



Modular Distance Learning Adaptability and Academic Performance in Creative Writing of Grade 11 Students

Kiezel Claire G. Atienza, LPT, MAEd

PG Student, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Writing has always been the core of the academic life of students. Developing this skill is a challenge, specifically during this pandemic wherein most schools employ modular distance learning modality. Thus, this study determined the status of modular distance learning adaptability and the level of academic performance in Creative Writing of Grade 11 students in San Mariano National High School. This study employed quantitative research using the descriptive-correlational method. Eighty-one (81) respondents were selected through stratified random sampling to answer the adapted and modified modular distance learning adaptability questionnaire and for the academic performance, the researcher used their semestral grade in Creative Writing. The findings revealed that the status of modular distance learning adaptability in terms of students' motivation, time-management, self-paced learning, help-seeking, and managing physical environment has a significant relationship to the level of academic performance in Creative Writing. Therefore, this paper concluded that the status of modular distance learning adaptability has greatly influenced the academic performance of the student-respondents. More so, the intervention being developed in this study may be used to support the school, specifically the students, in improving their adaptive strategies and writing skills, which will help them in studying and obtaining career opportunities after senior high school.

Keywords: Modular Distance Learning Adaptability, students' motivation, time-management, self-paced learning, help-seeking, managing physical environment, Creative Writing, Academic performance

Introduction

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic brought about significant challenges to the education sector worldwide, particularly due to school closures aimed at ensuring the safety of both teachers and learners. Before the pandemic, face-to-face interaction in the classroom allowed teachers to provide clear explanations and timely support, enabling students to engage actively with the lessons. This direct interaction fostered an environment for collaboration, questions, and discussions, enhancing the learning experience. However, the sudden shift to remote learning highlighted the critical role of in-person engagement. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) created the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) in response to the health crisis, aiming to ensure that students could continue their education through various modalities, including online learning and printed modules. The transition, however, has presented several challenges, especially in terms of student motivation and adaptability to the new learning formats.

The Modular Distance Learning (MDL) system, as implemented in schools like SMNHS, provides printed self-learning modules (SLMs) to students. These modules offer individualized instruction, allowing learners to study at their own pace. However, as Malaya (2020) noted, this format is not without challenges. While students can learn independently, they often struggle without the real-time assistance that would typically be available in a classroom setting. Moreover, feedback and interaction with teachers are limited, making it difficult for students to grasp complex concepts, particularly in subjects like Creative Writing, where guidance is essential. As seen in the initial written activity in Creative Writing, only 29% of students were able to pass, indicating that the new learning modality is not yet effective for everyone.

Adaptability is crucial in overcoming these challenges. As Half (2018) pointed out, adaptability helps students embrace change, develop resilience, and succeed in new environments. In the context of Modular Distance Learning, students must learn to adapt by managing their time effectively, staying motivated, and seeking help when needed. According to Bliese and Ployhart (2006), adaptability skills such as self-regulation, help-seeking, and motivation are vital for learners to succeed in self-paced learning environments. Furthermore, students must be able to manage their physical learning environments to ensure they have a space conducive to studying, as emphasized by Chonghui (2020). These factors are integral to academic success in the new learning environment.

In the study of adaptability, motivation plays a key role. Yelmaz et al. (2017) argued that motivation is a critical element for quality education, and without it, learning does not occur. Students' motivation to learn influences their engagement with the tasks and their ability to manage their time effectively. Time management, as described by Adams and Blair (2019), is another vital skill. When students learn to plan and allocate time for tasks,

they are more likely to complete their assignments on time and maintain high academic performance. Self-paced learning also encourages students to take responsibility for their education, fostering a sense of independence and self-regulation.

