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Level of Confidence towards the Implementation of Limited Face-to-Face Classes among Parents of the Primary Graders in Magsaysay, Philippines

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Abstract

The study's primary purpose is to assess the parents' confidence level towards implementing limited face-to-face classes in Bonifacio Aquiño Elementary School in Magsaysay, Philippines, related to school safety and teachers' competence. In line with this, the study is pursued to determine the significant difference in the participants' confidence when grouped according to profile. The findings of this study served as a guide for developing intervention material. This study utilized the descriptive-correlational method. The data revealed that the participants' level of confidence in school safety related to school health and safety standards is very extensive. Also, the participants' level of confidence in teachers' competence is very extensive. Furthermore, participants by group responses according to sex, highest educational attainment and economic status showed no significant difference in their levels of confidence. The data further showed a significant difference when the participants were grouped according to their child's grade level. In addition, the result exposed that there is a significant relationship between the participants' level of confidence in school safety and teachers' competence. The authors concluded that assessing parents' level of confidence is vital for the school to take action in securing a safe and conducive learning environment.

Keywords: level of confidence, limited face-to-face, school safety, teachers' competence

Introduction

COVID-19 has wreaked havoc around the world since its outbreak in late December 2019, and education, like any other vital sector, has been hard hit. According to Philani (2020), students, schools, colleges, and universities have all been affected. Over a year where learning just took place virtually, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) had announced that schools could reopen safely without driving up community spread or putting

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teachers and students at risk, as long as steps were taken to mitigate transmission of the virus (Willyard, 2021).

Students in the first and sixth grades will be able to return to school in stages beginning June 1, 2020, according to the British government. On the other hand, parents and the media were outspoken in their opposition to the decision, citing concerns about the students' safety (Khattab et al., 2020). When considering their children's return to school, parents' concerns about their children's health and safety are the most important factor, according to Limbers (2021), as cited by Zhan et al. (2020).

In connection to the statement above, face-to-face classes are still required for education. Distance learning modalities cannot fully replace the social aspect of learning, where students can interact with their teachers and classmates. Students' self-learning abilities are uneven. (Briones, 2020). In November 2020, schools that identified low-risk areas for coronavirus started to operate pilot testing. As a result, Education Secretary Leonor Briones has stated that the pilot run of limited face-to-face classes was highly successful (Yang, 2022).

National survey conducted by UNICEF and Social Weather Stations (SWS) among Filipino parents of children aged 0 to 17 years old in September 2021, 69 percent of parents agree to conduct voluntary face-to-face classes with health and safety protocols, and 73 percent of parents support voluntary face-to-face classes in areas where there have been no COVID-19 cases in the previous 28 days (Junio, 2021).

Currently, the Municipality of Magsaysay, Philippines, is under Alert Level 2, which means that the Municipality is eligible for conducting limited face-to-face classes if they successfully meet the demands and implement safety protocols within the school as advised by the IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force). In addition, as of March 27, 2022, the province of Misamis Oriental has not recorded any new COVID-19 cases, but it still has 11 active cases based on the Misamis Oriental Provincial Information Office Facebook post. The case transmission of the said Municipality is low and decreasing based on IATF guidelines. Still, it does not mean that when the area is considered as low risk, there will be no possible transmission of the disease.

With regards to this, the researchers conducted this study to determine the level of confidence towards the implementation of limited face-to-face classes among the parents of the primary graders in Bonifacio Aquiño Elementary School (BAES). If in case that the said school implements limited face-to-face classes, the parents' level of confidence must be assessed.

Review of Literature

As the epidemic situation gradually stabilizes in the post-epidemic era, the problem of resuming classes will emerge (Betz, 2020). As a result, the issue of students returning to class is crucial because of their isolation at home during the epidemic; children form closer bonds with their parents, so parents' attitudes toward their children's return to school are critical (Downes et al., 2020). Returning children to school safely during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is a huge public health challenge, but it's an important part of our country's recovery (Cernich, et al. 2021).

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The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends properly disposing of masks by throwing them away in the "correct" trash can after each use and not reusing them. Masks and other disposable pandemic materials, such as gloves, should not be thrown away in the recycling bin with other packaging, cans, or organic waste, according to Iberdrola (2022).

