that focused on the field of interest (telling the story), equipped with the essential knowledge and skills in conducting interviews, group discussions, and note-taking, I remain to be objective. I hoped that conducting this research would be a success. The participants were expected to cooperate and offer their full support in this endeavor with respect afforded to them.

D. Ethical Considerations

I took this kind of research to capture the critical narrative of undergraduate students experiencing online classes. Since this study has a personal sense to me, being a teacher in a public school. I conducted this study augmented the focal point of online class students to attain their voices and freedom more meaningful on the positive and negative influences of their peers.

As a researcher, I first identified the study participants and invited them to be part of this professional endeavor. I collected the data by having in-depth interviews with all the five respondents of online class students. I conducted the interviews, with the assistance of a colleague who took notes during the interviews and served as one of our self-governing readers and analysts. I also asked for the service

from another independent reader and analyst. I analyzed the gathered data from the audio recordings of the interviews. After that, I ended up with the same findings. I used the expertise of a professional data analyst for data analysis and interpretation and, after that, formed our insights.

In every data gathered, the analysis followed. I tried to break down all the information collected to understand better every element that would be placed in its respective order to explain its meaning. As pointed out, the data analysis in a research study involves summarizing the mass of data collected and presenting the results to communicate the essential features. Data were analyzed using a method that includes data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification. Qualitative content analysis is any qualitative material attempting to identify core consistencies and meanings (La Porte, 2015; Neale, 2016).

E. Methods of Validation

A technique called participant validation may also be used to assess the validity of qualitative research. This technique includes testing initial results with the participants to see if they still ring true. Although the study has been interpreted and shortened, the participants must still recognize the results as authentic and, at this phase, may even be able to refine their understanding.

To establish validity is to actively seek other explanations to what appear to be the research results. I would be able to exclude different scenarios, to strengthen the validity of the findings. Related to this technique is requesting queries in an inverse format. While the techniques to establish validity in qualitative research may seem less real and defined than in some of the other scientific disciplines, robust research techniques will, indeed assure an appropriate level of validity in qualitative research.

Data from transcriptions were abstracted, vital data were deleted, and the content is transformed into an easily readable stuff. This pairing and shelving of data are often termed thematic analysis, sorting, and categorizing. With data reduction, a professional data analyst employed the expertise for data analysis. The process will help me manage and handle the data, particularly with the sorting and organizing large volumes of qualitative data, retrieving, and locating words and phrases. The data were consolidated and manageable after being sorted and categorized (Chen, Hoople, Ledwith, Burlingame, Bush, & Scott, 2020; Loebbecke & Picot, 2015; Luo & Timothy, 2017).

Drawing conclusion and verification are the last steps of qualitative analysis. It involved going back to consider what the analyzed data mean and assessing their aftermaths for the questions at pointer while verification, integrally linked to conclusion drawing, compulsory revisiting the data as many times as essential to cross-check or confirm these emergent conclusions. At this point, no definite judgments were made, but rather, the data speak for themselves by the emergence of conceptual groups and descriptive themes. These themes were usually implanted in constructing unified ideas that make sense.

If the findings of the different investigators arrive at the same conclusion, then the researcher was confident that the result of the research study was reliable. Many different interpretations were considered before the researcher formed a rational argument in the most obvious way possible so that others could judge the validity of the study. The researcher assessed what data to include and exclude while reading the report. The written performance was clear, precise, correct identifying which information was a factual description or plain personal view of the researcher. An exciting and readable report provides sufficient explanation to allow the reader to understand the basis for an interpretation necessary to enable the reader to understand the description (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018; Siregar & Lisma, 2020; Denecke & Deng, 2015).

Therefore, in the data analysis, the consideration is in the particular experience that focuses on and is interested in peer relationships' influence on school success. The gathered information from the participants through in-depth interview, made it more comprehensive using group discussions and note-taking. The common perceptions were identified through expert consultants' help with the participants' approval of the texts or explanations.

In other words, as relived in the participants' minds, their experiences, which were tape-recorded during the interview sessions, were searched through each subject, especially their relevant statements appeared particularly meaningful to the participants in describing their experiences about the phenomenon of interest. Then, the researcher clustered these statements into themes. These were the aspects of the participants' experiences they have in common. They described the fundamental features of the knowledge that have been told by most of the participants in the study.

Lastly, the data analysis investigated the essential structure of the phenomenon about the dynamics of peer groups that influence the school success by interviewing the participants who had experienced this phenomenon. In addition, clarity of issues was enhanced using the focused group discussions and notes. Then, relevant statements were extracted and then clustered into themes. The themes integrate into a narrative description of the phenomenon. These things were consulted with the other experts to help sort out ideas with the final agreement of each participant.

