



**EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING MODALITIES ON THE
ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY STUDENTS
IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBAY**

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ABSTRACT

This study proposes a structured framework for alternative learning modalities aimed at enhancing academic engagement among criminology students from Amando Cope College, Bicol College, and PLT College. Amid the challenges posed by the shift from traditional classroom instruction to flexible learning arrangements, students have experienced difficulties related to technological access, instructional quality, and self-management. The study utilized a descriptive research design with both student and faculty respondents to assess levels of academic engagement cognitive, behavioral, and emotional and to identify key challenges affecting participation and learning outcomes.

Findings revealed that while both students and faculty agree that engagement occurs "sometimes," there is a need for a more responsive model that addresses the gaps in interaction, comprehension, and motivation. The proposed framework integrates blended learning strategies, modular learning, asynchronous tasks, and technology-supported collaboration to provide an inclusive and adaptable learning environment. By aligning instructional methods with students' needs and contextual realities, the model aims to

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promote equity, improve learner outcomes, and sustain quality criminology education in alternative modalities. This framework serves as a practical guide for academic institutions.

Keywords: *Alternative Learning Modalities, Academic Engagement, Criminology Education, Blended Learning, Modular Learning*

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, one concept has become increasingly important: online learning. As technology continues to shape everyday life, the education sector has adapted by using digital platforms to deliver learning experiences beyond the traditional classroom (Raouna, 2024). Online learning, also known as distance education or e-learning, allows students to access lessons, participate in discussions, and complete academic requirements remotely. It offers flexibility and convenience, making education more accessible to a wider range of learners (Asad, 2024).

This shift toward digital and flexible learning is also aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the goal 4 of the SDGs is to make sure that everyone has access to high-quality education and to encourage lifelong learning. Through online and alternative learning modalities, education becomes more accessible, especially for students who may not be able to attend traditional face-to-face classes. However, achieving this goal requires not only access but also the effectiveness and quality of learning experiences.

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Despite its advantages, online learning also presents several challenges. Studies have shown that some students struggle to understand lessons delivered virtually due to limited interaction, technical difficulties, poor internet connectivity, and ineffective communication (Erlangga, 2022). Additionally, not all students have the same resources or learning environments at home, making it difficult for others to keep up with academic demands. Some courses, especially those requiring hands-on training, are also harder to deliver effectively in an online setup (Custodio, 2021).

As far as Internet accessibility is concerned, it is not universal, and in some areas of the United States and other countries, Access to technology and internet connectivity remains a major concern. In many areas, reliable internet access is either limited or costly. Both students and instructors must also possess basic computer literacy skills to navigate digital platforms successfully. Without these, the quality of learning may be compromised (Springfield, 2024).

Legal Basis of online learning in the United States is the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), issue Virtual Locations and Asynchronous Learning in Distance Education. The HEA and the Department's regulations provide that institutions of higher education may offer programs through distance education. Currently, the Department has very limited data on students enrolled in distance education, which limits the Department's ability to answer important questions about student pathways and outcomes through in-person, distance, and hybrid education (Issue Paper 3: Distance Education, 2024).

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To support the implementation of flexible learning, various policies have been introduced. In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued Memorandum Order No. 4, Series of 2020, which provides guidelines for the adoption of flexible learning modalities. (GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FLEXIBLE LEARNING, 2020). The results indicated that the Criminology students of DCCP Laoag City Inc. encountered various challenges in this mode of flexible learning. The three most common challenges that the students faced are the following: The weak signal in my place affects my participation in online learning, I do not have good internet connection at home, I do have problems accessing my computer/gadget for my online learning. Regarding internet connectivity, most students are from rural areas where they are challenged geographically which makes it hard to follow instruction online (Cascayan, 2021).

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) had difficulties with the implementation of different alternative learning modalities. The main problem of alteration in the Philippines is the various locations have very slow internet connectivity. Standardization of alternative learning modalities in private and public schools encountered problems among Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) in Albay. Poor internet connectivity and lack of training 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 new learning modalities because (Britannica Dictionary, 2025) (Bisht, 2024) 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

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Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) in Albay in implementing standardization of alternative learning modalities with or without the pandemic (BETIZ, 2022).

