

Online Learning Experiences During COVID-19 Pandemic: Preservice Teachers' Perception of Quality, Coping Mechanisms and Learning Satisfaction

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Abstract:- Online learning has played a crucial role during this pandemic. While adapting to the new changes, teachers and students need to be gauged and supported. The learners with a fixed mindset find it difficult to adapt, whereas those with a growth mindset quickly adjust to a new learning environment. This survey-correlational research study sought to determine the preservice teachers' learning experiences, perception of quality, coping mechanisms, and learning satisfaction in online learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The participants were the two hundred thirty-three (233) preservice teachers. Data were collected using the standardized coping mechanism questionnaire adopted from Carver, et al. (1989) and researcher-made learning experiences questionnaire, perceived quality questionnaire, and learning satisfaction questionnaire. The findings showed that the learning experiences in online learning were good. The perceived quality of online learning was high. The coping mechanism in online learning was high. The learning satisfaction in online learning was high. There were significant differences in the online learning experiences based on the perceived quality, coping mechanism, and learning satisfaction. There were significant relationships among online learning experiences, perceived quality, coping mechanisms, and learning satisfaction in online learning

Keywords:- Coping Mechanisms, COVID-19 Pandemic, Online Learning Experiences, Perception of Quality, Learning Satisfaction.

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced numerous educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities to cease in-person instruction and shift to online learning. This shift from traditional classroom teaching to online platforms presents a new experience for students and educators, necessitating adaptation with limited alternative options.

During this pandemic, online learning has been instrumental. As educators and students adjust to these changes, they require assessment and support through digital platforms. Learners with a fixed mindset often struggle with

adaptation, whereas those with a growth mindset tend to adjust more easily to new learning environments. In response, educational institutions have embraced the new normal in education, offering fresh learning opportunities.

A learning experience encompasses any form of interaction, course, program, or activity where learning happens. This can occur in conventional educational settings like schools and classrooms, or in unconventional settings such as outdoor environments or non-school locations. It involves traditional educational interactions, such as students learning from teachers, and nontraditional interactions, like learning through games and interactive software applications [1].

During this period of quarantine, online learning has emerged as the primary solution for ongoing education through innovative learning management systems [2,3]. It has enabled educators to adopt online methods for both teaching and evaluating students' coursework [4]. Many educational institutions are embracing and refining online learning to facilitate a new normal for students [5].

Various studies indicate that the majority of students enrolled in online courses express satisfaction with this mode of learning. However, learners' perceptions are influenced by several factors such as age, gender, computer literacy, and individual learning styles, which are crucial predictors of students' acceptance of technology [6,7]. There is a need for ongoing efforts from educators to effectively integrate pedagogy with technology to enhance student learning.

Online learning is intricately linked with new information technologies that significantly impact university studies [8]. The retention and academic performance of students are influenced by the quality of services provided by higher education institutions [9].

Perceived quality in online learning refers to the evaluation process that assesses the development and delivery of online courses and learning environments, emphasizing appropriate design and best practices to ensure quality instruction in a supportive manner [10]. While studies on the quality of online learning are increasing, few have explored it from the learner's perspective [11].

Perceived quality in distance education can be categorized into three main subcategories: active engagement and interaction, effective course design, and learner support [11]. Active engagement and interaction foster reflective and teamwork skills, addressing typical gaps in distance education. Effective course design involves educators guiding instructional strategies that align with course goals and objectives, with clear expectations for assignments, discussion boards, active participation, and collaborative projects [12].

As students navigate the transition to online learning, understanding effective coping mechanisms becomes crucial. Coping is defined as a process essential for managing stress, where individuals employ cognitive and behavioral efforts to address both external and internal stressors [13]. A coping mechanism refers to strategies or adaptations to environmental stress, chosen consciously or unconsciously, aimed at enhancing behavioral control or providing psychological comfort [14].

There are two primary methods of stress management: social support and dysfunctional coping strategies. Social support, such as seeking help from family and friends, naturally aids in stress management. Dysfunctional or avoidant coping strategies include emotional venting, behavioral disengagement, and mental detachment [15]. According to [16], academic factors are the leading cause of stress among students, followed by physical, social, and emotional factors. Students who experience lower stress levels and employ fewer avoidance coping strategies, while utilizing more approach-oriented coping strategies, tend to achieve better academic performance [17].