F. Role of the Researcher and Potential Ethical Issues

I took this kind of research to capture the critical story of the Graduate School students who have an online classis in Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges. This study has a personal significance to me as a student of this college and a public-school teacher. The main focus of this research is to get the opinions of the participants and be heard and to better understand their peers' positive and negative influences.

As a researcher, I first identified the study participants and invited them to be part of this professional endeavor. I collected the data by having in-depth interviews with all the five students who have online classes. I conducted this

interview with the assistance of a colleague who took notes during the interviews and served as one of our independent readers and analysts. I also asked for the service from another independent reader and analyst. I analyzed the gathered data from the audio recordings of the interviews. After that, I ended up with the same findings. I used the expertise of a professional data analyst for data analysis and interpretation and, after that, formed our insights.

III. FINDINGS

This chapter presents the experiences of the study participants, their insights and discernment, and the concepts that emerged from the information gleaned through in-depth interviews and focused group discussions.

There are four parts presented in this chapter. Part 1 reveals the information about the participants of this study. Part 2 encompasses the data analysis and the categorization of the emergent themes developed from the result of the interviews. Part 3 deals with the general, typical, and variant responses to the in-depth interview questions. Part 4 summarizes the informants' and participants' responses.

A. Participants

Key informants. There were five critical participants in this study for an in-depth interview, who were all students of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial College – Graduate School Department. For confidentiality, the participants were given pseudonyms. In this study, there were five main informants, whose ages ranged from 25 to 35, Teacher I position, three to ten years of teaching experiences, the second year in Graduate School, and reside at the different places of Region XII.

Through the purposive sampling method as suggested by Mack et al. (2015), I was able to find more referrals and recommendations made by them. Through the help of the Graduate School office, data and information collection became manageable. The association with my colleagues helped me gain their trust, which is necessary in collecting personal data and in sharing their experiences with peer influence dynamics. Though some of them were anxious at first, they eventually felt comfortable with my assurance of confidentiality. They were very cooperative in answering each of my interview questions. Some of them felt relaxed in answering the interview, some were interested, and some thru their facial expressions, I could infer that they were happy with their friends (Mack et al. 2015; Zambrana, Ray, Espino, Castro, Douthirt Cohen & Eliason, 2015; Liu, Luo, Haase, Guo, Wang, Liu & Yang, 2020; Altun, S. 2015).

The interview took place in different places depending on the participants' preference, in the quiet area where they were assigned. I used a cellular phone as a recorder, one laptop, and one camera, and my notebook to write down important notes and observations during the interview. I asked an assistance of an Information Technology expert to assist me for the note-taking, as recommended by Speziale and Carpenter (2017), using more than one person to collect the data, thereby increasing its reliability (Gerber, Hayes & Bryant, 2019; Filipan, Boes, De Coensel, Lavandier,

Delaitre, Domitrović & Botteldooren, 2017; Speziale & Carpenter, 2017).

B. Individual Profiles

a) Participant 1

29 years old, a second-year Graduate School student of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges, taking Masters of Arts major in Educational Management. She has been in the service in the Department of Education for five years. She was first influenced by her colleagues to take a master's degree and she decided to enroll. She is now in her second-year, and currently has an online class. She was assigned in one of the remote areas of Glan, Sarangani Province where the internet connection was hard to find.

b) Participant 2

She is 34 years old, second-year taking up Master of Arts major in Educational Management at Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges. She served the Department of Education for ten years and was not able to get promoted in her ten years in the service. That is why she decided to take a master's degree since it is in online class. She is married and has two children. She is a working mother and at the same time she was taking her master's degree because she was encouraged by her husband so that she will be able to get a promotion.

c) Participant 3

She is 31 years old, a second-year taking a Master of Arts major in Educational Management at Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges. She has been in the Department of Education for five years now. She decided to enroll in a master's degree due to the influence of peers and for promotion in the future. She is also a teacher leader who wants to lead her colleagues to have a good future in the Department of Education. She likes to be a model to everybody that every teacher should be well equipped in her profession.

d) Participant 4

She is 35 years old, a second-year student of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges. She is taking Master of Arts major in Educational Management. She works in the Department of Education for five years and is still in the Teacher one position. She likes to get promoted and become a school head someday. She wants to learn more about the duties and responsibilities of a school head because she likes to become one.

e) Participant 5

She is 28 years old, a second-year student of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges taking a Master of Arts major in Educational Management. She has been working for the Department of Education for five years. Because it inspired her, the participant chose to pursue a master's degree.

