BEED STUDENT`S CHALLENGES IN THE NEW NORMAL INSTRUCTIONAL SHIFT

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Abstract

Coronavirus Disease -19 (COVID-19) pandemic greatly affected the education system and led West Visayas State University-Himamaylan City Campus to modular distance learning. The purpose of this study is to find out the challenges of elementary-pre-service teachers in the use of modular distance learning modality. It employed a qualitative-phenomenological approach deemed most applicable in discovering students' lived experiences in modular distance learning modality amidst the pandemic. The participants of the study were the ten (10) Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) students on the Campus. Two semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide was used in this study. The trustworthiness of the data collected was established through triangulation and member checking. It was discovered that students have difficulty understanding the modules, trouble connecting to the internet, complications in managing time, obstacles in retrieving and submitting the modules, and endure uncomfortable learning places. Considering that face-to-face mode is slowly returning to normal, it is recommended that teachers teach students how to work collaboratively with their peers and manage their time efficiently.

Keywords: *modular distance learning, pandemic, qualitative-phenomenological approach, challenges, coping mechanisms*

Introduction

Educational systems around the world have been severely affected by the Coronavirus Disease-19 (COVID-19). Schools were closed to limit the spread of COVID-19, and students missed the opportunity to learn inside the classroom and socialize with their peers. The data from Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2020) revealed that over 100 countries worldwide shifted to remote learning to cater to students' educational needs and welfare. According to the report of the United Nations (2020), the closure of schools and other institutions because of the pandemic has impacted 94% of the student population in the world but

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up to 99% in low and lower-middle-income countries, making it the largest disruption of education in history.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines adopted flexible learning, which the CHEd Chairperson Prospero de Vera introduced to accommodate the needs of the more than 3.5 million tertiary learners. This flexible learning has more proactive policies where modes of distance learning such as online learning, modular distance learning, and blended learning are modified based on the needs of the learners (Joaquin, Biana, & Dacela, 2020). For instance, online learning can be synchronous and asynchronous, creating more flexible options for students to complete the course requirements. Flexible learning activities include real-time lectures, delayed activities, video lectures, pre-recorded lectures, and time-independent and time-outcomes assessments (Oztok, Zingaro, Brett, & Hewitt, 2013).

Big universities like De La Salle University combine synchronous and asynchronous activities in which students can complete the course in the entire academic year (De La Salle University, 2020a). Ateneo de Manila University pursues asynchronous online learning where students can learn at their available time and place (Villarin, 2020). West Visayas State University-Main Campus in La Paz, Iloilo City, on the other hand, allocates Php30 million for its undergraduate students' tablets in a distance learning scheme. An estimated 4000 educational tablets were provided to the students where learning materials such as e-books, syllabi, instructions, and course policies were already downloaded. With these movements toward new normal education, students were ensured that learning was continuous despite the lack of connectivity. For a growing university like West Visayas State University-Himamaylan City Campus which became a regular campus of West Visayas State University in 2019, the adoption of modular distance learning is the most suitable form of flexible learning as most of its students are living in far-flung areas with no access to gadgets or other advanced technologies that may support their distance learning.

In this individualized instruction scheme adopted by West Visayas State University – Himamaylan City Campus, students can learn at home using self-learning modules or SLMs in printed or digital forms. Course facilitators provide students with these SLMs and syllabi where all the requirements are indicated, including assessment tools to check their understanding and the feedback they need. Students can also communicate with their classmates and course facilitators if they have queries or want to ask for assistance through group chats created in an instant messaging app. The university coordinated with the Local Government Units (LGU) to set up pick-up and drop-off locations to distribute and retrieve the learning modules. Adopting this scheme prioritizes the health and welfare of the students without sacrificing the delivery of quality education and its pursuance to its core, where excellence is a tradition.

This study aimed to explore the challenges experienced by Bachelor in Elementary Education (BEEd) students in implementing modular distance learning. In line with the teaching and learning initiatives of West Visayas State University Research Thrust and Priorities, this study is instrumental for CHEd, university, school administrators, teachers, and future researchers in understanding the students' experiences and how they deal with the situation to achieve quality education through modular distance learning despite the emergent situation. Additionally, using the findings gathered through this study; the researchers will develop a curriculum enhancement plan in response to students' and teachers' needs to enhance their competence and skills in shifting to new normal education.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative–phenomenological approach in research. This method was the most applicable in discovering students' challenges experienced in modular distance learning modality amidst the pandemic.

The qualitative approach to a problem attempts to examine, understand, and describe the phenomenon in the experiences of BEEd students of West Visayas State University Himamaylan City Campus using modular distance learning modality. The use of phenomenological design attempts to set aside biases and preconceived assumptions about human perceptions, experiences, emotions, and reactions to a particular situation (Giorgi, 2012).

Through qualitative research, the researchers analyzed the situation inductively, recursively, and interactively and presented a picture of their lives in more appropriate terms and in the context they best described (Creswell, 2007).

Determination of the Respondents

The participants of the study were the ten (10) Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) students of West Visayas State University Himamaylan City Campus who were officially enrolled during the academic year 2021 – 2022.

Specifically, this study utilized the criterion sampling method wherein only the participants who met the research criteria were involved.

Creswell W. & Creswell D. (2018) recommend using three (3) to ten (10) participants in the phenomenological study who will undergo an in-depth interview. To protect their identities and ensure confidentiality, the participants were assigned pseudonyms.

Data Collection Tools

The researchers developed an interview guide to gather extensive information about BEEd students' challenges using a modular distance learning modality. Although the researchers have prepared sets of open-ended questions, the researchers asked the participants follow-up questions that do not solely rely on the questionnaire. An interview protocol also guided the researchers to ensure openness and trust among the participants. Moreover, these open-ended questions undergo face and content validity by soliciting advice from qualitative research experts.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) suggested that interviewing is an important method to determine the accuracy of the data gathered by the researchers. It can be conducted in different ways, such as with prepared questions, an interview guide or protocol, or an unplanned event.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before conducting the study, the researchers complied with all the requirements and got approval from the university research committee. The researchers sent a request letter for permission to conduct the study was then sent to the Campus Administrator of West Visayas State University Himamaylan City Campus. The approved letter from the Campus Administrator was attached to the individual letters sent to every participant to impose trust and credibility of the research conduct.

