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 form 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. 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