Teaching Under Crisis: Impact and Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Education in Minnesota

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Abstract

A mixed-methods exploratory study was conducted to explore the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on Minnesota teachers. A convenience sample of 976 teachers were surveyed in mid-April 2020 via the Qualtrics version of the Swaggert Instructional Practice Under Crisis (SIPUC) questionnaire containing 43 questions. The SIPUC data were analyzed following the Leadership in Times of Crisis Framework for Assessment (Boin et al., 2013), that is, an *emergency instructional triage* to determine which teachers had been mostly impacted and the scope and effect the pandemic had on their instruction and lives. Teachers described the pandemic as an event that disrupted their teaching practices as well as their personal lives. Teachers remained focused on providing relevant learning experiences to their students in spite of the instructional challenges and the educational equity issues that became evident very early on. Resilience as well as confidence in their educational leaders was reported by the majority of teachers. A detailed description of the findings is provided as well as recommendations for educational leaders.

Keywords

Author Bio

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Introduction

Unlike localized United States crises in 2020, such as hurricanes, wildfires, and rioting, the COVID-19 pandemic has permeated the lives of seemingly everyone and generated significant amounts of stress to many. Having irrupted only a few months ago, with limited exceptions, the COVID-19 virus has unimaginably altered our way of life. Not since the 1918 influenza pandemic, which killed more people than any other disease outbreak in human history, has the world been faced with such a widespread and impactful disease. Although the deaths associated with COVID-19 are far fewer than those of the 1918 pandemic, estimated to have been between 21 million and 100 million (Barry, 2004; Johnson & Mueller, 2002), the impact of COVID-19 is significant. By fall of 2020, COVID-19 deaths surpassed 220,000 in the United States, including nearly 3,600 deaths in Minnesota (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). While death statistics have a shock value that attracts attention, the impact of a pandemic can be felt in nearly all aspects of the lives of the living, including their educational experiences. At the time this study was conducted, over 1.2 billion students globally had to stay home and wait for further instructions about what their school life would look like in the weeks to come (Li & Lalani, 2020).

Problem Statement and Significance of the Study

This paper focuses on the impact of COVID-19 on teachers, in their roles as practitioners as well as parents, and on their students in Minnesota. This paper presents a selection of data derived from the mixed-methods research conducted by Swaggert and collaborators in March of 2020 entitled *Swaggert Instructional Practice Under Crisis study (SIPUC)* which involved approximately 1,000 Minnesota educators. The results of this study and a companion white paper (Pahl, 2020) make clear: 1) the resounding impact of the COVID-19 virus on education in

Minnesota during the COVID-19 era; 2) recommendations to facilitate an improved teaching and learning experience during the COVID-19 era; 3) an approach to help readjust both students and educators once the COVID-19 pandemic has diminished; and 4) the potential outlook of education in a post-COVID-19 era.

The history of this study can be traced to governmental action in response to COVID-19. As noted by Swaggert et al. (2020),

On March 15, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz issued Executive Order 20-02 directing schools in Minnesota to close due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and the ensuing danger to the health and safety of all Minnesotans. From March 16-27, school personnel were directed to create distance learning plans to allow for continuing the education of all students. On March 30, 2020, schools began to implement their learning plans. With just days to plan, all Minnesota teachers were transforming their curriculum to fit a distance learning model. The effort of school leaders, teachers and all school personnel was deemed heroic as students are now learning from home and most teachers are teaching from home. On April 23, Governor Walz ordered all schools to remain closed for the remainder of the school year to limit the spread of the coronavirus. (p. 1)

Although the educational impact of the COVID-19 virus took many forms, the SIPUC study was primarily concerned with data collection and "data analysis in hopes of informing and supporting teachers and administrators as they continue the distance learning format and work to provide the best possible learning opportunities for students during the COVID-19 crisis" (Swaggert et al., 2020, p. 1). The minimal time to transition from traditional to distance education, the lack of professional development to train educators in best practices of online teaching, and the stress created for those with a vested interest in education combine to make

this study significant in that SIPUC not only provided data analysis regarding survey responses, but on late April of 2020, recommendations were provided and disseminated to school districts in the interest of improving the educational experiences for teachers, students, and parents during a protracted COVID-19 era.

Research Paradigm

Authors of the SIPUC study subscribed to pragmatism and utilized a mixed-methods approach. According to Patel (2015), from an ontological perspective, reality is constantly negotiated, debated, and reinterpreted taking into consideration its usefulness in new and unpredictable situations. Under pragmatism, the best research approach is one that solves problems and helps understand reality through a combination of methods. In light of the pandemic, which necessitated a sudden shift in the mode of educating children and demanded researchers to study this phenomenon through participants' various positionalities and lenses, pragmatism seemed an appropriate research paradigm. Without question, the unpredictability of education as the result of COVID-19 meant new and ever-changing educational realities for teachers, students, and parents. The SIPUC study was exploratory in nature.

Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks

From a conceptual perspective, the SIPUC study was a reaction to a perceived need. The Department of Leadership and Learning faculty at Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) who work directly with hundreds of educators (i.e., graduate students) witnessed first-hand in courses and through conversations the stress and concern of educators who were attempting to transition from a traditional educational setting to distance learning. The Leadership and Learning faculty envisioned a mixed-methods study comprised of a questionnaire (SIPUC Phase I) that could be administered via available listservs. The

quantitative and qualitative analysis would generate practical recommendations for educators and formulate recommendations for focus group sessions with educators to be conducted upon completion of the academic year (SIPUC Phase II). There was a recognition that SIPUC Phase I needed to be conducted quickly, so that data could be analyzed without delay, and a report containing recommendations for improved educational experiences be disseminated *post-haste*.

From a theoretical perspective, the SIPUC study was conceptualized following the Leadership in Times of Crisis Framework for Assessment (Boin et al., 2013). This framework defined crisis management as "the sum of activities aimed at minimizing the impact of a crisis" (p. 81). In this framework, "impact is measured in terms of damage to people, critical infrastructure, and public institutions" (p. 81). The authors asserted that effective management protects the lives of those affected by the crisis, protects the infrastructure, and also restores the trust that the community feels in public institutions. From an educational standpoint, the SIPUC was an immediate response to the crisis that the COVID-19 pandemic generated for the P-12 educational system and aimed to determine the living and teaching conditions of educators.

Boin and collaborators' framework is composed of ten executive crisis tasks to be asessed: 1) Early Recognition (i.e., What is the threat that has emerged and who is affected), 2) Sensemaking (i.e., scope and effect of the threat), 3) Making Critical Decisions, 4) Orchestrating Critical and Horizontal Coordination, 5) Coupling and Decoupling, 6) Meaning Making, 8) Rendering Accountability, 9) Learning, and 10) Enhancing Resilience. As physicians do when triaging a medical emergency, the SIPUC study was meant to serve as part of an *emergency instructional triage* to explore teachers' professional and personal emergencies, determine the level of severity of the problem, and prescribe emergency-based interventions. In that respect,

the SIPUC study focused on the first two crisis tasks aiming to provide educational leaders with sufficient data and direction to formulate strategies to support their teaching staff.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided this exploratory mixed-methods study:

1. What is the demographic profile of teachers facing the COVID-19 pandemic in Minnesota?

2. What are the greatest challenges reported by teachers in their transition from traditional face-to-face to online instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Since personal and professional lives became so blended as a result of teachers utilizing their own homes as centers for instruction, with both their students and own children, in some cases, it was important to determine a demographic profile and its potential interaction with the instructional and daily living responsibilities of teachers as practitioners and parents.

Literature Review

It must be understood that since COVID-19 took root, for the most part in the US territory, in March of 2020, literature specific to the virus and associated pandemic and its impact to the field of education was scarce. Basic COVID-19 demographic and medical information was available, but information changed with regularity. As a result, it seemed appropriate to consider education and the COVID-19 pandemic within a limited historical context, established best practices associated with education, contemporary research related to the topic of education in a COVID-19 era, and both the eventuality and potentialities associated with a post-COVID era.

Historical Context

Although natural disasters and illnesses are part of life's fabric, the pervasiveness and breadth of the COVID-19 pandemic are defining features that set it apart from most crises that have impacted the world, and most specifically, the United States. The most relevant comparison of the COVID-19 crisis is the 1918 influenza pandemic, and the most recent comparison involves the H1N1 influenza pandemic. According to Swaggert et al., (2020),

> The COVID-19 lengthy school closure and crisis are unprecedented. Minnesotans have had school closures due to blizzards, floods, fires, tornadoes and school shootings but these closures were always in specific geographic areas affecting limited numbers of students for limited time periods (Wong et al., 2014). The Spanish flu of 1918-19 which killed over 10,000 Minnesotans resulted in school closures of several weeks but was not a state-wide closing. Schools closed to limit the spread of the virus but students did not have the opportunity to continue their studies. Teachers were often asked to volunteer to help bringing health and sanitation information to families and the community (Stern et al., 2009). In 2009, the H1N1 influenza pandemic resulted in sporadic Minnesota school closures with outbreaks in certain school districts resulting in short term closures. However, hygiene emphasis, health monitoring and ill student quarantines were more often utilized (Como-Sabetti et al., 2010). The spring 2020 COVID-19 worldwide pandemic and resulting shutdown of schools and businesses and stay at home orders for all citizens is a first for Minnesota and the United States. (p. 1)

While the H1N1 influenza pandemic is the most recent point of reference to the current pandemic, it pales in comparison to COVID-19. With no disrespect or lack of empathy meant for those who were impacted through lost lives during the H1N1 pandemic, the scale of impact

is simply quite different. While the 1918 influenza pandemic seems to be a better comparison to COVID-19 than the H1N1 pandemic, there are still significant differences. According to Barry (2004), the death toll from the 1918 pandemic was between 21 and 100 million people worldwide, but the world's population was only 28% of that which it is today. Moreover, most deaths occurred within a sixteen-week period, September to mid-December of 1918. The COVID-19 pandemic has been raging for more than six months, and the pandemic end is estimated between months and years away. While the COVID-19 death count is not expected to rival the 1918 influenza deaths in any way, the impact of COVID-19 is substantial because of the protracted nature of the pandemic and the changed lifestyles as a result of precautionary measures to minimize its impact.

