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Coping mechanisms of the senior high school learners in addressing the concerns in the use of the blended learning modality during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract---This study aimed to determine the coping mechanism of the Senior High school learners during the blended learning modality amidst pandemic. The study was conducted in the selected public Senior High School Stand Alone of Zamboanga City, Philippines for the first semester of the school year 2020-2021. The findings revealed that the respondents were extensive in the use of the digital module on the blended learning. Extent of usage of the blended learning using the printed module was extensive among the senior high school students. The respondents agreed that they employed coping mechanisms to address concerns in the blended learning. The data revealed that despite the academic challenges being experienced by the Senior High School learners during the pandemic, it is good to note that they were able to cope with these challenges through proper planning ahead of time, by looking for references, and most especially,

the help of their family and friends in terms of technical problems had also eased their burden. In terms of the hazardous effect to their health of the technology they used, they also found a solution by using anti-radiation gadget. Furthermore, among all the coping mechanisms which they have mentioned, the use of instructions through Google and Youtube got the highest mean. This result implies that education will not stop, no matter what the situation is.

Keywords---blended learning modality, digital module, printed module, coping mechanisms, COVID-19 pandemic, senior high school learners, academic challenges, education.

Introduction

Blended learning has been around for a while and is the combination of traditional face-to-face instruction with aspects of on line instruction. Blended learning strives to provide students the best face-to-face and on line learning experience. Many schools will begin this year in a hybrid situation, with students retrieves learning materials in school and access the same material digitally. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) define blended learning as “ the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experience with online learning experience. Furthermore, Graham (2006) defines blended learning as combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction.

In relation to the Department of Education (DepEd) Order No.032 ,series of 2020 “Guidelines on The Engagement of Services of Learning Support Aides to Reinforce the Implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan in Time of COVID - 19 Pandemic .The integration of SLMs with blended learning modalities (modular, television-based, radio-based instruction, and online) will help Dep.Ed ensure that all learners have access to quality basic education for SY 2020-2021 with face-to-face classes still prohibited due to the public health situation. According to Briones (2020), the SLMs and the other alternative learning delivery modalities are in place to address the needs, situations, and resources of each and every learner and will cover all the bases in ensuring that basic education will be accessible amid the present crisis posed by COVID-19.

Although blended learning modality have been implemented in the field, only few researches conducted in order to gauge its effectiveness in the context of the Filipino learners. It is in this light that the researcher would like to pursue this research endeavour to particularly find out the impact of the blended learning modality to the academic performance of the students. Although, several studies had look into academic performance, but it was interrelated to the context of face-to-face classroom instruction.

It is on the premise that the researcher is interested to investigate , explore and analyze the intricacies of the use of blended learning modalities particularly the printed and digital module and coping mechanism where this will identify appropriate solution to the academic learning among the students in the senior high school.

Related Literature and Studies

Dalsgaard (2006) cited that the rapid uptake of campus-wide Learning Management System (LMS) is changing the character of the on-campus learning experience. Delivering information via the web is gaining popularity among both students and staff. LMS can support an entire university's teaching and learning programs. In an effort to expand the usage of LMSs in higher education in Greece in a uniform way, the Greek University Network (GuNET) distributed the platform Open eClass in any institution by facilitating its installation and operation. In addition, Open eClass provides an internal structure for each lesson, which promotes communication between learners and educators learning with active participation and ensuring open and free access to educational material.

In addition, Driscoll (2002) stressed that Blended E-Learning is the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to deliver information for education where instructors and learners are separated by distance, time, or both in order to enhance the learner's learning experience and performance. It is a set of instructions delivered via all electronic media such as the internet, intranets, and extranets.

Furthermore, Chatterjee, et al. (2014) opined that the development of new technologies in communications lead to new approaches to the educational process. E-learning is a new concept that designates a specific way of distance learning training. E-learning is a term that designates a learning process that relies on the use of computers as source of information and access to knowledge. E-learning is synonymous with the e-learning online education, online education, web education, distance learning, etc. Distance learning physics involves the distant between teacher and pupil/student communication between them by exchanging messages or electronic documents. In distance education, a particularly important role is held by the technological factors which should ensure that the pupils/students, and communication between them and their teacher. A professor in the education system can address simultaneously a large number of pupils/students, but can have a dialogue with each of them individually.

