



An Assessment of the Implementation of Printed Modular Distance Learning in the New Normal in Infanta

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ABSTRACT

School closures due to COVID-19 have brought significant disruptions to education across the country. At the peak of the pandemic all schools were forced to close that affected millions of students. Given the abruptness of the situation, teachers and administrations were unprepared for this transition and were forced to build BE-LCP that gave the school leaders to choose which among distance learning systems will be implemented in their supervised schools. This study aimed to determine the assessment of the respondents in the implementation of printed-modular distance learning in different areas of concern; *teachers' preparation, curriculum, motivation, learning resources; communication in teaching and learning; students' assessment of learning and module distribution and retrieval* and find out the problems its initial implementation and suggest immediate responses to the challenges as regards to; *safe Operations; well-being and protection, focus on learning; reaching the marginalized; education financing*. Mixed-method design of research was used in completion of this research. A total of 1125 respondents, 44 teachers and 1081 students, were directly involved in this study. Based on the assessment of the respondents, it was revealed that appropriate intervention and other enrichment activities were not given to the students. Meanwhile, lack of funds that could be used for the purchase of COVID-19 materials and office supplies for module printing were most pressing problem encountered in the implementation of printed-modular distance learning. The findings of this study were utilized as inputs of BE-LCP enhancement.

INTRODUCTION

Section 1 Article 14 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that “the state shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels” and Section 2 of Republic Act 7722 otherwise known as the Higher Education Act of 1994 mandates that “the State shall protect, foster and promote the right of all citizens to affordable and quality education at all levels”.

Additionally, *Republic Act No. 9155* also known as *an act instituting a framework of governance for basic education, establishing authority and accountability, renaming the department of education, culture and sports as the department of education, and for other purposes* provides:

It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality basic education and to make such education accessible to all by providing all Filipino children a free and compulsory education in the elementary level and free education in the high school level. Such education shall also include alternative learning systems for out-of-school youth and adult learners. It shall be the goal of basic education to provide them with the skills, knowledge and values they need to become caring, self-reliant, productive and patriotic citizens.

The above-mentioned declaration of policy of the Department of Education and the country's constitution is not difficult to achieve under the normal condition. People in any organization can move and do to attain the set goals.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the economy of our country. It forces many offices and establishments to stop their operation. The schools are not exempted for this closure. Unfortunately, the pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94 percent of the world's student population, up to 99 percent in low and lower-middle income countries.

Relative to the above-mentioned situation, DepEd- Philippines never failed to give priority and importance to education. As Briones said that the DepEd is aware of the calls to suspend the opening of classes due to the continued threat of COVID-19. “But what other options do we have? We have to go on because education must continue,” she added.

Further, Briones also said that the health and safety of learners and teachers remain the “utmost consideration” of DepEd.

That’s why DepEd presented the adoption of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan through, DO No 012, s. 2020 was issued by the Department of Education in order to realize the mandate of the state to provide quality education to all. This legal document is entitled ADOPTION OF THE BASIC EDUCATION LEARNING CONTINUITY PLAN FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021 IN LIGHT OF THE COVID - 19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY. DO No. 012, s. 2020 highlights the following:

In order to provide clear guidance to all offices, units, schools, and community learning cells (CLCS) of the Department of Education (DepEd), learners and their parents, partners, and stakeholders, the Department developed a Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP), a package of educational interventions that will respond to basic education challenges brought about by COVID – 19. Relative to BE-LPC, every school in the country was required to prepare its own Learning Continuity Plan (LCP), which is actually a product of collaborative efforts of all school stakeholders. Preparation of LCP seriously considers the principle of protecting the health, safety, and well-being of learners and personnel and preventing the further transmission of COVID – 19.

All efforts and initiatives to implement the LCP will greatly depend on family and community support. It needs to prepare not only the schools, learners, administrators, and teaching and non-teaching personnel, but also the parents or guardians of the learners. There will be orientations and capacity building for parents and guardians to prepare them for the new role/responsibilities that they will do. DepEd needs the support and partnership of the LGUs to maximize and align their Special Education Fund in providing resources and assistance for the LCP. It shall endeavor to have strong engagement by national government agencies, private organizations, and other stakeholders in contributing to educational needs, especially at this critical time.

Despite the difficulties and challenges encountered by the Department Education officials, school heads, teaching personnel, parents and learners in the implementation of the new modality of learning in the new normal, it was positively being embraced by the DepEd personnel to help many learners continue their education during the pandemic.

The implementation of the printed modular distance learning has been running for two years now. However, not all teachers, parents and learners could easily adapt to this sudden change. Teachers, parents and learners have various observations and experiences towards the implementation of the new normal approach. Inevitably, there are some problems met by the teachers in implementing the modular distance learning. Though the very purpose of the implementation of the approach is to develop the quality of education in the Philippines, the students who are affected have their own opinion regarding this approach.