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Two semi-structured interviews were conducted by the researchers for each of the participants. Participants' interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. The first semi-structured interview was conducted at the participants' residences to consider their comfort and for the researchers to see their situation firsthand. The researchers traveled personally to their place, and their available time was considered. The second semi-structured was done at school, where participants' availability for an interview was also considered so that they could give much time and extensive information during the interview. After the data gathering, insights and understanding were drawn from discussions.

The questions asked to the participants were based on the researchers' made key informant interview flow of activities, guided by the set of questions; the researchers were the ones who interviewed the participants. During the interview, the researchers asked focusing but not leading questions about the participants' experiences.

The researchers ensured that the information collected through notes, recording, and documentation was handled with the utmost confidentiality. Furthermore, no identity of the participants was revealed as part of the research paper. To protect their identities, the researchers used the following pseudonyms in order to interpret their experiences with the utmost confidentiality: Esmeralda, Roger, Balmond, Selena, Lesley, Lylia, Beatrix, Rafaela, Angela, and Kadita.

Trustworthiness of the Data

Triangulation was done to establish the trustworthiness of the data. The researcher ensured a good quality of records during the interview through video and audio recording and note-taking. Data collected from the participants were then transcribed to see the nuances and refinements of the participants. Triangulation helped validate the research findings by checking the different observers of the phenomenon if they produced the same results (Nigtingale, 2020). Triangulation increased the validity of the results as themes drawn from note fields, interviews, and observation were compared. Moreover, Jefferson Transcription System Symbols annotated the participants' conversations. It cannot only help conversation analysts examine transcription but allows other readers to see things that happened and make it more unsophisticated (Park & Hepburn, 2022)

Furthermore, member checking was done. The participants reviewed, checked, and approved transcripts from the two interviews to ensure that the data used in the interpretation and discussion were reliable and accurate. Also, when the conclusions from the data were obtained, they were presented to the participants for their final review and to ensure the data's authenticity. Member checking is important as it helps the participant "see themselves" and connect to the data and interpretation, which can help ensure the data's reliability and the process, such as data collection, analysis, and reporting (Birt, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016, pp. 805-806).

Ethical Consideration

In conducting this study, ethics in conducting research was placed as a primary consideration to avoid harm and guarantee respect and privacy to the participants. Prior to the collection of data for the participants, a letter request was sent to the Campus Administrator of the university indicating that the data to be collected would be treated with the highest level of confidentiality. Afterward, participants were informed vividly about the detail of the research study via call, text, or message through an instant messaging app. The researcher thoroughly explained the research process, the purpose of the study, and how the data collected will be used

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in crafting a curriculum enhancement plan. Then, a consent letter was sent to the participants asking their permission to participate voluntarily in the study. The approved letter of conduct from the Campus Administrator was also attached to impose trustworthiness. The participants of the study were ensured that the data collected from the study would be handled with utmost anonymity and confidentiality.

Data Analysis
Thematic analysis is a process of analyzing qualitative data that requires searching across a data set to identify, analyze, and report frequent patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is a process of describing and interpreting data by selecting codes and creating themes. In this study, a thematic analysis was done using NVIVO.

Results and Discussion

Challenges that Students have Experienced in the Modular Distance Learning Modality

As the pandemic rises, the operation of the learning system worldwide has changed significantly, including higher education. Since most students live in far-flung communities or areas with low internet connectivity, the university adopted the offline form of flexible learning or the modular distance learning modality.

In this study, the BEEd students shared the challenges they experienced when the modular distance learning modality was implemented, which became the basis for crafting themes.

Theme 1: In Dire Straits: Difficulty in Understanding the Modules
Modular distance learning is not a new learning modality in the country since it was used prior the pandemic, but for the students who were used with the face-to-face interaction inside the classroom, the struggle is overwhelming. In the study of Dangle (2020), it revealed that students have difficulty in understanding the lessons in some subjects especially that they lack the knowledge about the topics. Bayucca (2021) added that difficulty in learning independently was one of the contributory factors why modular distance learning is difficult. In this study, it reveals that understanding the modules is the biggest challenge that the learners faced in modular distance learning. Students attributed this experience to their lack of personal capability for independent learning, content of the modules that lack depth, examples, and clarification, directions in the modules that were too hard to follow, modules' vague prints and pictures and lack of practical application of the things that they are learning. Specifically, these experiences were described below:

Subtheme 1.1: Budlay kay Self-Learning Subong: Struggling to Learn Independently
Modular distance learning is a type of asynchronous learning wherein students must learn at their own pace and explore various opportunities as independent learning. It follows the principles students learn in their homes and personal spaces (Finol, 2020). Students will develop their study habits and take responsibility for finishing the tasks provided in the learning modules. This mode of instructional delivery is heavily supported by constructivism theory, in which

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students actively construct their understanding of various learning experiences (Elloit, 2020). On the other hand, not every student would accept or cope with the situation as they struggle to learn independently. Beatrix justified this when she mentioned how she struggled to understand the lessons from the modules on her own. Stress and overwhelming feeling consumed her as she could not find the motivation to learn and accomplish what she has started. In her words,

> *"sang daw nagdugay na daw (.) daw nawad-an ka gana kay daw nakapoy ka na><*
> *Nang daw stress ka na… indi man tanan ma-instindihan bala (.) kag kabudlay gid*
> *ya magtuon nga ikaw lang isa."* (as time goes by, I am losing my interest because I
> am exhausted and and stressed. I cannot understand everything and it`s hard learn
> by myself)

The difficulty in self-learning made it hard for the students to understand the lessons in their modules. To achieve success in self-learning, students need cognitive skills, including their ability to think, solve problems, understand, and manage knowledge. They also needed study skills which involve their skills in reading and writing. Personal skills were also a consideration wherein their emotional aspects and motivation and their power to believe in their goals would surely help them realize their goals. These skills will guide learners in directing their abilities to achieve the desired goals, allowing them to grow and progress in self-learning. For instance, one of the participants named "Selena" stated her difficulty understanding the learning modules because of her difficulty in dealing with self-learning. She shared that,

> *"Budlay-budlay,. Kay self-learning mo, daw something self-learning ang ano*
> *subong.=Ti, kung magbasa ka sang module pagkakita mo pa lang ang mga letter*
> *daw matyagan mo daw::: daw kasukahon ka."*(It`s very difficult because it is self-
> learning and the moment I read the modules I felt like I am about to puke)

Balmond also expressed the same experience in modular distance learning. He is struggling as no one guides him in answering the tasks and activities and discusses the difficult contents and topics of the modules. Mariage et al. (2000) said that teachers take the role of More of Knowledgeable Others that help in scaffolding students' performance. Though he is a college student and people are expecting him to perform satisfactorily in his studies, Balmond still recognized the essence of having someone or a teacher that would help him overcome the challenges of learning complex concepts. She said that,

