Curriculum Reblocks: Blocking the Challenges of Senior High School Students and Teachers in Modular Distance Learning in Light of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP)

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Abstract

This research aimed to analyze the experienced learning challenges of the senior high school students and transferees as well as the experienced instruction-related challenges of the teachers toward responsive method of delivering the modular distance learning in light of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan. The research used explanatory case study. Purposive sampling was used among the four (4) teachers and ten (10) student-participants. Data were collected using triangulated instrumentations including the structured interview, observations, and archival analysis. Thematic content analysis is employed to interpret qualitative data. Findings revealed that the senior high school students experienced lack of learning focus, mismanagement of time, and lack of learning support. The transferred students also experienced the same with additional challenge on curriculum programming. As to the teachers, full participation of the students in modular instruction was the main concern. Curriculum Reblocks of Modular Distance Learning Delivery was developed based on the findings and resulted to numerous advantages for students to sustain momentum of learning, to maximize their focus, and to easily manage learning activities while the teachers find it easier to monitor students' progress and implement differentiated interventions to support students' learning.

Keywords: Basic-Education Learning Continuity Plan, Project-based Learning, Modular Distance Learning, Block Method, SHS Curriculum Programming

Introduction

Quality education opens the door to a world of possibilities and opportunities. As a result, as highlighted in Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution, the government seeks to meet all of the educational requirements of Filipino children with the finest and most suitable curriculum and learning techniques. This right must be respected at all times, and the Department of Education is obligated to provide learning opportunities even during the COVID-19 national emergency. In this context, according to DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones, education must continue despite the pandemic (Briones, 2020 cited in Agarin, 2021). The Department of Education's clarion cry led to the development and implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) (DepEd, 2020). However, students confronted multiple challenges as a result of the deployment of various learning modalities, notably the modular distance learning strategy. The primary challenges that students have faced, according to Dangle and Sumaoang (2020), are self-studying, bad internet connection, lack of sleep and time to answer all of the modules owing to the large number of activities, distractions, and lack of attention. It is also mentioned that there is a lack of parental support (FlipScience, 2020). Similarly, teachers also

experienced problems in modular instruction as how they organize, prepare, and distribute modules, monitor students' learning, check, assess outputs, and offer feedback on students' performance (Acala, 2021). Likewise, the senior high school pupils of Cogorin Ibaba National High School shared the same concerns and issues. Based on quarterly mean-MPS reports, the students' academic performance decreased. They also stated in an interview that there are several things that they find difficult to accomplish without the direction of a teacher and the help of their parents. As a result, only 50% to 75% of the disseminated learning activity sheets accurately reflected the average retrieval percentage in all nine (9) senior high school topics (SHS).

Hence, the research team investigate the block technique of arranging curricular courses in light of the urgency of the situation. Block Method is a teaching schedule that arranges at least a portion of the school day into bigger blocks of time to offer greater flexibility for diverse educational activities (Cawelti, 1994 cited in Williams, 2011). The only exception is the way in which time is organized (Clark, 2021). Block scheduling, in theory, increases student accomplishment by increasing the quality and focus of instruction (Mamon, 2012). There are fewer courses and transfers each day because of the extended unbroken instructional time (Williams, 2011). On the