The concept of learning satisfaction in online education has evolved into a dynamic and intricate phenomenon. Learning satisfaction refers to an individual's feelings and attitudes toward the educational process and the perceived level of fulfillment related to their desire to learn [18]. Examining the factors influencing students' satisfaction and perceived learning outcomes, it is found that course structure, instructor feedback, self-motivation, learning style, interaction, and instructor facilitation significantly impact student satisfaction. However, they determined that only instructor feedback and learning style notably affect perceived learning outcomes. They also established that student satisfaction is a crucial predictor of learning outcomes [19].

This study was grounded in the "community of inquiry" model for online learning environments, initially developed by Garrison, Anderson & Archer. This model centers on three interconnected "presences": cognitive, social, and teaching while acknowledging their overlap and interrelationships. It supports the creation of active learning environments or communities in online and blended courses, fostering collaboration between instructors and students to exchange ideas, information, and opinions. This model of online learning introduces novel educational experiences for both students and educators, emphasizing social interaction as a

crucial aspect manifesting through discussions, blogs, wikis, and video conferencing [20].

The coping theory by Lazarus and Folkman was also pertinent to this study. According to this theory, individuals facing challenges first appraise them as either threatening or non-threatening, and secondarily assess whether they possess the necessary resources to effectively cope with the challenge. When feeling a lack of control or confidence in their ability to respond, individuals tend to employ emotion-focused coping strategies such as wishful thinking (e.g., hoping for change), distancing (e.g., trying to forget), or positive reappraisal (e.g., focusing on the bright side). Conversely, if individuals perceive they have sufficient resources, they typically engage in problem-focused coping strategies like analysis (e.g., analyzing the problem) or making a plan of action. The theory underscores that coping strategies are highly individualized, and influenced by personality traits and perceptual experiences [21].

The study was linked to the theory of learning satisfaction, which draws on principles from customer satisfaction theory originally proposed by Cardozo. Learning satisfaction refers to the overall impact of the teaching and learning processes experienced by students during their educational sessions. Moreover, satisfaction can be understood as a comparative assessment between expected outcomes and perceived educational services, leading to feelings of pleasure or displeasure. Additionally, the theory of learning satisfaction posits that students are consumers of educational products, affording them the right to choose and invest in their preferred learning institutions [22].

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study investigated the learning experiences, perceptions of quality, coping strategies, and satisfaction with online learning among pre-service teachers during the COVID-19 Pandemic for the academic year 2021-2022. Specifically, the study sought to address the following research questions:

- What is the level of pre-service teachers' online learning experiences in terms of time management, competencies, learning approaches, modes of learning, and acquired skills?
- What is the general level of perceived quality in online learning among pre-service teachers in relation to course design, active engagement and interaction, and learner support?
- What is the overall level of coping mechanisms in online learning among preservice teachers through emotion-focused coping, problem-focused coping, and avoidant coping strategies?
- What is the level of learning satisfaction in online learning among preservice teachers and in considering factors such as teaching quality, course materials (modules), technological support, attitudes and readiness, and assessment practices?

- Are there significant differences in online learning experiences among pre-service teachers based on perceived quality, coping mechanisms, and learning satisfaction?
- Are there significant relationships among pre-service teachers' learning experiences, perceived quality, coping mechanisms, and learning satisfaction in the context of online learning?

III. METHODOLOGY

This research utilized a survey-correlational approach involving 233 preservice teachers selected through stratified random sampling. The study employed Slovin’s formula to determine the sample size. Data collection included standardized questionnaires on coping mechanisms [18], along with researcher-developed surveys on learning experiences, perceived quality, and learning satisfaction. These instruments underwent validation and content review by an examining committee, with feedback incorporated to

refine them. Pilot testing followed validation, providing data for factor analysis, construct validation, and reliability testing using SPSS software. Independent variables comprised perceived quality, coping mechanisms, and learning satisfaction, while learning experiences in online education served as the dependent variable. Data analysis included descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (ANOVA, Pearson correlation coefficient), with a significance level (alpha) set at 0.05.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Level of Learning Experiences

The level of learning experiences is shown in Table 1. Data show that generally the level of learning experiences in online learning is good ($M = 3.87, SD = .48$). It also shows that the time management ($M = 3.78, SD = .70$), competencies ($M = 4.06, SD = .61$), learning approach ($M = 3.76, SD = .50$), modes of learning ($M = 3.91, SD = .51$), and acquired skills ($M = 3.86, SD = .59$) are good.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Learning Experiences in Online Learning

