Divulging the Lived Experiences of Public School Teachers in the U.S.A. during COVID-19 Pandemic: Phenomenological Analysis

Jaypee R. Lopres iD **, Glendale Y. Niadas** iD **, Geraldine P. Minez** iD **,
Greatchie M. Lopres** iD **, Madeleine I. Gutierrez** iD **, Albert Marion Q. Quiap** iD
and Saturnino Renante O. Bangot Jr. iD
K-12 Teachers, Gallup McKinley County Schools
Gallup, New Mexico, USA

Abstract. This research examined the lived experiences of public school teachers in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic. A qualitative design was performed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. Twenty public school teachers in the United States formed the sample, with the inclusion criterion being a minimum of three years' teaching experience, including the pandemic. To meet the safety measure protocols set by the U.S. government, the data gathering was conducted online using Microsoft Forms. The semi-structured interviews comprised two sections: the first ascertained the respondents' profiling and the second revealed their first-hand experiences. The thematic analysis approach was utilized to analyze the data. The findings disclosed five emerging themes: 1) low student engagement; 2) unstable internet connection; 3) professional development as school district support; 4) utilization of online engagement tools to leverage classroom engagement; and 5) evident parental support. School districts, teachers, parents, students, and potential researchers were provided with recommendations for improving online and hybrid instruction. In addition to implementing socio-emotional learning programs and addressing slow internet connections, it is advised that school districts train teachers on how to use the tools, software, and techniques for online and hybrid instruction. Teachers who are having difficulty in adjusting to online learning should think about developing their capabilities for helping students while finding a healthy balance in terms of stress management. The use of technology to support students should be adequately taught to parents. Future studies on the pandemic's effects on education should continue.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic; online learning; professional development; teachers' experiences; phenomenological analysis

1. Introduction

COVID-19, also known as SARS-CoV-2 virus, is a respiratory disease that has caused a global pandemic. The outbreak of the pandemic has significantly disrupted the growth of countries, affecting both their social and economic sectors (Sakshi & Nishi, 2021; Tarkar, 2020). This outbreak has not only significantly affected countries' economies and health structures but has also impaired the educational systems. Many countries globally, including the United States of America, have suspended and cancelled in-person classes to enforce total or partial lockdowns in order to impede the transmission of the virus (Flores, 2020). School districts, universities, and other educational institutions addressed the unprecedented challenge rapidly, yet were unprepared for adapting to novel online teaching and learning approaches (Flores, 2020; Placencia & Lopres, 2020; Sumalinog, 2022).

In the United States, synchronous and asynchronous learning are used in hybrid learning classes; synchronous learning occurs in real time while a predetermined login schedule is established for online classes (Bonk & Zhang, 2006; Means et al., 2010; Oztok et al., 2013). Asynchronous learning, on the other hand, can occur whenever it is most convenient for the learner (Finol, 2020; Joan, 2013; Oztok et al., 2013; Pappas, 2015). As long as they complete their assignments by the due dates, students can access self-paced courses, modules, recorded and downloadable video lessons, lecture notes, online forums, and social media platforms (Villarin, 2020).

Research about the lived experiences of teachers around the world during the pandemic has cited both challenges and successes in the implementation of the hybrid model and flexible online learning. Stable internet access, a lack of available devices, and the proper utilization of technological devices were presented as the most significant challenges teachers and students experienced in online instruction during the pandemic (Gocotano et al., 2021). Additionally, although students can learn concepts and skills online, learning may not be adequate, especially in courses that call for in-person interaction (Franchi, 2020). However, the use of hybrid and online models has some advantages. Students who work independently report higher motivation and a greater sense of control over their education; additionally, they have access to classroom materials via online learning management systems (University of Perpetual Help [UPH], 2020).

Relatively little research about the lived experiences of teachers in the United States of America during the COVID-19 pandemic has been published to date. In this context, it is imperative to consider how teachers have adapted to the limitations of the pandemic and the new teaching and learning delivery modes (Flores, 2020). Understanding teachers' experiences during the pandemic is critical in proposing recommendations to improve current practices of the new mode of teaching and learning, especially in higher education institutions (Tlili et al., 2020). Educational institutions all over the world could learn from these experiences and implement teaching strategies, execute policies, and apply best practices that would further improve the teaching and learning experience,

especially during the pandemic, as well as addressing and overcoming any emerging challenges in the future (Kabilan & Annamalai, 2022).

Hence, this research aimed to explore the lived experiences of public school teachers in the United States of America during the pandemic and specifically answered and analyzed the research questions (see Appendix 1). This present research can provide insights for school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and future researchers who seek literature on the real-life experiences of educators during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Literature Review
To support the present study, various pieces of literature related to the challenges of teachers, instructional support, and students' engagement during the pandemic are analyzed below.

2.1. Challenges of Teachers in the Delivery of Instruction during the Pandemic
As the COVID-19 pandemic threatened the education sector, online learning was adopted globally (Filho et al., 2022; Erarslan, 2021; Radina & Balakina, 2021; Tigaa & Sonawane, 2020). According to Berlina et al. (2020), the Indonesian government made the decision to move away from face-to-face instruction and toward online courses delivered through a number of learning management systems (LMS), including Moodle and Google Classroom. The students encountered three specific difficulties while learning online: a lack of familiarity with electronic learning; a slow internet connection; and physical difficulties such as eye strain. Marshall et al. (2022) revealed that face-to-face instruction in schools was abruptly discontinued, with emergency remote instruction being implemented in its place.

Within the literature, teachers have discussed a range of experiences relating to professional development opportunities, challenges to student learning, and support for ESL and special needs students. Many teachers have stated that remote instruction made all aspects of teaching more challenging. Future school calendars should include digital learning days, and based on teacher input, detailed emergency plans should be developed. Burton et al. (2022) mentioned that studying the actual experiences of teachers during the pandemic presented a number of challenges that needed to be taken into account, including inconsistent rules, caring responsibilities, exhaustion, unintended consequences of control measures, and the requirement for emotional support. Six themes served as both barriers and facilitators: the lived environment, notions of the consequences of non-compliance, the influence of others, concrete support, and faith in the government. He and Yang (2021) found that online training and instruction were the main learning barriers for the students. Tugirinshuti et al. (2021) revealed that less video-based multimedia is used for physics teaching and learning. The main obstacles to using video-based multimedia in the teaching and learning of physics, according to teachers, are a lack of infrastructure, insufficient teacher preparation for successfully integrating multimedia into the classroom, pressure to get students ready for exams, and teachers' lack of preparation time.

Fauzi and Asri (2021) identified several barriers to online learning that college students must overcome. These include higher internet usage limits, unstable internet connections, and a lack of IT expertise, all of which are significant hindrances to online learning. There were few opportunities for working from home during the COVID-19 lockdown in South Africa, according to Badaru et al. (2022), who studied how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the country's economy, organizations, and educational system. Difficulties included interpersonal isolation, alienation from co-workers, fatigue from the daily repetition of monotonous tasks, insufficient data, and poor internet connectivity. According to Batac et al. (2022), there is agreement among teachers regarding the effectiveness of the implemented educational policies and the government's response to the pandemic. Despite the flexibility of blended learning, teachers have had trouble implementing it during the pandemic due to issues with readiness, technological literacy, access to technology, financial hardships, and health risks. The most frustrating issue primary teachers encountered when teaching online, according to Allouh et al. (2021), was unmotivated students. Moreover, Ishak et al. (2022) discovered that because student access to devices, internet connectivity, and class time was constrained, teachers primarily use smart phones to access the internet and conduct lessons. Despite the challenges, they remained convinced of the importance of technology in the classroom and of its ability to raise students' digital literacy and promote responsible use.