The Department of Basic Education takes school safety very seriously, and as an apex priority, the department has put in place various policies and measures to ensure the safety of all learners, educators, and relevant stakeholders in schools (Department of Education, 2021).

In terms of teachers' competence in the new normal, according to Gokalp (2016), teachers can use a variety of instructional methods in their classroom to meet students' learning needs, create a relaxing environment, and cater to learners' language, motivation, and interests needs. In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in interest in and early adoption of blended learning to improve students' educational experiences. Much work has been done to codify approaches, with tools and resources emphasizing the structural components of new models, such as the configuration of physical learning space, use of time, staff distribution, and technological applications. While it is widely acknowledged that excellent in-person instruction is still required within these structures, there has been less research into the human factors and effective practices contributing to their success (Powell et al., 2014).

To address this need, the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) and The Learning Accelerator (TLA), two organizations dedicated to assisting educators in adopting and implementing blended learning at scale, convened a national committee of blended learning practitioners, thought leaders. Experts to investigate one critical question: what are the key characteristics of teachers in a successful blended learning environment? The Framework identifies 12 specific competencies divided into four larger domains: mindsets, qualities, adaptive skills, and technical skills. These domains differ in content (the type of competency and how it is expressed) and how individuals develop them (Rabbitt et al., 2014).

Methodology

1. Research Design

The design used in the study is the quantitative research method since it determined the primary grade parents' confidence level towards implementing limited face-to-face classes. This study also utilized a descriptive-correlational method for it described the participants' level of confidence towards the implementation of limited face-to-face classes and correlational since it involved the testing whether the relationship between the level of confidence towards the school safety and the level of confidence towards the teachers' competence.

2. Research Locale

This study was conducted in Bonifacio Aquiño Elementary School, Magsaysay District II, Division of Misamis Oriental, Region X Northern Mindanao. Bonifacio Aquiño Elementary School is situated in P-2A Barangay Bonifacio Aquiño Magsaysay, Misamis Oriental, and is 14 km away from Kibungsod Bus Terminal. It is composed of 9 primary teachers and is currently headed by the school heads, Mr. Ceriaco G. Bagnol.

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3. Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were the parents of the primary graders in Bonifacio Aquiño Elementary School (Grade I - III). The researchers used a simple random sampling method to select 50% of the total population. Overall, a total of 68 parents in the primary grades (Grade I-III) served as the participants of this study.

4. Sampling Design

The number of participants in this study was 50% of the total population of parents in the primary grades in Bonifacio Aquiño Elementary School Magsaysay District II. This study also utilized the simple random sampling method in selecting 50% of the sample from each grade in the primary grades in Bonifacio Aquiño Elementary School. Therefore, the number of participants in Grade 1 consisted of 27 parents, 16 parents in Grade 2, and 25 parents in Grade 3, with a total of 68 parents that served as the participants.

5. Research Instrument

The research instrument used in gathering data was adopted and modified questionnaire. The first part of the survey question asked about the demographic profile of the parents of the primary graders. The second part asked about the participant's level of confidence towards the implementation of limited face-to-face classes in terms of school safety that, was based on the report of DepEd Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones about the recommendation of limited face-to-face and the teacher's competency was based on iNACOL Blended Learning Teacher Competency Framework written by Allison Powel, Beth Rabbitt, and Kathryn Kennedy. The instrument used in this study consists of 24 questions with four main item specifications: Individual health protocols (five items), School health and safety standards (five items), management in case of infection or exposure (four items), and Blended learning competencies (ten items).

The research instrument was validated by the three research experts. For the reliability of the survey questionnaire, it was pilot tested on 20 parents in Consuelo Elementary School. The response from the pilot testing was statistically treated to determine the reliability of the survey questionnaires. The estimated internal consistency of the questionnaire with 24 items (five - Likert scale) resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha of .78 which means that the questionnaire is reliable.

6. Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers sent three (3) separate letters addressed to the District in Charge in Magsaysay District II, Consuelo Elementary School school principals, and Bonifacio Aquiño Elementary School to ask permission to have full support in conducting the survey. The researchers immediately distributed the survey questionnaires to the selected participants upon approval. Subsequently, the gathered data were tabulated and subjected to statistical treatment for interpretation purposes to conclude from the results.

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Findings

Participants Profile in terms of Sex, Highest Educational Attainment, Economic Status, and Child's Grade Level.