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Learning Experiences	3.87	Good	.48
Time Management	3.78	Good	.70
Competencies	4.06	Good	.61
Learning Approach	3.76	Good	.50
Modes of Learning	3.91	Good	.51
Acquired Skills	3.86	Good	.59

Note Interval. 4.21–5.00: Very High, 3.41–4.20: High, 2.61–3.40: Moderate, 1.81–2.60: Low, and 1.00–1.80: Very Low

The online learning experiences of preservice teachers are good. This indicates that preservice teachers find online learning beneficial and favorable, especially during the pandemic. Many prefer online learning because everything is structured and organized. The teachers are understanding and helpful in what the preservice teachers are going through and how difficult it can be.

The time management of preservice teachers is good. This suggests that they effectively balance their academic responsibilities with family and personal commitments. They maintain a consistent daily routine and allocate sufficient time to complete online tasks. Their ability to manage time is attributed to their flexibility and straightforward approach to scheduling.

The competencies of preservice teachers are good. This shows that the preservice teachers oftentimes engage in collaborative and collegial online learning activities. They often maintain a positive and nurturing online learning environment where they can sustain independence, motivation, and responsibility. Their social media presence reflects their friendly and approachable demeanor.

The learning approach of preservice teachers is good. This holds that the preservice teachers oftentimes adapt and acknowledge the importance of online learning amid the pandemic. They can select and structure learning strategies to match online learning. This is often associated with the experiential, interactive, or independent approach to creating a welcoming online learning environment to sustain motivation, good relationships, information processing, and social interaction.

The modes of learning of preservice teachers are good. This manifests that the preservice teachers oftentimes know how to acquire, process, and maintain knowledge when they are in the online environment. In other words, they are often familiar with and use the different modes of learning whether it is auditory, reading, visual, or kinesthetic. This makes them learn more effectively under different conditions.

The acquired skills of preservice teachers are good. This indicates that the preservice teachers oftentimes acquire various skills in teaching and learning during online meetings. It is because the teachers can tailor instruction to meet the needs of the students and at the same time hone the knowledge and skills necessary for the development of the students. This points out that the use of online learning is seen as a possible pathway to continue and improve the competencies of the students.

B. Level of Perceived Quality

The level of perceived quality in online learning is shown in Table 2. It shows that in its entirety the level of perceived quality in online learning is high (M = 3.99, SD =

.56). Data also show that course design (M = 3.90, SD = .67), active engagement and interaction (M = 3.99, SD = .57 and learner support (M = 4.09, SD = .67) are high.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived Quality in Online Learning

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Perceived Quality	3.99	High	.56
Course Design	3.90	High	.67
Active Engagement and Interaction	3.99	High	.57
Learner Support	4.09	High	.67

Note Interval. 4.21–5.00: Very High, 3.41–4.20: High, 2.61–3.40: Moderate, 1.81–2.60: Low, and 1.00–1.80: Very Low

The perceived quality of online learning of preservice teachers is high. The online learning platform is oftentimes providing a better learning experience to the preservice teachers. It is because access to the internet is very essential during the pandemic. This serves as a pathway for the preservice teachers to easily meet the teachers and receive direct instruction under the curriculum.

The course design in online learning is high. The course design, particularly the crafted learning modules of the teachers, is oftentimes relevant and meaningful to the learning experiences of the preservice teachers. This corresponds to the fact that the learning modules have opened an extensive opportunity for the preservice teachers to learn under their control.

The active engagement and interaction in online learning of preservice teachers is high. The preservice teachers are oftentimes highly motivated and active in joining

and participating in the discussion. They can transform the present isolated teacher-centered and text-book classrooms into rich, student-focused, interactive knowledge environments.

The learner support in online learning is high. The professors are oftentimes supporting the preservice teachers in online learning. This relates that they are active in responding to the needs and concerns of the preservice teachers.

C. Level of Coping Mechanisms

The level of coping mechanisms in online learning of preservice teachers is shown in Table 3. The result shows that in its entirety the level of coping mechanisms in online learning is high (M = 3.05, SD = .49). It also shows that emotion-focused coping (M = 3.12, SD = .52), problem-focused coping (M = 2.95, SD = .51) and avoidant focused coping (M = 3.09, SD = .54) are high.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Coping Mechanisms in Online Learning

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Coping Mechanisms	3.05	High	.49
Emotion Focused Coping	3.12	High	.52
Problem Focused Coping	2.95	High	.51
Avoidant Focused Coping	3.09	High	.54

Note Interval. 3.28–4.00: Very High, 2.52–3.27: High, 1.76–2.51: Low, 1.00-1.75: Very Low

The coping mechanism in online learning of preservice teachers is high. This implies that oftentimes they face stressful situations caused by the new normal. They see and understand that the current condition demands them to adjust. The unfavorable circumstances compel them to strive hard and cope with the situations. This leads them to make a conscious effort to look at things differently and have a positive affirmation of how they can manage their academic problems and overcome difficulties to have a less stressful life.

