

Teaching from the Remote: Investigating Teachers' Educational Presence and Instructional Experiences in Using Alternative Learning Modalities

Kayla Aira V. Estipona^{*}, Mary Gail C. Gonzales, Jaliha S. Jumaarin, Shareen P. Castro, Sher-Aini S. Hadjirul, Russel P. Alam, and Arayana F. Kunting

College of Teacher Education, Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga City, Philippines

^{*}Corresponding Author: ekaylaaira@gmail.com

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines brought about a significant challenge to the traditional learning mode among AP teachers due to their reliance on conventional teaching methods, necessitating a rapid shift and implementation of alternative learning modalities. This study, conducted through a qualitative approach, investigates teachers' educational presence and instructional experiences using alternative learning modalities in remote learning. It employed a thematic analysis of data gathered from nine semi-structured interviews, exploring understanding of teachers' educational presence and instructional experiences. The finding highlights two key sections: educational presence when using alternative learning modalities and instructional experiences in using alternative learning modalities. The analysis revealed the emergence of several key themes: (1) meaningful social presence and (2) essential teaching presence in online learning, (3) changing conception of teaching presence, (4) establishing connections in online learning, (5) implementing interactive online activities, (6) integrating educational multimedia materials, (7) employing strategies to promote student interaction, and (8) lastly utilizing diverse assessment strategies. With that, teacher training programs should prioritize the development of essential teaching presence skills, which includes establishing meaningful social connections, promoting active student engagements, and diverse interactive activities and assessment strategies to ensure effective and engaging online learning experiences.

Keywords: *educational presence, alternative learning modalities, social presence, cognitive presence, teaching presence*

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Introduction

Social studies include various disciplines that analyze social relationships and societal functions and how they evolve (Crisolo et al., 2021). According to NCSS (2023), "Social studies define as individuals, communities, systems, and their interactions across time and place". It prepares students for local, national, and global civic life. Social studies aim to be the center of knowledge of human rights and create global citizens (Grant,

VanSledright, and Halvorsen, 2025), with a sense of responsibility to work together for a just world in which they want to live.

As Social Studies is considered as fundamental basic subjects to be taught both primary and secondary education, it is a challenge for educators to serve its foremost goals, as it prepares learners for a lifelong practice of civil discourse and civic engagement (Schugurensky & Myers, 2003). Acknowledging the presence of unstoppable difficulties when teaching social

studies, educators have no choice but to look for a possible solution to continue the passage of knowledge to their learners. While these challenges are prevalent nationwide, this current study presents the unique difficulties of teaching social studies using alternative learning modalities by Araling Panlipunan teachers. This problem leads to the need to investigate further the teachers' insights on educational presence and their experiences using alternative learning modalities. Thus, this emphasized that social studies are as important as other core subjects such as English, Filipino, Science, and Mathematics in the Philippines educational system.

Moreover, Alternative Learning Modalities are one of the solutions they see to address inconveniences caused by some instances. Due to the strike of a pandemic, in 2020, the door to alternative learning modalities opened. Traditional face-to-face learning was no longer possible to adopt, as it may risk the health of the learners and educators. There are several types of distance learning, but this paper focuses on Online Distance learning as an alternative learning modality. In said types of distance learning, the teacher serves as a facilitator, engaging learners' active participation through various technologies accessed through the internet while they are geographically remote from each other during instruction. Online learning allows live synchronous instruction, the internet being the medium to facilitate learner-teacher and peer-to-peer communication. It serves the educational presence the learners and teachers need as the responses are real-time.

The Department of Education (DepEd) provides alternatives for learners and educational institutions suitable for classes like Alternative Delivery Modes (ADM), Blended Learning, Home-schooling programs, and In-person Classes. The Department of Education (DepEd) gives the educational institutions and the school heads sufficient time to transform the teaching process. The transformations in learning modalities in teaching remarkably impact what to modify in different settings. According to Pacheco (2019) and Benito (2017), calamities direct alteration action because they generate newly discovered and divergent be in needs for individuals, in particular the learners, facilitators, guardians, administrators, and partners, are part of the educational process and discovered their virtual identity.

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework emphasizes the importance of social, teaching, and cognitive presence in online educational experiences (Swan, Garrison, Richardson, 2009). Social presence mediates teaching and cognitive presence, involving affective/personal responses, open communication,

and cohesive responses (Garrison, Cleveland-Innes, Fung, 2010; Rourke et al., 2001). On the other hand, cognitive presence, structured within the Practical Inquiry (PI) model, consists of four phases: triggering event, exploration, integration, and resolution, essential for successful higher education (Garrison et al., 2000; Garrison & Anderson, 2003). As Anderson et al. (2001) outlined, teaching presence includes designing courses, facilitating discussions, and providing direct instruction. Design and organization activities involve planning curriculum, selecting instructional methods, and utilizing resources effectively. Facilitating discourse focuses on guiding learner interactions, fostering engagement, and evaluating learning processes. Direct instruction encompasses delivering content, assessing comprehension, providing feedback, and addressing misconceptions.