> *"ti syempre, daw pamatyagan bala nila sa imo sir tanda ka kay college ka na,*
> *tanda ka sa pag-learn (.) pero ano sa amon sir daw ka (.) Ah::: Daw Kabudlay gid*
> *ya."* (They thought that because we are college student, we are good at learning on
> our own, but it`s hard)

In their study, the desire to learn something new, the sense of control over one's own learning, and the discovery of an engaging website or activity were all motivating elements. On the other hand, participants of this study acknowledged they were losing motivation to learn on their own because of distance learning. Roger was even thinking of stopping because he felt hopeless and helpless. He was exhausted with independent learning as he couldn`t seek assistance from anyone. In his words,

> *"una to dira gid ang kabudlay na-feel ko nga wala-wala daw (.) na-feel ko bala*
> *nga daw indi na ko mag-eskwela kay budlay-budlay gid Katama"* (at first it feels

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like everything falls apart. I want to stop for the meantime because it is really difficult.)

Dangle (2020) identified that students also struggle to answer and understand their modules because not every student can work independently with their modules. Students at all age levels needed support of more knowledgeable others (MKOs) like teachers, parents, and siblings in order to explore the conventions of their modules. This difficulty was spot on based on the words of Rafaela, who is away from her family when she goes to their Barangay Proper which is more than 5 kilometers away from their home to look after for the sacks of charcoal they were selling.

> *"indi mo mainstindihan (.) nga mga::: ano topic sang inyo modules (.) kis-a wala kay may::: ano><sa akon kay wala, wala may, wala sa akon kis-a may gabulig wala nahuya man ko man ko mag-ano bala mag ngayo bulig sa iban."* (you can't understand the topics in the modules because no one helps as I am ashamed to ask for others' help.)

The modular distance learning modality situated Filipino students to study at the comfort of their homes and with their limited contact with their teachers placed parents, guardians, community tutors, or elder siblings to take the role of the "More Knowledgeable Others" or MKO. The psychologist Lev Vygotsky, in 1978, suggests that MKOs have a better understanding or higher cognitive ability than the learners with regards to a particular task. Since learning is a social process for Vygotsky, these MKOs should serve as the "tagapagdaloy" (channel) or partners that will guide the learning process, not teach the subject matter. In the case of Rafaela, she finds the module difficult because no one will guide her or help her in doing the task provided in their modules. The absence of MKO means a lack of rewards, encouragements, and praises to heighten her motivation to learn and someone she can interact with to assist in understanding the contents of the modules.

Subtheme 1.2. May Part nga Wala Labot: : Complications in the Contents and Depth of the Learning Materials

With the new learning system in the new normal education, students are expected to face difficulties in their learning since modules are not substitutes for teachers. Fojtik (2018) revealed in his study that difficulty in understanding some terms and activities in their modules or learning materials was one of the challenges that students faced in modular distance learning. Students were left confused with complicated concepts written in the modules since no teacher will explain these topics and explore higher-order thinking questions. In this study, participants mentioned this difficulty that they had to endure with their learning modules, and one of them is "Esmeralda," who experienced difficulty in doing the activity assigned for them to do in the modules:

> *"may ara lang gid part nga indi mo na siya mainstindihan kay example ma::: may ara da olobrahon Sir nga daw i-pa::: pa ihatag sa imo nga activity bala Sir kag olobrahon pero kis-a wala na sa lesson kag daw layo na gid bala Sir aw. Ti amo na Sir daw budlayan ko mag-answer bala Sir."* (There are parts that you can`t understand for example the given activities and tasks and sometimes they are on the lessons and it quite complicated. That is I find it hard to answer)

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In this situation, Esmeralda encountered difficulty understanding the tasks or activities given since it was not discussed in one of the topics in the modules. Because of this, she found it hard to answer the tasks provided. Selena supported this experience when she shared that there were irrelevant topics written in the modules, and she wondered why they were included in the topics she was learning. She uttered that,

> *"Daw may ara gid ya part nga daw::: wala man ni siya, daw wala man siya labot nga-a ari na di sa?"* (Some parts of the modules were not relevant to topics and I wonder why they are included?)

Also, "Lylia" experienced difficulty in dealing with questions in the learning modules though there were examples provided for them to examine concepts and enhance their comprehension while learning by themselves. She narrated that,

> <u>*"Budlay gid ya Sir ya*</u>. *Although may ara sang example (.) pero indi mo gid ya maka-instindihan ya pati mga question. Although nga may ara na na da sa pero indi-indi (head shakes) mo gid ya mainstindihan."* (It`s really difficult although there are examples. The questions were pretty hard too although they are provided in the modules)

Kadita also experienced the same situation with Lylia as she found the questions complicated. She also thought that the questions asked in the modules were not related to the topics. She did not see the relevance of the questions being asked when she emphasized that,

> *"About guro Sir sa mga:::sa mga question bala nila Sir aw><daw something amo na kay daw may part gid ya kis-a Sir nga daw kalayo naman bala Sir aw sa topic gid."* (Maybe it is about the questions because there are parts that they are unrelated to the topic)

Dangle (2020) explained that some modules given to the students did not have enough or detailed explanations, which resulted in their failure to understand the materials. Some of these modules also contained lengthy readings and strenuous terms, so students could not focus and comprehend the topics. Beatrix also cited this factor as to why she found it difficult to understand the module. She recounted that,

> *"...kis-a ang mga::: ano direction sang mga ano, sang mga, sang mga activity budlay intsindihon."*(sometimes the::: the directions of the, of the activity were hard to follow)

Complicated activities, hard to follow directions, and irrelevant topics were factors considered by the participants of this study as reasons why they consider learning through modules is such a difficult task. As no teachers that guides them directly and tell them what to do to accomplish the task, students are struggling to interpret the contents of the modules by themselves and deal it negatively.

