Challenges and Coping Mechanism in the Modular and Online Distance Learning among BSEd Students of Altavas College

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Abstract: The primary purpose of this study was to determine the levels of challenges encountered and their coping mechanism among BSED students of Altavas College. The researchers collected the data by using an electronic web-based questionnaire through the Google survey tool (Google Forms) using questions made by the researchers. The survey comprised 2 subsections according to the participant's challenges and a question corresponding to each respondent's coping mechanism. The analysis was perceived using the frequency count, percentage, and mean. Descriptive analyses were done. The result showed on the level of challenges encountered of the respondents was "Very Challenge". This signifies that the respondents are very challenge in Modular and Online Distance Learning. The level of coping mechanism of Bachelor in Secondary Education of Altavas College was described as "Very Highly Evident". It mis that students are good in coping with the challenges they are facing in the modular and online distance learning.

Keywords: Challenges encountered, Coping mechanism, Modular, Online Distance Learning

Introduction

The disruptive effects of COVID-19 have been felt worldwide across many demographics, sectors and institutions. College students have been affected by school closures, shifts to online learning, and the elimination of school and networking opportunities (Anderson, 2020).

The most common type of distance education is modular learning, which iscurrently used by all public schools in the Philippines. Learning through printed and digital modules emerged as the most preferred distance learning method among parents with children enrolled this academic year. In the course of instruction, the instructor and the students are geographically separated from one another. This modality is classified into three types: modular distance learning, online distance learning and television/radio-based instruction (Quinones, 2020).

Distance Learning, on the other hand, is a planned teaching-learning process that takes place in a location other than the traditional learning setting and necessitates communication and a special corporate organization through technologies (Moore & Kearsle, 2012).

In the other content, as distance learning was implemented, students face some challenges such as stress levels in emotional and physical symptoms experienced by tertiary students such as fatigues, headache and depression to stress, financial concerns, and misinterpretation of expectation. (Ramos, 2011; Rourke et al., 2010; Abdullah & Dan Mohd, 2011; Dusselier, Dunn, Wang, Shelley, & Whalen, 2010; Soliman, 2014, Williams, 2013).

Despite these obstacles, students can utilize a variety of coping mechanisms to help them overcome and alleviate the burden of their difficulties. Coping has been identified as an important factor in the process of reducing, minimizing, or tolerating stress and preventing psychological distress (Dooley & Fitzgerald, 2015).

Some students cope with these difficulties by seeking help from teachers and family members,

as well as participating in recreational activities, eating, seeking social support, making changes to essentially improve stressful situations, hiring someone to do household chores, reading, listening to cassettes during lunch breaks and switching from full time to part time.

Research Questions
1). What is the level of challenges in modular and online distance learning of BSED students?
2). What is the level of coping mechanism in modular and online distance learning of Bachelor in Secondary Education students?

Review Of Related Literature
On Challenges in Modular and Online Distance Learning

Challenges in the Modular and Online Distance learning refers to each student difficulties or struggles while participating in modular and online distance learning. Distance education is a process of planned teaching learning that occurs in a different place from the normal learning setting and requires communication and a special corporate organization via technologies (Moore & Kearsle, 2012). Distance education is a concept which pertains to increasing the quality of education to develop student's learning (Burns, 2011).

Distance Learning is a mode of study in which learning takes place remotely. In the course of instruction, the instructor and the students are geographically separated from one another. This modality is classified into three types: modular distance learning (MDL), online distance learning (ODL), and television/radio-based instruction. (Quinones, 2020). The most common type of distance education is modular learning. This learning mode is currently used by all public schools in the Philippines because, according to a survey conducted bythe Department of Education
(DepEd), learning through printed and digital modules emerged as the most preferred distance learning method among parents with children enrolled this academic year (Bernardo, J).

Based on the study conducted by Ambayon (2020), modular instruction is more operative in the teaching-learning method as equated to usual teaching approaches because in this modular approach the students learn in their own stride. It is unrestricted self-learning panache in which instantaneous reinforcement, a comment is provided to practice exercise, which stimulates the students and builds curiosity in them. Hence, this kind of learning modality increases the students-centered approach in learning. However, the implementation of modular instruction fostered various challenges to students.

On Coping Mechanism in Modular and Online Distance Learning

Coping has been identified as a critical variable in the process of reducing, minimizing, or tolerating stress and preventing psychological distress (Dooley & Fitzgerald, 2015). Coping is defined as cognitive and emotional attempts to deal with the internal or external demands of the encountered situation. It is perceived as a process rather than a trait or outcome.

Some students took an active role in dealing with them by seeking assistance from teachers and relatives and engaging in recreational activities. These active-oriented coping mechanisms of students were consistent with the findings of Carter et al. (2020), who investigated students' self-regulation strategies.

