Project DISTANCE: Delivering Instructions-Through Synchronous Teaching and Non-Internet Based as Collaborative Education

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ABSTRACT

This action research utilized blended distance learning instructions to improve students' performance in the subject of Philippine Politics and Governance during modular distance learning. The participants of the study are the Grade 12 students of Pagsanjan Integrated National High School in school year 2020-2021, learners are chose to use the modular distance learning. This research was limited to the used of blended distance learning (online and modular learning modality to improve the performance of 53 students in Philippine Politics and Governance. The analysis reveals that most respondents (50.94%) are aged 18-20, with laptops (39.62%) and smartphones (30.18%) being the primary tools for online learning. A majority (69.81%) frequently access online materials, and 71.70% find digital platforms easy to navigate. However, only 60.38% consider blended learning effective, highlighting potential limitations. Challenges include poor internet connectivity (60.38%), difficulty understanding online lessons (41.51%), and motivation issues (39.62%). Student preferences are split, with 39.62% favoring blended learning and 35.85% preferring face-to-face instruction. Satisfaction levels indicate that 41.51% are content with the format, while 24.53% express dissatisfaction. Despite these concerns, 56.60% recommend continuing blended learning, suggesting the need for improvements in digital accessibility, instructional strategies, and student support systems to enhance effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Philippine educational institutions (schools, colleges, and universities) are currently based solely on traditional learning methods, that is, they follow the traditional classroom setup of face-to-face lectures. Despite the fact that many academic units have begun to use blended learning, many are still using out-dated practices. The rapid emergence of Covid-19, a devastating disease caused by the Corona Virus (SARS-CoV-2) startled the entire world. It was labelled a pandemic by the World Health Organization. This event posed a challenge to the global education system, forcing instructors to switch to an online form of instruction overnight. Many academic institutions that were previously hesitant to participate are now doing so.

All public schools in the Philippines now adopt the Modular Learning modality. Modular learning is a type of remote learning that makes use of Self-Learning Modules (SLM) and is extremely handy for most Filipino students. It was also the majority of parents/guardians' preferred learning system for their children. The SLM is based on the Department of Education's most essential learning competencies (MELCS).

Online or E-learning allows individuals connect and even work remotely without the need for face-to-face interaction during times of crisis, providing inventive and resilient solutions to prevent disruption. As they adopt new technologies for communicating and working, these results in a slew of system adjustments (Mark & Semaan, 2008).

Online learning can be described as a tool for making the teaching–learning process more student-centered, inventive, and adaptable. "Learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using various devices (e.g., mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access" is how online learning is defined. Students can learn and communicate with teachers and other students from anywhere (independent) in these environments" (Singh & Thurman, 2019). The synchronous learning environment is structured in the sense that students attend

live lectures, there are real-time interactions between educators and learners, and instant feedback is possible, whereas the asynchronous learning environment is structured in the sense that students attend live lectures, there are real-time interactions between educators and learners, and there is the possibility of instant feedback.

According to a study conducted by Ambayon (2020), modular instruction is more effective in the teaching-learning method than traditional teaching methods since students learn at their own pace in this modular approach. It is an unlimited self-learning process in which students are stimulated and their interest is piqued by quick reinforcement, such as a comment on a practice exercise. As a result, this type of learning modality promotes a student-centered learning strategy. However, instructors, students, and parents faced numerous obstacles as a result of the deployment of modular learning.

Tshabalala, Ndeya-Ndereya, and van der Merwe (2014) explored faculty members' perceptions of blended learning and identified various challenges associated with its implementation. Their findings indicated that while some respondents recognized the potential benefits of blended learning such as increased flexibility in teaching and learning, greater independence for learners, enhanced opportunities for networked learning, and improved accessibility for both educators and students many exhibited limited understanding of blended learning concepts. Additionally, respondents found it challenging to implement blended learning in the classroom due to the absence of institutional policies, inadequate ICT training and knowledge (including technophobia), low confidence in adopting the approach, and restricted access to computer labs.