C. Categorization of Data

When the in-depth interview was accomplished, the audio-tape recordings were immediately transcribed and translated into English (for those interviews in vernacular). Three steps were undertaken during the data analysis, which include data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification. In addition, qualitative content analysis is any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that receipts a large amount of qualitative material and attempts to classify core consistencies and meanings (Clark, Birkhead, Fernandez, & Egger, 2017; Zhang and Wildemuth, 2017; Prasad, 2019).

Information reduction is the abstraction of data from the transcripts, deleting unimportant data and transforming it into an understandable material, easily understood by many. This pairing and sieving of data are often termed thematic analysis, sorting, and categorizing. Through data reduction, particularly with sorting and organizing a large volume of qualitative data, retrieving and finding words and phrases, the data came out consolidated, manageable, and easier to handle after being sorted and categorized. We also sought the help of an expert in data analysis (Namey et al., 2017; Paul 2006; Suter 2015; Barbaso, Cajés, Diocson & Daclan, 2016).

The second step was data display which is the organization of data and showing it in the form of graphic organizers such as a table or matrix that would enable the viewer to draw his conclusion. It is one step outside data reduction, showing the data in an arranged and orderly manner, clear presentation of the interrelationship of bits of information readily available to the viewer. At this stage, other higher-order categories came out beyond those discovered during the first step of data reduction (Namey et al., 2017; Paul 2016; Suter 2015).

Drawing conclusion drawing and verification are the last steps in the quantitative analysis. It involves going back to consider what the analyzed data mean and to assess their aftermaths for the questions at hand while confirmation, integrally linked to conclusion drawing, compulsory revisiting the data as many times as essential to cross-check or verify these emergent conclusions. At this point, no definitive judgments were complete, but rather, the information was allowed to speak for itself by the emergence of conceptual groups and descriptive themes. These themes are implanted in the structure of interconnected ideas that make sense. The researcher then interpreted the conceptual framework concerning the related literature on the subject to explain, with theory the narrative story (Angus, & Hassani-Mahmooei, 2015; Paul, 2016; McHoul, McHoul & Grace, 2015; Winter, 2015).

I considered many different interpretations and formed a rational argument. When evaluating the report, I thought about what data to include and what information to discard. The interpretation was written clearly, precisely, and correctly identifying which data is the researcher's factual description or plain personal view. An exciting and readable report provides sufficient illumination to allow the reader to understand the basis for an interpretation. The interpretation

is necessary to enable the reader to understand the description” (Griffiths & McLeod, 2008; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2017).

D. Analysis of the Themes

- How do the participants begin the journey in online classes?

The researcher facilitated the generation of comprehensive discussion for the above research problem. The following questions were asked during the in-depth interviews: What did you do at the beginning of the class? What are gadgets did you use in the online course? How do you prepare for your online class? What are the preparations you make before the start of your online class?

The themes aided in determining which core ideas to report. The emergent themes are described as Mindfulness in Embracing the New Normal.

Cluster Themes	Emergent Themes
I. Beginning the Journey in Online Classes	
A. Mindfulness in Embracing New Normal	
1. Have internet connection	1. Mindfulness
2. Wake up early	
3. Have laptop and cell phones	
4. Know how to use different gadgets	2. Embracing the new normal
5. In line yourself in different technology	
6. Anticipate the things that will be going Unexpected to happen Interruptions	3. Weary of
7. Exhausted and Weary	

Table 1: The participants beginning the journey in online class

E. Mindfulness

The first cluster theme under beginning the journey in online class is mindfulness. It has emergent themes based on the responses, categorized as mindfulness in embracing the new normal. Mindfulness is present when they are in an online class. Most of the critical respondents describe their experiences as mindful because they need to prepare the things they need for the online course.

The quality or rationale of being aware of something is viewed from the lens of Creswell (2017). Mindfulness interventions aim to foster more significant attention to and awareness of present moment experience. Moreover, according to the Siegel (2019) throughout history, human existences have sought to discover the causes of sorrow and the means to ease it. Sooner or later, we all ask similar questions: Why am I not feeling better? What can I do about it? Researchers who inhabited a physical body inevitably reveal us to pain. Thus, Baer (2013) mindfulness involves intentionally bringing one’s attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present instant and is often taught through various meditation exercises (Creswell, 2017, Siegel, 2019, Baer, 2013).

Participant 4 recalled that you should know how to manage your time and sacrifice the usual things before.

You must have your internet connections and gadgets, you should have a time management, sacrifice my usual doing. You should be emotionally ready when taking class. (Participant 4, Line No. 408 – 410).

Participant 2 narrated the preparation shedid in her online class.