The situation becomes more complex for criminology students, whose programs require hands-on training, practical exercises, and active classroom interaction. The sudden shift from face-to-face learning to alternative modalities such as online, modular, and blended learning has raised concerns about whether these approaches can effectively sustain students' academic engagement. Many students experience difficulties in maintaining participation, motivation, and understanding of complex concepts, which may affect their behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement in learning.

In the Province of Albay, higher education institutions offering criminology programs have adopted various alternative learning modalities to ensure the continuity of education. However, there is still limited evidence on how these learning approaches affect the academic engagement of criminology students. Challenges such as limited interaction, delayed feedback, poor internet connection, and reduced opportunities for collaboration continue to influence students' learning experiences. In line with the goals of SDG 4: Quality Education, this study aims to examine the effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of criminology students. By identifying the strengths and challenges of these learning approaches, the study seeks to provide insights that can help improve teaching strategies, enhance student engagement, and contribute to the development of more inclusive and effective educational practices. The findings of this study are expected to benefit students,

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faculty members, academic institutions, administrators, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), parents or guardians, and future researchers by providing valuable information that can guide improvements in the implementation of alternative learning modalities.

The legal basis of the study stated that Republic Act 10650 Open Distance Learning Act, An Act expanding the access to educational services by institutionalizing open distance learning in levels of tertiary education and appropriating funds, therefore. It is hereby declared that the policy of the State to expand and further democratize access to quality tertiary education through the promotion and application of open learning as a philosophy of access to educational services, and the use of distance education as an appropriate, efficient and effective system of delivering quality higher and technical educational services in the country. This act promotes the use of distance education as an efficient system for delivering quality higher education services. It emphasizes the importance of providing equitable access to education which includes addressing the challenges faced by the students in remote learning environments (LawPhil, 2025).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive–correlational research design with a quantitative approach, which was appropriate for examining the effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of Criminology students in the Province of Albay.

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The descriptive component was used to present a clear and systematic description of the current learning modalities implemented by criminology schools, as well as the level of students' academic engagement in terms of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional dimensions. It provided a factual overview of how students experience alternative learning modalities, including their interaction, learning retention, time management, and assessment of learning.

On the other hand, the correlational (inferential) component aimed to determine the relationship between alternative learning modalities and the level of academic engagement among students. This aspect of the study utilized statistical analysis, particularly Pearson correlation, to identify whether significant relationships exist between the variables. Through this, the study was able to go beyond description and examine how changes in learning modalities may influence student engagement.

The quantitative approach ensured objectivity and reliability by using structured survey questionnaires as the primary data-gathering instrument. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools such as weighted mean, frequency, ranking, and correlation analysis to identify patterns, relationships, and differences. This research design was suitable for achieving the objectives of the study, as it allowed the researcher not only to describe the existing conditions of alternative learning modalities but also to determine their relationship with students' academic engagement. By combining descriptive and inferential methods, the study provided a more comprehensive and evidence-based

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understanding that can support improvements in teaching strategies and educational practices in criminology programs.

Research Instrument

The main instrument of the study was the survey questionnaire, which was composed of four distinct parts, each aligned with the research objectives.

The First Part, titled Delivery Methods of Alternative Learning Modalities, identified the specific delivery methods of alternative learning modalities used in criminology institutions, such as modular distance learning, online distance learning, blended learning, synchronous learning, and asynchronous learning.

The Second Part, titled Effects on Academic Engagement, this part determined the effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of criminology students, specifically focusing on interaction and collaboration with instructors and peers, time management, and assessment of learning.

The Third Part, titled Level of Academic Engagement, assessed the level of academic engagement of criminology students in terms of cognitive engagement, behavioral engagement, and emotional engagement while utilizing alternative learning modalities.

The Last Part, titled Key Challenges, identified the key challenges of alternative learning modalities that affected the academic engagement of criminology students, particularly in the areas of technological accessibility, instructional quality, and flexibility.

