Students' Modular Learning Experiences Amidst Pandemic: A Basis for Recovery Plan

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Abstract
The researchers of this study determined the experiences of students to modular learning, the things that they like most about the module, and the students' priorities for the improvement of the module. The researchers employed the descriptive-survey design and the subjects of this study were 102 officially enrolled Grade 11 and Grade 12 Academic and TVL students of Juban National High School during the school year 2021-2022 and used adopted questionnaire. Findings revealed that the majority of the respondents had positive responses about the quality of the module. Moreover, there are things that the students like most about the module. Still, they have priorities to improve the module. The researchers recommended that the continuous improvement of the learning module must be done across the subject areas.
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Introduction of the Research

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the educational sector globally. In the report of Regencia, Ibrahim, and Siddiqui (2020), as UN said, the COVID-19 outbreak has led to the largest disruption of education in history. The disruption of classes has domino effects in the learning process. Meanwhile, in the report of Dobson (2020), the school closures are one of the most visible – and controversial – means by which COVID-19 is affecting the students. Added to the report, UNESCO said, 90 percent of school-age students worldwide suffered from the effects of the pandemic. In this regard, the learning of students is compromised.

In the Philippines, according to de Vera and Adonis (2020), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that the associated consequences of school closures — learning loss, mental distress, missed vaccinations, and heightened risk of dropout, child labor, and child marriage — will be felt by many students. The main culprit of these consequences is the pandemic. According to Simeon (2021), a joint report of the World Bank, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the United Nations Children's Fund revealed that the impact of the pandemic in the education sector is more severe than expected. Furthermore, the report also said that the pandemic would push more children into learning poverty especially in low- and middle-income countries like the Philippines.

Despite the problems encountered, educational sectors worldwide are doing their best to give the education needed by the students. School leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders are working together to give the learning needs of the students in the middle of pandemic. In the report of Magsambol (2020), in the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) maintains that education of millions of Filipino students should not wait. The Department of Education implemented different learning modalities like modular approach. In spite of the objectives of implementing modular approach, there are issues and concerns arouse.

In the report of Nicholls (2020), the Department of Education monitored errors in the self-learning modules. As added, based on the interview to Education Undersecretary Diosdado San Antonio, most of the errors were spotted in modules developed by the DepEd field offices, which means they did not pass through the central office's quality screening. On separate report of Nicholls (2020), due to lack of access to gadgets or internet, most of the students prefer printed modules or lessons as their alternative learning delivery modality. But some public school students shared self-learning modules or SLMs during the pandemic school year. This only means that there are problems in implementing modular learning approach.

Still, the Department of Education is doing everything to cater the needs of the students in this time pandemic. In the report of Sarao (2020), the Department of Education announced the implementation of

"learning recovery plan" to address learning gaps caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Added in the report, Department of Education Secretary Leonor Briones said as more schools open their doors for physical learning, the Department is currently crafting a learning recovery program as part of our post-pandemic efforts. The Department of Education Secretary added that the interventions must effective so that students can catch up and accelerate their learning. These are the reasons why the researchers initiated to conduct this study in Juban National High School.

Literature Review

Modular distance learning is the use of modules made by teachers with different tasks and learning activities based from the essential learning competencies (Anzaldo, 2021). According to Sadiq and Zamir (2014), there are students who favored in using the modular learning approach. They concluded that modular learning is free self-learning style in which immediate reinforcement, feedback is provided to practice exercise, which motivate the students and create interest in them. Furthermore, they recommended to apply modular learning approach in all levels. The findings are also connected to the study conducted by Ali, Ghazi, Khan, Hussain, and Faitma (2010) that many were in favor of modular learning approach. They also suggested that different learning institutions should adopt the modular learning approach. Additionally, modular learning approach is an effective way of learning (Lim, 2016). Added to these, modular learning is effective for students' knowledge adaptation and shows suitability to the level of the students and acceptability to the faculty evaluators (Guido, 2014).

According to Bordeos (2021), due to the sudden closure of schools because of pandemic, students are missing social interaction which is vital for better learning while most schools were forced to move from face-to-face classes to remote instruction. The study found out that the students perceived that the implementation of modular distance learning can be used as supportive learning delivery modality during the new normal. However, the students faced numerous challenges in using the said learning modality.

In the study conducted by Damao (2021), it was revealed that there are opportunities during the modular classes. Some of the opportunities are (1) parent-children relationship became even closer; (2) more time to study and research; (3) ensures life-work balance and (4) parents are able to focus on their children's studies. However, the study also revealed challenges or difficulties they faced during modular classes. Insufficient supervision from the teachers was the greatest challenge. Students' answers' validity and reliability were questionable and the learning outcomes were not good. Furthermore, the students emphasized the importance of cooperation among the students, parents and teachers.