Every time I have an online class, I wake up early since I have to walk distantly to reach the place that has an internet connection bringing my lunch box and water. Most importantly the gadgets or things to be needed in my online classes. (Participant 2, Line No. 1 3 5 – 1 3 8)

Participant 3 mentioned that she needs a laptop and cell phone in her online class.

Laptop and cell phones, laptop to present my report or presentation. The cell phone will be used for chatting classmates. (Participant 3, Line No. 287 – 288).

F. Embracing the New Normal

The second cluster theme under beginning the journey in online class is embracing the new normal. It has emergent themes based on the responses, categorized as mindful in welcoming the new normal.

Embracing the new normal is adjusting to the new normal in your way. The situation is inexact, and it is okay to yield the steps you need to adopt the new way of life. Life adjustments can be complicated and can bring on various experiences and emotions. Making the change to a new normal requires agility and staying open-minded. COVID-19 has essentially changed how we live, work, and learn. It affects each feature of our daily lives, and this new normal seemed to have changed almost immediately. We cannot resolve our difficulties with the same rationale, I used to create them. Embracing the connected upside to this knowledge scarcity will help the community think about applying education in the new normal (Buheji, 2020; Davison, Camões-Costa & Clark, 2019; Huffington, 2016).

Participant 5 expressed that he was knowledgeable on the use of the new technology.

As a 21st century teacher I already know how to use different gadgets. (Participant 5, Line No. 565 – 566)

Participant 4 recalled his experiences that he should be in line with the new technology.

You have to inline yourself in where you supposed to be in a different way... Go with what are the new technology has to offer. (Participant 4, Line No. 433 – 434)

G. Weary of Unexpected Interruptions

The third cluster theme under the beginning of the journey in online class is wary of unexpected interruptions. It has emergent themes based on the responses, categorized as mindfulness in embracing the new normal. There were interruptions in the class especially when the internet connection lag in the middle of the presentations.

The sudden switch from classes to screens leaves many learners the fear of lagging. These adolescents and early adults are trying their best to cope with this sudden change in their lives, and they share changes stresses due to this pandemic. Inevitably, students in the universities and colleges across the world face unexpected challenges. In addition, the students experienced uncertainty and sudden disruption (Camacho-Zuñiga, 2021; Ehrenreich, 2020; Khattar, 2020).

Participant 5 mentioned that she needs to adjust and anticipate what would happen while the online class is on.

I hate it but I need to adjust. I need to anticipate the things that will going to happen in our class. (Participant 5, Line No. 573 – 574).

Participant 1 said it was exhausting, especially when the connection was interrupted.

Exhausted and irritated because you will be left behind in my class. Especially during the schedule presentation and report. Participant 1, Line No. 36 – 37).

In general, the graduate school students taking an online class were reminded at the start of their journey that they needed to schedule their time and should have the necessary gadgets for their classes. To overcome the epidemic, they must adopt the new mode of learning, embracing the new normal. They become tired of being interrupted unexpectedly due to a weak internet signal in their area that makes them wary of unexpected internet interruptions, especially during their presentation of reports.

• How do the participants describe their experiences during their online class?

To find out the experiences and the challenges of Graduate School students on their online class as the respondents of this study, the following questions were asked during the in-depth interviews: How do you cope with the loss of internet connectivity during your session? How do you manage the loss of internet connectivity during your session? How do your classmates help you in your online class?

The theme was determined as follow: Teamwork.

Cluster Themes	Emergent Themes
II. Describe their Experiences in Online Class	
A. Teamwork	
1. Work together as one	1. Synergy
2. Collaborate	
4. Sharing of ideas communication	2. Open
5. Sending assignments and activities	

Table 2: The participants describe their experiences in online class

H. Synergy

The first cluster theme under the experiences in online classes is synergy. It has emergent themes based on the responses, categorized as teamwork. Most graduate school students who have online classes work together with their classmates. The interaction or assistance of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents produce a combined effect which is more important than the sum of their particular products. It is posited that both individual and class-level are relevant to understanding how online learning occurs, a true community of inquiry, the actions of many members together create a synergy. They made a synergy when leadership education is adapted to the online environment and described effective implementation strategies for instructors (Pezzani, Salehi, Vitalini, Iriti, Zuñiga, Sharifi-Rad & Martins, 2019; Rubin, 2015; Cini, 2015).

Participant 4 shared his ideas about their collaboration with their classmates.

We work together as one. We help each other in reminding them when we are not yet done with our task in a certain subjects. We can all deliver everything we have our throughout gc. There is a professor that are not particular in attendance. (Participant 4, Line No. 558 – 561).

Participant 2 said that they are actively participating.

