

Standardization of Alternative Learning Modality in the Higher Education Institution (HEIS) in Albay

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ABSTRACT

Standardizing alternative learning modalities in private and public schools encountered problems among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Albay. Poor internet connectivity and lack of trainings for faculties and students is the most massive problem upon implementing the alternative learning modality with limited face-to-face classes. The study gives an important guide and information to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Albay in implementing standardization of alternative learning modalities with or without the pandemic. To accomplish the objectives of the research, the mixed method is used a descriptive qualitative method and a descriptive-quantitative method. The primary sources of data were the school administrators' Higher Education Institutions in the first district, second district, and third district province of Albay. To create and implement an effective standardization of alternative learning modality among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay, a proposed model called

BETIZ model is projected. It represents the processes to Build, Evaluate, Test, Implement, and Zeal for Excellence in making operations of alternative learning modality successful that can be adopted by the target beneficiary of the study.

Keywords — Education, standardization, learning management systems, alternative learning modality, blended learning, BETIZ model, mixed method, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

During the pandemic in the Philippines 2020, private and public schools had difficulties in the adaptation of alternative learning modalities. Administrators, School Heads, Teachers, Parents, and students were surprised by the changes made by the government. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) had difficulties with the implementation of different alternative learning modalities. The main problem of alteration in the Philippines is that various locations have very slow internet connectivity.

Broadband access has become a top concern for policymakers as the digital divide threatens to leave rural communities behind. In the U.S., recent Federal Communications Commission (FCC) estimates suggest that at least 9.3 million rural residents have inadequate broadband service (Federal Communication Commission, 2021).

Standardization of alternative learning modalities in private and public schools encountered problems among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Albay. Poor internet connectivity and lack of trainings for faculties and students is the most massive problem upon implementation of the alternative learning modality with limited face-to-face classes. Mostly, faculty members had difficulties adopting a new learning modality in the reason of that they had an insufficient understanding of the use of technology, especially those who are handling general education subjects. The study will give an important guide and information to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Albay in implementing standardization of alternative learning modalities with or without the pandemic.

FRAMEWORK

The Davis Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (1989) (Silva, 2015) is engaged in predicting the use and acceptance or Standardizing the alternative learning modality in the HEIs in Albay. Perceived Usefulness will be the prospective user's probability that using the specific application system will enhance job performance. PU is a factor that measures how useful a blended learning modality is to its users. Perceived Ease of Use will be defined as the degree to which users of blended learning modality are free of effort. In other words, it is a variable that will indicate how easy the blended learning modality is for users. Attitude will be the user's evaluation of the desirability of employing a particular blended learning modality. It is the perception of the users regarding the blended learning modality. Behavioural Intention will be the measure of the likelihood of a person employing the blended learning modality. External Variables will be external variables that can be divided into three factors which are Social Factors, Cultural Factors, and Political Factors: (1) Social Factors such as language, skills, and facilitating conditions will show how society influences a person to use blended learning modality. (2) Cultural Factors such as the use of blended learning modality in certain cultures. (3) Political Factor will measure the impact of blended learning modality in politics and political crisis.

Learning styles theory also will be used to say that the various ways that people learn or comprehend new knowledge, as well as differences in how they process, comprehend, communicate, and recall information. Howard Gardner defined learning styles as an individual's approach to a variety of activities 1983. Visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic categories are all used to classify them. Tools like diagrams, flowcharts, drawings, and symbols can assist people who learn best visually to understand new ideas since they help people learn to see. Visual learners absorb information primarily by seeing it or by visualizing it mentally. They Are imaginative and can easily picture complex scenarios, images, or ideas without reference. Enjoy art, aesthetics, and the written word. Kinaesthetic learners acquire knowledge by doing something. University students may find this to be the most difficult learning method because there aren't always many possibilities for hands-on learning during lectures; because of this, laboratories and tutorials are much more essential for these students. Try to utilize every one of the senses while you're learning; the more senses you can use, the better your memory will be because you'll have more signals. If you're a kinaesthetic learner, you can increase the value of your study notes by including a number of examples

for each subject. Consider using an example from the text, lecture, or lab, and then simply come up with one of your own. The more specific your constructed example is, the better you will remember it—and, ideally, the concept it is portraying! The process of listening helps auditory learners learn. As read-and-write learners, attending lectures, tutorials, and group discussions is essential for them (and essential for the rest of us; skipping lectures is never an option!).