Salama (2005) disclosed that the current era is characterized by rapid changes resulting from scientific and technological advances, including information technology. Keeping up with these changes is necessary in the education system to cope with problems that may arise from them, such as the large volume of information technology, and increase in the number of learners, coupled with teacher shortages. These changes in science and technology ushered in many new teachings and learning methods, such as e-learning and blended learning (BL) particularly in research and self-development areas, and revolution in information technology, which has virtually turned the world into a global village. The former led to a greater need for learners to engage in multivendor environments, and the latter, for people to share experiences with others.

Valiathan (2002) disclosed that other components applied in Blended Learning (BL) are among others, email, simulations, web-based tests, and FAQ. Three main models, namely, skill-driven, attitude-driven, and competency-driven models, can

be applied in BL. All models entail the overview of the topics to be covered. They also involve the announcement of the initiatives that will be engaged in the delivery of learning concepts during class sessions. An example of this type of blending would be an education program that provides study materials and research resources directly on the internet, whereas teacher and classroom training sessions provide intermediate basic education.

Likewise, Graham (2006) stressed that Blended Learning (BL) also aims at using modern technology in teaching without abandoning the usual educational situation and classroom attendance. It focuses on direct interaction in the classroom through the use of modern communication mechanisms, such as computers, networks, and internet portals. In the assessment of the influence of BL on interactions between students and teachers, it established the social presence offered in the environment which encourages questions and hence provides a medium through which clarifications can be made in a timely and efficient manner. Such learning can be described as a way to organize information, attitudes, and educational experiences that are provided for the learners through multimedia offered by modern technologies.

According to Heinze and Procter (2004) underscored that Blended Learning (or mixed or hybrid learning) emerged as a new teaching method for distance learning through the application of technology and the internet to improve students' learning and encourage teachers to change their methods of education, and therefore to shift learning to a more student-centered model rather than a teacher-centered learning model. There are many definitions of blended learning, but most have in common that they point to the combination of virtual and physical environments. In spite of the multiplicity of blended learning definitions, all emphasize that it is a learning strategy that integrates various models of traditional and distance learning and uses multiple forms of technology.

Materials and Methods

This study employed the descriptive - quantitative correlational design. The study was descriptive because it aimed to describe the extent of usage of the blended learning modality in terms of digital module and printed module. The numerical data which were collected from the respondents through the research instrument makes the study quantitative in nature. As explained by Bhandari (2020), quantitative research is the process of collecting and analysing numerical data. It can be used to find patterns and averages, make predictions, test causal relationships, and generalize results to wider population.

Furthermore, the research instrument used in gathering data was a research made questionnaire-checklist form which consisted of three parts. Part -I solicited the profile of the respondents which included only the needed information such as their name (optional), Grade level, school and their preference on using the module (digital or printed module). Part II- was on the information on the use of the blended learning modality. Part III of the instrument was the coping mechanisms presently employed by the Senior High school students in order to cope with blended learning modality with the use of a 4 Point Likert Scale in gathering the data. The questionnaire-checklist contains descriptive statements

with four-scale degree of responses, where; 4 - the highest, and 1- the lowest. Responses presented in a numerical scale and descriptive level as follows: (4) for strongly agree, (3) – agree, (2) – disagree and (1) means strongly disagree. Statements were taken from the responses of the stakeholders and respondents through a questionnaire - checklist, which were important in the study.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Coping Mechanisms used in addressing the concerns in the use of the Blended Learning Modality