Digital education has become highly popular in many institutions worldwide (Fidalgo et al., 2020). Digital technologies in education pave the way for distance education, another important modality for increasing coverage while maintaining quality standards comparable to face-to-face education (Galvis, 2018). More so, in the study of Stephen and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2021), they mentioned that the perspectives of teachers and students are critical when using new teaching methods and introducing new technology in the teaching-learning process, such as alternative learning modalities. This implies that teachers' perceptions are crucial because they play an important role in implementing these various modalities and ensuring quality education while using alternative learning modalities in the teaching-learning process.

Many recent studies have highlighted the relevance of understanding and identifying students' preferred learning modalities for developing effective strategies (Gray & Diloreto, 2016; Izmirli & Izmirli, 2019; Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021; De Freitas & de Freitas, 2013; Al-Maqbali, & Al-Shamsi, 2023; Dennen et al., 2007; Martin & Bolliger, 2018; Dorresteijn, et al.). However, there are limited studies on understanding teachers' perspectives using alternative learning modalities. Hence, this study seeks to contribute to the limited body of research exploring teachers' perspectives on using alternative learning modalities, specifically focusing on the educational presence of Araling Panlipunan teachers. By investigating their experiences and understanding their approach to educational presence in these alternative learning modalities, the study aims to address existing gaps in knowledge and provide valuable insights for developing programs, initiatives, and support systems that empower Araling Panlipunan teachers

with the necessary skills to design and deliver instruction in distance learning environments effectively. The findings of this study will serve as a valuable resource for future research investigating the educational presence of Araling Panlipunan teachers in the context of alternative learning modalities.

Statement of the Problem

This current study seeks to primarily investigate the educational presence and instructional experiences of teachers in using alternative learning modalities in the context of remote learning. Specifically, it attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive their educational presence when using alternative learning modalities to teach their students?
2. How do teachers describe their instructional experiences using alternative learning modalities in teaching their students?

Review of Related Literature

The advent of online learning and digital technologies has profoundly impacted educational systems globally, particularly in the sudden shift of the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced many schools to transition from traditional classroom-based learning to online modalities (Carroll et al., 2024; Carroll & Conboy, 2020). This rapid shift, necessitated by health restrictions, significantly impacted students' socialization and communication while leaving educators with limited time to fully consider the broader implications for students' overall learning experiences (Daniel, 2020). The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework, with its three interconnected elements of social, cognitive, and teaching presence, offers a valuable approach to enhancing online learning experiences (Garrison, 2007). By incorporating these elements, educators can create engaging and effective virtual learning environments that cater to diverse learning needs, fostering a sense of community and promoting active learning (Evans et al., 2019). Therefore, learners and educators contribute to each of these presences, although educators typically demonstrate a more substantial teaching presence (Garrison, 2007).

This study focuses on the effectiveness of online learning by examining the three presences: cognitive, social, and teaching presence within the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison et al., 2010). It emphasizes the critical role of teaching presence in online learning, highlighting its positive impact on both cognitive and social presence. The study further explores the relationship between social presence and cognitive

presence, recognizing the need for further investigation in this area (Xioa et al., 2024). Participants in the study unanimously acknowledged the paramount importance of presence in their teaching practices, underscoring that it emerges through attentive teaching, student engagement, and the relevance of the subject matter (Roefs et al., 2021). They also recognized the potential to cultivate an environment conducive to presence by actively establishing connections and tailoring the subject matter to address the diverse needs of individual students. The sense of connection and interaction among peers aligns with the importance of social presence because it is crucial for fostering teamwork and bridging the gap between familiarity and satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2023). Even in online settings, social media platforms and learning websites offer opportunities for students to connect with classmates and build relationships. Being a present teacher requires full engagement, self-awareness, and attentiveness to students and their learning process. This presence enables teachers to discern student needs with expertise and empathy, utilizing their knowledge and pedagogical techniques to facilitate learning. Establishing trust is fundamental to achieving this form of presence (Rodgers et al., 2006).

Overall, this study underscored the prevalence of presence in interactive learning environments. In these contexts, presence manifested through shared experiences and each student's unique characteristics, as observed by the participants. They valued presence's role in enhancing students' comprehension of the subject matter and personal development, supported by active learning methodologies and dynamic classroom or peer interactions. For the participants, these encounters with presence resulted in varying levels of fulfillment (Roefs et al., 2021).