The responses from the survey were measured using a Likert scale, which allowed for the quantification of participants' perceptions and opinions. The scale ranged from 1 – Strongly

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Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Agree to 4 – Strongly Agree, and from 1 – Never, 2 – Rarely, 3 – Sometimes, to 4 – Always, depending on the type of question. This scale was applied to the questionnaire to determine the degree of agreement, frequency, or occurrence of respondents’ experiences regarding the delivery methods, effects, level of engagement, and challenges of alternative learning modalities. The use of the Likert scale facilitated statistical analysis of the data, including the computation of weighted means, rankings, frequency and Pearson correlation, providing a reliable and objective measure of students’ academic engagement. The weighted mean is a type of mean that is calculated by multiplying the weight (or probability) associated with a particular event or outcome with its associated quantitative outcome and then summing all the products together (Taylor, 2026). Ranking provides the respondent with a list of items, which they can rank according to their liking or knowledge. This allows survey respondents to compare different items to each other by placing them in order of how they score (or rank) at a specific aspect, such as design, cost, functionality, and importance. Often with the most important or preferred item ranked first or on top of the list (Ranking, 2023). A frequency distribution describes the number of observations for each possible value of a variable. Frequency distributions are depicted using graphs and frequency tables (Turney, 2023). The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is the most common way of measuring a linear correlation. It is a number between -1 and 1 that measures the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables (Turney, Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) | Guide & Examples, 2024). Overall, the survey questionnaire served as a comprehensive instrument to gather data on the delivery, effectiveness, and challenges of

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alternative learning modalities, ensuring that all responses were systematically aligned with the study's objectives and capable of generating valid and actionable findings.

Data Gathering Procedure

The conduct of this study followed a systematic and ethical research process to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the collected data. Initially, a research concept note was prepared and submitted for approval to the Vice President. Upon approval, the study title was formally presented and approved during the proposal defense.

Following the approval of the research proposal, the researchers developed the survey questionnaire based on the study's objectives and related literature. The instrument was then subjected to content validation by the thesis adviser and selected experts in the field to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research variables. Suggestions and recommendations from the validators were carefully reviewed and incorporated to improve the quality and accuracy of the instrument.

After the validation process, a dry run or pilot testing was conducted among a small group of respondents who were not part of the actual sample. This step was undertaken to assess the clarity of instructions, consistency of responses, and reliability of the questionnaire. Necessary revisions were made based on the results of the dry run before finalizing the instrument for actual data collection.

Before administering the survey, informed consent forms were provided to all respondents. The informed consent explained the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and the respondents' right to withdraw at

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any time without penalty. Signing the consent form indicated the participants' understanding and agreement to participate in the study, ensuring ethical compliance throughout the research process.

A formal letter of request was then submitted to the presidents or authorized administrators of the selected criminology institutions seeking permission to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researchers proceeded with the distribution of the survey questionnaires to the identified respondents. The questionnaires were administered personally and retrieved immediately after completion to ensure a high response rate and minimize data loss.

In addition to the survey questionnaires, supplementary data were gathered through observation to support and validate the quantitative findings. The entire data-gathering process was conducted over a period of two months, allowing sufficient time for coordination, distribution, retrieval, and validation of responses.

After data collection, all responses were carefully checked, tallied, and encoded for analysis. The data were then analyzed and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools, including descriptive statistics and Likert scale interpretation, in accordance with the research objectives. The results served as the basis for drawing conclusions and formulating recommendations related to the academic engagement of criminology students under alternative learning modalities.

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Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were composed of criminology students and full-time faculty members from selected criminology schools in the Province of Albay, specifically Amando Cope College, Bicol College, and PLT College. These institutions were chosen due to their active implementation of alternative learning modalities and their willingness to participate in the study.

The student respondents included officially enrolled criminology students who were currently engaged in alternative learning modalities such as online, modular, blended, synchronous, or asynchronous learning. To be included in the study, students had to be officially enrolled during the data collection period and have experienced at least one form of alternative learning modality. Students who were not enrolled during the semester of data collection, those who had already graduated, or those who had no exposure to alternative learning modalities were excluded from the study.