Subtheme 1.3. Panas kag Indi Mainstindihan: Hard Time Learning from Modules' Fuzzy Text

Participants also faced another problem regarding understanding the modules distributed to them, and that is the fuzzy or unclear printed modules. A Teacher`s Guide to Distance

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Learning (n.d.) published that printed materials also correspond to distance learning which serves as a primary source of instruction or maybe supplemental. However, one of the possible disadvantages of printed materials is the high probability that it be reproduced unclear or blurry, and this the difficulty faced by Roger, Selena, and Angela, which makes it difficult for them to understand the contents of their modules. It was difficult for Angela to understand the module because of the vague print quality on the modules. She said that,

> *"indi mo mainstindihan kay ang ano bala ang::: ano ang pag-print hanap"* (I can't understand the text because of its fuzzy prints)

Roger added that the prints in the modules he received were fuzzy, so it was hard for him to understand them. He uttered that,

> *" Ang iban panas, tungod siguro sa printer ↓ panas na siya kag di namon ma-instindihan."* (Some text were vague and incomprehensible probably because of the printer

It was supported by the statements of Selena when she elaborated that texts of the printed modules that were given to her were very small, and the printed picture was vague as they were presented in black and white. Hence she cannot understand it. She expressed that,

> *" indi man abi klaro. May ara gid ya, may ga:::pasa. Tapos ara man sa module nga mga picture tapos indi man dyapon klaro kung ano><anong-ano sang picture kay black and white, tapos ↓gagmay"* (Texts are not clear. They are too small and some pictures were printed in black and white)

In modular distance learning, modules are considered to be the most important tool in delivering education to students and it will greatly affect students learning if ever they are reproduced poorly. Dangle (2020) mentioned that good quality modules help student develop a sense of responsibility in accomplishing their tasks. On the other hand, Balmond shared his experience as he expressed how frustrating it was for him to read modules with incomplete pages, blurred texts and pictures. He uttered that the quality of prints need to be reviewed before giving it to them as it affects their motivation and skills in self-study. In his words,

> *"Budlay pa gid kis-a Sir kay ang mga modules nga ginahatag sa amon bala indi kompleto ang mga pages kag indi bala clear ang picture nga lantawon namon"* (It`s hard since the modules given have missing pages and pictures given were not clear)

It can be noted that providing high-quality printed materials to students helps them boost their creativity and focus their attention. Good quality instructional materials help students brainstorm their original ideas, develop proficiency in complex subjects, and inspire them to engage with the materials creatively.

Theme 2: A Bridge Too Far: Troubles in Connecting to the Net

One mode of flexible learning is offline learning in the form of a modular distance learning modality where students do not use an internet connection to learn. The learning process happens through the use of modules, whether in printed or digital forms. West Visayas State University Himamaylan City Campus decided to adopt this form of flexible learning because

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most of its students resides in far-flung areas, making it impossible for them to learn online because of their internet connectivity.

Even though the university adopted this mode of learning, the internet is still an important element for the students to communicate with their teachers for inquiry, check their Messenger for updates in the Group Chats or GC, work with their friends online, download the soft copies of the modules, researching additional information in the web to supplement their answers on the modules. Selwyn (2014) considers the internet a tool for open discussion, debate, radical questioning, experimentation and most especially, sharing knowledge and information. This was acknowledged by Kadita when she said that she used the internet to help her gain more knowledge and understanding questions in her modules. In her words,

> *"Makahatag siya knowledge nga mainstindihan ko pa gid ang amo na ang mga question."* (It gives me the knowledge to better understand the questions)

Moreover, Rafaela utilized the internet for research and checking of updates in their group chats. She said,

> *"Ga-search amo na(.) Tapos kung, mga, kung anong update sa inyo GC"* (Researching and checking for some updates in the GC)

The internet offers an easy and instant way to access a vast amount of information. With distance learning, the internet becomes a need that helps students make the research and relearning the content of the modules easier, but accessing this becomes a challenge for the students, especially those living in far-flung or remote areas. In this study, it shows that students are struggling to connect with the internet considering their time and location.

Subtheme 2.1. Dasig Kung Gab-e na Gid: Agonizing Time to Connect to the Internet

The COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the inequalities in terms of the internet speed of the country since connectivity in urban areas remains higher while digital infrastructures in more rural areas continue to weaken. This reality can be seen in the situation of Lesley. She lived 20 kilometers away from the town proper and from the Barangay Proper she needed to take a 5-kilometer walk to reach their house since their place is inaccessible by any means of transportation. She narrated that,

> *"Hina…ga-start sa 1:00AM to 5:00AM. Kung mag-send ko outputs ko sa email ga bugtaw ko 1:00AM."* (It`s very slow and good connection starts at 1:00AM to 5:00AM. If want to send my outputs I have to wake up at 1:00AM)

Lesley expressed how she struggled to access the internet and submit her outputs through emails or Instant Messaging (Messenger) as she needed to wake up early in the morning to have a good connection. The situation was also the same but much better for Kadita as the internet connection in their house starts to boost in the evening, since their residence is 59 kilometers away from their town proper. She said that,

> *"Nang::: hinay-hinay gid sa ya Sir. Tapos maka-access lang ko kis-a sa internet gid nga mas dasig siya connection kung gab-e na gid."* (Internet connection is too slow and I can access a better internet connection at night.)

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She added that whenever she has an internet connection, she used it to search for information to understand the contents of her module. However, there was a limitation that she needed to face, a good internet connection is only available upstairs, which starts at nine in the evening.

> *"kung diri sa dalom daw::: hinay-hinay pa gid ya Sir><pero kung sa babaw daw dasig bala ang connection(.) Pero amo lang na galing kay mga 9 PM na"* (Here downstaris the internet connection is too slow but it gets better upstairs at 9 PM)

In the study of Salac and Kim (2016), the Philippines ranked 104th out of 144 qualified countries worldwide and 13 out of 15 Asia-Pacific Countries in terms of its internet connectivity. With this, internet connection remains very slow although Filipino users spend $20.35 per Mbps compared to the worldwide average of $5.21 per Mbps. Additionally, Belgica et al. (2020) revealed in their study that most of the students cited poor internet connection as the major challenge in distance learning. This problem was very evident in this study as Balmond also disclosed this problem as he needs to wake up till early morning to wait for a good internet connection as he lives in a mountainous area that is 61 kilometers away from the city proper and can only be reached by riding in a *"habal-habal"*. He needs the internet connection in order for him to check updates in the Group Chats, and do research for his outputs and portfolio. He stated that,

> *"ina bala sir nga::: need ko gid ya magbugtaw kaagahon kay::: ga-check ko bi sang GC namon sa mga updates da bala haw><kag may mga subject nga need gid namon i-research kay requirements man sa bi".* (I need to wake up til early in the morning because I am checking the GC for the updates and for some subjects that I need to do some online research)

It is important to note that though the university utilizes modular distance learning, internet connection is still the best tool for a faster communication of teacher and students especially with the dissemination of information and updates about their modules and outputs. As expressed by the participants, they can benefit greatly in the internet as they use it to get information, answer their activities, and submit their tasks to their teachers though they need wait a perfect time just to access it.

