

Teacher's Responses on the New Normal Learning Delivery Modalities: Prospective Lifelong Learning Pathway

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess the teacher's responses on the different learning modalities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. This research applied the descriptive method. The subjects of this research are the teachers in selected public and private elementary schools of Agusan del Norte, Caraga Region, Philippines. The study revealed that teachers are adaptive and receptive to change in this new normal. They see themselves as facilitators of learning and ensure flexibility in dealing with student's needs. Regarding learning modalities, most teachers opted for online teaching followed by blended teaching and modular teaching as the least preferred modality. The study results recommend that teachers be given ample time to enroll in short courses and sufficient training in all learning modalities. Aside from that, parents and other stakeholders must be oriented to the changes in the educational setting in this new normal. The learning materials produced in the new normal class (i.e., videos, modules, learning activity sheets) must be kept and improved for future use.

KEYWORDS

Teaching modality, new normal, online, blended, modular, teacher's response, lifelong learning, descriptive, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The covid-19 pandemic brought a dramatic impact on our society and has created unprecedented effects on almost all sectors of the human race. These have resulted in widespread disruptions, among of which are travel restrictions (Chinazzi et al., 2020), global economic recession (Barua, 2020), racism (Habibi et al., 2020), and misinformation and controversies (Enitan et al., 2020), and most especially the closure of schools (Viner et al., 2020).

In response to these situations, educational leaders adopted the new normal in education (Barrera, Jaminial & Arcilla, 2020). Following the suspension of face-to-face learning modality last March 2020, the Department of Education and its policy-making bodies design programs and projects that will make the department continually deliver quality education to its Filipino learners amidst health uncertainty.

The Basic Education - Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) lays down the direction for basic education for the school year. Modular Distance Learning involves individualized instruction that allows learners to use a Learning Management System (LMS) in print or digital format, whichever is applicable in the learner's context, and other learning resources like instructional materials, textbooks, activity sheets, study guides, and other study materials. Online Distance Learning features the teacher as

facilitator, engaging learners' active participation by using various technologies accessed through the internet while they are geographically remote from each other during instruction. Blended Learning refers to a learning delivery that combines any or a mix of online distance learning, modular distance learning, and TV/Radio-based Instruction (DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2020).

To prepare teachers and school leaders for the delivery of multiple learning modalities, the Department of Education provided series of virtual training and seminars to fully capacitate all the teachers on the adjustments for the classes this school year.

According to Karalis (2020), what is worth studying after returning to normality, are the implications that have arisen for the day after, that is, what adjustments need to be made, the extent of the situation, and to define the basic dimensions of education and to learn in formal education systems and organizations amid educational disruptions.

However, like everything else, getting back on track will require some tinkering since this has become our new normal (Mayzenberg, 2020). Transitioning from the traditional classroom to utilizing the different learning modalities is a challenge even under the best possible circumstances. Educators and learners will take a while to adjust to this "new normal."

Thus, in the light of this research, the central idea of the study will focus on the teacher's response to the new learning modalities adopted by the Department of Education (DepEd). It will also assess and provide a clear lens on the experiences, difficulties, and challenges faced by teachers in this new normal education and recommends for short course/s offering intended for adult learners, especially teachers in private and public schools to capacitate them in this new era of dealing with technology in the delivery of instruction.

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored to the theory of change that is developed by Spencer (2001); Durkheim (2002); and Comte (1998) respectively, which states that individuals or organizations create a strategic plan with the multiple changes that need to take place and the structured actions that will lead towards these changes/goals. They will be able to close the gap between their goals and the actions needed to achieve them successfully.

The Theory of Change is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why the desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It is focused in particular on mapping out or "filling in" what has been described as the "missing middle" between what a programs or change initiative does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved. It does this by first identifying the desired long-term goals and then works back from these to identify all the conditions (outcomes) that must be in place (and how these related to one another causally) for the goals to occur. These are all mapped out in an Outcomes Framework, which provides the basis for identifying what type of activity or intervention will lead to the outcomes

identified as preconditions for achieving the long-term goal. Through this approach, the precise link between activities and the achievement of long-term goals is more fully understood. This leads to better planning, in that activities are linked to a detailed understanding of how change happens. It also leads to better evaluation, as it is possible to measure progress towards achieving longer-term goals beyond the identification of program outputs.

De Silva et al. (2014) noted that the theory could aid the development of interventions by providing a framework for enhanced stakeholder engagement and explicitly designing an intervention embedded in the local context.

The theory of reasoned action (TRA), on the other hand, is a model for predicting people's behavior, which states that the best predictor of people's behavior in any given situation is their intention to perform the behavior. Not surprisingly, the best predictor of whether people will do something is whether they intend to do it. The intention to perform the behavior is influenced by a person's attitude toward the behavior and the attitudes of important people, and the associated perceived social pressures.

