

PEDAGOGY

for Online Learning

Theory and Practice

Rodrigo M. Velasco
Ruel F. Ancheta
Chinaza Solomon Ironsi
editors



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Preface

During this unprecedented time, almost all educational institutions have shifted from traditional learning to online learning. When the COVID-19 hit the world, online teaching was no longer an option but a necessity. Due to government restrictions and other related protocols, schools, colleges, and universities opted to deliver academic instructions into online to ensure that students still receive quality learning they deserve. Online learning is a tool in which teaching and learning process still become student-centered, innovative and flexible. However, online learning can also become a disadvantage as there are many challenges associated with online teaching and learning. This e-book offers the different perspectives on online learning: framework, learning experiences both on students and teachers and its associated future management.

The introductory part of this book gives an overview and framework of online learning. It provides technical discussions of learning management systems and teaching and learning modalities used in online learning. It serves as guide in the development of the appropriate learning management system and modality relevant to the capacity and necessity of the academic institutions. The authors shared their actual experiences in the development and management of the systems and programs in online learning.

Part 2 of the book contains the efficacy of online learning experience as per the students' perspective. It highlights the attitude of students towards distance learning at the peak of

the pandemic termed as ‘behavioral Coronaphobia.’ This part also highlights the expectations of high school and higher education students on online learning and teacher-created videos as a tool in the online learning. The authors shared the results of their studies on the actual experience of their students which unveiled the various positive and negative facets of online learning.

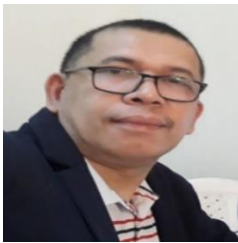
In part 3, the efficacy of online learning as per teachers’ perspective is presented. This part highlights the experience of the rural science teachers and the school administrator during the new normal in education. Recommendations outlined on this part serve as bases for further analysis in terms of online teaching-learning implementation. Meanwhile, the future of online learning is outlined in part 4, which can be a basis for further review. The model contained in the paper can be particularly applied in higher education where online platform may be adapted for long in the post-pandemic new normal.

This e-book offers major research results on the conduct and implementation of online teaching and learning in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. It provides a unique perspective on the research issues regarding the effects of online learning from many experts in this field.

Let us learn from the various personal experiences and perspectives of the researchers from various fields of specialization!

About the editors

Dr. Rodrigo M. Velasco has a multi-cultural perspective of education and research having worked as a professor and administrator in the Philippines, CNMI, USA and Sultanate of Oman. His orientation on multiculturalism and diversity trained him to cope with different cultural and geographical settings. He is currently an assistant professor of business management and accounting at Gulf College, Sultanate of Oman. As an academician, he has professional qualifications such as Doctor of Business Administration, Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership from School of Business London, and Certified Human Resource Professional and Certified Marketing Professional from Qualifi, United Kingdom. As a researcher, he is the founding president of the Institute of Industry and Academic Research Incorporated as a platform for open access publications.



Dr. Ruel F. Ancheta is currently an Assistant Professor in Gulf College with more than 2 decades of teaching experience in the graduate and undergraduate levels. Coupled with his teaching, he has massed industry experience in the field of Human Resource Management and Training and Development. He is a motivated lecturer who strives to make each student feel heard and cared for. He is dedicated to his profession and committed to the development of his students. His field of interests are English Language Teaching, Educational Management and Leadership, and Human Resource Management and Development. He is currently a member of

the Research Council- Oman (TRC). He has written and published various researches in the field of education and English Language Teaching.



Dr. Chinaza Solomon Ironsi is a language instructor at the Department of English Language Teaching, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Near East University in Cyprus. He currently teaches English language at Rauf Denktas University. He is a member of TESOL Africa and editorial board member of international journal of TESOL studies. He has published numerous articles and presented papers in national/international conferences. His research interests are in all areas of language teaching and education. He is happily married to Sarah Ironsi and has two kids Blyss and Apryl.