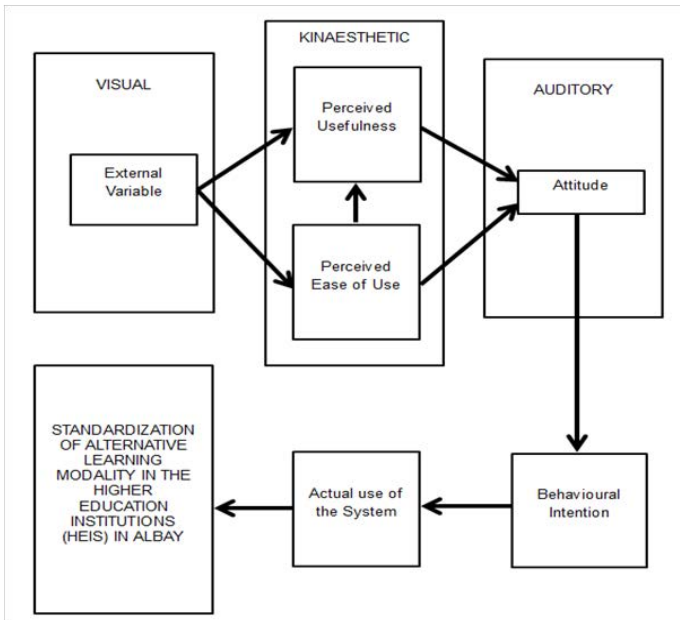


Figure 1 . Theoretical Paradigm

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to identify the needs in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay for the use of the alternative learning modality with or without the pandemic. Along with this, the study also aims to: (1) Identify the common alternative learning modality of HEIs in the province of Albay, (2) Determine the advantages and disadvantages of the common alternative learning modality of the HEIs in Albay, (3) Evaluate the feasibility of standardization of alternative learning modality of HEIs in Albay, (4) Propose a model for alternative learning modality that can be adopted by the target beneficiaries.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To accomplish the objectives of the research, the mixed method is used a descriptive qualitative method and a descriptive quantitative method. The qualitative methods can be regarded as more relevant and pertinent to comprehend the meaning that individuals give to events that they experience (Merriam, 1998). The descriptive quantitative method collected quantifiable data from the respondents, which the researcher had the capability to provide clear information about the study and its variables.

Research Site

The study site is the province of Albay, which has three (3) districts. The first district has eleven (11) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), three public schools, and eight private schools. The second district has (19) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), three (3) public schools, and sixteen (16) private schools. The third district has nine (9) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), four (4) public schools, and five (5) private schools. The primary sources of data were the school administrators of Higher Education Institutions in the first district, second district, and third district province of Albay. The participants were school administrators that can be represented by the School President, Dean, or Program Chair of the institution.

Instrumentation

The research instrument was a survey in a form, printed copy or machine copy, and soft copy form as a primary tool in this study. Data collection is done by a questionnaire and interview with the school administrators, deans, and program chairs from different Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay. The soft copy form is sent using messenger if the focal person is busy or unavailable. The questionnaire was answerable by a yes or no, checklist, identifying the advantages and disadvantages in a blank column and encircling the number of choices. Responses are collected on the day of the face-to-face interview and as scheduled on their vacancies or sent the data via messenger.

Data Collection

The researcher requested a list of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay to the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) thru

messenger. The researcher distributed and asked to sign a receiving copy of the communication letters in the identified (HEIs) in Albay for data gathering. The researcher uses a motor vehicle upon distributing the communication letters and the survey instrument. The interview is being conducted on the day received of the communication letter if the respondent is available on their time. A picture of the school and the respondent is captured in an android phone after the interview, and data gathering is done. The researcher had difficulty in the data gathering process as per schedule by the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) because of the typhoon name “Paeng” and heavy rains that resulted in declaring cancellation of classes in the province of Albay. The researcher made several follow up on the survey form among schools that set a date of schedule interviews, but it was always said for some reasons; it has a meeting, it is on the seminar, there is an audit, they have final examinations, and we will reschedule the interview.

Data analysis priory coding scheme will be used based on the prospect indicators (Efficiently in Teaching, Internet Connection, Learning Cost, Access to Learning Materials, and Ease of Use).

The researcher used weighted mean, the formula on the results of the survey from the evaluation of the feasibility of standardization of blended learning modality as alternative delivery of learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Respondents’ common alternative learning modality, as a result of the collected data, the respondents’ in all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay are using alternative learning modality. The status of different distance learning modalities utilized during the interview in data gathering. It demonstrates that 13 schools are utilizing blended online learning, which combines synchronous and asynchronous online learning; 22 schools are utilizing hybrid flexible learning, also known as HyFlex learning, which adapts simultaneous face-to-face and synchronous online teaching and learning; two (2) schools are utilizing blended block learning, which combines blocks of online learning and in-person learning, including practicum, fieldwork, and hands-on workshops, ten (10) schools are utilizing classic blended learning.

The Respondents’ state the advantages and disadvantages of the common alternative learning modality of the HEIs in Albay, advantage on efficiently in teaching, there are many benefits of the face-to-face format; this teaching modality provides in-person, real-time interaction between faculty-students and

student-student, which in turn can spark innovative questions and conversations. Students have an opportunity to seek clarification or respond to their questions in their classroom (Paul & Jefferson, 2019). Similarly, Alowed (2020), the student motivated to attend virtual classes; i.e., the teachers' interaction, the ability to record lectures and watch them when needed, the ability to monitor the current situation, and the discussion board and online chat functions provided them with opportunities to learn and practice. Thus, the disadvantages some instructors were not cooperative, changing the time of the class without prior notice, and not coordinating with other instructors, thereby overwhelming their students with assignments.