1.1 sex

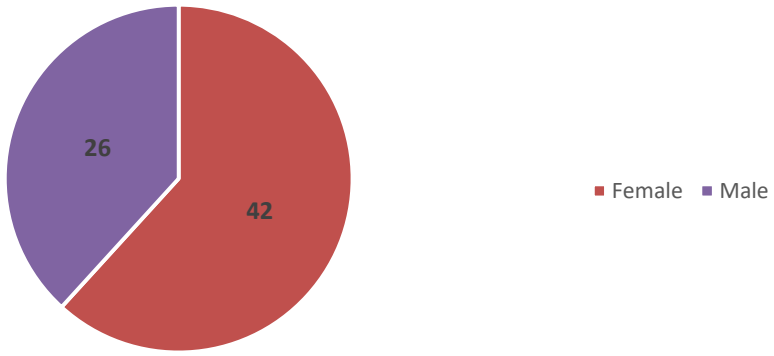

Figure 3. Graphical Representation of the participants according to sex

It can be gleaned from the figure that forty-four (44) participants were females while twenty-four (24) participants were males. This means that majority of the participants are female parents.

1.2 highest educational attainment

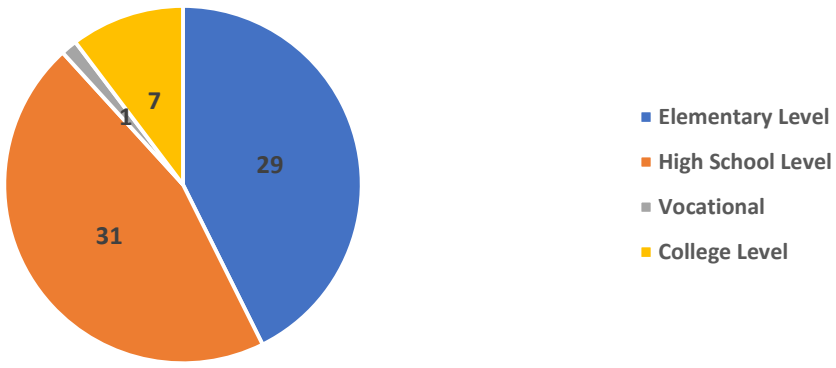

Figure 4. Graphical Representation of the participants according to highest educational attainment

It can be seen in the figure that the highest educational attainment of thirty-one (31) participants is high school level, twenty-nine (29) were elementary, seven (7) were college, and

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the highest educational attainment of one (1) participant is vocational. The figure shows that majority of the participants are high school level.

1.3 economic status

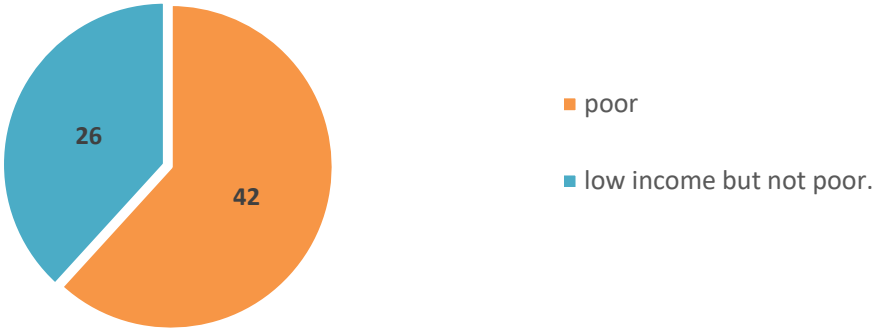

Figure 5. Graphical Representation of the participants in terms of economic status

It can be gleaned from the figure that forty-two (42) or the majority of the participants identified their economic status as poor, and twenty-six (26) participants had low income but were not poor.

