

Research Article:

Embracing the Challenges of Modular Approach in Teaching in the Time of Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to explore the challenges that college instructors faced during module preparation in this time of pandemic when educational systems around the globe are forced to flex and adjust to the new normal. Mixed methods was used as research design to quantitatively and qualitatively delve into the challenges of college instructors towards preparation of self-paced learning modules used for teaching in this time of pandemic. Forty-nine instructor-respondents from a Higher Education Institution in the Philippines were selected to participate in the study; they were assigned to teach in various courses, have different length of service, academic preparations and subjects handled. A questionnaire that underwent experts' validity and reliability test was used as primary instrument to gather quantitative data which were later subjected to appropriate statistical analysis. Qualitative data were gathered through interviews and gave deeper insights on numerical results. Findings revealed that college instructors were dominantly non-education graduates but with Professional Educational Subjects (PES), relatively young in teaching, mostly teaching core/major subjects and have minimal preparations and modules crafted for the current semester. They experienced serious to very serious problems regarding module preparation which challenged and pressured them. Those who were new to the service were better in handling pressure as to meeting deadlines and were more flexible about giving examples in explaining concepts; but those who were veterans were problematic that modules did not undergo instructional material review. Non-education graduates with PES were very particular on the availability or sufficiency of materials for the printing. Those who have more preparations did not find the unavailability or insufficiency of references and making explanations easier to be understood as serious as those who have lesser module preparations.

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The various problems and challenges that college instructors faced during their preparation of modules in adherence to the government's directive of non-face-to-face conduct of classes pose a greater challenge for educational systems to assist these teachers by providing sufficient resources, technologies and tools; proper training and a sort of expressive emotional reinforcement.

Keywords: challenges, college instructors, COVID-19, modular approach, mixed methods, new normal

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems around the globe leading to the near-total closures of schools, universities and colleges (United Nations, 2020). Most governments have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to reduce the spread of the plague which affected approximately 1.277 billion learners as of September. To note, around 46 countries implemented nationwide closures and 27 implemented local closures, impacting about 72.9% of the world's student population (UNESCO, 2020).

The pandemic caused a massive impact in higher educational institutions in the Philippines (Toquero, 2020). With this, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) released guidelines putting on hold face-to-face classes or meetings and even mass gatherings of students during the First Semester, AY 2020–2021 until the condition becomes safer to prevent local transmissions (CHED Advisory No. 7, 2020). Some teachers used online platforms to upload recorded lessons for students to access while others utilised available online learning management systems. However, few days after the CMO was released, there was an increasing clamor among students and teachers who find difficulty and were not ready in implementing this online learning system (Toquero, 2020).

In response to this, a state university in Cagayan Valley, Philippines remains steadfast in adopting modular approach in teaching since most of the students lived in far flung areas which do not even have roads and electricity, and internet connection is either absent or poor. With this, students find difficulty or cannot even participate in online teaching and learning. Modular approach seemed to be most appropriate since it was proven to be an efficient and effective tool for students' learning and, that easy or hard subjects can be taught using this approach (Malik, 2012). It can be helpful for both teachers and students; the latter learning in his own pace while the former teaching in different settings (Valencia, 2020).

Modular approach is an emerging trend in education that illustrates the shift of traditional to outcomes-based learning paradigm (Dejene, 2019). Further, it is an intelligent approach that can be individualised for learners to address their needs (Department of Education, 2020; Tate et al., 2014). Its focus is the learning outcomes while its success depends on the alignment of outcomes to students' learning and course design (Biggs, 1999). It is an approach that encourages immediate reinforcement and feedback for students to maximise participation in class (Sadiq & Samir, 2014).

Modular approach allows learners to virtually self-contain concepts about certain units of course or subject and aims to build up their skills and knowledge in discrete units (Sejpal, 2013). Moreover, it allows a student to achieve mastery of one unit of content before moving on to another (Torrefranca, 2017). Various researches and literatures revealed the importance of using modules in the teaching-learning process. Cheng and Abu Bakar (2013) found out in their study that more than 75% of the lecturers find module as a useful resource book for both students and lecturers and very helpful in providing guidance and support for new and inexperienced lecturers.