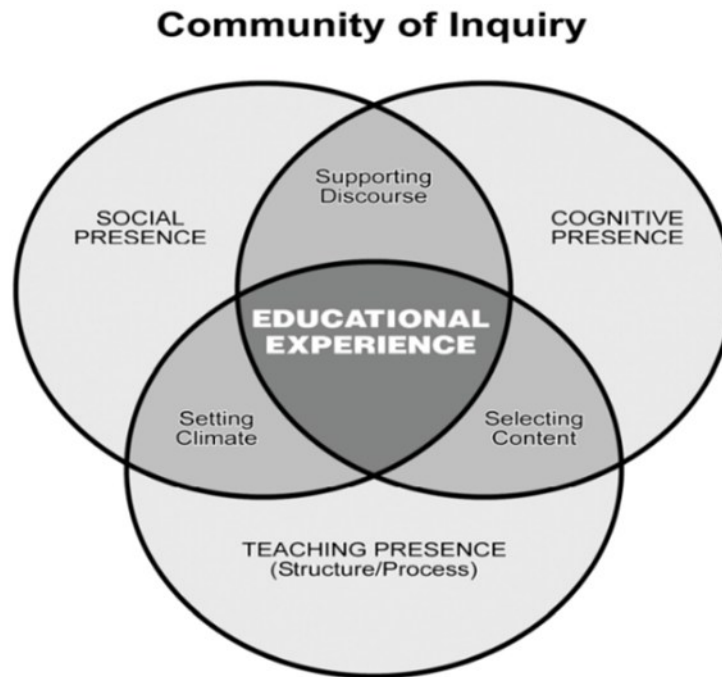
Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in utilizing Online Community of Inquiry Review: Social, Cognitive, and Teaching Presence Issues. It had its genesis in the work of John Dewey and is consistent with constructivist approaches to learning in higher education. This framework has provided significant insights and methodological solutions for studying online learning. The structure of the community of inquiry framework has also been confirmed through factor analysis by Garrison, Cleveland-Innes, Fung, Arbaugh, and Hwang. The concept of teaching presence is adopted from Canadian scholar Garrison's CoI (Community of Inquiry) framework, which is crucial in online education.

Furthermore, it emphasizes the interconnected nature of social, cognitive, and teaching presence in online learning. Social

Figure 1

COI Framework: The Interrelatedness of Social, Cognitive and Teaching Presence



Note. Adapted from "E-Learning in the 21st Century" by Garrison et al. (2000)

presence, the ability to project oneself and build relationships, initially attracted much research attention due to the asynchronous nature of online learning. However, the intersection of social and cognitive presence, where learners collaboratively explore, construct, and confirm understanding through reflection, is crucial for meaningful learning outcomes (Garrison, 2007). As Anderson et al. (2001) described, teaching presence involves designing, facilitating, and guiding these cognitive and social processes to achieve desired learning outcomes. Faculty members play a vital role in supporting online students through well-aligned learning experiences and ongoing communication, requiring a shift in mindset and tool adoption for successful online teaching (Northeastern Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning Through Research).

Materials and Methods

Research Design

The current study employs a qualitative research design, an inquiry approach to exploring a central issue. The researchers explore this problem to understand the meaning of individuals or groups

(Creswell, 2014). Specifically, it uses a phenomenological approach to examine Araling Panlipunan teachers' perceptions of educational presence and their instructional experiences while using alternative learning modalities. A phenomenological approach is a qualitative method that is used to understand and describe the meaning of the lived experiences of individuals. It particularly aims to describe the essence of the phenomenon experienced by individuals (Patton, 2001). Moreover, Creswell (2009), highlights that in this approach is usually used in-depth interviews as to allow participants to describe their experiences in their own way. With that, this elicits rich descriptions from participants regarding their experiences which include their feelings, thoughts, and perceptions. The live experiences of the AP teachers in this study were bracketed, analyzed, and compared to identify the essence of the phenomenon. Their perceptions and personal experiences were encouraged to share in this study to provide a deeper understanding of their lived experiences.

Therefore, a qualitative phenomenological approach is appropriate to use in this study as it aims to investigate and understand the lived

experiences of AP teachers specifically their insights into educational presence and their experiences while using alternative learning modalities.

Research Locale

The study is conducted in the Zamboanga Peninsula, region IX of the Philippines. Zamboanga City's predominantly diverse culture characterizes the area. The educational landscape is marked by a mix of public and private schools and mixed perspectives of teacher-student engagement, with a growing emphasis on implementing alternative learning modalities. The schools are located in rural settings, and some have limited access to technology and resources.

Sampling Technique

The study participants consisted of seven secondary Araling Panlipunan teachers from Zamboanga City, ranging in age from 25 to 40. Convenience sampling was employed as the sampling technique due to its suitability for this research. This approach facilitated the prompt collection of data from readily available teachers, addressing the constraints of time and accessibility inherent in researching the experiences and insights of secondary Araling Panlipunan teachers. The sample comprised one male and six female participants, acknowledging a gender imbalance. However, the study's primary focus on exploring the specific experiences of secondary teachers, examining their challenges and perspectives regardless of gender, means this imbalance does not invalidate the findings. Nevertheless, the study highlights the need for future research that specifically addresses the experiences of male teachers in this context to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse

perspectives of secondary Araling Panlipunan teachers' insights on Educational Presence and their experiences using alternative learning modalities.

Instrument

This study used a semi-structured interview guide to gather in-depth information from participants. The interview guide comprised three distinct categories, each containing three open-ended questions, resulting in a total of nine interview questions used by the researchers. This format was designed to comprehensively gather responses from participants that will help examine teachers' perceptions and experiences of educational presence while using online learning modalities and answer research questions.