The researchers wanted to find out how the assessment of the teachers and students help in promoting excellence in the academic performance of learners and how the problems/difficulties that they encountered would be addressed for an enhancement of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed at identifying the effectiveness of the first year of implementation of the printed modular distance learning approach in Binulasan Integrated School. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the assessment of the teacher, and student-respondents in the implementation of modular distance learning under new normal in terms of:
 - 1.1. Teachers’ Preparation;
 - 1.2. Curriculum Enhancement;
 - 1.3. Motivation;
 - 1.4. Learning Resources;
 - 1.5. Communication in Teaching and Learning;
 - 1.6. Students’ Assessment of Learning and
 - 1.7. Module Distribution and Retrieval?
2. How does the assessment of the teacher-respondents in the implementation of printed modular learning differ from that of the student-respondents?
3. What are the problems encountered by the teachers in the implementation of modular distance learning in the following areas:
 - 3.1. Safe Operations;
 - 3.2. Well-being and Protection;
 - 3.3. Focus on learning;

- 3.4. Reaching the Marginalized and
 - 3.5. Education Financing?
4. What are solutions/responses offered to address the problems in the implementation of printed modular distance learning as regards to:
 - 4.1. Safe Operations;
 - 4.2. Well-being and Protection;
 - 4.3. Focus on learning;
 - 4.4. Reaching the Marginalized and
 - 4.5. Education Financing?
5. Based on the findings of the study, what inputs can be derived to enhance the school's Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan- BE-LCP?

REVIEW RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

(Dangle & Sumaoang, 2020) stated in their study that due to the COVID-19 outbreak, students and teachers have been unable to engage in face-to-face learning within the school. As a result, Modular Distance Learning has been implemented as an immediate response to ensure educational continuity. The Philippines is currently transitioning to a new normal type of education, and educators' constant innovations and active participation from other stakeholders are the driving forces behind its success. The primary goal of this study is to learn about the obstacles that teachers, parents, and students have faced, as well as their thoughts and recommendations, in the implementation of Modular Distance Learning in Balbalayang National High School (BNHS) and Baguio City National High School (BCNHS) during the School Year 2020-2021. The employed a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach by conducting surveys to the 37 participants in the selected schools through quota and purposive sampling. Deductive thematic analysis was used in the interpretation and coding of data. The major challenges that emerged were lack of school funding in the production and delivery of modules; students struggle with self-studying, and parents' lack of knowledge to academically guide their child/children. In conclusion, the study was able to determine the prevailing challenges of the participants in terms of resources, preparedness, and communication. The result of this study may serve as a springboard for the future improvements of the schools' existing programs and guidelines on the implementation of modular distance learning.

Further, the research conducted by (Eriberto & Llames, 2020) revealed themes on challenges such as (1) time constraints, (2) insufficient and limited knowledge, and (3) tough tasks. On the part of opportunities, the following themes were discovered: (1) bonding activity, (2) learning experience, and (3) strategic learning. From the themes that emerged, the following recommendations are offered to the Department of Education and its Schools. They may launch programs to address most specifically the challenges and problems mentioned above to ensure that quality education is provided even in the pandemic. Moreover, the Department of Education and its Schools may provide supplementary materials such as video or audio recordings of each module to further help the students learn the lessons on the module.

Meanwhile, in the study conducted by (Mataac, 2021) disclosed the impact of modular distance learning to Central School's Beginning Readers. The study revealed that Modular Distance Learning had an impact on the improvement of Beginning Readers' reading skills. One factor is that; some parents were not trained to teach reading professionally. Some households have limited reading resources to be used in reading. It was also found that reading implementation at home during Modular Distance Learning is low that is why the reading development also decreased. Based on the result of the study the researcher recommended to develop home reading habit among beginning readers. Teachers should use different reading techniques in teaching beginning readers.

Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used in completion of this research. A total of 1125 respondents, 44 teachers and 1081 students, were directly involved in this study. Complete enumeration was applied in the selection of the research respondents. The quantitative research approach was utilized to assess the teachers' practices in the first year of implementation of modular distance learning using the teacher-made instrument. On the other hand, qualitative research approach was employed to quantify the respondents' response in the problem encountered through structured interview. Independent t-test was employed to determine the significant difference between the teacher-respondents' assessment with that of the student-respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS/ SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHER, AND STUDENT-RESPONDENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MODULAR DISTANCE LEARNING UNDER NEW NORMAL

Teacher-respondents

The teacher-respondents had a lot of practices in order to achieve successful implementation of the modular distance

learning. Following can be considered as good practices in this concern due to the frequency and intensity of the practice which ushered productive results:

1. Informed the parents/guardians on the schedule of distribution and retrieval of the module/s and other supplemental activities. (Module Distribution and Retrieval)
2. Used all the channels of communication such as cellphone, face book, group chats in reaching the teacher/students.(Communication in Teaching and Learning)
3. Utilized the group chats to keep learners updated of the announcement etc.(Communication in Teaching and Learning)

Meanwhile, the following statements below are the items in each area of concern as assessed by the student-respondents.

