

Experiences, Challenges and Opportunities of The Elementary Teachers in The Implementation of Modular Distance Learning

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Abstract — The unprecedented time caused changes in the educational system. This paradigm shift in the education arena brought challenges to the teachers in teaching particularly in the implementation of modular distance learning. The main purpose of this study was to explore the experiences, challenges and opportunities of the elementary teachers in Bachao Elementary School in the implementation of modular distance learning amid pandemic for the school year 2021-2022.

Using a phenomenological approach as a research design, the questions posed in the study were answered. The instrument used was an interview guide.

Based on the gathered data from the research participants, it was found out that the experiences of teachers in the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic challenging experiences, tiring experience and new learning experience.

Further, the challenges encountered of the elementary teachers in the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic were insufficient financial and material resources and inability of parents to assist their children.

Meanwhile, the opportunities teachers get in the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic, there was only one (1) dominating theme and that was developed and enhanced skills in using technology in teaching.

With regards to the intervention schemes adapted by the elementary teachers to carry out the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic, two major themes dominated regarding the intervention schemes adapted by the elementary teachers to carry out the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic. The themes were parents capacity building and home visitation.

It was recommended that comprehensive intervention program may be developed to help teachers address the different challenges being encountered in teaching Mathematics during pandemic.

Keywords — *Modular Distance Learning; Experiences Challenges of Teachers; Intervention Schemes*

I. Introduction

It can never be denied that education is important in all facets of life. Education provides stability in life and give a promising future for the learners. Thus, teachers as great contributors in the education of learners, always plan and implement teaching approaches that will hone the intellectual abilities and skills of learners that they can use in achieving their dreams. No matter how challenging it is for teachers to educate learners, still, teachers find ways and means. As stated by the Secretary of Education Leonor Magtolis Briones (2020), “Education should continue amid challenges. So, you continue building your schools, you continue enrolling the children, continue teaching them even we are facing this very difficult challenge”.

The job of teachers amid pandemic become more challenging. It is evident that teaching pupils during pandemic has been difficult more than ever. Lots of changes in the educational system took place. And these changes are great challenge for the teachers. It is because, activities to be done in the new normal education are very much different from the traditional one. One of the challenging new activity for the teachers in the new normal education is the mode of learning delivery.

According to the Department of Education (DepEd), the learning delivery modalities that schools can adopt may be one or a combination of different modalities such as Traditional Face-to-Face Learning, Distance Learning, Blended Learning, and Homeschooling. The school may adopt the learning modality depending on the COVID-19 restrictions and the particular context of the learners in the school or locality.

In the Philippines, the most common learning modality is the Distance Learning, specifically the Modular Distance Learning. This learning modality involves individualized instruction that allows learners to use self-learning modules (SLMs) in print or digital format/electronic copy, whichever is suited to the learning needs and learning styles of the pupils. Teachers may provide other learning resources such as contextualized workbooks and worksheets, textbooks, Learning Activity Sheets (LAS), and other instructional materials that can be utilized by the pupils. Learners access electronic copies of learning materials on a computer, tablet PC, or smartphone. CDs, DVDs, USB storage, and computer-based applications can all be used to deliver e-learning materials, including offline E-books. In monitoring and assessing the learners, the teachers take full responsibility of it. Thus, home visitation, making calls of sending text messages and using other online platforms can be used by the teachers. The learners may ask help from the teachers through e-mail, telephone, mobile phone through text message/instant messaging.

Modular Distance Learning is being adapted in Leyte 1 District. At the beginning of the school year 2020-2021, even teachers and school are unprepared, even without clear understanding of this learning modality, teachers tried their best to implement the said learning modality. Even though learning materials and other learning resources are not yet ready, still teachers did their responsibility to educate pupils using Modular Distance Learning as one of the mechanisms in teaching and learning in the new normal education. The challenges met by the teachers in the

implementation of Modular Distance Learning need to be investigated to be able to plan and create appropriate solutions. Thus, the researcher is motivated to conduct this study.

The main purpose of this study was to explore the experiences, challenges and opportunities of the elementary teachers in Bachao Elementary School in the implementation of Modular Distance Learning amid pandemic for the school year 2021-2022. Findings of the study will be the bases for the strategic planning.

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of elementary teachers in the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic?
2. What are the challenges encountered of the elementary teachers in the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic?
3. What are the opportunities did teachers get in the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic?
4. What are the intervention schemes adopted by the elementary teachers to carry out the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic?
5. What Strategic Implementation Plan can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

II. Methodology

Design. This study is qualitative in nature using phenomenological approach. This research design was applicable for the present study which answered the questions posed in the study specifically on the experiences of elementary teachers in the implementation of Modular Distance Learning during pandemic.