Featured authors:

Dr. Salvacion M. Domingo

Dr. Salvacion Domingo is currently an assistant professor in the Faculty of Computing Studies at Gulf College, Sultanate of Oman. She is a graduate of Doctor in Information Technology, Master of Science in Computer Science, and Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from AMA University in the Philippines. She has over 16 years of teaching experience in the Philippines and abroad. She has authored and co-authored a number of research and projects in IT. She is a member of the Philippine Society of IT Educators in the Philippines (PSITE) and Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA). In addition, she is a peer reviewer of The Research Council (TRC) in the Sultanate of Oman.

Marco Paulo J. Burgos

Marco Paulo J. Burgos finished Master of Science in Information Technology at Rizal Technological University, Mandaluyong City. He finished Bachelor of Science in Information as his undergraduate course in Philippine Women's University CDCEC-Calamba and a two-year diploma course in Electro-Mechanics Technology at Dualtech Training Center in Canlubang, Calamba City, Laguna. He is currently working as a lecturer, member of software development committee, and research adviser in the Department of Computing and Informatics at the City College of Calamba. He has various certifications such as National Certificate II in Computer Systems Servicing, Trainers Methodology Certificate 1, National TVET Trainer Certificate and Accredited Competency Assessor for Computer Systems Servicing Certificate.

Helen Bancod-Ancheta

Helen Bancod-Ancheta is currently a School Principal of St. Vincent Blessed School of Manila with 28 years teaching experiences. She has been a Pre-elementary School Directress of Villagers Montessori School in Quezon City for 12 years and a School Principal of St. Gabriel School of Norzagaray in Bulacan for almost five years. As an academician, her field of interest is language teaching, educational management, and developmental reading.

Associate Professor Hiroko Kanoh

Hiroko Kanoh is an associate professor in the Institute of Arts and Sciences National University Corporation Yamagata University, Yamagata prefecture in Japan. Her areas of specialization are educational technology, cyber psychology and ICT education. She has more than 20 international and 100 national publications and 30 authored books. She was awarded the Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Minister's Commendation of the field of science and technology in 2010. She graduated from the master's program Tokyo Gakugei University, Tokyo in Japan through the doctoral program at Waseda University, Tokyo in Japan.

Angela L. Reginaldo

Angela L. Reginaldo is presently the Director for Extension and Training Services of the Laguna State Polytechnic University. Has been in the teaching profession for 31 years, handling various mathematics and computer subjects. Has finished BS Applied Mathematics, major in Operations Research at the University of the Philippines at Los Banos, and has finished Master of Arts in Education, with specialization in Administration and Supervision. An active member and incumbent Vice President for Tertiary Level of the Mathematics Teachers Association of the Philippines – San Pablo City Chapter. A Board Member of the Mathematics Mentors of San Pablo City.

Dr. Delon A. Ching

Dr. Delon A. Ching is the Chairperson for Research and Development Office and Mathematics Instructor in the College of Teacher Education of Laguna State Polytechnic University, San Pablo City Campus. He teaches Mathematics and professional subjects in the undergraduate program, statistics and methods of research in the graduate program. He served as panel expert and thesis adviser to students majoring Mathematics and Educational Management. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation, Master's degree in Southern Luzon State University and Doctorate degree in Laguna State Polytechnic University.

Prof. Rekha Mahajan

Prof. Rekha Mahajan is the Principal at Jagannath Institute of Education, JEMTEC, Greater Noida, India. She is a post graduate in Physics and Education with Doctorate in Education. She was awarded with the Prestigious Excellence in Teaching Award for her outstanding contribution in the field of Education during the International Conference at Maharana Pratap University, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India in December 2017. She has over three decades of teaching and administrative experience at various renowned academic institutions. She is the founder Principal of two schools located in Haryana. She has authored and presented several research papers at National and International conferences and has delivered several expert talks on relevant topics.

