

# Innovations

## Teachers Tackling the Trials of Techno dependence (T4): How College Teachers Find Balance During Pandemic Transition

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### **Abstract**

The severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic had recently changed the demographic, educational and health landscapes of any country. This action research sought to evaluate mediating strategies for use in alleviating the effects of techno dependence to a specific group of both private and public college teachers fully utilizing electronic media platforms in teaching. Since the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions were still in place, only a handful of strategies were tested namely: (1) Online Time Reduction; (2) Forming Faculty Support Groups; and (3) Committing to Physical Modules. The results of the study proved to be a wake-up call for the working professionals to find that necessary retreat her to perform well at work. With the introduction of online time reduction, forming faculty support groups, and committing to physical modules, performances of teachers improved significantly. Moreover, forming faculty support groups gave the necessary boost to really perform beyond expectations and fully utilize the abilities of each member of the team. Further studies are extremely recommended and possible policy reduction may be integrated.

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**Keywords:** 1. Transition, 2. Reliance, 3. Adjustment, 4. Virtual, 5. Alternative

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### **I. Introduction:**

The severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic had recently changed the demographic, educational and health landscapes of any country (Fauci et al., 2020; Sohrabi et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020). Recent studies on the deadly disease focused on trends (Kannan et al., 2020), antiviral researches (Touret & de Lamballerie, 2020), patient characteristics (COVID-19 Surveillance Group, 2020), origin, transmission and characteristics (Chen et al., 2020; Shereen et al., 2020; Sun et al., 2020; Yuki et al., 2020).

A study dwell on the immediate psychological responses and associated factors of those who were stricken and at the initial stage of the disease (Wang et al., 2020). But that is how close a certain study can get

in terms of dealing with the disease on a personal level, let alone a study that can dwell into how COVID-19 affect their way of living and their method of thriving.

The transition to a new normal was such a direct hit to teachers who were forced to look for an alternative way of teaching and assessing the students (Akbulaev et al., 2020; ILO, 2020). For a pandemic of such magnitude to change what once were considered as normal, it can have ripple effects to different aspects of living and withstanding (Ryan et al., 2020).

With all the information given, it bounces back to the question, what was their initial reaction after changing the mode of teaching? Do they have contingency plan for such situation? Are they fully aware of the extent of the pandemic? Have they fully grasped the magnitude of their situation with retrospect to the persisting trials of techno dependence?

The questions presented motivated the researcher to delve into exploring techno dependence trials tackled by college teachers during the pandemic. There is a need to look closely into the experiences of such individuals with respect to their knowledge of the situation by assessing their perceptions and grasp of the possible potential solution to their challenges, hence the conduct of this study.

## ***II. Objectives:***

This action research sought to evaluate mediating strategies for use in alleviating the effects of technodependence to a specific group of both private and public college teachers fully utilizing electronic media platforms in teaching. The purpose of doing such is not only to improve their existing way of living but provide alternative ways of balance creation as determined by performance improvement observed during the pandemic.

## ***III. Methodology:***

Since the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions were still in place, only a handful of strategies were tested namely: (1) Online Time Reduction (in which only 3 hours of online time are permitted each day for 5 days of which college teachers can conduct classes and follow-up activities); (2) Forming Faculty Support Groups (with no alternations in the online time, where teachers are assigned to faculty support groups that can help in extensive classes and share the burden); and (3) Committing to Physical Modules (where teachers changed their online routine and totally go for modular approach in learning).

College teachers were instructed to commit to their chosen strategy for six months, since performance evaluation covers six months. Observation from the researcher was made twice a week for the first month, and shifted to monthly observation for the succeeding months.

After six months, their performance was evaluated using the Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) in public schools and its equivalent in the private sector. Data were tallied and subjected to statistical treatment. Copies of IPCR were kept to allow comparison in before and after the strategies implemented. These were used to determine any changes as well as differences in performance.

#### **IV. Results and Discussion:**

To compare the strategies implemented, it was necessary first to see if there is a significant difference between the performance rating before and after the introduction of the strategy. A mean of this set of differences was calculated for each strategy before and after performance evaluation. The justification for comparing the two performance ratings in this manner was that this measure quantified the growth teachers made during each strategy and provided a clear picture of how consistently this growth was seen over the population.

**Table 1 : Test for the Comparison of Performance Ratings of the Respondents on the Before and After Implementation of Each Strategy**

	Performance Rating Before		Performance Rating After		<b>t-test</b>
	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	
Online Time Reduction	3.52	0.26	4.05	0.03	<.001**
Forming Faculty Support Groups	3.17	0.07	4.28	0.16	<.001**
Committing to Physical Modules	3.31	0.22	4.13	0.02	<.001**

**Legend:**

ns - difference is not significant at 0.05 level ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ )

\* - difference is significant at 0.05 level ( $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ )

\*\* - difference is highly significant at 0.05 level ( $p\text{-value} < 0.01$ )

**Online Time Reduction.** Based on the results of the analysis, the performance mean rating after the strategy (4.05) is significantly higher than the before performance mean rating (3.52),  $t=6.621$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $p < .001$ .

**Forming Faculty Support Group.** Based on the results of the analysis, the performance mean rating after the strategy (4.28) is significantly higher than the before performance mean rating (3.17),  $t=18.964$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $p < .001$ .

**Committing to Physical Modules.** Based on the results of the analysis, the performance mean rating after the strategy (4.13) is significantly higher than the before performance mean rating (3.31),  $t=11.177$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $p < .001$ .

**Table2 : Test for the Comparison of Performance Ratings of the Respondents After Implementation of All Strategies**

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Between Groups</b>	.276	2	.138	15.034	.000
<b>Within Groups</b>	.248	27	.009		

<b>Total</b>	<b>.524</b>	<b>29</b>		
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There was a statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way ANOVA ( $F(2,40) = 21.839$ ,  $p <.001$ ). A Scheffe post hoc test revealed there was a difference between forming faculty support group to both online time reduction ( $p<.001$ ) and committing to physical module ( $p= .007$ ). There was no statistically significant difference between the online time reduction and committing to physical module ( $p = 0.166$ ).

#### **V. Conclusion and Recommendation:**

With the increasing dependence on technology in terms of teaching, especially on the academic transition observed during the pandemic, it is difficult to find a balance in a teacher's daily routine while aiming to be at par with the quality of education provided prior to the pandemic.

The results of the study proved to be a wake-up call for the working professionals to find that necessary rebreather to perform well at work. With the introduction of online time reduction, forming faculty support groups, and committing to physical modules, performances of teachers improved significantly. Moreover, forming faculty support groups gave the necessary boost to really perform beyond expectations and fully utilize the abilities of each member of the team.

Though technology provided conveniences to the teaching profession, it is recommended to have necessary offline time to really balance a fast-pace and technologically-driven profession. Sometimes going back to the basics may prove to be just the remedy institutions' needs. Further studies are extremely recommended and possible policy reduction may be integrated.

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