As students in Modular Distance Learning environments struggle with tasks like writing essays or composing short stories, the support system becomes even more critical. Help-seeking behavior, as discussed by Arbos et al. (2020), allows students to reach out for guidance when they encounter difficulties. This self-regulated strategy is important in an online or modular setup where immediate feedback from teachers is not always available. Students need to develop the confidence to seek help from teachers or peers, which is crucial for overcoming challenges in understanding complex topics like literary techniques and narrative construction in Creative Writing. Environmental factors also play a significant role in students' adaptability. Chonghui (2020) emphasized that the physical environment in which a student learns has a significant impact on their academic performance. In the case of Modular Distance Learning, students need to ensure that their home environment is conducive to learning. This may include having a quiet space free from distractions, as well as access to necessary resources like internet connectivity, books, and learning materials. The ability to manage and adapt to these environmental factors contributes to students' overall success in the new learning modality.

The I-ADAPT theory, developed by Ployhart and Bliese (2006), emphasizes the importance of an individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) in adapting to new situations. In the context of Modular Distance Learning, the theory highlights that students' motivation, time management, self-regulation, and social and environmental factors significantly impact their adaptability and academic performance. As students learn to manage their time, seek help when necessary, and adapt their learning strategies, they increase their chances of academic success. The Pickle Jar Theory, proposed by Wright (2002), emphasizes time management as key to academic success. It suggests that students must prioritize their tasks, ensuring that academic responsibilities are completed on time, particularly when students juggle multiple responsibilities at home. Time management is essential in Modular Distance Learning for maintaining academic performance in subjects like Creative Writing. Bernstein's pedagogic discourse theory (2000), as cited by Naidoo (2019), distinguishes between strong and weak pacing, with weak pacing being common in student-controlled learning environments. While weak pacing offers students more flexibility, it also requires self-discipline to prevent procrastination and meet deadlines. The balance between flexibility and discipline is crucial for students to succeed in the self-paced nature of Modular Distance Learning.

Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the challenges students face in adapting to Modular Distance Learning. They highlight the importance of motivation, time management, self-regulation, help-seeking, and the ability to manage one's learning environment. These factors, in turn, influence students' academic performance. As the study explores the relationship between adaptability and academic success in Creative Writing, it will provide valuable insights into how students can navigate the new learning environment and achieve their educational goals effectively. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to investigate how the adaptability of Grade 11 HUMSS students in SMNHS, particularly in terms of motivation, time management, self-paced learning, and help-seeking behaviors, correlates with their academic performance in Creative Writing. By examining these aspects, the study aims to offer practical recommendations that can enhance students' ability to adapt to the challenges of Modular Distance Learning, thus improving their academic outcomes and providing a more effective learning experience in this new educational setup.

Methodology

A quantitative research design was utilized in the study using the Descriptive-correlational research method. This study had eighty-one (81) Humanities and Social Science students of San Mariano National High School in the School Year 2020-2021 as respondents. The respondents are from the three sections of the Academic Track-Humanities and Social Sciences Strand namely; Honesty, Hope, and Faith. The respondents were selected through a stratified random sampling using Cochran's Formula.

The researcher utilized five sets of questionnaires composed of the five indicators such as students' motivation, time management, self-paced learning, help-seeking, and managing the physical environment. To measure the students' motivation the researcher adapted and modified the Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire by Payne (2012). For time management, the researcher adapted and modified the questionnaire from Sayari et al. (2017), and for self-paced learning, help-seeking & managing the physical environment the researcher used the adapted and modified questionnaire from Kocdar et al. (2018). For the students' academic performance, the researcher asked the permission of the advisers to get the semestral grades of the respondents in their permanent records. The adapted questionnaires were modified to meet the settings and needs of the learners.

For the academic performance, the researcher got the semestral grade in the school form 10 of the students. Then, all the responses to the Modular Distance Learning Adaptability Questionnaire were tabulated. Appropriate statistical treatment was made to process the data for analysis and interpretation.