2.2. Instructional Support for Teachers during the Pandemic
The COVID-19 pandemic has altered how principals perform their duties. Principals are expected to be excellent managers and leaders in this time of exponentially accelerating change (Pangestu & Karwan, 2021; Reyes-Guerra et al., 2021; Karakose & Papadakis, 2021). Pollock (2022) noted that a two-pronged strategy was being utilized by school leaders in Ontario, Canada, to manage public schools during the pandemic crisis. Their responsibilities were being widened to encompass (a) safe schools and building a framework for future education; and (b) concurrently, digital instructional leadership. In the Philippines, Bautista Jr. et al. (2021) found that in terms of capacity building, technical issues, data privacy, information-dissemination systems, and online learning management, most teachers had access to adequate support from their respective schools. However, Aloufi et al. (2021) discovered that there was inconsistency in some practices, necessitating the identification of training requirements for mathematics teachers in the area of e-learning in virtual classes. These requirements include diversifying the techniques for collecting student responses to activities, utilizing electronic participatory learning strategies to form and manage cooperative learning groups, and using electronic communication apps.

Dayagbil et al. (2021) discovered that the teachers altered their lesson plans in accordance with the institutional policies during lockdowns at the school.

The path model of Pressley and Ha (2022) discovered that teachers' psychological characteristics and administrative support were linked to their levels of stress. The path results in the final Social-Ecological Model (SEM) demonstrated the complex

indirect relationships between teacher efficacy and stress among school administration support and teachers. When the COVID-19 pandemic overran the educational system and forced teachers and students to acquire and use digital tools and platforms, school administrators were compelled to take on the responsibility for digital literacy. Khalid Alajmi (2022) revealed that school principals who exhibited digital leadership had a positive influence on teachers' adoption of technology during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teaching and interacting with students and parents, work-life balance, working from home, school management, and colleagues are some of the factors that Klusman et al. (2022) identified as needing support. Xue et al. (2022) disclosed that online instruction has been used to keep up with regular academic activities ever since the pandemic's inception. The participants' adoption of online instruction was influenced by facilitating circumstances, technology self-efficacy, learner characteristics, teaching administration, pedagogical factors, resistance to change, time restraints, and security concerns. Bichler et al. (2021) described a remote professional development course for high school teachers who were switching to remote instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic. By enabling them to set and modify objectives based on evidence from the students' prior work on the unit, the innovations aid teachers in tailoring a lesson plan.

2.3. Students' Engagement during the Pandemic

Many countries around the world have shifted to online learning and other digital alternatives to ensure educational continuity during the pandemic. (Alghamdi, 2022; Agarwal & Kaushik, 2020; Bahasoan et al., 2020). The students had favorable opinions of using online learning as a supplement to traditional education. According to Vellanki et al. (2022), the importance of teachers and students getting used to new teaching and learning techniques both during and after the pandemic has increased. To ensure that learning continues throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers must have a solid grasp of both pedagogical and content knowledge through information integration and communication technology (Astutik et al., 2022; El Said, 2021; Panagouli et al., 2021). In any situation during the pandemic, teachers and students can use teacher videos as one of their learning strategies.

Nwosu et al. (2022) uncovered a comprehensive conceptual relationship between instructional leadership roles at different hierarchical levels and their effect on learner performance. Policymakers should be aware of these implications if they are interested in improving instructional leadership both during and after the pandemic in order to improve student performance. Atalaya et al. (2022) discovered that many universities did not initially plan the mechanisms for adapting to the virtual modality sufficiently, despite the necessity to adapt to environments that ensure the continuity of educational services in the face of social distancing. Students' academic performance was significantly impacted by the switch to virtual teaching and learning. Guidelines were created by Chile's Ministry of Education to maintain the developmental processes that gave rise to the concept of remote learning. However, Munoz, et al. (2022) indicated that students were not impressed with how the material was handled or the virtual mode's evaluation techniques.

Vargas et al. (2020) revealed that the university students in Mexico were forced to switch to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the quarantine period, which required them to get used to cutting-edge technologies and environments that were different from those in their university's classrooms. They discovered that these unfamiliar surroundings can be uncomfortable, affecting students' academic performance. Further research revealed that noise, temperature, and lighting all significantly affect university students' academic performance.

Most students adapted to the new teaching delivery method with little help, despite the COVID-19 pandemic forcing universities and teachers to change their methods (Limniou et al., 2021). When emergency remote teaching was used, students' academic performance improved, according to Pradas et al. (2021), supporting the idea that organizational factors may be crucial for emergency remote teaching to be implemented successfully.

Spitzer and Musslick (2021) emphasized that the education of young children is at risk if schools are closed in response to the rapid spread of COVID-19, including a widening achievement gap. Their findings suggested that the performance gap between low- and high-achieving students was closing, with low-achieving students demonstrating greater performance improvements than high-achieving students. This gave rise to the idea that virtual classrooms might be helpful in halting the educational losses caused by recent and impending school closures. It was discovered that urban and rural students both benefited academically from distance learning, according to Clark et al. (2021). To maintain educational continuity during the COVID-19 lockdown, numerous instructional strategies were developed. The adoption of uniform teaching and learning strategies during the COVID-19 lockdown would be unsuccessful because each strategy depends on the infrastructure and economic conditions present in each geographical location (Nhongo & Siziba, 2022).

3. Research Methodology

This section discusses the research design that was selected for the study, as well as the environment and the respondents who are participating in it. Furthermore, the research instrument, data reliability and validity will be explained, and the data analysis will be provided.

3.1. Research Design

This paper employed a qualitative research design since it consists of verbal excerpts from interviews with the respondents through Microsoft Forms. The study was phenomenological since it delved into the lived experiences of public school teachers in the United States during the pandemic. In this study, respondents were asked to share what they observed among their students, the mode of instruction they have adopted, as well as issues such as their students' engagement, their methods for behavior management and assessment, the barriers or challenges they experienced, the coping mechanisms they applied in eliminating such challenges from their teaching, and the support they received from their school and district administration as well as parental involvement.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was purposefully used because the essence of the problem could only be fully grasped by acquiring teachers' lived experiences. IPA involves data gathered directly from participants and was employed with Smith and Osborn (2007) as proponents.

3.2. Research Environment

The data were gathered from public school teachers who were teaching in the United States, particularly in California, New Mexico, Arizona, Florida, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Colorado. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. educational setting immediately shifted from face-to-face learning to online or blended learning. During this time, contact with other people was prohibited; thus, the researchers collected the data through Microsoft Forms.