Data Collection

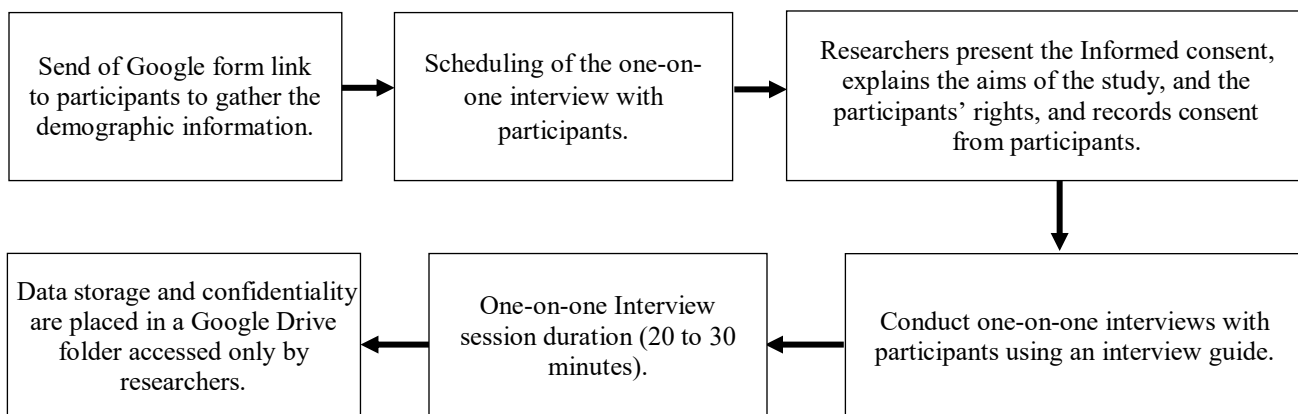
Before the one-on-one interview, the participants were given a Google form link to fill out. This initial form gathers data about the participants' demographic information that will be used for the study. During the online one-on-one interview, researchers used an interview guide. In the beginning, the researcher presented the informed consent form, which indicates the purpose and objectives of the study. Participants were informed ahead of time about their rights as participants before proceeding to the interview questions.

Moreover, the participants were asked if they were willing to record the interview session, which will be used confidentially by researchers to explore and examine their shared perceptions and experiences. The online, one-on-one interview lasted at least 20-30 minutes.

A flowchart outlines the sequential steps involved in gathering data from the participants, providing a clear and concise visual representation

Figure 2

A Methodological Process of Data Gathering among AP Teachers



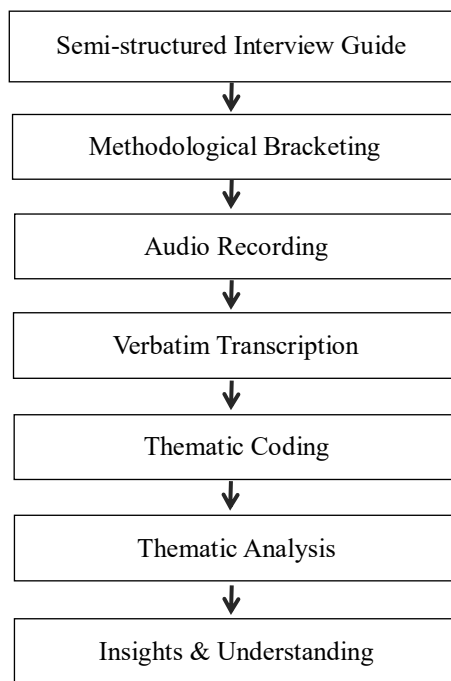
of the data collection process employed in this study.

Data Analysis

This study used a semi-structured interview guide to facilitate an in-depth insight of participant

Figure 3

A Qualitative Procedural Approach on Data Analysis



on their perceptions and experiences of educational presence in an online learning environment.

To avoid researcher bias, a methodological bracketing approach was implemented throughout the data collection and analysis process. Researchers bracketed their own opinions and experiences to ensure an objective interpretation of participant responses. Following the individual interviews conducted by the researchers, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim into text format. The transcribed data underwent thematic coding to facilitate analysis and interpretation. Researchers systematically identified emerging themes based on similarities and differences within the data. This thematic analysis allowed for the extraction of patterns and insights from participant experiences, providing a deeper understanding of their perspectives on online learning.

Below is a flowchart that clearly represents the sequential steps involved in the data analysis procedure. This flowchart provides a clear and concise depiction of the process employed in analyzing the data for this current study.

Ethical Considerations

This study adheres to ethical standards for conducting the research process. Before the interview, informed consent was presented to all participants, ensuring that participants were fully aware of the purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits of the study. Confidentiality and privacy of participants' identities were observed. Hence, throughout the analysis and interpretation process, the anonymity of participants was highly observed. Moreover, in the data analysis and discussions, this study utilized the member-checking approach to ensure that researchers share the findings to ensure accurate interpretations.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the key themes and findings that were revealed from the transcripts analysis. The transcript analysis was used to create codes and themes to structure the presentation of the results and findings. With that, the several key themes that emerged are organized into two sections. The first section focuses on how teachers perceive their educational presence, while the section on teachers' experience in using alternative learning modalities.