We work together with my classmates actively and collaboratively. (Participant 2, Line No. 190)

I. Open Communication

The second cluster theme under the experiences in an online class is open communication. It has emergent themes based on the responses categorized as teamwork. Open communication is essential. It allows you to be more engaged. Effective communication will lead everyone to be on the goal, a personal value and unique definition of success at any organization. Open communication is related to job satisfaction, organizational performance, and role clarity. The rationale was based on the idea that open communication is one-dimensional phenomenon (Caron & Light, 2016; Quirke, 2017; van Hoorn, 2017).

Participant 1 said that they are sharing ideas.
Sharing of ideas, answers and updates (Participant 1, Line No. 75).

Participant 4 said that they are helping each other.

My classmates send me links, assignments and other activity of task that we need to be accomplished. (Participant 4, Line No. 485 – 486)

Participant 3 said that they are interacting.

Interactions with my classmates are important because through them you will be updated of the happenings. They can help you in your assignments and also if your connection is not good they are willing to give you screenshots of the topic being discussed, and during reporting they are willing to present your presentation if our connection is not stable. (Participant 3, Line 318 320).

Generally speaking, the participants describe their experience in an online class as that they rely on their classmates for help with their tasks, resulting in a sense of synergy in their classes. They maintain open lines of the message with their peers and lecturers, particularly during discussions.

• How do the participants define their successful stories in online classes?

To find out the success stories of graduate school students in an online class, the participants of this study come up with themes. The themes are as Workable Setting. It has three emergent themes: challenging times, well-informed, and urges to learn more.

Cluster Themes	Emergent Themes
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III. Define their Successful Stories in Online Classes

A. Workable setting

1. Can adjust things as time goes by
2. It is normal to struggle and can overcome it as days go by
3. I learned from my professors and classmates
4. It helps me add my knowledge and expertise
5. It bridges me to continue my dreams
6. Develop my professional group

1. Challenging times
2. Well - informed
3. Urges to learn more

Table 3: The participants define their success stories in online classes

J. Challenging Times

The first cluster theme under the successful stories in an online class is challenging times. It has emergent themes, categorized as workable based on the responses. It is normal to struggle as long as it moves towards your dreams. The Real Challenge is Motivation from a practical standpoint, building a homepage is an easy and quick task for a teacher to include at the beginning of an online class. Students need

pictures of themselves and some period to reflect on their welfares and backgrounds (Beck & Beck-Gershon, 2018; Bennett, 2018).

Participant 5 said that she would adjust to a new usual way of learning as time goes by.

Keep going because as times goes by you can adjust the things that what you are doing. (Participant 5, Line No. 569 – 570).

Participant 4 said that it is normal to struggle today with time. It goes by, and she will overcome it.

Do not wait for tomorrow what you can do today. It is normal that they struggle but they will just overcome it as days goes by. (Participant 4, Line No. 526 – 527)

K. Well – Informed

The second cluster theme under the successful stories in online classes is well-informed. It has emergent themes, categorized as workable based on the responses.

They were having or showing much knowledge about a wide range of subjects or about one particular issue. Therefore, for these lower-achieving students, any efforts on the part of the instructors to give more information about the lessons is needed (Meyer, Kamens & Benavot, 2017; Knoblauch & Chase, 2015; Svanum, 2016).

Participant 1 said that it is good to learn from my professors and classmates.

I can enjoy in the same time you can learn from your professors and classmates and improve your personality because I'm trying my best to do good at all time. (Participant 1, Line No. 111 – 113).

Participant 3 said that it helped add the knowledge she needed to know about the educational system.

It helped me to add my knowledge and expertise to the things that I wanted to know. (Participant 3, Line No. 389 – 390)

L. Urges to Learn More

The third cluster theme under the successful stories in online class urged the students to learn more. It has emergent themes based on the responses categorized as the workable setting. Urges to learn more is solid with—a strong will, especially difficult or possible to control. Not to make blanket statements about millennial persevere teachers, but rather to understand these more fully. Find out what their students want to know more about their own experiences and optimism to learn (Victor, Scott, Stepp & Goldstein, 2019; Clark & Byrnes, 2015).

Participant 2 said that she has a strong will to continue her study.

It bridge me to continue my dreams and plan to become a doctor of education. (Participant 2, Line No. 208–209)

Participant 4 said that she would continue to study to develop herself.

