#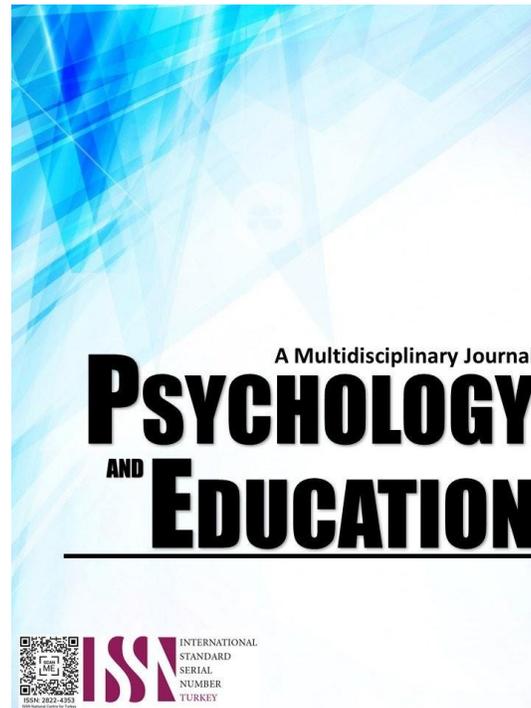 BEYOND THE SCREEN: THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL SCIENCES STUDENTS IN DISTANCE LEARNING AT WESTERN PHILIPPINES UNIVERSITY

Beyond the Screen: The Lived Experiences of Social Sciences Students in Distance Learning at Western Philippines University

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Abstract

This study explored the lived experiences of Social Sciences students at Western Philippines University regarding the implementation of the Distance Learning Modality (DLM). Using purposive sampling, ten participants were selected. Data were collected through reflective descriptions and analyzed following Creswell's data analytical framework. The findings revealed that most participants were female, equally distributed across year levels, with half identifying as Cuyunén. Seventy percent belonged to families earning below PHP 10,000 monthly. In terms of resources, all participants owned cellphones, 90% had computers/laptops, 40% had televisions, 80% had books, and 30% had radios. Internet access was limited, with 30% using pocket Wi-Fi/broadband and 20% having a PLDT subscription. Key challenges identified in the implementation of DLM included poor or no internet connectivity, financial and time management difficulties, inadequate instructional support from teachers, reduced self-motivation, compromised quality of education, and insufficient assessment mechanisms. Additionally, the critical role of teachers in this modality was emphasized. On the other hand, participants highlighted several benefits of DLM, such as cost-efficiency, enhanced self-reliance, resourcefulness, multitasking abilities, digital and communication literacy, quality time with family, and long-term personal growth. It is recommended that Western Philippines University develop a robust Learning Management System and scalable technologies, alongside training and pedagogical programs for teachers. Establishing round-the-clock virtual support and counseling services is also advised to address students' needs effectively.

Keywords: *lived experiences, social sciences' students, distance learning modality, distance learning modality framework*

Introduction

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has significantly disrupted societies worldwide, with the educational sector among the most profoundly affected. From December 2019 to April 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported over 100 million confirmed COVID-19 cases and more than three million deaths globally. In the Philippines alone, infections surpassed 900,000, with over 16,000 fatalities during this period. The escalating health crisis compelled educational institutions across the country to shift from traditional face-to-face instruction to remote, online, blended, and flexible learning modalities—collectively known as the "new normal" in education. This sudden transition reshaped learning spaces and challenged both educators and students to adapt to alternative instructional methods.

Recognizing education as essential for preparing individuals for future careers, the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) emphasized that learning must continue despite the pandemic. To ensure continuity, DepEd adopted distance learning approaches incorporating technology-based solutions such as online/offline platforms, printed modules, and broadcast media (ChildHope, 2021). These modalities aimed to provide flexible learning opportunities while accommodating the diverse needs and learning styles of students.

Distance learning has been recognized for its potential to deliver education across time and space, leveraging web-based platforms and evolving technologies (Bilgiç & Tüzün, 2015). Its benefits include accessibility, cost-efficiency, and capacity for skill development, making it a viable alternative to traditional education (Moore & Kearsley, 2012). However, its implementation is not without challenges. Ozudogru (2021) highlighted two key barriers to technological integration: first-order barriers, such as limited access to equipment, connectivity, and technical support, and second-order barriers, which pertain to pedagogical beliefs and preferences. These obstacles, coupled with varying levels of internet infrastructure and socioeconomic conditions, pose significant hurdles for educators and learners alike.

In response to the pandemic, the concept of Emergency Remote Education (ERE) emerged as a temporary yet necessary measure to ensure the continuity of instruction. Unlike traditional distance education, ERE focuses on rapidly adapting instructional delivery to meet immediate needs during crises (Hodges et al., 2020). ERE utilizes a range of technologies to support blended learning and enable education practitioners to provide instructional support under exceptional circumstances (Bozkurt et al., 2020). The World Bank (2020) further emphasized the importance of preparedness in adopting flexible and effective learning delivery methods to sustain student engagement and learning quality during disruptions.

Despite these efforts, the transition to distance learning has posed considerable challenges for Filipino university students. Studies indicate that reduced contact hours, limited teacher consultations, and difficulties in assessing authentic learning outcomes have adversely affected academic performance (Sintema, 2020). Socioeconomic disparities, limited access to digital tools, and the lack of

standardized evaluation criteria further exacerbate the situation (Santos, 2020). Additionally, students' expectations regarding post-graduation labor market prospects have been significantly impacted by the crisis (Aucejo et al., 2020).

For social sciences students, the challenges of distance learning are particularly significant. Social sciences play a critical role in fostering social awareness, promoting historical understanding, and addressing societal and psychological challenges. Social sciences students are future educators and advocates who will nurture critical thinking and empathy in younger generations, equipping them to confront real-world issues. Understanding their experiences and challenges during the pandemic is, therefore, vital to improving the delivery of quality education in the new normal.

This study aims to explore and amplify the voices and lived experiences of social sciences students at Western Philippines University under the distance learning modality. By shedding light on the challenges, benefits, and lessons learned during this educational shift, the study endeavors to inform institutional policies and practices. Ultimately, it seeks to provide relevant insights that will help educational authorities develop more responsive, inclusive, and effective strategies for distance learning, particularly within the context of developing countries like the Philippines.

Research Questions

This study was conducted to describe the lived experiences of Social Sciences Students on Distance Learning Modality at Western Philippines University. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. How may the lived experiences of students in distance learning modality at Western Philippines University be reflectively described?
2. What meanings may be drawn from their lived experiences?
3. What insights may be derived from the study?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what distance learning modality framework may be proposed to enhance the distance learning modality of students at Western Philippines University?

Literature Review

Emergencies have forced the closure of educational facilities. The COVID-19 pandemic is a biological emergency, and as such, education should emphasize social distancing as a means of maintaining personal space and preventing the spread of illness (Stage, et al., 2020). According to Vinner et al. (2020), youth are considered to be significant carriers of transmission. As in the case of COVID-19, experts have claimed that a review of previous studies on severe acute respiratory syndrome indicates that youth were the primary source of the infectious virus's human propagation (Gog et al., 2014; Vinner et al., 2020).

Community efforts, such as closing schools and other vulnerable establishments, can, as of this writing, reduce the pandemic breakout, ease pressure on the healthcare systems, and buy enough time for vaccinations to be produced sufficiently (CDC, 2020). Prior to March 6, 2020, China provided statistical evidence regarding the efficacy of social distance in containing the COVID-19 pandemic (WHO, 2020).

Status of Distance Learning Modality

There are three workable approaches to putting emergency remote instruction into practice. Prior to implementing remote learning, it is imperative that teaching tactics and approaches take into account several factors and scenarios, including target group, age range, technological and social infrastructure, and economic status. Second, since remote teaching entails more than just uploading instructional materials, the terminology used should be chosen carefully and intentionally. In the long term, distance learning will be useless if the incorrect definitions are used. Third, pay attention to how you're feeling (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020). According to Bozkurt et al. (2020), the majority of students lack the tools or even the digital literacy necessary to download and run the programs required for blended remote learning.

There are still gaps and difficulties in HEIs' replies, even with the advancements they have achieved in the Philippines regarding alternate modalities of learning and technological tools for delivering education. According to Joaquin et al. (2020), their study suggests that policy responses and learning innovations should be based on a more thorough comprehension of remote education and should be responsive to the needs of the moment. From the standpoint of the teacher, many of the initiatives implemented by higher education institutions (HEIs) to provide education in this pandemic circumstance have not been very successful. Instructors encountered a variety of challenges when teaching online, including inadequate technology, family emergencies, inadequate training, unclear instructions, and a lack of technical expertise (Joshi et al., 2020).

Accessibility is the component that prevents learning from being delivered effectively on a digital platform, out of the three characteristics that hinder it: social media, academic capacity, and accessibility. Therefore, colleges have a responsibility to reduce and secure digital issues such as internet access and technology use (Majid et al., 2020).

Zhao and Daniel (2020) suggest that resolving the issues faced by HEIs and teachers is a prerequisite for successful online teaching and learning. It is crucial to comprehend and take into account the future roadmap for online teaching and learning. Higher education

institutions must reevaluate their current curricula and methods and create new ones that can be taught online. It will support the establishments in handling a crisis.   The University Grant Commission established rules that mandate that professors use blended learning and flipped classrooms to teach 25% of the curriculum online in order to meet minimal standards for quality instruction (Mishra, 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020).   Therefore, a diligent and committed technical department that can assist, support, and train teachers should be present in all state universities and colleges.