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other side, it can be difficult for instructors and students, particularly transfer students, to adjust to a new timetable when they are used to teaching and studying in a traditional setting with rigid assessment requirements and numerous projects (Roberts, 2016). As a result, it has both benefits and drawbacks. Several studies have shown that block scheduling has a favorable impact on student success (Smith, 2017; Williams, 2011; Bonner, 2012). Students on block schedules, according to Clark (2021), are more focused on academics and have less discipline issues. Students have fewer examinations, quizzes, and homework assignments since they have fewer classes, according to Smith (2017), while the teachers have more time to plan for instructions.
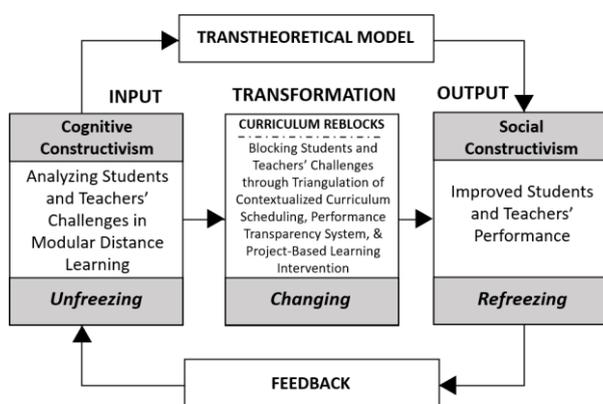
The Systems Model of Qualitative Action Research Process ("Action Research", 2021) is used to illustrate the significant phases of this study. The input phase is the unfreezing stage where the challenges, difficulties, and problems experienced by the students and teachers were qualitatively analyzed in light of the Cognitive Constructivism (Piaget, 1977 in Clark, 2021) which emphasized that the mind of the students and teachers, and learning views represent the mental models of assimilating experiences. Inputs were considered in the transformation stage where changes were demonstrated upon the adoption of curriculum reblocks which is a triangulated method of contextualized curriculum scheduling, performance transparency system, & project-based learning intervention. Transtheoretical model (LaMorte, 2019) at this phase depicted how perceptions and situations representing cognitive constructivism changes to the new context of social cognitivism (Vygotsky, 1962) and underscores the socio-cultural context in which the students and teachers are situated, new normal. Upon the changing phase, results were expected with the improvements on stupents' learning experiences and teachers' performance. This is the refreezing stage where feedback such as bottlenecks of the

implemented Curriculum Reblocks were addressed toward continuous cycle of sustainable improvement.

Research Questions

This study aimed to analyze the difficulties experienced by the senior high school teachers and students of Cogorin Ibaba National High School and to develop a method in response to their needs in modular distance learning of the BE-LCP. This specifically aimed to answer the questions as follows:

1. What are the experienced challenges of the senior high school students in modular distance learning?
2. What are the experienced challenges of the senior high school teachers in modular distance learning?
3. What method of modular distance learning delivery can be developed based on the experienced challenges of the students and teachers?
4. What are the effects of the developed modular distance learning delivery method to SHS students and teachers?

Methodology

This research employed the explanatory case study under the qualitative method. Five (5) Grade 11 students and five (5) Grade 12 students along with the four (4) senior high school teachers of Cogorin Ibaba National High School, Lopez, West District, who are picked using purposive sampling participated in the study. Structured interview questions anchoring on the research questions / objectives were facilitated in an online synchronous and limited face to face interview with the respondents who agreed to participate in the study with their signed informed consent. The personal interview was conducted first among the students followed by the teachers. Aside from the interview, observations at home visitations, and students and teachers' archives were analyzed in relation to the interview data to triangulate the instrumentation.

Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) was utilized to evaluate the data. Thematic analysis was used to examine the information obtained. The goal of the analysis was generally to look at similar data on a topic and make a comment about it. The data organizing technique was the initial stage in the data analysis process. To check the accuracy of the data,

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the researcher reviewed each interview and listened to each record while analyzing the transcripts. The data analysis techniques required the formulation of coding categories, mechanical sorting of the data, and examination of the data inside each coding category for each participant's interview transcript. Each participant's interview was categorized uniquely in this regard. This was accomplished in three steps: specification of categories, exemplification, and codification regulation. To begin, the responses to each question were divided into relevant groups, titled, and coded. The identified statements were brought together in the second stage. To eliminate recurrence, the third stage involved carefully checking each sentence. The outcomes were discussed and connected to one another in the final step.

Results and Discussion

There were four questions needed to be answered in this study. These covered the identification of the challenges of the senior high school students in MDL, challenges of the teachers in MDL, method of MDL to be developed based on the findings, and the effects of the developed curriculum method.

