MODULAR INSTRUCTION IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION: A RESEARCH STUDY OF ADAPTABILITY AND ATTITUDE IN MODULAR LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the adaptability and attitude of Grade 6 students in the Modular Learning Approach. This study aims to create a comprehensive review of the adaptability and attitude of elementary students in the Modular Learning Approach Especially. It seeks to describe and analyze the following: the profile of the respondents in terms of sex and education of the parents; the adaptability of the respondents toward the relationship between the student's profile in terms of their sex and educational attainment of parents; the attitude of the respondent's significant relationship between sex and educational attainment. The researcher used the quantitative survey questionnaires to gather data from 128 Grade 6 students in five Elementary Schools in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija who enrolled during the School Year 2020-2021. The study revealed that the respondent's demographic profile in sex has no significant relationship to their adaptability and attitude in the modular learning approach. Yet the parents' educational attainment of the respondents has a significant relationship to adaptability in terms of learning assistance and support in the modular learning approach. The results further signified that parents' educational attainment is a basis for adaptability in modular learning.

Keywords: distance learning, modular learning, adaptability, attitude, modular learning approach

INTRODUCTION

Education is continuously evolving and adapting to the rapidly changing world and challenges brought about by social, political, and natural occurrences. With the recent COVID-19 outbreak, one of the sectors affected is the learning and education sector. It impacts the emergence of alternative way of teaching and learning to cope with the new normal situation. Previously face-to-face education, which has been practiced for a long time, is being replaced by distance and blended education. In blended learning, offline learning is mixed with online education in response to the learners' convenience and adaptability. This involves printed materials, books, worksheets, and modules to be studied by the learners at their own pace and convenience.

In the Philippines, modular instruction is adopted by both private and public schools, and wherein printed modules are sent to the students as an alternative delivery mode of teaching and learning. The Department of Education (DepEd) implemented modular education to continue learning amidst the pandemic in the basic education program. This action is taken from the study conducted by DepEd, where 8.8 million out of 22.2 million enrollees preferred modular distance learning. With this sudden transition of learning, teachers and parents face many challenges in fulfilling their roles as mentors. Time allotment for supervision, designing comprehensive modules, monitoring students' progress, parents' educational attainment, and financial matters are among the factors that impact the students' learning.

This setting is even more difficult for primary students, who require more attention, guidance, and support to facilitate their learning. Young learners are more dependent and rely most of the time on their teachers in a classroom setting to grasp and understand the lessons quickly. In addition to that, some parents who are working full-time are not able to guide their children in accomplishing their modules. Furthermore, there are also parents who cannot teach their children because of insufficient educational background. Hence, modular instruction is implemented for the safety of young learners and for the school community to continue the learning process despite the pandemic.

With that, this study explores Modular Instruction in Elementary Education to assess the adaptability and attitude of young learners in Modular Learning.

Modular Learning Approach

During the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, schools in the Philippines implemented the curriculum with the modular approach at some points in their classroom activities. These are used as enrichment or supplementary instructional materials for learning concepts and skills, as remedial instruction is necessary for slow learners and advanced instruction for fast and highly motivated ones.

As cited by (Kintanar et al., 2021), modularized education includes a teacher, a learner, learning content (module), and instructional tools (internet and gadgets). It is also a closed educational facility (Ibyatova, Oparina, and Rakova, 2018). The Department of Education (DepEd) embraced modular education to continue the students' learning amidst the pandemic. One of its advantages is its flexibility of instruction. Modular education also provides self-maturity and independence to the students. With the help of the parents, they can manage their time and finish the module early. In addition, wearing a uniform is not a must, and their parents can monitor their study habits while studying at home (Ali, Ghazi, Khan, Hussain, & Fatima, 2010). DepEd provides Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) with alternative learning delivery modalities for various learners across the Philippines. The SLMs and other alternative learning delivery modalities are in place to address each learner's needs, situations, and resources and will cover all the bases in ensuring primary education.

With the sudden shift to distance learning, one noticeable concern of teachers and learners is their readiness. Distance learning converts homes into a formal part of the learning environment (Bušelić, 2012) as cited by (Manlapaz, 2020). As result, there are teachers and learners who face the challenge of finding in their homes a conducive study area with the proper furniture. Furthermore, teachers find it difficult to communicate with one another regarding the volume and weight of tasks they assign to their learners, which leads to excessive learner workload thereby affecting their academic outputs and quality of their day-to-day living. Meanwhile, some teachers and learners reported that their lack of necessary information communications technology (ICT) skills (Arayata, 2017, Caluza et al., 2017) as cited by Manlapaz (2020)

hinders online learning facilitation on the part of the teachers and independent online learning on the part of the learners.

