

Perceived Effectiveness Of Online Learning As A Modality In The New Normal

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Abstract:

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of online learning as a modality in the new normal. It employed the quantitative research design using survey methods conducted online. The sample collection method used was stratified random sampling out of the population of officially enrolled students of Surigao del Sur State University-Main Campus. Primary data collection in this study was carried out by distributing questionnaires online to 373 respondents. The data were obtained by filling out questions that were distributed to all respondents in the form of Google on the link <https://forms.gle/QVCPpYqkCBvHgy5s8>. Furthermore, the collected data were analyzed and interpreted with the aid of a statistician. Results show that online learning modality carried out during the new normal is very effective with a general weighted mean of 3.58. Slow connectivity of Internet sources remains as one of the factors that hinder the effectiveness of online learning. Moreover, results reveal that there is no significant relationship between the level of effectiveness of online learning and the hindering factors since the p-value of 0.605 is higher than 5% level of significance.

Key Word: Effectiveness, Online Learning, Learning Modality, New Normal

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I. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has become a global health issue denting a major impact to education (Amir et al, 2020). The effects of this pandemic to various sectors around the world cannot be overemphasized. In the Philippines, not only that the government and economic sectors are working hard to find solutions to the problems that are projected to have long-term effects, but likewise the education sector that has experienced unequalled disruptions in modern time schooling at all levels. The traditional way of teaching and learning is transformed to what is now called the “new normal.” Consequently, face-to-face learning has shifted to online learning in order to avoid physical contact and to adhere to the minimum health protocol set by the Government.

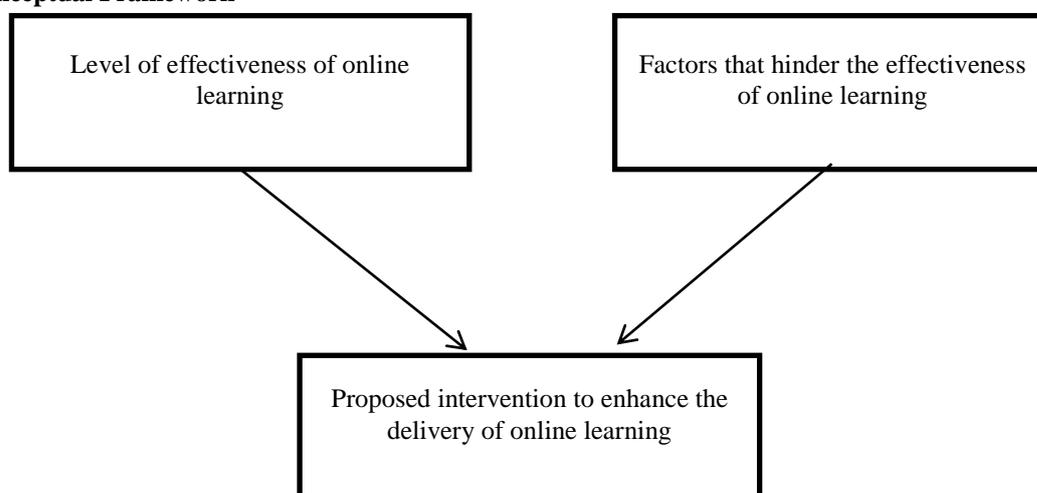
Online courses have become the new normal in the higher education landscape. Dashtestani (2014) argues that online learning can assist students and teachers in their educational practices. Furthermore, due to the increased need for higher education institutions to respond to the needs of students and admit new students, the justifications for including online education are plausible and pertinent. According to Kim et al.,(2005), online courses provide a convenient and flexible approach to learning, and students have the option of studying even when they are working. Thus, making sure that online courses provided through a distance learning approach is imperative as it dictates the course of learning that is made especially more challenging by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The result is that, many institutions of higher learning have adopted distance and online education as the next logical step in educational delivery systems (Sharma and Aggarwal, 2012). However, it is an inevitable circumstance that in the implementation of online learning, both students and teachers are struggling to address the technological demands especially those students living in isolated areas. Thus, as online learning is dominantly implemented in the higher education, this study prompted to determine the level of effectiveness of online learning as a modality in the new normal despite the hindering factors and struggles being experienced by the students. Furthermore, it aims to propose an intervention as to how the higher institutions could contribute in uplifting students’ morale during this time of pandemic.