Table 1. *Challenges of the Senior High School Students in MDL*

Grade Level	Interview Results	Observation Results	Archive Analysis Results
Grade 11 (ABM)	- To many activities, quizzes, & projects - Lack of focus to learning - Mismanagement of time	- Attendance to different household chores - Lack of parental learning support	- Low retrieval records General Mathematics, English for Academic and Professional Purposes
Grade 11 (HUMSS)	- To many activities, quizzes, & projects - Lack of focus to learning	- Attendance to different household chores - Lack of parental learning support	- Low retrieval records General Mathematics, English for Academic and Professional Purposes
Grade 12 (ABM)	- To many activities, quizzes, & projects - Lack of focus to learning - Mismanagement of time	- Attendance to different household chores - Lack of parental learning support	- Low retrieval records Earth and Life Science, Practical Research 2, and FABM2
Grade 12 (HUMSS)	- To many activities, quizzes, & projects - Lack of focus to learning - Different curriculum programming	- Attendance to different household chores - Lack of parental learning support - Child labor	- Low retrieval records Earth and Life Science, Physical Science, and Practical Research 2

Table 1 depicts the challenges experienced by the senior high school students in modular distance learning. Data reveals four (4) themes from the interview that manifest the experienced challenges mainly concerning too many activities, quizzes, and projects and lack of learning focus by all students added with mismanagement of time among the ABM students of Grade 11 and 12 and challenges in difference in curriculum programming from a

transferee of the Grade 12 HUMSS. Observation at home visitations also depicts the challenges appealed by the learners due to attendance to different household chores and lack of parental learning support. There was also the presence of child-labor among Grade 12 HUMSS that added to the difficulties expressed by the students. Lastly, the reviewed documents showed limited records of retrieval in subjects of General Mathematics, English for Academic and Professional Purposes among the Grade 11 students, and Earth and Life Science, Practical Research 2, FABM, and Physical Science among the Grade 12 students. This depicts, mismanagement of learning task and responsibilities concerning time focus to learning.

Same with the findings Dangle and Sumaoang (2020), the students faced several obstacles in the use of diverse learning modalities, particularly the modular distance learning technique like self-studying, a terrible internet connection, a lack of sleep, and time to answer all of the modules due to the numerous number of activities, distractions, and lack of focus. There is also a lack of parental support, which is noted (FlipScience, 2020).

Findings imply the varying difficulties of the learners needed to be addressed for them to acquire quality education. The identified challenges hinder them in mastering the most essential learning competencies in certain subjects while being unable to attend to household duties. The interview results were also supported by the observation analysis and reviewed documents that depicted the urgency of action to implement contextualized method toward positive changes leading to attainment of the students' learning goals.

Table 2. *Challenges of the Senior High School Teachers in MDL*

Grade Level	Interview Results	Observation Results	Archive Analysis Results
Teacher 1	- Incomplete assessment records - Incomplete printed modules	- Difficulty in looking for loss / misplaced LAS - Conduct of Intervention - Difficulty in Checking	- A number of e-class records do not have student inputs / scores
Teacher 2	- Incomplete assessment records - Credibility of student answers	- Difficulty in looking for loss / misplaced LAS - Conduct of Intervention	- A number of e-class records do not have student inputs / scores
Teacher 3	- Incomplete assessment records - Difficulty of monitoring students' progress	- Difficulty in looking for loss / misplaced LAS - Difficulty of monitoring students' progress	- Low records of retrieval of LAS
Teacher 4	- Incomplete assessment records - Incomplete printed modules	- Difficulty in looking for loss / misplaced LAS - Lack of resources and inefficiency issues	- A number of e-class records do not have student inputs / scores