If one were to compare the current educational scene to that of 1918, similarities and differences would be found regarding the influence of pandemics on decision-making. According to Markel (2020),

> During the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic, when an estimated 675,000 people died in the United States alone, the majority of public schools were closed for weeks to months on end. But three major cities — New York City, Chicago, and New Haven — kept their schools open amid valid questions and concerns about safety. (para. 2)
>
> In March, school districts across the nation shut their doors and more than 50 million American students finished the 2019-2020 school year through a variety of remote learning and home-schooling programs. (para. 3)

What must be understood is that sanitation in homes during the early part of the 20th century was inadequate. In larger cities, schools were more sanitary than most homes. As a

result, some schools remained open during the 1918 pandemic while many did not. Stern et al. (2010) agreed with Markel that some schools stayed open during the 1918 pandemic due to:

> The strong faith that these cities placed in the medical inspection of students reflected their leadership in the early-twentieth-century school hygiene movement and major investment in a health infrastructure that included physicians and nurses. In these cities, school medical corps were charged with carefully inspecting classrooms and pupils, and sometimes with extending services to homes. (para. 12)

The pros and cons of traditional versus distance learning are volleyed on a daily basis during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the concerns of a century ago have been mitigated. During the H1N1 pandemic, Stern et al. (2009) reported,

> There is no question that schools and school systems are markedly different institutions in 2009 than they were in 1918. Today, most public schools do not have the health infrastructure that had become commonplace in U.S. educational institutions during the Progressive era. Financial cutbacks to public education over the past several decades have severely affected health programs, reducing the number of school nurses and resources for activities such as physical education. In addition, the diseases—such as smallpox, whooping cough, measles, and diphtheria—that were of great concern in the early twentieth century are no longer major killers in the United States. Because of a combination of laudable advances in medicine and health, complacency toward the threat of infectious diseases, and reticence among public officials to implement measures that could be interpreted as violating individual rights, the perceived need for school hygiene has diminished during the past ninety years. Even with these changes,

school closure remains controversial for many of the same reasons as it was in 1918.

(para. 23)

At the time of this study, schools across the United States are educating children in traditional in-person ways, a hybrid model, and full distance learning. While there are various pressures (e.g., quality of learning, policy and law, economic) that have driven decision-making regarding the mode of schooling, the basic health risk to children seems to be the overriding factor that determines whether schooling occurs in person, on a hybrid basis, or entirely online. As Markel (2020) noted,

> Children, especially those under the age of 12, appear far less likely to contract and spread the virus. To a lesser extent, the same appears to be true for older children. Although school-age children make up about 24 percent of the American population, they have thus far accounted for only 4.7 percent of the reported COVID-19 cases in the United States. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data, only 4.4 children per 100,000 have had to be hospitalized for COVID-19, a rate that is strikingly lower than the 161.7 per 100,000 adults in the age range of 50 to 64 years of age who have been hospitalized. (para 6)

The Minnesota Department of Health (2020b) provided information that supports Markel's claim that COVID-19 doesn't seem to affect the younger segment of populations. In Minnesota, as of mid-September of 2020, only 2,376 COVID-19 positive tests had occurred in the 0-12 age range among the nearly 87,000 Minnesotans with confirmed cases. Moreover, younger people tended to have less likelihood of experiencing severe symptoms or high mortality rates.

Different from children, teachers have been sidelined due to becoming ill by COVID-19. The pandemic was impacting staffing levels" reported Mayerle through CBS Minnesota (2020)

in early October. According to Golden (2020), "more school staff are ending up ill or quarantined because they or a family member spent time with someone who tested positive, usually at gatherings unrelated to school." Because of this, school administrators had to ensure a robust supply of substitute teachers, which was not the easiest task to accomplish during the pandemic. For example, a local high school principal sent an email to parents encouraging them to consider obtaining an interim substitute license. At some schools, principals were subbing because the situation was quite challenging (Mayerle, 2020).

To help guide Minnesota school administrators in making decisions regarding traditional, hybrid, or online learning, the Minnesota Department of Health (2020a) provided daily updates to determine case rates and recommended modes of schooling. As a result, a patchwork approach to schooling was parent across Minnesota. Even in school districts that have opted for in-person learning, some parents have opted for virtual or home schooling. Managing different instructional modalities in parallel to accommodate families' preferences poses a significant challenge to teachers and administrators. However, this was the direction schools decided to take in order to ensure accessibility to instruction for all students.

Best Practices in Education

In consideration of the purpose of this paper, a narrative rather than an exhaustive approach is presented. As a result, trends and best practices most closely associated with distance and hybrid education will be reviewed. It is important to emphasize that while most public schools had access to online learning platforms (e.g., PowerSchool, Haiku, Blackboard, Schoology), these were mostly used on a limited basis. That is, the online instructional infrastructure was available but not taken advantage of to its full potential.

Distance Education Trends. Distance learning was in its infancy 20 years ago, but online learning opportunities are increasingly available at the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels. The National Center for Education Statistics (2019) reported,

> During the 2015–16 school year, about 21 percent of public schools nationwide offered at least one course entirely online. This was more common among public charter schools (29 percent) than it was among traditional public schools (20 percent). Offering one or more classes that were entirely online was much more common among high (58 percent) or combined (64 percent) schools, and very small (45 percent) or very large (44 percent) schools than for all public schools (21 percent). Among schools offering online courses, relatively more public charter schools offered all of their classes online (14 percent) than traditional public schools (5 percent). (para. 2)

At the postsecondary level, according to Seaman et al. (2018),

> The number of distance education students grew by 5.6% from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016 to reach 6,359,121 who are taking at least one distance course, representing 31.6% of all students. Total distance enrollments are composed of 14.9% of students (3,003,080) taking exclusively distance courses, and 16.7% (3,356,041) who are taking a combination of distance and non-distance courses. (p. 3)

Although a majority of students still learn through traditional means, an increasing number of students at all levels are choosing to learn either in part or fully online. As distance learning has increased in popularity, so has the focus on best practices for online learning. While certain aspects of teaching and learning, such as relationship building, content knowledge, and appropriate assessment, are necessary regardless of the mode of learning, teaching and learning online requires different approaches and skills than that which we would find in a traditional

setting. Fish and Wickersham (2009) stressed, "Teaching online requires a faculty member to think differently about teaching and learning, learn a host of new technological skills, and engage in ongoing faculty development for design and development of quality online instruction" (p. 279).

Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. Although there are many best practices in education, distance education highlights certain practices that are of particular importance to online learning. Before examining some best practices for online teaching and learning, however, it is important to note that instructors need to invest substantial advance work to create optimal distance education learning experiences. Dykman and Davis (2008) made clear the point that detailed organization and planning is the first step in teaching online. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic did not allow for a substantial investment of advance work. Instead, in many cases, educators were forced to move courses online within a matter of one to two weeks. Consequently, it should not come as a surprise that much of the *ad hoc* distance learning did not subscribe to best practices. Both teachers and students were thrust into a learning environment that was foreign to both parties, and teaching and learning were compromised overall.

Best practices in K-12 online course content design and delivery systems were provided by the Quality Matters (QM) framework (QM, 2019) which is comprised of 8 core standards that require significant advanced planning and emphasize enhanced [teacher] interactions with and among students" (Robinson & Wizer, 2016, p. 17). QM "reflects nationally recognized, research-based best practices" in distance learning (Rucker et al., 2015, p. 36). The QM General Standards are: 1) course overview and introduction; 2) learning objectives (competencies); 3)

assessment and measurement; 4) instructional materials; 5) learning activities and learner interaction; 6) course technology; 7) learner support; and 8) accessibility and usability.

Each QM General Standard is comprised of 4 to 8 Specific Standards that provide teachers with clear descriptions of what needs to be in place in order to make an online course successful. For example, General Standard 1 – Course Overview and Introductions contains 4 Specific Standards: 1.1) Instructions make clear to learners how to get started and where to find various course components; 1.2) Learners are introduced to purpose and structure of the course; 1.3) Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stared, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided, and 1.4) Minimum computer skills and digital literacy skills expected of the learner are clearly stated. Teachers should remember that much of the navigation information that is provided to students in the introduction of the course will be read by parents, particularly in the lower elementary grades, as oftentimes parents become the facilitators of their children's course navigation process at the beginning of the academic year. Appendix A provides a copy of the Specific Review Standards from the QM K-12 Rubric (2019) where all the General and Specific Standards are listed and can be used to guide online or hybrid course design. Fundamentally, QM best practices for distance education include: an organized course replete with consistent navigational features, grading rubrics, clear expectations; the utilization of varied learning mechanisms; regular communication; timely feedback, and appropriate formative and summative assessments.

Within QM General Standard 1, the design of the course must be made clear to learners. Regarding this, Kumar et al. (2019) noted,

> In practice, researchers have found that students have increased academic confidence
>
> when instructors are transparent about the purpose of the course content and activities,

the tasks that students have to complete (i.e., what to do and how to do it), and the criteria

for success (i.e., what excellence looks like, criteria to help students to self-evaluate). (p.

163)

Likewise, Magnussen (2008) indicated that clarification is especially important with

online learning since faculty members cannot always give students real-time explanations for

potential misunderstandings. Tanis (2020) argued that teacher–student communication creates a

sense of online community that is initiated through various means, including introductions. In a

nutshell, if one is going to play a game, the expectations, rules, and means to succeed must be

clear and players also need to know who else is playing. The same is true with distance

education. Students will succeed at a higher rate if course requirements are communicated

clearly at the start of a course so as to ensure students have a thorough understanding of course

expectations and the necessary tools to participate, including technology requisites. Students

also need to know who the instructor and peers are. The QM General Standard 2 requires

learning objectives or competencies to describe what learners will be able to do upon completion

of the course. The focus on objectives and the connection between activities within the course

and proficiency with course outcomes is key. As Wormeli (2006) contended,

Rather than perpetuate ineffective, norm-referenced grades that reflect the tools of

assessment (such as tests, the number correct on the tests, and how students did in

relation to others), successful, differentiating teachers focus on criterion-based mastery in

relation to essential understandings and their learning objectives. (p. 160)

One important point to remember is that grades should reflect proficiency with stated

outcomes, rather than dispositions. In other words, reducing points for a late assignment has

nothing to do with learning objectives and proficiency with competencies. Learners who

struggle to submit work on time are demonstrating a dispositional issue that should be addressed, but not through grades. The QM General Standard 3 involves assessments that are integral to the learning process and are designed to evaluate learner progress in achieving the stated learning objectives or mastering the competencies. Kumar et al. (2019) stressed the importance of clarity for student success, and Wormeli (2006) added that evaluation and feedback should focus on what the student is learning in regard to outcomes to demonstrate the grading of proficiency.

The QM General Standard 4 focuses on instructional materials that enable leaners to achieve stated learning objectives or competencies. Kumar et al. (2019) clarified that learning activities, which are often the same as materials, "need to be intentionally created or selected by instructors to provide experiences and opportunities for learners to construct and use knowledge from digital resources" (p. 162). The QM Standard 5 involves learning activities that facilitate and support learner interaction and engagement. Learning activities should promote interaction with a focus on unit objectives and overall course outcomes. Wormeli (2006) noted, "Cooperative learning is an outstanding teaching strategy. When we use it with our students, however, we're mindful that it is a technique used to teach students about a topic, not a demonstration of proficiency in that topic itself" (p. 127). In other words, interaction is a vehicle to help achieve proficiency, but the interaction itself should not be part of the evaluation of a learner's level of proficiency with objectives or outcomes. The QM Standard 6 involves course technologies that support the learners' achievement of course objectives or competencies. Both Chen and Yang (2017) and Giannakos et al. (2016) suggested technologies as a means to incorporate more active learning for students. Technologies allow for interactions between learners and course content. In regard to course technologies, Kumar et al. (2019) made clear the need for intentionality when selecting resources. Churchill (2017b) further explained the

intentional selection of technologies by stressing the importance of learning purpose associated with these technologies. Varvel (2007) added the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of technologies in reaching outcomes. Technologies should be varied so as to appeal to various learning modalities, and teachers should select technologies so as a means of furthering student learning. The QM Standard 7 involves the idea that the course facilitates learner access to institutional support services essential to learner success. Lastly, the QM Standard 8 focuses on the course design to reflect a commitment to accessibility and usability for all learners. Related to the idea of accessibility and usability is a focus on the needs of a learner. In an online environment, and especially within the context of COVID-19, instructors must anticipate students' needs and unexpected circumstances. Some latitude should be afforded to students. Churchill (2017a) suggested the utilization of both synchronous and asynchronous tools (e.g., discussion forums and email) as a means to address the needs of learners and keep them on track.