The findings that poor internet connection can be a significant barrier are in line with previous research. For example, Altunay (2019), Hamad (2017), and Ja'ashan (2020) found that their students complained about having internet connection problems. To access a more reliable internet connection, people who live in rural areas must travel to the city. The school was unable to install technology that needed a quick internet connection due to the poor connection. Currently, the leading internet service providers in the nation have made significant upgrades to the provinces' internet access, taking it from 2G to 3G and even 4G in some areas. The additional disadvantage, it confirms evidence reported by Ja'ashan (2020), who mentioned problems accessing content online, and Altunay (2019), who mentioned technical problems when using distance learning. In the Philippines, residents of rural areas must travel to the city To use a more reliable internet connection. The university was unable to install technologies that needed a fast internet connection due to the connection's slowness, and this put the school's pupils in a difficult situation because they couldn't easily access e-learning websites (2019).

The advantage is the reduced cost. This states that blended learning is economical, benefits the students who formerly spent considerable time commuting to the campus, and saves them the associated expenses Hamad (2017) and according to Stein and Graham (2017), teachers and students will benefit from less travel time, fewer transport savings, and fewer parking costs (if payment is required). It makes the spending of both teachers and students more effective. In other words, this would offer more benefits to students and teachers.

They found that blended learning activities improved interactions between the students and the teacher, offered more flexible learning opportunities, improved the students' language skills, increased their confidence, and motivated them to log in to other social media accounts. They also found that the students reported

experiencing technical problems when their system had not been updated Gulnaz et al. (2020). According to Sofi and Laafon (2020), students appreciated the idea of distance learning through the Google Classroom platform.

It proves that online classes have had a positive impact on improving the students' punctuation, spelling, and grammar skills (Al Bataineh et al., 2019) and that virtual classes enhanced the language learners' communication skills. Hussain Al-Qahtani (2019) found that blended learning provides additional learning opportunities to students Alowed (2020). Bir (2019) showed that online teaching has a negative effect on students' academic performance, except for students with high academic performance, especially for those students not familiar with the technologies or slow learners that need attention.

Proposed model for alternative learning modality that can be adopted by the target beneficiaries, to create and implement an effective standardization of alternative learning modality among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay, a proposed model called BETIZ model is projected. It represents the processes to Build, Evaluate, Test, Implement, and Zeal for Excellence in making operations of alternative learning modality successful that can be adopted by the target beneficiary of the study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing finding and interviews of this study, the following conclusions have been identified: (1) the data is collected among the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay, which will identify the common alternative learning modality they used. Hybrid flexible or HyFlex learning is the most commonly used blended learning among the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay in the first, second, and third districts based on respondents' responses.

(2) In describing the advantages and disadvantages of a Learning Management System (LMS) among the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Albay, it is stated that the results of the interview and observation of the dean in the college provide a significant understanding and effectiveness. Advantageous in terms of; can easily manage teaching materials, more references can be accessed, it allows flexibility in all phases of teaching and learning, easy use for the teacher to upload and prepare lessons can easily track students' progress, discussion can be recorded, reducing time and effort, saves money, reaches a big number of learners, can be helpful in research, convenient access to information,

and promotes collaboration even for remote learning. Hence, disadvantages were defined in terms of; the reliability of exams, students cannot make a clarification and teachers following up on the activities and discussion, lack of interaction and engagement, cheating during online exams, slow learners cannot easily understand the lessons, background noise of one can affect others, error on posting, late and poor on attendance, poor signal, unavailable during a brownout, poor internet connection, it is inaccessible to others that some have very limited access to the internet, unstable internet, weak internet, more expenses on the part of the school, more learning cost on module, printing and materials and setting of internet connection, expensive, costly on some students on data, additional expenses to meet technical specifications and other software requirements, high maintenance cost, and expensive on the part of the teacher.

(3) The collected data from the first, second, and third district mostly showed the feasibility of blended learning is much feasible which is that blended learning are well suited to a large group, better preparation and feedback, reduction of cost, gathering data for better insights and overall effectiveness and usefulness of the blended learning's. However, with indicators on the data, with a feasible score, it takes a long time to learn the Blended Learning modality due to lack of training on faculty or some reason that the respondent might encounter. (4) The collected data and information will be a big help in constructing the proposed blended learning model, which the target beneficiaries of the study can adapt.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The study's findings will give essential guidance and information to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Albay in implementing standardization of alternative learning modalities with or without the pandemic. The study's target beneficiary can utilize the BETIZ model to standardize the operations of alternative learning modalities for a successful implementation.

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