Jones (2019) noted that adjusting the environment around faculty attitudes and subjective norms of social media use in distance learning would influence the faculty's intentions and behaviors. They further noted that the number of faculty using social networking to enhance distance learning increases. Those who are not using social networking would begin to feel pressure from their peers to include it in their distance learning classes. Thus, informing those who train and develop distance learning faculty, administrators, colleagues and peers would positively influence the outcome of faculty members incorporating these technologies into their courses.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to assess the teacher's responses on the different learning modalities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research method was employed in this study to see the sights on the central idea of the responses on the new normal learning modalities. The study also endeavored to help the Department of Education and the institution to prepare teachers and school leaders for the delivery of multiple learning modalities. The study was conducted in public, and private elementary schools of Agusan del Norte, Caraga, Philippines, wherein teachers of different schools were the participants. The method used in gathering data was through a questionnaire via Google forms. The instrument underwent validation of the content by the identified experts, obtained reliable reliability test results, and administered the said instrument via an online platform to the study participants. In presenting, interpreting, and analyzing the data gathered by the

researchers, the following statistical measures were used to treat the accumulated data in the study: mean, percentage, and frequency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

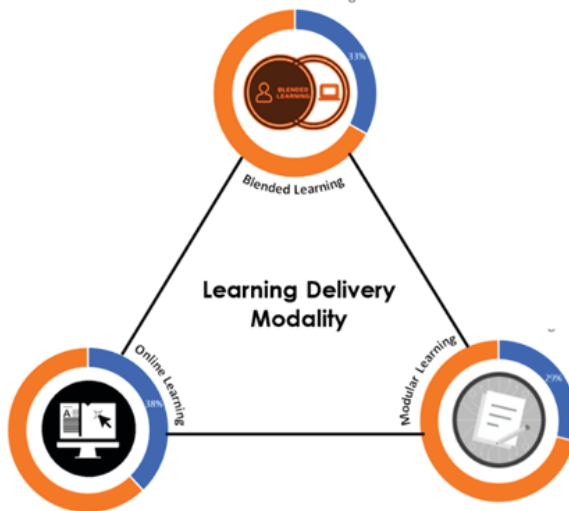


Figure 1. Learning delivery modalities

Figure 1 reflects the learning delivery modalities used by the participants in the delivery of instruction. Online learning is a computer-assisted method in the delivery of instruction via the internet. In this study, online learning is referred to as pure online or distance learning. It includes a real-time discussion (synchronous) with the learners anytime or as scheduled or anywhere and applies asynchronous interactions. It shows that more than one-third (or about 38%) of the participants utilized pure online learning to deliver instruction. Another method of learning delivery considered in this study is blended learning. Researchers define blended learning as currently applied in the delivery of instruction in basic education as partly online learning and partly modular learning and strictly no face-to-face delivery of instruction due to COVID – 19 pandemic.

About one-third (or 33%) of the participants in this study utilized blended learning to deliver their instruction as implemented in their respective schools. In comparison, nearly one-third (or about 29%) of the participant's utilized modular learning. Modular learning is a form of distance learning that uses Self-Learning Modules (SLM) based on DepEd's essential learning competencies (MELCS). The modules include sections on motivation and assessment that serve as a complete guide of both teachers' and students' desired competencies. Teachers will monitor the learners' progress through home visits (following social distancing protocols) and feedback mechanisms and guide those who need special attention (Manlangit, Paglumotan, & Saperia, 2020).

It further shows that more than two-thirds (or about 71%) of the participants in this study utilized the e-learning method (combining online and blended learning). E-learning methods and processes are really strong. These strengths of the online learning modes can rescue us from these challenging times. It is student-centered and offers a great deal of flexibility in terms of time and location. The e-learning methods enable us to customize our procedures and processes based on the needs of the learners. Plenty of online tools are available, which is important for an effective and efficient learning environment (Dhawan, 2020).

Mean representation of the teacher's responses on the new normal learning delivery modalities