3.3. Research Respondents

This study involved 20 public school teachers who specifically teach English, Math, Science and Special Education, with an average of eleven years of teaching experience, from selected U.S. public schools; they have all been teaching during the pandemic. The participants were each provided with a generic name to conceal their identity. Some inclusion criteria were strictly considered in the selection of participants. First, participants had to have been teaching in the U.S. during the pandemic. Specifically, these teachers have witnessed the way in which public schools transitioned from face-to-face to online learning. Second, they needed at least three years of teaching experience. Lastly, they had all been trained on how to use the online learning platforms that may be incorporated in their online classes. Table 1 illustrates the demographic profile of the participants.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the participants

Respondents	Years of Teaching Including Pandemic	Present Teaching Location	Subjects Taught and Level of Education	Modes of Instruction during the Pandemic
Teacher 1	14	California, USA	Science, Secondary	Blended Learning
Teacher 2	12	New Mexico, USA	STEM and Algebra, Secondary	Blended Learning
Teacher 3	8	California, USA	Math, Secondary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 4	12	Arizona, USA	Special Education, Primary	Blended Learning
Teacher 5	11	New Mexico, USA	English, Math, and Science, Primary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 6	22	New Mexico, USA	Functional English, Reading, Writing, Math, and Science, Tertiary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 7	12	Arizona, USA	Special Education, Primary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 8	4	New Mexico, USA	English, Secondary	Full Online Learning

Teacher 9	20	Florida, USA	Biology, Secondary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 10	3	New Mexico, USA	English, Math, Social Studies, and Science, Primary	Blended Learning
Teacher 11	8	Florida, USA	Geometry and Pre-Calculus, Secondary	Blended Learning
Teacher 12	4	South Carolina, USA	Math, Secondary	Blended Learning
Teacher 13	11	New Mexico, USA	Special Education, Primary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 14	17	New Mexico, USA	English and Math, Primary	Blended Learning
Teacher 15	10	New Mexico, USA	English, Secondary	Blended Learning
Teacher 16	10	Texas, USA	English and Math, Primary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 17	15	Colorado, USA	English, Secondary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 18	8	Colorado, USA	Math, Secondary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 19	7	Utah, USA	Science, Secondary	Full Online Learning
Teacher 20	12	Utah, USA	English, Math, and Science, Primary	Full Online Learning

3.4. Research Instrument

In order to facilitate the data-gathering process, the study used a semi-structured interview that was written in English. Its content was checked and validated by at least five experts in the field to ensure that the constructed questions were suitable for a study using IPA. In such an interview, the interviewer must build a positive relationship with the respondents (Smith and Osborn 2007). This research examined the lived experiences of teachers in the United States during the pandemic. Two major parts of this instrument were ascertained. The first was the profiling questions about the research informants, and the second was the unveiling of their teaching experiences during the pandemic time through five open-response questions.

3.5 Data Reliability and Validity

The use of a validated survey questionnaire through Microsoft Forms and its distribution to a diverse sample of public school teachers across the United States during the pandemic ensured the reliability of the study's data. The questions were written with clarity and objectivity, and respondents were urged to give thoughtful, honest answers to increase the validity of the data. To reach data saturation, the respondents participated in a focus-group discussion led by the researchers.

3.6. Data Analysis

The six steps of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach were utilized in the study, as follows: data familiarization, generating initial codes,

searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. A method for analyzing qualitative data called thematic analysis entails searching through a data set to identify, investigate, and record recurrent patterns. Thematic analysis is a good method of analysis when trying to understand the experiences, thoughts, or behaviors present in a data set (Kiger and Varpio, 2020).

4. Results and Discussions

After a thorough and rigorous analysis of the teacher-respondents' narrative responses, five emerging themes concerning the lived experiences of the Filipino teachers in the United States of America during the COVID-19 pandemic were identified. These are: students' low engagement; unstable internet connection; school district support in the form of professional development; utilization of online engagement tools to leverage classroom engagement; and evident parental support.

4.1 Theme 1: Students' Low Engagement

The respondents divulged that low student engagement was evident during the pandemic and narrated their experiences as follows:

> T2: "*During the pandemic, student engagement was low, and students were less motivated in attending online classes. Assessment was easy to conduct, but its reliability was low since students did it online.*"

> T3: "*Student engagement was not as evident and effective during online learning as in regular full face-to-face learning. Assessment of student learning, on the other hand, was relatively easier to conduct, collect and grade, but its results were not very reliable sometimes.*"

> T10: "*They have short attention span towards online instruction.*"

> T12: "*My students had [a] hard time learning during the pandemic. Some of them had difficulty in answering and completing assignments or tasks.*"

> T16: "*Students were not fully engaged with the online set-up due to a lot of distractions. Behavior management strategies were not as effective as they were [when] implemented in the classrooms.*"

> T18: "*Some students joined the meeting (online class) just for attendance. There were low scores in assessments due to some gap in the instruction.*"

> T19: "*The students were not totally engaged during class discussions; they were distracted by the social media.*"

When the COVID-19 pandemic commenced, it negatively impacted the educational sectors around the world (Franci, 2020). Teachers have long been concerned about student engagement. When U.S. schools closed in March 2020 to slow the spread of the coronavirus, millions of American students and teachers were forced to participate in remote learning for the first time, making the situation even more urgent. Teachers were worried that too many students were

falling behind as some students continued their remote learning into the 2020–21 school year, others switched between in-person and home instruction, and still others returned to the typical schedule of school days interspersed with social isolation, quarantines, and masks.

The current study supports the U.S. national survey conducted by the EdWeek Research Center (2020), which found that students and teachers were frequently at odds when it came to student engagement. Both teachers and students had a lot to learn about online education and innovative classroom management techniques. In Australia, McKenna (2022) discovered that due to COVID-19's quick shift to fully online instruction without any in-person instruction, students were accessing learning resources more slowly throughout the semester. Despite tutorials being the only virtual face-to-face activity available to students in this course, student engagement declined, as indicated by a decline in attendance.

Additionally, according to research by the Northwest Evaluation Association (2020) with 4.4 million U.S. students as respondents, the average Math scores for students this year were lower than they had been for students in the same grade last year by between 5 and 10 percentile points. Since the COVID-19 pandemic started, most learners in all grades have made some progress in reading and math. However, compared to previous years, math gains were on average lower in the fall of 2020, which led to more students falling behind in terms of their prior attainment. The implication is to keep providing federal and state funding to pandemic-affected school districts. To effectively target resources, data reporting should be transparent.

Ling (2022) recommended that a proactive governmental approach is required to close the gap caused by the shift in learning delivery methods and the emergence of online learning. Academics and practitioners should rethink education entirely in order to more effectively combat the new learning challenges presented by novel technologies.

The research findings imply that the pandemic has significantly affected student motivation and engagement in online learning. Students have a shorter attention span and are more susceptible to distractions when learning online, which leads to lower test scores and difficulty in finishing assignments. Despite the simpler administration of assessments, their reliability was called into question because of the online format. Additionally, it seems that behavior control techniques that worked well in face-to-face classes did not have the same effect online. Incorporating interactive activities and minimizing distractions are two strategies that teachers may need to employ to keep students interested and motivated during online instruction. To ensure the validity of assessment techniques in the online format, it might also be necessary to reevaluate them.

4.2 Theme 2: Unstable Internet Connection

As indicated by the respondents, unstable internet connections caused low student engagement and delayed the teaching-learning process at times:

> T1: *"I had a hard time engaging the students in class discussions and group collaborations due to a bad internet connection."*

> T6: *"One of the barriers I have experienced in my instruction during the pandemic is the unstable internet connection, especially during inclement weather."*

> T9: *"The students who are living in areas that cannot be reached by the internet that the district provided were not able to get online ever so it made learning more difficult for them."*

> T13: *"Due to their location in the reservation area, many of my students' poor internet connections posed the biggest problem. Students frequently experienced screen freezes or were kicked out of Zoom."*

> T14: *"Some are late in attending the live lesson, blaming the poor Wi-Fi connection. Some students aren't taking it seriously."*

A stable internet connection has played a vital role during online classes, but not all learning institutions are sufficiently privileged to access one. According to Broom (2020), only half of the world's population has access to the internet. In the least developed nations, less than half of the population is connected. Thus, much effort is required to enhance education both during and after the pandemic.