Modules are generally very satisfactory in terms of physical aspects, objectives, instructions, learning, and evaluative instrument which points out that they are acceptable as a learning intervention (Larawan, 2013). Course module was found to be useful academically up to some level in improving the standards of students (Reddy, 2008). Moreover, the very essence of using modules is that students are put at the center of the teaching-learning process. Students become actively involved in knowledge construction while teachers shift from a mere knowledge transmitter to a facilitator of students' learning (Dejene, 2019).

With the occurrence of the pandemic, the higher education institutions faced a lot of challenges along teaching and learning. Certain problems and challenges have emerged such as financial burdens to cope up with "continuance of learning" (CHED, 2020a; 2020b). Students, who are staying at home to participate in their classes, do not have the resources for online learning (Mirkholikovna, 2020). Meanwhile, internet connection in the country seem to be the lowest in rank among countries in Asia (Akamai, 2017) so online learning could not be possible. Educational institutions were forced to think of the technologies to deliver instruction (Kim, 2020), both online and offline. On the other hand, while teachers and administrators were confined in their homes during the emergence of COVID-19, they were tasked to quickly revise and adapt course syllabi and requirements without proper training and refresher courses to shift to alternative teaching modalities. Teachers were encouraged to teach online when internet connection permits while in instances where a reliable internet connection cannot be guaranteed or have limited access on, some universities suspended online classes and shifted to modular approach (Simbulan, 2020). This means that one's access to the internet connection and learning devices is a continuing privilege but is a disadvantage to the marginalised (Jones, 2019) both for teachers and students.

However, despite the abundance of studies discussing the importance of modules in teaching, no local researches which focused on the feedbacks, challenges and struggles of teachers in the preparation of such materials were conducted. Teachers as the key individuals in the preparation of instructional materials such as modules, they carry the responsibility and even burdens to fulfill this task. Module preparation is a tedious task that instructors need to complete to deliver the instruction that students deserve. Having this in mind, this study intended to identify and explore the challenges of college instructors in a state university in using modular approach with a particular focus on the three phases of module preparation: start, during and after. The results of the study could give a bird's eyeview of how teachers can be assisted towards preparation and enhancement of modules.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study worked on the following research objectives:

1. Determine and explore challenges faced by college instructors before, during and after crafting modules.
2. Identify if significant differences on the challenges faced by college instructors on module preparation when grouped by profile.
3. Explore the challenges of college instructors along module preparation.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Modular teaching is concerned for each student as an individual with his/her own special aptitude and interest, goal of helping each student to think for himself, and allowing the individuality to each learner. The emphasis must be on the one–one students with unique abilities, aspiration, and influencing experiences and, again to provide quality education, the teacher must personalise and individualise the instructional programme. When a teacher devoted to individual learning, he/she finds time for personal discussion with students and giving them individual help. The individual learning may help in developing many notable and self-reliant characters, and in much more modern ways, students enjoy periods in which they pursue their interests and satisfy their curiosities (Manlove & David, 1985).

Creativity, flexibility, and lifelong learning are requirements needed to be successful in a real world. According to Struyven et al. (2010), in order for students to acquire these skills, schools need to be organized around the learner not the teacher. educational reforms have emphasised the concept of student-centeredness as one of its threads. Student-centered learning takes the idea of what is to be learned from what the teacher desires to teach and directs instruction to what students need to learn. Classrooms are now considered as “a center of intellectual inquiry,” allowing students to form ideas, take risks, make mistakes, critically think, fix mistakes, and learn how to solve problem from those mistakes. Interaction is no longer between teachers to student; it now needs to be multidirectional. Students, in the process of learning, will interact with teachers, peers, parents, and even professionals outside of the school building in order to seek and understand their learning (Ali et al., 2010; Martin, 1997).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Methodologically, this study used mixed research design which comprised both quantitative and qualitative method specifically explanatory sequential design. This involves two phases

where an initial quantitative research instrument was administered followed by a qualitative data collection phase.

