



STUDENT EXPERIENCES ON MODULAR LEARNING AMIDST PANDEMIC: A SURVEY DESIGN

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Abstract:

The pandemic of COVID-19 has become a global health issue and has had a significant influence on education. The study employed a survey design. The degree to which social media was used for learning was the independent variable. The study used a researcher-made questionnaire to gather the data on the experiences of college students to modular learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic among selected students of Western Philippines University External Campuses such as Quezon, Rio Tuba, Busuanga, Canique, El Nido, and Culion Campus.

Significant findings of the study revealed that students at Western Philippines University External Campuses have various experiences and perceptions with regards to the use of modular learning during the pandemic.

Keywords: Modular Learning, Experiences, Survey, Education Students

INTRODUCTION BACKGROUND

Schools in many countries faced unprecedented challenges resulting from the COVID-19 virus pandemic. According to the study of Cullinane & Montacute (2020), they found that children from the poorest families were the least likely to have access to the devices needed and internet access at home. Hence, this creates parental problems due to the emergence of the pandemic.

The Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has already infected almost 3 million people in more than 148 countries, has resulted in more than two hundred thousand deaths worldwide and has wrecked chaos around the globe. The crisis has already transformed into an economic and labor market shock. The world is only beginning to understand the economic impacts of COVID-19, but many other issues have emerged and need to be urgently addressed, like the closure of schools and its impact on learning and the burden of education on students, parents, and teachers (Bhamani, et al., 2020).

The shift of the times necessitates a change in perspectives experienced by all stakeholders of education. All stakeholders in education are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; thus, their experiences matter a lot. Administrators, teaching and non-teaching personnel, students and learners, government officials, local government unit officials, and personnel and parents are all involved in this emerging phenomenon, thus, a relevant study ought to be conducted for clarity and understanding to address confusion and educational difficulties.

With the present educational situation, there is a need to shift to a flexible learning modality. It includes the use of learning modules among students. According to (Carrillo & Flores, 2020), learning modules is beneficial because it provides continuity of learning and that the students are safe at home. After all, they need not attend school for a face-to-face discussion with their respective professors.

The research utilized a survey on the students on their experiences on modular learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic among selected education students of Western Philippines University. It is an opportunity for the researcher to determine the experiences of college students in using modules during the COVID-19 pandemic.

OBJECTIVES

The research study sought to determine students' experiences on the modules during the COVID-19 pandemic of Western Philippines University External Campuses for the school year 2020-2021. In addition, the purposes of the research study are: (1) To assess the experiences of college students amidst the COVID-19 pandemic

and (2) To determine the perception of selected education students of Western Philippines University External Campuses on the use of modules.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed the survey research design. A survey refers to the collection of information from a sample of respondents through their responses to a set of questions (Ponto, 2015). In addition, this type of research allows a variety of methods to recruit participants, collect data, and instrumentation. Survey research used quantitative research strategies.

Sampling. The respondents of the study were selected from a population of first-year to fourth-year undergraduate students enrolled in different programs at Western Philippines University External Campuses, namely: Quezon Campus, El Nido Campus, Rio Tuba Campus, Busuanga Campus, Canique Campus, and Culion Campus.

Instrumentation. A questionnaire on the perception of students on modular learning was adopted for the research study to determine the experiences and perception of selected students of Western Philippines University External Campuses.

Data Analysis. The data were exported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which was used for data manipulation and analysis. The data were checked for accuracy. Descriptive statistics (University of West London, 2019) were used to organize and summarize the data. Specifically, the mean was used to present the data gathered from respondents.

RESULTS AND KEY FINDINGS

Experiences of College Students to Modular Learning. Table 1 presents the mean results of the selected college students to modular learning used by instructors and professors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the table, it seems that statement 13 (My teacher encourages me in my studies) obtained the highest mean score of 4.28 (Mostly Agree). This finding implies that the professor in their class, regardless of the use of modular learning continuously provide encouragement, inspiration, and motivation to pursue their career, thus they will have a better future. Allen, Rowan, & Singh (2020) lamented that the teacher provides guidance for students to advance their goals of finishing a career in college.

