



BEST PRACTICES IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FLEXIBLE LEARNING MODEL

MAE C. ORTIZ
Master Teacher I
Albay Central School
maeortzcioco@gmail.com

The COVID-19 pandemic created the most significant disruption of education systems in human history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 200 countries (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). This descriptive-inferential study evaluated the best practices implemented by mega schools in three city divisions in the province of Albay during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study explored the challenges met by the respondents in implementing distance learning through time management, technology, learning modality, and connectivity, tested the group's agreements, and evaluated the best practices. The findings show that respondents have different degrees of difficulty with each variable. Challenges cannot be ranked, as their effect on each respondent is subjective. There was a record of the agreement among the school divisions; mega schools have different best teaching practices in delivering distance learning. Teachers modified their teaching strategies and methods of instruction to suit their learners' needs per the school guidelines and policies.

Nevertheless, they rated the blended teaching modality as the best learning model during the crisis. Therefore, all matters considered, mega schools should equip teachers, provide a contextualized teaching and learning plan, and intensify home visits to enhance the best practices. Furthermore, flexible learning classrooms can be used during disasters to ensure teaching and learning continuity. Hence, this study.

Keywords: *Mega Schools, Flexible distance learning theory, descriptive-inferential method, Hybrid learning, Albay Province, Philippines*

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INTRODUCTION

With approximately 1.6 billion students affected in more than 200 nations, the COVID-19 epidemic caused the most significant disruption of educational systems in human history (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). The closure of schools, institutions, and other learning venues impacts more than 94% of the student population worldwide. Wide-ranging changes are brought about in many facets of life by this. Traditional educational processes were severely disrupted by social estrangement and restrictive mobility laws. As a result, reopening schools following limitation easing presents a new set of challenges that require implementing numerous new standard operating procedures.

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread globally, affecting practically all nations and territories. The outbreak was initially discovered in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Globally, governments have issued warnings urging people to exercise caution. Handwashing, face masks, physical separation, and avoiding large crowds and meetings have all been public health precautions. The steps to flatten the curve and stop the spread of the disease have been implemented, including lockdowns and home-bound policies (Sintema, 2020).

Best Practices of School Teachers to Sustain their Student Learning During Crisis. This study aims to identify the most effective strategies used by Palestinian teachers during COVID-19. Two focus group meetings with 24 different specialized teachers from various schools were conducted using a qualitative method to examine the best techniques thoroughly. The findings showed that teachers spend a lot of time researching and learning about free platforms like Google Classroom and Zoom. To engage their pupils and provide them with emotional support during the COVID-19 crisis, teachers were willing to experiment with and apply innovative teaching techniques. Additionally, as they demonstrated by sharing their experiences with colleagues, teachers were driven, committed to their social responsibilities during the crisis, and self-learners. Teachers could benefit from this study's findings and apply them in different

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contexts by adapting experiences to different scenarios. It is advised to use a mixed approach for generalization and subsequent research (Shireen Hayhaykeh, Ayshaabd Rabo et al Palestine)

Effective Teaching Techniques for Success During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Towards Physical Learning Indian universities were closed after the COVID-19 outbreak in February 2020, and they have since employed digital platforms to instruct their pupils. By drawing on Kolb's Learning Theory, John Dewey's Theory, Jack Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory, and Jean Piaget's Theory, the authors in this paper offer a perspective on some of the practical teaching practices that can be modified in business schools in India to be successful in this emerging blended or physical environment. The authors use a Community of Inquiry framework to reflect on effective teaching approaches based on their own experience and theoretical knowledge discovered after a thorough web search of numerous databases throughout the period, particularly from February to August 2020. These initiatives (Shakti Chaturverdi, Sonal Purokit, and Meenakshi Verma 2020 of India) can motivate academics, educationists, podcasters, and the entire teaching profession to develop an effective and sufficient lesson plan for the student community in India.

In addition, children in Thailand have been returning to the physical classroom since July 1 and adjusting to the new normal, according to UNICEF Thailand (2020), following a prolonged time of learning at home during school closures. Children at Thai Raj Kiri School in Tak province's Mae Sot area were ecstatic, as were many other students once again on the first day of classes. They are excited to return to a regular learning schedule while attempting to acclimate to an unusual school year amid COVID-19.

In the new normal in an education setting, the classroom is the home and the learning space wherein the teaching-learning processes are exchanged. The learning delivery modalities provide methods wherein education can foster and succeed (Ramos, 2021). Education, a necessity for students, will find its space even during a pandemic.

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As a precaution against the 2019 coronavirus sickness, most educational systems globally have moved to online instruction in the Philippines. The criticisms made by students in the context of poor countries show the challenges this issue is bringing the most (Rotas & Cahapay, 2021). Moreover, Flores (2021) notes that it has been over a year since the still-active COVID-19 outbreak disrupted daily life. The nation's educational system is one of those that has suffered greatly. The Department of Education (DepEd) implemented some changes that are now referred to as "blended learning" to guarantee that the requirements of students are not overlooked in this so-called new normal.

Blended learning, a pseudo-virtual technique, combines two types of alternate educational opportunities into a "mix" to better serve kids who must stay at home due to the epidemic. According to a Social Weather Stations (SWS) poll conducted in March 2021, 89 percent of Filipino families with children enrolled for the 2020-21 school year believe blended learning to be more challenging than the standard face-to-face setting. Parents agree that the existing system tends to force pupils to study alone, even though schools offer printed materials and online support. Other parents wind up teaching their children at home, which is particularly challenging for part-time house parents (Flores, 2021).

On the other hand, the 1987 Constitution, otherwise known as the Fundamental Law of the Land, mandates quality education. Schools are exempt from real property tax because the law values and encourages education. The law views education as the solution to poverty and most problems in the country. Together with Republic Act 6655, often known as the Free Secondary Education Act, these laws confirm the state's intention to defend and advance the rights of Filipinos by providing children with free and compulsory education at the elementary and high school levels.