Student-respondents

1. Informed the parents/guardians on the schedule of distribution and retrieval of the module/s and other supplemental activities. (Module Distribution and Retrieval)
 2. Used all the channels of communication such as cellphone, face book, group chats in reaching the teacher/students.Communication in Teaching and Learning
 3. Claimed the SLM/ LeAP from the teachers on the given schedule.Module Distribution and Retrieval
2. The computed computed t-value of 3.81 and a critical t-value of 1.98 which registered 0.05 level of significance., reveals that there is significant difference between the assessment of the teacher-respondents in implementation of the printed-modular distance learning. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that 'there is no significant difference between the teacher and the student-respondents' assessment in the implementation of printed-modular distance learning is rejected.

3. Problems encountered by the teachers in the implementation of modular distance learning

Below are the problems/difficulties which they encountered in each identified areas of concern:

Safe Operations

Increasing number of COVID cases in the locality.

Limited supplies of COVID 19 materials.

Well-being and Protection

Teachers can be prone to covid risks.

Risk of being infected by the virus during the distribution and retrieval of learning

Focus on learning

Insufficient number of modules and delayed delivery of SLM's from the Division Office.

Shortage of materials for the reproduction of SLMS.

Reaching the Marginalized

Lack of communication with learners/parents who reside in remote residence without dependable internet or cellular signal.

Lack of financial capability among parents particularly in transportation to claim their modules.

Education Financing

Inadequate materials and funds for the SLMs.

Lack of financial assistance in implementing the intervention programs prepared by the teachers.

4. Solutions/responses offered by the teachers in the initial implementation of modular distance learning

Teachers never allowed to make these challenges create another problems. They found immediate response in addressing

them. Below are their responses as regards to:

Safe Operations

Followed AITF Protocol such as social distancing, wearing of face mask, frequent handwashing avoidance of social gatherings.

Well-being and Protection

Adhered to the DOH and IATF health protocols.

Focus on learning

Printed SLM and prepared additional activities for the learners.

Reaching the Marginalized

Conducted home visitations.

Education Financing

Tapped donors, the LGU and NGO to be partners of school in effecting teaching and learning.

5. Inputs to enhance school's BE-LCP were listed and considered.

CONCLUSIONS

With the findings discussed in this action research, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. In the initial implementation of printed-modular distance learning, teachers were able to refine good practices in different areas of concern. Below are the top five practices that they possessed:

Informed the parents/guardians on the schedule of distribution and retrieval of the module/s and other supplemental activities. (Module Distribution and Retrieval)

Used all the channels of communication such as cellphone, face book, group chats in reaching the teacher/ students. (Communication in Teaching and Learning)

Claimed the SLM/ LeaP from the teachers on the given schedule. (Module Distribution and Retrieval)

2. The assessment of the teacher and student-respondents shows that the teacher-respondents are more aware and informed in the implementation of printed modular distance learning. They exerted and made all their best effort to effect quality learning.

3. The most pressing problems they encountered were the following:

Increasing number of COVID cases in the locality. (Safe Operations)

Risk of being infected by the virus during the distribution and retrieval of learning modules. (Well-being and Protection)

Insufficient number of modules and delayed delivery of SLM's from the Division Office. (Focus on learning)

Lack of communication with learners/parents who reside in remote residence without dependable internet or cellular signal. (Reaching the Marginalized)

Inadequate materials and funds for the SLMs. (Education Financing)

4. The solutions offered were the following:

Strictly adhered to the minimum health protocols. (Safe Operations)

Followed social distancing, wearing of face mask, frequent handwashing avoidance of social gatherings. (Well-being and Protection)

Printed SLM and prepared additional activities for the learners. (Focus on learning)

Consistently held home visitations and reached out to those struggling learners. (Reaching the Marginalized)

Built strong school and community partnership. (Education Financing)

5. Inputs to enhance BE- LCP were made for better implementation of printed modular-distance learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review the LDM course that focuses in giving learners intervention.
2. Benchmark other school's practices in offering remedial in the new normal setting among struggling learners.
3. Attend/hold in-house seminar, webinar, LAC Session on intervention strategies under modular distance learning
4. Intensify partnership among LGU and barangay officials
5. Tap sponsor to be the school's partner in delivering quality education in the normal set up.

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