Through online class my masters degree urges me to continue develop my professional growth. (Participant 4, Line No. 482 – 483)

Overall, Graduate School students who are having online classes shared that it is exhausting and challenging to adjust to their new environment, but they prefer to continue their studies. They seek assistance from their classmates, who are continuously updated on their various activities. They stayed true to their aspirations since they wanted to learn and excel in their chosen field.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the findings, implications for practice, and future research based on the themes developed during the data analysis. This study has indicated its purpose of examining and narrating the experiences of graduate school students in online classes. It aims to go deeper into bringing about the feelings and insights of the participants to the surface and determine what concepts may be gleaned from the findings.

Considering the nature of this study, I adopted and employed the qualitative research method, precisely the narrative approach, since it explains the meaning and structures. Also, the essence of the lived experiences of a person or group of people around a specific phenomenon is through focusing on a concrete experiential account grounded in everyday life (Christensen, Burke and Turner 2015; Langdrige 2017). The study emergence of different themes concerning the three main questions for the phenomenon was made possible through the interviews conducted. Five graduate school students were interviewed and asked to share their good and bad experiences in an online class. The participants were chosen based on some requirements, such as they must be graduate school students of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges who are having an online course (Christensen, Burke and Turner 2015; Langdrige 2017).

A. Major Findings

After the in-depth interviews of the participants on their implementation of Positive discipline.

a) The Beginning Experience of Graduate School Students in Online Class

Mindfulness in Embracing the New Normal. The quality or state of being aware of something. It was viewed from the lens of Creswell (2017). Mindfulness interventions aim to foster more significant attention to and awareness of present moment experience. Moreover, studies of Siegel (2019) throughout history, human beings have sought

to discover the causes of suffering (Cresswell, 2017, Siegel, 2019).

It means to alleviate it. Sooner or later, we all ask similar questions: “Why am I not feeling better? What can I do about it? Living a physical body inevitably exposes us to pain. Thus, mindfulness involves intentionally bringing attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment and taught through various meditation exercises (Grossman, 2015; Creswell, 2017; Siegel 2019; Baer, 2015).

Considering the case of participant 4, she needs to attend her online class every Saturday. Participant 2 narrated the preparation she did in her online class that she needed to wake up early to prepare food and water for her lunch, because she needs to walk for 30 minutes, to reach the area where there is an internet connection or mobile signal.

Similarly, Devine mentioned that she needs a laptop and cell phone in her online class to be used in her presentation and reports. Life adjustments can be tricky and transport a wide range of experiences and emotions. Making the change to a new normal education requires agility and stay open-minded. COVID-19 has altered our way of life, work, and education. It affects each feature of our daily lives, and this new normal seemed to have changed almost overnight. “We cannot solve our problems with the similar thinking we used to do.” Embracing the connected upside to this knowledge scarcity will help the community think about applying education in the new normal and perhaps. Consider the case of participant 4, that she is knowledgeable of the latest technology. Participant 3 recalled her experiences that she should be adept with the new technology (Davison, Camões-Costa & Clark, 2019; Pattnaik & Jena, 2020; Ardebili, Naser Bakht, Bernstein, Alazmani-Noodeh, Hakimi, & Ranjbar, 2021; Buheji, 2020).

Slow Internet connections or limited access from homes in rural zones can contribute to pupils dropping behind intellectually. Enlightening setbacks can have significant impacts on academic achievement. These cases were reinforced by the results of the study. Participant 3 embraces online education: exploring options for success and beginning to take a back seat to the new normal. Risk-taking behavior is a consistent trait in online education, which is true to all students. Participant 3 said that she encountered a poor internet connection, which interrupted during her presentation of her report (Robinson, 2017).

The sudden switch from classes to screens leaves many learners the fear of lagging. These young adults are trying their best to cope with the sudden changes in their lives, and there a lot of changes that cause stress due the pandemic.

Inevitably, students in universities and colleges across the world face unexpected challenges. In addition, the students experienced uncertainty and sudden disruption. The case of participant 5 mentioned that she needed to adjust and anticipate the things that would happen while the online class is ongoing. Participant 1 said that it was exhausting, especially when the connection was interrupted (Ehrenreich, 2020; Khattar, 2020; Camacho-Zuñiga, 2021; Milton, Martin, & Melham, 2016).

b) The Middle Experience of Graduate School Students on Online Class

Teamwork. The interaction or assistance of two or more governments, materials, or other agents produces a combined result more significant than the sum of their particular products. It posits that both individuals and class-level are relevant to understand how online learning occurs, a true community of inquiry, the actions of many members together create a synergy. The synergy can develop when leadership in education is adapted to the online environment and describes effective implementation strategies for instructors. Participant 3 said they share ideas and collaborate with their peers and classmates. Participant 5 said that they actively participate and work together with their classmates (Pezzani, Salehi, Vitalini, Iriti, Zuñiga, Sharifi-Rad & Martins, 2019; Rubin, 2015; Cini, 2015)

The combined action of a group of persons is effective and efficient. Successful performance often involves interaction among several individuals who must work as a team. A critical feature of units is that individuals must coordinate their decisions and activities by sharing information and resources to attain shared goals. The study of teamwork has fragmented through the years, but the findings are practically not used. This article argues that it is likely to boil down what researchers know about teamwork into five core components that the authors submit as the “Big Five” in partnership. The core components of cooperation include team leadership, mutual performance monitoring, backup behavior, adaptability, and team orientation (Salas, 2015; Matijević, Žakula, Korićanac, Radoičić, Liang, Mi & Nešić, 2021; Dickinson, 2017).