Disasters can happen anywhere, at any moment. If the correct precautions are not taken to prevent it, it can result in irreparable harm to life and property. Both the best and worst aspects of human nature may emerge. How something is significantly done influences how well people

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come out of the experience. Consequently, if disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) are not taken to prevent it, it can result in irreparable harm to life and property. Both the best and worst aspects of human nature may emerge. How something is done dramatically influences how well people emerge from the experience. Consequently, disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) are necessary. The systematic process uses administrative directives, organization, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies, and better-coping mechanisms to lessen the adverse effects of hazards and the likelihood of disaster.

As an archipelagic country, the Philippines is vulnerable to natural calamities such as typhoons, heavy rains, floods, and tsunamis. Moreover, the Philippines is situated between two major tectonic plates of the world- the Eurasia Plate and the Pacific Plate-it experiences 100-200 earthquakes yearly (Center, 2019). This is evinced in the Region of Albay, specifically in Legazpi City, which experiences numerous earthquakes and even volcanic eruptions. Albay province suffers from heavy rains, flooding, and several typhoons annually. These natural calamities greatly affected the educational system particularly in the province of Albay, as they caused several days of suspension of classes.

This study aims to identify and analyze the best practices implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic in education, intending to develop a flexible learning model that can effectively address the challenges and demands of remote and hybrid learning environments. The school divisions must fully grasp and understand the underlying factors and challenges of the new teaching practices in the new normal educational setting and develop a model to implement the different modalities of learning effectively. This will enhance learners' knowledge and skills for providing quality education for global competitiveness.

Numerous studies have been conducted on education and instruction during the COVID pandemic. The difficulties faced during COVID-19, are that they have yet to give much attention to the procedures that can make teaching more effective. As a result, this study was conducted to examine and assess the best practices implemented by mega schools in three city divisions in

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the province of Albay: Legazpi, Ligao, and Tabaco. The researcher presented and analyzed the best practices of the respondents amidst the pandemic; the researcher's perception and the respondents' perspectives served as a foundation for the design of the flexible learning model, which can be successfully used by schools when disasters force the suspension or disruption of classes.

Research Design

The researcher utilized descriptive-inferential research designed to obtain different but correlative information from the resources and bring it together through qualitative and quantitative methods. According to McCombes (2019), the descriptive research method aims to describe a population, an environment, or a phenomenon entirely and precisely. What, when, where, when, and how questions can be answered, but not why. The inferential approach aims to compare data, develop hypotheses and projections, and draw generalizations or inferences about the population. A survey questionnaire and personal interviews with selected respondents were used as primary sources of information. A focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in which each category of respondents was represented. To validate the respondents' responses, the group reviewed, analyzed, and discussed the context of the respondents' narratives. using methodological triangulation approach. Recorded videos from the FGD and personal interviews were presented to the research panel during the final defense. Journals, eBooks, and research studies supported the results and discussions of this study.

Research Site

The study was conducted in three city divisions in the province of Albay, each of which has two mega schools. Under Republic Act 2234 and its amendment by Republic Act 5525, Legazpi City Division was established on April 5, 1971. The city's schools were once a part of the Department of Education's Division of Albay. The SDO Tabaco was established as a separate

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division on March 25, 2001, began operations on March 1, 2003, and was authorized as the 13th Division of Region V on September 27, 2005. Since then, Ligao City Division was established as a separate division and has gained a reputation for itself and the commitment of its internal and external stakeholders, as well as countless outstanding accomplishments in academics, athletics, and other fields.

Participants

The respondents to the study were the four school heads from division one, two school heads from division two, and two school heads from division three. For faculty and teachers, there are 138 from division one, 120 from division two, and 88 from division three. For learners' respondents, it was represented by the supreme pupil's government for division one (24), division two (24), and division three (20). For parents, respondents for division one, represented by the SPTA and HRPTA total of 53 parents; for divisions two and three were represented by the School Parent-Teacher Association (20) and (19) parents, respectively, of mega schools in three (3) city divisions in the province of Albay, to determine the best practices in the COVID-19 pandemic as the basis for the development of a flexible learning model.

Instrumentation

The researcher prepares a questionnaire. According to McLeod (2018), a questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions to gather information from respondents. The questionnaire was presented to the research panel members for corrections and suggestions. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part indicates challenges encountered using a scale of 4 - Always encountered, 3 - Sometimes encountered, 2 - Seldom encountered, and 1 - Never encountered. The second part refers to the best practices with 4 - Extremely observed, 3 - Moderately observed, 2 - Slightly observed, and 1 - Not observed.

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Data Gathering

To perform the study, the researcher individually requested approval from the SDOs of three (3) city divisions: Legazpi, Ligao, and Tabaco. The researcher proceeded to the school head's office after receiving authorization. The researcher gave the respondents the questionnaires, asking them to be as truthful as possible in their responses. The researcher personally collected the surveys and interviewed a few chosen respondents in person. The acquired information was tabulated and totaled, and the weighted mean was computed to ascertain the respondents' perceptions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As the foundation for creating a flexible learning model, this part discusses the best practices in COVID-19 across mega schools in three (3) city divisions in the province of Albay. The organization is attempting to adopt new technologies and explore new avenues to meet the challenges of expansion and the needs of everyone. However, due to several factors, including inadequate budgets, inadequate facilities, the benefits of face-to-face interaction, and modular learning, it still needs to be fully prepared to abandon the conventional modes of knowledge transfer. When a group of teachers was asked which type of instruction they preferred—traditional classroom instruction or ICT-supported instruction—the students were split almost evenly between the two options. Blended learning is just right because it combines elements of face-to-face instruction with elements of online instruction. A blended class's online element can occur in the classroom, computer lab, or at home. It allows teachers to personalize instruction because students can work through the material at their own pace. It prepares students to collaborate in an online environment. It expands the classroom boundaries because students can work with peers from other classrooms or schools online. In the discussion on the different learning modalities, the teachers who are teaching at the three city school divisions in the Province of

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Albay also mentioned that such modalities are being implemented by the Inter-Agency Task Force to control the spread of the deadly virus all over the country.

Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of Distance Learning

During COVID-19, difficulties were faced by all schools worldwide. Only the degree or level of difficulties and how the respondents respond to them cause variation. Teachers are very creative and have used more innovation in teaching, which encourages analytical thinking, a spirit of adventure, and a willingness to change, all of which will benefit learners.

