

UTILIZATION OF MODULAR DISTANCE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

There has been an extreme change in education and educators face a massive challenge in their teaching and learners were in uncertainty. This is the most critical year for education. The normal learning and teaching of learners and teachers within the school has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the continuity of education, the Department of Education has made a way to the implementation of Modular Distance Learning as a vital response to this pandemic. At present, the government is still in the process of adapting to the new normal form of education. Educators' open-mindedness for their continuous enhancements and innovations and the stakeholders and community active support and involvement are the driving force for its success. The key purpose of this research is to find out the challenges encountered, opinions, and recommendations of teachers, parents, and students in the utilization of Modular Distance Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 pandemic has reshaped the world in just a matter of few weeks. The occurrence of the new coronavirus infection known as COVID-19 has first occurred at Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan city of China in December 2019 (Wikipedia, 2020), Millions of people has swiftly affected. Every corner of the world are sick or being killed due to the spread of this pandemic. There was travel restrictions, closures of private schools, and there was decline on the economic of the nations affected. To minimize the spread of this virus, most countries around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions even private establishments such as malls and other departments stores. Face to face learning engagement of learners and teachers within the school has also been temporary stopped. At present, the government is still in the process of adapting to the new normal form of education. Educators' open-mindedness for their continuous enhancements and innovations and the stakeholders and community active support and involvement are the driving force for its success. Education must school continue, even during this pandemic. The Department of education must still have to attain its mission and vision which is to protect and promote the right of every Filipino to quality, equitable, culture-based, and complete basic education where: Students learn in a child-friendly, gender-sensitive, safe, and motivating environment. Where teachers facilitate learning and constantly nurture every learner. Where administrators and staff, as stewards of the institution, ensure an enabling and supportive environment for effective learning to happen. And where family, community, and other stakeholders are actively engaged and share responsibility for developing life-long learners.

The Department of Education (DepEd) issues the enclosed **Policy Guidelines for the Provisions for the Learning Resources in the Implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP), DepEd Order No. 018 s. 2020**. The policy establishes the guidelines that will enable DepEd to provide learning in response to to this emergency, as stated in the rationale of this policy; to ensure that learning opportunities are provided to learners in a safe manner through different learning delivery. So the Modular Distance Learning was implemented.

Distance Learning refers to a learning delivery modality, where learning takes place between the teacher and the learners who are geographically remote from each other during instruction. This modality has three types: Modular Distance Learning (MDL), Online Distance Learning (ODL), and TV/Radio-Based Instruction. (Quinones, 2020) Modular learning is the most common type of Distance Learning. This learning modality is used by all public schools at present in the Philippines. According to a survey conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd), Learning through printed and digital modules emerged as the most preferred distance learning method of parents who enrolled their children in the coming school year, based on a survey conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd). Places where internet are not accessible were considered for online learning.

Teachers were responsible in the distributions and retrievals of these printed materials and were responsible in supervising and monitoring the progress of the learners. Printed Modules will be delivered to students who are living in remote areas, distributions and retrieval centers are designated for every sitios, subdivisions and barangays with the help of teachers and the local government units. Learners may seek guidance from the teachers through Facebook Messenger, telephone, text message/ and calls. If needed and allowed by the authority, teachers do home visits to learners needing remediation or assistance (Llego, n.d.).

According to Valerie G. Lebaste, (2020), parents have an active role in the learning process. They would be the one to facilitate and guide their children through the modular lessons that would be sent to learners while doing remote learning.

DepEd calls the parents and guardians guides, mentors, and facilitators. There is no better time to emphasize these roles than today's time. The teachers are literally not around when learners are doing their modules. The parents or guardians are the ones with them when they do and like it or not, for convenience reasons, students will consult their parents/guardians first. Parents and guardians are duty-bound to assist their children because there is not much choice, (Fernando, 2020).

Being the mentors and facilitators of parents does not stop there. They must act as guides and confidants. Learners must deal with motivation and energy in their modular distance learning. And teachers must also do their part to assimilate motivational activities in the class to keep them focused but this would not be the case. This time learners must stay at home.

a. Literature Review Article:

Education creates a country's economy and society; therefore, it is the achievement of a nation's development. It offers knowledge and skills to the people and shapes the personality of the youth of a nation. Education is very vital for a person's victory in life. It can give a big influence on human opportunity in continuing their life quality. Education is generally seen as the foundation of society which brings economic wealth, social prosperity, and political stability. Economic and social status depends on education obtained by individual since education contributes to individual capability in managing quality of life. The key purpose of this study is to find out the challenges encountered, opinions, and recommendations of teachers, parents, and students in the utilization of Modular Distance Learning.