Quantitative research design was employed and enabled the researcher to identify the challenges of college instructors in the preparation of self-paced learning modules in response to flexible learning style adapted by most universities in the Philippines.

Qualitative research design, on the other hand, helped the researchers explore and have a deeper insight and interpretation of the various struggles faculty members experienced as they craft self-paced learning modules.

Research Instrument

A survey questionnaire was used as the primary data gathering instrument for quantitative data. The questionnaire was self-made and was constructed based on experiences of college instructors as observed by the researcher. It has undergone experts' validation to ensure that items provided met the objectives of the study and were error-free. Experts were education graduates, have been teaching in college for more than 15 years, have researches focused on education and whose lines of expertise are indispensable. Suggestions of experts were incorporated in the instrument. The instrument has also undergone reliability testing. It was piloted to a number of instructors (non-respondents) from other campuses to test whether they fully understood the items. Responses were analysed; results revealed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.858 which implied and suggested that the items have relatively high internal consistency and can be used as instrument for the research.

Qualitative data were gathered through open-ended interviews to further explore the challenges faced by instructors along module preparation. The kind of interview conducted to participants enabled the researcher to deeply understand the challenges that instructors faced in the preparation of modules.

Sampling

There was a total of 49 respondents, who are college instructors assigned to teach in the different courses offered in the state university, were randomly selected and were treated as respondents for the quantitative part. This number comprised about 35% of the total population of instructors in the university.

The participants, who were selected purposively, for the qualitative part of the study were 15 faculty members in the university which comprised ten (10) faculty with plantilla position and five (5) with contract-of-service status. They were selected based on the following criteria: have been teaching for at least three years in the university, handled general or professional subjects, and prepared at least one module for class. Through purposive sampling, the researcher could be able understand the main issue (Creswell, 2008). The number of participants for the qualitative part was sufficient for the researcher

to build and maintain close relationship with them and further to encourage open and smooth exchange of thoughts and conversations (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006).

Data Gathering Procedures and Analysis Tools

The questionnaire was created through an online platform and sent to faculty members; however, to assure that there were no duplications of responses among respondents, a person was assigned to a number of instructors to facilitate in the process. Quantitative data were extracted and imported in a statistical software which assisted in data analysis. Frequency counts, mean and ANOVA were used to analyse the quantitative data.

The quantitative results were further explained through detailed qualitative discussion. Meanwhile, 15 instructors were interviewed to gather qualitative explanations exploring the challenges of these instructors towards module preparation. Qualitative data were analysed thematically. This method enabled the researcher to examine commonality, differences and relationships between and among the responses of participants (Harding, 2013).

RESULTS

Challenges faced by college instructors along module preparation were varied and overwhelming. These challenges were subsectioned into three phases: before, during and after module preparation. The degree of seriousness of the problems identified were discussed quantitatively while exploring these on thematically arranged discussions.

Challenges of College Instructors in Module Preparation

College instructors were faced with various challenges in their preparation of self-paced learning modules for their students. These challenges were reflected in the quantitative and qualitative data gathered from their responses.

Before crafting modules

At the beginning of the module design process, a teacher needs to be capable of different approaches to learning depending upon a range of factors. These factors can somehow influence the process, including the way one designs modules and the teaching and assessment methods to be employed (Moore & Panter, 2015).

Table 1. Degree of seriousness of problems or challenges faced by college instructors before crafting modules

Statements	Mean	Description/ Interpretation
1. Course description and outline is not stipulated in the program's CMO	2.24	Not a problem
2. Syllabus of subjects taught during previous semesters are not available.	2.49	Serious
3. Subject assigned is not in line with specialisation.	1.84	Not a problem
4. There is no collaboration among faculty who teach the same subject.	2.76	Serious
5. Crafting the module was difficult because of the absence of training.	2.92	Serious
6. Faculty members do not have a common knowledge and understanding about the differences between/among its parts.	2.78	Serious
7. Deadline set for modules submission brought pressure/stress among faculty.	3.47	Very serious
8. Resources (like books, e-books and the like) available are limited and/or outdated.	3.24	Serious
9. Internet connection is very slow.	3.73	Very serious
10. Laptops or desktops are not available for use.	2.39	Serious
Grand Mean	2.79	Serious