Based on the above results for the time management indicators, school divisions 1 and 2 revealed that they occasionally had difficulty switching tasks quickly. This indicator was ranked first, with weighted average means of 2.65 and 3.15, respectively. Most parents in divisions 1 and 2 work, and it is difficult to quickly change their work schedule or workload, dividing time between work and teaching their children at home. Division 3 revealed that it is challenging to eliminate distractions that affect teaching and learning performance. They ranked this indicator as number one. Children today are fans of social media, online games, and television, which can divert their attention. They still need to prepare for distance learning since this is the first time they have encountered it, so this indicator is ranked first. Whereas Division 3 signified that they seldom encountered problems switching tasks quickly. Respondents in Division 3 are mostly full-time parents; they can manage their time between housekeeping chores and teaching their children. So they need help with time management.

The above result was supported by the study of Lantsoght et al. (2021). The COVID-19 epidemic required academics to work from home and convert to blended and hybrid teaching, demanding a swift shift in teaching materials and style. Students' parents encountered more difficulties transferring work from in-person to virtual platforms with extended childcare or homeschooling. Moreover, divisions 1 and 3 admitted that they only experienced activity in

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indicator 3, putting tasks off once there was little time before the deadline, obtaining a weighted mean of 2.21 and 2.72, respectively. The results explained that respondents were responsible for their task because they did not want to wait for the deadline before working on it; respondents knew what to prioritize and thought the due date helped remind them to finish their stuff on time.

For technology, Distance learning has become simpler because to the quick advancement of electronic technologies, yet occasionally there might be significant challenges. Divisions two and three had similar experiences. Respondents indicated that they had a limited financial budget to buy gadgets. With a weighted mean of 3.38 and 3.19, mainly, it only indicates that parents in divisions two and three are parents in a range of living situations which have only enough income to sustain the basic needs of their family and that the abrupt purchase of very costly gadgets is not their priority. The demand for gadgets was very high during the first year of the pandemic. Parents with average incomes cannot afford the gadgets, especially if they have more than two schoolchildren. In contrast, division one data showed that respondents were relatively easy with their gadget budget. It is evident because Division One is a first-class city, and salary rates are pretty good compared with other cities.

The above data was supported by the study of According to Valentine's (2017) comment, the challenges of distance learning and how it relates to new computer technology hold great promise for the future of education. The combination frequently fails to achieve its goals in practice, nonetheless. Technology issues cause some flaws, while others are more related to management, teaching strategies, or students. Despite the issues, many consumers choose technology like compressed video and anticipate more development in the field. This essay will look at recent research and ideas regarding the benefits, drawbacks, and potential futures of contemporary Distant Learning, mainly that offered electronically.

For the implementation of learning modalities, Division One revealed that they need help to meet the needs of all learners. This indicator was rated as rank 1 with a weighted mean of 2.20 and interpreted as seldom encountered. Mega schools in Division one catered big number

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of learners, not only in their catchment areas but also to learners from another municipality. Teachers find meeting all learners' needs challenging since some parents need to get learning models regularly. Teachers visit home when parents fail to get modules or learning materials for their children. However, there are times when parents change their address, making it difficult for teachers to contact them and impacting the learning process. While Division Two signified that they met more challenges and difficulties in the preparation, distribution, and retrieval of modules, they rated this indicator as rank 1, with a weighted mean of 2.72 interpreted as seldom encountered. Because most school stakeholders are working parents, they need help to get and return the self-paced modules on time. Another one is the distance from their house to school. In the interview conducted, the respondent said that in cases where parents fail to get their children, teachers make home visits. However, there are times when parents change their addresses, teachers find it hard to contact them, and the learning process is affected.

The above finding was supported by a study conducted by Lase et al. (2022) on parents' perceptions and attitudes. The study found that without other options, parents must live with and support the learning approach implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. Although parents do not have negative perceptions, distance learning has increased the burden on parents and families economically, psychologically, and socially. The lack of parental involvement and support in children's learning processes at home was generally due to a lack of time and the inability of parents to become teachers for their children at home. The surprising finding from this study was the decline in children's learning motivation and cognitive abilities.

For Division 3, the above data disclosed difficulties monitoring learners' learning performance, with a weighted mean of 2.95 interpreted as sometimes encountered. According to the respondents interviewed, they struggled to assess students' learning levels in the first year of the pandemic to determine whether they were on track and whether the school closure caused any learning gaps or losses. Teachers noticed that the parents answered the modules in the modular class; this practice prevented the students from developing their writing skills and

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understanding. Even in an online class, teachers can hear the parents directing the children to complete their activity. Children become less reliant on their parents. Self-motivation and independent learning were not developed.

The result above was supported by the study of Gonzalez et al. (2020), which analyzed how the COVID-19 restriction affected students' performance in autonomous Learning in higher education. The outcomes demonstrated that COVID-19 confinement had a considerable favorable impact on pupils' academic achievement.

For connectivity, Division 1 admitted to having a poor internet connection. Although Mega Schools of Division 1 are in the city or centro of Legazpi, which is a developed city and has many internet providers, during the pandemic, the Internet was not only used for distance learning but by most people. Businesses, like online sales, let their workers work from home. People overuse the Internet. That is one of the reasons why connections have become poor.

The study by Bakioglu and Can (2020), supported the above discussion, evaluated students' distance education in terms of internet services related to high failure rate and developing suggestions by considering their expectations. The result suggested that compared to non-repeaters, most repeaters connect to the Internet from their houses and offices. This difference has been found significant. There was a significant relation between providing internet connection with the faculty and the repeating situation of the students.

Divisions 2 and 3 affirmed that electric power interruptions were their number one problem during distance learning, particularly online and blended Learning. APEC Albay Power and Energy Corp., the private power distributor in Albay province, did line clearing activities, hotspot correction, and repair of primary lines, pole replacements, and reconnections of cutoff primary risers. Interruptions lasted for an hour or more. This activity of APEC affects the delivery of online Learning. Division 1 does not experience this much because most mega-school learners live within APEC's priority sub-station, where brownouts are seldom experienced.