Subtheme 2.2. Didto, Mangita Signal: Finding a Place with Better Connectivity

The circumstances to access the internet are not always the same for all, as other students need to wait for a certain time at the comfort of their home, some students need to find a good internet in their nearby areas or a distance away from their homes.This situation is very evident in this study as the participants need to look for a good internet to connect to their teachers, classmates, check for updates, submit outputs, do some research, and download available materials for their modules. Esmeralda narrated what she had to do to look for a good internet connection since it was not available in their house. She did not even had her own smartphone, which she can utilize. She resided in a community eight kilometers away from the town proper. She shared that,

> *"Mayo gani kis-a Sir makapa-simbahan ko Sir didto sa ** Sir maka-ano ko na Sir maka-download ko module nga gin-pasa soft copy bala Sir aw"* (It's better

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sometimes if I could go to *** there I could download the modules that were sent in soft copy)

The area was less than a kilometer away from their house, and whenever she needed to send something, she could go there immediately and use either a *PISO Net* or *PISO WiFi*.

The availability of internet connection in Esmeralda's area was the same with Beatrix, Roger, and Lylia as they also needed to find a good internet connection in their nearby areas not that far away from home. For Lylia, who lived 37 kilometers away from the town proper, she had to roam outside their house in order to access a good internet connection;

" Kung wala sa signal sa baba, sa balay bala ti mangita ka gid sa gwa" (If there is no signal available inside the house, then I have to get out and look for a better one)

Roger also lived in a mountainous area that was 20 kilometers away from the city, and the only way to reach their place was by riding in a *"habal-habal."* His experience with internet connection was no different with Beatrix and Lylia.

"kung wala mo pa na ma-download mangita ka pa gid way para matuon ka. (.)" (You really need to find some ways to download documents and learn)

As some of his teachers send a soft copy of their modules, he needed to download it. Moreover, to understand some of the complicated topics in the modules, he needed to find a good internet connection in his area to make all of these things work for him. This situation was also experienced by Balmond as he also needs to find a good location with good internet connection as he uploads his outputs. He even shared how he climbed a cotton fruit tree just to send his output and meet the deadline. He uttered that,

" indi ko gusto bala ma-late haw pasa ti, nagsaka na lang ko sa may puno sang santol eh::: Waay di daan chansa signal sa amon ya." (I don`t want to get late with my submission so, I climbed a cotton fruit tree to have a better connectivity)

On the other hand, there were worst scenarios that students had to face when they look for an internet connection, especially when it was far away from their homes. Rafaela persists more than a kilometer walk if she needed to access the internet in order to search for relevant information to the topic she was studying in her modules, open the instant messaging for some updates, which sometimes got late, but the more agonizing experience was when she sends a video that would take too long because of a very slow internet connection.

"ano ka mag-send ka kis-a dugay, as if may choice ko, hulat!" (Sending documents online take a lot of time, but I don`t have any choice but to wait.)

Even though the students were utilizing the modular distance learning modality to continue their learning amidst the pandemic, participants claimed that still, they needed the internet to access the link provided for further readings and activity, download soft copies of the modules, communicate with their teachers and friends using emails and instant messaging applications, send their outputs or requirements online and with the emerging situations where teachers are not always available to explain the content of the modules, they redirected themselves to use the internet to see relevant activities and information on the topics of their modules. With this, eight of the nine participants asserted that they experienced difficulty accessing the net because of their geographical locations, weather, and poor internet infrastructure.

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Theme 3: On the Front Burner: Complications in Managing Time Between Priorities

Putri (2020) discussed the negative consequences of modular distance learning to students, and one of those things he mentioned is that with modular distance learning, students might get lost and may fail to manage or discipline themselves effectively because of their schedules, and most especially the work at their homes or part-time jobs they have undertaken. Students have seen distance learning as an opportunity to help their parents financially and gain income to sustain their needs in different aspects. These circumstances result in their difficulty managing their time effectively and setting their priorities right as they want to achieve all the goals they have in mind.

Theme 3.1. Unahon Mo ang Obra Mo: Dividing Time for Modules and Responsibilities at Home

Indeed, this problem was faced by Esmeralda as she struggled to find a balance between answering her modules and work. As she stayed at home, she also must look after their small poultry farm, feed their animals, attends their small business, carry out the household chores and take care of her 2-year-old cousin since her parents and other siblings also have work to do. She further said,

> *"Ang akon gid guro Sir ang pinaka-primary is (.) ang time sa pag-answer sang module bala Sir aw kay (.) indi man lang tungod Sir kay ari kami di sa balay maka-direct kami answer sang amon nga module kay tungod Sir olobrahon sa balay indi gid pwede mapabay-an"* (My primary problem is the time in answering the module because it doesn`t mean that we are staying at home, we can directly answer the module since we have work that we just can`t neglect.)

Lesley encountered the same problem with Esmeralda as she also found it difficult to divide her time working as a student assistant before and accomplishing her modules. She mentioned that,

> *"Budlay. Budlay sa i-ano Sir, i-divide ang imo oras sa sa work kag sa module."*
> (It`s difficult to divide your time between work and module.)

The experiences of Esmeralda and Lesley were quite similar to Roger's as he also needs to help his parents on the farm growing various crops that they have to sell in the city. Since he is the second son of his ten siblings, he needed to help his family as it is the only means for his parents to generate income in raising them all. He shared that,

> *"indi man lang siling nga matuon ka lang matuon kinahanglan magbulig sa imo ginikanan, kay ti amo na, 10 kami nga mag-utod><So, kung sila lang ni Papa kag ni Mama mangabudlay, ti paano na lang (.) kami."* (It`s not just that I are going to study the whole time; I also need to help my parents because we are ten siblings. So, if only my parents would work at the farm, what would happen to us?

Rafaela also faced the same problem as she finds it hard to focus and study her modules because of working on the farm, taking care of their farm animals, and attending their *"sari-sari" store*. Since she was occupied with work, she recognized her failure in studying her modules.

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"daw mapabay-an(.) Kay kung gab-e, ti makapoy ka naman." (Modules would be neglected, I am exhausted already.)