 The PEW Research Center (2021) confirmed that 90% of Americans consider the internet to be essential, and 40% of them also made video calls and utilized technology in novel ways. While technology was a godsend for some people, it was challenging for others. Moreover, a sizable majority of Americans (81%) say they have participated in video calls with others at least once since the pandemic's start. Also, 40% of Americans say they have used technology or the internet in new or unusual ways, and as a result, they see new value in digital tools. Some customers also requested service enhancements as the pandemic spread. 29% of broadband users have taken action to improve the reliability, quality, or speed of their home high-speed internet connection since the crisis began.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2020) discovered that 3.7 million American households with students still do not have regular access to the internet, and 4.4 million do not regularly have access to a computer. Although schools provided computers to more than 50% of households, only a small percentage also received internet access devices.

The pandemic has presented significant challenges for both teachers and students due to poor internet connectivity. Due to this challenge, teachers have found it difficult to involve students in group projects, live lessons, and class discussions. Some students have even reported being unable to participate in online classes at all. Students frequently experience screen freezes or are expelled from Zoom in places with poor internet connectivity, such as reservation areas, where the issue is particularly severe. To ensure that all students have equitable access to education, it is imperative that educators and policymakers address this problem by providing reliable internet access to all. To account for potential connectivity issues and provide flexibility for students encountering technical difficulties, teachers may need to modify their lesson plans and delivery strategies.

4.3 Theme 3: School district support in the form of professional development

The respondents described the instructional support their school districts have provided during the pandemic as follows:

> T1: *"The school administration provided the teachers with training about the usage of an online platform for class instruction and help desk support from the Microsoft Teams."*

> T4: *"Professional Development and giving [a] stipend to those teachers offering extra hours after school."*

> T5: *"Providing Wi-Fi hotspots to students and also providing them with laptops that they can use at home."*

> T8: *"The district and the school have been very supportive. There were liaison officers giving out printed worksheets that we made for students who were dealing with internet connection issues."*

> T11: *"Offer more training and support by providing us more Professional Development (PD) Training online."*

> T17: *"Our principal sent us links for various online trainings that would strengthen or enhance our strategies for online teaching."*

> T20: *"Series of trainings were conducted; teachers were trained on how to conduct blended learning effectively and provided the students laptops and iPads they needed for online learning. School administrators were in support, making sure students get online and on time by calling out parents."*

The provision of professional development sessions on how to deliver instruction (online, blended, modular) is a common strategy among educators and school leaders not only in the United States, but globally. Various online engagement tools have been marketed towards educators and students, such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Edpuzzle, Quizizz, Screencastify, Padlet, Nearpod, and many others. When the pandemic occurred, it also altered the course of the professional development topics that the education sector must plan and provide (Cabeen, 2021). Schools must continue to offer their teachers professional development opportunities in order to continue offering their students the best education they can under these unprecedented and demanding conditions (Logan, 2020).

On the other side of the world, Jen et al. (2022) found that teachers in the Netherlands are dealing with new difficulties when using educational technology. Classroom teachers in Turkey require a targeted approach when designing their professional development, according to Kalman et al. (2022). The process was successful for most of the teachers despite some difficulties, such as a lack of technological tools, inadequate infrastructure, and adverse psychological effects. In Asian contexts (Bond, 2021; Morra et al., 2021), funding for professional development and equipment must be increased, equity must be prioritized, collaborative activities must be created, and a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning techniques must be used.

To support the secure reopening and operation of schools and to deal with the pandemic's effects on American students, the U.S. Department of Education gave states and school districts a total of nearly $122 billion. It also included additional funding for Native Hawaiians, Alaska Natives, and Tribal educational institutions, as well as $3 billion for special education, $850 million for the Outlying Areas, and $2.75 billion for private schools. It follows, then, that the state and school district leaders must ensure that adequate funding is allocated for teachers' professional development.

Educating and assisting teachers as well as students can enhance the success of online learning. Schools can better equip teachers to deliver high-quality instruction in an online format by offering training on how to use online platforms effectively, providing technical support, and providing financial incentives to teachers who offer extra hours. Additionally, closing the digital divide and guaranteeing that all students have access to learning opportunities can be achieved by giving Wi-Fi hotspots and laptops to students who might not have reliable internet access or technology at home. To encourage students' success in online learning, school administrators and district liaison officers can be extremely helpful in addressing connectivity problems, distributing materials, and offering ongoing professional development opportunities. Education professionals and students can adjust to the new norm of online and hybrid learning with continued investment in support, technology, and training.

4.4 Theme 4: Utilization of Online Engagement Tools to Leverage Classroom Engagement
To improve students' engagement during the pandemic, the respondents had to utilize online engagement tools to provide purposeful and meaningful online instruction. They describe the initiatives taken below:

> T3: *"In regard to engagement, we started with a Google form for check-in questions for all of my students so I will know who are present and logging in our Google classroom. Collaborations are based on the answers that they have with our activities, whether it would be in Google Docs or forms or even Jamboard. Most of the assessments that I have during the pandemic are in Google Forms."*

> T5: *"The district made us learn Microsoft Teams as a self-paced training to catch up with the start of classes. Our school administrator had to buy the online programs that would be mainly used in our classrooms such as Edpuzzle, Seesaw, Screencastify, and Padlet."*

> T7: *"My school used the flipped classroom (asynchronous-synchronous-asynchronous) model to ensure that rigor is observed in the teaching-learning process in the online classroom."*

> T10: *"Presentation of actual classwork is done by showing their work in front of the camera and highlighting it for the whole class to see."*

> T13: *"Students responds [in] real time during the lesson by using the activities, quizzes, and games feature of Nearpod and other online*

> *education programs that records real-time responses of the students."*

T14: *"A presentation screen is always shown the moment students join the meeting so they will see the expectations right away before the start of the lesson. Having them invested on getting Dojo points for a reward helps in keeping them on task."*

T15: *"Teams Groups and OneNote come in handy when doing small group discussion and group tasks. The use of other programs such as Padlet, Whiteboardchat, and Jamboard made classroom collaboration more engaging and task-oriented."*

T17: *"Assessment has been collected through quick check for understanding during discussion by utilizing the activities feature of Nearpod, exit ticket using Microsoft Forms, lesson video with questions in between using Edpuzzle, performance task and project using Flipgrid, and homework using the Teams assignment and OneNote program."*

T19: *"Used Google classroom/meet or Zoom for students with internet. Those who don't, we provided them with remote packets which they send back to school when they are done answering."*

T20: *"I learn different teaching strategies that I can still connect and motivate my students to participate during virtual learning such as Quizizz, Edpuzzle and Breakout rooms in Teams."*

The teacher-respondents undertook a series of professional development training sessions to hone their technological skills in order to be effective in their online teaching. SalasPilco et al. (2022) found that it was essential to provide teachers with both adequate professional development and emotional support for their work to improve the students' engagement during the pandemic in Latin America.