Research Environment. The locale of the present study was in Bachao Elementary School, Leyte 1 District, Area 3 of Leyte Division.

Research Respondents. The participants of the study were the teachers in Bachao Elementary School, Leyte 1 District.

Research Instruments. An interview guide was used during the face-to-face interview or an interview through video-call. The interview guide was very helpful on the part of the researcher in ensuring that all respondents were asked and treated the same. It was also a good tool which made the interview session organized and created a structured process of the interview.

Research Procedure. A formal letter asking permission to conduct the study was submitted to the office of the Schools Division Superintendent of Leyte Division. Upon approval of the permit, the researcher sent consent letters to the teachers of Bachao Elementary School who were the participants of the study. The schedule and the venue of the interview was arranged according to the convenience of the participants of the study and the researcher. In the consent letter the schedule and the venue of the interview were reflected.

The interview was done through face-to-face interview. The face-to-face interview was conducted to participants wherein they live in the community that lockdown is not implemented. In the conduct of face-to-face interview, the researcher sought permit from the local Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF). During the interview, proper health protocol were observed such as wearing of face mask, wearing of face shield, and observing physical distancing.

Information that were obtained from the interview were recorded through audio or mobile phone and at the same time, the researcher took down notes of the important points shared by the teachers regarding their experiences on the implementation of Modular Distance Learning during pandemic. During the interview, the researcher asked his co-teacher to ask the questions during the interview, while the researcher focused on taking down notes of the respondents' answers.

Treatment of the Data. The data analysis process in a phenomenological study is to deduce meaning out of the themes identified through initial manual coding.

III. Results and Discussion

The Experiences of teachers in the Implementation of Modular Distance Learning During Pandemic

Table 1
Experiences of Teachers in the Implementation of Modular Distance Learning During Pandemic

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Challenging Experiences	...hard time in adjusting to this situation
	...most challenging part of my career as teacher
	...challenging....
	Cramming in printing modules and always busy ...
	...not easy. It truly entails time.
	... hard task/challenge but I was able to cope with the new changes and challenges in delivering quality education..
	Preparing and printing modules is time consuming.
	..a little bit struggle for me as a teacher...
	..very challenging, dialing and almost unendurable and unbearable but life must go on....
	...very challenging because there are various things to be considered....
	...it is quite difficult
	...hard to manage time.
	..situation is still hard for both teachers and pupils..
	..worked hard in printing modules. Hard to reach my pupils...
Tiring Experience	..sometime tiring
	tiring...
	tiring...

		..it feels like I'm overloaded and exhausted..
		...making and printing more modules while taking meals. Downloading modules until dawn. Sleeping late at night almost killing us softly.
New Learning Experience		..improve my skills and knowledge in ICT...
		I learned to explore more things..
		I was able to know the way they're living for.

There were three (3) themes formulated by the researcher regarding experiences of teachers in the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic. The themes were: Challenging Experiences, Tiring Experience and New Learning Experience.

The most dominating theme was “Challenging Experiences”. This means that the teachers went through difficulties in implementing modular distance learning during pandemic. The findings of this study is supported by the statement of Resabal (2020) who conveyed that the shift of learning modality from face-to-face to remote learning such as modular learning caused challenges to both teachers and the learners.

Challenges Encountered of the Elementary Teachers in the Implementation of Modular Distance Learning During Pandemic

Table 2
Challenges Encountered of the Elementary Teachers in the Implementation of Modular Distance Learning During Pandemic

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Insufficient Financial and Material Resources	Spending my own money for bond paper and ink if MOOE is not available ..
	...ran out of stock of ink and bond paper because of limited supply....
	.. no ink and bond paper available..
	..lack of ink supply.
	Lack of printing materials and scarcity of supplies..
	...lack of ink supply..
	..supply of bond paper it's not available..
Inability of Parents to Assist their Children	.. MOOE cannot suffice the printing needs..
	...pupils with illiterate parents/guardian..
	..parents are busy for business and had hard time in teaching their children.
	..parents can't teach their children because of their capacity.
	..module not being instructed by their parents or brothers or sisters.
	...busy in doing the household chores...
	can't teach or assist because they are also struggling in understanding the lesson.