Results and Discussion

Table No.1			
The extent of the Modular Distance Learning Adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of students' motivation			
Items	Mode	Percentage	Description

1. I am motivated to answer my Creative Writing module and revise my writing activities before submitting them.	3	54.32	High Extent
2. I easily focus on what I am writing.	3	60.49	High Extent
3. I can clearly express my ideas in writing.	3	59.26	High Extent
4. I enjoy writing literary analysis papers.	3	54.32	High Extent
5. I complete my writing activity even when it is difficult.	3	40.74	High Extent
6. I put a lot of effort into my writing.	3	48.15	High Extent
7. I enjoy different Creative Writing tasks and activities.	3	50.62	High Extent
8. I am motivated to answer the activities in my Creative Writing subject.	3	56.79	High Extent

Table 1 presents the status of Modular Distance Learning Adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of student motivation.

The data shows that the students are generally motivated, with the highest percentage (60.49%) indicating a strong focus on writing, as seen in item No. 2, while the lowest percentage (40.74%) pertains to students' eagerness to finish difficult tasks (item No. 5). This suggests that while students are motivated in certain aspects, persistence in completing challenging tasks remains a challenge.

According to Martin & Curwood (2022), motivation plays a crucial role in students' engagement and writing performance, where self-belief and learning focus significantly contribute to their writing success. However, as Moses et al. (2019) pointed out, a lack of persistence in tackling difficult tasks can hinder students' writing development, emphasizing the need for teachers to encourage and support students in completing complex assignments to enhance their academic performance.

Table No. 2			
The extent of the Modular Distance Learning Adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of time management			
Items	Mode	Percentage	Description
1. I complete answering my activities on time.	3	45.68	High Extent
2. I estimate how long it takes to read and comprehend the topics in my Self-learning module.	3	55.56	High Extent
3. I check the accomplishments of my tasks based on the priorities made.	3	50.62	High Extent
4. I plan out my daily duties with the right strategy.	3	53.09	High Extent
5. I prepare a list of my tasks to be performed in sequential order.	3	45.68	High Extent
6. I see to it that I prioritize the task according to what should be the first to be done.	3	53.09	High Extent
7. I set enough time for my daily duties and activities.	3	43.21	High Extent
8. I monitor my daily activities by comparing my plan against what has been done and reconciling any differences.	3	46.91	High Extent

Table 2 presents the status of Modular Distance Learning Adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of time management.

The highest percentage in time management, 55.56%, was observed in students' ability to comprehend the topics in their self-learning modules, which reflects their awareness of their study time and learning strategies. On the other hand, the lowest percentage of 43.21% was seen in students' ability to allocate enough time for their daily obligations. This indicates a need for improvement in prioritizing tasks effectively. As noted by Aduke (2015), time management is crucial for productivity, as individuals must organize their time to meet various demands. Furthermore, Khan et al. (2020) emphasized that efficient time management is linked to better academic performance. Similarly, Alyami et al. (2021) found that students' ability to manage their

time directly impacted their academic success, with challenges arising during the pandemic due to disrupted sleep patterns and time allocation. Therefore, improving time management is essential for students to balance their academic and personal responsibilities.

Table No. 3			
The extent of the Modular Distance Learning Adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of self-paced learning			
Items	Mode	Percentage	Description
1. I think of questions on the subject while reading the material.	3	58.02	High Extent
2. I draw up a draft of reading material to be able to organize my thoughts.	3	51.85	High Extent
3. I practice by repeating the contents of the material.	3	59.26	High Extent
4. I review my reading materials and notes and try to find the most important opinions.	3	48.15	High Extent
5. I create simple schemes, diagrams, or tables to organize my study materials.	3	38.27	High Extent
6. While studying my self-learning modules, I review my lesson notes and draw up a draft of the important subjects/topics.	3	50.62	High Extent
7. I summarize the topics to understand what I have learned from the lessons.	3	43.21	High Extent
8. I evaluate what I understand by pausing at regular intervals while studying.	3	59.26	High Extent

Table 3 presents the status of modular distance learning adaptability of the students in terms of self-paced learning.

The highest percentage of 59.26% was observed in students' understanding of their lessons when they have enough time to study, indicating that allowing students time to process and reflect on their learning improves comprehension. This is aligned with Hubauer's (2019) emphasis on self-paced learning (SPL), where students can select the content they wish to focus on and manage their study time, enhancing their understanding. On the other hand, the lowest percentage of 38.27% was seen in students' use of diagrams and schemes, which, according to Roberts et al. (2013), is an important tool for organizing information and enhancing comprehension. However, students often struggle to master this technique, which is essential for effective communication and writing skills. Therefore, incorporating strategies like SPL and visual aids could significantly improve students' academic performance.

