

Challenges Encountered and Coping Mechanism in New Learning Modality Among BSEd Students of Altavas College

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Abstract

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the levels of challenges encountered and coping mechanism in new learning modality among BSED students of Altavas College. The researchers collected the data by using an electronic web-based questionnaire through the Google survey tool (Google Forms) using questions modified from challenges encountered and coping mechanism. The survey comprised 2 subsections according to the participant's challenges encountered and a question corresponding to each respondent's coping mechanism. The analysis was perceived using the frequency count, percentage, and mean. Descriptive analyses were done. The result showed that the level of challenges encountered by the respondents was "evident." This signifies that the respondents are facing more challenges in their new learning modality during the Covid-19 pandemic. Also, the level of coping mechanism of Bachelor in Secondary Education of Altavas College was described as "evident." It implies their good learning habits towards using social media and asking help from the teachers and their classmates.

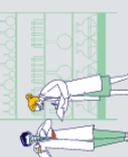
Keywords: Challenges encountered, Coping mechanism, New learning modality.

INTRODUCTION

Due to Covid-19 pandemic, people may have to live in the 'new normal' for quite a long period of time. Education is one of the sectors that has been most impacted by the pandemic. Education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of online learning whereby teaching and learning are conducted remotely through digital platforms, to ensure the continuity of the form of education. In fact, on a global scale, UNICEF (2020) reported that more than 1.5 billion learners of all ages are affected because of the school and university closures.

Challenges encountered in new learning modality are defined as some of the issues experienced by a person such as: anxiety associated with using technology; being out of one's comfort zone; (perception of) inequity in assessment, particularly in "group" assignments; and the (perceived) inability or difficulty in peer interaction, particularly in presentations (Williams et al., 2012).

A study conducted by Sundarasan et al. (2020) shows that new learning modality is their compromised physical health of some students because students spend almost the entire day for online classes and answering activities, thus giving them less time or no time to engage in physical activities.



In other context, distance education provides students much more freedom in how and when they interact; however, Sun & Rueda (2012) argued that their ability to regulate learning becomes critical.

A study conducted by (Tuscano, 2020) states that teachers in the new normal play a big part on the teaching and learning process using the chosen modality. Teachers must initiate virtual learning activities such as collaborative work to motivate students to learn. They should be more creative, motivate their students to actively participate in the virtual learning and engage the students to a deeper learning so that the desired learning outcomes are met.

It was observed by the researchers that most students encountered challenges in new learning modality such as online or modular. Despite overwhelming difficulties in new learning teachers embrace their students, allowing them to build confidence and nurture competence in the new normal and teachers value the support gained from one another as a beneficial way to stay connected.

In spite of all challenges, students still find themselves surviving in a remote learning set-up through coping mechanisms to manage their stress.

In view of the above considerations, this study's primary purpose was to determine the levels of challenges encountered and coping mechanism among BSED students. The study focused on challenges encountered in new learning modality among BSED students as independent variable and coping mechanism in new learning modality among BSED students as the dependent variable.

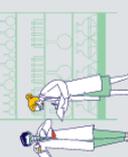
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of challenges encountered in new learning modality of BSED student during the Covid-19 Pandemic?
2. What is the level of coping mechanism in new learning modality of BSED students during the Covid-19 Pandemic?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

On Challenges Encountered in New Learning Modality

Due to Covid-19 pandemic, people may have to live in the 'new normal' for quite a long period of time. They have learned to adapt their lifestyles with this Covid-19, and to adjust to a 'new normal', which is a new way of living and going about their lives, work and communication with the people around them. Adaptation and changes are considered 'new normal'. Education is one of the sectors that has been most impacted by the pandemic. In this regard, the form of education too has changed during the Covid-19 pandemic in which teaching and learning is conducted remotely through digital platforms. The university lecturers have opted online learning approach and electronic devices as mediator of communication to replace face-to-face learning. This has led to a robust and more interactive way of learning, whereby both students and lecturers find engaging. Adaptation and changes are considered 'new normal'. Under this 'new normal' environment, parental expenditure inclined more towards electronic devices as a medium for home-based learning as reiterated by the government (Ating, 2020).