Research conducted in South Africa has demonstrated the importance of both public and private sector funding for education (Makgahlela et al., 2021). For instance, Kosovo faces difficulties with teacher socioemotional support and rural access to electronics and the Internet. The Dutch government has taken steps to provide families without access to digital technologies, computers, and Wi-Fi (Shqipe, 2020). In accordance with a major impact strategy, useful examples of ways that educators can assist students in times of crisis have been provided as alternative, instructive, and enlightening activities (Edukacia, 2020). It can be difficult for teachers to meet the needs of every student, especially those with special education needs. Teachers must choose and modify suitable solutions that meet the needs of their pupils despite any inherent obstacles (Frumos, 2021).

Polish experts claim that in addition to requiring universal and equal access to tools and a sufficient level of digital competency, remote learning also necessitates a different approach to working with students because teachers are frequently not psychologically prepared regarding social competence (Czaplinski et al., 2020).

For the previous few years, students' academic achievement in social studies has been subpar. The absence of teaching resources, the attitudes of the pupils toward the subject, and the differences in the teachers have all been held accountable. The study aimed to ascertain whether students' sociocultural variety was a factor in their poor social studies performance. It investigated the effects of students' sociocultural variety on their academic performance in social studies in the Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. According to the results, the academic performance of Social Studies pupils in the Calabar Education Zone is greatly influenced by social and cultural variety. To ensure that every student benefits from the lesson, it was suggested that teachers take into account the sociocultural diversity of their students (Cornelius-Ukpepi et al., 2019).

The Impact and Benefits of Distance Learning

Modern learning spaces make the most of new technologies to enhance interactive and captivating lessons. Teachers are already seeing the advantages of remote learning and figuring out how to include it in their curricula. One benefit of the distant learning modality is that students may learn how to use these resources independently and can keep track of assignments, tests, and projects by simply checking their phones. This means that there is no need to forget homework. Decreased Social Anxiety: With online learning or virtual classrooms, kids may be able to feel more confident in their social interactions and do better academically. Roughly 15 million Americans suffer from social anxiety disorder, or SAD. Flexible Scheduling Options: Compared to traditional classroom settings, distance learning provides greater scheduling freedom.   Virtual classes may make it easier for students to manage their time between work and school. Children can stay at home when sick without missing too many lessons thanks to remote learning, which helps them stay healthy and keep others safe. Accessibility for All: By including distance learning in your educational program, you give students who are unable to attend in-person classes new opportunities. This minimizes missed lectures, improves learning, and lets students learn where they feel most comfortable. With self-paced learning, students can become more involved in the subject matter without having to deal with extra peer pressure. Additionally, students can advance by reviewing the content as often as necessary (Vibe Team, 2021).

According to a different study, there are several reasons why pupils' comprehension has increased as opposed to when they were taught using a traditional methodology. The first component of a blended learning method that contributes to student success is the deliberate purpose that is assigned to each learning task. When learning objectives are well-defined, student learning is enhanced. An intentional design of each exercise also helps teachers understand what they are teaching more clearly. Teachers who are well-versed in their subject matter are more equipped to evaluate what their students know and don't know, as well as how best to apply their important information to benefit their students.

A study revealed a strong relationship between learning satisfaction and the following: self-directed learning, course experience, deep learning strategy, and surface learning approach. Furthermore, the relationship between learning satisfaction and both the course experience and the self-directed learning experience was mediated by the learning techniques (Hua et al., 2023). Furthermore, the findings showed that practical conflicts and complementary benefits in blended learning affected students' flow experiences while studying. Flow experience is crucial to blended learning and has a favorable impact on students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement. Students' efficacious learning was positively enhanced by learning engagement. Tang et al. (2023) found that there was a positive moderating influence of self-efficacy on the link between students' learning engagement and learning effectiveness in blended instruction. Furthermore, research has shown that education can successfully raise students' learning motivation, self-efficacy, critical thinking skills, and learning satisfaction in addition to their academic achievement (Sáiz-Manzanares et al., 2020). In the meanwhile, educators struggled to integrate learning support needs and assistive technology into the lesson plan, and they ran into problems when utilizing a specific learning environment, implementing interactive activities, and keeping track of their student's progress. Additionally, the teachers' most prominent teaching experiences included building strong relationships, establishing student development objectives, choosing educational resources, letting students work at their own pace, and encouraging knowledge transfer

(Fernandez, 2023). Additionally, both teachers and students may find the teaching-learning process more engaging when technology is used. As a result, it gives the topic life. Additionally, it energizes the students and encourages their involvement in the conversation (Bobila & Daing, 2022).

According to a study, most faculty members know their responsibilities in a blended learning setting. It was discovered that independent of time or location, blended learning lessens the delivery of teaching and learning access (Aldosemani et al., 2018). The results showed that academic staff members had a favorable opinion of blended learning's capacity to be affordable in a teaching and learning environment. It highlights the idea of blended learning by providing access to course materials at any time or location. It suggests that people place a high value on their privacy and ease of access to educational materials According to Aldosemani et al. (2018), the report mentioned above asserts that ICT is not limited to its ability to deliver high-quality data; rather, it also provides a platform for the use of a variety of instructional tools that are important for distance learning, such as in the case of blended learning (Rivera, 2017; Smith & Hill, 2018; Vaughan, Reali, Stenbom, Van Vuuren, & MacDonald, 2017). The findings demonstrated that, as most teachers have indicated, collaborative planning offers chances to improve and advance teachers' instruction in a blended learning setting. Incorporating instructional activities into a larger teaching strategy rather than a number of separate learning tasks helps teachers guarantee that learning objectives, learning contents, and learning activities are aligned. As a result, the method tends to be more holistic. It sets itself apart and provides personalization towards attaining the intended learning outcome (Arnesen et al., 2019).

Challenges on Distance Learning Modality

The majority of the impacted nations imposed the stay-at-home policy during the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak, which forced employees across numerous industries to continue working from home. Colleges, universities, and schools are using online learning to carry out instructional tasks. For a long time, traditional education was supplemented with online learning. However, throughout this crisis, educational establishments completely moved their curricula online. This shift comes with a lot of difficulties, which forces us to reconsider how much money should be spent on education and prioritize online learning. It's also time to update the risk policies and take biological threats into account as one of the potential hazards impeding normal education (Hodges et al., 2020).

The primary issues that come up are students' difficulties with independent study, parents' ignorance of how to properly mentor their child or children academically, and the absence of school money for the creation and delivery of modules. The study concluded that communication, preparation, and resources are the biggest obstacles for learners (Dangle & Sumaoang, 2020). The online evaluation presented a number of challenges for the students, including browser incompatibility, tracking tool anxiety, an unreliable internet connection, power outages, environmental distractions, and unidentified accessibility issues. They recommended that school administrators take the application's complexity into account when choosing it to be used for online assessments, but not at the expense of the program's ability to maintain the integrity of the assessments. Furthermore, in light of the application that was chosen, educators ought to plan alternate solutions in case the study's findings—which are inevitable—come to pass. Finally, it is suggested that courses include a test orientation and give students a test handbook in order to help them through the online assessment (Cahapay, 2021). The child's family and community history was examined, as well as the diversity of language, culture, and religion—factors that impede the teaching and learning of social studies. It is imperative that school curricula conceptually incorporate multicultural education. Teachers of social studies should address a variety of cultural and religious subjects impartially, and they should treat such delicate subjects with objectivity and impartiality. Furthermore, cultural laws need to be truthful when elucidating to kids whether or not student performance and accomplishment in social studies have improved (Njok, Cletus, & Edinyang, 2014). Therefore, teachers should use a multicultural approach in the classroom, especially in light of the current pandemic. The pandemic has made it necessary to reshape evaluation processes. Various contexts must be used persuasively in order to better understand the appropriate reasons for adjustments (Cahapay, 2020). Students have also reported that studying with this method is difficult for them regarding self-discipline, lack of touch, availability to resources, and high-quality education. Furthermore, there are still certain obstacles to be addressed, including those related to time, money, technology, and the educational experience (Cooke, 2021). Additionally, a potential substitute is provided by having students get teaching via both computer-based and in-person methods. The thought of altering the basic structure and operation of a classroom might be intimidating for a teacher. A complete overhaul of the classroom is needed. issues such developing student authentic mastery, maintaining teacher authenticity, and designing an efficient self-paced learning environment (Farah & Barnett, 2019).

Even while remote learning has numerous benefits, there may be some areas where students find it difficult. They can better equip themselves to take advantage of remote learning in the digital age by being aware of these potential dangers. Students who learn remotely may face a variety of difficulties, including the need for strong self-motivation, the need to exercise self-control and responsibility, and the need to persevere through difficult material or periods of low motivation. Since most learning is done online and there may be minimal opportunity for in-person interaction, the distance learning modality may impede students' development of communication skills. This can make it challenging for younger children or those who have communication difficulties to continue honing those skills. Another factor could be a lack of practical experience. Videos are a great way to learn a lot of things, but some abilities need to be practiced in order to be learned correctly. Simulators cannot take the place of actual practice. Additionally, examinations are the most efficient means of evaluating students (The Problem of User Identification). Even though the majority of credits are awarded for honesty, virtual proctors or additional monitoring during test times are the only ways to confirm that the material has been retained (Vibe Team, 2021).

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a phenomenological research design that explores the essence of a phenomenon as experienced by individuals (Creswell, 2018). It uncovers shared experiences to develop a deeper, universal understanding through in-depth interviews and supplementary data like records or observations. For this study, the phenomenological design is suitable as it captures students' lived experiences in remote learning environments without interpretative layers. This method offers rich, first-person insights into the challenges and perceptions of Western Philippines University's social science students, helping to inform strategies for improving remote learning practices.