Northeastern Mindanao State University, a typical countryside academic institution in the Southern Philippines, did not escape from the impact of COVID-19 on its students. The problems faced by the students are enormous and include inadequate learning resources, difficulty understanding the module contents and assessment instructions, overloaded remote learning tasks, poor learning environment, and mental health problems. However, challenges connecting to the internet seemed to have the largest impact (Bustillo & Aguilos, 2022).

Anzaldo (2021) summarized the common challenges posed by modular instruction such as most students and learners do their modules for formality purposes only and to simply comply with the requirements. In addition, parents pamper their children and do their task instead of the students and lastly parents are having a hard time teaching their children with modules particularly for lessons that are too complicated since some parents do not know how to read and write (Anzaldo, 2021).

Parents have mixed feelings about remote learning. Some parents are more involved in their child's schoolwork, while others see it as an added burden (Selwyn et al., 2011). Sorensen's (2012) study revealed that the most challenging and rewarding aspects of online learning for parents are keeping their children on track while completing their coursework and interactions with the child's online teachers, respectively. Furthermore, schools and teachers lack sufficient guidance to improve parental engagement, mainly through the effective use of technology (Goodall, 2016).

The current literature base and empirical research concerning parental involvement and the problems in their children's learning experiences focus mainly on the traditional school site-based setting while suggesting parental involvement may drastically differ in an online environment (Liu et al., 2010) as cited by (Garbe et al., 2020).

Research surveyed parents from the Philippines and applied Inductive Content Analysis. Parents have encountered various challenges from the new mode of learning in virtual setting; delivery of instruction; unsatisfactory learning outcomes; financial difficulties while working for the family during lockdown; struggle with the use and availability of technology; and personal problems on health, stress, and learning style (Agaton & Cueto, 2021).

A descriptive qualitative study was planned to explore the experiences of parents about home learning and management during COVID-19 to get an insight into real-life experiences. Three major themes emerged after the data analysis: impact of COVID on children learning; support given by schools; and strategies used by caregivers at home to support learning (Bhamani et al., 2020). It was analyzed that the entire nation and academicians around the world have come forward to support learning at home offering a wide range of free online avenues to support parents to facilitate home-learning. Furthermore, parents too have adapted quickly to address the learning gap that have emerged in their children's learning in these challenging times (Bhamani et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, one research finding reveals there are at least three main issues related to parents' interest in distance learning, especially in the context of research and in general, in Indonesia's rural areas. Namely, concerning parents' conservative paradigm about education is educational institutions' responsibility; a decrease in children's learning motivation in distance learning, and technology infrastructure distributed unevenly throughout Indonesia (Lase et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, Bautista et al., (2021) surveyed 151 teachers participated in this study using a quantitative approach via an online survey, reveals that the majority of respondents received adequate support from their respective schools in terms of capacity building, technical and data privacy issues, information dissemination systems, and online learning management. Two areas for development are financial and emotional support methods. From the same study, common issues include motivating students, using ICT, managing the time allotted for online sessions, and assessing learners' knowledge. Teachers wanted more free resources and tools, webinars to share ideas and challenges, and professional development (Bautista et al., 2021).

Modular instruction poses challenges in academic achievements and performance of the students. A study discovered a 2.25% decrease in learners' GWA following the modular distance learning (MDL)

implementation results in a significant improvement in their academic performance. MDL promotes family bonding, independent learning, and is inexpensive. However, it adds to the workload of working parents, there is little teacher-learner interaction, learners lack socialization with other children, and they are not exposed to significant school activities but are instead exposed to numerous distractions at home (Janina Molina Dargo & Dimas, 2021).

A study was carried out to explore the impact of modular teaching on the achievements of students. The results of the study were in the favor of a modular teaching approach; therefore, it is suggested that this approach should be widely used in conventional classroom at various levels of education (Ali et al., 2010).