A case study by Benson, Anderson, and Ooms (2011) found that the majority of participants valued the use of ICT-based instruction within a blended learning framework. While some concerns were raised regarding web-based instruction such as its time-consuming nature, the increased demands of lesson preparation, and the reluctance of some faculty members to adopt blended learning most academic staff recognized its benefits when integrated with traditional face-to-face teaching.

Alvarez Jr. (2020) highlighted in an interview that lack of standardized assessment guidelines for blended learning activities made it challenging to evaluate students' submissions. Implementing a common rubric would help establish fair assessment criteria. Some facilitators assessed student work subjectively without using performance rubrics, while others created their own assessment tools to guide their evaluation process. It was added that some participants also raised this concern when sharing their experiences regarding minimal to no interaction between teachers and students, as well as limited student collaboration. They emphasized that instructional resources and teaching strategies are crucial in fostering engagement. However, the NSTP department directed teachers to conduct online activities by having students watch a video link and submit a reflection paper as their output.

Aldosemani, Shepherd, and Bolliger (2018) found that blended learning enhances accessibility to teaching and learning, regardless of time and location. Their findings highlighted a positive perception among academic staff regarding the affordability and benefits that blended learning offers in an educational setting. The study emphasized that blended learning provides seamless access to course materials, enabling learners to engage with content at their convenience. It also underscored the importance of personal space and flexibility in accessing learning resources.

According to Castroverde, F., & Acala, M. (2021), teachers must devise alternative approaches for dealing with various challenges that may develop during the teaching process. Time management is also beneficial in dealing with numerous school duties. The school authorities must also put in place a system for delivering and retrieving modules to guarantee that both parents and teachers are informed of what to do and that everyone is safe from the COVID-19 pandemic's consequences. The use of webinars to familiarize teachers with current trends in new normal education also aids educators in adjusting to changing circumstances.

The Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) has introduced various initiatives to enhance blended learning. The Digital Rise Program aims to improve digital literacy, provide ICT-assisted teaching tools, and expand access to learning management systems by distributing devices and integrating technology into the curriculum. Blended learning is also promoted to address classroom shortages and enhance accessibility, combining

traditional instruction with online activities. Additionally, DepEd is exploring the possibility of making blended learning a permanent mode of instruction to ensure flexibility and adaptability in education.

In line with these, Grade 12 General Academic Strand (GAS) students at Pagsanjan Integrated National High School consistently received below average grades in Philippine Politics and Governance and other related subjects in Social Science has been recorded despite using of supplementary activity sheets and digital learning resource materials provided by the teacher. According to a survey conducted before the school year began 45% of Senior High School student compliance to modular learning has been observed.

With the cited literatures and observations in hand, the researcher set out to perform the current study in the hopes of generating additional contributions to the body of knowledge.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to assess the effectiveness and challenges of using blended learning in teaching Social Science subjects. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How effective is blended learning in enhancing students' understanding of Social Science subjects?

2. What is the common challenges students face when learning through blended learning?

3. How does blended learning compare to traditional face-to-face learning in terms of student engagement and academic performance?

4. What factors influence students' satisfaction with blended learning in Social Science subjects?

5. What improvements can be made to enhance the blended learning experience for Social Science students?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A blended learning approach was used to teach Social Science subjects, combining modular instruction with online learning activities. The research utilized a descriptive research design, gathering quantitative data and qualitative data to assess the effectiveness of blended learning. The participants consisted of Senior High School students taking Philippine Politics and Governance subject. Data collection tools included pre-tests and post-tests to measure learning outcomes, survey questionnaires were utilized to gather student and teacher perceptions, and learning management system (LMS) analytics to track engagement and participation. The instructional materials used included digital modules, video lectures, interactive activities, and discussion forums, supplemented by in-person lectures and group discussions. Data analysis was conducted using statistical methods for test scores responses. This methodology aimed to evaluate how blended learning enhances student engagement and comprehension in Social Science subject.

Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess the effectiveness of blended learning in teaching Social Science subjects. A quasi-experimental design was used to measure learning outcomes, comparing students' performance before and after the implementation of blended learning through pre-tests and post-tests. Additionally, a descriptive research design was utilized to gather perceptions and experiences from students and teachers through surveys and interviews.