There were two (2) themes dominated and they were “Insufficient Financial and Material Resources and Inability of Parents to Assist their Children”. The findings of the study is supported by the study of Dangle and Sumaoang (2020) which also revealed that the main challenges that emerged were lack of school funding in the production and delivery of modules. Likewise, the findings of this study support the claim of Chin (2020), who stated that parents’ educational background matters for a successful implementation of Modular Distance Learning. Parents who are illiterate can never teach or discuss concepts of lessons to their own children.

Opportunities Teachers Get in the Implementation of Modular Distance Learning During Pandemic

Table 3
 Opportunities Teachers Get in the Implementation of Modular Distance Learning During Pandemic

Major Theme	Core Ideas
Developed and Enhanced Skills in Using Technology in Teaching	...able to explore video editing apps...
	..chance to be recognized by the division office for my interactive video-made story.
	...learned how to make an audio lesson..
	..making video or audio lessons....
	..my expertise in making audio lesson...
	...share knowledge in making video and audio lesson..
	...improve my skills most specially in using technology...
	...be good at computer works and online jobs..
	...use technology as means to deliver instruction.
	... learning technology..

With regards to the opportunities teachers get in the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic, there was only one (1) dominating theme and that was “Developed and Enhanced Skills in Using Technology in Teaching”. The result convey that during the pandemic, teachers were able to get benefit despite the challenges they encounter in the implementation of modular distance learning. Teachers had the opportunity to develop and improve their knowledge and skills in using technology as a platform in teaching the pupils. The result of the study support the idea of Zimmerman (2020), who opined that teachers across the section of the society variably or invariably have had to quickly get used to the online mode of teaching guided towards a digital mindset.

Intervention Schemes Adopted by the Elementary Teachers to Carry Out the Implementation of Modular Distance Learning During Pandemic

Table 4

Intervention Schemes Adopted by the Elementary Teachers to Carry Out the Implementation of Modular Distance Learning During Pandemic

Major Theme	Core Ideas
Parents Capacity Building	.. explained to them the importance of modular distance learning...
	..addressed this problem to the parents..
	...monitoring of learners and to the parents/guardians as well..
	Feedbacking with the parents/guardians.
	...remind the parents/guardians...
	..contact other parent to call the attention of the concerned parent/learner.
	..help by their parents or siblings...
	... intervention called PARTNER (Parents Act as Reading Teachers in Nurturing and Enriching Readers)..
Home Visitation	Home visit.
	Home visit.
	...deliver it to their homes...
	...home visitation...
	... home visitation..
	...and I had to deliver or ask someone to deliver door to door the modules....
	..door to door delivery either by the teacher..
	...home visit once a week...
	.. home visitation..
	.. home visitation...

Two major themes dominated regarding the intervention schemes adapted by the elementary teachers to carry out the implementation of modular distance learning during pandemic. The themes were “Parents Capacity Building” and “Home Visitation”. The result means that teachers had employed several interventions to make teaching effective despite the pandemic. These interventions were capacity building and home visitation. This intervention help teachers to make teaching and learning successful. According to study of Thompson-Grubham (2014), parent and child involvement in an early childhood home-visitation program designed to influence both parent and child skills supports a child’s literacy readiness and school success.

IV. Conclusion

In the light of the findings of the study, it is safe to conclude that:

1. Teachers experience challenging situations in teaching Mathematics during pandemic.
2. Teachers felt exhausted in teaching Mathematics during pandemic.
3. Teachers obtained new learnings experience in teaching Mathematics during pandemic, particularly in using technology.
4. The most challenging situations experienced by teachers in teaching Mathematics during pandemic were on insufficient financial and material resources and inability of parents to assist their children.
5. Teachers adapted interventions such as parents capacity building and home visitation to cope up with the challenges in teaching during pandemic.

V. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby offered for considerations:

1. Teachers may sustain home visitation for effective teaching and better learning outcomes.
2. A comprehensive intervention program may be developed to help teachers address the different challenges they encounter in teaching Mathematics during pandemic.
3. School heads may seek financial support for implementing school's priority, programs, activities in teaching Mathematics during pandemic.
4. Establish good relationship and rapport with internal and external stakeholders may be strengthened in order to seek assistance for financial and material resources to be utilized in teaching Mathematics during pandemic.
5. Teachers may enhance parents capacity building.
6. Develop implementation and sustainability plan which will guide teachers in addressing the challenges they encounter in teaching Mathematics during pandemic.
7. It is highly recommended that further studies be conducted regarding experiences of teachers in teaching Mathematics during pandemic in a broader scope.

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