The faculty respondents consisted of full-time criminology instructors who were actively teaching during the conduct of the study and had direct experience in delivering lessons through alternative learning modalities. Faculty members who were part-time, on leave, or not involved in the implementation of alternative learning approaches were excluded from the study to ensure consistency and reliability of responses.

The inclusion of both students and faculty members allowed the study to gather comprehensive and balanced perspectives regarding the implementation, effectiveness, and challenges of alternative learning modalities. This approach strengthened the validity

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of the findings by capturing insights from both the recipients and implementers of the instructional strategies used in criminology education.

Table a
Respondents of the Study

Respondents	Number of Respondents
Full time Faculty Members	15
Criminology Students	592
Total	607

Sampling Technique

The study employed a purposive sampling design to select the respondents who were most appropriate and knowledgeable regarding the alternative learning modalities in criminology education. This non-probability sampling technique was deemed suitable because the research required participants who had direct experience with alternative learning modalities and could provide relevant and informed responses.

For the student respondents, purposive sampling was used to select currently enrolled criminology students who had experienced online, modular, blended, synchronous, or asynchronous learning modalities during the academic period covered by the study. This ensured that the data gathered reflected actual student experiences related to academic engagement under alternative learning settings.

For the faculty respondents, purposive sampling was likewise applied by selecting full-time criminology instructors who were actively involved in teaching and implementing

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alternative learning modalities. Faculty members who had no direct involvement in these instructional approaches were excluded to maintain the accuracy and relevance of the data.

The use of purposive sampling allowed the researchers to focus on participants who could provide rich, reliable, and contextually appropriate information regarding the effects of alternative learning modalities on academic engagement. This sampling design ensured that the findings of the study were grounded in the actual experiences of both learners and educators within the criminology programs of the selected institutions in the Province of Albay.

Study Site

The study was conducted in selected Criminology schools located in the Province of Albay, Philippines. The schools included in this research were chosen based on their established Criminology programs and their implementation of alternative learning modalities during the period of study. These institutions are:

Amando Cope College, located in Tabaco City, Albay. This private higher education institution offers a Bachelor of Science in Criminology and adopted alternative learning approaches to adapt to educational disruptions. Bicol College, located in Daraga, Albay. As one of the pioneering institutions in the province, Bicol College's Criminology program has served as a key provider of criminological education in the Bicol Region and utilized a combination of modular and online learning during the pandemic. PLT College of Guinobatan Inc., located in San Francisco, Guinobatan, Albay. This college delivers Criminology education

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using flexible learning modalities designed to maintain academic continuity during times of restricted face-to-face instruction.

These institutions represent the diversity of higher education providers in the First District to Third District of Albay, both geographically and institutionally, and were selected due to their accessibility, established programs, and cooperation during the study period. By focusing on these Criminology schools, the study aimed to generate localized insights into how alternative learning modalities influence the academic engagement of Criminology students in this district of Albay.

Data Analysis

Frequency and ranking were used as statistical tools to describe and interpret the responses of the participants regarding the effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of criminology students. Frequency was utilized to determine the number of respondents who selected each response option in the questionnaire, allowing the researchers to identify common trends and patterns in the data. Ranking was employed to arrange the responses in order from highest to lowest based on their computed frequencies or weighted means, making it possible to determine which factors, indicators, or challenges were most prominent and influential in relation to academic engagement.

The weighted mean was applied to quantify the degree of agreement, frequency, or occurrence of responses for each survey item. This provided a precise measure of central tendency, enabling the researchers to assess the overall perception of students and faculty

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regarding delivery methods, effects, engagement levels, and challenges of alternative learning modalities.

A four-point Likert scale was used to measure the respondents' level of agreement with each statement in the questionnaire. The scale allowed the researchers to systematically interpret the responses and categorize them into meaningful levels of agreement, ensuring consistency in data analysis and interpretation.

The Pearson correlation coefficients (r) were computed to examine the significant relationships between delivery methods of online learning modalities and academic engagement. This statistical tool measured the strength and direction of linear relationships, helping the researchers understand how specific online, synchronous, asynchronous, or blended learning methods were associated with cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement among criminology students.