Educational Presence when Using Alternative Delivery Modalities

This section presents a focused analysis of the results and findings related to teachers' perceptions of their educational presence. Primarily, the analysis is based on the teachers' understanding of this concept, exploring how teachers perceive their role, impact, and significance within the educational context. Therefore, in exploring teacher's perceptions on how they perceive educational presence these are the following themes emerged in analyzing the interview transcripts.

Theme 1: Meaningful Social Presence in Online Learning

Among participants' responses, one common belief reveals that all of them positively responded to the importance of establishing meaningful connections with learners in an online learning environment. Two of the participants described their perceived beliefs as like these:

"Well, when we say the establishment of an online connection in a learning environment, ahh, this is one way of catering to a maximum number of students and people that we would want to have a relationship or a connection with ahh. Establishing such online connection would

mean that we would want to cater to many students by ensuring that their ideas, perspectives, points of view, and opinions are well catered."

(Participant 1)

"Okay, so I believe establishing a connection in an online learning environment is an essential and crucial part because for you to get the attention of the students you for them to learn the lesson that you wanted them to learn in the class. So that is why I believe it's essential".

(Participant 4)

Based on the responses extracted from the two participants in this current study, both of their responses greatly emphasize the importance and necessity of establishing meaningful connections in an online learning environment. Participant 1 response emphasized that there is a need to cater to and accommodate learners' various ideas and perspectives in an online learning environment. Additionally, the response of Participant 4 highlights the importance of getting students' attention in an online class to ensure their learning.

One of the findings highlighted is teachers' experiences of the crucial role of establishing connections with students while facilitating online classes. This result is similar to the study conducted by Kaufmann and Vallade (2020); they said that teachers and students need to interact to build a sense of community despite the distance. This implies that teachers' social presence plays a vital role in establishing and maintaining rapport or relationships with students in an online class setting. More so, previous studies have mentioned the importance of interacting with others because this helps foster social presence (Lim, 2023). Social presence during interactions with others is important to increase participation, which helps facilitate meaningful learning experiences (Zhao et al., 2014). Similar to Park's (2014) study, he emphasized that interaction is an important factor that needs to be present to ensure effective online learning. These related studies show that social presence is significant in helping establish interaction and participation in online classes.

Theme 2: Essential Teaching Presence in Online Learning

In an online learning environment, teacher presence remains crucial to ensure effective and engaging learning among students. This theme is emerging from the similarities of the participant's responses to the interview question. Following are transcript excerpts of the participants describing their opinions of the significance of teacher

presence in an online learning environment.

"Okay, so during the pandemic, we went online. Because, you know, if we stopped learning for the kids, or they did not have school, they would not be learning. Or if there was not a teacher engaging them. So, as teachers, we need to be a part of our students' lives to ensure their learning continues."

(Participant 2)

"The teacher's presence... Of course, ma'am, as a teacher, it is important to control the kids, or else... We should ensure we can still facilitate their learning effectively, even with limited teaching modalities. Because if there is no teacher presence, especially online, then the students will not learn anything. Unlike in a classroom setting, where you are there, you can monitor them, call their attention when they are not paying attention."

(Participant 3)

Two among the participants described how important teachers' presence is in an online learning environment. Similarly, they both acknowledge that teachers and management are greatly needed to ensure students learning and active engagement in the online class environment. On the other hand, results from participants emphasized particularly their difficulty and concerns about the lack of physical presence because of online distance learning. Accordingly, to overcome the challenges associated with online teaching and learning, students must strongly feel the teacher's presence, which will help facilitate teaching presence. It will surely help promote an active facilitation of online discussion between teachers and students (Dennen et al., 2007)

Theme 3: Changing Conceptions on Teacher Presence

The transition to an online learning environment changes the role of teacher presence in a classroom setting. Primarily, one of the most significant changes is that a teacher's role becomes a learning facilitator. Despite the physical distance in online learning, teacher presence remains significant because, as perceived by teachers there, there is a huge difference compared to the traditional way of learning. Still, teacher presence in online learning remains necessary to help maintain continuous learning and provide a classroom-like atmosphere that guides student's learning. One of the participants acknowledged how a teacher's presence changes in an online

learning environment. Following is the transcript excerpt of the participant describing his view on the teacher as a facilitator, in which their presence helps manage the online class.

"Yeah, way back in the previous years of teaching, we see teachers as the ones who provide inputs, who provide ideas, but with the emergence of the 21st century, students with the emergence of Globalization. With the different revolutions we experience, teachers now serve as facilitators of learning. We do not just input or provide data. We facilitate the immediate learning or the on-the-spot learning by the students."

(Participant 1)

Another participant acknowledges that there is a huge difference in teacher presence in an online learning environment. Below is her transcript excerpt describing her perceptions.