In this unprecedented situation, online learning becomes an alternative to ensure the continuity of the form of education. Education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of online learning whereby teaching and learning are conducted remotely through digital platforms. Universities adhered to the Ministry of Education's recommendation to move educational activities to a virtual teaching model using the existing institutional software and available public digital platforms. There are some issues and challenges that are related to online teaching and learning, such as accessibility, affordability, flexibility, learning pedagogy, life-long learning, and policy (Dhawan, 2020).

In a local study entitled “Difficulties in Remote Learning: Voices of Philippine University Students in the Wake of Covid-19 Crisis”, remote learning reveals a digital divide among Filipino students (Santos, 2020). This current situation in remote learning may most possibly exacerbate existing inequalities and may translate to barriers in online learning. For example, a cross-sectional study conducted nationwide reported that thirty-two percent (32 %) and twenty-two percent (22%) out of 3, 670 Filipino medical students surveyed have difficulties adjusting to new learning styles and do not have reliable internet access, respectively (Baticulon et al., 2020). For some, it may present difficulty to purchase a facilitative learning device to easily tune in to online classes and immediately turn in assignments in the online system (Santos, 2020). Despite the efforts to make education accessible for all, many difficulties are still confronting Filipino university students in the practice of distance education.

On Coping Mechanism in New Learning Modality

The World Health Organization (WHO) and Morin et al. (2020) opined that the Covid-19 Pandemic and the imposed social confinement have produced significant stress, anxiety, and worries about health and the fear of being infected, jobs, and financial problems, and uncertainty about the future. Worry, anxiety, and uncertainty are common in children, and they may include feelings that are sometimes close to those experienced by adults, such as a fear of death, a fear of their family losing, or a fear of what it means to undergo medical assistance. If schools are closed as part of necessary interventions, children will no longer have the sense of structure and excitement that the environment provides, and they now have fewer chances to be with their peers and gain the social support that is important for good mental health.

Interestingly, the World Health Organization and Pastor et al. (2020) suggest that one should need to maintain regular routines and worthwhile activities or assist in the development of new ones in a new environment like regular exercise, cleaning, everyday tasks, singing, drawing, and other activities. Maintain daily contact with loved ones via phone, e-mail, social media, or video conference. To avoid the loneliness that could lead to psychological issues, students can benefit through the use of messaging systems, the internet, and social media. Although students recognize that their leisure preferences may not be enough to combat depression and mental illness, they are seeking other ways to combat the depressive mentality during Covid-19.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Miller (2021), they proposed that friends are extremely important to teens and young adults and interacting with peers is beneficial activities for adolescents. For parents, if they notice that their teen is upset about



being trapped at home with them, a direct conversation could be beneficial. Taking care of yourself would better equip you to care about others. It is particularly important to remain engaged with your friends and family during periods of social distancing. Helping others deal with stress through phone calls or video chats will make you and your loved ones feel less depressed and isolated.

With regards to accomplishing lesson activities, the students cope by practicing time management, doing learning tasks ahead, and extending the time for learning tasks. These three coping strategies are interconnected because time management makes time flexible for other tasks. Joubert (2020) suggested that students need to make a schedule of the tasks they need to accomplish to improve their time management skills including doing lesson activities ahead and extending the time for learning tasks. She emphasized that students need to commit to making their online coursework a part of their weekly routine.

In summary, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused a drastic shift from traditional to online distance education which resulted in many difficulties to the learning delivery modes. Facing this pandemic gave every individual a roller coaster kind of emotion. However, despite overwhelming stress and difficulties as reported in recent studies, students still find silver linings out of the challenges they encounter in the practice of new learning modality. Filipino students surveyed used a combination of personal coping strategies during this pandemic. It includes connecting with friends and family to relieve stress, talking and motivating oneself, and diverting attention to other things at home to stay away from the stress caused by Covid-19. Despite the negativities, students still find themselves surviving in a remote learning set-up through coping mechanisms to manage their stress.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

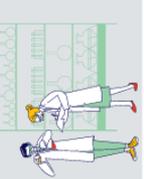
Research Design

This study employed descriptive survey research method. Survey research is defined as “the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions” (Check & Schutt, 2012). The independent variable in this study was the challenges encountered in new learning modality while the dependent variable was the coping mechanism.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the 101 students of Bachelor in Secondary Education Majors in English and Math in Altavas College purposively selected. The researcher selected 50 students per grade level who were chosen using simple random sampling.