According to Bayucca (2021), the shift from face-to face to distance learning brought about by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic is a major adjustment to all school administrators, teachers, students and parents. The study revealed that difficulty in independent learning, difficulty in concentrating on studies and parent's limited knowledge on the content of child's lessons are the top struggles of parents in the modular distance learning while almost all learner-respondents describe their experiences of distance learning as difficult because of difficulty in learning by themselves, lack of reference materials for more examples, limited guidance from parents and teachers, challenges in load to research and difficulty in every subject. According to Agaton and Cueto (2021), COVID-19 pandemic has closed-down educational institutions and dramatically shifts the instruction to distance learning. Marginalized families and from rural areas have limited access to technology necessary for online learning and modular distance learning served as the solution.

The mentioned studies show that modular learning approach as learning modality have positive and negative impacts in the teaching-learning process. Hence, there is a need to determine the learning experiences of Juban National High School Senior High School students in this time of pandemic.

Research Objectives

The researchers of this study determined the experiences of students to modular learning, the things that they like most about the module, and the students' priorities for the improvement of the module.

Scope and Delimitation

The subjects of this study were 102 officially enrolled Grade 11 and Grade 12 Academic and TVL students of Juban National High School during the school year 2021-2022. Other Grade 11 and Grade 12 academic and TVL students from other schools were not included in this study.

Research Methodology

The researchers of this study employed quantitative approach since the questions given are answered by numerical data. Specifically, the researchers utilized descriptive survey. The subjects of the study were selected senior high school students in Juban National High School for the S.Y. 2021-2022. The researchers used adopted questionnaire from the work of Santillan and Labaria (2021). The researchers of this study chose the Senior High School students—Grades 11 & 12, both Academic and TVL students. Out of the officially enrolled students, the

researchers applied convenient sampling. The researchers of this study used Google Forms in distributing the research questionnaire. Furthermore, the researchers applied frequency and other research papers in explaining the results.

Results and Discussion
The experiences of students to modular learning
To push education forward in the face of the lethal pandemic brought on by COVID-19 is a difficult undertaking in the new normal. In spite of the pandemic the education must continue. Along the process, modular learning was implemented. Thus, it is essential to determine the experiences of students to modular learning. Out of the 102 respondents, majority had positive responses—53 agree and 9 strongly agree that the module materials were helped them to maintain interest. Meanwhile, majority also had positive responses—43 agree and 3 strongly agree that the study workload of modules fitted their circumstances.

Furthermore, majority of the respondents said positive responses that the resources they accessed through the library, internet or journals, books, help them to understand the core concepts of the module—45 agree and 38 strongly agree. In terms of collaborating with classmates on an online document using Google docs or something similar majority had positive responses—50 agree and 9 strongly agree. Meantime, majority also had positive responses that they satisfied with the opportunities to attend tutorials (either face-to-face or online)—39 agree and 17 strongly agree.

Meanwhile, majority of the respondents had positive responses that sufficient opportunities were provided to check their understanding of the module for example—44 agree and 12 strongly agree. Majority also said that the instructions on how to complete the assessed task were easy to follow—46 agree and 12 strongly agree. Moreover, majority of the respondents said that it was obvious how the module materials related to the assessed task on the module—59 agree and 8 strongly agree.

Moreover, majority of the respondents had positive responses that there was enough time in the study planner to prepare for the end-of-module assessment—45 agree and 11 strongly agree. Also, majority of the respondents had positive responses that they contact their teachers at the start of the module and helped them get started with their studies—49 agree and 17 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents had positive responses that they could get in touch with their teachers when necessary—61 agree and 9 strongly agree.

Meanwhile, majority of the respondents had positive responses that they were satisfied with the support provided by their teachers on modular learning—58 agree and 15 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents had positive responses that their teachers encourages them in their studies—53 agree and 24 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents had positive responses that their teachers used friendly/ personal tone in feedback on their assessed task—59 agree and 18 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents had positive responses that their teachers' feedback on their assessed task explained the mark that they received—63 agree and 14 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents had positive responses that their teachers' feedback on their assessed task helped them prepare for the next assessment—61 agree and 12 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents had positive responses that teachers' feedback on the assessed task helped them to learn—60 agree and 18 strongly agree.