Table 1
Experiences of Students to Modular Learning (n = 278)

Social Media Use	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. The way the module materials were presented helped to maintain my interest.	4.08	Definitely Agree
2. The study workload on this module fitted with my circumstances.	3.76	Definitely Agree
3. Resources I accessed through the library, internet or journals, books, help me to understand the core concepts of the module.	4.03	Definitely Agree
4. Collaborate with a classmate on an online document, using Google docs or something similar.	3.51	Definitely Agree
5. I was satisfied with the opportunities I had to attend online tutorials (either face- to-face or online).	3.74	Definitely Agree
6. Sufficient opportunities were provided to check my understanding of the module for example.	3.71	Definitely Agree
7. The instructions on how to complete the assessed task were easy to follow.	4.01	Definitely Agree
8. It was obvious how the module materials related to the assessed task on the module.	3.98	Definitely Agree
9. There was enough time in the study planner to prepare for the end-of-module assessment.	3.79	Definitely Agree
10. Contact my teacher at the start of the module helped me get started with my studies.	2.58	Definitely Disagree
11. I could get in touch with my teacher when necessary.	3.77	Definitely Agree
12. I was satisfied with the support provided by my teacher on this modular learning.	3.91	Definitely Agree
13. My teacher encourages me in my studies.	4.28	Mostly Agree
14. My teacher used a friendly/ personal tone in feedback on my assessed task.	3.50	Definitely Agree
15. My teacher's feedback on my assessed task explained the mark that I received.	3.82	Definitely Agree
16. My teacher's feedback on my assessed task helped me prepare for the next assessment.	3.63	Definitely Agree

17. My teacher's feedback on the assessed task helped me to learn.	3.11	Definitely Agree
18. The aims and learning outcomes of the module were made clear.	2.31	Definitely Disagree
19. The learning materials provided in the module were helpful.	2.48	Definitely Disagree
20. The module was intellectually stimulating and stretched me.	2.51	Definitely Disagree
21. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the module.	3.92	Definitely Agree
Composite Mean	3.42	Definitely Agree

Legend:

Rating Scale	Descriptive Rating
4.21 – 5.00	Mostly Agree
3.41 – 4.20	Definitely Agree
2.61 – 3.40	Neither agree or disagree
1.81 – 2.60	Definitely disagree
1.00 – 1.00	Mostly disagree

Moreover, statement 1 (The way the module materials were presented helped maintain my interest) obtained the second-highest mean of 4.08 described as definitely agree. This suggests that the respondents view modular learning as a tool that elevates their curiosity, thus improving their learning and understanding.

Furthermore, statement 3 (Resources I accessed through the library, internet or journals, books, helps me to understand the core concepts of the module) was rated third with a mean of 4.03 described as definitely agree. This implies that the respondents have the initiative to learn by using other resources in the library to supplement their learnings. This is important during the pandemic as this will provide better opportunities for students in accomplishing their learning modules.

Overall, the computed mean is 3.42 with a descriptive meaning of definitely agree. This implies that the respondents have positive views on the use of modular learning. According to Amir et. al., (2020), he discovered that students are satisfied with the learning modules they are accomplishing so long as there is discipline and understanding of the need to pursue learning.

Things That Students Like Most About the Module. Table 2 presents the things that students like most about the module among the selected college education students of Western Philippines University External Campuses. It can be gleaned from the table that statement number 1 (Help me increase my knowledge) obtained the highest frequency of 234 (84.17%). This denotes that the students consider the modules to be able to assist in increasing their knowledge, thus they participate and get involved to pursue their learning needs. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected teaching and learning, this did not deter the students to continue and that they continue to learn regardless of the modality or strategy of teaching and learning introduced by the professors.

Furthermore, statement number 2 (Can spend more time to answer the module, and you have a lot of time to make a review) obtained the second-highest frequency (221 or 79.50%). This implies that the respondents appreciate the benefits of modules as a way to provide them the needed learning outcomes. Likewise, statement number 3 (Modules helps me to widen my understanding and vocabulary and also helps me to become a more creative and productive individual) was rated third overall (219 or 78.78%). This finding suggests that the students provided them good opportunities to learn despite the ongoing challenges they are facing. This is an important finding because it gave the students more alternatives to learning their lessons based on the syllabus employed by their college professors. Nevertheless, (Mukhtar, Javed, Arooj, & Sethi, 2020)said that the use of modules has its limitations and that careful planning and collaboration from all stakeholders need to ensure that the learning outcomes are attained and that understanding is key to a better education for the students.