Table No.4			
The extent of the Modular Distance Learning Adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of help-seeking			
Items	Mode	Percentage	Description
1. I contact someone to discuss my understanding.	3	35.80	High Extent
2. I participate in social media group discussions regarding study subjects.	3	37.04	High Extent
3. When I do not understand the distance education course material, I ask another student for help.	3	40.74	High Extent
4. I contact other students, who I think are successful and can help me in my subject.	3	41.98	High Extent
5. I determine what I will ask before asking for help.	3	41.98	High Extent

6. I find someone who has information about the course content to consult when I need help.	3	43.21	High Extent
7. I share my questions about the lessons with other distance education students on the Internet.	3	41.98	High Extent
8. I try to talk face-to-face with my classmates in distance education if necessary.	3	30.86	High Extent

Table 4 presents the status of modular distance learning adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of help-seeking.

The highest percentage of 41.98% was found in students' willingness to share ideas and ask for help from peers when they don't understand their self-learning modules, which supports the idea that collaborative learning and communication with others can improve understanding and academic performance. This aligns with Sullivan's (2019) assertion that asking for help positively impacts a student's academic achievement and self-esteem, emphasizing the importance of seeking assistance when needed. Conversely, the lowest percentage of 30.86% was observed in students' willingness to contact someone to discuss their understanding, highlighting that students may feel reluctant to ask for help due to embarrassment or a desire to work independently. Sullivan (2019) emphasizes that students must recognize when they need help and overcome the stigma of seeking support, which can significantly enhance their learning and academic success, especially in areas like Creative Writing.

Table No.5			
The extent of the Modular Distance Learning Adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of managing the physical environment			
Items	Mode	Percentage	Description
1. I prefer studying in places where I can concentrate.	4	55.56	Very High Extent
2. I choose a comfortable place to study.	4	64.20	Very High Extent
3. I have places where I can study efficiently for my distance education lessons.	4	45.68	Very High Extent
4. I choose places where nothing distracts me from studying my distance education lessons.	4	54.32	Very High Extent
5. I study my lessons in places where I can focus.	3	49.38	High Extent
6. I have a regular place to study.	4	43.21	Very High Extent
7. I can study well in my working area in our house.	3	39.51	High Extent
8. I check first the place before I do my activities.	4	49.38	Very High Extent

Table 5 presents the status of Modular Distance Learning Adaptability of the student-respondents in terms of managing the physical environment.

As seen in the table, the highest percentage of 64.20% was observed in students' preference for a comfortable study environment, with a mode of 4, described as "agree" and interpreted as "very high extent." This supports Balog's (2018) view that a conducive physical environment plays a crucial role in students' learning experiences, as a comfortable space helps maintain focus and reduces distractions. Hendrix (2019) further reinforces this idea, emphasizing that a well-designed study area supports effective learning by eliminating discomfort. On the other hand, the lowest percentage of 39.51% was noted for students' ability to study well in their working area at home, with a mode of 3, described as "agree" and interpreted as "high extent." This finding aligns with Maxwell's (2007) assertion that a well-structured learning environment is key to promoting effective study and creativity. Additionally, the study by Rotas and Cahapay (2020) highlights that students often face difficulties in modular distance learning due to poor learning environments and the conflict with home responsibilities.

Table No.6			
Level of academic performance in Creative Writing			
Grading Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Descriptor
90-100	8	9.88	Outstanding
85-89	17	20.99	Very Satisfactory
80-84	30	37.04	Satisfactory

75-79	26	32.10	Fairly Satisfactory
Below 75	0	0.00	Did Not Meet Expectations
	81	100	

Table 6 presents the level of academic performance in Creative writing of the student-respondents.