The study involved two groups: an experimental group, which experienced blended learning (a combination of online and face-to-face instruction), and a control group, which received traditional face-to-face instruction. The data collected included academic performance scores, engagement levels, and qualitative feedback on the challenges and benefits of blended learning. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical methods such as mean comparison and t-tests, while qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis to identify key patterns and insights.

This research design aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how blended learning impacts student engagement, comprehension, and overall learning effectiveness in Social Science education.

Participants/Respondents

The respondents of the study are 53 Pagsanjan Integrated National High School Grade 12 – General Academic Strand students in the school year 2020-2021 who are taking the subject Philippine Politics and Governance and will be participating in blended remote learning instructions. To collect data, purposive sampling techniques will be employed.

Instrumentation

In this study, a survey questionnaire was used as the primary research instrument to gather data on students' experiences with blended learning in Social Science subjects. The questionnaire was designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of student perceptions, challenges, and satisfaction levels.

1. Structure of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into several sections:

Demographic Information: Collected basic details such as age, year level, and primary device used for online learning.

Blended Learning Experience: Assessed students' frequency of access, ease of navigation, and perceived effectiveness of blended learning.

Challenges Encountered: Identified common difficulties faced by students, such as internet connectivity issues, motivation problems, and difficulty understanding lessons.

Student Engagement and Satisfaction: Measured how engaging students found blended learning compared to traditional learning, their overall satisfaction, and whether they would recommend the approach..

Data Collection Procedure

The study followed a structured approach to data collection to ensure accuracy and reliability. A validated survey questionnaire was distributed online to 53 students enrolled in Social Science subjects using a blended learning setup. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, and ethical considerations were observed, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation.

The survey remained open for one week, with periodic reminders sent to maximize response rates. After collection, the data was carefully reviewed for completeness and accuracy, and any incomplete responses were excluded. The final dataset was analysed using descriptive statistics, identifying key trends in student experiences, challenges, engagement, and satisfaction levels with blended learning.

Ethical Consideration

Participants are well-informed about the objective of the study. They virtual meeting was conducted to inform the parents and the students on the research scenarios.

Data Analysis

Data collection tools included standardized tests, surveys, and learning management system (LMS) analytics to assess student engagement and comprehension. Statistical methods such as descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (t-tests, ANOVA) were applied to analyze the data and determine if there was a significant difference in learning outcomes between the two groups.

This quantitative approach allowed for an objective assessment of the effectiveness of blended learning in improving student performance in Social Science subjects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of data collected from 53 students provided valuable insights into their experiences with blended learning in Social Science subjects.

The demographic profile revealed that most students were aged 18-20 years old, with laptops (39.62%) and smartphones (30.18%) being the primary devices used for online learning.

In terms of learning experience and engagement, 69.81% of students frequently accessed online learning materials, and 71.70% found online platforms easy to navigate. However, only 60.38% considered blended learning effective, indicating that while the approach is accessible, it may not fully meet all learning needs.

The study identified several challenges in blended learning, with poor internet connectivity (60.38%) being the most significant issue. Other major difficulties included understanding lessons online (41.51%), lack of motivation (39.62%), and difficulty communicating with teachers (26.42%).

Regarding student preferences, 39.62% favored blended learning, while 35.85% preferred face-to-face classes, showing a mixed preference for learning modes. Satisfaction levels were moderate, with 41.51% of students satisfied, but 24.53% dissatisfied, highlighting areas for improvement.

Finally, while 56.60% of students recommended blended learning, 43.40% did not, indicating that despite its advantages, improvements are needed in terms of accessibility, engagement strategies, and academic support.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher understood the value of these online and modular combinations in obtaining the desired effects after doing action research on the implementation of Blended Distance Learning Instructions. This will be a reflection of what will be used to achieve the Department of Education's learning skills during the new normal.

The data reveals that while blended learning is preferred by many students, technical challenges, engagement issues, and communication barriers remain significant obstacles. The findings suggest that improving internet accessibility, increasing interactive content, and strengthening teacher-student communication could enhance the effectiveness of blended learning in Social Science education.

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