As online learning remains to be the most convenient way of delivering instruction in the higher education institutions (HEIs) in the new normal, it is of great importance that this learning modality is to be implemented with sufficiency and efficiency. The gaps between the students and teachers upon the delivery of instructions have to be managed and addressed in order to ensure the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process. This research aimed to contribute in terms of educational innovations and strategies on delivering instruction through online platforms. This also attempted to gather students’ perceptions as to how effective the

online learning implementation is in the University. This study further offers facts and ideas on the hindering factors in the effectiveness of online learning that will lead to educational propositions and interventions.

Conceptual Framework



There are two variables involved in this study which are enclosed in the two boxes opposite each other, namely the level of effectiveness of online learning and factors that hinder the effectiveness of online learning. The primary aim of this study is to determine the level of effectiveness of the online learning modalities employed by the teachers in response to the alterations demanded by the pandemic brought about by COVID-19. The online learning modalities fall under the two main categories namely synchronous learning where learning occurs in real time between the teacher and students but virtually, and asynchronous learning where learning occurs at a certain period of time set by the teachers in order to give allowance for the students who have no Internet connection and cannot therefore participate in real time activities and virtual classes. Synchronous learning includes the real-time virtual classes, and asynchronous learning includes modular approach to distance learning. In each of the unique modalities, there are different challenges and factors that affect its 100% effectivity that is aimed to accomplish in this gigantic leap of educational shift. The results in testing the level of effectiveness of the different modalities and the factors affecting its optimum effectiveness shall provide the researchers an insight in order for the systems to be improved through an intervention that may be proposed based on the findings of the study.

II. Methodology

The study utilized the quantitative method of research using a validated online researcher-made survey questionnaire via Google form. Guided with health protocols issued by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) restricting the face-to-face transaction, the respondents accomplished the survey questionnaire via online. Wright (2005) as cited by Vasantha and Harinaraya (2016) revealed that web-based survey tools are efficient for conducting survey researches especially when there is a distance involved in the gathering of data. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, distance learning is employed through different modalities in order to adhere to the minimum health protocols set about by the Department of Health in the quest of minimizing the spread of the virus, if not totally eliminate it. Furthermore, in the digital era that the world is currently in, there is no other more means that is more efficient to utilize in gathering of data for the purpose of research.

The respondents of this study are the officially enrolled students in Surigao del Sur State University-Main Campus. This study used a stratified random sampling procedure that identifies the number of students per College. The respondents are composed of 155 students from the College of Business and Management, 129 from the College of Arts and Sciences students, 50 students from College of Information Technology Education and 39 students from the College of Teacher Education. The total number of respondents is 373.

The researchers distributed the questionnaires via Google form to the respondents as soon as the approval from the Campus Director was gained to immediately collect data that are relevant to answer this investigation. Once the questionnaires were retrieved, the researchers, assisted by the identified research assistant, tabulated and analyzed the data with the aid of the statistician. The significant relationships and differences among the variables were also determined based on the computed data.

The data were carefully treated using Weighted Mean and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Weighted Mean was utilized to treat the responses on the level of effectiveness of online learning as a modality in the new normal and the factors that hinder the effectiveness of the learning modality. Moreover, the

significant relationship between the level of effectiveness of online learning as a modality in the new normal and the hindering factors were treated using Pearson Product- Moment Correlation.

III. Results and Discussion

The level of effectiveness of online learning as a modality in the new normal was determined as to how students perceived its effectivity.

Table no 1: Level of Effectiveness of Online Learning as a Modality in the New Normal

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
Online discussion/lectures	3.37	Very Effective
Delivery of instructions and updates through online platforms	3.62	Very Effective
Integration of online learning tools such as Blackboard, Edmodo, Google Classroom etc. to teaching learning process.	3.57	Very Effective
Distribution of self-learning modules through online	3.61	Very Effective
Video lessons, recordings or other alternative learning delivery modalities	3.48	Very Effective
Conduct of Online regular assessments or quizzes	3.69	Very Effective
Recommended Educational online sites and resources	3.60	Very Effective
Instructor's Immediate feed backing through online	3.56	Very Effective
Communication process between me and instructors through online media	3.55	Very Effective
Submission of learning outputs through online platforms	3.73	Very Effective
Mean	3.58	Very Effective

As reflected on table 1, online learning as a modality in the new normal has been perceived by the respondents as very effective. Submission of learning outputs through online platforms has the highest weighted mean which is 3.73 followed by Conduct of Online regular assessments or quizzes which has a weighted mean of 3.69. While online discussion/lectures has the lowest mean which is 3.37 followed by Video lessons, recording or other alternative learning delivery modalities which has a mean of 3.48. However, both were still perceived very effective. As earlier studies of distance learning concluded that these technologies were not significantly different from regular classroom learning in terms of effectiveness. Policymakers reasoned that if online instruction is no worse than traditional instruction in terms of student outcomes, then online education initiatives could be justified on the basis of cost efficiency or need to provide access to learners in settings where face-to-face instruction is not feasible.