As shown, respondents were faced with very serious problems as to the set deadline as this brought them pressure in meeting it. Further, they faced very serious problem on internet connectivity as they experience slow connection. Also, they experienced serious problem on the non-availability of syllabi of subjects, non-collaboration of teachers with similar subjects, difficulty of crafting the module due to absence of training, having no common knowledge on parts of the module, limited/outdated resources and non-availability of laptops/desktops for use. This implies that crafting modules is not an easy task since various considerations need to be addressed so things and processes become smooth and easy.

During module preparation

Along the process of module preparation, college instructors were tested to hurdle various challenges. These were reflected in their responses in the survey questionnaires floated to them and interviews conducted with them by the researchers.

College instructors were faced with very serious problems during module preparation such as introducing topics for easier understanding of students, simplifying technical terms, difficulty of using exposition in the discussion of topics and struggle in explaining some topics. These problems could be associated to the lack of training on crafting of module as revealed in previous table which could have been addressed if there were activities held regarding the preparation of the materials. Further, respondents had serious problems as to the absence of common rules in crafting competencies/objectives/outcomes which gave them struggle to do it, lessening the number of pages through decreasing the examples

provided and anchoring enrichment activities to objectives. They were also confused about the difference of enrichment activity and comprehension check, creating rubrics, varying test items and following the art of questioning.

Table 2. Degree of seriousness of problems or challenges faced by college instructors during module preparation

Statements	Mean	Description
1. There is no common rule on crafting the learning competencies/objectives/outcomes.	3.16	Serious
2. There is a struggle on making the competencies/objectives/outcomes.	3.24	Serious
3. Introducing the topic to be easily understood by students is a challenge.	3.43	Very serious
4. Technical terms are difficult to simplify.	3.29	Very serious
5. Discussion using expository style (or detailed) was difficult.	3.31	Very serious
6. Examples used to explain a certain concept/idea are delimited to lessen the number of pages of the module.	3.18	Serious
7. Some topics are difficult to explain.	3.29	Very serious
8. Anchoring the enrichment activities to the competencies/objectives/outcomes is challenging.	3.06	Serious
9. There is confusion between enrichment activity and comprehension check.	2.94	Serious
10. Constructing the rubrics or criteria to evaluate an activity is tough.	3.06	Serious
11. Varying the test items included in the comprehension check is difficult.	3.24	Serious
12. Following the art of questioning is hard.	3.16	Serious
Total Mean	3.20	Serious

After module preparation

After crafting modules for students, the after-activities for faculty members were still challenging. Problems did not end before and during the module preparation; it continued even after modules were crafted.

To note, college instructors experienced very serious problems after they prepared their materials since modules were not reviewed by a committee, reproduction unit lack staff, there was unavailability of materials, sorting of modules was laborious and distribution was difficult. This confirms some utterances of instructors during interviews.

Table 3. Degree of seriousness of problems or challenges faced by college instructors after module preparation

Statements	Mean	Description
1. Availability of printers is limited.	3.61	Very serious
2. Materials like bond paper, ink, binding materials, and the like are not available and/or not enough.	3.55	Very serious
3. Modules did not undergo IM review.	3.47	Very serious
4. Usability of module is not guaranteed.	3.06	Serious
5. Reproduction unit is undermanned.	3.67	Very serious
6. Sorting of modules is laborious.	3.71	Very serious
7. Distribution of modules is a challenge.	3.43	Very serious
Total Mean	3.50	Very serious

Significant differences on challenges faced by faculty members in module preparation**Table 4.** Significant differences on the challenges faced by college instructors in module preparation when grouped by profile