Jahfet N. Nabayra

Jahfet N. Nabayra is currently a college instructor and the chairperson of the Quality Assurance unit of the Aklan State University - College of Teacher Education where he graduated with a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Mathematics degree as Magna Cum Laude last 2016. He is currently pursuing his Doctor of Philosophy in Science Education major in Mathematics at the West Visayas State University. He has ongoing and completed researches in the fields of mathematics education, instructional material development, ethnomathematics, and flexible learning modalities in the new normal. In addition, he has published some of his completed researches in local and international refereed journals.

Juliet C. San Luis

Juliet C. San Luis is currently a fourth-year college education student at Calayan Educational Foundation Incorporated under the Bachelor of Secondary Education program major in Science. She is a 23-year-old aspiring teacher from Lucena City, Quezon, Province. She has been consistently an honor student leading her class academically with humility. She serves as a leader, being the Vice President for Internal Affairs of Young Educators' Circle in CEFI. She shows great interest in research events and conferences, particularly in the field of education, intending to raise awareness and empower others through knowledge that academic writing can provide.

Michael Jere' D. Abiol

Michael Jere' D. Abiol is currently the Business Administration Program Head at St. Peter's College in Iligan City. He is now pursuing a Doctor of Management at Capitol University in Cagayan De Oro City. His research interests include business administration, business education, management, finance, innovation, and design thinking. Mr. Abiol pursued and completed BS Business Administration (2013) and Master of Business Administration (2015). In addition, he also earned units of the Doctorate in Business Administration (2019). The author's extensive expertise in academia and the business world established his credibility of business education in higher education.

Wai Wai Than

Wai Wai Than is a former lecturer at Department of Educational Psychology in Sagaing University of Education. From that university, she got her bachelor's degree (BEd) in 2008 and Master's degree (MEd) specializing in Advanced Educational Guidance and Counselling in 2012. At present, she is also studying as a fourth year PhD student at Yangon University of Education. Her PhD dissertation focuses on student satisfaction in the field of higher education. She has delivered lectures on educational psychology to undergraduate and post-graduate students, conducting her PhD dissertation, and supervising MEd theses.

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The Administrative Challenge of the ‘New Normal’ in Education

Dr. Ruel F. Ancheta

Introduction

The operation of the private basic education institutions in the country and around the world was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic which began in December 2019. It became a worldwide health crisis where everyone were literally affected regardless of age, gender and social status. The world stopped and economy collapsed as all businesses shutdown operations. For instance, most countries closed the schools, colleges and universities to contain the spread of the virus. The crisis became a dilemma not only to the health sectors but also to the education sectors. When the Philippine government ordered closures of all educational institutions, the disruptions were sudden since classes were still running. At the height of the pandemic, educational institutions came out with remote learning as an alternative solution. The immediate action and strategy aims to mitigate the closure while continuously delivering quality education.

The sudden shift to online learning created a hot debate in the Philippines citing the poor living conditions of the learners. Magsambol (2020) cites an obvious gap between those who can and cannot afford the resources to avail the new education platform. The general condition of children in the public school system sends a message of inequality with the DepEd’s mantra ‘no child left behind.’ However, learning cannot be cancelled as much as to drive the economy. This led to a tighter measures for education institutions in sustaining its operations despite the impending risk.

One of the basic problems seen by Kasrekar (2020) is the conduct of classes despite of the closure order. As the face to face classes

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pose higher risk of spread, the most viable solution is through online teaching and learning. This platform challenges both the teachers and the students as it occurs something new to them. This calls for an ‘adopt quickly’ response to the new normal in teaching and learning amidst the pandemic (Tanhueco-Tumapon, 2020). The shift to online learning was too sudden at a very short notice but academic institutions have to strategize and accelerate new forms of teaching pedagogy. The question of how ready the schools are in terms of technical infrastructure is still left unanswered. Reopening of the schools at this stage is really expensive (Felter & Maizland, 2020). Magsambol (2020) cites that the Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations posed threat of closure of over 400 private schools due to lack of enrollees.

