

Looking Through the Lens of Rural Science Teachers in the New Normal Setting

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ABSTRACT

Teaching science in distance learning has severely challenged the educators in maintaining a quality learning experience during the pandemic. This also opened to new experiences for science teachers to facilitate learning in a new normal setting, especially in rural schools. This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to describe the lived experiences of rural science teachers during the new normal learning. Ethical standards on trustworthiness and rigor were followed. Five (5) participants were purposively chosen through criterion sampling with the following criteria: should be a junior/senior high school rural teacher 30-55 years old, should be teaching science in the school year 2020-2021 and should be willing to express and share their experiences. Data were collected from unstructured interviews. Narratives were transcribed word for word and reflectively analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. Analyzed data revealed four (4) dominant themes: (1) 4A's of New Normal: Accept, Arrange, Adjust, and Adapt. (2) Dare to Teach: Agents of Learning, Front liners of Teaching. (3) Facing New Variants of Students. (4) A Dose of Hope: Educators' Response to Learning Emergency. The findings of the study contributed to a deeper understanding of the experiences of rural science teachers as they facilitate learning amidst the pandemic. Implications were derived based on the findings. It is challenging for science teachers to grasp students' attention in learning through a modality away from the instructors. Meaningful learning in science has been facilitated using the teachers' interventions through localized experiments, modified activities, and demystified lessons.

Keywords: education, science teachers, rural schools, lived experience, new normal setting, descriptive- phenomenology