Challenges	Profile	Mean	Description	F	Sig.
<i>Years in service</i>					
Deadline set for modules submission brought pressure/stress among faculty.	1–8 years	3.35 ^a	Very serious	3.283	0.046
	9–16 years	3.92 ^b	Very serious		
	17 years above	3.00	Serious		
Examples used to explain a certain concept/idea are delimited to lessen the number of pages of the module.	1–8 years	3.00 ^b	Serious	4.327	0.019
	9–16 years	3.67 ^a	Very serious		
	17 years above	3.33	Very serious		
Modules did not undergo IM review.	1–8 years	3.32	Very serious	4.221	0.021
	9–16 years	3.75 ^b	Very serious		
	17 years above	4.00 ^a	Very serious		
<i>BS Degree Attained</i>					
Materials like bond paper, ink, binding materials, and the like are not available and/or not enough.	Education/Education-Related Course	3.53	Very serious	3.581	0.036
	Non-education but with PES	3.76 ^b	Very serious		
	Non-Education Course	3.18 ^a	Serious		

(Continued on next page)

Table 4. (Continued)

Challenges	Profile	Mean	Description	F	Sig.
<i>Number of Modules Prepared</i>					
Resources (like books, e-books and the like) available are limited and/or outdated.	–	3.34 ^a	Very serious	4.079	0.023
	34 modules	3.29	Very serious		
	5 or more modules	2.00 ^b	Not a problem		
Introducing the topic to be easily understood by students is a challenge.	1–2 modules	3.55 ^a	Very serious	3.882	0.028
	3–4 modules	3.41	Very serious		
	5 or more modules	2.33 ^b	Serious		

Result showed that differences on the degree of the problems met college instructors as to the deadline set on submission of modules, using examples to explain a concept and absence of IM review are significant as to their years in teaching service. Further, those who have been in the service for 9–16 years are more pressured in meeting deadlines and delimiting the number of examples to decrease the number of pages used for the module compared to the younger fellow. Those who are new to the service are better in handling pressure regarding deadlines and were more flexible about giving examples to explain a concept than those who have rendered 9–16 years. Also, those who have been in the service for 17 and more are more problematic that the modules did not undergo review than those who have rendered service for 9–16 years. Those who are experienced in teaching find review as an important aspect that need to be considered so as to assure that modules are error-free and lessons and activities meet the objectives of the curriculum.

On the other hand, those who graduated non-education courses but obtain PES are more challenged on the non-availability or insufficiency of materials for the printing of modules than those non-education graduates. This could imply that non-education with PES individuals are more particular about the printing materials than those who graduated technical/non-education degrees.

The number of modules prepared was also contributory to the degree of seriousness experienced by those who prepared 1–2 and 5 or more modules as to the availability of references both online and printed and by making topics be easily understood by students. However, those who have more preparations were more relaxed in addressing the indicated problems than those who have fewer modules prepared. This implies that those who have the greatest number of preparations do not find the unavailability or insufficiency of references and making explanations easier to be understood as serious as those who have lesser module preparations.

Theme 1. Absence or insufficiency of reference materials and other resources. Results confirmed some statements uttered by respondents when responses were validated through interviews.

I was assigned to teach a new subject, I could not also find adequate references.

There are e-books available but printed books are still necessary. Probably, the University could look into this especially for new subjects offered.

I found books in the library, but some I think are already obsolete. This is a dilemma not only for me but for those who really need bulk of references other than what can be downloaded online.

This suggests that the availability syllabi of subjects to be taught is necessary to serve as references for faculty during the preparation of modules. Textbooks or books for that matter provides a syllabus for the course, serves as a road map of the learning process, provides a set of visuals, activities and readings, and helps teachers in developing materials (Basturkmen, 2010).

Aside from references, the availability of a speedy internet connection was seen as an important part in the process. Since the internet offers a wide variety of references, this can serve as an alternative, if not the main, source to enable faculty explain lessons included in the material.

One revealed,

I do not know if I am right, there are dead spots in our office why is why, I cannot connect to the internet many often. With this, I bring works at home where internet connection is faster and better.

The use of internet connection is paramount to crafting instructional materials since it stores almost everything that a person could learn. The internet can serve as an alternate to physical libraries. Since the emergence of the internet, it has become an essential tool of communication and medium for research for it provides many opportunities and information to many people around the world in many different ways (Dogruer et al., 2011). The use of recent technologies and resources in education lead to perfect teaching process and meet international standards (Geladze, 2015).