In the United States, Hollister et al. (2022) reported that most students claimed that their professors used polls, breakout sessions, and weekly quizzes to engage students in their classes, at least occasionally. While most students were neutral or positive about the weekly quizzes that were used to replace midterm or final exams, they were slightly less favorable about the breakout rooms. Students gave the in-class polling extremely positive reviews. Students preferred working as a whole class rather than in breakout rooms, Fitzgibbons et al. (2021) found, but they claimed to form more peer connections that way. According to Venton and Pompano's (2021) positive qualitative student feedback from students in chemistry classes at the University of Virginia, some students found it simpler to interact with peers in breakout rooms as opposed to the entire class and participate in class discussions.

In Indonesia, Tamah et al. (2020) identified various factors that could influence the success of online learning, such as teachers' prior experience with online learning, technological and pedagogical knowledge, and the support system. In

Hongkong, Chiu (2021) emphasized that the online engagement tools included in digital support strategies better met the needs of students, that all needs were indicators of engagement, and that relatedness support was crucial. Furthermore, Tay et al. (2021) found that more self-directed habits and skills need to be taught to Singaporean students in order for them to learn effectively both online and in person. They also learned that there are different software programs for different types of learning activities, that teachers need professional development to stay current, and that online social networking sites may be necessary for student discussions outside of the allotted times for online lessons.

Using different online platforms and tools can increase student engagement and support efficient instruction in online learning. Teachers can track student attendance and assess their progress in real time by using Google Forms for check-ins and assessments. The flipped classroom model can help to ensure a consistent level of rigor in the teaching-learning process, while other online resources such as Edpuzzle, Seesaw, Screencastify, and Padlet can promote student interaction and collaboration. Not only can online tools such as Nearpod, Quizizz, Edpuzzle, and Flipgrid make assessments more interesting and interactive for the students, but they can also enable teachers to gather and process student data more quickly. By giving students without internet access remote packets, we can close the digital divide and guarantee that all students have access to educational opportunities. Through ongoing professional development and training, teachers can keep learning new teaching methods. The findings imply that a variety of online platforms and tools can be used to improve student engagement and support efficient instruction in the virtual classroom.

4.5 Theme 5: Evident Parental Support
Parents play a pivotal role in students' learning during the pandemic. Below are the narratives of the respondents' experiences with the parents of their students:

> T2: *"Parental support was 90% compared to pre-pandemic. Parents were most likely to respond to our emails and calls and sometimes sat down with their students during classes."*

> T4: *"But all in all, they do support us whenever we request their presence in a virtual meeting or whenever we are addressing some issues with their child."*

> T8: *"Parental support was there; parents were updated from the announcement and cooperative and you can observe that it was teamwork."*

> T9: *"Parents were responsive during the online and hybrid classes in the same level of participation as they were during the times before that. Parents got a call from teachers when their students were not online or not in the class, and they would make sure their students get on and participate. They informed us when they were having bad connection using the provider's or their own internet."*

> T12: *"During parent-teacher conferences, parents/guardians were actively participating through online video call or phone call.*

> *Fortunately, all my students' parents were quite helpful. We spoke over the phone and via email."*

> T17: *"Parents are supportive, since they go to school and pick the packets for their kids. They also return them at the end of the week. They take time to go to school, which means a lot."*

> T18: *"Some parents were on board and supportive of the school policy and were supportive of their child's education."*

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of online learning, parental involvement in their children's education is just as crucial as that of the teachers because parents must support, respect, and guide their children's work, as well as supervise, and discipline them (Dini, 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021). It is evident from the respondents' responses that parents were supportive of their children's education during the pandemic. Sari and Maningtyas (2020) concurred with the present research that parents demonstrated a positive level of involvement in terms of accompanying children during distance learning. However, some parents were unable to support their children as much during the pandemic due to their lack of technological abilities, experience, resources, or time – often due to conflicts with their own employment – which led to their experiencing barriers during the online learning of their children (Garbe et al., 2020; Knopik et al., 2021).

In the United States, McClain et al. (2021) found that 93% of parents with children in grades K–12 reported that since the pandemic outbreak in February 2020, their children have taken some kind of online course. The majority of these parents claim, on the whole, to have had positive experiences with their children's online learning; 62% of parents whose children have received some online education during the pandemic felt that it had gone very well or somewhat well, and 70% noted that it had been very easy or somewhat easy for them to assist their children in using technology and the internet for online education.

According to a separate survey of 1000 parents, conducted by Rutgers University, parent communication is increasing among some of the most vulnerable student groups, whose parents are typically the hardest to contact (Lansford, 2020). In comparison to before the pandemic, 57% of Black parents, 56% of families with incomes below the federal poverty level, and 52% of Hispanic parents noted that they felt more comfortable in helping their children with schoolwork. Sixty-two percent (62%) of parents who responded to the survey reported that they now have a better understanding of their child as a learner—including both their academic strengths and weaknesses—than they did before the pandemic. Additionally, two-thirds felt they were more aware of what their child is learning at school. These results indicate that some portions of the parental population need reinforcement, such as training on how to use tools for online learning, so they can effectively support their children.

As with the school children themselves, their parents also have various ability levels. Thus, it is essential for school leaders to appropriately determine which

groups of parents need additional support so that they can better involve themselves in their children's education.

5. Conclusion

When the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic reached the United States and other countries around the world, education was one of several sectors that underwent a paradigm shift. Different learning delivery modes, such as online, blended, and modular learning were initiated around the world. In the United States, online learning was popular, but it resulted in considerable anxiety for school leaders, teachers, students, and parents. The goal of this study was to share the real-life experiences of public school teachers in the United States during the pandemic. After a thorough examination of the respondents' narratives, five themes were extrapolated. These included low student engagement, erratic internet connections, support from the school district in the form of professional development, the use of online engagement tools to boost engagement in the classroom, and overt parental support. It was discovered that low levels of student engagement were evident during the pandemic. Many U.S. teachers and students were new to online learning, which clearly involved technological tools. Unreliable internet connection was reported to be one of the main reasons for students' poor performance, which low levels of included class participation or engagement, late arrival in the online class, and the late submission of work. The school districts collaboratively provided a series of professional development courses for teachers on how to deliver lessons online. The teachers learned specific teaching strategies pertaining to students' engagement in online education. Lastly, positive parental involvement played a vital role in the education of children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusion, recommendations for the school districts and administration, teachers, parents, learners, and future researchers are detailed below.

School Districts and Administration. The school districts' provision of training to teachers on the use of devices, programs, and strategies for online and hybrid instruction illustrates that teachers need to acquire more skills for delivering lessons in a way that is new to them. It is deemed important for teachers to undergo these training sessions in advance of the actual online classes in order to prepare teachers ahead of time and allow them the opportunity to practice using the technological devices needed for instruction. It is recommended that school districts implement socio-emotional learning programs, as well as focusing on enhancing teachers' technology skills, as part of the classroom routine. Also, the concern regarding students' poor internet connection must be addressed.

Teachers. Teachers who reported having difficulty adapting to the new delivery mode of teaching and learning during the pandemic must be willing to consider learning and implementing online teaching to improve their teaching and technological skills. Apart from personal and professional growth, teachers can also provide more support to students who are struggling with the adaptation to

online teaching and learning. It is further recommended that educators should be equipped with the capabilities to find a balance in managing stress between the challenges of online instruction and socio-emotional development.

Parents and Learners. Students were observed to adapt to the changes in classroom instruction from in-person to online learning faster than the teachers. Parents, most of whom were assessed as being technologically challenged, showed more frustration-related behaviors. Additionally, these behaviors were anchored in their lack of ability to support their children's learning using modern technology. It is finally recommended that parents should be provided with adequate training in the usage of technology to support their children. The district should initiate parental support programs to address this matter.