The emotion-focused coping of the preservice teachers is high. This suggests that oftentimes they try to moderate the hurt or difficulties brought on by problems related to emotional, physical, and mental stress. To face the crises, they pray to ease their burdens and humble to God to bring back what they have experienced or done before and return to

normal life routines and academic activities. To escape from the new normal, they leave everything to God, discuss their feelings with their families and friends, and focus their efforts on something useful and productive.

The problem focused on coping with preservice teachers is high. This indicates that despite the struggles and difficulties in the new normal they have the positive thinking to adjust and face the situation. They see the new normal in a different light to make it more positive. They look for something good in what is happening and think about what is best to handle the problem. They take desirable actions to get rid of the problems and focus on the learning goals to cope with the academic demands effectively.

The avoidant-focused coping of the preservice teachers is high. This shows that oftentimes they make conscious and unconscious efforts to reduce problems in academics and life stress. In response to intense academic demands, they adapt more learning strategies, seek academic support from their families and friends, and express feelings to God. This helps them cope positively and face the problems optimistically during the pandemic.

D. Level of Learning Satisfaction

The level of learning satisfaction in online learning of preservice teachers is shown in Table 4. The result shows that in its entirety the level of learning satisfaction in online learning is high ($M = 4.08$, $SD = .48$). Data further show that teaching ($M = 4.34$, $SD = .60$) in online learning is very high. On the other hand, the course material (module) ($M = 4.12$, $SD = .59$), technological support ($M = 3.92$, $SD = .63$), attitudes and readiness ($M = 3.99$, $SD = .57$), and assessment ($M = 4.03$, $SD = .64$) are high.

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Learning Satisfaction in Online Learning

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Learning Satisfaction	4.08	High	.48
Teaching	4.34	Very High	.60
Course Material	4.12	High	.59
Technological Support	3.92	High	.63
Attitudes and Readiness	3.99	High	.57
Assessment	4.03	High	.64

Note Interval. 4.21–5.00: Very High, 3.41–4.20: High, 2.61–3.40: Moderate, 1.81–2.60: Low, and 1.00–1.80: Very Low

The learning satisfaction in online learning of preservice teachers is high. This suggests that oftentimes the preservice teacher's desire to learn in online learning is fulfilled. This demonstrates that the expectations and needs of the preservice teachers in online learning are achieved.

The teaching in online learning is very high. This implies that the preservice teachers are always satisfied with the way how teachers teach in online learning. This shows that teachers can develop new teaching and learning methods to guide students effectively in online learning.

The course material is high. This indicates that oftentimes the course material (i.e. module) is timely distributed online to the preservice teachers. The designed modules of the teachers are significant for the preservice teachers to learn the contents of the curriculum.

The technological support is high. This implies that oftentimes the preservice teachers are content with the learning management system the school has established. This indicates that the online learning platform that has been adopted to facilitate online learning provides many positive learning experiences to the preservice teachers.

The attitudes and readiness are high. This signifies that oftentimes preservice teachers have appreciated the importance and usefulness of online learning during the pandemic. This shows that teachers guide them to carry out the virtual meeting effectively.

The assessment is high. This denotes that oftentimes the preservice teachers are satisfied with the various learning assessments done online. This directly reflects that they can access the assessment with flexibility around time.

E. Differences in Online Learning Experiences Based on Perceived Quality, Coping Mechanism, and Learning Satisfaction

The differences in the online learning experiences based on the perceived quality, coping mechanism, and learning satisfaction are shown in Table 5. Table 5 shows that there is a significant difference in the online learning experiences based on the perceived quality $F(85.516^*) = .000$, $p < .05$ in favor of the high perceived quality ($M = 4.24$; $SD = .38$). There is also a significant difference in the online learning experiences based on the coping mechanism $F(11.459^*) = .000$, $p < .05$ in favor of the very low ($M = 4.32$; $SD = .69$) coping mechanism. Moreover, there is a significant difference in the online learning experiences based on the learning satisfaction $F(76.832^*) = .000$, $p < .05$ in favor of the very high ($M = 4.21$; $SD = .36$) learning satisfaction. Thus, the null hypothesis, which posited no significant differences in online learning experiences based on perceived quality, coping mechanism, and learning satisfaction, is rejected.