Time management was indeed a skill that affects students learning, and students who know how to manage their time also understand the relationship between study and productivity as they know how to plan and monitor their time. On the other hand, time management should also be taught by teachers as they taught students with academic skills, especially in this time of the pandemic. Failure to do this might lead to students rattling which tasks and responsibilities should be prioritized in their home and study. For instance, Angela faced a pressing responsibility in her family, leading to her struggle in modular distance learning modality. She explained that,

"Ti, ang tanan di nga olobrahon sa balay imo kay syempre ikaw lang di isa babayi(.) kinahanglan mo mag (.) maghimos (.) pakaon sa lolo mo, mangita ka da bi kwarta para mabuhi kami" (As the only girl at home, I was in charge of doing everything, like doing the chores, feeding my grandfather, and even finding money to sustain us.)

Moreover, having many responsibilities at home and her siblings leads Beatrix to question how to manage her tasks effectively.
"as a magulang bala, syempre ang responsibility sa balay nah kung (.) paano mo i-time><i-manage imo time pero pag-amo na kis-a gaka-delayed ko kay indi ko makuti" (As the eldest of my siblings, of course I have responsibilities at home, like how to manage my time effectively, but with all the things that I have to do, I got delayed with my submission.)

At home, Beatrix acted as the More Knowledgeable Others (MKO) for her younger siblings since her parents were occupied with their work on the farm. As an MKO, she guides and helps her siblings accomplished their learning modules at night after working in their small barbeque business. Her responsibilities as the eldest sibling interfere with her time in working and studying for her modules.
With all the time she dedicated to perform her responsibilities at home, she no longer has time to do her modules as she failed to consider her priorities towards her studies.
It is expected that as students are learning at home, they will be directly involved in the problems and work at home, but still, they have to find ways to achieve their goals in the different activities provided to continue their learning process in times of pandemic. Additionally, better time management leads students to better learning outcomes.

Theme 3.2. Time na Ini, Para Makabulig Kami: Allotting Time for Study and Labor

Time management in distance education is an issue for most students, for others are taking a part-time job, while others are helping their parents, and some students lack the competence or skill to do it. Other participants in this study expressed that they failed to do their tasks in their studies, like submitting their outputs on time, because of their difficulty balancing their responsibilities for their study and part-time job. Balmond shared that he decided to work as a "house helper" when the university announced that it will still adopt modular distance learning. He was helping his mother raise his four younger siblings after his father's death because of the

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COVID-19. He saw how difficult it is to allocate time on studying while working at the same time but he don`t have any choice but to work and have something on their plate every day. He said that,

> *"Indi gid ko katuon kis-a eh (.) kay syempre unahon ko gid ya ang obra:::
> Kaypigado gid kami daan ya, basta may pambakal na ko bugas sa balay, ayos na
> ko.* (I cannot study sometimes because of course I have to do my work first. We are
> so poor and important that I have something to earn to buy some rice)

This situation was also experienced by Lesley when she decided to work as a student assistant in the school as she also saw the pandemic as a chance to have some extra income for herself. However, it caused conflict to her study as she cannot also answer her modules because of her exhaustion. She uttered that,

> *"Kay kung wala ko ga SA, ti maka-answer pa ko sa sina nga module, ti kundi indi
> ko kapoy."* (If I am not working as a student assistant thenI can answer my modules
> without getting exhausted)

The demands of studying and working in this time of pandemic are far different from the pressure that students put when things were still normal (Antipolo, 2021). Arulampalam et al. (2012) mentioned that working while studying may have a negative effect the education since students spent less time accomplishing the task which leads to lower academic achievement. In this study, Lylia narrated how working as a part-time seller of beauty and wellness product affected her studies. At first, she finds the business and studying fun and easy, but as the weeks and months go by that she gain income, she noticed that we become withdrawn and uninterested in her learning modules. Her work changes her the way she perform during the face-to-face class and her motivation suddenly shifted. She articulated that,

> *"Nami bi sir ang business><baw><pero sang dugay na::: natamad na ko
> mag-answer module (.) daw mas nami gali makakwarta ka ya(.).* (It`s nice to have a
> business but as the time goes by I got lazy answering my modules. I like it better
> when I am making some money)

The majority of the participants considered their part-time job during pandemic as a challenge to effectively engage themselves in modular distance learning. It is important to note that participants claimed positive effect of this activity especially in terms of their finances as they can help themselves and their family. On the other hand, this condition leads to their failure to submit their outputs on time, exhaustion, getting good grades, and manage their time between work and study. Congruently, Wallengren-Lynch et al. (2021) found that working and learning from home is a challenge especially in managing boundaries between work and home as the reality changed for everyone.

Theme 4: A Cold Shoulder: Obstacles in Retrieving and Submitting Modules

In its implementation of flexible learning during the First Quarter of the academic year, 2020-2021, the university have come up with a better decision to deliver the modules to the students' respective LGUs in order to protect the health and welfare of its teachers, staff, and most especially its students since the cases COVID-19 is surging. To implement this mode of learning successfully, the university coordinated with the Local Government Units or LGUs, and

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they assigned a Focal Person that will facilitate the distribution and retrieval of modules. Additionally, the university also initiated a pick-up and drop-off center at the Barangay level, wherein students in the far-flung areas do not have to go in the town or city proper to submit their outputs or get their modules. However, in special cases like students residing in a Barangay near the university, they could submit and pick up their modules to the guardhouse.

Subtheme 4.1. Wala man to amon Module: Delayed Delivery of Learning Modules

For a systematic distribution and retrieval of modules, the university established a schedule posted on the Official Facebook Page of the university, and they were also updated by their teachers in their respective group chats in instant messaging. Moreover, the line of the Campus Administrator was open all the time for queries of the students.

On the other hand, despite the effort to make the distribution and retrieval of the modules convenient for the students, some challenges arrived along the way. Participants like Esmeralda expressed their experience over the unexpected event that test her patience. She contacted the school before she goes to the LGU, and she was instructed that the modules were yet delivered. She narrated that,

> *" wala wala to amon module Sir hambal na ang focal person namon na, wala pa man di sila kahapit''* (Our module was not there yet as the Focal Person told us that they have not delivered it)

They were surprised that their modules were not there yet in the LGU since she was instructed before she went to the LGU to picked up her module. She finds it very disappointing since it was not easy for her to travel, and their house is 8 kilometers away from the town proper. With what happened, it is expected that there will be some delays in retrieving her modules.

Kadita encountered another problem regarding with the retrieval of modules as she lived 35 kilometers away from the drop-off and pick-up centers of the modules. She narrated that,

> *"syempre, matravel-travel ka pa tapos need pa ang mga::: mga::: quarantine pass, mga something amo na kay daw *** mas nagstrikto bala Sir"* (Of course, you have to travel then you need quarantine pass, something like that since *** had a strict policy that time.)