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Using blended method in teaching improved my ICT skills	3.46	Agree
2. E-teaching system is easy to handle	2.71	Agree
3. E-teaching system provides ease to communicate with the students	3.00	Agree
4. E-teaching system has high availability	2.75	Agree
5. E-teaching is well structured and clear	3.08	Agree
6. My teaching objectives are clearly stated	3.46	Agree
7. E-teaching content is rich enough	2.92	Agree
8. My quiz and assignment are clearly stated and explained	3.50	Strongly Agree
9. Quiz and assignment grading is appropriate and fair	3.29	Agree
10. I use discussion as a teaching strategy for the subjects that I teach	3.42	Agree
11. I encourage independence and creativity from my students	3.58	Strongly Agree
12. I facilitate and monitor appropriate interaction among students	3.67	Strongly Agree
13. As a teacher, I support student-centered learning	3.63	Strongly Agree
14. I am flexible in dealing with students' need (due dates, absences, make-up class special exam)	3.71	Strongly Agree
15. Critical thinking and problem solving are important skills for my students	3.79	Strongly Agree
16. I use strategies to encourage active learning, interaction participation and collaboration among students	3.67	Strongly Agree
17. I use effective strategies and techniques that actively engage students that learning process (e.g., team problem-solving, in-class writing, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation instead of passive lectures)	3.58	Strongly Agree
18. I encourage learning through group interaction	3.17	Agree
19. I provide timely, constructive feedback to students about assignment and questions	3.42	Agree
20. I use appropriate strategies designed to accommodate the varied talents and skills of my students.	3.58	Strongly Agree
21. I provide students-centered lessons and activities that re based on concepts of active learning and that are connected to real-world applications	3.58	Strongly Agree
22. My teaching goals and methods address a variety of student learning style.	3.50	Strongly Agree
23. As a teacher, I view myself as a facilitator	3.71	Strongly Agree
24. I immediately consult with students to correct problems and keep them on task	3.58	Strongly Agree
25. I set standards for my assignment in online courses.	3.29	Agree
26. I set short-term (daily or weekly) goals as well as long-term goals (monthly or for the semester)	3.46	Agree
27. I keep a high standard for teaching in my online course	3.22	Agree
28. I set goals to help me manage preparation time for my online course	3.46	Agree
29. I don't compromise the quality of my work because it is online	3.29	Agree
30. I prepare my questions before joining the chat room and discussion	3.38	Agree
31. I prefer online teaching than Blended or modular teaching	2.92	Agree
32. I prefer blended teaching than online or modular teaching	2.75	Agree
33. I prefer modular teaching than online or blended teaching	2.58	Agree
Weighted Mean	3.44	Agree

Table 1 shows the mean representation of the teacher's responses on the new normal learning delivery modalities. The commonly used learning delivery modalities in both and public schools in Agusan del Norte, Caraga Region, Philippines are online learning, blended learning, and modular learning to address the emerging needs of the learners in this time of COVID – 19 pandemics as part of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) under DepEd Order No. 012, s. 2020. The content of the BE-LCP emphasizes the different learning modalities that the schools can utilize as demanded by their community, like distance learning which focuses on modular, online, and blended learning, and even in radio-based learning, either on top or in place of the regular classroom learning.

The participants in this study strongly agreed ($\bar{x} = 3.79$) that critical thinking and problem-solving skills are important skills that their students must develop. Based on the results of the study of Fitarahmawati and Suhartini (2020) shows that the learning components, including constructivism, inquiry, questioning, community learning, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment, can empower critical thinking core skills as well as problem-solving skills during the pandemic through contextual distance learning. Ceniza (2020) stressed that teaching modalities present continually deliver quality education to our learners. It also shows that participants agreed ($\bar{x} = 2.58$) that they prefer modular teaching to be online or blended learning. This proves that more teachers opted to use Modular Distance Learning over other learning approaches because of the main reasons like poor internet connection and lack of enough knowledge on the adoption of the online platform in teaching and learning.

The overall weighted mean of the teacher's responses on the learning delivery modalities is $\bar{x} = 3.44$, which means that they agreed on the indicators stipulated in online, blended, and modular learning modalities. Thus, the institution is doing its best to use effective teaching modalities in every school (Bagood, 2020). It is the noble right of every student to access quality education amid the crisis our country and other nations are confronted with. So education among learners must continue while ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all learners, teachers, and education department personnel (Abu, 2020).

Furthermore, with its stakeholders and partners, the Department of Education (DepEd) has pushed for learning continuity and created various alternative teaching modalities that go beyond the four walls of the classroom (Manila Times, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Based on the data gathered, teachers are adaptive and receptive to change in this new normal. Whether they come from public and private schools, they are flexible to fit in the current situation. Delivering quality education through innovation with the integration of technology is one of their utmost priorities. They see themselves as facilitators of learning, giving ample opportunities for the children to learn and master

the skills they need to. Considering their positive response in the new normal manner of teaching and learning, the human resources of the Department of Education just needed training for them to perform effectively and efficiently in the field.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are also highly recommended. Teachers in both public and private schools must receive training in all modalities and could propose the new lifelong learning pathway or short course to be offered in the region's different higher education institutions and universities. They will be oriented on the different communication platforms and different learning management systems. The school must identify a specific communication platform and Learning Management System to be utilized during online classes. Production of instructional materials for radio-based instruction and television-based instruction must also be introduced to all the teachers.

Modules utilized in the new normal must be kept for future use. These must be reviewed considering the reports of typographical errors, content mistakes, and key answers. These should be improved for the utilization of the materials whenever classes are suspended due to natural calamities for any other reasons. Videos produced in the new normal must be compiled to be used in the old normal. Parents as partners of learning must be oriented on the different learning modalities.

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