At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, QM published the *Emergency Remote Instruction (ERI) Checklist*, which is "a tiered list of consideration, tips, and actionable strategies to enact during an institutional move to temporary remote instruction of classroom-based courses" (QM, 2020). While teachers get used to online instruction, some of the tips included in this Checklist are still relevant, particularly for younger students. For example, "Explain how the remote class will be structured, if students need to log on for synchronous sessions (and how), where they can find assignment information, and how they should submit assignments" or "When teaching remotely, it's important to include acknowledgement feedback as well – let students know, for example, that their assignments have been received" (p. 8). The guidelines provided in this Checklist are still very relevant even though the US is about to enter the 10-month mark of the pandemic hitting its territory.

As P-12 teaching and learning practitioners across the world continue to develop knowledge and skills to face the disruptions created by the worst pandemic of the 21st century thus far, this disruption presents unique opportunities to address long lived educational inequities. This event has sorrowfully made educators and leaders realize that many students in urban and rural cities had been left completely disconnected from the educational process (Swaggert et al., 2020) due to lack of internet accessibility. Yet, for those who were able to connect virtually, achievement differences were observed across subject matter areas (math learners facing more challenges) and grade levels (younger learners facing more challenges); while underscoring the overall inequities already in existence due to factors such as infrastructural differences (Mendenhall, 2020). Lastly, no one should forget that many students, as well as teachers and administrators, are losing loved ones during the pandemic. A September 2020 report by the United Hospital Fund indicated that between May and July 4,200 children lost a parent or caregiver in the state of New York. Soon the nation will know the status of more children across the nation. Like children losing their parents, many adults are losing loved ones and while the magnitude of such events will not be immediately determined, it should remind everyone to be compassionate of students and educational practitioners who may be navigating this crisis with unimaginable stress and sorrow.

Methods

Instrumentation

The Swaggert Instructional Practice Under Crisis (SIPUC) Questionnaire (see Appendix B) was designed by 5 Leadership and Learning at Minnesota State University Moorhead, 4 of whom were licensed educational administrators and one was working as superintendent at the time of the study. The SIPUC was developed in Qualtrics and contained 43 items arranged in 3

sections. Section I had 15 items and focused on demographic information (e.g., marital status, number of children, ages of children, level of education). Section II had 23 items and focused on the teaching practice (e.g., frequency of contact with students, online learning platform used, degree of confidence delivering online instruction, degree of collaboration with grade level team). Section III had 5 items and focused on crisis concerns (e.g., fear regarding COVID-19, stress due to disruption to personal life, stress due to disruption to teaching practice). With the exception of two, all questions generated quantitative data. Five questions used ordinal answer choices (i.e., Likert scale), five questions used scale answer choices (i.e., 0 to 10), and the remaining questions used nominal answer choices (e.g., Yes/No). The two open-ended questions were part of SIPUC Section II and asked the following: A) Can you manage teaching from home while addressing other responsibilities (e.g., household, children, spouse)? Please explain, and B) What is your biggest concern? The SIPUC was not designed to measure any specific construct but to help researchers conduct *emergency instructional triage* in the context of the leadership in times of crisis framework of Boin et al. 2013). Fundamentally, the SIPUC was going to generate data for 1) Early Recognition (i.e., What is the threat that has emerged and who is affected) and 2) Sensemaking (i.e., scope and effect of the threat).

Sampling

Convenience sampling was utilized in this study. The SIPUC was created in Qualtrics and sent electronically to all MSUM education graduate students (all of whom were practicing teachers) and to school administrators who were part of educational leadership advisory boards and listservs to distribute among their teaching staff. The SIPUC study obtained IRB approval and anonymity of participants was assured. A total of 976 teachers responded to the SIPUC questionnaire. Because there was no way to know how many teachers received the instrument,

there was no information regarding the return rate. The inclusion criteria for this study were to be a teacher and be practicing in the state of Minnesota at the time of the study.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) with the main focus of determining the demographic profile of respondents as well as to gain understanding of the areas of their teaching practice that had been affected the most by the pandemic. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to compare data across some groups. Qualitative data were analyzed through inductive and deductive coding. For the latter, Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 1981) was utilized as a lens for data analysis purposes. This theory helps facilitate an understanding of adults in transition and direct them to the help they need to handle the "ordinary and extraordinary process of living" (Evans et al., 2010, p. 213). This theory is based on "4 S's"– a system designed to assist individuals in understanding change. Because of this, the codes guiding the deductive coding process were: Situation, Self, Support, and Strategies.

Results

Two research questions guided this exploratory mixed-methods study:

1. What is the demographic profile of teachers facing the COVID-19 pandemic in Minnesota? (RQ1)

2. What are the greatest challenges reported by teachers in their transition from traditional face-to-face to online instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic? (RQ2)

Quantitative data were collected to address RQ1 and a combination of quantitative and qualitative data were collected to address RQ2. This section is organized by research questions.

RQ1: What is the demographic profile of teachers facing the COVID-19 pandemic in Minnesota?

Section I of the SIPUC contained 15 questions collecting demographic data. Based on these data, Minnesota teachers during the pandemic can be divided in two groups: One with children at home and the other without any. The latter group included parents of adult children who were no longer living at home. Both groups are very similar in composition, mostly White adults with a mean age of 41 and who are primarily teaching in grades P-5 at a rural district serving over 1,000 students. These teachers reported having 11 or more years of professional practice and also reported having previous experience with online learning platforms, either as part of their teaching practice and/or their learning experience as undergraduate or graduate online students. Those caring for kids at home have primarily between 2–4 elementary-age or younger children. The SIPUC did not collect marital status quantitative data.

There were slight differences between teachers with and without children at home. More members of the latter group reported *great* confidence in their virtual instruction skills (26.7%) as compared to teachers with kids (21.9%). Likewise, more teachers with no children at home indicated feeling *great* confidence in their school leadership (44.9%) as compared to those with children at home (41.1%). For other purposes, both groups were very close on their appraisals of their teaching practice. There were also a few differences between groups when compared by gender. For example, less women reported having children living with them (55%) than men did (60.7%). Also, more men (80.4%) reported working in rural areas than women (74.9%) and were primarily teaching at the high school level (44.7%) as compared to women who reported primarily teaching in elementary grades (36.4%). Men reported using online learning platforms for instructional purposes more frequently (56.6%) than women (49.5%).

Lastly, two salient differences emerged when groups were compared by level of education. Teachers with doctoral or masters' degrees reported more frequent experience with online teaching (55.6%, 54% respectively) and learning (77%, 63.7%) than teachers holding a bachelor's degree (47.2%, 59.4%). Holding a higher educational degree was inversely proportional to continuing work at a rural school. There were 66.7% of doctoral degree holders working at a rural school as compared to 72% of master's degree holders and 81.3% of teachers holding a bachelor's degree. Table 1, shows detailed descriptive data with demographic information for the sample as a whole.

Table 1

SIPUC Demographic Data

Variable	Percentages / Based on $N = 976$				
Gender	Men	Women	Other	--	--
	219	756	1		
	(22.4%)	(77.5%)	(.1%)		
Age	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	--
	21	69	40.91	11	
Ethnicity	White		Non-White		Missing
	960		13		3
	(98.4%)		(1.3%)		(.3%)
Children in household	Yes		No		Missing
	552		423		1
	(56.6%)		(43.3%)		(.1%)
Number of children in household	0	1	2	3	4+
	410	135	238	139	54
	(42%)	(13.8%)	(24.4%)	(14.2%)	(5.6%)
Ages of children in household[a]	Kindergarten or younger	Elementary	Middle	High School	19 or older
	330	391	188	236	124
	(25.5%)	(31%)	(15%)	(18.5%)	(10%)

Variable	Percentages / Based on $N = 976$				
Level of education	Bachelor's degree 411 (42.1%)	Master' degree 548 (56.1%)	Doctorate degree 9 (.9%)	--	Missing 8 (.8%)
Type of school	Urban 224 (23%)		Rural 743 (76.1%)		Missing 9 (.9%)
Size of school	<500 206 (21.1%)	501-1000 176 (18%)	1001-2500 296 (30.3%)	2501> 289 (29.6%)	Missing 9 (.9%)
Years of teaching experience	Less than 3 years 118 (12.1%)	4 – 10 years 283 (29%)	11 years or more 567 (58.1%)	--	Missing 8 (.8%)
Current teaching position (General Ed)	Preschool 23 (2.4%)	Elementary 319 (32.7%)	Middle 195 (20%)	High 235 (24.1%)	Missing 204 (20.9%)[b]
Current teaching position (SPED)	Early Intervention & Preschool 39 (4%)	Elementary 103 (10.6%)	Middle 51 (5.2%)	High 55 (5.6%)	Missing 728 (74.6%)[c]
Past instructional experience with online platforms	Yes 497 (50.9%)		No 317 (32.5%)		Missing 10 (1%)
Past learning experience with online platforms	Yes 601 (61.6%)		No 258 (26.4%)		Missing 9 (.9%)

Note: The table reports missing data when appropriate.

[a]Does not add to 976 as some teachers have no children and others have more than 1.

[b]It represents SPED teachers.

[c]It represents General Ed teachers.

SIPUC Demographic data were used to guide disaggregated analyses to address Research Question 2.

RQ2: What are the greatest challenges reported by teachers in their transition from traditional face-to-face to online instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected and have been organized sequentially, presenting the quantitative results first.

Quantitative Data

Section II of the SIPUC contained 23 questions focused on respondents' teaching practice. From these data, it was clear that at the beginning of the virtual instructional phase most teachers were planning to offer asynchronous instruction with recorded videos made available to their students. What most teachers (82.7%) planned to do was to keep virtual office hours and provide *some* to a *great* degree of flexibility (77.9%) regarding students' assignments and due dates. Because schools were getting ready to function fully online, the SIPUC explored accessibility to high-speed internet for students. Almost 47% of teachers reported their students did not have access to high-speed internet from home and 15% reported having no information regarding this matter. However, 56% of teachers reported being required by their supervisors to contact their students on a daily basis, mostly by means of emails and discussion boards. Students were also expected to contact their peers via FaceTime, discussion boards, emails, text messages, or phone calls. In addition, teachers reported being also required to contact parents (62%), via discussion boards, emails, or phone calls. No indication as to the frequency of these communications was provided. Knowing that 47% of households did not have access to high-speed internet services, these communications requirements seemed to posit a challenge for teachers.