She found it difficult to travel and retrieve her modules because of the strict policy before entering the town proper since they must present pertinent documents like quarantine pass as part of their health and safety protocols.

It is impractical for her to get just two or three out of her eight modules with her situation. Despite that, she recognized why there were some delays in the distribution of modules, which is its reproduction. In her words,

> *"siguro kay nang indi pa bala Sir naobr><natapos man guro print sang mga teacher something amo na. Nang::: kis-a ginapadala sa amon duwa lang, tag-tatlo, ti daw ka hassle man bala Sir haw nga makadto ka to duwa lang man imo kwaon kag indi man kompleto."* (Probably because teachers have not finished printing it yet and they were going to send us two modules, or three modules, so it was a bit hassle)

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Subtheme 4.2. Pinangabudlayan mo Na, Nadula Pa: Stress over Missing Outputs

Since the pick-up and the distribution were scheduled, some of the modules get stocked in the LGU or Barangay before the university could collect them, and this was the problem encountered by Roger. However, the most painful part of his experience was when his finished modules get lost before reaching school. Additionally, the most distressing was when he passed his accomplished modules in the guardhouse of the university and disappeared without a trace, and he has to do his modules one more time. He expressed his disappointment when he said,

> "*So perti ka ano, perti kakapoy, gina pangabudlayan mo answeran pagkalab-ot didto madula. Sugod naman kami sa una kag daw ka::: kalbaryo sa amon nga kabuhi bilang studyante ang modular↓.* "(It was very exhausting, you worked hard to answer it, but they get lost at school. We have to start all over again, and it seems modules were very distressing for us.)

This was also experienced by Balmond when he shared how stressed he was to find out that his submitted modules in the LGU drop-off point was missing as his teacher told him that she did not received any outputs from him. He went to the LGU drop-off office to search for his outputs, but it was gone and never to found and leave him with no option but start over again. In his words,

> "*naglalain ko sang pagmamangkot ko sa akon teacher kag hambal ya wala sa may nabaton (.) ginkadtuan ko to sa LGU eh, pero ayawan lang ko pangita wala gid::: Galalain ko kay ti liwaton ko gid to tanan.* (I was shocked when I asked my teacher and she said that she did not received any of my outputs. So, I went to the LGU, but I had hard time finding it. I was so frustrated because since I have to do it all again.)

Theme 5: A Place in the Sun: Enduring Uncomfortable Place to Learn

Bihjees (2020) acknowledged the presence of noise from the gadgets, neighbors, or annoying siblings as why modular distance learning was disadvantaged for the students who were learning at home. He said that students tend to quickly lose their focus and motivation to learn because of the present distractions.

Subtheme 5.1. Gahod Permi saBalay: Unwelcoming Noise from Home

As she learns and works on her task in the modules, Esmeralda recognized that the noises from her family members distracted her from doing her outputs. She expressed that,

> *"Indi ko gid ko ya Sir maka-obra video ya Sir kay gahod-gahod gid di ya permi sa may balay Sir"* (I can`t do any of my video tasks because of the noise in our house.)

There were 12 of them on one roof, so the noises they had created affected her when she records a video as part of their performance tasks. Additionally, when it comes to answering her modules, Esmeralda added,

> *"kay budlayan ko di Sir mag-answer kung adlaw kag ano nga damo bala tawo di sa balay Sir kay damo di daan nga ano sa isa bala ka balay damo kami bala Sir haw."* (Even during the day, with everyone in the house, it's hard for me to answer my modules)

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She added that she could not even answer her modules because of the distractions in their house. This poor learning condition was quite similar to the condition of Roger when he said,

"budlay kay ti ang sa family nimo, sa environment indi ka mayo maka-acquire mayo sang knowledge especially ang imo palibot gahod kag ang sa balay bi, damo kami nga mag-utod amo na siya gahod akon mga utod" (It's challenging because of my family; I don't learn well in the setting; my house is full of noisy siblings; and my surrounding environment is noisy.)

Roger claimed that his ability to understand and acquire the knowledge provided in the modules was affected by the noise from his siblings and environment. Rafaela felt the same as she failed to concentrate while studying when her siblings keep on asking questions. She said that,

"mag-answer ko, mamangkot man sila. Ti, Daw ka ano bala aw, masabaran kung kis-a (h). Ti daw indi ka ka-ano, concentrate." (Even as I'm answering, other questions are being posed by my siblings. It would appear that I am occasionally irritated. As a result, my mind is going a million miles an hour.)

Subtheme 5.2. Indi ka Focus sa Gahod sa Palibot: Distracting Noise in the Surrounding

Chonghui (2020) claimed that bad learning conditions would hinder the learners' ability to learn as the environment helps them to stimulate their thinking. An unfavorable learning environment will affect students' behavior, motivation, and interest in learning. Lylia proved this situation as she was annoyed and tended to lose her focus because of the roaring sounds in her space.

"For example, (.) arang magtuon ka (.) arang mag-gahod-gahod ang TV ti, indi ka gid ya ka focus ya(.)" (If you were trying to study and someone turned on the TV, for instance, your concentration would be severely disrupted.)

The noise coming from TV also distracts her as she claimed that annoying sounds do not fit with her learning styles. She also mentioned another source of noise that bothers her while studying.

"For example, bi may ga-karaoke bi sa ano::: sa tupad balay, ↓ti kung mag-ano ka ya Sir kung ↓magtu-on ka ya ti, kung gahod-gahod to ya Sir ya kung karaoke ya, ti gahod-gahod, ti indi ka gid ya ka ano ya, punduhan mo na lang eh," For example, if you're trying to study but loud noises (from, say, nearby karaoke) are distracting you, you have no alternative but to give up.

UCAS (2019) believed that to absorb new information effectively, a comfortable study space plays a vital role. Learners who study in a positive learning environment become more engaged, motivated, and have a higher learning ability than students who are learning in poor learning conditions – those that are uncomfortable, noisy, and full of distractions.

Subtheme 5.3. Tani May Lugar nga Nami Tun-an: Learning in a Poor Learning   Enviro

Students who are studying in poor environments find it more difficult to absorb information and keep engaged. Poor learning conditions relate to the learning environment of Selena that she needs to live through. Their house was burned, and nothing was left to them

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except their precious lives. All of their belongings, including the learning modules that she finished working with, were all wiped out. Moreover, she has to face a more challenging effect of the event as she struggles to find a more comfortable study space since they are now living in a makeshift shelter.