Participant 2 mentioned that they are helping each other by sharing their insights. They shared assignments, ideas and gave information about the lessons to help each other. Participant 5 expressed that through interaction and collaboration are ways to help their classmates. They help each other in answering questions, making activities and requirements. DeVine said that she participated in an online class and chatted their classmates.

Open communication allows you to be more engaged. Effective communication will lead everyone to be on the same goal, a personal value and unique definition of success at any organization.

Open communication is related to job satisfaction, organizational performance, and role clarity. This logic was on the assumption that open communication is one-dimensional construct. Participant 2 said they are sharing ideas and updating their classmates about the news, especially in their area where there is no network coverage. In the same manner, Participant 4 said they help each other with their assignments and other school requirements.

c) The Successful stories of Graduate School Students in Online Class

Workable Setting. Capable of or suitable for the work. Learning at your own pace helps you feel better. The engaged teacher who has constructed a real and workable course is perceived to most students as a variable in online learning. Participant 2 said that online class is convenient because you can do your style anytime and anywhere. Participant 1 confirms that online course is not time-consuming (Gilbert, 2015; La Pointe, 2018).

It is normal to struggle as long as it moves towards your dreams. The Real Challenge Is Motivation. From a practical standpoint, building a homepage is an easy and quick task for a teacher to include at the commencement of an online class. Students need pictures of them and time to reflect on their welfares and circumstances. Participant 5 said that she would adjust to a new usual way of learning as time goes by. Participant 2 also concluded that it is normal to struggle today. As time goes by, he will overcome it (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2018; Bennett, 2008).

I was showing much knowledge about a wide range of subjects or about one particular issue. Therefore, for these lower-achieving students, any effort on the part of instructors to give more information about the lessons is needed. Participant 1 said that it is good to learn from her professors and classmates. Participant 5 noted that it helped add the knowledge she needed to know about the educational system (Meyer, Kamens & Benavot, 2017, Knoblauch & Chase, 2015; Svanum, 2016).

A strong wish, especially the difficult or impossible to control, is not to make blanket statements about millennial persevere teachers but rather to understand these more fully. They seldom find out what their students want to know more about their own experiences and what they hope to learn (Clark & Byrnes, 2015).

Participant 2 said that she has a strong will to continue her study because she wanted to become a doctor of education. Participant 4 said that he would continue to study to develop himself through studying master’s degree.

B. Comparison of Findings with Existing Studies

This study showed that the participants' experiences are related to the students' experiences in Georgia. COVID-19 infection was detected, rising to 211 local and more than 1.5 million infection cases worldwide by April 8, 2020. Georgia became one of 188 universal countries that have suspended the education process. The paper studies the country's capacities and population to continue the education process at schools in the online form of distance learning which reviews the different available platforms. The study has those used by the government's support, such as online portal, TV School, and Microsoft teams for public schools. Online education can also use tools such as Zoom, Slack, and Google Meet platform and live communication (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020; Ghosh, Bernstein & Mersha, 2020).

In the study of Palvia et al. (2018), E-education or online education is changing the way we approach teaching and learning. Changes in education delivery models have been rapid and transformational. As institutions worldwide adapt to these changes, a dynamic education landscape has generated immense interest among the researchers, educators, administrators, policymakers, publishers, and businesses (Palvia, Aeron, Gupta, Mahapatra, Parida, Rosner & Sindhi, 2018).

According to research, having online classes in the Philippines is difficult due to weak internet connectivity. The majority of these issues arise in places with no network connectivity. Research on e-learning has addressed the challenges of creating and behind participatory environments. The growth of massive open online courses calls for new methods beyond the existing research on participatory environments in institutionally defined classes. Academic success among nontraditional students appears to be correlated with several biological, psychological, and social factors. Nontraditional students are less likely to complete their degree programs and have lower attrition rates than traditional students. The institution should have a focused approach for professional development for online faculty (Paulin & Haythornthwaite, 2016; Eppler, Carsen-Plentl, & Harju, 2000; Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2015; Darby & Lang, 2019).