Participants

This study selected ten Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Social Studies students (1 male and 9 female) from the third and fourth were the participants of this study. Participants varied by ethnicity (Cuyunén 50%, Palaw'an 20%, others 30%), socio-economic status (70% earning below ₱10,000 monthly), and access to learning resources. All owned cellphones; 90% had laptops, 40% had televisions, and 30% had radios or pocket Wi-Fi. The following were the criteria in choosing the participants: official enrollment, access to learning materials, and recognition by coordinators for sharing meaningful experiences.

Procedure

Immediately after granting the permission to conduct the study, data gathering commenced. Necessary permission was obtained from the president of Western Philippines University before the study was conducted. Upon approval of the request, the researcher administered the interview through the use of Google Forms and Google Meeting for the third-year and fourth-year social studies students whom the Social Studies Coordinator of the WPU College of Education has chosen. For those who did not have a regular internet connection or those who did not have an available internet connection, the actual and personal interview was applied.

Data Analysis

The approach used in the study is phenomenological in nature. A phenomenological research methodology is categorized into two methods – the descriptive and the interpretative phenomenological research methods.

A descriptive phenomenological approach aims to unfold and understand the most essential meaning of the phenomenon of interest from those directly involved in the said phenomenon due to little knowledge about it (Giorgi, 1997), while an interpretative phenomenological approach aims to explore in detail how participants make sense of their personal and social world focusing on their subjective lived experiences by examining them one by one prior to more general claims (Love et al., 2020). The distinguishing mark between the two methods is that the interpretative phenomenological analysis is not formally theory-based nor concept-based in generating general observations.

The researcher made use of the descriptive phenomenological research method and followed the steps below in order to systematically interpret the qualitative data gathered from the study: (1) The researcher validated the raw data (transcripts or fieldnotes coming from the Key Informant Interview) by organizing all data for analysis; (2) Reading all through data followed before coding them into themes or descriptions to find their interrelation; and (3) Finally, the interpretation of the meaning of themes or descriptions was conducted to come up with the lived experiences of the respondents on the said phenomenon. The analysis of qualitative data was based on Creswell's data analytical framework.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the reflective descriptions and meanings of the participants' lived experiences on distance learning modality.

Table 1. *Participants' views about distance learning modality*

Participant	Coding of Themes (Significant Statements)	Thematic Reflections (Synthesizing the Themes into a Description of Experiences)
1	Distance learning modality becomes one of the alternative learning tool for the students during the pandemic COVID-19, and I experienced how challenging it is. It becomes very helpful especially that during those time of pandemic where everyone is not allowed to go out. If was helpful, yes! But we cannot fully say that student has learned a lot from it, especially that they use modular tool; we know how technology works nowadays, its easy to manipulate answers using different social networking sites.	An Alternative Modality
2	In my opinion, distance learning modality is a great thing that happen especially during the pandemic. Though, the curriculum of the Philippines is not ready for this kind of learning modalities, there are a lot of adjustments and changes just to cope with the situation. Nowadays, some schools still using distance learning modality because it was already included in our curriculum, also to practice is just in case there would be another pandemic.	A must-have Modality

3	Base on my experiences distance learning modality is a bit challenging, most especially if you had no gadget that can be use. Because distance learning modality is one of the type of learning where you don't need to go to school physically, because you can acquired the knowledge that you needed through books of modules that sent by the teacher/instructor.	Module-based Modality
4	Para sa akin mayroong advantage and disadvantage ang distance learning modality dahil due to pandemic maraming estudyante ang nahirapan at nag-adjust para sa distance at online learning. Bukod pa roon iba ang learning o natutunan ng bata pagface to face kesa online class. Dahil nga po sa pandemic parang hindi masyadong effective ang tinuturo ng teacher bukod pa roon naging meron itong negatibong impact para sa mga estudyanteng hindi kayang maprovide ang gadget.	A Challenging Modality
5	Ang aking pananaw sa distance learning modality ay isang uri ng makabagong pagtuturo na kung saan ay ginagamitan ng ibat-ibang makabagong teknolohiya. Sa paggamit ng distance learning ay mas nagiging madali at mabilis ang proseso ng pagbibigay ng impormasyon at nagiging mas magaling ang mga guro at mag-aaral sa bawat larangan ng edukasyon. Ang distance learning modality ay mainam na pamalit sa face-to-face classes lalot higit nung kasagsagan ng pandemic na kung saan kahit malayo o mahirap ang personal na interaksyon ay patuloy ang pagtuturo at pagkatoto ng mga mag-aaral.	New Learning Platform
6	To be honest po, distance learning modality ay napakahirap dahil nga minsan kung halimbawa nalang may mga di ka nagegets na lessons is di ka makaka-communicate ng maayos sa mga kaklase or professors dahol nga na rin sa walang signal sa barangay namin at isa sa dahilan na rin is walang kuryente, kumbaga ang hirap kapag nag-shutdown na ang celphone dahil di na alam kung saan pweding mag-charge.	A Challenging Modality
7	To be honest, it's really hard and diffucult at the same time you can't communicate immediately with your teacher, if may kailangan kang itanong hindi mo agad malalaman ang sagot na gusto mo para sa iyong tanong kung baga limited lang ang learning na mayroon ka. Katulad na lamang sa politics when having that topic in online ang hirap intindihin but when we that in face-to-face class ang dami naming nalaman.	A Challenging Modality
8	I think distance learning is not great for me. As I describe my views, in my opinion hindi sya for me, since gusto ko na laging makipag socialize, makipag usap at makipag argument sa mga topic. Mas okay na nakikinig sila kesa malayo at may ginagamit na module.	Learner-unfriendly Modality
9	For me po, distance learning modality ay hindi po gaanong maganda when it comes to teaching students, especially those students na walang phones, laptop and kahit anong gadgets to use when it comes to pag-aaral. In addition, distance learning modality ay hindi po masyadong effective because of the slow internet connection here in Philippines.	A Challenging Modality
10	Distance learning modality for me ay talagang nakatulong para magcontinue ang learning process ng mga mag-aaral nakatulong siya para maminimize ang contact transactions amidst the pandemic. We all know that pandemic ay hindi biro at talagang maraming tao ang nasawi dahil sa sakit na ito. But becuase of the program of DepEd and CHED ay kahit papaano ay nakatulong siya pero mayroon ding factors na naidulot ito sa mag-aaral, marami sa aking mga kakilala ay huminto dahil hindi ito kinaya, marami ang dumaan sa emotional distress n nagresulta ng pagtigil, pagrop ng subjects. I am a product of pandemi, isa ako sa nakaexperience ng distance learning modality na kung saan nakaranas ng hirap na habulin ang deadlines, para hindi na rin matambakan. Pero amidst that experiences, nakakatuwa dahil who can imagine na nandito na ako doing my teaching internship, collaborating with other teachers.	A Challenging Modality

As shown in Table 1, the participants have varied views about Distance Learning Modality. Sixty (60) percent of them described Distance Learning Modality as a Challenging Modality as evidenced in their transcriptions as follows:

"Para sa akin mayroong advantage and disadvantage ang distance learning modality dahil due to pandemic maraming estudyante ang nahirapan at nag-adjust para sa distance at online learning. Bukod pa roon iba ang learning o natutunan ng bata pagface to face kesa online class. Dahil nga po sa pandemic parang hindi masyadong effective ang tinuturo ng teacher bukod pa roon naging meron itong negatibong impact para sa mga estudyanteng hindi kayang maprovide ang gadget."

"To be honest po, distance learning modality ay napakahirap dahil nga minsan kung halimbawa nalang may mga di ka nagegets na lessons is di ka makaka-communicate ng maayos sa mga kaklase or professors dahol nga na rin sa walang signal sa barangay namin at isa sa dahilan na rin is walang kuryente, kumbaga ang hirap kapag nag-shutdown na ang celphone dahil di na alam kung saan pweding mag-charge."

"To be honest, it's really hard and diffucult at the same time you can't communicate immediately with your teacher, if may kailangan kang itanong hindi mo agad malalaman ang sagot na gusto mo para sa iyong tanong kung baga limited lang ang learning na mayroon ka. Katulad na lamang sa politics when having that topic in online ang hirap intindihin but when we that in face-to-face class ang dami naming nalaman."

"For me po, distance learning modality ay hindi po gaanong maganda when it comes to teaching students, especially those students na walang phones, laptop and kahit anong gadgets to use when it comes to pag-aaral. In addition, distance learning modality ay hindi po masyadong effective because of the slow internet connection here in Philippines." and

"Distance learning modality for me ay talagang nakatulong para magcontinue ang learning process ng mga mag-aaral nakatulong siya para maminimize ang contact transactions amidst the pandemic. We all know that pandemic ay hindi biro at talagang maraming tao ang nasawi dahil sa sakit na ito. But becuase of the program of DepEd and CHED ay kahit papaano ay nakatulong siya pero mayroon ding factors na naidulot ito sa mag-aaral, marami sa aking mga kakilala ay huminto dahil hindi ito kinaya, marami ang dumaan sa emotional distress n nagresulta ng pagtigil, pagrop ng subjects. I am a product of pandemi, isa ako sa nakaexperience ng distance learning modality na kung saan nakaranas ng hirap na habulin ang deadlines, para hindi na rin matambakan. Pero amidst that experiences, nakakatuwa dahil who can imagine na nandito na ako doing my teaching internship, collaborating with other teachers."