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The study aided the above result in South Korea; the study of Jung and Shin (2020) investigated the relationship between online remote learning quality, flow, and learner satisfaction, and the implications are presented. The results of the empirical analysis were as follows. First, system quality, information quality, and service quality had a positive effect on flow. Second, system quality, information quality, and service quality had a positive effect on learner satisfaction. Third, the flow had a positive effect on learner satisfaction. Online remote Learning in universities is becoming the new normal. In conclusion, the implications and limitations of this study are presented. The testimony of parents in the School Division strengthened this outcome.

*May mga leksyon na di namu maipaliwanag ning maray sa mga akus
(We couldn't fully convey several lessons to our kids).
ta maski kami di namu naintindyan. Usad pa, kan cellphone namu
(because of lack of understanding and we have only one gadget)
usad usad man sana kina an akus namu tulo na nagiriskwela. Kaya
(Our three school-age children share a single cellphone).
minsan di namu naisihan kung kin uno na bareta sa iskwelahan ninra
(We occasionally are unable to receive updates at school due to this.)
kaya nadipisilan kading iba kon akus sa pagklase ninra”
(This pandemic makes extremely difficult for us to send our children to school)*

To sum it up, Division 3 ranked first among the three (3) city divisions in the province of Albay on the challenges and problems encountered in implementing distance learning modalities along all four (4) indicators. It means Division 3 faced more challenges than Division 1 and Division 2. The respondents may find it challenging in their coping mechanisms. Division 1 respondents said during the interview that periodically, the division office conducted seminars for psychological intervention and coping strategies. Considering the results, Division 3 needs to improve its coping mechanisms and strategies to address the needs of learners and stakeholders.

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This meant understanding and accepting the challenges that come with the advancement of technology and, accordingly, coming up with the most efficient and effective solution.

Infer the Significance of an Agreement on the Rank Order of the Challenges Encountered by the Respondents

To find the significance of an agreement on the ranks of challenges encountered by the group of respondents, the Kendall coefficient of concordance (W) and the chi-square test were computed.

Table 4 reflects the data, the summation of the squared deviation from the mean, the number of groups and activities, the computed W , the computed χ^2 , the degree of freedom, the tabular χ^2 value, the significance of the agreement, and the decision on the null analysis. It could be discerned in this table for the Legazpi City Division that the sum of the squared deviation from the mean difference was 36.8 for time, 27.2 for technology, 14 for implementation of DLM, and 46 for connectivity. I followed the Coefficient of Concordance W with 0.41, 0.30, 0.16, and 0.51, respectively, for each variable. The computer chi-square was 4.8, 3.6, 1.92, and 6.12.

The data revealed that the computed chi-square for the challenges encountered by the respondents does not exceed the tabular chi-square at a 0.05 level of significance; therefore, the researcher does not accept the null hypothesis that time, technology, implementation of learning modalities and connectivity were not significant, therefore rejecting H_0 or the alternative hypothesis.

The findings show that the groups of respondents do not significantly agree on the variables, which indicates the respondents' disagreement with the identified mega schools. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no significant agreement on the rank order for time, technology, the implementation of DLM, and connectivity.

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Agreement among the three divisions:

For time management, technology, and learning modality implementations on student academic performance, school division 1 agreed that there are difficulties in switching tasks quickly, school division 2 has the same agreement with time management, and mega schools in division 3 have similar difficulties switching tasks rapidly.

On Parents and Teachers in Technology, mega schools in Division 1 need help keeping learners engaged. In contrast, mega schools in Division 2 have the same problem, and school division 3 has a similar problem. In addition, as with Division 1, power outages impact their performance in Division 3. It clashes with other activities in unlimited loads (housework, chores, career workload), and division 3 agreed that there needed to be more knowledge on how to use gadgets.

The null hypothesis was rejected among the three divisions. The rank orders have no significant agreement; hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Indeed, the three divisions have different ranks of order. For policy and guidance of the teachers, the DepEd issues this DepEd Order number 035 s2016. Curriculum Contextualization is making curriculum content and instructional practices relevant to learners or making competencies relevant, meaningful, and valuable to all learners. By contextualizing the topic, teachers can help students understand how their studying knowledge applies to their lives. It can make learning more relevant for students and inspire them to take an interest in their homework. Teachers who contextualize the information can assist students in developing a deeper comprehension of the subjects they are studying. Students can also better grasp and utilize this knowledge in future academic endeavors. Contextualizing the content can help pupils develop critical thinking abilities.

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Evaluate the Best Practices among Schools in Implementing the Distance Learning Modality (DLM)

Best Education Practices refer to the wide range of individual activities, policies, and programmatic approaches to positively change student/pupils' attitudes or academic behaviors. The summary of the table revealed the BP among mega schools of Albay.

The table on the best practices on modular learning, among the different indicators, shows that the average weighted mean among the variables indicated that modular, online, and blended learning were interpreted as highly observed.

However, indicators 14 and 8 were moderately observed for modular learning from the average WM. These indicators have specific reasons for being only moderate, maybe because the learners' locations and needs differed in meeting pupils and parents' schedules.

The result also showed the best practices in modular learning modality; (a) provides self-instructional learning activity sheets, (b) helps pupils develop new routines and strategies for learning, (c) explains complex lesson topics to parents/ guardians during the distribution/ release of modules, (d) motivate home learning partners to facilitate and guide the learners in answering their modules, (e) keeps positive relationships with learners and home learning partners, (f) conduct home visits if parents fail to get the modules, (g) regularly checks SLMs and LAS and Solicits feedback from the parent.

Modular, indicator number 5 for modular learning got a summary rating of 3.48 WM, interpreted as moderately observed. Teachers, school heads, and parents rated explaining complex topics of the lesson to parents or guardians during module distribution or release as significantly observed, with weighted means of 3.67 and 3.59, respectively. In contrast, learners rated it as moderately observed, with a mean of 3.46. Several parents revealed in the interview that the teachers explained difficult lessons to parents as part of their intervention program. Parents and teachers collaborate to address the learning disparity that learners experience in

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modular learning. The learners rated it moderately, possibly because they were unaware of the intervention activity.

The above discussions were supported by the study of Dangle and Sumaoang (2020) discovered that the difficulties faced, ideas, and recommendations of teachers, parents, and students in the Modular Distance Learning implementation in Balbalayang National High School (BNHS) and Baguio City National High School (BCNHS) during the School Year 2020-2021 were highlighted. The study's conclusions demonstrated that the main issues were. Lack of funding from the school for creating and delivering modules, students' issues with independent learning, and parents' ignorance of academic support for their kids.