Online learning seems convenient, allowing students to study at their own pace and time. Students reported that online knowledge enabled them to hold a higher level of accountability for their knowledge and learn independently. Not all experiences were positive. A significant hindrance to online learning was the inadequate opportunity for human communication, which was deemed necessary for establishing peer support and emerging in-depth group discussions on the subject matter. These findings offer a guide for further development and development in online teaching and knowledge methodologies.

C. Limitations

The study participants are the graduate school students of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges who have an online class. It is based on the concept of Creswell (2015) that the participants are involved in a qualitative study. Moreover, this study is only limited to students who have an online class during the pandemic.

D. Implications for Future Practice

Based on the findings, the following implications are offered for practice:

Mindfulness in Embracing the New Normal. The excellence or state of being conscious or aware of somewhat. It's a pretty straightforward word. It suggests that you mindfully attend to what's happening and what you're doing. That might seem trivial, except for the annoying fact that we so often veer from the substance at hand. Our mind takes flight, we lose touch with our body, and pretty soon, we're engrossed in obsessive thoughts about somewhat that just happened about the future. That makes us anxious. Before the online class, they should prepare everything they like water and food as well as their gadgets.

Slow Internet connections or incomplete access from homes in rural areas can contribute to students falling behind academically. Educational setbacks can have significant effects on academic success. The poor internet connection in the Philippines is now a dilemma because the students in online classes badly need good internet connectivity.

The sudden switch from classes to screens leaves many learners the fear of lagging. The case of Participant 5 mentioned that she needed to adjust and anticipate the things that would happen while the online class is ongoing. Participant 1 said it was exhausting, especially when the connection was interrupted.

It is normal to struggle as long as it moves towards your dreams. The Real Challenge Is Motivation from an applied position; building a homepage is an easy and quick assignment for an instructor at the beginning of an online class. Students need pictures of themselves and some periods to reflect on their interests and backgrounds (Bennett, 2018).

Life adjustments can be tricky and transport a wide range of experiences and feelings. Creating the transition to a new normal requires agility and stay open-minded. COVID-19 has essentially changed how we live, work, and learn. It affects each feature of our daily lives, and this new normal seemed to have changed almost overnight. We cannot resolve our difficulties with the same thinking we used to create them. Embracing the connected upside to this knowledge scarcity will help the community think about applying education in the new normal (Buheji, 2020).

Team work. The combined action of a collection of people, particularly when effective and efficient. Participant 2 mentioned that they are helping each other by sharing their insights. They were sharing assignments, ideas and giving information about the lessons to help each other. Participant

5 expressed her feeling that interaction and collaboration are ways to help their classmates by answering questions, making activities and requirements. Participant 4 said they are sharing ideas and collaborating with their peers and classmates. Participant 2 said that they actively participate and work together with their classmates.

Workable Setting. Capable of or suitable for the work. Learning at your own pace helps you feel better. The engaged teacher who has constructed a real and workable course is perceived to most students as a variable in online learning. School requires hard work to be successful. Students can be easily unfocused and often have trouble in traditional school settings. Understanding these incapacities makes it possible to find workable solutions, especially in the new learning platform that requires an online environment. You don't need to travel as long as you have an internet connection in your area, you can attend your class (La Pointe, 2018).

E. Overall Significance of the Study

From the findings of the study, I concluded that the impact of online classes to the Graduate School students is shown to be diverse. It includes the challenges, adjustment to the new normal and the feeling of being unable to access in online courses due to inadequate internet connections. There is no network coverage, so some have to walk for thirty minutes to get a network connection, have eye fatigue from staring at computers and cell phones for long periods, and stress from interrupting calls, especially when the presentations or reports are given. These technical hitches vary among individuals because they adapt to the new average education. One of the participants thought to discontinue her study, while others developed adaptive behavior towards failing grades. Other repercussions of challenges are convenience, flexibility, bringing education right to your home, allowing students to attend classes from any site of their choice, and saving money for transportation costs, especially for students living in a far-flung area of Region XII. The challenges were either helpful or harmful in the participants' life. Moreover, the study revealed that the participants became submissive, diligent, hardworking, and completed their work on time to cope with their online classes.

Most importantly, this study reveals that although there is a difficulty in the internet connection in the Philippines, the five participants concluded if they will choose between face-to-face classes and online classes, they still prefer to have an online course due to its flexibility. Students can juggle their careers because they aren't tied down to a fixed schedule. They have reduced the costs of expenses because they don't need to travel for an hour or two to go to school. Most graduate school students reside outside General Santos City. They have a comfortable learning environment right in their homes.

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