> *"pero kung sa gab-e naman, syempre tamad><kay wala man kami di permanent abi nga lamesa nga pulungkuan nga pwede study-han. Amo pa gid na ang pinakabudlay kung tani, galing subo, wala"* (but at night I naturally became unmotivated to study because there is no fixed table in our house. That's the toughest part. If only we had a house, which sadly, we don't.)

After the unfortunate event in the life of Selena, she struggled to find a comfortable space to study and also lost her motivation to answer her modules. She failed to stay focused and motivated since her environment fails to provide her with the correct level of support to maintain her learning. This uneasy and uncomfortable learning environment is something that Balmond complained as he find it hard to learn in their small nipa hut and he only have a gas lamp at night. He shared that,

> *"kung::: magtunon naman ko kada gab-e, wala man kami suga, kingki lang man amon gamit (.) ti, amo na eh kis-a ginatamad ko (.) tani::: kung nami nga lugar nga tun-an makatapos gid ko obra goro galing sa adlaw bi may obra man ko.* (Since our only source of illumination is a gas lamp, I have resolved to devote every evening to studying, despite my occasional propensity to laziness. A decent study spot would allow me to complete my outputs, but alas, I must work during the day.)

Balmond shared that his learning environment affects his motivation to learning. Positive learning environment enables students explore, work, and learning from their mistakes and learners are more likely to acquire higher motivation that leads to a good learning outcomes (Verma, n.d.). However, this vital factor in learning also affects Rafaela as she lives in a deprived remote area.

> *"Tapos wala kuryente (.) tapos mga><medyo lagka pa na to ang mga pamabalay (.) kag amo na, solar ila gamit (.)"* (There is no power, and the dwellings are spread apart, so many have resorted to utilizing solar lamps for illumination.

These were critical problems concerning to their environment that participants need to endure while engaging with their modules. Most of them were affected by the unpleasant learning environment as they struggle to focus, maintain their motivation, and accomplish their tasks in the modular distance learning modality. One participant also expressed that she does not have a comfortable learning space since their house was burned down, so she lost interest in studying. It was shared by Warfield (2016)that the physical environment affects the student`s academic progress by as much as 25%. Thus, the environment should be uncrowded and creative to maintain students' positivity in the learning activity. Having a supportive environment also helps students learn happily, solve problems and make decisions effectively and lead them to perform better and achieve their set of goals.

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Conclusions

Various problems in implementing modular distance learning confronted students. All participants declared that understanding the module is the most challenging situation since they have to learn independently and don`t have the skills to be successful independent learners. Skills that would guide them, direct their abilities to achieve their goals, and allow them to grow and progress in self-learning. Students were used to the situation where teachers were in charge of explaining complex lessons and helping them understand topics that were out of their prior knowledge. Students also suffer from understanding the lesson because of the complicated topics and contents in the modules. They realized that the depth of materials needed the support of a teacher, as they were new to the situation. Lessons in the modules measure their higher-order thinking skills, and activities asked for them to be submitted needed supervision which they need clarification on what to do. Students also realized that the questions being asked are sometimes too irrelevant to the topics, or some tasks are not discussed in the modules, yet they are required to complete them. They have observed that the modules provided for them contain lengthy readings and strenuous terms which they failed to understand and complete. Students also claimed that the texts of the modules were fuzzy and vague, which led to their failure to understand the module. Pictures may be provided, but they are printed in black and white, which is unclear or blurry.

Though the university adopted modular distance learning, students realized that they needed an internet connection to succeed as it would help them supplement the knowledge in the modules to understand the topics better. The Internet also serves as their tool to communicate with their classmates and send their accomplished tasks online, like videos. With these worthwhile causes of the internet, students have struggled to find a better internet connection, as they live in far-flung areas. They must wait a long time to connect to a good internet connection. They need to wake up early in the morning to get better connectivity, check some GC updates, and send their outputs. Others are looking for a better internet connection outside of their homes or in a place with higher elevation or even climbing in a cotton tree. They have to do this to ensure that they are updated with various updates, download learning materials, and do some research to answer their modules that are too difficult for them.

Students have seen modular distance learning as an opportunity to help their parents financially and gain income to sustain their needs in different aspects. They have realized that since they are at home, they can help do household chores, be a tutor or More Knowledgeable Others (MKO) for their siblings, or even do part-time jobs. On the other hand, these initiatives led to complications in managing their time with their priorities. Students experienced having a hard time dividing their time between their modules and their responsibilities at home, like taking care of their siblings, attending their small businesses, and feeding their farm animals. They are also directly involved with the problems at home, and they also want to take responsibility for solving these problems, especially when money becomes an issue; thus, they are finding ways to help by engaging in heavy labor like house helpers or part-time jobs by selling wellness and beauty products. After working all day, they are too exhausted, leaving them no more time to work on their modules. It is also hard for them to maintain good scheduling as younger siblings depend on them, especially in answering modules, so sometimes, they cannot answer their modules on time.

Students were also confronted with obstacles in retrieving and submitting their modules. To ensure the welfare and safety of the students against COVID-19, the university set up a pick-

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up and drop-off location with various Local Government Units (LGU) to better accommodate students living in far-flung areas. On the other hand, these initiatives faced difficulty, as some modules were not delivered on the determined schedule due to slow reproduction. Some students got fewer modules than expected, which caused difficulty with their time, especially finances, as the fare got so high because of the pandemic. Yet, students faced many difficult consequences of modular distance learning, and that is when they had to repeat all of their responses in the modules because their modules disappeared without a trace.

Another challenge that participants needed to endure was perhaps studying in an unconducive learning environment. A supportive environment helped students solve problems, make decisions effectively, perform better, and achieve their goals. In this study, participants claimed that the noises from their siblings, neighbors, passing cars, television, and karaoke disrupted their learning ability. They easily get distracted by these annoying sounds and struggle to focus and maintain their motivation. One participant also expressed that she did not have a comfortable learning space since their house was burned down, so she lost interest in studying.

Declaration of Interest Statement

Regie M. Bangoy and Virgie P. Tan declare that we have no financial interests, employment or consultancy affiliations, intellectual property rights, personal or professional relationships, or received any funding or support that could pose conflicts of interest or influence our work on research. We confirm that respect for intellectual property has been maintained. This statement is accurate and complete to the best of our knowledge. We commit to promptly updating this declaration if any changes occur.

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