Realizing the students' perspectives on the modular instruction, is very crucial to determine how these changes in the learning environment may impact their learning habits and adaptability. A current study looked at how adaptability helped high school students navigate their online learning during a COVID-19 period that included fully or partially remote online learning. The study investigated the role of adaptability in predicting students' online learning self-efficacy in mathematics and their end-of-year mathematics achievement using Job Demands-Resources theory and data from a sample of 1,548 Australian high school students from nine schools. It was found that adaptability was significantly associated with higher levels of online and parental learning self-efficacy and with gains in later achievement; online learning self-efficacy was also significantly associated with gains in achievement—and significantly mediated the relationship between adaptability and achievement (Martin et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, a study to determine the students' adaptability challenges on online learning specifically identified the respondents' profile in terms of age, gender, socioeconomic status, educational attainment of the respondents' parents, and campus affiliation. It also identified the academic performance of the student-respondents. Furthermore, it identified the difficulties encountered by students during online classes in terms of geographical location, adaptability, technical issues, computer literacy, time management, and self-motivation. The result shows that students' motivation has an impact on their academic performance because they fall behind and perform poorly (Mariden Ventura-Cauilan, DPA, 2022).

This study is supported by Spiro's theory of cognitive flexibility is a learning theory that enables teachers to promote the use of educational technologies in the learning process (Cheng & Koszalka, n.d.).

Therefore, the theory was used to guide the instructional design of the e-learning module on the topic of "Transistors'. Meanwhile, attitude has been defined as "a learned predisposition to respond positively or negatively to a specific object, situation, institution, or person" (Aiken, 2000: as cited in Yushau, 2006) as cited by (Sachdeva, 2016). A student's attitude towards a subject of study is affected in various ways depending on the teaching method employed. Yushua (2006) as cited by Sachdeva (2016) argues that attitudes affect students in everything they do and, in fact, reflect what they are and hence a determining factor of their behavior. This makes the issue of students critical to education since most educators define learning as a change in behavior.

Overall, students' learning affects their behavior; they can adapt to their attitudes because of the different changes in their learning. Students' behavior affects students' attitudes toward their learning because attitudes are often the result of experience or upbringing. Also, behavior can affect students and how fast they can adapt or adjust to a new learning condition.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The quantitative study follows a descriptive design is being used in this study. Descriptive survey is used to gather information of current conditions and situation through the use of questionnaire. The research questionnaire was given to five elementary schools in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija, Philippines, a town comprising twenty public and four private schools. Survey questionnaire was distributed via Google Form and was sent to the Grade 6 advisers in these five elementary schools. In order to determine the reliability of research instrument, the pre-test method was adapted. The pre-test helped the researcher identify the most likely source of errors and hence respond to them before the actual study. The researchers tried this

instrument to 128 students from elementary school of Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija, a nearby town of Bongabon. Reliability of questionnaires was measured by Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. The questionnaire was proven reliable at 0.6. The instruments were accepted as reliable since a correlation coefficient greater or equal to 0.5 is taken.

The respondents of this research were the Grade 6 students of five elementary schools in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija in the School Year 2020-2021. The sample population is composed of 128 students from Antipolo, Bantug, Cruz, Heniero, and Olivete elementary school who were enrolled during the School Year 2020-2021. The targeted samples were drawn from the population through Slovin's Formula. Probability sampling was used to draw the targeted samples from the population.

The collected data was analyzed using quantitative data analysis approaches. The gathered data were statistically interpreted using the frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. In determining the adaptation and attitude of students the Likert Scale has been used. This study used a four-point scale; each point corresponding to a Likert item.

The researchers sought to answer the following research questions:
1. How may the modular learning approach be described in terms of content, teaching and learning, support and assessment feedback?
2. How do the students adapt to the learning approach in terms of activities and learning support? and
3. How may the students' attitudes towards the modular learning approach be described in terms of learning experience and personal and skills development?

Limitation

The study was conducted in Five Elementary Schools at Bongabon Nueva Ecija during the School Year 2020-2021. All information and conclusion drawn from this study were obtained only from the respondents were the Grade 6 students who adapt and attitude on the modular learning and enrolled during the School Year 2020-2021.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Table 3 shows the respondent's distribution according to their sex. There are 128 respondents of 59 males (46.09%) and 69 females (53.90%). Most of the respondents are female. Meanwhile, the majority of the educational attainment of the parents and guardians are secondary graduates.

Table 3. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Profile	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)	Rank
1.1 Sex			
Male	58	15.3%	2
Female	70	54.7%	1
Subtotal	128	100%	
1.2 Highest Educational Attainment			
Elementary	33	25.8%	2
Secondary	75	58.6%	1
College	20	15.6%	3
Total	128	100%	

Modular Learning Approach

Table 4 shows how the modular learning approach is described in terms of its content, teaching and learning, support and assessment, and feedback.