The combined use of frequency, ranking, weighted mean, Likert scale, and Pearson correlation provided a clear, systematic, and statistically sound analysis of the data. This approach ensured accurate interpretation of the findings and alignment with the study's objectives in assessing the effects of alternative learning modalities on academic engagement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the analyzed findings of the study on the effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of Criminology students in selected institutions in the Province of Albay. The results are organized according to the research

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objectives, providing a clear summary of key patterns, trends, significant differences, and relationships observed in the data. Each objective is addressed to highlight the delivery methods of alternative learning modalities, their effects on student engagement, the levels of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement, the challenges encountered, and the significant relationships between learning modalities and academic engagement.

1. Delivery Methods of Alternative Learning Modalities

This section presents the analyzed findings of the study on the effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of Criminology students in selected institutions in the Province of Albay. The participating schools were Amando Cope College, Bicol College and PLT College. The results are organized according to the research objectives, summarizing key trends, significant differences, and relationships observed in the data. The discussion focuses on the delivery methods of alternative learning modalities, their effects on student engagement, levels of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement, the challenges encountered, and the significant relationships between learning modalities and academic engagement.

Table 1 below illustrates the frequency and rank of five delivery methods: Modular Distance Learning, Online Distance Learning, Blended Learning, Synchronous Learning, and Asynchronous Learning.

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Table 1
Delivery methods of alternative learning modalities in 3 criminology institutions

Criminology Institutions						
Delivery Method	Amando Cope College		Bicol College		PLT College	
	F	R	F	R	F	R
1.Modular Distance Learning	23	3	83	2	24	3
2.Online Distance Learning	35	1	71	3	27	2
3.Blended Learning	17	5	52	5	21	4
4.Synchronous Learning	28	2	90	1	33	1
5. Asynchronous Learning	20	4	65	4	18	5
Respondents Per School	123		361		123	
Total Respondents	607					

At Amando College, Online Distance Learning ranked first (F = 35), followed by Synchronous Learning (F = 28). This indicates a strong reliance on internet-based instructional delivery, allowing real-time interaction while also offering flexibility. Modular Distance Learning ranked third (F = 23), suggesting that the institution provided printed or offline materials as support for students with limited internet access. In Bicol College, Synchronous Learning emerged as the most utilized modality (F = 90), followed by Modular Distance Learning (F = 83) and Online Distance Learning (F = 71). This distribution reflects a blended institutional strategy that balances real-time instruction with self-paced learning resources. The high frequency of synchronous learning suggests a preference for direct teacher student interaction to ensure comprehension and engagement. For PLT College, Synchronous Learning again

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ranked first (F = 33), while Online Distance Learning ranked second (F = 27). Modular and Blended Learning followed, indicating moderate utilization. Asynchronous Learning ranked lowest (F = 18), suggesting limited reliance on fully independent learning modes.

Across all three institutions, Synchronous Learning consistently emerged as the most preferred delivery method, highlighting the importance of live interaction, immediate feedback, and structured instruction particularly vital in criminology education where analytical discussions, case analysis, and applied learning are central. The continued use of Modular Distance Learning, especially in Bicol College, reflects institutional responsiveness to connectivity issues and socioeconomic constraints faced by students. Conversely, Asynchronous Learning consistently ranked lowest across institutions, suggesting challenges related to learner autonomy, self-regulation, or limited institutional support for fully self-paced learning environments. Similarly, the relatively lower ranking of Blended Learning may be attributed to logistical constraints and limited opportunities for face-to-face instruction during the implementation period.

The dominance of Synchronous Learning indicates a strong institutional preference for real-time instruction, which allows immediate interaction, clarification of concepts, and active student participation. This mode is particularly effective in criminology education where discussion-based learning, case analysis, and instructor guidance are essential. The high utilization of Online Distance Learning further reflects institutions' efforts to maintain continuity of instruction using digital platforms. Meanwhile, the consistent presence of Modular Distance Learning highlights institutional responsiveness to students with limited internet

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access or technological resources. However, the low utilization of Asynchronous Learning suggests challenges in promoting self-directed learning, possibly due to limited student readiness, reduced motivation, or insufficient instructional design support. The relatively lower ranking of Blended Learning may also be attributed to restricted face-to-face engagements during the implementation period.