"Yes, there is really a big difference in terms of physical, or person-to-person/face-to-face learning environment comparing to the online learning environment because... definitely when you see someone teaching in the person-to-person scenario and online scenario, it is really different, person to person you are... we are conscious, but you can manage."

(Participant 5)

These perceptions from the participants emphasize their perceptions of the difference in teacher presence in an online setting as compared to face-to-face or traditional learning. In online learning, managing a teacher's presence remains necessary for effective learning. Teachers' presence in online learning enables students to feel connected and guided through the learning process.

Instructional Experiences in Using Alternative Delivery Modalities

Moreover, this section is a focused analysis of the results and findings related to teachers' experiences using alternative learning modalities. This section explores the teacher's practical experiences of implementing these approaches by examining the challenges and effectiveness associated with the use of alternative learning modalities in the teaching and learning process. The findings from the transcript analysis reveal that participants significantly perceived the importance of the presence of teaching in an online learning environment. Important emphasis was given in this

section on the significant changes in the teacher role in an online setting, the importance of teacher presence for effective and engaging learning, and the challenges teachers experience with physical distance in online learning. Moreover, one of the participants clearly stated that the role of teachers in online learning changed into that of facilitators in learning. These findings were consistently similar to the study conducted by Richardson et al. (2016), which found that instructor presence was a significant aspect in an online learning environment. Further, this study reveals that teachers' perceptions viewed teacher presence as an important factor, which is similar to the findings of the current study. However, reasons for teachers vary. On the other hand, collectively, participants acknowledge the importance of teacher presence in maintaining effective learning that will guide students in an online class environment.

Theme 1: Establishing Connection in Online Learning.

Another theme that emerged is the challenges experienced by teachers in establishing connections in an online learning environment. It reveals that the participant must establish a connection in online learning. The participant discussed the challenges that they encountered in establishing and maintaining the connection between them and their students in an online class. Two of the participants described the challenges that they experienced:

"Our private school, St. Joseph School, uses a blended learning modality. I think it is a good teaching method because it's convenient for students. However, one downside is the impact it has on student participation. Some students, maybe even most, do not actively participate in class. They say things like, 'Ma'am, I do not have internet,' or 'My signal is weak.' So, while there are advantages to blended learning, there are also disadvantages."

(Participant 2)

"In terms of online learning for teachers and students, I think maintaining a strong connection will be very difficult. One factor is that students cannot see their teachers during class. Secondly, it's easy for them to get distracted even during online classes. For example, they might feel like no one is watching them so that they might slack off on their requirements. There are many distractions during online classes, which is a real challenge for teachers and students."

(Participant 7)

Participant interview excerpts reveal the challenges they experienced with establishing connections in online class settings. Initially, Participant Two expressed a positive sentiment regarding the convenience a blended learning modality offers. However, later, it highlights the common concern teachers encounter, which is the lack of active participation among students. Due to poor or unstable internet connectivity experienced by students. Furthermore, the response of Participant Seven stressed his harrowing experience of fostering and maintaining connections within online classes. Accordingly, it is difficult due to the many distractions experienced by students that affect the learning process. Moreover, in connection with promoting interactive activities, educational multimedia materials can be integrated to facilitate learning in an online class. One of the participants emphasizes the need to use PowerPoint presentations. As well as using innovative content and online tools to meet the demands of alternative learning modalities. Online applications that participants used include Quizizz, Kahoot, and Quizlet. These help enhance online teaching and learning among students. Similar findings revealed in this study create fun and engaging online learning. Teachers integrate various online approaches, such as gamification, to maintain students' interest in the class and facilitate online learning (De Freitas and de Freitas, 2013).

Theme 2: Implementing Interactive Online Activities.

Mostly from participants' responses, they consistently emphasized the importance of using and integrating interactive activities in the learning process to foster active engagement among students while in an online learning setting. Following are transcript excerpts from some participants describing their experiences in incorporating interactive strategies in online classes:

"So, in that case, the number one thing we can do is provide interactive activities as we go away with the traditional PowerPoint of presenting ideas and inputs; instead, we have to use this gamification or game-based learning. Majority of the students since we are dealing with 21st century's students or people. They have improved already; they have improved that for us to be able to get their attention, we have to go to their level. By going to their level, we have to provide interactive activities and game-based learning."

(Participant 1)

"You should have rewards. That is why I use gamification and incorporate games. It encourages students to engage in my class. After they play, they get a reward, so they are more likely to participate."

(Participant 2)

Based on their responses, participants have stressed similar experiences in the approaches they used to promote students' active engagement in online classes. They incorporate in their online classes gamification to be able to get students' attention and make learning more engaging. On the other hand, some of the participants noted that maintaining students' active engagement in class is necessary to constantly monitor the student's focus and their understanding during the learning process. Following are transcript excerpts from some participants describing their experiences:

"I think I can promote active engagement by making sure we check in with students to see if they are still following along with the discussion. Sometimes, when we lecture, we get caught up in what we are saying and do not realize that our students might have lost focus."