Theme 2. Lack of training on IM preparation. Also, the holding of trainings focused on crafting IM is also imperative to equip the faculty important skills needed in the preparation. The need for instructors to be trained regardless of degree attained and length of service is found necessary as this is an opportunity for them to be adept of the challenges in teaching and be at par with recent trends in education.

Various claims reflect instructors' clamor for training:

I have problems in starting to do my module. This could have been brought about by absence of training on IM preparation. Crafting the module was challenging.

No training was held. Though I can find resources online, I still need a training.

The template distributed was not enough. It should have been discussed to us in-depth. This could be done in training, I think.

Given the central importance of education in any society, teachers are expected not only to be competent but also to be professional in their subject matters. They have to possess a great deal of knowledge and skills in teaching. Thus, a good quality of teacher training and professional development, alongside with motivating environments impacts teaching/learning improvement (Boudersa, 2016). It is in this case that training for IM preparation is vital to equip teachers with knowledge and skills they need to possess in preparing modules. Teachers, despite length of service, need to develop their professional thinking and practice throughout their careers (Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications, 2014).

It implies that the role of the university in providing various resources for the teaching-learning process, as well as giving trainings for a specific skill that an instructor should possess is very important especially in this time of pandemic when almost everything, if not all aspects of the academic community is widely affected. Since, during these days, there is a move toward modular approach in teaching in technical, vocational and higher education (Malik, 2012) and shifted instruction from traditional method of instruction to an outcome-based learning paradigm (Ministry of Education, 2013), there is a need for provision of resources so as shifting becomes even and effective. Training for teachers demands attention.

Making topics easily comprehensible and technical terms simplified. Since face-to-face classes were not allowed, faculty members need to flex and strategise so the quality of the teaching-learning process is not compromised. The process of flexing and strategising were full of struggles. One of these struggles is the need to make topics be delivered to students so these are understandable or comprehensible to them. Technical terms were difficult to simplify. These were noted in interviews conducted.

It is too hard to make things easy. How can I explain the different steps in solving a mathematical problem so students will understand? I need to explain it in steps like I am explaining it to them in person. This was a challenge.

There are technical terms that need to be explained further using various examples. I cannot do that in a module.

It is too hard to explain programming concepts in a module. I cannot assure that they can follow the codes but to suffice the discussion, I include video links for students to see. However, I am not sure if all students can access these.

Some instructors find it difficult to shift from traditional to modern way of teaching. Thus, the shift from face-to-face to modular approach remains a challenge. Some other instructors also attributed the dominance of traditional teaching approach for the nature of classroom, shortage of time for covering courses, and large class size (Dejene, 2019). This is the reason why teachers find difficulty to explain topics in modular approach as they settled on doing in face-to-face classes. But, if education aims to produce independent learners, then the teacher must be regarded, not as a dispenser of knowledge, but as one who dispenses with knowledge as the major outcome of education.

Unavailability of printing materials. Availability of resources is tantamount to performing tasks and services efficiently. Thus, the absence of materials for teaching or resources for printing modules could lead to compromising efficiency and quality.

After preparing modules, college instructors struggled on various after-activities. The reproduction of modules seemed to be a burden to them. The unavailability of printing materials worsened the situation. Respondents shared their challenges on these.

I pity the reproduction unit because it's undermanned.

Due to the pandemic, there were restrictions in deliveries; thus, supplies were limited.

Sometimes I bring school to home. I print modules at home so as not to add to the burden in reproduction.

Some offices in the university, whose supplies are more than adequate. they shared their photocopiers to us.

Reproduction and distribution could not have been this difficult if printing materials were provided earlier.

The availability of materials for teachers and students are necessary to effectively fulfill the goal of education. When resources are underutilised, the didactical and pedagogical skills of teachers are imperiled. Well-equipped schools with relevant facilities which comprise instructional materials and other resources do much in standardised examination (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015).