The findings imply that while institutions have successfully adopted interactive and structured learning modalities, there is a need to strengthen flexible and learner-centered approaches. Academic institutions should enhance faculty capability in designing asynchronous and blended learning materials that promote independent learning, critical thinking, and digital literacy. Administrators should also invest in technological infrastructure and continuous faculty training to ensure the effective delivery of diverse learning modalities. From a learner’s perspective, exposure to multiple learning formats can help develop adaptability, self-discipline, and professional competence skills essential in the field of criminology. Educational policymakers should institutionalize flexible learning frameworks that formally integrate synchronous, asynchronous, and modular approaches. Policies must prioritize digital equity by ensuring access to devices, stable internet connectivity, and learning management systems, particularly for students in geographically disadvantaged areas. School administrators should strengthen faculty development programs focusing on effective online pedagogy, instructional design, and learning management system utilization. Regular monitoring and evaluation of delivery modes can help institutions determine the most effective combinations for student engagement and academic success. Faculty members are

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encouraged to balance synchronous interaction with asynchronous and modular strategies to accommodate diverse learning needs. Integrating problem-based activities, recorded lectures, and interactive assessments can enhance learner autonomy while maintaining academic rigor. Students benefit from a diversified learning environment that promotes flexibility, self-regulation, and digital competence. Exposure to multiple learning modalities prepares criminology students for professional practice, where adaptability, independent decision-making, and technological literacy are essential.

The findings imply that while criminology institutions have successfully implemented structured and interactive learning modalities, there is a need to strengthen flexible and learner-centered approaches. Institutions should invest in faculty training for the design and delivery of asynchronous and blended learning materials that foster independent learning, critical thinking, and digital literacy. Regular monitoring and evaluation of these delivery methods will help identify the most effective combinations to enhance academic engagement and ensure consistent learning outcomes.

The findings imply from the learners' perspective that exposure to multiple learning modalities cultivates adaptability, self-discipline, and professional competence essential in the field of criminology. Policymakers and school administrators should institutionalize flexible learning frameworks that integrate synchronous, asynchronous, and modular approaches while prioritizing digital equity, ensuring access to devices, stable internet connectivity, and functional learning management systems. This promotes a diversified learning environment that enhances student autonomy, engagement, and readiness for professional practice.

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The findings support Rasmitadila et al. (2020), who noted that educators quickly shifted to distance learning and relied on synchronous instruction to maintain interaction and assessment despite resource challenges. Modular learning, as highlighted by Anzaldo (2021), remains essential in areas with limited internet access, ensuring educational continuity and equity. The low use of Asynchronous Learning aligns with Mallari (2022), indicating that self-paced modalities require strong instructional design and learner support to maintain engagement. Similarly, the lower preference for Blended Learning reflects challenges in implementing face-to-face components, consistent with Al Ghazali (2022) and Géraldine Heilporn (2024), who emphasized that effective blended learning demands careful planning, faculty training, and technological readiness.

2. Effects of Alternative Learning Modalities on the Academic Engagement of Criminology Students

Alternative Learning Modalities and Students' Academic Engagement in the New Normal: Evidence from Criminology Students Table 2a shows that Alternative learning modalities namely, Modular/Printed, Online-based and Blended significantly affected the interaction of students with their teachers. The data represent the aggregate of student respondent and full-time faculty member response rates from School A, School B, and School C.

This part is to explore the implications of these modalities on communication, participation, collaboration and technology when learning occurs.