The study pinpointed the participants' primary resources, preparedness, and communication difficulties. The results of this study could be used to enhance current school programs and create regulations for the future implementation of modular distance learning.

The next indicator that got a good rating from the respondents is number 3, which helps pupils develop new routines and strategies for learning. The respondents rated this unanimously, as remarkably observed, with a weighted mean of 3.68, 3.52, and 3.50, respectively. This indicates that teachers and parents worked together to help the learners establish a self-learning strategy in an interactive classroom at home. Modular teachers do online "kumustahan" [Follow up session] with their learners once or twice weekly. The teacher discussed difficult lessons during this session.

Recorded audio videos were also sent to the learners. Teachers made learning activity sheets within the learners' level and gave feedback on the learners' progress during the "kumustahan" (Follow up session).

The initial findings were supplemented by Castroverde and Acala (2020) Tacloban City Phil. study aimed to determine teachers' difficulties using the modular distance learning modality during the epidemic and how teachers handled these difficulties. Teachers' issues have been highlighted based on how they organize, prepare, and distribute modules, keep track of students'

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progress, examine, and evaluate outputs, and give comments on students' performance. Teachers also employed a variety of coping mechanisms to deal with the difficulties presented by the modular distance learning modality, including time management, creative teaching methods, adaptation to the changes brought about by the new usual trend in education, flexibility, offering alternative plans, optimism, patience, and equipping oneself with the required skills for the new usual ways of education. Many parties must collaborate and develop alternatives for various difficulties that could arise as they are involved in the teaching-learning process considering all the limitations in these trying times brought about by the pandemic.

On the contrary, indicator No. 8, "Conducts a home visit if parents fail to get the modules," got a general rating of 3.40 WM, interpreted as moderately observed. Teachers and school heads indicated that they were doing this intervention with a rating of 3.58 WM, interpreted as highly observed. On the other hand, parents and learners revealed that it was just moderately observed, with a weighted mean of 3.48 and 3.13, respectively. Teachers do home visits to their students, especially those who need follow-up even before the pandemic. During the pandemic, home visits were made with proper coordination with the community. Community workers, like community health workers, accompanied the teachers during in-home visits. Parents should update their addresses so that teachers can reach the learners easily. Some parents were not around when teachers conducted home visits; they were at work.

The data above was strengthened by the study in Florida, United States of America; in the statement of Jonassen (2021), printed materials remained a vital component of most distance education courses. In addition, modular learning could be effective with the various components to be considered, such as two-way technology-based communication as an essential feature of distance education delivery. Email, internet chat, and internet videoconferencing are the most cost-effective modes of communication.

The statements of selected respondents during the focus group discussion supported the above results. One of the school principals disclosed that the respondents' responses were right

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and vivid and that the teaching force in her school applied different strategies and innovative approaches to delivering learning instruction during COVID-19. For modular distance learning, the school and the catchment communities joined forces in delivering and retrieving self-learning modules, learning activity sheets, and feeding for kindergarten and grade one learners. The "Kumustahan approach" (Follow Up session) was also used; teachers created a group chat for small-group learners and met them through video calls twice a week since all the parents have Messenger. Learners' need and progress was evaluated periodically.

Teachers developed and implemented interventions with the help of home learning partners. Moreover, some teachers discussed difficult lessons with the parents during the release and retrieval of self-learning modules. However, above all, blended learning is beneficial to teachers and learners because of its benefits. Indeed, many learners engaged in both synchronous and asynchronous online learning. By so doing, teachers and coaches reached out and trained their contestants for academic and non-academic competitions.

Division 2 schools revealed their different system for modular learning modality. Teachers prepare weekly home learning plans, create Messenger for group chat, and check output through Messenger; they send video clips about the topics with less mastery, send video clips about the best-mastered skills in every rating period, create video lessons uploaded to GC's, create podcast uploaded to GC's and eBooks, video call pupils by the group for discussions of complex topics, practiced one gift token at the end of every quarter for active pupils in the class, sends video-based stories via Messenger. Respondents in Division 2 imparted that they send personal-created videos for difficult lessons and appreciation notes to parents and learners for good performance. Open communication between home partners (parents and teachers) and educators through group chat contributed a lot, making the delivery of distance learning successful during COVID-19.

SPG President in one of the mega schools in division 1 disclosed that Learners' answers were also accurate and précised. That the school implemented distance learning modalities, both

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online and modular, so that learners continuously learned despite the threat of covid-19. He chose online distance learning because there is a teacher teaching just like in a regular classroom; the teachers address all questions, and learners answer their self-paced activities in their Google Classroom, which significantly helps the learners learn smoothly. For modular learning, the teachers gave the learners the modules and other learning materials and brought them home, where they would have self-directed learning. Some teachers made a video of the lesson and sent it to the learners; such a strategy helped the modular learners understand the lesson. More so, teachers made interventions and innovations to bridge the gap in learning during covid 19. The implementation of distance learning was successful and lasted for two years until the Department of Education conducted face-to-face learning.

Online learning, (Not all caps) respondents rated indicator number 5 as one of their best practices for the online learning modality: sharing the platform link an hour before classes start, with weighted means of 3.76, 3.62, and 3.67 subsequently and interpreted as highly observed. Teachers made the link available ahead of time so that students could prepare their devices and connections. If an issue arises, they can notify their teacher and have it resolved before classes begin. Learners with a stable connection have more opportunities to participate in class discussions and share their experiences and opinions. It piqued students' interest and accelerated their academic progress.

The study by El Firdoussi et al. (2020), which examined the constraints of e-learning platforms and how these activities took place at public and private Moroccan universities during the coronavirus confinement, supported the previous finding. Because online instruction was not more engaging than traditional instruction, professors and students in this study agreed that face-to-face instruction should account for at least half of the professors' instructional time. Recommendations were made to enhance and progress distance learning at the technical and instructional levels. For example, technical assistance and instruction in using these tools are

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required. The preceding study is related to the current discussion in that sharing the link ahead of time may assist learners in requesting technical assistance if a technical problem arises.