The study was distributed the structured questionnaires to the participants by providing them a link via Facebook Messenger. As a result of the outbreak of Covid-19 and the relevant prevention steps and measures suggested by the Department of Health, an electronic web-based questionnaire through the Google survey tool (Google Forms) was developed to conform with the recommendations.



Research Instrument

The data for the study were collected by combining researcher-made and adapted and modified questionnaires that were self-administered. The questionnaire was composed of three (3) parts. Part I was used to determine the demographic profile of the respondents. This was used to determine the personal information and characteristics of the respondents in terms of sex, age, and year level. Part II was the Level of Challenges Encountered checklist. This was a 15-item checklist questionnaire which was adapted from Sander Tamm (2022) and modified by the researchers. Part III was the Level of Coping Mechanism Checklist. This was a 15-item checklist questionnaire which was adapted and from Rotasa and Cahapay (2021) and modified by the researchers.

Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaires were analyzed using the following statistical tools: Frequency Count (f) was used to determine the number of times an event occurred in levels of challenges encountered and coping mechanism in new learning modality among BSED students.

Sum was used to determine the whole observation in levels of challenges encountered and coping mechanism of BSED students in new learning modality.

Percentage (%) was used to determine the percentage of observations and survey responses in challenges encountered and coping mechanism of BSED students in new learning modality

Mean was used to determine the average in levels of challenges encountered and coping mechanism of BSED students in new learning modality.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents from the Major in English and Math students of Altavas College.

Table 1. Distribution of participants according to their designated year level

Designated Year Level	N	n
First year	40	13
Second year	15	10
Third year	21	13
Fourth year	21	14
Grand total	101	50

The respondents were classified according to their sex, age, and year level. The target number of respondents was randomly selected by the researchers and was used as the basis for the final respondent as shown in Table 2.

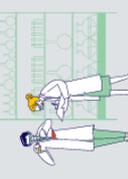


Table 2. Distribution of participants according to their sex, age, and year level

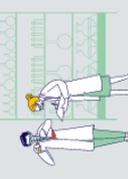
Variables	f	%
Sex		
Female	40	80
Male	10	20
Age		
19 years old and below	12	24
20 to 24 years old	37	74
25 years old and above	1	2
Year level		
1 st year	13	26
2 nd year	10	20
3 rd year	13	26
4 th year	14	28
Total	50	100%

In total, 50 respondents, comprising 10 males and 40 females, participated in the online survey conducted in the month of April 2022. Majority (74%) of the respondents were 20-24 years old. In the context of year level designation, 13 respondents were first year college, 10 were second year college, 13 were third year college, and 14 respondents were fourth year college.

Table 3. Mean Results of the Level of Challenges Encountered in New Learning Modality among BSED students

Variable	Mean	Description
Level of Challenges Encountered	3.77	Evident
Scaling		
Descriptors		
4.21-5.00	Very evident	
3.42-4.20	Evident	
2.61-3.40	Moderately evident	
1.81-2.60	Less evident	
1.00-1.80	Least evident	

The results highlighted “evident” challenges encountered which signifies that the respondents are facing challenges in their new learning modality during the Covid-19 pandemic. It indicates that the students fully supported the online learning system as a tool to help them learn beyond the new normal learning, but the problem is the accessibility of the



Internet. It also emphasizes that students suffer from a lot of stressful events due to the many responsibilities they have to handle every day.

Aside from the above-mentioned statement, another reason could also be from the financial problem, inadequate learning resources, and especially the effect of Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 pandemic has impacted both students and lecturers in many ways and it can lose the motivation and interest of the students to learn more. Despite overwhelming stress and difficulties in new learning modality, students still find silver linings out of the challenges they encountered in the practice of new mode of learning.

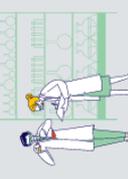
The results of this study are similar to the survey study by Francisco (2021); his study found that the most occurring problem in virtual learning of language is the Internet connectivity problem, whereas five out of the seven or 71.43% of the respondents expressed the same concern. Similarly, the local studies of study by Mudga et al. (2020) discovered that new learning modality offers lack of discussion among students brought about by Covid-19 lockdowns.