Coping Mechanisms	Weighted Mean	Description	Interpretation
1. I am planning my tasks ahead of time to be able to submit my requirements on time specially if there is no interruption like brown out and slow internet connection. (DIGITAL)	2.84	Agree	Extensive
2. I can handle my tasks because of the technical support of my family and relatives. (PRINTED)	2.71	Agree	Extensive
3. I don't feel burden on my academic tasks because I have the technical know-how in using digital modules. (DIGITAL)	2.96	Agree	Extensive
4. Whenever, I don't understand the lessons, I try to look for other references so that other matters will be clarified. (PRINTED)	3.15	Agree	Extensive
5. Whenever, I feel tired, I am thinking that academic freeze will ease the burden of the students. (PRINTED)	2.93	Agree	Extensive
6. Whenever I am confused, my classmates are sharing their thoughts that also helped me in understanding our lessons. (PRINTED)	3.09	Agree	Extensive
6.I am using anti-radiation gadget to protect myself from the hazardous effect of long exposure to computers. (DIGITAL)	2.98	Agree	Extensive
8. I don't worry much on the power interruption because I know it's beyond my control.(DIGITAL)	2.98	Agree	Extensive
9. When having some technical trouble, I ask the help of my friends or find ways following instructions	3.33	Strongly Agree	Highly Extensive

through Google and YouTube. (DIGITAL)			
10. I right away downloads my module so I can work on it during my vacant time. (DIGITAL)	3.21	Agree	Extensive
Average Weighted Mean	3.02	Agree	Extensive

Legend:

3.25-4.00-Strongly Agree (Highly Extensive)

2.50-3.24-Agree (Extensive)

1.75-2.49-Disagree (Less Extensive)

1.00-1.74- Strongly Disagree (Not Extensive)

Table 1 shows that, the respondents agreed in the coping mechanisms which states that “When having some technical trouble, I ask the help of my friends or find ways following instructions through Google and YouTube” obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.33 described “strongly agree”. This means that respondents were convinced that as part of their coping mechanisms in the use of the digital and printed modules, they asked help form their friends and browsed internet sources like Google and YouTube, when they were confronted with difficulties on their lesson. Even in the research skills of the tertiary students, Alejandro, Saavedra, & Espinosa’s (2022) study found out that the websites such as Google and Youtube have been very instrumental for students who are writing their thesis. Students perceived that instructions from those mentioned sites are helpful especially on the references, articles and other studies which they need to support in their paper.

This was followed by coping mechanism statement that “I right away downloads my module so I can work on it during my free time” with a weighted mean 3.21 where the respondents also marked “agree”. This means that, respondents can accessed the modules by downloading from the online sources provided by the teachers. This result was not quite surprising because of the ability of the Senior High students to explore on everything they thought of with the aid of the different websites today. It also gave advantage to the teachers who were not able to give instructions clearly because of some limitations. Saavedra (2018) noted in her study that the aid of technology has been very helpful in the school activities of the learners especially on the development of their writing skills. By browsing in the different academic website, they were able to look for guides that enhance the teaching inside the classroom

On the other hand, the statement which obtained the lowest weighted for the coping mechanisms employed by the respondents was “I can handle my tasks because of the technical support of my family and relatives” with a weighted mean of “2.71” described “agree”. This means that, the respondents can manage the tasks with the support of the members of the family and as part of their coping mechanisms. Based also on the survey made during enrolment, parents and guardians admitted that many of them cannot provide technical assistance to their children due to their limited knowledge in using educational gadgets. Their children were better in terms of using computers and other school devices. The average weighted mean for the coping mechanisms employed by the respondents

in the used of the digital and printed module in the blended learning was “3.02” described “agree”. This means that, the respondents agree in their responses that they employ coping mechanisms in addressing concerns in the blended learning. Perhaps the respondents were confronted with concerns on the blended learning, however, they use or employ coping mechanisms to address the problems and other concerns.

Conclusions

The data revealed that despite the academic challenges being experienced by the Senior High School learners during the pandemic, it is good to note that they were able to cope with these challenges through proper planning ahead of time, by looking for references, and most especially, the help of their family and friends in terms of technical problems had also eased their burden. In terms of the hazardous effect to their health of the technology they used, they also found a solution by using anti-radiation gadget. Furthermore, among all the coping mechanisms which they have mentioned, the use of instructions through Google and Youtube got the highest mean.

This result implies that education will not stop, no matter what the situation is. Even though learners will express their academic challenges during the pandemic, still, they were able to make it by employing their coping mechanisms. Truly, their family, friends and technology have made their learning possible despite the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, this study highly recommends that it should be emphasized to all learners that having good relationship with family and friends is very essential. They may be considered as our backbone in all our endeavours. The aid of technology will always play a great role in the teaching-learning regardless what the situation is. That is why, inclusion of technology in the school is a must.

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