Another indicator that respondents rated as highly observed is number 9, with a weighted mean of 3.66, 3.58, and 3.58, respectively interpreted as highly observed. Creates interactive participation in lesson concerns. Interaction between the teacher and learners, both verbal and nonverbal, is critical in the teaching and learning process. All teachers encouraged students to participate, bring their own experience and knowledge to the process, and contribute to the definition or organization of their learning. This may assist teachers in determining the learners' level of learning. The outcomes can also serve as a foundation for intervention or innovation in teaching strategies.

The preceding discussion was backed by Almahasees et al. (2021), which identified students' and faculty's attitudes toward online education. According to the analysis, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, which provides online interactive lessons, and WhatsApp are the most used online communication tools. The study found that online education is beneficial during the current epidemic, and both academic staff and students agreed on this. Nonetheless, it is less efficient than in-person teaching and learning.

In contrast, indicator number 2 was found to be moderately rated, with weighted means of 3.37, 3.04, and 2.98, indicating access to a stable and reliable internet connection, as interpreted by respondents. During a pandemic, most public and private employees work from home. They used an internet connection to process their work output. This could explain why internet connections are only sometimes stable and interfere with online classes.

One more indicator rated low by the respondents is number 3, which has complete computer accessories, e.g., mic, camera, speaker, etc. Well, not all learners can afford to buy complete gadgets. The pandemic was not expected to come and affect the whole world. Parents were not ready financially when the pandemic brought high prices, not only for gadgets but also

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for food. Parents find it challenging to cope with the needs of their children for online learning. Only a few had complete computer accessories.

The data above was confirmed by the findings of Bahasoan et al. (2020) data analysis concluded that the online learning system used during the COVID-19 pandemic was practical and inefficient. Effective because of the conditions that require online study but inefficient because the costs are higher than offline lectures. The cost pertains to tuition and laboratory fees and includes the complete set of updated gadgets.

Indeed, indicators 1-3 were rated as moderately observed by the parent's respondents, given that the learners' parents are not computer savvy, are fortunate to acquire technologies, and have difficulty accessing the internet due to their locations and economic factors. According to the teacher's guide, connectivity issues between the teaching site and the learner's location are only likely at the learner's location.

Blended learning (Not all caps), maintaining regular communication with learners, their families, or guardians, was rated highly by all respondents for blended learning, with a weighted mean of 3.77, 3.80, and 3.67, with an adjectival interpretation of highly observed. This demonstrates that teachers, parents, and students developed good communication skills to reach out to one another and collaborate as a team with one unifying goal: to deliver effective teaching and learning processes via online learning modalities.

The above data was supplemented by the study in Dziuban et al. (2018); in a world where information and communication technologies (ICTs) increasingly communicate, numerous outcomes, implications, and potential future paths for blended learning in higher education were discussed. The authors argue that access, success, and student perceptions of their learning environments all come together when discussing the effectiveness of blended learning.

The study concluded that, even though blended learning predates contemporary instructional technology, its development may be intrinsically linked to modern information and communication technologies, some of which are beginning to resemble human brain processes.

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Next is indicator 5, which encourages the learners to reflect on what worked, what did not, and why? All respondents rated this highly, with the weighted mean of 3.63, 3.57, and 3.62, respectively, interpreted as highly observed. Blended learning uses two or more modalities. Learners in this classroom experience active and interactive learning. For their interactive learning, teachers upload activities in Google Classroom or another platform in which the teacher can monitor the learner's output. Who among the learners has submitted work, and who still needs to be done? Aside from this, weekly, teachers send an online evaluation form to evaluate or ask the learners to reflect on what they learned. What are the unfinished activities, and what were the reasons for not complying with the activities? From it, the teachers were able to make their intervention plan to help the learners with their problems.

Tonio's (2021) study supported the preceding discussion by investigating Google Classroom's acceptability and potential as a tool to support flexible language teaching and learning. According to the findings, most students thought Google Classroom could improve accessibility, usefulness, and student enjoyment. Students agreed that flexible learning could promote participation, communication, and educational delivery. Similarly, a qualitative-inductive approach based on thematic analysis of open-ended survey questions revealed that Google Classroom supports flexible language learning by

Providing straightforward monitoring of tasks, assignments, projects, and announcements; providing excellent storage of learning materials (ex., backup files); motivating students to manage their time; and motivating them to perform well. As a result, Google Classroom is an educational tool.

The parent and learner respondents rated indicator number one in the online learning modality, which discusses the benefits of blended learning to parents (F2F with online learning, radio-based, TV-based), as low, with a weighted mean of 3.44 and 3.38 interpreted as moderately observed. Teachers and principals rated it as highly observed, with a weighted mean of 3.59. Respondents have different perceptions, which could be because parents were not present during

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the orientation for different learning modalities or could not connect to the link provided by the school. Teachers and counselors communicate with their student's parents and allow them to select their preferred modalities for their children.

The above results were backed up by the study of Muthuprasad et al. (2021), which focused on understanding students' perceptions and preferences toward online learning. The results indicated that most respondents could opt for online classes to manage the curriculum during this pandemic. Most of the students preferred to use their smartphones for online learning. The students opined that the flexibility and convenience of online classes make them an attractive option, whereas broadband connectivity issues in rural areas make it a challenge for students to use online learning initiatives.

The next indicator with a low rating is number two, which shares schedules of the preferred learning modality regularly with a weighted mean of 3.58, 3.39, and 3.48, with an average mean of 3.48 interpreted as moderately observed. It indicates that not all parents or learners were updated on the information posted by the teacher adviser in their group chat. For guidance and compliance, parents need to do a back reading of the post made by the teacher adviser of their children.

The study's findings backed up the preceding discussion. Lase et al. (2022) investigated parents' perceptions and attitudes. The study found that without other options, parents must live and support the learning approach implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic emergency. Although parents do not have negative perceptions of distance learning, it has increased the financial, psychological, and social burden on parents or families. The lack of parental involvement and support in children's learning processes at home was primarily due to a lack of time and parents' inability to become teachers for their children at home. Parents need help to divide their time between work, attending to their children's needs in distance learning, and updating themselves on school.

