

ONLINE DISTANCE LEARNING IN BARAS-PINUGAY: Grade 11 HUMMS & TVL Students' Challenges & Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 pandemic enforced government officials to declare a state of emergency to the entire Philippines. DepEd strived for an efficient way to bring knowledge to the students even without the traditional face-to-face classes. DepEd proposed an alternative way to continue the education of students by implementing online distance learning whereby classes will be conducted remotely using online platforms. While most studies in the Division of Rizal focused on the teaching strategies, effectiveness of modular distance learning, research guide in the new normal, no study has explored the challenges, issues, and possible opportunities that transpired among ODL students. Hence, this paper attempted to qualitatively investigate the challenges and opportunities of the said learning modality among SHS students. A total of 10 Grade 11 students from HUMSS and TVL strands were conveniently selected as participants of the study. An online semi-structured interview was done to collect data. Findings showed an overview of trials and prospects of the students' experiences in ODL based on the six major themes developed. Implications for classroom teachers can also be drawn from this study.

INTRODUCTION

The fight against COVID-19 pandemic threats has led to profound impacts and effects on almost all sectors of human society. Responses like community lockdown and/or quarantine of several countries have led students and teachers to study and work-from-home which resulted in the delivery of online learning platforms. The use of the available technical resources to facilitate online learning with the students has become one of the feasible solutions toward the rising issue. *The goal of this paper is to adequately understand the students' circumstances and opportunities who opted to choose online distance learning. This study will also give an overview of the effects of online learning among students to provide educators and school administrators recommendations and possible solutions on how to enhance the implementation of online learning.*

METHODOLOGY

The study used Hsieh and Shannon's (2014) directed approach of content analysis, to validate or extend conceptually the themes developed from the interview. The study aims to explore students' experiences in online distance learning. The data were collected through the online semi-structured interview from a total of 10 participants that were divided into two groups, five from the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) and five from the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL), with open-ended questions. Additionally, the student-researchers analysis of interviews was validated by an intercoder.

RESULTS

The interview transcripts revealed three major themes for each research question which students experience in online distance learning. RQ1: For the challenges: (1) intermittent WiFi connection; (2) noisy environment; and (3) lack of parental supervision and support. Students experienced some personal difficulties while they are in online distance learning but these did not stop them from learning amidst the pandemic. RQ2: Moreover, for the opportunities: (1) comfortable learning environment; (2) lower total cost; and (3) flexible schedule. Likewise, they saw the silver lining in ODL and this gave them a great time while learning.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

- (1) Teachers of online distance learning modality need to understand that students are still coping with the huge changes in the new normal.
- (2) This also provides implications for classroom teachers to tailor fit their online instructions to meet the needs of students.
- (3) This present study has limitations since few student-participants were interviewed.
- (4) The present study hopes to give significant input to some of the lived experiences of students throughout the pandemic.