Private basic education institutions in the Philippines are not funded by the government. They operate in accordance with the laws and regulations set by DepEd and follow the same curriculum as the public schools. The public school is basically free, but parents with financial capacity opt to send their children to private schools due to smaller class size and better facilities and resources. The role of the private basic education institutions in the Philippines play a vital role in educating the minds of young Filipinos in terms of quality services (Acidre, 2019). The House Bill 4813 created the Bureau of Private Schools (BPS) that regulates the conduct of educational programs of all private basic education institutions in accordance with the DepEd standards. The bureau undertakes studies and prepares prototype curricular designs and guidelines to improve the curricular offerings of the private schools. All the programs and activities of the private education institutions are still under the supervision of DepEd (Carcamo 2014).

This article examines the administrative challenges faced by the private basic education institutions in the Philippines in the ‘new normal’ of teaching and learning modality. It particularly assesses the different factors considered by the private schools in shifting to the online learning.

Discussion

Most countries all over the world are focused on how to start the new school year within the ‘new normal’ of teaching and learning without depriving the students of their right to quality education. The public and private academic institutions in the Philippines are instructed by DepEd to come up with a learning continuity plan (LCP), a package of education intervention in response to the challenges in basic education brought by Covid-19 pandemic. This strategic plan is designed to carry out the conduct of classes amidst pandemic. It is a commitment of the government in protecting the health and safety of learners, teachers, and school personnel under the health protocol of the Department of Health (DOH) and the World Health Organization (DepEd Order Nos. 12 and 13, 2020).

a. *The Learning Continuity Plan*

Per DepEd Order Nos. 12 and 13 s. 2020, the LCP contains two major parts: the rationale and the operationalization home-based learning through modular, online or a combination of modular and online (blended approach). The rationale is an easy part of the LCP as it only indicates the nature of the school which include government recognition or permit number, accreditation, and its classification whether small, medium or big school. It also includes the location of the school, summary of the number of students for the past two school years, number of administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff, and number of classrooms and other facilities. The number of currently enrolled students are included in the rationale. In reality, this part shows a drastic decrease on the number of current enrolment in most of the private basic education institutions as compared to the past two years data. This is because most of the students transferred to the public school. It was clearly stated by DepEd Secretary in the interview conducted by Rappler on 08 July 2020 that the transfer of students to public schools is due to the economic downturn. Parents who used to send their child in the private schools have lost their jobs during the pandemic. She also said that almost 200,000 students from private schools had transferred to public schools.

The operationalization part of the LCP is a very comprehensive plan in response to the new normal in education. This part needs strategic planning and coordination with the stakeholders in order to come up with a comprehensive contents as per DepEd guidelines. The operationalization part include 10 major contents which are school readiness, platform and support, content, assessments, teachers preparation, learners capability, parents role, communication plan, continuance, and monitoring and evaluation. All these require proper preparation, brainstorming, meeting, survey and coordination. Briones (2020), DepEd Secretary, emphasized that the basic education learning continuity plan in the time of Covid-19 is the response of the department to the challenges posed by Covid-19 in the field of education. She pointed out that education must continue whatever the challenges and difficulties faced now and in the future. Thus, the LCP is an integrated output of the Department in consultations with advisers, legislators, executive directors, teachers, parents, learners and the general public.

All private basic education institutions must have a clear statement of its readiness in the new normal. This readiness include consultation with stakeholders as to how the new normal would take place such as online enrollment, the date of school opening, teaching and learning modality, and the availability of the learning resources. A sample class program needs to be presented on this content. In this item, the DepEd wants to find out if the private basic education institutions are ready to continue their services to their stakeholders during the pandemic. Hernando-Malipot (2020) cites the DepEd directive that as long as no face-to-face classes, basic private education institutions and other non-DepEd schools are allowed to continue their respective school openings. The non-DepEd schools which started or scheduled to start their classes are allowed to proceed with the provision of using distance learning (DLE). However, parents assert that this ‘home schooling’ scenario is unfavorable to the students. Burges et al. (2020) agree that home schooling is not only a massive shock to parents but also to the social life and learning of the students.