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Indeed, based on the result, mega schools in the three (3) city divisions revealed "blended learning." It is the best learning modality. This gives an average weighted mean of 3.57, translating to highly observe. Blended learning" is a hybrid learning approach to education. It combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online and in person. It provided deeper learning and increased learners' interaction, communication skills, self-confidence, and collaboration. With that said, schools should maintain and enhance strategies and approaches to implementing the "blended learning" modality.

SPTA officers agreed that parents' responses were accurate to life because they had experienced it. Furthermore, they revealed their experience in distance learning as a parent. Implementing distance learning due to the pandemic was an adjustment to the learning process since learning was done at home. Parents ensure that kids are present physically and mentally during online classes/ lessons. Parents must implement follow-up and intervention, which is posted as a challenge, especially with our busy work schedules. Not to mention the additional expenses in procuring the gadgets and for a stable internet connection so that the lesson is conducted smoothly; grateful that ACS school was able to adapt and rise to the challenge; teachers made the point to make the lesson is fun and exciting and periodic follow up were made to make sure that no pupils left behind.

Overall, it was an exciting time, but returning to face-to-face classes is the best way to address the deficiency and ensure quality education.

The above statements were supported by the study of Alvarez (2020); blended learning is still a relatively new concept in the Philippines. Issues and difficulties with this expanding need for blended learning merit investigation, particularly in developing primary education, as they obstruct the effective and efficient delivery of teaching and learning. In particular, the author provided measures for the design and development, implementation, assessment, and evaluation of blended learning through the lenses of various literature. Nonetheless, it increased the number of teachers who spoke up about their difficulties and difficulties implementing blended learning.

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Develop a Model to Implement Flexible Learning Effectively

Flexible learning is a hybrid of digital and analog technologies that guarantee continuing inclusive and accessible education through online, offline, or mixed teaching and learning processes. Which can take the shape of online, offline, or blended teaching and learning processes, is a modality used in the Philippines that combines digital and non-digital technology to maintain inclusive and accessible education.

According to Rojas (2021), flexible learning is blending various instructional techniques, including online platforms and digital or printed modules. Under this new system, schools and institutions will choose a variety of various learning and teaching approaches depending on their circumstances. Universities that are more equipped will start offering all their courses online. In contrast, others may let some students return at different times and "conduct more synchronous versus asynchronous learning." The flexible classroom model allows learners a structure to learn at their own pace and gives teachers a way to create applied learning opportunities during in-person class time. Teachers offer feedback on learners' work, provide nudges to stay motivated, host discussions, and identify.

Learners who may be struggling. In a teacher-led model, the teacher is more involved with the coordination of the subject. Outside of class, students still learn more passive elements of the course; however, in-person class time is devoted to more active learning exercises coordinated by the teachers. Activities may include.

Teacher-led case studies, group discussions, role-playing games, or team projects. Flexible learning is a type in which students control how, what, when, and where they learn. Flexible learning environments cover the utilization of physical space, the grouping of students during learning, and the use of time during the teaching process. Flexible learning allows for more schedule alternatives—improved learning experiences, including more immersive and community-based learning choices. Learners use resources and educational technologies based on their abilities and capabilities but are easy to use and exciting to study. Unified policy guidelines for

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evaluating the model may be crafted and implemented to evaluate and make future improvements to the model.

This suggested flexible distance model applies to all kinds of learners (learners without cell phones, smartphones, and laptops). Modality, teaching strategies, technology, and materials will be based on the learners' profiles. Learners without gadgets will be modularly printed; learners with smartphones will have blended learning; learners with laptops will have an online classroom. This model will help adhere to the mandate of DepEd to provide contentious education in times of disaster. Like covid-19. (DO_ s2020_ 012: Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School Year 2020-2021 considering COVID-19, a Package of Educational Interventions that will Respond to Basic Educational Challenges Bring by COVID-19, Panopto is a top platform or tool for enterprises serving schools. Lectures and other videos can be recorded by educators and uploaded for asynchronous viewing by Modular and blended students. With flexible video presentation software that teachers and students can use to record lectures and presentations whenever they want, from any location, using any device, and sharing them instantly with students, teachers, and peers on a secure, searchable video library, Panopto makes flipping the classroom simple. The tool can be found at this link <https://www.panopto.com/>.

On the other hand, Lumi Education App offers a desktop app that can be used locally on computers and does not require internet access; a variety of content can be made with this app, uploaded content, downloaded, reused, and remixed. It is compatible with H5P technology; H5P is a free and open-source content collaboration framework that aims to make it easy for everyone to create, share, and reuse interactive HTML5 content. Interactive videos, presentations, quizzes, timelines, and more have been developed and shared using H5P, which learners can browse without a WIFI connection.

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CONCLUSIONS:

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

1. Mega schools in the three city divisions experienced different levels/ degrees of challenges or difficulties along time management, technology, implementation of distance learning modality, and connectivity. Division one had seldom encountered, while Division two and Division three have sometimes encountered.
2. Three divisions have a different rank order
3. The three different groups of mega schools have different best practices, and all divisions employ different methods and strategies in delivering distance learning; modular distance learning (Print/ Digital), Online learning, and blended learning. Blended learning was the best modality in all three divisions.
4. Develop a model, flexible learning classroom for three different groups of learners.

MAJOR FINAL OUTPUT

Teachers in the twenty-first century know that today's kids are very different from their forebears. Due to their superior ability to learn knowledge quickly, kids nowadays call for classroom changes.

Flexible learning models are the major final output of this study. Although COVID-19 is virtually gone, its impact will live on throughout world history. Education used a variety of methods to deliver high-quality instruction to its students. Despite Covid -19 being on the verge of departing, the world has continued to endure several natural disasters because of the severe effects of global warming. In the Philippines, people get sick from summer heat waves especially schoolchildren.