According to a study on coping strategies used by distant students conducted by Gore, Bloem, Patton, Ferguson, and Joseph (2014), students use a variety of coping strategies such as seeking social support and making changes to improve the stressful situation. They also use escapism in the form of substance abuse, comfort eating, or attempting to avoid stressful situations. They also use escapism in the form of substance abuse, comfort eating, or attempting to avoid stressful situations.

There has been little research conducted from the perspectives of teacher education students on the coping strategies they employ during their educational programs. Seeking support and engaging in leisure activities are two positive coping strategies identified byGore et al. (2014). However, dysfunctional coping strategies, such as venting frustrations on children, have been reported, particularly among married distance learning students.

In summary, Coronavirus disease, also known as COVID-19, is a global health issue thathas a significant impact on many aspects of daily life, work, and education. One of these constraints is the lack of face-to-face education. Implementations of distance education have been used to reduce contact while continuing education.Distance education has begun to be implemented in this manner, beginning with preschool and progressing to higher education. During the Covid-19 pandemic, institutions, administrators, educators, students, and even parents were caughtoff guard by the process of distance education. Furthermore, related studies have revealed that, despite the fact that learners face a variety of challenges in this learning system's new mode.Students were able to overcome the various challenges they faced. It also showed that learners were able to apply learning strategies while confronted with challenges in the

education of the new normal.

Research Design

This study employed descriptive survey research method. This type of design provides a wide range of ways for recruiting people, gathering data,and using various instrumentation techniques and is often used to describe and look into human behavior (Singleton & Straits, 2009 as cited by Ponto, 2015).

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study was the 101 students of Bachelor in Secondary Education Majors in English and Math in Altavas College purposively selected. The researcher selected 50 students per grade level who were chosen using simple random sampling.

The study was distributed the structured questionnaires to the participants by providing them a link via Facebook Messenger. As a result of the outbreak of Covid-19 and the relevant prevention steps and measures suggested by the Department of Health, an electronic web-based questionnaire through the Google survey tool (Google Forms) was developed to conform with the recommendations.

Research Instrument

The data for the study was collected by the questionnaires made by the researchers that were self-administered. The questionnaire was composed of three (3) parts. Part I was used to determine the demographic profile of the respondents. This was used to determine the personal information and characteristics of the respondents in

terms of sex, age, and year level. Part II was the Level of Challenges Encountered checklist. This was a 15-item checklist questionnaire. Part III was the Level of Coping Mechanism Checklist. This was a 15-item checklist questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaires was analyzed using the following statistical tools:

Frequency Count (f) was used to determine the number of times an event occurred in levels of challenges and coping mechanism in modular and online distance learning among BSED students.

Sum was used to determine the whole observation in levels of challenges and coping mechanism in modular and online distance learning among BSED students.

Percentage (%) was used to determine the percentage ofobservations and survey responses that exist in levels of challenges and coping mechanism in modular and online distance learning

among BSED students.

Mean was used to determine the average in levels of challenges encountered and coping mechanism of BSED students.

Research Findings And Discussion

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents from the Major in Englishand Math students of Altavas College.

Table 1. Distribution of participants according to their designated year level.

Designated Year Level	N	n
First year	45	16
Second year	15	10
Third year	21	10
Fourth year	21	14
Grand Total	101	50

The respondents was classified according to their sex, age, and year level.The target number of respondents was randomly selected by the researchers and was used as the basis for the final respondent as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of participants according to their sex, age, and year level.

Variables	f	%
Sex		
Female	37	74
Male	13	26
Age		
21 years old and below	33	66
22 years old and above	17	34
Year level		
1st year	16	32

2nd year	10	20
3rd year	10	20
4th year	14	28
Total	**50**	**100%**

In total, 50 respondents, comprising 13 males and 37 females, participated in the online survey conducted in the month of June 2022. Majority (66%) of the respondents were 21 years old and below. In the context of school year level, 24 respondents was first year college, 8 was second year college, 4 was third year college, and 14 was fourth year college

Table 3. Mean Results of the Level of Challenges towards the Modular and Online Distance Learning among the BSED students in Altavas College.

Variable	Mean	Description
Level of Challenges in the Modular and OnlineDistance Learning	3.67	Very Challenged

Scaling	Descriptors
4.21-5.00	Very Highly Challenged
3.42-4.20	Very Challenged
2.61-3.40	Moderately Challenged
1.81-2.60	Less Challenged
1.00-1.80	Least Challenged

Based on the results, the respondents was "very challenged" in the modular and online distance learning. It also emphasizes that modular and online distance learning had challenged them mentally, physically and emotionally, since the system of education was changed dramatically due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Another reason could be the fact they are not used to the kind of education system that was implemented during the outbreak. Because of the seriousness of the pandemic students encounter so much pressure since they are studying their modules on their own. This another milestone to the students learning cause a great challenge in their learning.

The currents study's findings are nearly similar to the study conducted by Ermelyn Bostillo et al. (2022), which revealed that 76% of students experienced several challenges such as Internet connectivity problems, difficulty understanding the modules contents and assessment instructions, poor learning environment, inadequate learning resources and mental health problems.