The SIPUC data also showed that while many schools had online learning platforms available to teachers prior to the pandemic (e.g., Google Schools, Schoology, Infinite Campus),

67.7% of respondents indicated these eLearning platforms were not part of their regular instructional activities. This seem to indicate that although the virtual infrastructure may have been available to teachers, the knowhow was not. Because of this situation, the majority of teachers reported having *some* degree of confidence with their virtual instruction skills (57.3%). *Great* confidence with their virtual instruction skills was only reported by 24% of respondents. Overall, teachers felt *some* satisfaction (44.7%) with the training provided by schools in preparation to the fully virtual instructional phase. The SIPUC questionnaire included a question exploring the level of confidence about teaching from home, not surprisingly teachers with no kids at home reported feeling confident more frequently (79%) than teachers caring for children at home (60.7%).

Some areas could reflect the supports experienced by teachers during these difficult times. One was the degree of grade level team collaboration (i.e., peer support), which was reported as either *adequate* or *great* by 82.8% of teachers. The other was the confidence in their educational leaders (i.e., administration support), which was reported to be *some* by 36.5% and *great* by 49.9% of teachers.

Section III of the SIPUC asked 5 questions about the school closure crisis and its impact on teachers' daily functioning on a scale from 0 (i.e., Low Impact/Low Stress) to 10 (i.e., High Impact/High Stress). Table 2 presents teachers' responses on each one of these questions. Because the distribution of scores on all these questions were negatively skewed (i.e., the scores were accumulated on the higher end of the distribution), the median values have been also reported. Data on this table clearly show that there was a generalized sense of disruption among teachers regarding both their professional as well as personal lives.

Table 2

SIPUC COVID-19 Impact

| Question	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
What is your level of fear regarding the COVID-19 school closure crisis?	5.00	5.10	2.30
What is the level of disruption to your professional practice that results from the COVID-19 school closure crisis?	8.00	7.51	2.09
What is the level of disruption to your personal life that results from the COVID-19 school closure crisis?	7.00	6.84	2.35
How resilient do you feel to navigate the COVID-19 school closure crisis?	8.00	7.63	1.68
What is the level of disruption to your teaching that results from the COVID-19 school closure crisis?	8.00	7.82	1.89

Note: Highest possible score = 10, lowest possible score = 0 on each question.

Figures 1 and 2 present the distribution of scores for disruption of teaching practice and personal life, respectively. These figures are negatively skewed and demonstrate the high level of disruption experienced by the majority of participants in the SIPUC study. Combined, about 70% of the sample appraised these questions with scores of 7 or higher. Some demographic variables were found to impact the level of disruption of their teaching practice. Among regular educators, elementary teachers reported higher levels of disruption to their teaching ($M = 8.21$, $SD = 1.60$), followed by preschool teachers ($M = 7.60$, $SD = 2.66$), high school teachers ($M = 7.60$, $SD = 1.97$) and middle school teachers ($M = 7.34$, $SD = 1.91$). A total of 45% of elementary teachers and 52% of preschool teachers appraised the disruption to their teaching with scores of 9 or 10. Among special educators, preschool teachers reported higher levels of disruption to their teaching ($M = 8.67$, $SD = 1.1$), followed by elementary teachers ($M = 8.11$, $SD = 1.9$), early interventionist ($M = 8.05$, $SD = 2.64$), high school teachers ($M = 7.84$, SD: 1.93),

and middle school teachers ($M = 7.65$, $SD = 1.93$). A total of 41% of preschool teachers appraised the disruption to their teaching with scores of 9 or 10, while the same occurred to 45% of elementary teachers and 50% of early interventionists. Overall, the levels of disruption to teaching were about the same for special education and regular education teachers.
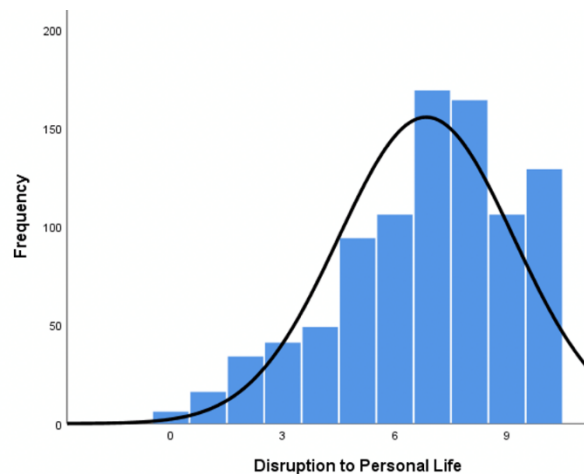
Figure 1

SIPUC Teacher Disruption of Teaching
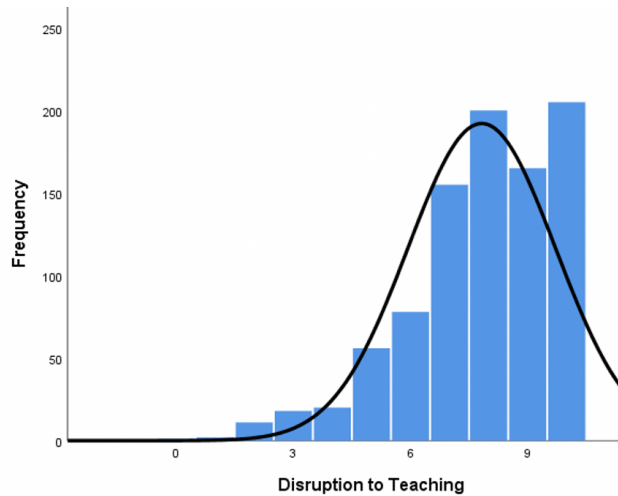
Figure 2

SIPUC Teacher Disruption of Personal Life

Women reported a slightly higher disruption to their teaching ($M = 7.92$, $SD = 1.87$) than men ($M = 7.48$, $SD = 1.91$). The same occurred to teachers holding bachelor's degrees ($M = 7.74$, $SD = 1.85$) and master's degrees ($M = 7.91$, $SD = 1.90$) as compared to teachers holding doctoral degrees ($M = 6.33$, $SD = 2.50$). Teachers with less than 3 years of teaching experience reported their teaching as less disrupted ($M = 7.06$, $SD = 1.94$) when compared to teachers with more years of practice ($M = 7.90$, $SD = 1.88$).

It is important to note that teachers who reported having great confidence in their educational leaders (50% of the sample) reported lower levels of teaching disruption ($M = 7.61$, $SD = 1.97$) as compared to the 1.4% of teachers who reported no confidence at all ($M = 8.71$, $SD = 2.13$). Data showed that confidence in educational leaders and disruption to teaching were inversely proportional, that is, the higher the confidence in leaders the lower the reported teaching disruption. Similar results were obtained regarding the satisfaction with the online instruction training that teachers received during the days schools closed in preparation to transition to distance learning. Teachers who reported great satisfaction with their training (27% of the sample) reported lower levels of teaching disruption ($M = 7.56$, $SD = 2.05$) than the 5% of teachers who reported no satisfaction ($M = 8.85$, $SD = 1.55$). Demographic variables such as school size or geographic location did not result in any differences across groups regarding disruption to their teaching.

As stated earlier, while there were differences among sub-groups regarding disruption to teaching, about 70% of all scores fell on the upper end of the distribution indicating that scores tended to be high across the board. The Spearman correlation was run to explore the association between disruption to teaching and disruption to home life in order to explore how these two dimensions of a teachers' life collided during the pandemic. A statistically significant positive

correlation was confirmed, $r_s(913) = .424$, $p < .01$, indicating that teachers who reported disruption to their teaching also reported disruption to their personal lives and vice versa.

Few demographic variables were found to generate differences in the level of disruption to teachers' personal life. For example, cross tabulation analysis showed that the most important variable was having children at home. Teachers with no children reported lower levels of disruption to their personal life ($M = 6.49$, $SD = 2.43$) as compared to teachers caring for children at home ($M = 7.11$, $SD = 2.25$), although the difference is not too large. It should be reminded that teachers caring for children were caring primarily for younger children, which required to provide more involved supervision. Additionally, teachers had to also supervise their own children's virtual academic learning from home.

Not all the data reflected challenges; teachers reported feeling resilient in the midst of great instructional and life altering events. Figure 3 presents fear of COVID-19 scores, which show a normal distribution with a relatively equal split between low and high scores.

Figure 3

SIPUC Teacher Fear of COVID-19
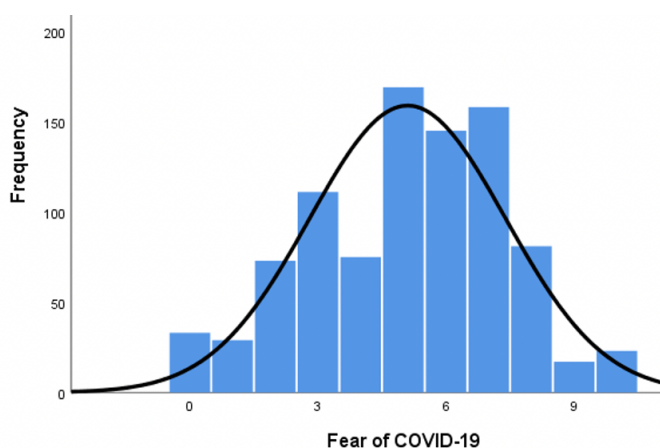
When cross tabulation analysis was conducted, data showed that women reported higher levels of fear ($M = 5.31$, $SD = 2.25$) than men ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 2.29$). However, both mean

scores fell in the low range and were substantially lower than the reported levels of disruption to their teaching. Finally, Figure 4 represents the image of resiliency for Minnesota teachers.

Figure 4

SIPUC Teacher Resiliency
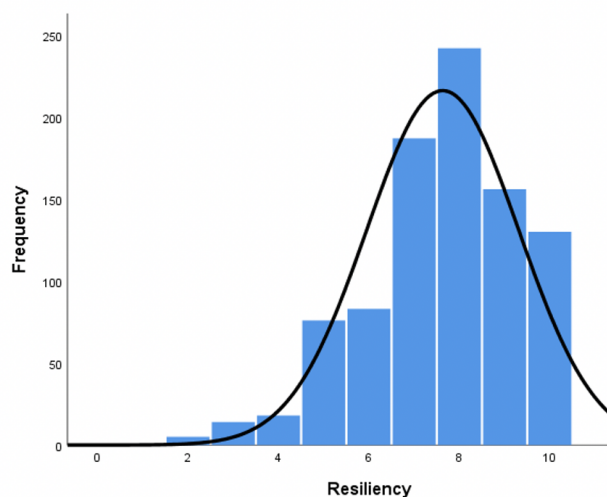
Within regular education, high school ($M = 8.04$, $SD = 1.48$) and middle school teachers ($M = 7.92$, $SD = 1.59$) reported higher resiliency scores than elementary ($M = 7.36$, $SD = 1.67$) and preschool teachers ($M = 7.32$, $SD = 1.60$). Within special education, preschool, elementary, middle, and high school teachers reported equivalent resiliency scores. Early interventionists, however, reported lower scores ($M = 6.39$, $SD = 2.12$) than all other special education teachers. Cross tabulation analysis showed that men reported an overall higher level of resilience ($M = 8.18$, $SD = 1.45$) than women ($M = 7.46$, $SD = 1.71$). Other cross tabulation analyses were conducted considering school type, school size, and online teaching experience among other variables, but nothing was found to generate differences on the levels of resiliency reported by teachers.