Table 4. Modular learning approach description

Variables	Weighted Mean	Rank
2.1 Content		
At the start of the module, I received clear information and guidance on what the module covered and on assessment details.	3.23	1
My understanding of the subject has increased due to taking this module.	3.17	2
The module content was up to date.	3.11	3
Total Weighted Mean	**3.17 Agree**	
2.2 Teaching and Learning		
Our teacher has made the subject matter covered in the module interesting.	3.16	4
The module was intellectually stimulating.	3.21	3
The teaching methods used in this module have helped me to learn.	3.32	1
The quality of teaching in this module has been good.	3.23	2
Total Weighted Mean	**3.23 Agree**	
2.3 Learning Support		
The module was well-organized.	3.24	2
The learning resources provided in the module were helpful to my learning.	3.26	1
I have been able to contact module teaching staff when I needed to.	3.18	3
I have received sufficient advice and guidance about my module.	3.04	4
Total Weighted Mean	**3.18 Agree**	
2.4 Assessment and Feedback		
The assessment requirements and marking criteria were clear.	3.14	2
The assessment task and associated marking criteria were made available in good time.	3.13	3
The balance between teaching (e.g., lectures, seminars, online) and independent learning was appropriate.	3.13	3
The module prepared me well for the assessment tasks.	3.10	4
Feedback throughout the module has helped me to develop and improve my learning	3.17	1
Total Weighted Mean	**3.18 Agree**	

The study respondents were asked how they described the modular learning approach during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of content, teaching, learning support, and assessment and feedback. Based on the survey result, the respondents "Agreed" that they received clear information and guidance on what the module covered and on assessment details, increased their understanding of the subject, and they described it as the content being up to date. Meanwhile, the teaching and learning in modular learning, as defined by the respondents, "Agreed" that the teaching methods used in the module have helped them to learn; quality has been good and intellectually stimulating, and the subject matter covered in the module is interesting. Table 2.3 also shows the respondents "Agreed" that the learning resources provided were helpful to their learning, well-organized, the teaching staff can be contacted when needed, and they have received good advice and guidance about their module. Lastly, in terms of assessment and feedback, the respondents "Agreed" that feedback throughout the module has helped them to develop and improve their learning, assessment requirements and criteria were explicit, assessment tasks and associated marking criteria were made available in good time and module prepared them well for the assessment tasks.

Modular Learning Approach Adaptability

Table 5 shows the students' adaptability to the modular learning approach regarding learning activities and assistance or support.

Table 4. Adaptability to the modular learning approach

Variables	Weighted Mean	Rank
3.1 Learning Activities		
I regularly attend online classes if required.	3.13	2.5
I use other resources from the internet or online websites to help me understand my module.	3.19	1
I communicate my questions about my module through social media, such as Facebook Messenger	3.09	4
I contact my teacher through phone calls or video calls if I need assistance	3.13	2.5
Total Weighted Mean	**3.13 Agree**	
3.2 Learning Assistance or Support		
Our teacher covered has made the subject matter in the module interesting.	3.09	3

I have a tutor to help me with my module.	3.13	2
I can obtain guidance from my family when needed in answering my module.	3.23	1
I meet my classmates online for group study and discussion about our module.	2.83	4
Total Weighted Mean	**3.07 Agree**	

The study's respondents were asked how they adapt to modular learning in their learning activities and assistance or support. Based on the gathered data, the respondents "Agreed" that they have used other resources from the internet or online websites to help them understand their module, regularly attend their online class, and contact their teacher through phone calls or video if they need assistance. They communicate their questions about the module through social media like Facebook Messenger. Meanwhile, respondents "Agreed" that they have obtained guidance from their family members when answering their module. They have tutors to help them and make the module interesting and they meet with their classmates online for group study and discussion.

Attitudes on Modular Learning Approach
Table 6 shows how the respondents describe their attitudes toward the modular learning approach.

Table 6. Attitudes to the modular learning approach

Variables	Weighted Mean	Rank
4.1 Learning Experience		
I enjoy studying my module.	3.07	4
I am motivated to accomplish my module on time.	3.13	2
The module was intellectually stimulating and excites me.	3.19	1
I can work on my modules independently.	3.10	3
I learn quickly with this self-learning module.	3.02	5
Total Weighted Mean	**3.10 Agree**	
4.2 Personal Skills and Qualities Development		
It helped me develop my self-confidence.	3.12	4
I learn to be more disciplined in managing my studies.	3.14	1.5
I can practice better self-time management.	3.11	5
I have improved my skills in accessing other resources to support my studies.	3.13	3
I am opened guidance and support from others.	3.14	1.5
Total Weighted Mean	**3.13 Agree**	

The respondents of the study were asked about their attitudes toward modular learning approach in terms of learning experience and personal skills and qualities development. It obtained that respondents "Agreed" that modular learning was intellectually stimulating and excite them, motivated to accomplish on time, work independently on their modules, and quickly learn with the self-learning module. In terms of personal skills and qualities development, the respondents agreed that modular learning approach are more disciplined in managing their studies, opened guidance and support from others, improved their skills in accessing other resources to support their studies, helped them developed their self-confidence and practice better self-time management.