Future Research. Future studies should continue to examine the ways in which the pandemic has affected education and investigate the steps that can be taken by schools and teachers to modify and enhance their teaching methods in order to address the difficulties that have arisen during this time. It is crucial to reflect on the lessons learned during this time and apply them effectively to improve the standard of education for students as we continue to navigate the post-pandemic landscape.

7. Implications for the Post-Pandemic Period
School administrators, teachers, parents, students, and future researchers should think carefully about the implications for the post-pandemic period. It is evident that online and blended learning are here to stay and, as a result, educators and institutions of all levels must continue to improve their capacities and offerings for the delivery of high-quality instruction to students in these settings. To help teachers adjust to these new forms of instruction, professional development opportunities, particularly those centered on technology and online teaching techniques, should remain a top priority.

8. Study Limitations
Since the study employed a qualitative design using thematic analysis, it was limited to 20 respondents. Future researchers are encouraged to include teacher respondents from other U.S. states not included in this research. Also, for this research, the researchers focused only on teachers. However, future researchers are advised to include both teachers and students as participants in order to provide more varied perspectives.

9. References
Agarwal, S., & Kaushik, J. S. (2020). Student's perception of online learning during COVID pandemic. *The Indian Journal of Pediatrics*, *87*, 554-554. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12098-020-03327-7

AlAjmi, M. K. (2022). The impact of digital leadership on teachers' technology integration during the COVID-19 pandemic in Kuwait. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *112*, 101928. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2022.101928

Alghamdi, A. A. (2022). Saudi Teachers' Attitudes towards using Online Learning for Young Children during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Learning,*

Teaching and Educational Research, 21(6), 178-193. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.6.11

Aloufi, F., Ibrahim, A. L., Elsayed, A. M. A., Wardat, Y., & Ahmed, A. O. (2021). Virtual mathematics education during COVID-19: An exploratory study of teaching practices for teachers in simultaneous virtual classes. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *2012*. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.12.6

Allouh, A. M., Qadhi, S. M., Hasan, M. A., & Du, X. (2021). Teachers' self-efficacy and online teaching during COVID-19 pandemic in Qatari Governmental Schools. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *20*(11). https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.11.2

Alshwiah, A. A. (2021). Barriers to online learning: adjusting to the 'new normal 'in the time of COVID-19. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, *22*(4), 212-228. https://doi.org/10.17718/tojde.1002858

Astutik, Y., & Setiawan, S. (2022). " I Can Teach With My Videos": How Do Teachers Teach English to Young Learners in a Technology-Limited Environment?. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(7). https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.7.9

Badaru, K. A., Adu, K. O., Adu, E. O., & Duku, N. (2022). Teaching in a Pandemic: An Exploratory Study into University Instructors' Perceptions of Work-from-Home Opportunities and Challenges during the COVID-19 Lockdown in South Africa. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(7). https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.7.15

Bahasoan, A. N., Ayuandiani, W., Mukhram, M., & Rahmat, A. (2020). Effectiveness of online learning in pandemic COVID-19. *International journal of science, technology & management*, *1*(2), 100-106. https://doi.org/10.46729/ijstm.v1i2.30

Batac, K. I. T., Baquiran, J. A., & Agaton, C. B. (2021). Qualitative Content Analysis of Teachers Perceptions and Experiences in Using Blended Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *20*(6). *https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.6.12*

Bautista Jr, A., Bleza, D., Buhain, C., & Balibrea, D. (2021). School Support Received and the Challenges Encountered in Distance Learning Education by Filipino Teachers during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*. *https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.6.19*

Bichler, S., Gerard, L., Bradford, A., & Linn, M. C. (2021). Designing a remote professional development course to support teacher customization in science. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *123*, 106814. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106814

Bond, M. (2021) Schools and emergency remote education during the COVID-19 pandemic: A living rapid systematic review. *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, *15*(2), 191-247. http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4425683

Bonk, C., & Zhang, K. (2006). Introducing the R2D2 model: Online learning for the diverse learners of this world. *Distance Education*, *27*(2), 249-264. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587910600789670

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101. DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Broom, D. (2020). Coronavirus has exposed the digital divide like never before. *World Economic Forum*. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-digital-divide-internet-data-broadband-mobbile/

Burton, A., McKinlay, A., Dawes, J., Roberts, A., Fynn, W., May, T., & Fancourt, D. (2022). Understanding barriers and facilitators to compliance with UK social distancing

guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic: A qualitative interview study. *Behaviour Change*, 1-21. https://doi.org/10.1017/bec.2021.27

Cabeen, J. (2021). Professional Development That's Relevant Now. https://www.edutopia.org/article/professional-development-thats-relevant-now

Chamorro-Atalaya, O., Olivares-Zegarra, S., Atoche-Wong, R., Anton-De los Santos, M., Fierro-Bravo, M., Ruiz-Carrasco, K., ... & Chávez-Herrera, C. (2022). Academic Performance before and during the State of Emergency due to Covid- 19: Analysis from the Perspective of Distance Education. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 21(7), 366-378. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.7.19

Chiu, T. K. (2022). Applying the self-determination theory (SDT) to explain student engagement in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 54(sup1), S14-S30. https://doi.org/10.1080/15391523.2021.1891998

Clark, A. E., Nong, H., Zhu, H., & Zhu, R. (2021). Compensating for academic loss: Online learning and student performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. *China Economic Review*, 68, 101629. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chieco.2021.101629

Dayagbil, F. T., Palompon, D. R., Garcia, L. L., & Olvido, M. M. J. (2021, July). Teaching and learning continuity amid and beyond the pandemic. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 6, p. 678692). https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.678692

Dini, J. P. A. U. (2021). Influence of Parent Involvement to Children's Learning Interest During Corona Virus Pandemic. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini [Journal of Obsession: Journal of Education for Children and Youth]*, 5(2), 2050-2058.https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v5i2.1145

EdWeek Education Center. (2020). https://www.edweek.org/research-center/research-center-reports/student-engagement-during-the-pandemic-results-of-a-national-survey

El Said, G. R. (2021). How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect higher education learning experience? An empirical investigation of learners' academic performance at a university in a developing country. *Advances in Human-Computer Interaction*, *2021*,1-10.https://doi.org/10.1155/2021/6649524

Erarslan, A. (2021). English language teaching and learning during Covid-19: A global perspective on the first year. *Journal of Educational Technology and Online Learning*, 4(2), 349-367.https://doi.org/10.31681/jetol.907757

Fauzi, R. A., & Asri, Y. (2021, March). Barriers and solutions in online learning during the covid-19 pandemic, Indonesian language education students at the Riau Islamic University. In *Ninth International Conference on Language and Arts (ICLA 2020)* (pp. 14-18). Atlantis Press. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210325.003

Finol, M. O. (2020). Asynchronous vs. synchronous learning: A quick overview. https://www.brynmawr.edu/blendedlearning/asynchronous-vs-synchronouslearning-quick-overview

Fitzgibbons, L., Kruelski, N., and Young, R. (2021). *Breakout Rooms in an E-Learning Environment.*

Flores, M. (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on teacher education. European Journal of Teacher Education, 43(4), 453-456. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1824253