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Table 2 presents the challenges of the Senior High School Teachers in MDL. Interview results showed one (1) common theme such as incompleteness of assessment records. This shows that the activities for mastery, summative assessments, and performance – based assessments are not fully accomplished. Hence, no records will be assessed to determine if the MELCs are mastered. Other themes of challenges they experienced are related to incomplete printed modules, credibility of student answers, difficulty of monitoring students' progress, and incomplete printed modules. The experienced challenges of the senior high school teachers were also supported by the observation results where loss of uncompiled LAS hinders the completeness of checking and monitoring of students' progress. This further results to incompleteness of the assessment records which also reflects the e-class records with less inputs per student. Moreover, low records of retrieval of LAS also validates the incompleteness of assessment basis.

Similar with the findings of Acala (2021), teachers experience challenges in modular distance learning even after a year of implementation. The teachers face challenges on how to organize, prepare, and distribute modules, monitor students' progress, check outputs, and offer feedback.

Findings imply that teachers are not excuse in experiencing the challenges of BE-LCP, particularly in modular instruction in which they are the prime-movers. Hence, addressing those challenges is believed to improve their conduct of instructional duties and functions with higher level of effectiveness and efficiency. The teachers' challenges should also be considered in designing the contextualized method.

Figure 2. *The Developed Method of Modular Distance Learning Delivery Based on the Experienced Challenges of the Students and Teachers*
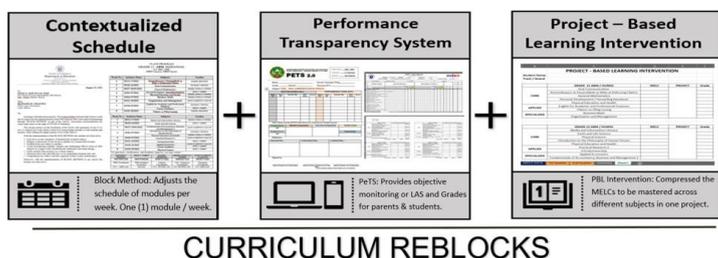

Figure 2 shows the developed method of modular distance learning delivery based on the experienced challenges of the students and teachers with the title "Curriculum Reblocks". This was developed with the aim to address the identified challenges of the senior

high school learners and teachers. "Curriculum Reblocks" is composed of triangulated approaches of contextualized scheduling, performance transparency, and project-based learning that have different functions but were harmonized toward achieving quality education and respond to DepEd's call for "Sulong Edukalidad" in light of BE-LCP. The Block Method contextualizes and adjusts the schedule of modules per week: One (1) module per week. Block Method aims to lessen the number of learning activities and assessments of the pupils by subject, provide fluent & scaffolded transition of learning from one module to another, improve students' focus, and maximize their time in both learning and household duties. On the other hand, its implementation also seeks to compile all LAS in a single distribution and retrieval to be submitted in pace of the learners' capability and aptitude level, maximize the use of printed modules, and address interrupted checking problems of teacher. This will also lessen the loss or misplaced parts of the students' LAS, hence, lessens difficulty in monitoring students' progress. Similarly, the PeTS is a transparency system made up of printed modified e-class record with intervention schemes and restructured e-class that can be opened using students' laptop or android phone. PeTS will help address the difficulty of checking students' outputs and monitoring their progress. Parents and students are also given the objective view of their grades and academic status. Lastly, PBL- Intervention seeks to provide mastery of the MELCs and learning objectives across all core, applied, and specialized subjects of the senior high school in a single unified project. This will also fill the missing inputs / scores of the students with ease without compromising the quality of education learning standards.

Like the current study, Williams (2011) also used Block Method that divides at least a portion of the school day into larger blocks of time in order to provide more flexibility for a wide range of educational activities. Also, similar with the contextualized schedule, Clark (2021) reorganized the schools' timetable to adjust to students' needs. Lastly, (Roberts, 2016) cited the difficulty of learning without transparency of assessments and numerous projects.