(Participant 3)

"Actually, active engagement is one of the challenges in an online learning environment because it is really hard to maintain the active engagement of and every student, but as a teacher and an educator, you really have to overcome that situation that you have to maintain the engagement of the student from the very beginning of your class discussion until the end, so from time to time I think you have to follow-up, asked question monitor the student and make your instruction/ subject matter interesting for them so that there will be no dull moment in that particular session"

(Participant 5)

Based on these transcript excerpts, similar answers can be drawn from these two participants. Both emphasized the importance of constantly checking students' understanding using Socratic or question-and-answer techniques. By frequently doing this from time to time during the learning process, teachers can facilitate an interactive learning environment and determine student's understanding of the class. The findings from transcripts analysis reveal that participants significantly perceived the importance of the context of cognitive presence in an online learning

environment. It shows that the experiences of teachers in fostering cognitive presence varied. In this section, results from the cognitive presence questions emerged from three key themes: implementation of interactive activities, assessment strategies, and integration of educational multimedia materials. These were highlighted in participants' responses, where it is reported that participants emphasized that using various materials and implementing them in class helps foster interactive and engaging learning experiences, which eventually improves students' learning in online settings. This finding is similar to the study of Gray and Diloreto (2016), whose findings reveal that active participation and engagement among students in online classes help promote better learning performance among students. Hence, this study implies that it is important in an online learning environment to ensure interaction between the teacher and student to effectively facilitate learning and class participation.

Theme 3: Integrating Educational Multimedia Materials

The use of educational multimedia tools such as pictures, videos, movies, and other innovative content and online applications was frequently mentioned by participants. Hence, this is another significant theme that emerged from the collected data. Participants mentioned the importance of incorporating these educational multimedia materials to support discussions and improve students' learning experiences. Following are the transcript excerpts where participants stressed the importance of integrating educational online tools and educational multimedia presentations.

"Materials... well, of course, we use PowerPoint presentations. We also use video presentations that we download from YouTube. Since my subject is Social Studies, which is like history, it is relevant."
(Participant 3)

"In this particular setting where the teacher has online teaching, of course, we have so much innovative content and materials that we are supposed to use in order for us to adapt to the fast-changing pace of demand for technology. In terms of online and online learning, me personally I usually use, aside from pictures, well... videos/recent videos, the.... What do you call that one? The Apps. (application) the different applications that are... like Kahoot, what else, the Quizlet, the different applications

nowadays that you can use in online teaching".

(Participant 5)

Another participant explained how content and online applications can effectively improve students' learning processes and experiences in online learning. The transcript excerpt is described below.

"Content to be discussed online should be aligned with the competency and objectives for a certain week of teaching. In line with this, the use of relevant materials such as PPT presentations, games related to the topic to be discussed, and other motivating ways of encouraging students to participate".

(Participant 1)

The findings from transcripts analysis reveal that participants significantly perceived the importance of the context of cognitive presence in an online learning environment. It shows that the experiences of teachers in fostering cognitive presence varied. In this section, results from the cognitive presence questions emerged from three key themes: implementation of interactive activities, assessment strategies, and integration of educational multimedia materials. These were highlighted in participants' responses, where it is reported that participants emphasized that using various materials and implementing them in class helps foster interactive and engaging learning experiences, which eventually improves students' learning in online settings. This finding is similar to the study of Gray and Diloreto (2016), wherein findings from their study reveal that active participation and engagement among students in online classes help promote better learning performance among students. Hence, this study implies that it is important in an online learning environment to ensure interaction between the teacher and student to facilitate learning and class participation effectively.

Overall, the two sections provide a clear examination of both teachers' perceptions and experiences of educational presence while using alternative learning modalities. Therefore, it provides a comprehensive understanding of teacher's insights and experiences associated with online teaching and learning.

Theme 4: Employing Strategies to Promote Student Interaction.

Most participants placed great importance on using various strategies in an online learning environment to enhance student interaction. This

strong emphasis leads to another theme emerge, which strategies play a crucial part in helping to foster students' interaction and active engagement in online learning. Among all the participants, three shared common strategies to create an interactive learning environment in online classes. Below are the transcript excerpts of the three participants where they discussed the strategies they utilized:

"We use gamification, like Quizizz and Kahoot. Those are the only two we use because the other ones are too heavy for the students' internet. They need a strong internet connection for those websites."

(Participant 2)

"Our online strategies mainly involve using online tools that can help with teaching. There are so many applications that you can use in your lessons now. They are interactive and fun for students but still allow for learning."

(Participant 3)

"Based on my personal experience, I used games to have a, what do you mean well? Connection/ easy connection because the students really wanted/were really interested in games. Of course, you have to establish good rapport with the students, let them feel that they are comfortable in that online setting, and let them feel that they are okay. You have to have a connection-friendly connection to the students."