Franchi, T. (2020). The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on current anatomy education and future careers: A student's perspective. Anatomical Sciences Education,13(3), 312–315. https://doi.org/10.1002/ase.1966

Garbe, A., Ogurlu, U., Logan, N., & Cook, P. (2020). COVID-19 and Remote Learning: Experiences of Parents with Children during the Pandemic. American Journal Qualitative Research, 4(3), 45-65. https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/8471

Gocotano, Thessalou E., Mae Anthoneth L. Jerodiaz, Jenny Claire P. Banggay, Harold B. Rey Nasibog and Marivel B. Go (2021) Higher Education Students' Challenges on Flexible Online Learning Implementation in the Rural Areas: A Philippine Case, 281, https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.7.15

He, X., & Yang, H. H. (2021). Technological barriers and learning outcomes in online courses during the Covid-19 pandemic. In *Blended Learning: Re-thinking and Redefining the Learning Process. 14th International Conference, ICBL 2021, Proceedings 14*(pp.92-102). Springer International Publishing. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-80504-3_8

Hollister, B., Nair, P., Hill-Lindsay, S., & Chukoskie, L. (2022, May). Engagement in online learning: student attitudes and behavior during COVID-19. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 7, p. 851019) https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.851019

Iglesias-Pradas, S., Hernández-García, Á., Chaparro-Peláez, J., & Prieto, J. L. (2021). Emergency remote teaching and students' academic performance in higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic: A case study. *Computers in human behavior*, *119*, 106713. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106713

Ishak, N., Din, R., & Othman, N. (2022). Teachers' Perceptions and Challenges to the Use of Technology in Teaching and Learning during Covid-19 in Malaysia. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(5), 281-308. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.5.15

Jen, E., Mathijssen, S. & Hoogeveen, L. (2022). Supporting professional development for educators during the pandemic: Lessons from an international blended learning diploma program. Prospects 51, 583–587 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-021-09591-5

Joan, R. (2013). Flexible learning as new learning design in classroom process to promote quality education. I-Managers on Journal on School Education Technology, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1098325.pdf

Kabilan, M. K., & Annamalai, N. (2022). Online teaching during COVID-19 pandemic: A phenomenological study of university educators' experiences and challenges. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, *74*, 101182. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2022.101182.

Kalman, M., Kalender, B., & Cesur, B. (2022). Teacher Learning and Professional Development during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Descriptive Study. *Educational Research: Theory and Practice*, *33*(2), 1-22. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1352338

Karakose, T., Polat, H., & Papadakis, S. (2021). Examining teachers' perspectives on school principals' digital leadership roles and technology capabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Sustainability*, *13*(23), 13448. https://doi.org/10.3390/su132313448

Kiger, M & Varpio, L (2020): Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131, Medical Teacher, http://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2020.1755030

Klusmann, B., Trippenzee, M., Fokkens-Bruinsma, M., Sanderman, R., & Schroevers, M. J. (2022). Providing emergency remote teaching: What are teachers' needs and what could have helped them to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic?. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *118*, 103815. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103815

Knopik, T., Błaszczak, A., Maksymiuk, R., & Oszwa, U. (2021). Parental involvement in remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic—Dominant approaches and their diverse implications. *European Journal of Education*, *56*(4), 623-640. https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12474

Lansford, J. (2020). Parents' Involvement in Children's Education. *Psychology Today*. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/parenting-and-culture/202008/parents-involvement-in-children-s-education

Leal Filho, W., Lange Salvia, A., Abubakar, I. R., Mifsud, M., Azadi, H., Sharifi, A., ... & Lombardi, P. (2022). Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Routines of Higher Education Institutions: A Global Perspective. *Sustainability*, *14*(21), 14105. https://doi.org/10.3390/su142114105

Limniou, A. M., Varga-Atkins, T., Hands, C., & Elshamaa, M. (2021). Learning, student digital capabilities and academic performance over the COVID-19 pandemic. *Education Sciences*, *11*(7), 361. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11070361

Ling Li, L. (2020). Factors Affecting the Student Performance during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Scientific Research*. DOI: 10.4236/jss.2022.107032

Logan, L. (2020). Why Professional Learning for Teachers Is Essential During the Pandemic. *Education and Career News*. https://www.educationandcareernews.com/education-technology/whyteacher-professional-learning-is-essential-during-the-pandemic/

Mariano-Dolesh, M. L., Collantes, L. M., Ibanez, E. D., & Pentang, J. (2022). Mindset and levels of conceptual understanding in the problem-solving of preservice mathematics teachers in an online learning environment. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(6), 18-33. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.6.2

Marshall, D. T., Shannon, D. M., & Love, S. M. (2020). How teachers experienced the COVID-19 transition to remote instruction. *Phi Delta Kappan [Professional Magazine]*, *102*(3), 46-50. https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721720970702

Mcclain, C., Vogels, E.A., Perrin, A., Sechopoulos, S., & Raine, L. (2021). Parents, their children and school during the pandemic. PEW Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2021/09/01/parents-their-children-and-school-during-the-pandemic/

McKenna, B. A., Horton, C., & Kopittke, P. M. (2022). Online engagement during COVID-19: comparing a course previously delivered traditionally with emergency online delivery. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*. https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/6813033

Means, B., Toyama, Y., Murphy, R., Bakia, M., & Jones, K. (2010). Evaluation of evidence based practices in online learning: Meta-analysis and review of online Learning studies. https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/tech/evidence basedpractices/finalreport.pdf

Morra, C. N., Adkins-Jablonsky, S. J., & Raut, S. A. (2021). Leveraging virtual experiences for international professional development opportunities during the pandemic and beyond. *Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education*, 22(1), ev22i1 2511. https://doi.org/10.1128/jmbe.v22i1.2511

Muñoz, F., Beltrán, J. C., Alves, R., & Rodríguez, F. (2022). Academic Satisfaction of Pedagogy Students Regarding Learning in Virtual Mode. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching, and Educational Research*, *21*(9), 35-51. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.9.3

Nhongo, R., & Siziba, L. (2022). Adopting virtual classes during the COVID-19 lockdown: Interrogating new approaches to teaching and the exclusion of learners in rural settings. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching, and Educational Research*, 21(2). https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.2.2

NWEA. (2020). Learning During COVID-19: Initial Findings on Students' Reading and Math Achievement and Growth. *https://www.nwea.org/news-center/press-

releases/new-research-on-academic-impacts-from-covid-19-closures-highlights-gains-in-reading-and-setbacks-in-math/

Nwosu, L. I., Matashu, M., & Buabeng, A. T. (2022). A Call to Strengthen Instructional Leadership to Support Learner Achievement During and Post COVID-19: A Systematic Literature Review Approach. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(7). https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.7.12

Octaberlina, L. R., & Muslimin, A. I. (2020). EFL students perspective towards online learning barriers and alternatives using Moodle/Google Classroom during COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Higher Education*, *9*(6), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v9n6p1

Oztok, M., Zingaro, D., Brett, C., & Hewitt, J. (2013). Exploring asynchronous and synchronous tool use in online courses. Computer Education, 60, 87–94. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2012.08.007

Panagouli, E., Stavridou, A., Savvidi, C., Kourti, A., Psaltopoulou, T., Sergentanis, T. N., & Tsitsika, A. (2021). School performance among children and adolescents during COVID-19 pandemic: Asystematic review. *Children*, *8*(12), 1134. https://doi.org/10.1155/2021/6649524