b. School's Plan for Compliance with Minimum Health Standards

DepEd Order No. 14, s. 2020 instructs all private basic education institutions to come up with health and safety protocols in compliance with the guidelines on the risk-based public health standards for COVID-19 mitigation. This Covid-19 mitigation aims to increase mental and physical resilience, reduce transmission and contact, and reduce duration of infection (DOH AO No. 0015, 2020). For this, the UNICEF (2020) emphasizes on the water and hygiene facilities.

In compliance with the DOH guidelines on the risk-based public health standards for covid-19 mitigation, the general health and safety protocols advocate the use and practice of respiratory etiquette and other protective measures. All learners, teachers, and non-teaching personnel are required to observe this general health safety protocols through the use of protective measures. Additionally, the school needs to ensure the availability of disinfecting paraphernalia at all times. Singh-Vergeire (2020) explains that the public must be vigilant and observe the infection prevention such as the use of PPEs, proper hygiene and social distancing to avoid the spread of the virus.

Early detection through temperature check of all who enters the school premise is a primary step in times of pandemic. In case someone is detected to have high temperature, referral to the nearby local health unit is a must. This is an additional challenge to the school as they are responsible for the monitoring of students and teachers with or without disease symptoms. The responsibilities of the school administration extends to the implement of this policy to maintain safety within the school community. Bender (2020) emphasizes that the school community must promote information sharing including prevention and control measures and follow the guidelines set by the health authorities.

Curricular and co-curricular activities are part of the teaching and learning process. These help learners develop their skills and

talents. Nairi (2018) points out that extracurricular activities provide students with self-confidence to become a well-rounded individual. However, for the current school year, all school activities are postponed except those that can be done through online. DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2020 reiterates that all activities of the private basic education institutions are postponed for the entire school year 2020-2021. Postponement of the school's extracurricular and co-curricular activities like field trips, school retreat, foundation day and other activities will surely be missed by the students this school year.

The school clinic plays a big role on the students' health and safety. The school has to ensure that teachers and other school personnel who manifest symptoms shall not be allowed to report to school. The school clinic also needs to coordinate with the local health authorities in tracing and quarantine of confirmed positive cases. The school clinic ensures the availability of emergency health kits that include PPEs and other needed supplies and materials. The role of the school management in the protection, detection, prevention, and monitoring of the school community plays a big role in times of pandemic (Vergeire, 2020).

In times of pandemic, physical arrangement of the school complies with the DOH guidelines. All classrooms must meet the standards prescribed by the DOH to avoid the spread of the virus. This includes proper ventilation, proper sanitation and hygiene facilities. Even though students are not coming to school, the physical arrangement of the school has to follow the standards set by the government (DepEd Order No. 13, 2020).

The support mechanisms include physical and mental resilience and administrative support of the school. The first step to achieve resilience is through proper orientation to its teachers and learners. Furthermore, the school guidance office must be functioning effectively in monitoring students' mental health. The school also makes sure that teachers working at home are provided with necessary logistics.

Conclusion

It is obvious that almost all private basic education institutions are facing lot of challenges brought by the effect of covid-19 pandemic. The government order on the stoppage of face-to-face classes until vaccine is available has impacted on the enrollment data of the basic private education institutions. The decrease on the number of enrolment is due to economic downturn as parents who can afford high fees in the private schools lost their jobs during the pandemic. In addition, the sudden shift on the teaching and learning modality added burden and pressures to the school owners.

The DepEd requires all private basic education institutions have to comply with all the government requirements if teaching and learning are pursued for the current school year. Of these requirements, the LCP and health and safety protocols add additional burden as these are for strict compliance and immediate implementation. Though DepEd gave guidelines on how to prepare all the requirements for the opening of classes, the documentation process is a tedious process completed in no time. The bigger challenge is now passed on to the private schools.

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