Meanwhile, the remaining participants viewed Distance Learning Modality to be an alternative modality, a must-have modality, module-based modality, a new learning platform and learner-unfriendly modality respectively as they say:

"Distance learning modality becomes one of the alternative learning tool for the students during the pandemic COVID-19, and I experienced how challenging it is. It becomes very helpful especially that during those time of pandemic where everyone is not allowed to go out. If was helpful, yes! But we cannot fully say that student has learned a lot from it, especially that they use modular tool; we know how technology works nowadays, its easy to manipulate answers using different social networking sites."

"In my opinion, distance learning modality is a great thing that happen especially during the pandemic. Though, the curriculum of the Philippines is not ready for this kind of learning modalities, there are a lot of adjustments and changes just to cope with the situation. Nowadays, some schools still using distance learning modality because it was already included in our curriculum, also to practice is just in case there would be another pandemic"

"Base on my experiences distance learning modality is a bit challenging, most especially if you had no gadget that can be use. Because distance learning modality is one of the type of learning where you don't need to go to school physically, because you can acquired the knowledge that you needed through books of modules that sent by the teacher/instructor.

"Ang aking pananaw sa distance learning modality ay isang uri ng makabagong pagtuturo na kung saan ay ginagamitan ng ibat-ibang makabagong teknolohiya. Sa paggamit ng distance learning ay mas nagiging madali at mabilis ang proseso ng pagbibigay ng impormasyon at nagiging mas magaling ang mga guro at mag-aaral sa bawat larangan ng edukasyon. Ang distance learning modality ay mainam na pamalit sa face-to-face classes lalot higit nung kasagsagan ng pandemic na kung saan kahit malayo o mahirap ang personal na interaksyon ay patuloy ang pagtuturo at pagkatoto ng mga mag-aaral". and

"I think distance learning is not great for me. As I describe my views, in my opinion hindi sya for me, since gusto ko na laging makipag socialize, makipag usap at makipag argument sa mga topic. Mas okay na nakikinig sila kesa malayo at may ginagamit na module."

The common emerging themes in terms of their views on Distance Learning Modality are challenging modality, alternative modality, a must-have modality, module-based modality, a new learning platform and learner-unfriendly modality.

Table 2. *Participants' description of implementation of distance learning modality at Western Philippines University*

Participant	Coding of Themes (Significant Statements)	Thematic Reflections (Synthesizing the Themes into a Description of Experiences)
1	The implementation of distance learning modality at Western Philippines University is very challenging. I know it was implemented just because of pandemic in able for the students to still continue in pursuing their degree. It was challenging because we face a lot of problems especially about the technology tools like the lack of computers, cellphones to use during the learning process. And also, the lack of network connection that makes it hard for the students to focus.	Technologically-challenging
2	The implementation of distance learning modality at Westcrn Philippines University is nice and organized because they're using various online applications like Google Classroom, Messenger, Facebook, Google meet and more. Those application help us to continue our studies despite of Covid 19 and big thanks to my alma matter for introducing it to us.	Multi-platform Modality
3	Personally, I am grateful in Western Philippines University in their implementation of distance learning modality, because even the teachers are not physically present still the presence of teaching is still there. Western Philippines University truly give their quality education behind the distance learning modality.	Quality Education-compliant
4	Though online class maganda naman naimplement ng WPU dahil on time at nasa schedule na nasusunod ng mga teacher at patuloy naprovide ng learning ng mga teacher sa mga bata, kahit na may pandemic hindi ito naging hadlang sa edukasyon ng mga bata at patuloy pa din na proprovide ang highly competence of education.	Quality Education-compliant
5	Based on my own experience, nung panahon ng pandemic bilang isang mag-aaral sa	Technologically-challenging

	wpu, ay minsan may magandang dulot ito ngunit may hindi rin especially danil malayo kami sa university madalas ay nahihirapan akong isend ang aking mga module sapagkat mahina ang internet connection. Ngunit may magandaug dulot din ang distance learning modality sapagkat malaya ang mga estudyante na gumawa ng kanlang mga modules or schoolworks. Kung sa pagtuturo naman ang titingnan para sa akin, madalas ay nahihirapan akong gumawa ng mga modules sagagkat minsan ay kulang sa gabay ng aming mga guro.	
6	To be honest po, ang implementation ng distance learning modality at Western Philippine University is mahirap po lalo na kapag walang signal dahil nga sa online enrollment mabagal ang proseso at minsan pa nagloloko ang link or something isa pa sa dahilan is kapag mau pinapasa or kapag deadline na ng mga activities is nalalate dahil kailangan pang maghanap ng lugar kung saan mayroong signal. At isa pa rin dito is kapag nagkaklase gamit ang giogle meet or zoom	Technologically-challenging
7	I could say both positive and negative. Since we are the product of pandemic, ang hirap makipagsabayan sa ganitong systema, but later on naadopt rin namin. I would go for negative. To be honest, makakatanggap ka nalang ng grade na hindi mo inaasahan, like magkakaroon ka ng final grades kahit wala ka pa nakapag-exam for midterm and final. Hindi rin nila nakikita ang totoong performance mo kasi nga online	Assessment-deficient modality
8	At some point, goods naman siya dati kasi nga may pandemic pero gaya nga ng sabi ko hindi okey for me yomung distance learning. Maganda yung pag-implement nila since maraming teachers yung palaging nag-uupdate sa amin and hindi nila pinapabayaan yung mga students.	Fully-implemented Modality
9	To be honest po, hindi po ganon kaganda and mahirap po talaga. Whent it comes to online enrollment their implementation ay hindi po ganoon kaganda ang daloy. But pagdating po sa online class, minsan po hindi ganoon kadaling pumasok sa zoom and google meet becuase of slow internet connection, with this, the teachers is not be able to discuss the important details and informations of the subjects. So ang ending, self-study. In our time during pandemic, there are subject na importante sanang maintimdihan namin kasi isa iyon sa mga pre-requisite sa aming field study.	Self-reliant Modality
10	WPU uses 2 types of distance learning modality; (1) Online distance learning at (modular) but in my experience I only experience online distance learning. A lot of tasks na linggo-linggo sinesend sa amin kapag malate ay automatically magkakaroon kami ng IP grades or In Progress. Sobrang hirap noong mga panahong pandemic bilang estudyante. Confuse din ako before sa mga grades na natatanggap namin dahil napakakababa ng nagtatanggap namin pero kung implementation ay talagang smooth ang lahat and organize dahil gumagamit kami ng google classroom at messenger ang problema lang kapag hindi ka online at nasasaktuhan lang na hindi ka online ay automatically absent na.	Multi-platform Modality

The participants described the implementation of Distance Learning Modality at Western Philippines University to be technologically challenging and assessment deficient modality as they say:

"The implementation of distance learning modality at Western Philippines University is very challenging. I know it was implemented just because of pandemic in able for the students to still continue in pursuing their degree. It was challenging because we face a lot of problems especially about the technology tools like the lack of computers, cellphones to use during the learning process. And also, the lack of network connection that makes it hard for the students to focus."

"Based on my own experience, nung panahon ng pandemic bilang isang mag-aaral sa wpu, ay minsan may magandang dulot ito ngunit may hindi rin especially danil malayo kami sa university madalas ay nahihirapan akong isend ang aking mga module sapagkat mahina ang internet connection. Ngunit may magandaug dulot din ang distance learning modality sapagkat malaya ang mga estudyante na gumawa ng kanlang mga modules or schoolworks. Kung sa pagtuturo naman ang titingnan para sa akin, madalas ay nahihirapan akong gumawa ng mga modules sagagkat minsan ay kulang sa gabay ng aming mga guro."

"To be honest po, ang implementation ng distance learning modality at Western Philippine University is mahirap po lalo na kapag walang signal dahil nga sa online enrollment mabagal ang proseso at minsan pa nagloloko ang link or something isa pa sa dahilan is kapag mau pinapasa or kapag deadline na ng mga activities is nalalate dahil kailangan pang maghanap ng lugar kung saan mayroong signal. At isa pa rin dito is kapag nagkaklase gamit ang giogle meet or zoom." and

"I could say both positive and negative. Since we are the product of pandemic, ang hirap makipagsabayan sa ganitong systema, but later on naadopt rin namin. I would go for negative. To be honest, makakatanggap ka nalang ng grade na hindi mo inaasahan, like magkakaroon ka ng final grades kahit wala ka pa nakapag-exam for midterm and final. Hindi rin nila nakikita ang totoong performance mo kasi nga online."

Meanwhile, other participants viewed its implementaion as multi-platform and self-reliant modality as they narrate:

"The implementation of distance learning modality at Westcrn Philippines University is nice and organized because they're using various online applications like Google Classroom, Messenger, Facebook, Google meet and more. Those application help us to continue our studies despite of Covid 19 and big thanks to my alma matter for introducing it to us." and

"To be honest po, hindi po ganon kaganda and mahirap po talaga. Whent it comes to online enrollment their implementation ay hindi po ganoon kaganda ang daloy. But pagdating po sa online class, minsan po hindi ganoon kadaling pumasok sa zoom and google meet becuase of slow internet connection, with this, the teachers is not be able to discuss the important details and informations of the subjects. So ang ending, self-study. In our time during pandemic, there are subject na importante sanang maintimdihan namin kasi isa iyon sa mga pre-requisite sa aming field study."

Despite all these views, the participants positively described its implementation to be quality education-compliant and fully implemented as they say:

"Personally, I am grateful in Western Philippines University in their implementation of distance learning modality, because even the teachers are not physically present still the presence of teaching is still there. Western Philippines University truly give their quality education behind the distance learning modality."