This implies the high probability of addressing all students and teachers challenges in modular distance learning with harmonized approach and blends of modification of schedules, transparency approach, and intervention that respond to the need of the learners and teachers in the actual context.

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Table 3. *Effects of the Developed Modular Distance Learning Delivery Method*

Grade Level	Interview Results	Observation Results	Archive Analysis Results
SHS Students	- Sustains learning continuity - Improves focus - Manages learning activities with ease	- Finishes activities earlier - Provides better assessment records and reflections	- Addresses learning needs through MELCs with unified interventions in all subjects
SHS Teachers	- Eases checking - Facilitates monitoring of students' progress	- Lessens the problems in misplaced LAS -Resources and time are maximized	- Improves students' participation in assessments and activities

Table 3 presents the effects of the developed modular distance learning delivery method as represented by "Curriculum Reblocks". Three (3) themes emerged in the interview among the SHS students which showed that the developed Curriculum Reblocks helps them to sustain learning continuity, improves focus, and manages learning activities with ease while two (2) themes showed the Curriculum Reblocks helps the teachers in checking the LAS with ease and it helps in monitoring the students' progress. Observations among the participants also showed that the students can finish the learning activities in a shorter time which also provides improved assessment records and reflections while the archives and documents reflect positive comments on the implemented intervention through PBL which addresses their learning needs in varying SHS curricular subjects. Likewise, observation among the teachers shows less reports of unfound LAS with less issues on office supplies and time conflicts as further supported by their improved students' participation in assessment and activities.

Similar with the findings of the current research, block scheduling has been found in several studies to improve student achievement (Smith, 2017; Williams, 2011; Bonner, 2012). According to Clark (2021), students on block schedules are more engaged on academics and have less discipline difficulties. According to Smith (2017), students have fewer exams, quizzes, and homework assignments since they have fewer classes, while the teachers have more time to plan for instruction.

Findings imply positive effects on the implementation of the developed Curriculum Reblocks. Implementing further ease both the teachers and students' teaching and learning responsibilities in time of pandemic. This also lessens their burden to focus on improving students' academic and teachers' performance. It can also be perceived that implementing the output, Curriculum Reblock, will also strengthen the campaign of other schools in the SDO Quezon and other regions toward the achievement of "Sulong Edukalidad" that can be adopted in different learning modalities that will suit the teachers and students' context in light of BE-LCP

Conclusion

Based on the findings, this study arrived to the following conclusions: (1) The experienced challenges of senior high school students in modular distance learning are having too many activities, quizzes, & projects, lack of learning focus, mismanagement of time, and difference in curriculum programming for the transferees. (2) The experienced challenges of the senior high school students in modular distance learning are the incomplete assessment records, incomplete printed modules, difficulty of monitoring students' progress, and credibility of student answers. (3) The method of modular distance learning delivery that was developed to address the experienced challenges of the senior high school students and teachers is the "Curriculum Reblocks" comprising of contextualized schedule (Block Method), Performance Transparency System (PeTS), and Project-Based Learning (PBL) Intervention. (4) The developed modular distance learning method, Curriculum Reblocks, allows the students to sustain learning continuity, improve focus, and manage learning activities while this also allows the teachers to ease checking and facilitate monitoring of students' progress.

Based on the cited conclusions, this study recommends the following: (1) Teachers may also contextualize the activities, quizzes, projects or adjust the number of items for assessments according to students' capability. Realignment of the contextualized SDO Quezon SHS programming to national SHS programming is also suggested. (2) Teachers are encouraged to explore other means of assessment that reflects objectivity of results with due monitoring and clarion presentation of students' progress. SLAC to maximize school resources in BE-LCP concerning module reproduction and formatting is also encouraged. (3) Curriculum Reblocks is suggested to be implemented in all senior high schools of SDO Quezon. (4) Considering the effects of Curriculum Reblocks, the method is also suggested to be adopted as a division-wide alternative scheduling including the elementary and JHS schools in SDO Quezon

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