Pangestu, U., & Karwan, D. H. (2021). The role of the principal to increase teacher innovation and creativity during the pandemic. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam [Journal Of Islamic Education Management]* 6(2), 251-266. https://doi.org/10.31538/ndh.v6i2.1432

Pappas, C. (2015). Synchronous learning advantages and disadvantages in corporate training. https://elearningindustry.com/synchronous-learning- advantages-and disadvantages-in-corporate-training

PEW Research Center. (2021). The Internet and the Pandemic. https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2021/09/01/the-internet-and-the-pandemic/

Placencia Jr, M. C., & Lopres, J. R. (2022). Learning Conditions vis-à-vis Alternative Delivery Mode in the Philippine Department of Education during the Pandemic for Instruction Augmentation. http://doi.org/10.51386/25815946/ijsmsv5i6p119

Pressley, T., & Ha, C. (2022). Teacher exhaustion during COVID-19: Exploring the role of administrators, self-efficacy, and anxiety. *The Teacher Educator*, *57*(1), 61-78. https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2021.1995094

Radina, N. K., & Balakina, J. V. (2021). Challenges for education during the pandemic: an overview of literature. *Вопросы образования* [Educational Issues], (1 (eng)), 178-194. https://doi. org/10.17323/1814-9545-2021-1-178-194

Realyvásquez-Vargas, A., Maldonado-Macías, A. A., Arredondo-Soto, K. C., Baez-Lopez, Y., Carrillo-Gutiérrez, T., & Hernández-Escobedo, G. (2020). The impact of environmental factors on academic performance of university students taking online classes during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Mexico. *Sustainability*, *12*(21), 9194. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12219194

Reyes-Guerra, D., Maslin-Ostrowski, P., Barakat, M. Y., & Stefanovic, M. A. (2021, March). Confronting a compound crisis: The school principal's role during initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 6, p. 617875). Frontiers Media SA. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.617875

Ribeiro, L. M., Cunha, R. S., Silva, M. C. A. E., Carvalho, M., & Vital, M. L. (2021). Parental involvement during pandemic times: Challenges and opportunities.*Education Sciences*, *11*(6), 302. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11060302

Salas-Pilco, S. Z., Yang, Y., & Zhang, Z. (2022). Student engagement in online learning in Latin American higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic

review. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *53*(3), 593-619. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.13190

Sari, D. K., & Maningtyas, R. T. (2020, November). Parents' involvement in distance learning during the covid-19 pandemic. In *2nd Early Childhood and Primary Childhood Education (ECPE 2020)* (pp. 94-97). Atlantis Press. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201112.018

Smith, A., & Osborn, M. (2007). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis.* http://med-fom-Familymed-research.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2012/03/IPA_Smith_Osborne2162.pdf

Srivastava, S., & Agarwal, N. (2020). Psychological & social effects of pandemic Covid-19 on education system, business growth, economic crisis & health issues globally. *Globus-An International Journal of Management and IT*, *11*(2), 40-45. http://dx.doi.org/10.46360/globus.mgt.120201007

Spitzer, M. W. H., & Musslick, S. (2021). Academic performance of K-12 students in an online-learning environment for mathematics increased during the shutdown of schools in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. *PloS one*, *16*(8), e0255629. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0255629

Srivastava, S., & Agarwal, N. (2020). Psychological & social effects of pandemic Covid-19 on education system, business growth, economic crisis & health issues globally. *Globus-An International Journal of Management and IT*, *11*(2), 40-45. http://doi.org/10.46360/globus.mgt.120201007

Sumalinog, G. G. (2022). Barriers of online education in the new normal: Teachers' perspectives. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(1). https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.1.3

Tamah, S. M., Triwidayati, K. R., & Utami, T. S. D. (2020). Secondary school language teachers' online learning engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*, *19*, 803-832. https://doi.org/10.28945/4626

Tarkar, P. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education system. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, *29*(9), 3812-3814. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/PreetiTarkar/publication/352647439Impact_Of_Covid19_Pandemic_On_Education_System/links/60d1e909299bf1b8d99d279/Impact-Of-Covid-19-Pandemic-On-Education-System.pdf

Tay, L. Y., Lee, S. S., & Ramachandran, K. (2021). Implementation of online home-based learning and students' engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic: A case study of Singapore mathematics teachers. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, *30*, 299-310. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-021-00572-y

Tigaa, R. A., & Sonawane, S. L. (2020). An international perspective: teaching chemistry and engaging students during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Chemical Education*, *97*(9), 3318-3321. https://doi.org/10.31681/jetol.907757

Tugirinshuti, G. J., Mugabo, L. R., & Banuza, A. (2021). Integrating Video-Based Multimedia in Teaching Physics in Context of Covid-19 in Rwandan Secondary Schools. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *20*(12). https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.12.4

University of Perpetual Help [UPH]. (2020). The Benefits of flexible learning. https://perpetualdalta.edu.ph/2020/10/02/the-benefits-of-flexible-learning/ US Census Bureau. (2020). USA Facts. https://usafacts.org/articles/internet-access-students-at-home/

U.S. Department of Education Fact Sheet. (2021). American Rescue Plan Act of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund.

Vellanki, S. S., Mond, S., Khan, Z. K., & Nair, L. G. (2022). Teachers' Viewpoint of Metacognitive Strategy Instruction in Listening during Remote Teaching in Oman: Challenges and Strategies. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching, and Educational Research*, *21*(7), 82-106. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.7.5

Venton, B. J., and Pompano, R. R. (2021). Strategies for enhancing remote student engagement through active learning. *Anal. Bioanal. Chem.* 413, 1507–1512. http://doi.org/10.1007/s00216-021-03159

Villarin, J. R. T. (2020). Enhanced community quarantine. http://www.ateneo.edu/enhanced-community-Quarantine

Vu, C. T., Hoang, A. D., Than, V. Q., Nguyen, M. T., Dinh, V. H., Le, Q. A. T., ... & Nguyen, Y. C. (2020). Dataset of Vietnamese teachers' perspectives and perceived support during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Data in brief*, *31*, 105788. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2020.105788X

Xue, S., Wang, C., & Yang, Y. (2022). Exploring affecting factors of and developing a framework for teachers' online instruction. *Learning and Instruction*, *82*, 101665. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2022.101665

Appendix 1

Research Questions

Part 1: Respondents' Profile

1. Write your complete name. (Note: For privacy purposes, a generic name will be assigned in the research manuscript later, not your complete name.)
2. How many years have you been teaching? (USA, Philippines, etc.)
3. Were you working as a teacher when the COVID-19 pandemic started? (Yes/No)
4. Which State in America are you currently working as a teacher?
5. What subject/s are you currently teaching in the United States?
6. Which level of education are you currently working as a teacher? (Primary, Secondary or Tertiary)
7. What mode of instruction has your U.S school adapted during the pandemic? (Blended, Full Online, or Modular)

Part 2: Lived Experiences of the Respondents

1. How did your classroom instruction look like during the pandemic? (To answer this question, please discuss these elements: students' engagement, behavior management, collaboration, and assessment.)
2. In relation to the elements mentioned in question number 1, what barriers or challenges have you experienced in your instruction during the pandemic? (Be sure to use details from real-life events or personal experiences in the classroom)
3. What was/were your coping mechanism/s to solve or eliminate the challenges in your instruction?
4. How did your school administration or district support you to solve or eliminate those barriers?
5. Describe the parental support your school gets during the pandemic.