Theme 3. Absence of IM review. The most effective teachers are not the perfect ones. They are those who believe that their works are not perfect but can be improved through careful planning and review. In statements of faculty members, IM review is very important before preparing modules for distribution. Thus, the absence of this process was a challenge for them. This is confirmed in utterances of respondents.

Because we lack time, modules were not rigidly reviewed.

Even I have lived my life in teaching, I could still appreciate that my works are checked. I could not see my own mistakes, other might. It's also an opportunity for growth when modules were reviewed.

According to Dahar and Faize (2011) instructional materials are print and non- print items that are designed to impact information to students in the educational process; thus, it is essential that modules prepared undergo instructional materials review by a certain committee. Further, the most effective teachers ensured that students efficiently acquired, rehearsed and connected knowledge (Rosenshine, 2012). Thus, this calls the academe to review materials teachers use in the process of teaching.

Theme 4. Difficulty of module distribution. The University strategised toward the distribution of modules to the students. Some students were not reached through social media due to the absence of internet connection. Others cannot be called through cellular phones since signals were not available. Struggles on module distribution were discussed in the following claims:

Module distribution was a dilemma.

The distribution of modules was challenging. Students live in various barangays in the province. There are a number of them who cannot be reached since there were no internet connection neither cellphone signals. This was too difficult.

Because we lack resources, distribution was not done one-time. It was realised in days. Thanks that others use their own vehicles to deliver modules right into the doorsteps of our students.

Since the pandemic, there were restrictions in the movement of people. Various health protocols were followed. Limitations on going out for individuals for certain ages were implemented (WHO, 2020). Thus, module distribution has become a challenge for faculty members as they need to adhere to these protocols.

The result implies that the work of a teacher does not end upon completing the module, it continues even after. The material needs to undergo review to assure the usability of the module. It has to be produced so each student is given copy. With this, resources like printing materials need to be provided so everything runs smoothly.

This result, in a way, supports the survey of the American Psychological Association (2012) that younger people experienced the most stress and the least relief, they report higher stress level than older generations and say they were not managing it well. A teacher's role and attributes are essential in the teaching process. They are an integral part of any instructional activity (Salandanan, 2012). Teaching methodologies teachers

employ is paramount to creating beneficial interactions and positive responses, and contributory to promoting self-directed learning and independent decision-making. Further, Fruitful learning is achieved when a teacher shows desirable attributes coupled with organized methodical teaching (Agsalud, 2016) Thus, the ability to manage stress and battle challenges in teaching is important.

DISCUSSIONS

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORKS

The sudden change in the mode teaching delivery in higher education in the country has challenged institutions to plan and strategise. Since the state university adapted modular approach to teaching to reach most students, college instructors crafted self-paced learning modules and experienced a lot of challenges along the way.

Findings revealed that college instructors were dominantly non-education graduates but obtained professional education units that armed them with various teaching principles and methods, were relatively young in teaching service, mostly handling core/major subjects in the courses where they were assigned and have minimal preparations and modules crafted for the current semester. Results also showed that they experienced very serious problems on meeting deadlines, slow internet connection, introducing topics for easier understanding, simplifying technical terms, using exposition in discussion, absence of IM review, unavailability or insufficiency of printing materials, undermanned reproduction unit, laborious sorting and distribution of materials to students which imply that preparation of modules is not an easy task since various considerations need to be addressed so things and processes become smooth and easy. Also, those newbies in teaching were better in managing pressure in beating deadlines and were adaptable in explaining concepts through examples; but those who were veterans were problematic that modules did not undergo IM review. Non-education graduates with PES were more challenged on the unavailability or insufficiency of materials for the printing of modules. Those who have more preparations find the unavailability or insufficiency of references and making explanations easier to be understood as a problem but not as severe as those who have lesser module preparations see it.

With some of the problems or challenges found very serious, there were various considerations noted so as to improve modular approach mode of teaching especially for state universities. The school could consider the creation of a functional committee for the review of the materials to guarantee its quality and usability, spearheading trainings on module and teaching material preparation to arm faculty with the necessary skills, providing sufficient resources that can serve as references of topics included in the modules, to name a few.

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