(Participant 5)

Similar responses from participants two, three, and five were derived. Based on their shared experiences, it reveals that they effectively integrated in their online classes' innovative online tools and game-based applications. This approach used by teachers is to ensure learning is both fun and educational with the help of gamification tools such as Quizizz and Kahoot. These online tools will also help create a more engaging and encouraging online class environment.

Furthermore, another great emphasis was placed on the strategies employed by participants in promoting student interaction in an online learning environment. The results show that most participants stressed the need to use various strategies to influence student active participation. As mentioned by participants, they use gamification tools such as Quizizz, Kahoot, and other online applications to make online learning more fun and engaging. A study by Izmirli and Izmirli (2019) found that using teaching strategies

and techniques is essential to collaboration and may help to establish a social presence in an online class setting. Similarly, previous studies also found that incorporating strategies that promote active participation and improve student learning outcomes (Martin and Bolliger, 2018). This implies that it is essential for teachers to create various opportunities by using different strategies to help promote student engagement in the online environment

Theme 5: Utilizing Diverse Assessment Strategies.

Another significant theme that emerged is the utilization of assessment strategies mentioned by participants, and most of them emphasized that they utilized various methods to determine and ensure students learning. Participants used various assessments, including formative assessments, summative assessments through online, scaffolding approach, and learning modules. Following are transcript excerpts from some participants describing their experiences in incorporating assessment strategies in online classes:

"St. Joseph has many assessments, I do not know about other schools. However, our assessments are very structured. They follow a step-by-step approach, which is like scaffolding, and they are motivational and use learning modules."

(Participant 2)

"Of course, we also... we still have to follow the formative, the summative assessment that is still applied in assessing the students learning, but the difference is when it is in an online learning environment, you have to use like different assessment tools that are also suited for this online teaching, online environment, you can use for the summative test you can use the... like when you conduct the quiz you may use the google form or the quiz app"

(Participant 5)

"Okay, so a common assessment method I use is allowing students to share their opinions or answers when I ask oral questions. I want them to answer themselves, and I rarely give take-home assignments. You know, online, you cannot be sure if they're doing the work or just copying from ChatGPT or Google. So, I do a lot of formative assessments in my class. Along with that, when we have exams, I make them open-camera exams. That way, I know they're not cheating or copying from

other students. And if we do have exams, I set a time limit. For example, I'll post the exam on Google Classroom, and they have 30 minutes to complete it before it closes."

(Participant 6)

Based on these responses, participants clearly recognized the need to utilize assessment strategies to ensure students understanding effectively and enhance the overall online learning experience. Another important finding highlighted by participants' responses is using assessment strategies. They emphasized the importance of employing different assessment strategies to ensure students learning in online learning. Participants consistently mentioned of the importance of using formative assessments, summative assessments, scaffolding, and learning modules during the online learning process. This different strategy helps enhance the learning experience of students in an online setting. One of the participants pointed out that oral questions from time to time are essential because this allows students to give their ideas. Where teachers can immediately check students' understanding. Hence, the various assessment strategies teachers use are crucial because they will help assess whether students are learning in an online environment. This finding is similar to a study conducted by Al-Maqbali and Al-Shamsi (2023), which revealed that their participants used various assessment strategies to measure students' learning. Based on the results, most participants collectively acknowledge that using interactive activities and online tools is crucial for effectively maintaining students' focus and understanding throughout online teaching and learning process.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, this study aims to determine and provide valuable insight into Araling Panlipunan teachers' educational presence and instructional experiences using alternative learning modalities. Several key findings revealed AP teacher's educational presence and their instructional experiences that are organized into two sections: meaningful social presence in online learning, essential teaching presence in online learning, changing conception in teaching presence, establishing connections in online learning, implementing interactive online activities, integrating educational multimedia materials, employing strategies to promote student interaction, and lastly utilizing diverse assessment strategies. Therefore, these present the key insights of Araling Panlipunan teachers' experiences with educational presence and instructional practices

when using alternative learning modalities, which highlights the importance of meaningful social presence, essential teaching presence, and implementing diverse strategies for online engagement in remote learning.

Moreover, this further implies that the academic community must recognize the need and importance of addressing and catering to the diverse needs of learners to actively engage them in the learning process. Teachers must be exposed to various trainings to facilitate learning effectively in the digital era. Thus, this study recommends that schools and institutions prioritize teachers' professional development programs to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively facilitate teaching and learning in an online environment. This will allow teachers to implement strategies that will foster interactive discussions and innovative approaches that will support remote teaching and learning. By this, the learners can be actively involved in the delivery of online learning.

Another recommendation is that this study can be used as a future reference by other scholars considering the emergence of another pandemic or crisis that may occur in the future. The results and findings in this study can be used as one of the references for developing an emergency educational response plan. Educational institutions and experts develop a plan for what strategies to utilize and how to implement these for transitioning to remote learning to be responsive to the crisis. With this, the study's findings can be used as a reference to evaluate the remote teaching practices used by teachers and evaluate how effective and appropriate it is to improve the overall learning experience of the learners in online learning.

Overall, the academic community, scholars, and researchers can use this study as a reference to improve their preparedness for future educational disruptions.

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