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a. Interaction and Collaboration with Instructors and Peers

Table 2a

Effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of criminology schools

Combined Results of Student Respondents and Full-time faculty members						
Indicators	School A		School B		School C	
	TW M	AI	TW M	AI	TW M	AI
1. The frequency of interactions with instructors and peers is evident through regular online meetings, active participation in chat discussions, and involvement in group projects.	2.82	A	2.61	A	2.86	A
2. The quality of engagement during discussions or activities is reflected in meaningful contributions, attentive listening, and constructive feedback exchanges.	2.89	A	2.75	A	2.88	A
3. Opportunities for peer collaboration and group work are provided through team-based assignments, collaborative platforms, and brainstorming sessions.	2.86	A	2.54	A	2.86	A
4. The level of instructor’s availability and responsiveness is demonstrated by their prompt replies to inquiries, scheduled office hours, and support during academic activities.	3.01	A	2.82	A	2.89	A
5. Use of technology like Artificial Intelligence (AI) help streamline brainstorming by offering creative suggestions and simplify feedback by highlighting areas for improvement in assignments.	2.85	A	2.90	A	2.85	A
AWM	2.89		2.72		2.87	
Legend:						
<i>AI- Adjectival Interpretation TWM- Total Weighted Mean AWM- Average Weighted Mean</i>						
<i>SA- Strongly Agree – 3.28-4.00 A- Agree – 2.52-3.27</i>						

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D- Disagree – 1.76-2.51 SD- Strongly Disagree – 1.00-1.75

The table shows that all the indicators for the three schools got a "Agree" rating, which means that both students and faculty think that interaction and cooperation are present and successful in different types of learning. When it comes to the Average Weighted Mean (AWM): With a score of 2.89, School A came out on top. School C came in second with 2.87, and School B came in last with 2.72. The highest-rated indication is Instructor Availability and Responsiveness, with School A getting a 3.01, School C getting a 2.89, and School B getting a 2.82. The least favorable metric is Opportunities for Peer Collaboration School B = 2.54.

The results show that the availability and responsiveness of teachers got the best scores overall, with School A getting the best score (3.01). This means that even though students are learning in different ways, teachers are still there to help. Students still think that their teachers are easy to get in touch with, respond quickly, and give them help when they need it. A strong presence from the teacher is a big part of keeping students interested and motivated in their studies.

After that, the quality of participation in discussions was also high, especially at School A (2.89) and School C (2.88). This means that students are not only going to class, but they are also taking part in meaningful ways. They share their thoughts, listen to others, and give helpful criticism, which makes the learning environment more interactive and useful. It was also good to use Artificial Intelligence (AI), especially in School B (2.90). This shows that students and teachers are beginning to understand how technology can help them learn. AI

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tools make it easier to learn, even when you're not in the same room with someone else. They help you come up with ideas, improve your work, and give you feedback more quickly. The frequency of interaction, on the other hand, got slightly lower ratings, but they were still positive. Schools C (2.86) and A (2.82) did better in this area. This means that even though schools are having online meetings, chats, and group activities, the level of interaction may not always be the same at all of them.

Finally, chances to work with peers and in groups were the least important, especially in School B (2.54), but they were still in the "Agree" range. This means that even though there are group activities, they might not be as interesting or happen as often as expected. Students might not have as many chances to work together as a group as they do with their teachers.

The findings suggest that alternative learning modalities can still keep students engaged, especially when instructors remain active, approachable, and supportive. When teachers are responsive and consistently guide their students, it helps maintain a sense of connection even without face-to-face interaction. This shows how important the role of instructors is in making learning meaningful despite physical distance. However, the lower ratings in peer collaboration point to an area that needs more attention. While students are interacting with their instructors, they may not be getting enough opportunities to work closely with their classmates. To improve this, schools can introduce more structured group activities, use collaborative online tools, and encourage peer-led discussions so that students can learn from one another, not just from their teachers.