"Though online class maganda naman naimplement ng WPU dahil on time at nasa schedule na nasusunod ng mga teacher at patuloy naproprovide ng learning ng mga teacher sa mga bata, kahit na may pandemic hindi ito naging hadlang sa edukasyon ng mga bata at patuloy pa din na proprovide ang highly competence of education." and

"At some point, goods naman siya dati kasi nga may pandemic pero gaya nga ng sabi ko hindi okey for me yomung distance learning. Maganda yung pag-implement nila since maraming teachers yung palaging nag-uupdate sa amin and hindi nila pinapabayaan yung mga students."

The common emerging themes with respect to their description of implementation of Distance Learning Modality at Western Philippine University are technologically challenging and assessment-deficient modality, multi-platform and self-reliant modality, quality education-compliant and fully implemented.

Table 3. *Participants' view on adaptability to distance learning modality*

Participant	Coding of Themes (Significant Statements)	Thematic Reflections (Synthesizing the Themes into a Description of Experiences)
1	It was very challenging at first, especially that l only have smartphone to use during class and to answer modules. But as time goes by and we continue in that pace, I learned to adopt and becomes familiar through learning using smartphones and without a physical view of school in my learning process. Imagine how hard it is to learned without anybody around but a module and your smartphones.We use to study with teachers in front, teaching us; classmates, buildings, etc. All over the years, we learn through modules (one academic year); I cannot say I have learned a lot. I admit, I cannot focus in studying just with that kind of tools, I am used to learn with teachers in front teaching students. But yeah, during this time we need to adopt in able to learn so as time goes by and it becomes our everyday lifestyle, I use to adopt it.	Setting clear directions and expectations
2	It's hard for me to adopt the situation because we don't have any experience when it comes to distance learning modality, it takes time for me to fully overcome it and the challenges I have faced. I am grateful during that time because I have the things that I need to adopt the distance learning modality.	Self-motivation
3	Honestly, at first it was hard but eventually I find it not that hard most especially if you had resources. And because of the support of my family and friends. And, also one of the most important thing that helps me to adopt and survive the distance learning modality is the online resources and or platforms and technology. Before if there is tikes that I don't understand the topic in my module, I just need to watch in YouTube so that I can understand it comprehensively.	Establishing a deeper support system
4	Habang tumatagal ay nasasanay na din sa distance learning modality at mas naeenhance ang paggamit ng mga gadgets, mas nagagawan ng paraan para makasabay sa klase kahit mahirap ang internet connection. Sa paunti-unting adjustment natututo pa din ang mga bata at nagsisikap para makasabay at makaccess sa edukasyon	Self-motivation
5	Based on my own experience, nakapag adopt ako sa distance learning modality sa pamamagitan ng sinanay ko po anv aking sarili sa pag-gamit ng iba't ibang online applications and sites like gamit ang bawat lahat ng resources na maaari kung magamit. Nung una ay nahirapan akong mag-adopt dahil hindi ako sanay sa distance learning, para po kasi sa akin mas maganda kung may teachers na nagdidiscuss kesa sa binibigay lang ang topics. Mas madaling maka-adopt sa distance learning modality if may gamit ka na mas mabilis at makaimprove ng media and digital skills ng isang mag-aaral at palaging manuod or mag-explore sa websites.	Setting clear directions and expectations

6	Ang hirap mag-adjust dahil nga sa situation namin na sa Barangay namin is poor connection talaga ang pinakaproblema kailangan ko pang pumunta malapit sa simbahan para lang magkaroon ng stabble na connection. Pero sa kalaunan medyo nagiging okay na man na siya, lalo na at may mga kasama rin akong mga students na nasa ganong situation.	Self-motivation
7	I could say little by little. Ang hirap mag-adopt sa ganiyang situation. It takes 1 year to adopt in this situation like this. Matutunan mo talaga ang isang bagay kapag palagian mo ito ginagawa.	Self-motivation
8	Since hindi ko po gusto yung distance learning wala po akong choice kundi mag-adopt. Nakapag adjust naman ako since palaging ginagawa then nakasanayan na rin. Distance learning is great but for me is that easy ans it's hard to adjust kasi bigla-bigla lang na ganon, nag pandemic so ang hirap mag-adjust pero nakayanan naman at sometimes nagugustuhan na rin yung distance learning.	Self-motivation
9	Araw-araw po nag-aadjust sa situation, becuase we have no choice. If there is no internet in our area which is sa bukid aakyat po ako ng puno (haha) just to find a stable internet connection para makapag-in sa class (zoom). Sa katagalan, ay unti-unti na akong nasasanay sa ganong situation. Napakahirap po. Just accept the situation po and go with the flow.	Self-motivation
10	Hindi ko po alam directly how I adopt distance learning modality dahil araw-araw ay pinipilit na lang naming sagutan at maipasa sa google classroom for compliance. At first ay okey siya for the whole week but becuase we need to do all the tasks kailangan naming gawin, sagutan, at ipasa. I also encounter some teachers na walang binigay na tasks only the attendance but in the end we recieved a 2.75 grades in WPU webcite where we can see our grades.	Setting clear directions and expectations

The participants were also asked of their view on their adaptability to Distance Learning Modality. They said that they were able to adapt to the present modality by setting clear directions and expectations and by motivating themselves to continue their studies despite challenges as they narrate:

"It was very challenging at first, especially that l only have smartphone to use during class and to answer modules. But as time goes by and we continue in that pace, I learned to adopt and becomes familiar through learning using smartphones and without a physical view of school in my learning process. Imagine how hard it is to learned without anybody around but a module and your smartphones. We use to study with teachers in front, teaching us; classmates, buildings, etc. All over the years, we learn through modules (one academic year); I cannot say I have learned a lot. I admit, I cannot focus in studying just with that kind of tools, I am used to learn with teachers in front teaching students. But yeah, during this time we need to adopt in able to learn so as time goes by and it becomes our everyday lifestyle, I use to adopt it."

"Based on my own experience, nakapag adopt ako sa distance learning modality sa pamamagitan ng sinanay ko po anv aking sarili sa pag-gamit ng iba't ibang online applications and sites like gamit ang bawat lahat ng resources na maaari kung magamit. Nung una ay nahirapan akong mag-adopt dahil hindi ako sanay sa distance learning, para po kasi sa akin mas maganda kung may teachers na nagdidiscuss kesa sa binibigay lang ang topics. Mas madaling maka-adopt sa distance learning modality if may gamit ka na mas mabilis at makaimprove ng media and digital skills ng isang mag-aaral at palaging manuod or mag-explore sa websites."

"Hindi ko po alam directly how I adopt distance learning modality dahil araw-araw ay pinipilit na lang naming sagutan at maipasa sa google classroom for compliance. At first ay okey siya for the whole week but becuase we need to do all the tasks kailangan naming gawin, sagutan, at ipasa. I also encounter some teachers na walang binigay na tasks only the attendance but in the end we recieved a 2.75 grades in WPU webcite where we can see our grades."

"It's hard for me to adopt the situation because we don't have any experience when it comes to distance learning modality, it takes time for me to fully overcome it and the challenges I have faced. I am grateful during that time because I have the things that I need to adopt the distance learning modality."

"Habang tumatagal ay nasasanay na din sa distance learning modality at mas naeenhance ang paggamit ng mga gadgets, mas nagagawan ng paraan para makasabay sa klase kahit mahirap ang internet connection. Sa paunti-unting adjustment natututo pa din ang mga bata at nagsisikap para makasabay at makaccess sa edukasyon."

"Ang hirap mag-adjust dahil nga sa situation namin na sa Barangay namin is poor connection talaga ang pinakaproblema kailangan ko pang pumunta malapit sa simbahan para lang magkaroon ng stabble na connection. Pero sa kalaunan medyo nagiging okay na man na siya, lalo na at may mga kasama rin akong mga students na nasa ganong situation."

"I could say little by little. Ang hirap mag-adopt sa ganiyang situation. It takes 1 year to adopt in this situation like this. Matutunan mo talaga ang isang bagay kapag palagian mo ito ginagawa."

"Since hindi ko po gusto yung distance learning wala po akong choice kundi mag-adopt. Nakapag adjust naman ako since palaging ginagawa then nakasanayan na rin. Distance learning is great but for me is that easy ans it's hard to adjust kasi bigla-bigla lang na

ganon, nag pandemic so ang hirap mag-adjust pero nakayanan naman at sometimes nagugustuhan na rin yung distance learning."

"Araw-araw po nag-aadjust sa situation, becuase we have no choice. If there is no internet in our area which is sa bukid aakyat po ako ng puno (haha) just to find a stable internet connection para makapag-in sa class (zoom). Sa katagalan, ay unti-unti na akong nasasanay sa ganong situation. Napakahirap po. Just accept the situation po and go with the flow."

There is only one who said that he or she was able to establish a deeper support system as he said:

"Honestly, at first it was hard but eventually I find it not that hard most especially if you had resources. And because of the support of my family and friends. And, also one of the most important thing that helps me to adopt and survive the distance learning modality is the online resources and or platforms and technology. Before if there is tikes that I don't understand the topic in my module, I just need to watch in YouTube so that I can understand it comprehensively."

The common themes emerging on the participants' view on their adapatability to Distance Learning Modality are setting clear directions and expectations, self-motivation and the establishment of a deeper support system.