The results show that 37.04% of students achieved satisfactory academic performance in Creative Writing, while 32.10% reached a fairly satisfactory level. Nardo (2017) suggested that the use of learning modules promotes self-directed learning, engaging students but requiring extra effort to fully understand the material, particularly in tasks like writing journal entries or poems. However, the lack of direct teacher guidance can hinder progress, as noted by Bijesh (2017), leading to distractions and missed deadlines. Only 9.88% of students achieved outstanding performance, highlighting that while many students struggle with modular distance learning, they have the potential for success with better learning strategies and teacher support. Narad and Abdullah (2016) emphasized that academic performance depends on effective pedagogies and collaboration between students, teachers, and institutions. The results indicate that most students need additional support and guidance to succeed in this learning modality.

Table No. 7				
Correlation Between the Extent of Modular Distance Learning Adaptability and Level of Creative Writing Performance				
Variables	Computed r_s-value	Direction ±	Description	Interpretation
Students' motivation	0.78879	Positive	High	Significant
Time management	0.58507	Positive	Moderate	Significant
Self-paced learning	0.60912	Positive	High	Significant
Help-seeking	0.40542	Positive	Moderate	Significant
Managing physical environment	0.4492	Positive	Moderate	Significant
Degrees of Freedom	79	Critical r _s -value:		0.221

Table 12 shows the correlation between modular distance learning adaptability and academic performance in Creative Writing taking into account the variables of modular distance learning adaptability which are students' motivation, time-management, self-paced learning, help-seeking, and managing physical environment.

On the first row, the absolute value of r-computed is greater than the absolute value r critical is $|0.78879| > |0.221|$ at a 5% level of significance with 79 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis of the study is rejected therefore there is a significant relationship between students' motivation as an indicator of modular distance learning adaptability and academic performance in creative writing.

Further, on the second row, the absolute value of r-computed is greater than the absolute value of r critical is $|0.58507| > |0.221|$ at a 5% level of significance with 79 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is rejected therefore there is a significant relationship between time management as a variable of modular distance learning adaptability and academic performance in creative writing.

On the third row, the absolute value of r-computed is greater than the absolute value of r critical is $|0.60912| > |0.221|$ at a 5% level of significance with 79 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is rejected therefore there is a significant relationship between self-paced learning as a variable of modular distance learning adaptability and academic performance in creative writing.

In addition, on the fourth row, the absolute value of r-computed is greater than the absolute value of r critical is $|0.40542| > |0.221|$ at a 5% level of significance with 79 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is rejected therefore there is a significant relationship between help-seeking as a variable of modular distance learning adaptability and academic performance in creative writing.

On the fifth row, the absolute value of r-computed is greater than the absolute value of r critical is $|0.4492| > |0.221|$ at a 5% level of significance with 79 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis of the study is rejected therefore there is a significant relationship between managing the physical environment as a variable of modular distance learning adaptability and academic performance in creative writing.

The study revealed that while students generally agree with the status of modular distance learning adaptability in terms of motivation, time management, self-paced learning, and managing their physical environment, they face challenges in certain areas. Specifically, students struggle with persistence to complete difficult tasks, time utilization, and the use of strategies like diagrams or tables for organizing their ideas in writing. Help-seeking behavior was also identified as a weakness, as students often work independently, which affects the quality of their work. Despite these challenges, students can complete written and performance tasks in Creative Writing, but they need to improve their modular distance learning skills.

The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between modular distance learning adaptability and academic performance in Creative Writing, leading to the proposal of the Project Write intervention to enhance these skills and improve student performance.

It is recommended that during times of pandemic, calamities, and for working students, teachers and parents strengthen their communication through regular meetings and group chats to ensure both parties are informed about the student's learning progress and academic performance. Students should be encouraged to develop better time management skills and utilize strategies such as diagrams and to-do checklists to improve their academic performance in Creative Writing. Additionally, the Department of Education should provide more localized examples, learning materials, and virtual seminars to help students adapt effectively to the Modular Distance Learning-Print modality, ensuring they receive the necessary support in these challenging times, especially during calamities that may disrupt their learning environment.

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