1.4 child's grade level

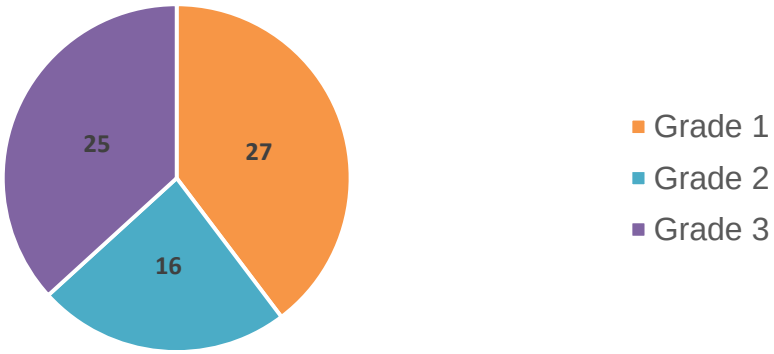

Figure 6. Graphical Representation of the participants in terms of child's grade level

It can be gleaned from the figure that twenty-seven (27) participants, which were grade 1 parents, sixteen (16) were Grade 2 parents meanwhile twenty-five (25) were parents of grade 3 pupils.

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Level of Confidence of the Participants towards Implementation of Limited Face-to-Face Classes in terms of School's Safety and Teachers' Competence

Table 2

Mean distribution of the level of confidence towards the implementation of limited face-to-face classes in terms of school safety

	School Safety **A. Individual Health Protocol**	**Mean**	**Description**	**Interpretation**
1	follow respiratory etiquette when sneezing/coughing, use tissue or inner portion of elbow to cover nose and mouth, and ensure that proper distance is maintained.	4.62	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
2	follow physical distancing (at least 1 meter apart) at all times.	4.54	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
3	frequently clean hands by using an alcohol-based hand rub or by proper handwashing with soap and water.	4.54	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
4	dispose properly the tissue and non-reusable masks after use.	4.21	Fairly confident	The level of confidence is moderately extensive
5	use face masks properly at all times. Both nose and mouth are covered. Those who do not have symptoms may use cloth/washable face mask	3.56	Fairly confident	The level of confidence moderately extensive
	Overall Weighted Mean	**4.29**	Fairly confident	**The level of confidence moderately extensive**

As displayed in the table, indicator number (1) states that following respiratory etiquette when sneezing/coughing, using tissue or inner portion of elbow to cover nose and mouth, and ensuring that proper distance is maintained got the highest mean of 4.62 which means that their level of confidence is very extensive. Meanwhile, indicator four (5) indicates that using face masks properly at all times; both nose and mouth are covered, and those who do not have symptoms may use cloth/washable face masks garnered the lowest mean of 3.56 or fairly confident or moderately extensive.

The overall weighted mean on the individual health protocol is 4.29 or fairly confident, which means that the level of confidence is described as moderately extensive. This implies that when everyone inside the school premises follow the respiratory etiquette when sneezing/ coughing, the parents' level of confidence in sending/allowing their primary children in possible implementation in limited face-to-face classes is very extensive.

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Table 3

Mean Distribution of the Level of Confidence of the parents in BAES in terms of school safety related to school health and safety standards

	School Safety **A. School Health and Safety Standards**	**Mean**	**Description**	**Interpretation**
1	The school ensures that learners, teachers, and personnel have access to hand soaps/hand sanitizers/alcohol-based solutions/other disinfectants in restrooms, classrooms, entrances, etc.	4.94	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
2	All learners, teachers, and personnel, on the first day of their reporting to school, are provided with an orientation on all health standards to be strictly observed at home, during travel to and from the school, and within school premises.	4.85	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
3	All learners, teachers, personnel, and visitors will be checked for temperature using a thermal scanner prior to entering the school.	4.84	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
4	The school regularly cleans/disinfects frequently touched surfaces and objects (tables, doorknobs, desks, and school items) using bleach solution.	4.79	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
5	All classrooms have proper ventilation. Open windows are preferred over air- conditioning systems. Classrooms shall follow the following physical layout for physical distancing, as provided in Enclosure No. 4 of DepEd Order No. 014, s. 2020	4.66	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
	Overall Weighted Mean	**4.82**	**Completely confident**	**The level of confidence is very extensive**

As shown in the table, indicator number one (1) which states that the school ensures that learners, teachers, and personnel have access to hand soaps/hand sanitizers/alcohol-based solutions/other disinfectants in restrooms, classrooms, entrances, etc. got the highest mean of 4.94 which suggests that participants' level of confidence is very extensive. On the other hand, indicator (5) which states that all classrooms have proper ventilation; open windows are preferred over air- conditioning systems; classrooms shall follow the following physical layout for physical distancing garnered the lowest mean of 4.66 which implies that the participant's level of confidence is very extensive. The overall weighted mean of school safety's, school health and safety standards is 4.82 or completely confident and this signifies the participant's level of confidence is very extensive