Furthermore, majority of the respondents had positive responses that the aims and learning outcomes of the module were made clear—56 agree and 8 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents had positive responses that the learning materials provided in the module were helpful—57 agree and 14 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents had positive responses that module was intellectually stimulating and stretched me—59 agree and 9 strongly agree.

Overall, out of 102 respondents, 53 said agree, 16 said strongly agree, 20 said neutral, 9 said disagree, and 4 said strongly disagree that they satisfied with the quality of the module. Therefore, majority of the respondents had positive responses about the quality of the module. Thus, this is connected to the study of Tugano, Tria, and Tonio (2021) that the students have satisfaction on modular learning in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the majority of the findings were leaning toward the positive results of modular learning as mentioned in the literature review. Still, struggling students must be considered in modular learning approach. Table 1 summarizes the experiences of students to modular learning

Table 1

Experiences of students to modular learning

STATEMENTS	1-SD	2-D	3-N	4-A	5-SA
1. The way the module materials were presented helped to maintain my interest.	5	6	29	53	9
2. The study workload on this module fitted with my circumstances.	5	10	41	43	3
3. Resources I accessed through the library, internet or journals, books, help me to understand the core concepts of the module.	7	4	8	45	38
4. Collaborate with a classmate on an online document using Google docs or something similar.	8	12	23	50	9
5. I was satisfied with the opportunities I had to attend tutorials (either face- to-face or online).	4	15	27	39	17
6. Sufficient opportunities were provided to check my understanding of the module for example.	4	13	29	44	12
7. The instructions on how to complete the assessed task were easy to follow.	4	9	31	46	12
8. It was obvious how the module materials related to the assessed task on the module.	3	10	22	59	8
9. There was enough time in the study planner to prepare for the end-of-module assessment.	5	8	33	45	11
10. Contact my teacher at the start of the module helped me get started with my studies.	6	5	25	49	17
11. I could get in touch with my teacher when necessary.	6	8	18	61	9
12. I was satisfied with the support provided by my teacher on this modular learning.	10	2	17	58	15
13. My teacher encourages me in my studies.	5	3	17	53	24
14. My teacher used a friendly/ personal tone in feedback on my assessed task.	7	3	15	59	18
15. My teacher's feedback on my assessed task explained the mark that I received.	5	5	15	63	14
16. My teacher's feedback on my assessed task helped me prepare for the next assessment.	7	3	19	61	12
17. My teacher's feedback on the assessed task helped me to learn.	5	2	17	60	18
18. The aims and learning outcomes of the module were made clear.	2	8	28	56	8
19. The learning materials provided in the module were helpful.	5	6	20	57	14
20. The module was intellectually stimulating and stretched me.	7	4	23	59	9
21. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the module.	4	9	20	53	16

The things that students like most about the module

The COVID-19 pandemic has paved the way to the implementation of Modular Distance Learning as an urgent response to ensure continuity of education (Dangle & Sumaoang, 2020). Thus, it is necessary to determine the things that the students like most about the module. To begin with, majority of the respondents said positive responses that the module helped them increase their knowledge—51 agree and 24 strongly agree. Moreover, majority of the respondents said positive responses that they can spend more time answering the module and have a lot of time to make a review—51 agree and 16 strongly agree. Also, majority of the respondents said positive responses that the modules help them to widen their understanding and vocabulary and also helps them to become more creative and productive individuals—58 agree and 15 strongly agree.

In addition, majority of the respondents said positive responses that the module helps them to learn a lot of things that new to them and it helps them to improve their knowledge—55 agree and 19 strongly agree. Likewise, majority of the respondents said positive responses that the module recalls their understanding from the past and help them to understand words—60 agree and 11 strongly agree. Moreover, majority of the respondents said positive responses that the module saves time and money—42 agree and 18 strongly agree.

Furthermore, even the students do not need to go to school every day and the modular approach saves time, majority of the students said that they do not understand the lessons without the help of their teacher—41 agree and 23 strongly agree. Meanwhile, majority of the respondents said positive responses that the module is interesting and creative—58 agree and 10 strongly agree. Also, majority of the respondents said positive

responses that the module enhances their critical thinking skills and widened their understanding—56 agree and 14 strongly agree. Moreover, majority of the respondents said positive responses that the module is time-friendly and instructions were clearly stated—51 agree and 13 strongly agree.

Truly, modular learning approach is student-centered approach. As mentioned in the work Vallespin (2021) modular learning is an approach in which students are required to learn everything in a module on their own time and at their own speed because it is student-centered, self-paced, and does not require note-taking (Gonzales, 2015). Moreover, the findings also revealed the advantages of modular learning approach as mentioned in the literature review. Although the modular learning is student-centered, still, students need the assistance and guidance of the teachers as revealed in this study. According to Mayasari and Kemal (2020), in modular learning approach amidst COVID-19 pandemic, teachers are needed by the students as facilitators of learning. Table 2 summarizes the things that students like most about the module.