Qualitative Data

The following section will present the summary of the qualitative data gathered through two SIPUC questions: The two open-ended questions were part of SIPUC Section II and asked the following: A) Can you manage teaching from home while addressing other responsibilities (e.g., household, children, spouse)? Please, explain and B) What is your biggest concern? Although only these two survey questions were designed to elicit qualitative data, more than 100 pages of comments were analyzed given the sample size. As mentioned previously, both deductive and inductive coding procedures were used to analyze the qualitative data.

Deductive Coding Results

For both research questions the 4 S's of Situation, Self, Support, and Strategies were investigated through the Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 1990) lens. Because this transition occurred hurriedly for most subjects, there are certain aspects of each of the 4 S's that simply can't be analyzed. For example, Situation involves subjects to consider their new role as a positive or negative, gradual or sudden, a gain or a loss, and the duration. This transition was sudden for all of the subjects and did not allow them time to prepare for distant learning. Similarly, one or two weeks into their new role does not allow the time necessary to determine if this transition to distant learning was a gain or a loss and the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact it will have on schools is still not known. This research focused on whether or not the subjects considered their new role as positive or negative simply because that is the only Situation factor that can be investigated so early in the transition to distant learning.

In consideration of Self, the same type of analysis was used to determine which of the factors can be investigated, and which are to be left for a later time. None of the teachers who made the transition to distant learning had any other options than to transition to some type of

online learning/teaching platform. Very few of the subjects had previous experience teaching online, although some did mention that they had taken courses "online" in the past as a graduate student. This research focused on strengths/weaknesses, control, resiliency, stage of life, adaptability, and health. For simplicity sake, control, resiliency, and adaptability were pooled into one category. For the analysis of Support, all of the factors were given consideration because they were all relevant and timely. Regarding Strategies, the only factors under consideration were optimism, self-esteem, stress management, and flexibility. Akin to Situation above, some factors were eliminated from this research due to the suddenness of the transition. For example, it is very difficult to develop a well-planned strategy one or two weeks into the transition to distance learning.

Question: Can you manage teaching from home while addressing other responsibilities?

Situation. The Situation lens illuminates how the individual perceives the transition as positive or negative or as a gain or loss (Schlossberg, 1990, p. 10). After analysis, the factor related to Self that applied was being positive or negative among all other factors. The predominant theme was that overwhelmingly, subjects regarded the situation as manageable but negative (see Table 3).

Table 3

Participant Responses Supporting Situation

- "It's definitely not easy, but in my situation is doable."

- "There is a definite lack of balance, but I have no choice. My family and home are not getting the time they need/deserve even over what we were told was our Spring Break."

- "It is very hard to balance. Hoping it will become easier with time!"

- "Some days yes, some days no…it depends on the day."

- "No, this is difficult and I hate it. Frankly, I want to quit."

- "I'm doing it but it's tough. Really tough."

- "It has been by far the biggest challenge I have faced in my years as an educator."

- "HAHA! Just taking time to get used to it and all the responsibilities although it is very overwhelming!"

Self. The Self lens defines what type of strengths and weaknesses the individual brings to the transition (Schlossberg, 1990, p. 10). After analysis, the factors of Self that applied included stages of life and health. It was too early in the transition to measure control, resiliency, and adaptability. The first predominant finding was that none of the subjects made mention of the strengths or weaknesses they brought to the situation. The second predominant theme was that the subjects mentioned stage of life numerous times, specifically, managing their own children's education while at the same time teaching from home (see Table 4).

Table 4

Participant Responses Supporting Self: Stage of Life

- "The age range of my children make this very difficult."

- "It's really hard as a teacher to try to manage my own kids' schooling. My 11 year old is fairly independent, but the 8 and 5 year olds need a lot of guidance. The 5 year old can't

read directions, so he needs the most help (although the instructional videos his teacher creates are great). The 8 year old has a tough time understanding how to prioritize the many learning tasks required each day. And I still have to take care of chores and supper each day because my spouse is working outside of the home."

- "It's hard to be expected to have normal hours when also teaching 2 children."

- "I have two children 9 and 11, and my daughter has special needs. My husband is working as well so this balance and what expectations I have as a parent and teacher - it is still in a process of knowing what all of those are."

- "It is doable but take some extra work. I am trying to teach my own kids plus answer question from my students."

- "I have one "child" at home--a senior. My college kids are here too, but they are independent. I can not imagine the stress of families trying to continue working a regular schedule and/or from home PLUS balancing multiple children's learning schedules. ESPECIALLY small children that need assistance."

- "Keeping on a schedule is vital for myself as well as my husband who is also an educator working at home and my children who are doing schoolwork at home."

- "Its [sic] very hard to be a great parent keeping two kids busy and keeping up with school kids, My own kids are losing out and it breaks my heart. They have fears and worries too that get missed due to my husband and I working."

The third predominant finding was that many of the subjects mentioned health, but not health per se (see Table 5).

Table 5

Participant Responses to Self: Health

- "I can manage but with lots of stress and concern."

- "I am making it work but it is exhausting and stressful. I know it will get easier as my son become more familiar with the SeeSaw app he needs to us for his distance learning as a 3rd grader. It will also become easier when Schoology stops crashing every day."

- "Yes, but it is stressful with a 7 month old on my hip."

Support. The Support lens describes sources of support available to the person in transition. Support could be from a variety of sources including spouse or partner, family member(s), friend(s), co-worker(s), neighbor(s), organization(s), or institution(s) (Schlossberg, 1990, p. 10). The first predominant theme was that overwhelmingly, the majority of the subjects leaned on their spouse/partner for support during the transition (see Table 6).

Table 6

Participant Responses Supporting Self: Spouse/Partner

- "My spouse is at home and is doing a great deal of the extra work at home while I teach."

- "Depends on childcare needs. If my spouse is home I can manage with greater ease, if my spouse is working it requires a greater juggling act."

- "I am choosing to work from the office as no one is there, and my husband is available to be with the children."

The second predominant finding was that a majority of the subjects worked at home and did not mention how their workspace was organized. The third predominant finding was that at this early stage of transition, none of the subjects mentioned institutional support in response to the research question.

Strategies. The Strategies lens details how and individual copes with the transition including using multiple strategies, changing how he or she views the situation, managing emotions and reactions, and being flexible (Schlossberg, 1990, p. 10). After analysis, the factors from Table 5 that applied were optimism, self-esteem, stress management, and flexibility. The predominant finding was that many of the subjects remained hopeful or optimistic (see Table 7). The second predominant finding was that self-esteem, how to manage stress, and flexibility were not mentioned by most of the subjects.

Table 7

Participant Responses Supporting Strategies: Optimism

- **"**We will make it work."

- "Unsure…I still come to the school building to work, but I also have the flexibility to go home and check on my own children."

- "It is very hard to balance…hoping it will become easier with time."

- "I hope so. I am juggling my three kids, plus all of the communication with families. Crossing my fingers!"

- "I would actually like this to become another format."

- "Unique situation for all, do your best and make it work."

Question: What is your greatest concern?

It should be noted that the word "concern" has negative implications. Hence, almost all of the comments are stated using a negative tone making this particular section very difficult to analyze from a positive angle.

Situation. As found in the prior research question, the factor most expressed was the whether the situation was perceived as positive or negative. The first predominant theme was that overwhelmingly, subjects mentioned how this situation is negatively associated with student learning. The second theme was that subjects repeatedly referred to how the situation inhibited their abilities to perform various teaching functions that they had been able to perform prior to the transition. And finally, the third theme is that subjects made negative comments about access to technology, internet, and unfamiliarity of teaching using online format/tools.

Self. The factors most expressed in the Self lens was stage of life, control, resiliency, adaptability, strengths and weaknesses, and health. Mental health came up time and time again but most of the references were to the students' and the parents' mental health and not

necessarily their own. The first predominant theme is that stage of life dominated this section of

analysis as family concerns outweighed all other factors (see Table 8).

Table 8

Participant Responses Supporting Self: Stage of Life

- "My own children aren't getting what they need as I am so busy in google hangouts...but it is my job;)."

- "When I am not sure my own children's needs are met by me as a parent first, I have an inner struggle with being a mom and teacher. My own children are important. My students are important. I will not want to sacrifice not attending to my own children 8-3:45pm daily and not meet needs of my own children. I hope admin is able to be flexible as we manage this balance at home of parent and teacher. I am blessed to be able to work from home. We are making life work balancing this first week."

- "Making sure my own children get the education they deserve while trying to teach and reach out to my students."

- "The expectation of teaching and caring for my own children (priority #1) and teaching my students (obviously another top priority). It gets complicated fast, but we are doing the best we can."

- "The expectations that we teachers will magically know how much to assign, be available for responses at all times of the day, and supposedly work our regular hours without distraction (I have two kids at home that need help in all their schoolwork as well). I also am not allowed to go outside during my contract time, which is hard if my kids want to go outside and I can't watch them (my husband is an essential worker, so it is all on me)."

- "As a Parent/Husband: being able to modify schedules and make sure my kids are getting the education they would if they were in school and keeping them connected to their friends and teachers that they miss."

The second predominant finding was that participants showed concern about losing the

ability to control certain facets of teaching, specifically communication, student contact, and

relationships (see Table 9).

Table 9

Participant Responses Supporting Self: Control

- "That kids will not get the face to face contact they need with positive adults (teachers) as well as their friends. Also concerned about the lack of feedback given to students as they complete music videos/sing along since I am not there with them."

- "Poverty is high in my district and I worry about students getting sufficient nutrition and support from parents. I do not feel that the vigor of instruction can be as high due to the emotional stress on families during COVID-19, as well as lack of time/training to prepare for this. Maintaining contact with students and providing emotional support is paramount during this time."

- "What concerns me the most is the lack of personal contact with my students. I don't get to share as many examples with them that help the lessons come to life and help them to understand what they are learning is important for their futures."

- "Some parents are refusing to answer their phone--call or text; email, and mail contact. That is what makes this really hard--how to connect with the kids who don't care AND how to keep them/get them motivated. So many new computer programs to learn in a week! Spending lots more time planning and talking with parents even at 9 pm than ever in my 38 years of teaching."