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Table 4

Mean Distribution of the Level of Confidence towards the implementation of limited face-to-face classes in terms of schools' safety related to management in case of infection

School Safety B. Management in case of infection or exposure	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1. The School Head, with the support of the School DRRM Team, ensures the monitoring of all COVID-19 cases.	4.64	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
2. The health personnel or the designated clinic teacher(s) ensures that the school has an established and open communication line/referral system with local health authorities identified by the local government unit to respond to and manage COVID-19 cases in the locality where the school is situated.	4.41	Fairly Confident	The level of confidence is moderately extensive
3 Personnel or learners who show any COVID-19 symptom(s) are immediately provided with a surgical mask and assisted to the clinic or to a private screening.	4.07	Fairly Confident	The level of confidence is moderately extensive
4 Concerned learners and personnel strictly observe the advice of health authorities, including the possibility of home quarantine or isolation in a quarantine facility or confinement.	3.91	Fairly confident	The level of confidence is moderately extensive
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.27**	**Fairly confident**	**The level of confidence is moderately extensive**

As browsed in table 4, indicator number (1) which states that the school head, with the support of the School DRRM Team, ensures the monitoring of all COVID-19 cases got the highest mean of 4.64 or the participants is completely confident. This implies that the participants level of confidence is very extensive. On the contrary, indicator number (4) which indicates that concerned learners and personnel strictly observe the advice of health authorities, including the possibility of home quarantine or isolation in a quarantine facility or confinement garnered the lowest mean of 3.91 described as fairly confident. The overall weighted mean of the school safety's management in case of infection or exposure is 4.27. or fairly confident. This means that the participants' level of confidence is moderately extensive. The findings reveal that parents are confident in sending/allowing their primary children back in school when school and its DRRM team will join hands in monitoring and ensuring the Covid-19 cases inside the school premises.

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Table 5

Mean Distribution of the Level of Confidence towards the implementation of limited face-to-face classes in terms teachers' competence

	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1. engages in problem-solving through continuous planning, designing, testing, evaluation, and recalibration of teaching methods.	4.79	Completely Confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
2. looks objectively at all results (both positive and negative), and help others to do the same.	4.76	Completely Confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
3. creates learning environments that are flexible and personalized, dependent on real-time data, direct observation, and interaction with and feedback from students.	4.75	Completely Confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
4. maintains and models persistence, confidence, and optimism to resolve issues.	4.75	Completely Confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
5. continually assesses student progress against clearly defined standards, goals, and outcomes to identify specific topics in which each student needs additional support to achieve mastery of a concept or skill.	4.72	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
6. provides resources for students to learn content and enable them to work independently and/or in cooperative groups.	4.71	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
7. collaboratively, transparently, and proactively seeks out feedback from students, parents, and colleagues to continuously improve instruction and teaching practices.	4.68	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
8. develops, practices, models, and embodies respectful behaviors in both face-to-face and online learning environments.	4.68	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
9. embraces uncertainty and ambiguity as part of improving teaching and learning practices	4.62	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
10. establishes and maintains open communication channels, online and in person, with students, educators, and other stakeholders to support student learning	4.62	Completely confident	The level of confidence is very extensive
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.71**	**Completely confident**	**The level of confidence is very extensive**

As shown in the table, indicator number one (1) which states that engaging in problem-solving through continuous planning, designing, testing, evaluation, and recalibration of teaching methods got the highest mean of 4.79 or completely confident. On the contrary, indicator number ten (10) that talks about establishes and maintains open communication channels, online and in person, with students, educators, and other stakeholders to support student learning garnered the lowest mean of 4.62 or completely confident which tells that the participant's level of confidence is very extensive as well. The overall weighted mean on the teacher's competence is 4.71 obtained a response of completely confident which the level of confidence is described as very extensive.

Significant difference on the level of confidence when the participants are grouped according to profile

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Table 6
Significant Difference on the level of confidence when grouped according to sex

Participants	*P* value	Remarks	Decision
Male and Female	.609	Not Significant	Do Not Reject Ho

*tested at 0.05 level of significance

As shown in the table, the computed p-value is 0.609. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The result reveals no significant difference in the level of confidence when the participants are grouped according to sex. This means that regardless of sex, parents perceive the same level of confidence in the implementation of limited face-to-face classes.