Table 4. Mean Results of the Level of Coping Mechanism in New Learning Modality among BSED students

Variable	Mean	Description
Level of Coping Mechanism	3.58	Evident
Scaling	Descriptors	
4.21-5.00	Very evident	
3.42-4.20	Evident	
2.61-3.40	Moderately evident	
1.81-2.60	Less evident	
1.00-1.80	Least evident	

The results highlighted "evident" which signifies that the respondents hold on how learning habits make their studies easier to understand and make their learning experience comfortable and enjoyable. It also implies their good learning habits towards using social media and asking help from the teachers and classmates. These result can be described as methods and means of obtaining information. It helps students organize their efforts to solve problems, develop skills and acquire knowledge.

Aside from the above-mentioned statement, another reason is the respondents setting aside their time, free from distractions during study and to take breaks to keep focused. Additionally, these may also be associated with the respondents "evident" scores because of their positive thinking and attitudes towards learning.



The current study's findings are nearly similar to the study conducted by Rotas et al. (2020) in which it showed that 32 respondents cope with the different challenges in new learning modality by looking for good space and time. Students also cope with by borrowing learning resources. Approaching the teachers is also one way of coping with bulks of lesson activities. Both studies suggested that respondents continue to learn despite Covid-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study stated above, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The level of challenges encountered in new learning modality among BSED students of Altavas College was "evident". The result signified how the respondents suffer from the challenges brought by Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 Pandemic has impacted both students and lecturers in many ways and it can lose the motivation and interest of the students to learn more. Despite overwhelming stress and difficulties in new learning modality students still find silver lining out of the challenges they encounter in the practice of new mode of learning.
2. A result of "evident" was shown on the level of coping mechanism in new learning modality among Bachelor in Secondary Education students of Altavas College as based on the garnered overall learning habit score. It signifies that the respondents hold an optimistic or positive perception towards learning. It shows that the respondents have good learning habits that help them to gather ideas and information in convenient and easy way. Therefore, the result showed high and positive learning habits of the respondents. It increases their confidence, competence, and self-esteem. They can also reduce anxiety about tests and deadlines.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made;

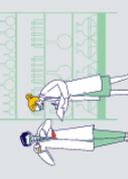
1. It is recommended for the BSED students to cope with academic and personal anxiety through active and passive coping strategies.

For the teaching staff, it is recommended to continuously encourage the students in order to help them release their anxiety and stress, allowing them to build confidence and nurture competence in the new normal.

For the parents, it is recommended that they motivate and nurture their child in a supportive home environment, support them in all ways and monitor their children in all aspects so that they can guide them properly.

For the college administrators, it is recommended that online teaching and modular classes present some challenges for the students and teachers. Furthermore, ready printed self-learning materials and adequate learning resources should be provided.

For the Local Government Units (LGUs), it is recommended to provide timely, accurate, and understandable information. They may implement this action by using social media as a platform and the content may be written by utilizing English, Filipino, and Aklan's local language, Akeanon, as the medium of instruction, to be easily understood by the citizens in their municipality.



2. To the students, it is suggested to seek support from family, friends, classmates, and teacher. Despite overwhelming difficulties in new learning students should find themselves surviving in a remote learning set-up through coping mechanisms to manage their stress.

For the instructors, it is recommended that they should give consideration for those students that have difficulties adjusting to new learning styles and do not have reliable Internet access. For the parents or guardians, it is recommended to create a home environment that encourages learning and to avoid distractions to be able for them to maintain focus and concentration on their class. Also, they should motivate their child so that they will learn, lessen their stress and anxiety by showing support and encouragement.

It is recommended to the college administrators to have the equipment and resources necessary to deliver educationally effective curriculum. They are able to shape academic goals and are dedicated to getting their students to achieve them.

It is suggested to the Local Government Units (LGUs) to make use of their authority by utilizing and distributing their resources accordingly. They may continuously provide their service which may still be done by following the safety measures to avoid spreading and acquiring the virus.

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