This conformed to the overall findings that revealed that online learning was an effective and efficient system of learning to fulfill the educational needs of learners at distant locations. On the whole, the inferences supported the effectiveness of the online learning system during the COVID-19 Pandemic (Ijaz, et al. 2020). Online learning remains very effective despite the existing challenges and struggles encountered in this new normal education.

Table no 2: Hindering Factors in the Effectiveness of online learning in the New Normal

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
Student's Technology incompetency	3.69	Serious
Unavailability of gadgets to be used for online learning	3.68	Serious
Slow connectivity of internet sources	4.02	Serious
Difficulty to contribute to class discussions in an OL course.	3.68	Serious
Students' sense of disconnectedness to the academic community	3.69	Serious
Students' less motivation towards online learning	3.68	Serious
Inability of Distance Learning services to make students feel socially present and connected to the instructor and other students.	3.61	Serious
Instructors' lack of technical competence	3.27	Somewhat serious
Instructors' attitudes toward students	3.46	Serious
Instructors' late responses to students' queries, concerns, and updates	3.41	Serious
MMean	3.62	Serious

Table 2 shows that the identified factors in the effectiveness of online learning are perceived as serious factors. Slow connectivity of Internet sources has the highest mean of 4.02, followed by students' technology incompetency and their sense of disconnectedness to the academic community which both has 3.69 as a weighted mean. Meanwhile, instructors' lack of competence has the lowest mean of 3.27 followed their late

responses to students' queries, concerns and updates which has a mean of 3.41. Instructors' lack of competence is the factor that least hinders online learning effectiveness.

This relates to the study of Ramil .et al (2020) where three impeding factors namely accessibility, social and academician capability factors were discussed. The descriptive findings determined that the accessibility factor was the main impeding factor towards the effectiveness of online learning. Shivangi (2020) also conducted a research study in order to find out the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of online learning during COVID – 19 pandemic. The study found out that time flexibility was the main advantage of online learning while technical difficulties was the main drawback of online learning. It furthermore concluded that robust IT infrastructure is one of the pre-requisites for online learning. In other words, for effective e-learning to occur even if students are at home, access to the Internet and technological resources should be made available so that they may make connections amongst themselves and the lecturers, irrespective of hindrances faced.

Table no3: Significant Relationship between the level of effectiveness of online learning and the hindering factors by the respondents

Variable Tested	Computed r	p-value	Decision	Conclusion
Level of effectiveness and the hindering factors	-0.187	0.605	Accept Ho	Not significant

As depicted on the table above on the significant relationship between the level of effectiveness and the hindering factors by the respondents, results show that there is no significant relationship since the p-value of 0.605 is higher than 5% level of significance. It means that there is no connection between the two variables being tested. The hindering factors do not affect the level of effectiveness of online learning. The study of Vaibhav G. (2020) which states that there is no significant relationship exists between the online teaching and connectivity issues. This also conforms to the study of Hayashi E, (2020) in which he asserted that there is no significant relationship among the CSE of online learners, their perceived usefulness, confirmation, and satisfaction level. As a moderating factor, computer self-efficacy does not have significant influence on learning outcomes. This supports the finding that there is no significant relationship of the perceived effectiveness of online learning and the hindering factors, which means that online learning continues to manifest effectiveness despite the presence of the hindering factors. Despite the persistence of influencing factors that put the effectiveness of online learning at stake, its effectiveness continues to thrive provided that other guaranteeing factors for its success are present.

IV. Conclusion

Online learning as a modality in the new normal is perceived as very effective by the students. Despite the existing factors that hinder the effectiveness of online learning, the learning modality remains as the most convenient and efficient way of delivering instructions in the higher education. The effectiveness of online learning and the factors hindering its effectiveness have no significant relationship. Meaning, the hindering factors do not affect the level of effectiveness of online learning. Thus, online learning continues to manifest effectiveness despite the challenges. Still, the roles of government, University and telecommunication firms are important to reduce the issues of internet access, internet data cost and lack of technology devices. Consequently, the students' motivation and performance during online learning can be enhanced (Ramil, .et al, 2020).

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