Table 7
Significant Difference on the level of confidence when participants are grouped according to their highest educational attainment

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	**.339**	**2**	**.113**	**.686**	**.563**
Within groups	**15.130**	**92**	**.164**		
Total	**15.468**	**95**			

It can be inferred from the table that there is no significant difference in the level of confidence between and within groups having significant values which are higher than 0.05 levels of significance tested for analysis. It insinuates that the participants have a similar level of confidence in sending their primary children to school in the possible implementation of limited face-to-face classes regardless of their educational attainment.

Table 8
Significant Difference in the level of confidence when the participants are grouped according to economic status

Participants	*P* value	Remarks	Decision
Poor and not poor	.060	Not Significant	Do Not Reject Ho

As shown in the table, the computed p-value is 0.60. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The result reveals no significant difference on the level of confidence when the participants are grouped according to economic status.

Table 9
Significant Difference on the level of confidence when participants are grouped according to their child's grade level

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

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Between groups	**.889**	**2**	**.445**	**3.113**	**0.050**
Within groups	**9.856**	**69**	**.143**		
Total	**10.746**	**71**			

*tested at 0.05 level of significance

As shown in the table, the computed p-value is 0.050. The result reveals that there is a significant difference between the level of confidence to the child's grade level of the participants. This implies that the parent's level of confidence varies depending on the grade level of their children.

Is there a significant relationship between the level of confidence towards the school safety and the level of confidence towards the teacher's competence?

Table 10

Correlation analysis between the level of confidence towards the school safety and the level of confidence towards the teacher's competence

Variables	R	Sig. (2 – Tailed)	Remarks	Decision
School Safety				
Teacher's Competence	0.534**	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

As shown in the table, the computed p-value is 0.000. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The result reveals a significant relationship between the level of confidence towards school safety and the level of confidence towards teachers' competence. This implies that when school is safe for the children following the protocols mandated by the IATF that makes school still a safe avenue for learning and teachers adopting the blended learning competencies, parents of the primary graders will confidently send their children back to school.

Conclusions

The participants of the study are mostly mothers, high school level, poor, and a significant number of grade 1 parents. The participants' child grade level is the only factor in which their level of confidence varies.

Parents are confident in sending or allowing their primary graders to return to school provided that the school will strictly mandate everyone inside the premises to practice individual health protocols such as following respiratory etiquette, maintaining physical distancing, etc.

Moreover, the parents are fairly confident that school health and safety standard will be strictly considered, like checking the temperature regularly, having access to hand soaps and etcetera. Also, the parents' level of confidence in school safety is associated with their level of confidence in teachers' competence. This means that the higher the parents' level of confidence in school safety gets, there is also a tendency that their level of confidence in the teachers' competence will also rise. Also, these two must be fulfilled and promised by the school to the

parents when they plan to implement limited face-to-face classes so that parents have the assurance to their children's learning and safety.

Furthermore, the parents of the primary grade pupils have trust and faith in the teachers and the school in general which also suggests that they may support the school if it will implement face-to-face classes and it will not be hard for the school to convince parents about it.

Recommendations

1. The school may use the intervention material developed in this study to determine the parents' level of confidence when it comes to school safety and teachers' competence.
2. The school may consider the grade level of the pupils in the implementation of limited face-to-face classes. The school may also conduct a seminar about blended learning competencies that is helpful for the teachers in teaching blended learning modality. It may also hold seminars and programs that aim for school preparedness in the possible implementation of limited face-to-face.
3. The school may consider sending the DRRM team to seminars related to Covid-19 precautions. It may also hold a parent's orientation before the school starts the implementation of limited face-to-face classes so that they will be informed and aware. It may educate extensively and intensively the students on proper ways to wash hands, proper etiquette when sneezing, and putting signages so that students can follow the etiquette and can stand a 1-meter distance away from each other.
4. The school property custodian may consider ensuring the availability of masks, hand soaps, hand sanitizers/alcohol-based solutions, and other disinfectants.
5. Teaching methods that the teachers will use may be enhanced. They need to set a learning environment that is flexible and personalized during this pandemic.
6. The parents may use the intervention material and flyer to be more informed about school health and safety during the pandemic.
7. Future researchers may replicate this research but with a bigger scope and in a different locale.

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