Table 2

Things That Students Like Most About the Module (n = 278)

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1. Help me increase my knowledge	234	84.17
2. Can spend more time answering the module, and you have a lot of time to make a review	221	79.50
3. Modules help me to widen my understanding and vocabulary and also helps me to become a more creative and productive individual.	219	78.78
4. Modules help me to improve my understanding and skills and also helps to gather new knowledge.	211	75.90
5. It helps me to learn a lot of things that new to me and it helps me to improve my knowledge.	204	73.38
6. Recall my understanding from the past and help me to understand words	202	72.66
7. It saves time and money	198	71.22

8. I don't need to go to school every day. It saves my time. But seriously, I don't understand the lessons, without the help of my teacher.	181	65.11
9. Interesting and creative	177	63.67
10. It enhances my critical thinking skills and widened my understanding.	171	61.51
11. Time-friendly and instructions were clearly stated.	168	60.43

Priorities for the improvement of the module. Table 3 highlights the list of priorities that college students of Western Philippines University External Campuses identified. Priority number 1 is the inclusion of drawings to be included in the modules. Aside from the text in modules, drawings can be an important feature of the modules that allows clear understanding from the students. According to Hill, Sharma, & Johnston (2015), the conceptual understanding of students to modules can be enhanced through the inclusion of drawings that are related to the subject matter.

Moreover, priority number 2 is that there should be examples in the modules so that they will understand more. In teaching, giving examples is the key to learning. This is a fact in all subject matters especially if the topic is very abstract. In higher education, students get confused sometimes, therefore, it is very essential, that college professors provide their students' clear examples in their modules for better understanding.

Furthermore, priority number 3 is the use of examples and using simple words. Books, reading materials including modules can be understood well if it is written in simple terms so as not to cause any misunderstanding among students. This is a clear example of feedback from the students, the need for the use of clear words for better understanding. Modules should be written for the readers, thus, if it is written in simple terms or words, there is a better chance that learning and comprehension will occur.

Table 3
Priorities for the Improvement of the Module (n = 278)

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1. More drawings to be included in the modules to aid in understanding	269	96.76
2. Some example in every activity to quickly understand and to do.	251	90.29
3. Have a lot of examples like on the problem and use a simple word	249	89.57
4. Images should be printed legibly	230	82.73
5. It helps me to learn a lot of things that new to me and it helps me to improve my knowledge.	215	77.33
6. The topic or some activities should be connected with the student capacities	211	75.90
7. The font of the text should bigger for those who have blurred eyesight	198	70.97
8. Use simple and easy to understand words, and provide a lot of examples in discussion to understand them easily	176	63.31
9. Conciseness of information	171	61.51
10. We need teachers to explain the lessons more than modules	166	59.71
11. Give more concrete examples and provide more sources of information	151	54.32

CONCLUSION

From the findings, the study offered the following conclusions: college students use Google for online researching, read blogs and news items for them to be updated, utilized Facebook to regularly communicate with the friends, families, and classmates, they would sometimes use Facebook, Messenger, Google Classroom, or other web meeting services to reach out to their friends and families. More importantly, college students regularly use YouTube, or other video services to watch movies for their entertainment. However, the majority of the students attained a very satisfactory academic performance which manifests that they possess an average level of academic performance. Finally, the extent of the use of social media is very significantly correlated to the academic performance of college students. This evidence indicated that the academic performance of college students is due to their use of social media.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed: (1) the education administrators of Western Philippines University External Campuses must consider teaching integrating into their courses utilizing the social media to a better impact among college students, (2) to improve the internet services of the university to better serve the college students (3) continue to utilize motivation, inspiration, encouragement to all college students to realize their dreams, (5) to provide training to faculty members of the Western Philippines University External Campuses to improve their competency in online teaching and learning, (6) to conduct research on the use of social media as a learning strategy to other colleges of the university

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