Relationship of socio-demographic profile and learning adaptability
Table 7 shows the results of the correlation between the sex of the respondents and adaptability of the students in the modular learning in terms of learning activities. Since the p-value of 0.698 is greater than the margin of error of 0.05, it is implied that there is no significant relationship between sex and the adaptability of the students in their learning activities.

Table 7. Relationship of sex and learning adaptability

Profile Variables	Study Habits Pearson r @ n = 123	Sig. 2-tailed	Interpretation
Sex	.720[a]	.698	No Significant Relationship

Table 8 shows the correlation between the highest educational attainment of the parent/guardian of the respondents and the adaptability of the students in modular learning in terms of learning activities. Since the p-value of 0.644 is more significant than the margin of error of 0.05, it is implied that there is no significant relationship between the highest educational attainment of the parent/guardian and the student's adaptability in their learning activities. Also, findings revealed that the students' adaptability in modular learning in terms of learning assistance and support has a significant relationship with the highest educational attainment of the parent/guardian. Since the p-value of 0.12 is less than the margin of error of 0.05, this indicates that the highest educational attainment of the parent/guardian and the learning assistance and support can affect their adaptability in the modular learning approach.

Table 8. Relationships of the educational attainment and learning adaptability and attitudes

			Correlations								
			modulecontent	moduleteachingandlearning	modulesupport	moduleassessmentandfeedback	overallsatisfaction	learningactivities	learningassistanceandsupport	learningexperience	personalskillsandpersonalities
Kendall's tau_b	EDUCATTAINMENT	Correlation Coefficient	.144	-.092	.076	-.048	.080	.039	.211*	-.042	-.058
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.083	.279	.370	.569	.330	.644	.012	.617	.485
		N	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Parental involvement is an essential factor for student achievement in traditional school settings. Parent support has significantly contributed to learners' success in a virtual learning environment (Borup et al., 2014; Feng & Cavanaugh, 2011; Lee & Figueroa, 2012; Makrooni, 2019; Woofter, 2019). However, parents must take on new and unfamiliar roles, and responsibilities as their children participate in online education while experiencing increasing instructional responsibility for their child's learning (Liu et al., 2010). Also, based on the findings, the correlation between the highest educational attainment of the parent/guardian of the respondents and the attitude of the students in modular learning in terms of learning experience has no significant relationship. Since the p-value of 0.617 is greater than the margin of error of 0.05, it is implied that there is no significant relationship between the highest educational attainment of the parent/guardian and the student's adaptability in their learning experience.

On the other hand, the correlation between the highest educational attainment of the parent/guardian of the respondents and the attitude of the students in modular learning in terms of personal skills and qualities development indicates that since the p-value of 0.485 is greater than the margin of error of 0.05, it is implied that there is no significant relationship between the highest educational attainment of the parent/guardian and the student's adaptability in their skills and qualities development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The new teaching norm may challenge the learners' adaptability and attitudes. It may impact the learning process from the resources and support the students need. Remote learning with a modular approach in times of pandemic was the new norm and emerged challenges in the student's learning process. This present study identified the adaptability and attitudes of the learners to the modular learning approach of elementary students. And from the findings, the learning approach in terms of the module content, teaching and learning, support and assessment, and feedback is observable from the learners. It implies that the new learning practices are adapting to the learning needs of the students.

On the other hand, the students' attitudes in terms of learning experience and personal skills and qualities development are still achieved despite the difference in the teaching approach. It signifies that despite the drastic switch to remote learning, the desired need for the students learning experience and skills development. However, the present study revealed that a parent/guardian's educational background significantly impacts learning assistance, which is a vital factor in the adaptability of the learners. Thus,

this may bring difficulties as it is highly dependent on the amount of knowledge from their parents or guardians. Parental involvement is significant in the student's learning process, and the capacity to guide the learning activities given their educational background may determine the effectiveness of learning. With that, creating learning support coming from various communities is found to be relevant to provide the learning assistance needed by the students in remote education.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FUNDING

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