- "My biggest concern is the simple lack of real connection with students. Obviously it is pleasant when you can focus directly on instruction and not have to worry about the classroom management, but the classroom is where connections and relationships are built. Without real time connection, it is going to become increasingly difficult to be there for students as they often need. I am also concerned about what I foresee as our next big challenge, and that is trying to work with students whose lives will be drastically changing as a result of parental unemployment, loss of income, or illness/death in the family as COVID becomes increasingly relevant."

- "Still being able to maintain/foster personal connections with students. Relationships are everything and it is much more difficult to reach as many students in that way through online learning."

- "How do we make sure that they students who were already struggling don't completely disconnect? I'm worried that they will fall further and further behind their peers, exacerbating the gap even more so for next year."

Support. The sources of support associated with the Support lens that were expressed

after analysis were the individual's spouse/partner, workplace, and institution. Similar to

Situation, "concern" had negative connotations and when associated with support, caused many answers to focus on a lack of support. The first predominant theme was that there was a lack of institutional support (see Table 10). The second theme was that spouse/partner and workspaces were not identified in the section of analysis.

Table 10

Participant Reponses Supporting Support: Institutional

- "District administration that does not understand what teachers do or how asinine some of their expectations and demands are. How peers will react to expectations that show school board members or admin is more concerned with getting their money's worth of work out of teachers then the education being delivered or the wellbeing of teachers and other staff."

- "The amount that is being expected of us is unreasonable. Administration is little help as they have not only never done this before but they are also unfamiliar with the platform we were told to use. We were basically left on our own to figure this out. I am worried about everyone's mental health: children, families, mine...I also just want to make sure I am staying connected with students. Academics is the least of my concerns; however, I am still working on the academics."

- "My job has gotten harder. I have not worked harder in my job even on my busiest days than I have during this past couple of weeks. It is mentally exhausting - learning all the new technology, supporting families in their own crisis, finding resouces [sic] for families, supporting staff who are also struggling. I am afraid that administrators will think this is a gravy train for teachers - like we have it so good working from home. I would rather be at the school any old day."

- "The lack of concrete expectations handed down by the administration."

Strategies. Optimism, self-esteem, stress management, and flexibility are the factors of the Strategies lens. It was too soon to develop strategies or solutions to their concerns at this time. Solutions to concerns would be an emphasis for a future focus group.

Inductive Coding Results

As noted previously, inductive coding does not utilize a priori codes. Instead, the researcher uses a bottom-up approach that involves specific examples that lead to categorization

of identified ideas leading to generalized themes. An analysis of responses to the question

involving the management of teaching at home while addressing other responsibilities, eleven

categories generated five themes (see Table 11).

Table 11

Themes, Categories, and Responses: Q41 Managing Teaching/Home Responsibilities

Themes	Categories	Response Examples
Children	Age	• My own children are old enough to take care of themselves. • My children are independent learners at their age. • My kids are older and self-directed.
	Needs	• It is difficult however as I have one child that struggles with Reading and Math, and another child with undiagnosed anxiety and ADHD like behaviors. • I have 3 young children who depend on me to meet their needs. • My 11 year old is fairly independent, but the 8 and 5 year olds need a lot of guidance.
	Presence	• Do not have kids yet, so it is easier for me than I am assuming others who have children. • I am living alone and have 0 distractions. • I don't have any children which makes a huge difference! I don't know how people with kids do it.
Support Systems	Daycare	• My 4 year old still goes to daycare. • I still have daycare that we access fulltime. • Only because I still have childcare that is open. • If daycare closes I have 3 children 5 and under to take care of and teach online.
	Spouse	• My husband is very helpful. • With the help of a spouse during Live Lessons. • My wife is home to manage the kids. • My spouse is at home and is doing a great deal of extra work at home while I teach.

Themes	Categories	Response Examples
Schedule	Needs of Dependents	• I am needing to stretch my work day out far longer than a typical day due to needing to help to take care of my family. • My husband does not have flexible hours or work so I need to provide childcare during the day and spend work most of my hours after bedtime. • In order to do this I am working while my own children are sleeping…early mornings and late nights.
	Household Chores	• Because during my work hours, I am working. I do everything else like dishes, laundry, etc. during lunch or outside of my office hours. • And I still have to take care of chores and supper each day because my spouse is working outside of the home.
	Teaching Hours and Responsibilities	• Busy 7:30-5 with student and parent and teacher communications. • I feel as though I am on call 24/7 for the students which is a bit frustrating. • I only do personal things outside of the 8-3:45 school day. • A lot of work outside of "office hours." • I am available to students during "office hours" but my planning grading and other school responsibilities carry over to other parts of the day.
Work/Life Balance	Personal Children v. Students	• I am struggling with keeping my 5 year old daughter on track with her preschool coursework while also satisfying my work requirements. • It is very hard to be a great parent keeping two kids busy and keeping up with school kids. My own kids are losing out and it breaks my heart. • My own kids are having to learn on their own because so much is expected of me for my students. • I am managing, but certainly not at my highest levels. Because I have so much live interaction with my students, I have no flexibility to step away and help my own children navigate their school work.
	Psychological Considerations	• I can manage, but none of the above will meet the expectations I hold for myself as a teacher, parent, or spouse. Basically, I will just be getting by. • I feel very guilty being home and not being 100% invested in my child. He has no idea what I am doing when he needs/wants something it is now.

Themes	Categories	Response Examples
Technology Issues	Internet	• My WiFi does not work well for downloading videos so go into school for that. • Home Internet doesn't support working from home. • Internet is spotty…come to school for the Internet. • My Internet isn't fast enough, so I go in to school.

Note: This table demonstrates the qualitative analysis via inductive coding for 1018 responses to the question: Q41 Can you manage teaching from home while addressing other responsibilities (e.g., household, children, spouse)?

Inductive Findings: Managing Teaching/Other Responsibilities

In regard to whether teachers were able to manage teaching from home while addressing other responsibilities, coding revealed several categories that led to themes. These themes, children, support systems, schedule, technology issues, and work/life balance, were derived from categories supported by survey responses. Between one and three categories provided support for the themes that emerged. Categories were created as the result of repeated words or inferences to a particular idea.

Children. The categories of age, needs, and presence emerged as the result of inductive coding. In regard to age, respondents were clear that their ability to manage online teaching and learning was connected to the presence and age of children in their homes. The absence of children bolstered manageability. On the flip side, teachers expressed reduced manageability if they had children at home who were not independent learners. The exception to manageability in regard to younger children in the home was found in the theme of support systems.

Support systems. The theme of support systems was supported by the categories of daycare and spouse. Assuming the availability of daycare or a caregiver (i.e., spouse) in the home, teachers found online teaching as manageable as those who did not have children in the home. A common concern, however, among those who utilize daycare or a spouse was the

possibility that daycares would close or the spouse's schedule wouldn't permit parenting coverage.

Schedule. Tied to the idea of support systems to address childcare was the theme of a daily schedule based upon the needs of dependents, household chores, and teaching hours and responsibilities. For many teachers, daily schedules were modified to accommodate the needs of their own children and teaching responsibilities. This resulted in the completion of teaching preparation and obligations and household chores either earlier or later in the day than would be the norm.

Work/Life Balance. The theme of work/life balance was connected to a teacher's schedule and support systems. Teachers noted that they experienced an emotional and psychological tug-of-war to address the needs of their own children and students. As a result, some teachers felt that they were not succeeding at a high level with their own children or students. To an extent, the findings from this theme are contacted to the theme of mental health and wellness, which emerged from responses to the other research question responses that were analyzed.

Technology. A final theme that emerged was that of technology. In particular, Internet issues were cited as the greatest challenge in regard to technology. Although some comments surfaced regarding the reliability of a learning management system (e.g., Schoology), the biggest concern focused on the reliability or presence of Internet services. In some cases, these concerns resided with Internet reliability or availability for students, but in other cases, teachers themselves didn't have adequate bandwidth or had too many individuals competing for bandwidth with their own homes.

Inductive Findings: Biggest Concern

In regard to the second question, the biggest concern of teachers who were teaching online from home, coding revealed several categories that led to themes. These nine themes were derived from categories supported by survey responses, and they are as follows: mental health/well-being; student participation; student support; technology; social interaction; assessment; lost learning; learning equity; and special needs (see Table 12).

Table 12

Themes, Categories, and Responses: Q42 Biggest concern of Teachers

Themes	Categories	Response Examples
Mental Health/Well-Being	Students	• The mental, behavioral, and emotional health of students. • Keeping my students healthy, emotionally and physically.
	Teachers	• The biggest concern right now is my own mental health. • Teacher mental health. • Taking care of myself when I know I am maxed and stressed.
	Parents	• …working parents falling further behind. • …distraught parents… • …overwhelming the parents.
	Nutrition	• Children…not getting the nutrition they need. • Poverty is high in my district and I worry about students getting sufficient nutrition.
Student Participation	Attendance	• Kids who don't show up during school time. • Students that don't check in. • I have 5 students who haven't responded at all to online instruction.
	Productivity	• Getting all kids to buy in and participate in online learning. • The students that already struggle finding it difficult or impossible to complete their work, no motivation...

Themes	Categories	Response Examples
Student Support	Home Setting	• Students who don't have supports at home: educationally or mentally. • Students who don't have adequate support or stability at home. • What will become of the students who fall behind that have no home support by this same time next year? • The kids whose parents are not engaged.
	Teacher	• Not seeing my student! • quality and quantity of learning • … not providing adequate education.
Lost Learning	Learning Gaps	• Learning gaps going into next school year. • The gap widening. • Students falling behind due to lack of time for parents to help them at home.
	Regression	• The regression of my student's abilities. • I will have to "play catch up" next fall.
Learning Equity	Teaching/Learning Format	• …equity in distance learning. • …equity in how instruction reaches our families and accurate progress monitoring. • Equity in my students learning online versus paper. • Equity! We are still grading every assignment and giving students letter grades. Also, how unrealistic it is to teach a language online asynchronously.
	Home Life	• Equity. Some students have more support at home than others. • The inequity in resources, parent assistance, and participation. • Equity- it is necessary but I don't see how it can be done when so many don't have support at home.
Assessment	Grading	• Grading at the end of tri 3....I do not feel that I can get an accurate assessment for each child w/o seeing them face to face. • I have almost 500 students and I haven't heard anything about grades for this trimester.
	Learning	• Assessing and my students receiving enough learning. • Assessing the paper/pencil kids with limited access to building. • I'm concerned about how assessment will work.
Technology	Infrastructure Issues	• Students with inadequate Internet access • Students who don't have access to the Internet.