Table 5: ANOVA Results on the Differences in Online Learning Experiences Based on the Perceived Quality, Coping Mechanism, and Learning Satisfaction

Category	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Perceived Quality					
Between Groups	28.995	3	9.665	85.516*	.000
Within Groups	25.881	229	.113		
Total	54.876	232			
Coping Mechanism					
Between Groups	7.161	3	2.238	11.459*	.000
Within Groups	47.495	228	.208		
Total	54.656	231			
Learning Satisfaction					
Between Groups	27.586	3	9.195	76.832*	.000
Within Groups	27.287	228	.120		
Total	54.873	231			

*p < .05 – significant at 5% level

The online learning experiences of the preservice teachers vary significantly based on the perceived quality. This implies that there is a disparity in the online learning experiences depending on the support mechanism and established practices provided for online learning. This is founded on how to engage the preservice teachers during the pandemic rather than the conventional practice of teaching.

There are significant differences in the online learning experiences based on the coping mechanism. This implies that there is distinctness in online experiences situated on the coping strategies employed by the preservice teachers. This conveys that every preservice teacher has coping strategies and different behaviors to cope with the new normal.

Furthermore, there are significant differences in the online learning experiences based on learning satisfaction. This implies that there are dissimilarities in online experiences stored in the learning satisfaction of the preservice teachers. This points out that the success of online learning is dependent on the degree to which learners' expectations are fulfilled during the learning process.

F. Relationships among Online Learning Experiences, Perceived Quality, Coping Mechanism, and Learning Satisfaction

The relationships among online learning experiences, perceived quality, coping mechanisms, and learning satisfaction are shown in Table 6. Data reveal that there is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between learning experiences $r = .796^*$, $p = .000 < .05$ and perceived quality. There is a positive, moderate association, and significant relationship between learning experiences $r = .251^*$, $p = .000 < .05$ and coping mechanisms. Furthermore, there is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between learning experiences $r = .704^*$, $p = .000 < .05$, and learning satisfaction. The result indicates that online learning experiences are connected to the perceived quality, coping mechanisms, and learning satisfaction of preservice teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis, which suggested no significant relationships between online learning experiences, perceived quality, coping mechanisms, and learning satisfaction in online education, is rejected.

Table 6: Pearson r among the Online Learning Experiences, Perceived Quality, Coping Mechanism, and Learning Satisfaction

Variables	r-value	Sig
Learning Experiences and Perceived Quality	.796*	.000
Learning Experiences and Coping Mechanism	.251*	.000
Learning Experiences and Learning Satisfaction	.704*	.000

*p < .05 – significant at 5% level

The findings indicate that higher levels of learning experiences correspond to better-perceived quality. Preservice teachers who receive robust support, actively engage, and are motivated in their learning activities within the modules tend to have positive learning experiences in online education, whereas those facing connectivity issues or inadequate preparation tend to have poorer experiences.

Additionally, there is a positive, moderate, and significant relationship between learning experiences and coping mechanisms. This implies that higher levels of learning experiences are associated with better-coping mechanisms. Preservice teachers who approach coping

strategies positively are more likely to report better learning experiences in online education compared to those who struggle to adjust to the circumstances.

Furthermore, a positive, strong, and significant relationship exists between learning experiences and learning satisfaction. This indicates that enhanced learning experiences contribute to higher levels of satisfaction. Preservice teachers find their learning experiences in online education stimulating, engaging, and interactive.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The positive impact of online learning for preservice teachers during the pandemic is evident in their ability to learn flexibly and comfortably, leading to increased productivity and absorption of information compared to traditional methods. The perceived high quality of online education highlights its enhanced viability and accessibility. This adaptation has fundamentally transformed educational delivery, enabling preservice teachers to exhibit strong coping behaviors and resilience in managing pandemic-related challenges. Their high satisfaction with online learning enhances efficiency, task organization, critical engagement, and relationship building. Varied experiences based on perceived quality underscore the importance of self-motivation and adaptability in navigating the "new normal." Overall, these factors collectively influence the effectiveness of online learning environments for preservice teachers.

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