Table 4. *Participants' view on the challenges encountered during the implementation of distance learning modality*

Participant	Coding of Themes (Significant Statements)	Thematic Reflections (Synthesizing the Themes into a Description of Experiences)
1	The challenges encountered during the implementation of distance learning modality isn't for us as a student as well as to the teachers. We cannot escape those challenges especially it is about education and molding students. Challenges about network connections maybe can improve as time goes by and it will all also be improved.	Poor internet connection
2	The challenges I have encountered during the implementation of distance learning modality are financial, slow internet connection, gadgets, and time management. Those challenges are common problem that the students have experience.	Poor internet connection Financial and Time Management-challenged
3	Those hardship that I experience during the distance learning modality is because my inspiration to strive in life. I take those a challenge but at the same time a blessing, because distance learning modality teach me a lot of lesson in life.	Dreams become a great motivator
4	Para sa akin isa sa mga challenges naencounter ko during distance learning modality ay mahirap makaaccess ng internet conncection dahil na din sa masamang panahon bukod paroon ay nagpoprovide ng load dahil dahil mga video app ang ginagamit malaking load ang kailangan para makaaccess sa teacher. Additionally, hindi napapaliwanag ng teacher ang nilalaman or content ng module kaya kadalasan hindi alam ng mga estudyante kung ano nga ba ang tinutukoy sa lesson at hindi nila alam kung paano gagawin yolung activity.	Poor internet connection Financial and Time Management-challenged Teacher's inability to provision the needed instruction
5	Ang aking pananaw sa mga challenges na aking naranasan during the implementation of distance learning modality ay una mahirap ang ganitong uri ng pagkatuto dahil parang self learning ang nangyayari ngunit ngunit mas ayos ito sa mga working students, isa pa rito ay mas makakatipid lalo na sa malalayo ang bahay sa university. Maliban pa rito ay kung wala kang gadgets ay mahihirapan kang makaadopt or makasagot sa iyong mga modules. Sa lahat ng mga challenges na aking naexperience sa distance learning ay naenjoy ko po talaga at parang nasanay ako nung una na mas better ito kesa face-to-face classes although parang ung learnings namin ay hindi masyadong elabovorate dahil nga self-learning ang nangyayari pero mas nakakapagbigay kami ng time sa aming sarili, friends, and family.	Teachers are critically needed
6	Mahirap po lalo na kapag nagrereport ka or may reporting, di mo alam kung okey ka pa ba or kasama ka pa rin ba sa klase and also yong mga challenges po na naencountered namin during the implementation of distance learning modality is nagpapatunay lamang iyon na kahit gaano kahirap ang sitwasyon is may paraan para malampasan ito.	Self-motivation
7	"Mahirap", kasama na rito ang pagkakaroon ng poor connection. Lalo na kapag nagkaroon ng examination, may pa zoom meeting. Kailangan rin naman ito para sa discussion and for our attendance. What if mawalan ng connection habang ginagawa namin yan. So doon palang mahirap na. Pagdating sa load, minsan wala pang pera para makapag-paload.	Poor internet connection
8	First it's hard to adjust from grade 12 to college then samahan pa ng pandemic, talagang napakahirap iprocess lahat lahat ng mga nangyayari. Second internet, since wala pa kaming dating internet mahirap para sa akin na magsend ng mga module at mahirap din magsagot kasi lalabas ka pa para lang magresearch or hahanap pa ng signal para isend. Third is technology like laptop at cellphone since grade 12 I have no cellphone and I not that great to used laptop, super hirap magencode and hirap makipagcommunicate, but lahat yon makakayanan at nakaraos din.	Poor internet connection Lack of gadgets to be used
9	Positive, minsan po bad. Positive, becuase those times during pandemic napahalagahan ko ang quality of education, though hindi ganoon ka quality kapag online class becuase of some factors na nakakaapekto sa aming pag-aaral. Bad, dahil ang distance learning	Deliver of quality education is compromised Insufficient Assessment

	modality ay hindi ganoon ka effective lalo na sa mga lower grades at sa aking part dahil nga po online class, minsan hindi deserved yong narerecieved na grades dahil nga hindi ka kilala ng guro or hindi nacheck yong work mo.	
10	Durinf implementation I experienced before ang sobrang hinang internet dahil wala pa kaming wifi or yong PLDT, ginagamit lang namin ay cellphone. Sobrang hirap to cope with the challenge of distance learning. I also encounter yung kailangan naming umattemd for attendance and participation na rin sa klase. An education student, I also experience na magdemo teaching online which is sobrang hirap I can't express it especially kasi halo-halong emotions. Yumg maiiyak ka nalang sa paghahanap pa lang ng are kung saan ka pweding pupwesto o di kaya hahanap ng mga resources for like costumes sa sayaw, appropriate attire in other types of dance kasi kasama yun sa rubrics in doing tje tasks. I have a lot of negative experiences in distance learning modality the things I mentioned are are just some of them.	No internet connection

As for the challenges brought about by the implementation of Distance Learning Modality, the participants viewed them to have poor internet connection to no internet connection, financial and time management-challenged and teacher's inability to provision the needed instruction as they narrate:

"The challenges encountered during the implementation of distance learning modality isn't for us as a students as well as to the teachers. We cannot escape those challenges especially it is about education and molding students. Challenges about network connections maybe can improve as time goes by and it will all also be improve."

"Mahirap", kasama na rito ang pagkakaroon ng poor connection. Lalo na kapag nagkaroon ng examination, may pa zoom meeting. Kailangan rin naman ito para sa discussion and for our attendance. What if mawalan ng connection habang ginagawa namin yan. So doon palang mahirap na. Pagdating sa load, minsan wala pang pera para makapag-paload."

"The challenges I have encountered during the implementation of distance learning modality are financial, slow internet connection, gadgets, and time management. Those challenges is common problem that the students have experience."

"Para sa akin isa sa mga challenges naencounter ko during distance learning modality ay mahirap makaaccess ng internet conncection dahil na din sa masamang panahon bukod paroon ay nagpoprovide ng load dahil dahil mga video app ang ginagamit malaking load ang kailangan para makaaccess sa teacher. Additionally, hindi napapaliwanag ng teacher ang nilalaman or content ng module kaya kadalasan hindi alam ng mga estudyante kung ano nga ba ang tinutukoy sa lesson at hindi nila alam kung paano gagawin yolung activity."

"First it's hard to adjust from grade 12 to college then samahan pa ng pandemic, talagang napakahirap iprocess lahat lahat ng mga nangyayari. Second internet, since wala pa kaming dating internet mahirap para sa akin na magsend ng mga module at mahirap din magsagot kasi lalabas ka pa para lang magresearch or hahanap pa ng signal para isend. Third is technology like laptop at cellphone since grade 12 I have no cellphone and I not that great to used laptop, super hirap magencode and hirap makipagcommunicate, but lahat yon makakayanan at nakaraos din." and

"During implementation I experienced before ang sobrang hinang internet dahil wala pa kaming wifi or yong PLDT, ginagamit lang namin ay cellphone. Sobrang hirap to cope with the challenge of distance learning. I also encounter yung kailangan naming umattemd for attendance and participation na rin sa klase. An education student, I also experience na magdemo teaching online which is sobrang hirap I can't express it especially kasi halo-halong emotions. Yumg maiiyak ka nalang sa paghahanap pa lang ng are kung saan ka pweding pupwesto o di kaya hahanap ng mga resources for like costumes sa sayaw, appropriate attire in other types of dance kasi kasama yun sa rubrics in doing tje tasks. I have a lot of negative experiences in distance learning modality the things I mentioned are are just some of them."

Also, they view the challenges to be a motivator as they narrate:

"Those hardship that I experience during the distance learning modality is because my inspiration to strive in life. I take those a challenge but at the same time a blessing, because distance learning modality teach me a lot of lesson in life."

"Mahirap po lalo na kapag nagrereport ka or may reporting, di mo alam kung okey ka pa ba or kasama ka pa rin ba sa klase and also yong mga challenges po na naencountered namin during the implementation of distance learning modality is nagpapatunay lamang iyon na kahit gaano kahirap ang sitwasyon is may paraan para malampasan ito."

However, they view them that the delivery of quality education is compromised as well as there is insufficiency in assessment that is why they critically need the teachers as they say:

"Positive, minsan po bad. Positive, becuase those times during pandemic napahalagahan ko ang quality of education, though hindi ganoon ka quality kapag online class becuase of some factors na nakakaapekto sa aming pag-aaral. Bad, dahil ang distance learning modality ay hindi ganoon ka effective lalo na sa mga lower grades at sa aking part dahil nga po online class, minsan hindi deserved yong narerecieved na grades dahil nga hindi ka kilala ng guro or hindi nacheck yong work mo."

"Ang aking pananaw sa mga challenges na aking naranasan during the implementation of distance learning modality ay una mahirap ang ganitong uri ng pagkatuto dahil parang self learning ang nangyayari ngunit ngunit mas ayos ito sa mga working students, isa pa rito ay mas makakatipid lalo na sa malalayo ang bahay sa university. Maliban pa rito ay kung wala kang gadgets ay mahihirapan kang makaadopt or makasagot sa iyong mga modules. Sa lahat ng mga challenges na aking naexperience sa distance learning ay naenjoy ko po talaga at parang nasanay ako nung una na mas better ito kesa face-to-face classes although parang ung learnings namin ay hindi masyadong elabovorate dahil nga self-learning ang nangyayari pero mas nakakapagbigay kami ng time sa aming sarili, friends, and family."

The common themes emerging on the challenges encountered by the participants on the implementation of Distance Learning Modality are poor internet connection to no internet connection, financial and time management-challenged and teacher's inability to provision the needed instruction, self-motivation, delivery of quality education is compromised as well as insufficiency in assessment and teachers are critically needed in this modality.