Themes	Categories	Response Examples
	Non-infrastructure Issues	• Technology glitches while at home and no available resources • Technology crashing • Schoology has been highly unreliable (out of the first four days, it has been down two days)
Social Interaction	Student/Adult Interaction	• Students not getting enough social interactions with important adults • Social interaction with kindergarten students
	Peer Interaction	• The aspect of teaching social skills when some children don't have siblings to practice with. • The social aspect of middle school is difficult to replicate online. • Students not getting enough social interactions with peers.
Special Needs	Regression	• Special education population regressing. • My sped student falling further behind. • Students with special needs not getting their individualized direct instruction that they need to learn, they are going to lose skills.
	Expectations	-…keeping up with the relentless onslaught of additional paperwork for SPED staff, in addition to keeping up with IEP meetings and evaluations. We miss vital training, have higher expectations for student contact, and our SPED students and families have greater expectations for connection because they must have exposure to all classroom activities, and the specific goals of their IEP. • Being a Special Education teacher, our students often need lots of one-on-one and prompts to stay focused or reteaching of concepts. Many of my current students are avoiding working with me. It's unrealistic for teachers to visit with students face-to-face. Even online chatting by students is hard when kids avoid it.

Note: This table demonstrates the qualitative analysis via inductive coding for 1018 responses to the question: Q42 What is your biggest concern? This question was asked within the context of teachers forced to teach online from their homes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Inductive Findings: Biggest Concerns

    Mental health/well-being. The categories of students, parents, teachers, and nutrition

shared common connections that led to the theme of mental health/well-being. Within this

theme, the idea of basic needs, emotional and physical, were present. Moreover, survey respondents expressed concerns regarding the needs of their students, their students' parent, and their own needs. In a generalized way, the theme made clear the concern that the COVID-19 pandemic had proven disruptive to all parties with a vested interest in the education of children. For students and teachers, disruption had occurred on two fronts; those were, the home and teaching/learning settings. The strain of trying to provide learning opportunities for students, combined with the juggling of home life responsibilities proved daunting. Moreover, parents were faced with potential job loss and amplified expectations of support (e.g., helping with learning, meals, monitoring their children). With schedules disrupted for all parties involved in the educational process, the potential for emotional, mental, and physical deterioration as clear.

Student Participation. The theme of student participation is tied to the theme of mental health/well-being. Teachers were concerned that some students have failed to show up for online class. Moreover, even those who did show up might not have been productive. Teachers needed to rely upon parents, to a large extent, to help ensure attendance and participation in the teaching/learning process. However, parents were feeling overwhelmed themselves. Parents might have been struggling to address their own mental, emotional, and financial needs, which translates into limited capacity to provide support for their own children. Teachers were frustrated because they worried about the educational deficit in educating their students, while many were also trying to assist their own personal children.

Student support. The theme of student support is tied closely to the theme of student participation. In many ways, these two themes go hand-in-hand. Within this theme, however, a concern was magnified that teachers aren't able to see and interact with their students to provide the necessary supports for learning. At the same time, teachers were concerned that those

students with limited or no support at home will be academically unprepared for the next school year. Although disengaged parents were problematic during normal educational times, this disengagement nearly guarantees lost, if any, education for children during the learn-at-home time necessitated by COVID-19.

Lost learning. The theme of lost learning is associated with the themes of student support and student participation. Teachers expressed concerns that students would regress; that is, lose already obtained knowledge and skills. Moreover, teachers identified potential learning gaps that would occur, in large part due to the differences in support structures in the home. For those who have engaged parents, the concern with learning gaps was less than those who have little support in the home. Although this concern is not unique to education in general, it is amplified when teachers have limited contact with their students. In other words, teachers simply can't provide enough support to offset a lack of support in the home when they don't have regular contact with their students.

Learning equity. Closely associated with the theme of lost learning is the theme of learning equity. Teachers were clear that they could not see how learning could be equitable when the levels of parental support vary. This argument could be made during normal educational times as well, but as with lost learning, the lack of support in the home simply magnifies the concerns connected to learning equity. In addition to concerns of parental support, there were concerns expressed regarding the online format of teaching. Teachers were concerned whether distance education could even produce equitable learning, especially in some subjects.

Assessment. To an extent, assessment is a theme related to the learning equity theme. The assessment theme was derived from two categories, learning and grading. Some teachers

expressed concern that it was difficult to determine whether learning had occurred, and others weren't certain whether or how they should issue grades. Implicit was the idea as to whether grades would represent learning with any degree of accuracy.

Technology. Two categories resulted in a technology theme. Teachers focused on two aspects of technology. The first concern related to Internet access and/or capacity. Internet access and bandwidth has impacted not only students, but teachers as well. Some teachers noted unreliable or limited Internet bandwidth to large uploads and/or downloads, such as videos. Moreover, teachers reported that some students had no access to Internet. Beyond Internet, teachers noted that some platforms, such as Schoology, did not work as they should initially.

Social interaction. Teachers expressed concern over both student/teacher interaction and peer-to-peer interaction. While teachers noted that some students simply aren't showing up online for classes, even those who did weren't necessarily getting the sort of student/teacher interaction that would be most beneficial for learning. In addition, a concern emerged that students, especially those at certain grade levels, weren't getting peer interaction. Social interaction is an integral part of learning, so there is a sense that learning and well-being are compromised by a lack of peer-to-peer interaction.

Special needs. With a seeming connection to the lost learning and learning equity themes, the special needs theme resulted from two categories: expectations and regression. Special education teachers noted that parents still had expectations that they would meet the individualized instructional components of a child's program, but the logistical considerations compromised the ability to deliver those individualized needs. In addition, there was a sense that special education children would regress at an even greater rate than many regular education

students, similar to the idea of student regression for those with little to no parental support at home.

Discussion

COVID-19 has created a demarcation line; that is, pre- and post-COVID-19. At present, we are living in a tumultuous time of transition. Uncertainty is omnipresent, and COVID-19 is driving most aspects of our lives, including education. There will be a new normal in a post-COVID-19 era, and education will operate within the new normal in ways different than that which teachers and learners encountered in a pre-COVID-19 world. Schools will need to consider the best means to work with students as they re-enter the school system, such as the plan put forth by Pahl (2020). Pahl's plan takes trauma into account while focusing on resiliency, utilizing student input, and creating opportunities to review strengths and supports over time. While Pahl's plan focuses on student reintegration into an educational system, one should question just what the educational system will reflect in a new normal.

In a post-COVID era, both P-12 and postsecondary schooling will likely look different than they did prior to COVID-19. The silver lining, in the eyes of educators who recognize and value the importance of change, is that of COVID-19 within the context of education has accelerated change. As Bradbury et al. (2011) noted, "The only aspect of education that is truly static is its propensity to change. Leaders have both the capacity and the responsibility to respond to change" (p. 173).

Leadership response to change must include the recognition that online education will play an expanding role within both E–12 and postsecondary settings. As the National Center for Education Statistics (2019) and Seaman et al. (2018) reported, distance education at both the E–12 and postsecondary levels was growing in popularity in a pre-COVID world. Given the

necessity to shift education to an online setting during the COVID era, one must be prepared to assume that some educators and students who would not have experienced or preferred distance education as a means to learning prior to the pandemic will both know and prefer it in a post-COVID-19 world. As a result, school leaders who believe that the new normal will be the old normal are utilizing the incorrect calculus. Learners and educators alike will expect online options for learning.

Although the traditional model of learning, which involves in-person attendance, will remain viable for segments of the population due to necessity, an increasing percentage of those who have tasted the fruit of distance education will want more. No doubt, traditional learning structures at the E-12 setting will remain for many since parents need somewhere for their children to go during the workday and distance education is more problematic for some segments of the student population (e.g., younger, special education). For others, however, the flexibility and convenience of learning in an online setting will prove too strong of a pull to return to the old way of education. If schools, E-12 or postsecondary, refuse to change, so-called leaders of those schools should prepare for reduced student populations and decreased revenue streams. Just as traditional retailers have shuttered their doors when refusing to give consumers what they wanted in regard to online shopping options, so will schools pay the price for refusing to change.

During the change process, however, there must be adherence to best practices within online learning. While there are numerous resources to assist educators in making the transition from a traditional setting to an online venue, Quality Matters (2019) should be viewed as the seminal source to guide course development and online learning. The pandemic hijacked quality online learning due to the need to transition *en masse* with little notice. As the protracted pandemic marches forward, educators need to adopt Quality Matters principles as the guiding

force for online learning. Without best practices, learning suffers. Students and parents are increasingly savvy consumers, and schools that fail to adhere to best practices should plan to lose students.

COVID-19 necessitated a move to online learning for many. Following Boin and collaborators' framework (2013), Swaggert et al. (2020) conducted an initial *emergency instructional triage* that was published by the Minnesota Rural Education Association (2020), making clear both the issues and recommendations related to the conversion to distance education in Minnesota as the result of the pandemic. Teachers described the pandemic as an event that disrupted their teaching practices as well as their personal lives. Teachers remained focused on providing relevant learning experiences to their students in spite of the instructional challenges and the educational equity issues that became evident very early on. Resilience as well as confidence in their educational leaders was reported by the majority of teachers.

Educational leaders should implement the Swaggert et al. (2020) recommendations and adhere to Quality Matters principles in an effort to provide the best possible education to students during the pandemic and in a post-COVID era.

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Appendix A

QM K-12 Standards

K-12 Specific Review Standards from the QM K-12 Rubric, Fifth Edition for K-12 Reviews

General Standards	Specific Review Standards	Points
Course Overview and Introduction	1.1 Instructions make clear to learners how to get started and where to find essential course components.	3
	1.2 Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.	3
	1.3 Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided.	3
	1.4 Minimum computer skills and digital literacy skills expected of the learner are clearly stated.	3
	1.5 Etiquette expectations (sometimes called "netiquette") for online discussions, email, and other forms of communication are clearly stated.	2
	1.6 Standards of academic integrity are clearly stated.	2
	1.7 The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate and is clearly available in the course.	1
	1.8 Prerequisite knowledge in the discipline and/or required competencies are clearly stated.	1
Learning Objectives (Competencies)	2.1 Course-level learning objectives or competencies are measurable and describe what learners will be able to demonstrate as a result of successfully completing the course.	3
	2.2 The module/unit-level objectives or competencies describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives.	3
	2.3 The learning objectives or competencies are aligned with state standards and/or other accepted content standards.	3
	2.4 Learning objectives or competencies are designed and written for the target student audience.	3
Assessment and Measurement	3.1 The types of assessments in the course measure the stated learning objectives or competencies, are consistent with learning activities and resources, and their relationship with learning objectives or competencies is clearly stated.	3
	3.2 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work and assist the instructor in determining the level of achievement of learning objectives and competencies.	3
	3.3 Assessment strategies provide learners with opportunities to reflect on their progress towards meeting course requirements and mastering learning objectives or competencies.	3
	3.4 Multiple methods of assessment strategies are included, based on the specified learning objectives or competencies and learner need.	3
	3.5 Expectations for successfully completing the course, earning course credit, and calculating grades are clearly defined for the learner and instructor.	3
Instructional Materials	4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course- and module/unit-level learning objectives or competencies, and their relationship with learning objectives or competencies is clearly stated.	3
	4.2 Instructional materials are integrated within the context of each lesson, and their intended use is clear.	3
	4.3 The course content is appropriate to the reading level of the intended learners.	3
	4.4 The instructional materials have sufficient breadth, depth, and currency.	3
	4.5 All instructional materials used in the course are appropriately cited.	2
	4.6 The course content strives to reflect a culturally diverse perspective that is free from bias.	1
	4.7 The course is free of adult content and avoids unnecessary advertisements.	1
Learning Activities and Learner Interaction	5.1 The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies, and their relationship with learning objectives or competencies is clearly stated.	3
	5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for learner-content interaction that support active learning.	3
	5.3 Learning activities provide opportunities for learner-instructor and learner-learner interaction.	3
	5.4 Standards for instructor responsiveness and availability are clearly stated.	3
	5.5 The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.	2
Course Technology	6.1 Course tools support the learning objectives or competencies.	3
	6.2 Course tools facilitate student engagement and promote active learning.	3
	6.3 The course takes advantage of technologies and tools that protect student privacy and maintain confidentiality of student information.	3
	6.4 Course tools and technologies are current.	2
Learner and Instructor Support	7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it.	3
	7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to academic support services and resources that can help learners succeed in the course.	2
	7.3 The course articulates or links to resources to support effective course facilitation.	2
	7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.	3
Accessibility and Usability	8.1 Course navigation is logical, consistent, efficient, and intuitive.	3
	8.2 The course design facilitates readability.	3
	8.3 The course provides accessible text and images in files, documents, LMS pages, and web pages to meet the needs of diverse learners.	3
	8.4 The course provides alternative means of access to multimedia content in formats that meet the needs of diverse learners.	3
	8.5 Course multimedia facilitate ease of use.	2
	8.6 Vendor accessibility statements are provided for all technologies required in the course.	2