Recently, the Department of Education Bicol, through regional memorandum no. 56, s. 2023, implemented the modular distance learning or adjusted modality provided in DepEd order no. 037, s. 2022. Public Elementary Schools implemented Half-day classes from Monday to

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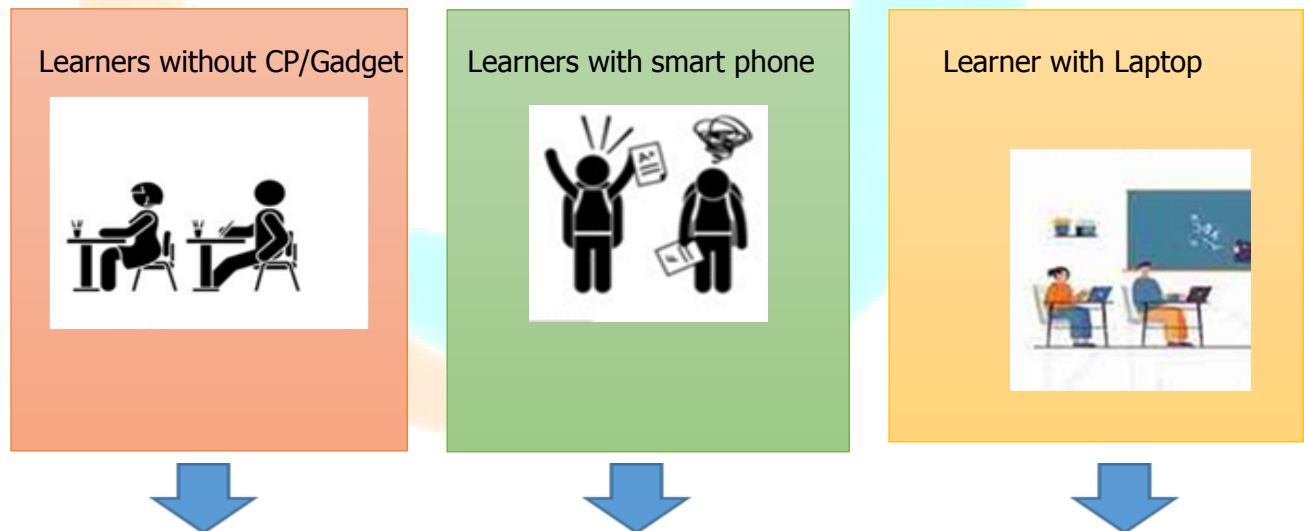
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Thursday, and Friday is flexible learning based on the preferences of the teachers and the learners. Adjusted face-to-face classes cannot carry out the required number of learning competencies. Interactive or asynchronous learning was implemented to augment the learning gap. Children with laptops can have online learning, those with a smartphone can have blended learning, and those who do not have gadgets may opt to have modular printing.
In today's situation, flexible learning models are helpful. Educators can adopt this model based on their learner's preferences. It gives the learners flexibility regarding what, when, where, and how they learn. Flexible learning allows learners to plan their activities according to interest and enthusiasm. It also keeps a learner's mind in a pleasant situation that is out of external fear. Flexible learning can support the learning styles required for the knowledge economy of the information society.
Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic taught school administrators, teachers, and learners to adopt various learning modes that catered to the demands of remote and hybrid learning environments.

LEARNERS PROFILE



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(Modular)



Blended Learning



Online learning



FLEXIBLE LEARNING MODEL

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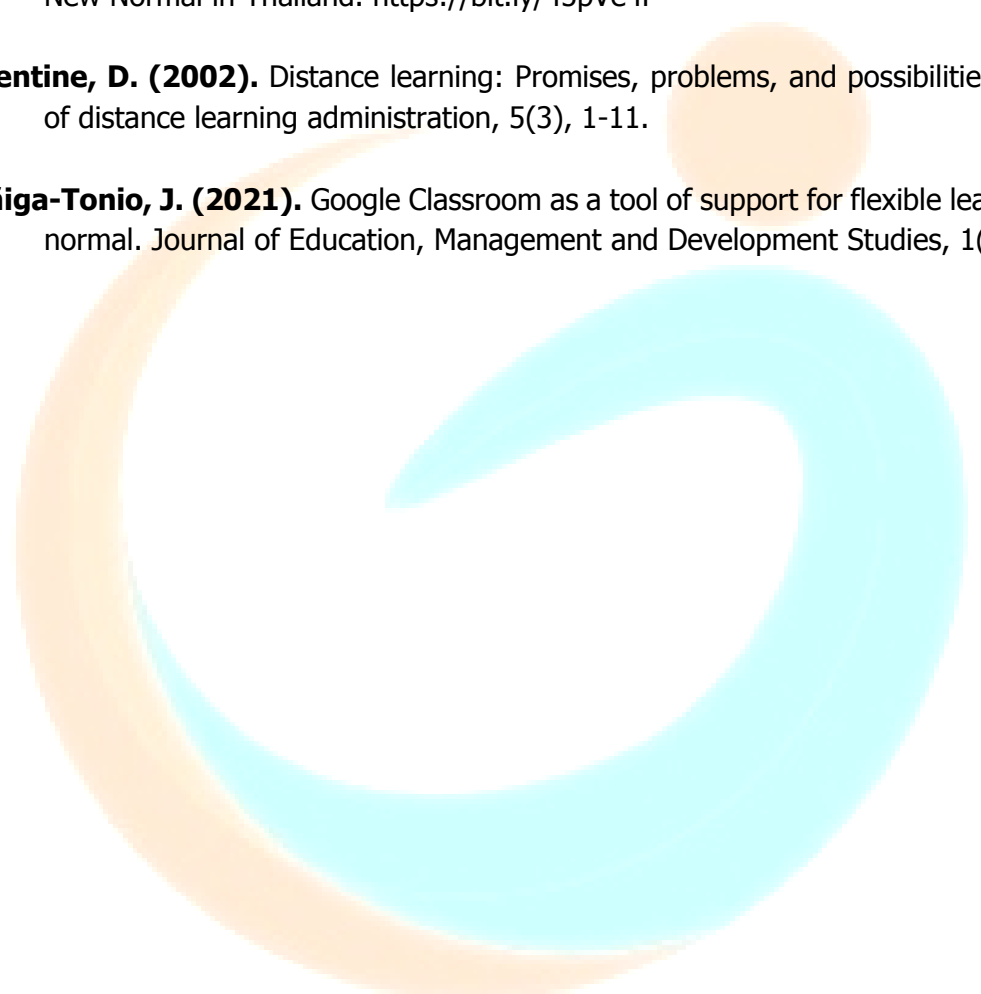


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