Table 5. *Participants' description on the benefits derived from distance learning modality*

Participant	Coding of Themes (Significant Statements)	Thematic Reflections (Synthesizing the Themes into a Description of Experiences)
1	As a students who come from a far municipality, I can say I benefits a lot especially that I don't need to travel from my municipality to Aborlan and it help us a lot financially. It help me and my family to lessen financial expenses. The knowledge I gain maybe limited, but I am still thankful that at least I learned.	Cost-efficient
2	The benefits that I may drive from distance learning modality is crucial and benefecial because until now I kept using the knowledge I got and experiences that's why I keep on striving right now.	Life-long
3	Distance learning modality is like a training era, for me. Because it has a process that you need to learn and master in order to survive.	Life-long
4	Isa sa mga benefits ng distance learning modality mas naeenhance yong paggamit ng technology at different application na hindi nakasanayan gamitin ng lahat. Although mas kilala ito sa ibang school pero dahil sa distance learning mas nabigyan ng opportunity yung mga bata iexplore ang mga learning application. Additionally, mas maimprove ng communication skills ng mga bata kung paano sila makipaginteract sa mga kaklase nilang taga iba't ibang lugar ang pinanggalingan.	Digital Literacy Communication Literacy
5	Ang aking mga benefits na nakuha sa distance learning modality ay pag-improve ng aking media, information and digital skills na hanggang ngayon ay malaking tulong bilang isang educ students. Naging malawak ang aking kaalaman sa paggamit at pagkatuto sa paggamit ng iba'y ibang gadgets. Naging mas beneficial ang distance learning para sa aming mga mag-aaral dahil nakatipid at malaya ka pa sa pagsagot ng modules.	Digital Literacy Cost-efficient Self-reliance
6	Dahil nga distance learning modality parang dito mapapatunayan na kahit ang situation or saan situation ka pa ilagay is kayang-kaya mo itong gawan ng paraan, and then isa na rin dito is mas naging bihasa or mas naging maalam/natuto ako sa paggamit ng mga application and then sa pag-inquire na rin sa google or youtube para lang may mas maintindihan pa about sa lessons.	Digital Literacy
7	. Saving Money. Makakapag-ipon ka habang sa bahay ka lang nag-aaral. Hindi ka magagastusan except load. May learning naman kahit papaano na matutunan ka but in a limited way unlike in face-to-face class. Naging masipag ka sa paghanap ng lugar na may magandang connection. Nagkakaroon ng mahabang oras kasama ang pamilya dahil nasa bahay lang mag-aaral. Mabilis masagutan ang exam dahil naka google form lang ito. Puweding mandaya (sarili lang ang niloloko). Nagiging flexible dahil habang nakikinig ng discussion sa zoom meeting nakagagawa ka ng gawaing bahay.	Cost-efficient Resourcefulness Multi-tasking
8	Natuto din ako mag-laptop, natuto rin ako na hijdi dumedepende sa iba, at natuto din akong maging greatful sa lahat ng learnings na nakuha ko from distance learning aside from that malaki din ang naitulong non kasi dahil don na set aside ang mga gala since pandemic at nakatulong din yon na magkaroon ng family bonding.	Digital Literacy Self-reliance Quality Family Time
9	Naging matiyaga, dahil doon napatunayan kong kahit gaano kahirap ang sitwasyon ay nakaya ko pa ring malampasan. In addition, using different online app for learning mas naging bihasa akong gumamit ng mga application na mas makakatulong sa akin during this kind of situation (pandemic). Natutunan kong mag-inquire sa mga online app like youtube para lang mas magets ko yong lessons.	Digital Literacy
10	Being able to explore the online world, nakilala ang iba't ibang online applications na maaari nating gamitin. Being able to create different projects through the use of different applications. Through distance learning modality, you experience to be with your family all the time while you are studying. Experience to become flexible in doing different tasks.	Digital Literacy Quality Family Time

The participants view the benefits that they derived from Distance Learning Modality to be cost efficiency on their part and self-reliance as well as multi-tasking as they narrate:

"As a students who come from a far municipality, I can say I benefits a lot especially that I don't need to travel from my municipality to Aborlan and it help us a lot financially. It help me and my family to lessen financial expenses. The knowledge I gain maybe limited, but I am still thankful that at least I learned."

"Ang aking mga benefits na nakuha sa distance learning modality ay pag-improve ng aking media, information and digital skills na hanggang ngayon ay malaking tulong bilang isang educ students. Naging malawak ang aking kaalaman sa paggamit at pagkatuto sa paggamit ng iba'y ibang gadgets. Naging mas beneficial ang distance learning para sa aming mga mag-aaral dahil nakatipid at malaya ka pa sa pagsagot ng modules." and

"Saving Money. Makakapag-ipon ka habang sa bahay ka lang nag-aaral. Hindi ka magagastusan except load. May learning naman kahit papaano na matutunan ka but in a limited way unlike in face-to-face class. Naging masipag ka sa paghanap ng lugar na may magandang connection. Nagkakaroon ng mahabang oras kasama ang pamilya dahil nasa bahay lang mag-aaral. Mabilis masagutan ang exam dahil naka google form lang ito. Puweding mandaya (sarili lang ang niloloko). Nagiging flexible dahil habang nakikinig ng discussion sa zoom meeting nakagagawa ka ng gawaing bahay."

Meanwhile, other said that they become more digitally literate as well as communication literate and resourceful and they had a more quality time with their family as they say:

"Isa sa mga benefits ng distance learning modality mas naeenhance yong paggamit ng technology at different application na hindi nakasanayan gamitin ng lahat. Although mas kilala ito sa ibang school pero dahil sa distance learning mas nabigyan ng opportunity yung mga bata iexplore ang mga learning application. Additionally, mas maimprove ng communication skills ng mga bata kung paano sila makipaginteract sa mga kaklase nilang taga iba't ibang lugar ang pinanggalingan."

"Dahil nga distance learning modality parang dito mapapatunayan na kahit ang situation or saan situation ka pa ilagay is kayang-kaya mo itong gawan ng paraan, and then isa na rin dito is mas naging bihasa or mas naging maalam/natuto ako sa paggamit ng mga application and then sa pag-inquire na rin sa google or youtube para lang may mas maintindihan pa about sa lessons."

"Naging matiyaga, dahil doon napatunayan kong kahit gaano kahirap ang sitwasyon ay nakaya ko pa ring malampasan. In addition, using different online app for learning mas naging bihasa akong gumamit ng mga application na mas makakatulong sa akin during this kind of situation (pandemic). Natutunan kong mag-inquire sa mga online app like youtube para lang mas magets ko yong lessons."

"Natuto din ako mag-laptop, natuto rin ako na hijdi dumedepende sa iba, at natuto din akong maging greatful sa lahat ng learnings na nakuha ko from distance learning aside from that malaki din ang naitulong non kasi dahil don na set aside ang mga gala since pandemic at nakatulong din yon na magkaroon ng family bonding." and

"Being able to explore the online world, nakilala ang iba't ibang online applications na maaari nating gamitin. Being able to create different projects through the use of different applications. Through distance learning modality, you experience to be with your family all the time while you are studying. Experience to become flexible in doing different tasks."

In addition, they said that one of the benefits has life-long effect as they narrate:

"The benefits that I may drive from distance learning modality is crucial and benefecial because until now I kept using the knowledge I got and experiences that's why I keep on striving right now." and

"Distance learning modality is like a training era, for me. Because it has a process that you need to learn and master in order to survive."

The common themes emerging on the benefits derived from Distance Learning Modality are cost-efficiency, self-reliance, resourcefulness, multi-tasking, digital and communication literacy, had quality time with family and life-long effect.

Table 6. *Participants' recommendations to address the issues on the use of distance learning modality*

Participant	Coding of Themes *(Significant Statements)*	Thematic Reflections *(Synthesizing the Themes into a Description of Experiences)*
1	One thing to improve in the implementation of distance learning modality is that they should focus on what really matters. Maybe those topics related to the skills that students will acquire like more on real life situation. In case of network connections, maybe next generations. Philippines can have a better connections (network) just like the other country.	A more skill-focused learning Improved Connectivity
2	The issues that must be address is the slow internet connection. Distance learning cannot be implemented if the internet connection is poor especially nowadays technology become part of human living, so think we must address it first.	Improved Connectivity
3	Master the digital literacy. Improve and be innovative in instructional materials.	Innovativeness in instruction
4	Para sa akin okay lang merong distance learning bastat yung communication skills at	Communication and Collaboration-

	interaction sa isa't–isa ng mga bata ay hindi nawawala. Dahil mas effective yung learning pagnabibigyan ng emphasize yung pagtuturo ng mga guro sa mga bata, at continue yung pagpoprovide ng high quality education. Additionally I recommend the free orientation to the students for those student who are not able to access and use the technology.	focused instruction
5	My recommendations to address the issues on the use of distance learning modality are: panatilihin pa din ang interaction ng students and teacher; sana ay may maiprovide na learning gadgets na magagamit ang mga student upang hindi sila mahuli sa lessons; iwasan sana ang pagbigay ng mga mahihirap na activities or school works lalo't higit may iba't ibang problema din ang students; magkaroon ng seminars or training para sa mga guro sa tamang paggamit ng distance learning; maging mas aware sa mga students dahil minsan dahil sa distance learning nagiging mas open sila sa mga hindi magagandang information; at maging mas open ang school/universities sa mga challenges when it comes to the digital learning of the students dahil mostly kulang sila rito.	Collaboration-focused instruction Enhancement of teaching and learning competence
6	I suggest po na magprovide ng flaskdrive for every students. Gadgets na pweding gamitin ng mga students and also a wifi or anything na magkakaroon ng stable connection.	Improved Connectivity Provision for learning gadgets/materials
7	Make it sure na lahat ng student may magagamit for online learning. Provide modules sa mga students but need din nilang magbigay ng bondpaper. Provide flaskdrive.	Provision for learning gadgets/materials
8	Provide modules that can simply understand of the students. Provide materials that needed. Provide teachers to efficient to teach distance learning. Provide cellphone or laptop.	Provision for learning gadgets/materials
9	If ever po kung ipu-pursue ang distance learning modality I suggest na palakasin yong internet connection sa Pilipinas. Provide free gadgets for those students na walang kakayahang bumili but at the end of the school year need nilang ibalik ang gadget na pinahiram at need nilang ingatan.	Improved Connectivity Provision for learning gadgets/materials
10	Provide appropriate devices needed in the implementation. Make sure that every student have an access in internet. To those who don't have an access on internet provide them a module. Provide trainings and seminars for teachers with regards to the implementation of distance learning modality.	Improved Connectivity Provision for learning gadgets/materials