Appendix B

Swaggert Instructional Practice Under Crisis (SIPUC) Questionnaire

Consent Form

   You are invited to participate in a study that explores the instructional experience of public school teachers in times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of this study is to learn about what schools and teachers are doing to ensure that online learning experiences can be delivered in a meaningful way to students and that teachers are supported in their efforts. You have been selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a public school teacher in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

   If you decide to participate, you will be provided electronic access to the *Swaggert Instructional Practice Under Crisis (SIPUC) Questionnaire*, which contains 43 items and will take you less than 10 minutes to complete. No discomforts or risks are expected from your engagement with this instrument other than the inconvenience of responding to the questionnaire at a time of high demand. The benefit of your participation is for the authors of this study to identify the factors that best support teachers in delivering alternative means of instruction to students in MN during the times of crisis.

   Your participation will remain anonymous. Your and other teachers' data will remain private and will be reported in aggregated fashion. There will be no possibility for you to become identified, your privacy is assured. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relationships with Minnesota State University Moorhead. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time. Please, feel free to ask questions regarding this study. You may contact me later if you have any additional questions via email at julie.swaggert@mnstate.edu or call me at (763) 229.9121. Any questions about your rights may be directed to Dr. Lisa Karch, Chair of the MSUM Institutional Review Board, at 218.477.2699 or by email at irb@mnstate.edu. You will be offered a copy of this electronic form to keep.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature or submission of the questionnaire indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate. You may withdraw at any time after signing this form should you choose to discontinue participation in this study.

    ⃝ Implied consent (1)

I would like to reach out to teachers at the end of the academic year. If you would feel comfortable to be contacted again in June, please provide your email. Thank you!

_____

Demographic Information

---

1. What is your gender?

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

○ Non-binary (3)

○ Other (4)

---

2. What is your age?

_____

---

3. What is your ethnicity?

○ White (1)

○ Non-White (2)

---

4. Do you have children with you?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

---

5. What are the ages of the children in your home?

☐ Child 1 (1) _____

☐ Child 2 (2) _____

☐ Child 3 (3) _____

☐ Child 4 (4) _____

☐ Child 5 (5) _____

☐ Child 6 (6) _____

- -

6. What is the highest degree you have completed?

○ Bachelor's degree (1)

○ Master's degree (2)

○ Doctorate degree (3)

- -

7. Which one best describes your school?

○ Rural (1)

○ Urban/Metro (2)

- -

Click to write the question text

○ Click to write Choice 1 (1)

○ Click to write Choice 2 (2)

○ Click to write Choice 3 (3)

8. What is the size of your school district?

○ Less than 500 (1)

○ 501-1000 (2)

○ 1001-2500 (3)

○ 2501 - more (4)

9. How long have you been teaching?

○ Less than 3 years (1)

○ 4-10 years (2)

○ 11 or more years (3)

10. If you are a general Education teacher, which one best describes your current position?

○ Preschool teacher (1)

○ Elementary teacher (2)

○ Middle School teacher (3)

○ High School teacher (4)

11. If you are a special Education teacher, which one best describes your current position?

○ Early interventionist (1)

○ Preschool teacher (2)

○ Elementary teacher (3)

○ Middle School teacher (4)

○ High School teacher (5)

---

12. If you are a middle school or high school teacher, what subject do you teach?

_____

---

13. Have you used online learning (or student management system)?

☐　　Yes (1)

☐　　No (2)

☐　　Fill-in: Describe (3) _____

---

14. Have you been an online student before?

☐　　Yes (1)

☐　　No (2)

☐　　Fill-in: Describe (3) _____

---

15. If you are/have been an online student, about how many courses did you complete?

_____

16. Has your school used eLearning as part of your regular school calendar?

   ◯ Yes (1)

   ◯ No (2)

17. Which learning platform or student management system does your school use?

   ◯ Google Schools (1)

   ◯ PowerSchool (2)

   ◯ Haiku (3)

   ◯ Schoology (4)

   ◯ Infinite Campus (5)

   ◯ Blackboard (6)

   ◯ Other: (7) _____

18. What learning platform or student management system are you using for instruction during the COVID-19 school closure crisis days?

_____

19. How are you delivering instruction during the COVID-19 school closure crisis days?

_____

20. How often are you required to contact your students during the COVID-19 school closure crisis?

   ○ Daily (1)

   ○ 2-3 times per week (2)

   ○ Once a week (3)

   ○ Other (4)

- -

21. In what ways will you contact your students (Mark all that apply)

   ☐   Discussion board (1)

   ☐   Phone call (2)

   ☐   Text message (3)

   ☐   Email (4)

   ☐   Fact Time / Real Time (5)

   ☐   Zoom (6)

   ☐   Other, Fill in: (7) _____

- -

22. How will students contact you? (Mark all that apply)

☐   Discussion board (1)

☐   Phone call (2)

☐   Text message (3)

☐   Email (4)

☐   Face Time / Google Hangouts (5)

☐   Zoom (6)

☐   Other, Fill in: (7) _____

- -

23. How will students communicate with each other? (Mark all that apply)

☐   Discussion board (1)

☐   Phone call (2)

☐   Text message (3)

☐   email (4)

☐   Face time / Google Hangouts (5)

☐   Zoom (6)

☐   Other, Fill in: (7) _____

- -

24. Are you required to contact the parents of your students during the COVID-19 school closure crisis?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

- -

25. In what ways will you contact the parents (Mark all that apply)

☐ Discussion board (1)

☐ Phone call (2)

☐ Text message (3)

☐ Email (4)

☐ Face Time / Real Time (5)

☐ Zoom (6)

☐ Other, Fill in: (7) _____

- -

26. How will parents contact you? (Mark all that apply.)

☐   Discussion board (1)

☐   Phone call (2)

☐   Text message (3)

☐   Email (4)

☐   Face Time / Real Time (5)

☐   Zoom (6)

☐   Other, Fill in: (7) _____

----

27. Do all of your students have access to reliable high speed internet?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

○ I do not know (3)

----

28. What percentage of your instruction will be synchronous (i.e., real time/live) versus asynchronous (i.e., content for students to review at their own time)? (e.g., 10/90)

_____

----

29. Will you keep virtual office hours during the COVID-19 school closure crisis?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

○ Did not think about it (3)

----

30. How much difference there will be between your pre-school closure crisis instruction and now in terms of flexibility with assignments and due dates?

○ No difference (1)

○ Little difference (2)

○ Some difference (3)

○ Great difference (4)

----

31. How confident do you feel in delivering instruction via your school's learning platform or student management system?

○ No confidence (1)

○ Little confidence (2)

○ Some confidence (3)

○ Great confidence (4)

----

32. How much are you collaborating with your grade level team?

○ No collaboration (1)

○ Insufficient collaboration (2)

○ Adequate collaboration (3)

○ Great collaboration (4)

---

33. Are there plans to review student performance data during the COVID-19 school closure crisis? (special education students/all students)

○ No planning (1)

○ Insufficient planning (2)

○ Adequate planning (3)

○ Great planning (4)

---

34. How will professional meetings (e.g., staff, PLC) be conducted

_____

---

35. How satisfied do you feel with the training provided by your district for the COVID-19 school closure crisis?

○ No satisfaction (1)

○ Little satisfaction (2)

○ Some satisfaction (3)

○ Great satisfaction (4)

---

36. How confident do you feel in the leadership of your school to navigate this crisis?

○ No confidence (1)

○ Little confidence (2)

○ Some confidence (3)

○ Great confidence (4)

- -

37. Can you manage teaching from home while addressing other responsibilities (e.g., household, children, spouse)?

☐　Yes (1)

☐　No (2)

☐　Fill in response, Explain (3) _____

- -

38. What is your biggest concern?

_____

End of Block: Teaching Practice

Start of Block: Crisis Concerns

39. What is your level of fear regarding the COVID-19 school closure crisis?

○ Low = 0 (1)

○ 1 (2)

○ 2 (3)

○ 3 (4)

○ 4 (5)

○ 5 (6)

○ 6 (7)

○ 7 (8)

○ 8 (9)

○ 9 (10)

○ High = 10 (11)

----

40. What is the level of disruption to your professional practice that results from the COVID-10 school closure crisis?

○ Low = 0 (1)

○ 1 (2)

○ 2 (3)

○ 3 (4)

○ 4 (5)

○ 5 (6)

○ 6 (7)

○ 7 (8)

○ 8 (9)

○ 9 (10)

○ High = 10 (11)

----

41. What is the level of disruption to your personal life that results from the COVID-10 school closure crisis?

○ Low = 0 (1)

○ 1 (2)

○ 2 (3)

○ 3 (4)

○ 4 (5)

○ 5 (6)

○ 6 (7)

○ 7 (8)

○ 8 (9)

○ 9 (10)

○ High = 10 (11)

42. How resilient do you feel to navigate the COVID-10 school closure crisis?

○ Low = 1 (1)

○ 2 (2)

○ 3 (3)

○ 4 (4)

○ 5 (5)

○ 6 (6)

○ 7 (7)

○ 8 (8)

○ 9 (9)

○ High = 10 (10)

43. What is the level of disruption to your teaching that results from the COVID-19 school

     ○ Low = 0 (1)

     ○ 1 (2)

     ○ 2 (3)

     ○ 3 (4)

     ○ 4 (5)

     ○ 5 (6)

     ○ 6 (7)

     ○ 7 (8)

     ○ 8 (9)

     ○ 9 (10)

     ○ High = 10 (11)

End of Block: Crisis Concerns

Start of Block: Block 2