Table 2
Things that students like most about the module

STATEMENTS	1-SD	2-D	3-N	4-A	5-SA
1. Help me increase my knowledge.	7	5	15	51	24
2. Can spend more time answering the module and you have a lot of time to make a review.	7	8	20	51	16
3. Modules help me to widen my understanding and vocabulary and also helps me to become a more creative and productive individual.	4	9	16	58	15
4. Modules help me to improve my understanding and skills and also helps to gather new knowledge.	6	7	18	53	18
5. It helps me to learn a lot of things that new to me and it helps me to improve my knowledge.	4	8	16	55	19
6. Recall my understanding from the past and help me to understand words.	6	6	19	60	11
7. It saves time and money.	4	12	16	42	28
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.	9	10	19	41	23
9. Interesting and creative.	5	9	20	58	10
10. It enhances my critical thinking skills and widened my understanding.	5	7	20	56	14
11. Time-friendly and instructions were clearly stated.	6	4	28	51	13

The students' priorities for the improvement of the module

Improving teaching by the teachers means improving the learning of the students (Bommel, 2012). Hence, it is a must to determine the students' priorities for the improvement of the module as well as the learning. To begin with, out of 102 respondents, majority of them said more drawings to be included in the modules to aid in understanding—48 agree and 8 strongly agree. Also, majority of the respondents said some example in every activity to quickly understand and to do—54 agree and 17 strongly agree.

Meanwhile, majority of the respondents said the module must have a lot of examples like on the problem and use a simple word—54 agree and 17 strongly agree. Additionally, majority of the respondents said the module's images should be printed legibly—52 agree and 9 strongly agree. Notably, majority of the respondents said that the topic or some activities should be connected with the student capacities—59 agree and 19 strongly agree.

Furthermore, majority of the respondents said that the font of the text should bigger for those who have blurred eyesight—54 agree and 16 strongly agree. Also, majority of the respondents said that the module must have conciseness of information—55 agree and 19 strongly agree. Remarkably, majority of the respondents said that they need teachers to explain the lessons more than modules—43 agree and 39 strongly agree. Lastly, majority of the respondents said that the module must have more concrete examples and provide more sources of information—45 agree and 36 strongly agree.

To sum up, the priorities of the students for the improvement of the module are proper size of the text, more illustrations and examples, simple words, activities that are aligned to their capacity, concise information, more sources of information, and teachers as facilitators of learning. On the other hand, these priorities of the students for the improvement of the module are examples of solutions to the problems they encountered in the said learning modality. Thus, improving the quality of the modules is a continuous process and the quality of the modules is directly related to the quality of learning of the students (Khalid, Abas, & Zulkifly, 2007). Table 3

summarizes the priorities of the students for the improvement of the module.

Table 3

Priorities for the improvement of the module

STATEMENTS	1-SD	2-D	3-N	4-A	5-SA
1. More drawings to be included in the modules to aid in understanding.	7	9	30	48	8
2. Some example in every activity to quickly understand and to do.	6	6	19	54	17
3. Have a lot of examples like on the problem and use a simple word.	6	9	17	49	21
4. Images should be printed legibly.	4	8	19	52	9
5. The topic or some activities should be connected with the student capacities.	5	5	14	59	19
6. The font of the text should bigger for those who have blurred eyesight.	5	9	18	54	16
7. Use simple and easy to understand words, and provide a lot of examples in discussion to understand them easily.	6	5	17	49	25
8. Conciseness of information.	6	5	17	55	19
9. We need teachers to explain the lessons more than modules.	5	4	11	43	39
10. Give more concrete examples and provide more sources of information.	7	5	9	45	36

Recommendations

The learning modules given to the students must promote interest of the students to learn. Additionally, the learning modules must be student-centered, student-friendly, and easily to understand but in a sense that can develop critical thinking. The content of the learning modules must promote and increase learning. Moreover, the schema of the students must be applying in their present learning in modular approach in order to widen their learning on different topics. Additionally, the learning module must save time and money without compromising the learning of the students. Teachers must be facilitators of learning in modular learning approach. The teachers must give attention to all students especially to those students who are struggling to learn. Experiences of the students on modular learning must be considered to improve the content of the module as part of the learning recovery plan. Continuous improvement of the learning modules in all subject areas must be done as part of the learning recovery plan and further studies relative to the research topic using other variables must be done.

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