Some of the recommendations in order to address the issues on the use of Distance Learning Modality are to have a more skill-focused learning as well as improvement of connectivity and provision for learning gadgets or materials as they say:

"One thing to improve in the implementation of distance learning modality is that they should focus on what really matters. Maybe those topic related to the skills that students will acquire like more on real life situation. In case of network connections, maybe next generations. Philippines can have a better connections (network) just like the other country."

"The issues that must be address is the slow internet connection. Distance learning cannot be implemented if the internet connection is poor especially nowadays technology become part of human living, so think we must address it first."

"I suggest po na magprovide ng flaskdrive for every students. Gadgets na pweding gamitin ng mga students and also a wifi or anything na magkakaroon ng stable connection."

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"Make it sure na lahat ng student may magagamit for online learning. Provide modules sa mga students but need din nilang magbigay ng bondpaper. Provide flaskdrive."

"Provide appropriate devices needed in the implementation. Make sure that every student have an access in internet. To those who don't have an access on internet provide them a module. Provide trainings and seminars for teachers with regards to the implementation of distance learning modality." and

"Provide modules that can simply understand of the students. Provide materials that needed. Provide teachers to efficient to teach distance learning. Provide cellphone or laptop."

They also recommend that:

"Para sa akin okay lang merong distance learning bastat yung communication skills at interaction sa isa't–isa ng mga bata ay hindi nawawala. Dahil mas effective yung learning pagnabibigyan ng emphasize yung pagtuturo ng mga guro sa mga bata, at continue yung pagpoprovide ng high quality education. Additionally I recommend the free orientation to the students for those student who are not able to access and use the technology."

"My recommendations to address the issues on the use of distance learning modality are: panatilihin pa din ang interaction ng students

and teacher; sana ay may maiprovide na learning gadgets na magagamit ang mga student upang hindi sila mahuli sa lessons; iwasan sana ang pagbigay ng mga mahihirap na activities or school works lalo't higit may iba't ibang problema din ang students; magkaroon ng seminars or training para sa mga guro sa tamang paggamit ng distance learning; maging mas aware sa mga students dahil minsan dahil sa distance learning nagiging mas open sila sa mga hindi magagandang information; at maging mas open ang school/universities sa mga challenges when it comes to the digital learning of the students dahil mostly kulang sila rito." and

 "Master the digital literacy. Improve and be innovative in instructional materials."

The common themes emerging on the participants' recommendations are provision for learning gadgets/materials, to have a more improved connectivity, collaboration-focused instruction, enhancement of teaching and learning competence and innovativeness in instruction.

Insights on Participants' Lived Experiences on Distance Learning Modality

Distance learning has become increasingly popular in recent years, especially with advancements in technology. This modality involves the delivery of educational content to students who are geographically separated from the instructor or the educational institution.

Below are some insights into the implementation, challenges and benefits of distance learning modality:

On Implementation

Technological Infrastructure. Successful implementation requires a robust technological infrastructure, including high-speed internet, learning management systems (LMS), video conferencing tools, and collaboration platforms. Institutions need to invest in the development and maintenance of these systems to ensure a seamless learning experience.

Course Design. Designing effective online courses involves careful planning and consideration of various learning styles. Instructional designers play a crucial role in creating engaging and interactive content. Multimedia elements, such as videos, quizzes, and discussion forums, are often incorporated to enhance the learning experience.

Teachers' Trainings. Faculty members need training to adapt their teaching methods to an online format. This includes learning to use digital tools effectively and understanding how to engage students in a virtual environment.

Student Support Services. Implementing distance learning requires strong student support services, including technical support, counseling services, and virtual libraries, to ensure students have the resources they need to succeed.

On Challenges

Technological Barriers. Unequal access to technology and reliable internet can create disparities among students which has greatly impacted their ability to fully participate in online courses.

Lack of Social Interaction. Distance learning can be isolating for students, as it lacks the face-to-face interactions and social connections found in traditional classrooms. This can affect motivation and a sense of belonging.

Quality of Education. Ensuring the quality of education and assessments is a challenge. Institutions should strive to maintain demanding academic standards in the digital realm.

Time Management. Students may struggle with time management and self-discipline in an online environment, as they need to be proactive in their learning and adhere to deadlines without the structure of a physical classroom.

On Benefits

Flexibility. Distance learning offers flexibility in terms of scheduling, allowing students to access course materials at their convenience. This is particularly beneficial for learners who have to do household chores at the same time while studying and with their other commitments.

Access to a Wide Range of Learning Material. Students can access learning materials from institutions around the world, expanding their educational opportunities and choices.

Cost Savings. Both institutions and students can benefit from cost savings associated with distance learning, such as reduced infrastructure costs and the elimination of commuting expenses.

Lifelong Learning. Distance learning facilitates lifelong learning by making education accessible to individuals at various stages of their lives and careers.

Innovative Teaching Methods. Online education encourages the use of innovative teaching methods, such as gamification, virtual simulations, and collaborative projects, enhancing the overall learning experience. Despite the challenges, distance learning continues to evolve, driven by technological advancements and the growing demand for flexible education options. Institutions that effectively address the challenges can harness the benefits of this modality to provide accessible and quality education.

In consideration of the results revealed by the actual transcripts and their meanings as well as the insights of the researcher, developing an effective framework for distance learning involves considering various aspects such as:

Technological Infrastructure

Robust LMS: Implement a user-friendly Learning Management System (LMS) that supports various multimedia elements, collaborative tools and assessment features.

Scalable Technology: Ensure that the technological infrastructure can scale to accommodate a growing number of users. Regularly update and upgrade systems to stay current with technological advancements.

Pedagogical Design

Instructional Design: Employ instructional designers to create courses that are engaging, interactive and cater to diverse learning styles. Incorporate multimedia elements, real-world applications and assessments that foster critical thinking.

Active Learning: Promote active learning strategies, such as discussion forums, group projects and simulations to enhance student engagement.

Teachers Training and Development

Training Programs: Develop comprehensive training programs for teachers to enhance their proficiency in distance learning-teaching methods, technology usage and effective communication in a virtual environment.

Peer Collaboration: Encourage collaboration among faculty members to share best practices, innovative teaching methods and technological solutions.

Student Support Services

24/7 Technical Support: Provide round-the-clock technical support to address issues related to accessing online platforms, navigating the LMS and troubleshooting technological challenges.

Virtual Counseling: Establish virtual counseling services to support students' academic and emotional needs, fostering a sense of connection and well-being.

Continuous Development

Data Analytics: Utilize data analytics to track student performance, engagement and satisfaction. Use this data to make informed decisions and continuously enhance the distance learning experiences among learners.

Adaptive Learning Technologies: Explore and implement adaptive learning technologies that personalize the learning experience based on individual student needs and progress.

Quality Assurance

Regular Assessments: Implement a system for regular assessments of course quality, considering factors such as content relevance, pedagogical effectiveness, and student satisfaction.

Feedback Mechanisms: Collect feedback from both instructors and students to continuously improve courses and the overall distance learning experience.

Conclusions

The participants were predominantly female students, equally distributed across year levels, with half identifying as Cuyunén. Seventy percent came from families earning below ₱10,000 monthly. All participants owned cellphones, 90% had computers/laptops, 40% owned televisions, 80% possessed books, and 30% had radios. Additionally, 30% had Pocket Wi-Fi/broadband, while 20% had PLDT subscriptions. Emerging themes regarding their views on Distance Learning Modality (DLM) included it being challenging, alternative, essential, module-based, a new learning platform, and learner-unfriendly. In terms of implementation at Western Philippines University, themes reflected a technologically challenging and assessment-deficient system but also one that was multi-platform, self-reliant, quality education-compliant, and fully implemented. Participants cited challenges such as poor or no internet connection, financial and time constraints, insufficient teacher instruction, compromised education quality, and lack of proper assessments. However, they also identified benefits, including cost-efficiency, self-reliance, resourcefulness, multi-tasking, improved digital and communication literacy, quality family time, and life-long impacts.

Moreover, based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that the institution is highly encouraged to develop a robust Learning Management System and scalable technology to align with current advancements. Courses should be pedagogically designed to be engaging, interactive, and inclusive of diverse learning styles to promote active learning. Teacher training programs must be enhanced to ensure virtual proficiency and effective communication while encouraging peer collaboration to share best practices. Establishing

round-the-clock virtual support, counseling services, and adaptive learning technologies will address students' academic and emotional needs. Finally, similar studies in other school communities are recommended to improve the implementation of Distance Learning Modality.

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