Table 4. Mean Results of the Level of Coping Mechanism towards the modular and online distance learning among the BSED students in Altavas College.
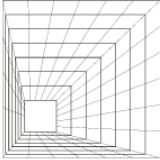
Variable	Mean	Description
Level of Coping Mechanism in the Modular and Online Distance Learning	3.57	Very Highly Evident

Scaling	Descriptors
4.21-5.00	Very Highly Evident
3.42-4.20	Highly Evident
2.61-3.40	Moderately evident
1.81-2.60	Less evident
1.00-1.80	Least evident

The results highlighted a "very highly evident" coping mechanism which signifies that the respondents were able to cope with the challenges towards modular and online distance learning. It indicates that they have enough determination to surmount the challenges confronts them in modular and online distance learning. It also emphasizes their willingness to succeed despite the hurdles that challenge their capacity of learning in modular and online distance learning.

Aside from the above-mentioned statement, another reason could also be that the students were able to find ways to surpass the various challenges of modular and online distance learning such as taking things slowly, unwinding at their friend's house, asking guidance from the teacher, going to a place where there isa stable Internet connection, putting an extra effort to study their lesson, etc.

The results of the study are directly proportional to the international published survey study lead by Uros Petronijevic (2021), in which it showed that 45% of the participants indicated a positive attitude in coping mechanism such as maintaining social connections, developing a satisfaction routine, tryingnew activities and time management.
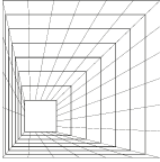
Conclusion
Based on the findings of the study stated above, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The level of challenges in modular and online distance learning of Bachelor of Secondary Education students of Altavas College was "very challenged" based on their average knowledge score. The result signified how the respondents were literally very challenged from modular and onlinedistance learning. It is crucial to emphasize the challenges that students have encountered since a lack of awareness regarding to the student's hardship in modular and online distance learning may not be addressed in order for the teachers to improve the mode of instruction and materials intended for students.

2. A result of "very highly evident" was shown on the level of coping mechanism of the Bachelor of Secondary Education of Altavas College towards modular and online distance learning as based on the garnered overall coping mechanism score. It signifies that the students were able to cope with modular and online distance learning. It owes to the fact that their different preferred ways to surmount the challenges in modular and online distance learning were greatly applied by the respondents. Therefore, the result showed high coping mechanism and positive response of the respondents in modular   and   online distance learning. This result shows that the Bachelor of Secondary Education students are able to cope with the challenges of modular andonline distance learning despite being very challenged.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1.   For the students, it is recommended to remain persistent and continue to pursue their dreams in spite of the various circumstances. Students must remain positive and embrace the current situation of education and use it as a motivation to reach their target goal. Also, students are recommended to make atime management to balance and finish their modules and online activities prior its deadline.

For the school teaching and non-teaching staff, it is recommended to be aware about the challenges of the students in modular and online distance learning in order to come up with a possible solution to lessen the challenges that confront the students in the mode of education system that we have. Specifically for school teachers it is recommended to promote a friendly learning material, to lessen the challenges that the students encountered in the modular and online distance learning. Teachers, as the driver of the learning process, must be the sole source of positivity, by encouraging the students to have a positive outlook despite the challenges they have felt, in order to combat the challenges of Covid outbreak in education and replace negativity with a great inspiration and hope.

For the parents, it is recommended to support their children emotionally, mentally, morally and financially to encourage students to continue their studies despite the hardships they have encountered. Parents must serve as the students' motivator and encourager. Also, parents are recommended to maintain a healthy environment to their children, for learning process as of now was centered at home. Additionally, it is recommended for parents to lessen the household chores of the students at home, for them to focus more and have enough time to do their modules and other online activities.

For the Local Government Unit (LGU), it is suggested that information be provided in a timely, accurate, and understandable manner. They may carry out this action by using social media as a platform, and the information may be writtenin English, Filipino, and Aklan's native language, Akeanon, as the medium of instruction, so that individuals in their municipality may readily understand it.

For the Commission on Higher Education, it is recommended to promote seminars, monthly webinar to introduce strategies and techniques that can be used by the teachers to assess and facilitate a more friendly and student-centered materials, to develop the students' competences despite the distance learning.

2.For the students, it is recommended to find ways that divert their attention to lessen their exhaustion from modular and online distance learning.

For the school teaching and non-teaching staff, it is recommended to be innovative to their learning materials at the peak of modular and online distance learning, in order for them to lessen the student's burden from modular and onlinedistance learning.

For parents, it is recommended to remain as a support system in the midst of this trying times toward the education of the students. They should continue to create a healthy relationship and environment for the student's sake.

For the Local Government Unit (LGU), it is recommended to exercise their leadership by properly utilizing and allocating their resources They can continue to deliver their service while taking precautions to prevent the virus from spreading and infecting others.

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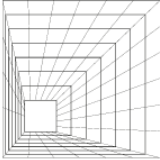
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