According to Ma. Theresa Bringas Nardo, (2017), modular instruction is an alternative instructional design that uses developed instructional materials which are based on the needs of the students. Students are encouraged to work on various activities that are interesting and challenging to maintain focus and attention, thereby encouraging independent study. The research discusses the benefits of using modules for instruction such as the acquisition of a better self-study or learning skills among students. Students engaged themselves in learning concepts presented in the module. They developed a sense of responsibility in accomplishing the tasks provided in the module. With little or no assistance from the teacher, the learners progressed on their own. They learned how to learn; they were empowered. She then added that the experiential theory of learning advocated by the experientialists like Rogers made significant contributions in the field of education because they believed that all human beings have a natural desire to learn. Thus, when there is failure to learn, it is not caused by the person's inability to learn, but rather to problems present with the learning situation. Nardo, (2017) elaborates that Rogers also maintained that experiential learning answers the needs and wants of the learner and involves the learner more to initiate and evaluate himself. With this process, the learner earns long lasting effects of what he does. He added that experiential learning is equivalent to personal development and that everybody has an innate tendency to learn. The teacher facilitates the learning process by encouraging the students to do their task, by clarifying and explaining how things should be done, and organizing learning resources that aid learning. The teacher does not impose his own views on the students.

Fernando, (2020) of Sunstar, Baguio City on the other hand said that, distance learning is new, and it may overwhelm the students. The adjustment from the face-to-face setting to the distance learning setting may cause mood swings among the learners. It may also cause frustration and disappointment especially when they are having difficulty adjusting. Unlike the normal setting, there have no friends to talk to when they are bored and/or tired in school. He further explains that there is also the role to ensure that actual learning takes place. He also added that honesty by the learners in answering the modules is the key here. Parents and guardians must live in honesty no matter how tempting it is for them to help their struggling children. Moreover, he said that there are challenges apparently among parents and guardians in fulfilling these roles. Students sometimes do not trust their parents and guardians in accomplishing school tasks. They are hesitant to ask for help thinking that their parents and guardians do not know about the subject matter. It is up to the parents and guardians how to get the trust of their children. The additional roles put upon the shoulders of parents and guardians

are serious. They cannot be ignored and overlooked. Without the commitment of parents and guardians to embrace these roles, the quality of education amid the pandemic will surely be compromised.

Furthermore, Mean Chin (2020) stated that open communication between the teacher to students and/or teacher to parents/guardians is also part of the norm. This is to ensure and monitor the progress of the students at home. Just the thought of studying at home gives students the eerie feeling of freedom and luxury of being less pressured. Conversely, this modular distance learning has certain adversities to both parents and students. She also cited common disadvantages of Modular Distance Learning for a typical Filipino student with a normal family set up. After the opening of classes, these problems and difficulties encountered by students, especially teachers burst into different social media platforms. First, Technical Element – this has been the most substantial issue of distance learning. Second, is the technicality which involves the availability of devices both for students and teachers. These are Mobile phones. Computers, Laptops, Printers, and Internet Connection. Third is the Self Learning Module's Reliability. Chin (2020) said that being the pivotal instrument of this new norm, it's content should meet the standard learning capacity of a student. Given that these instructional materials will be assessed by students on their own, mostly. Next is the Sense of Authority. She mentioned that the luxury of being less pressured. Parents become teachers, but do not see to be as one. Focus and Concentration is also one of the common challenges in modular distance learning Chin had discussed. It is the comfort of studying at home with less or no supervision at all. Students tend to divert their attention instead of focusing on and prioritizing their homeschooling first. Parent's / Guardian's Lastly, the Educational Background. It may sound off but let us face the reality that not all parents are well equipped with proper education. The disadvantages include greater self-discipline and self-motivation required for students, increased preparation time and lack of concrete rewards for teachers and staff, and greater administrative resources needed to track students and operate multiple modules (Nardo, M.T.B,2017).

On the contrary, Nardo, (M.T.B,2017). Stated that there are also advantages of modular instruction. It include more choice and self-pacing for students; more variety and flexibility for teachers and staff; and increased adaptability of instructional materials.

b. Definition of Terms:

Modular learning, based on the most essential learning competencies (MELCS) offered by DepEd, is a form of distance learning that uses Self-Learning Modules (SLM). The modules consist of sections on motivation and assessment that serve as a complete guide of both teachers' and students' desired competencies.

Distance learning – any form of remote education where the student is not physically present for the lesson.

Modular Distance Learning features individualized instruction that allows learners to use self-learning modules (SLMs) in print or digital format/electronic copy, whichever is applicable to the learner. Teachers generally will have to deliver appropriate learning materials.

Conclusion

Our learners may be adjusting from the normal school set up they were used to. In this pandemic, the utilization of modular distance learning is a response to the call of “education must continue” by the Department of Education.” Proper time management and discipline will be the most engaging tools for our students to pass through this. The use of modules promotes autonomous study. Learners will acquire better self-study or learning skills They will engage themselves in learning the concepts presented in the module. They develop a sense of responsibility in accomplishing the tasks provided in the module. The learners improve on their own with less supervision from others. They will learn how to learn and that, they will be empowered. The utilization of modular distance learning increases the variety and flexibility of teachers and staff as well as their adaptability of instructional materials. Teachers are encouraged to be innovative and creative. But of course, this is just the one side of the coin. On the other side of it, reflects the true side of the story. The real-life situation in handling and utilizing the modular distance learning.

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