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The positive feedback on the use of AI also shows that students and faculty are becoming more open to using technology in learning. AI is seen as a helpful tool for generating ideas, improving outputs, and giving feedback. This means schools can further invest in digital tools and provide proper training to both students and instructors to maximize these benefits. At the same time, the differences in results among schools, especially the lower scores in School B, suggest that not all institutions are implementing alternative learning in the same way. Some schools may have more effective strategies than others. Because of this, it would be helpful to identify and adopt best practices from schools that are performing better, so that all students can have a more consistent learning experience. Overall, while alternative learning modalities are working well, there is still room for improvement. Strengthening collaboration among students, making better use of technology, and ensuring consistent teaching practices across schools can further enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Table 2a shows that students and faculty generally agree that ALM positively supports interaction and collaboration. Synchronous meetings, group projects, and collaborative platforms enhanced peer engagement, while instructor responsiveness and AI-assisted tools facilitated effective communication and feedback. These findings align with Mohammed (2024), who highlighted the importance of teacher-student connectedness in online learning, and Damayon (2022), who emphasized that instructor interaction is critical for student satisfaction and academic performance in remote environments. Similarly, Panjehfouladgaran (2025) noted that digital tools enhance peer collaboration and active engagement, supporting the study's observation that ALM promotes meaningful academic interactions.

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b. Learning Retention and Comprehension

Learning retention and comprehension are essential indicators of academic engagement, particularly in alternative learning modalities where students rely heavily on digital platforms, self-directed study, and flexible instructional approaches. In criminology education, the ability of students to retain concepts, apply knowledge, and demonstrate understanding is vital for developing analytical and critical thinking skills necessary for professional practice.

Table 2b presents the combined results of student respondents and full-time faculty members regarding the effects of alternative learning modalities on students' learning retention and comprehension in criminology programs. This dimension focuses on how effectively students understand, retain, and apply knowledge in flexible learning environments. The results are measured using the Total Weighted Mean (TWM) and interpreted through adjectival ratings.

Table 2b
Effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of criminology schools

Combined Results of Student Respondents and Full-time faculty members						
Indicators	TW M	AI	TW M	AI	TW M	AI
1. Students demonstrate their ability to recall and apply learned concepts by accurately answering questions, solving practical problems, and integrating knowledge into new contexts or scenarios.	2.42	D	2.51	D	2.35	D
2. Assessment scores and performance in tasks or assignments reflect students' understanding of the subject matter, showcasing their mastery of concepts and skills taught in the course.	2.97	A	2.73	A	2.97	A

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3. The perceived clarity and effectiveness of learning materials are evident through students' feedback, ease of comprehension, and ability to navigate and utilize the resources provided for their academic progress.	2.94	A	2.86	A	2.84	A
4. Students demonstrate comprehension by accurately interpreting data, identifying trends, and drawing insightful conclusions in activities like research projects or case studies.	2.84	A	2.62	A	2.77	A
5. Students contribute meaningfully to group activities by explaining concepts to peers, facilitating discussions, and providing helpful input based on retained knowledge.	2.92	A	2.53	A	2.86	A
AWM	2.81		2.65		2.75	

Legend:

AI- Adjectival Interpretation **TWM-** Total Weighted Mean **AWM-** Average Weighted Mean

SA- Strongly Agree – 3.28-4.00 **A-** Agree – 2.52-3.27

D- Disagree – 1.76-2.51 **SD-** Strongly Disagree – 1.00-1.75

The overall findings show that all indicators were generally rated as “Agree,” with Average Weighted Means (AWM) of 2.81 (School A), 2.65 (School B), and 2.75 (School C). This suggests that alternative learning modalities have a positive impact on learning retention and comprehension, although some areas require improvement. The highest-rated focuses on students’ assessment scores and performance in tasks, with TWMs of 2.97 (School A), 2.73 (School B), and 2.97 (School C), all interpreted as Agree. This indicates that despite the shift to alternative learning, students are still able to demonstrate their understanding through exams, assignments, and other academic outputs. It implies that assessment strategies used in these modalities are generally effective in measuring student learning. Closely following,

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the clarity and effectiveness of learning materials, with ratings of 2.94, 2.86, and 2.84, respectively. The consistent "Agree" interpretation suggests that instructional materials provided in alternative learning setups are accessible and understandable. This plays a crucial role in supporting independent learning, especially when face-to-face guidance is limited. Next, which deals with students' contributions to group activities, receiving ratings of 2.92, 2.53, and 2.86. This reflects that students are still able to collaborate and share knowledge with peers, although slightly lower ratings in some schools may indicate challenges in online or remote collaboration environments.

Next, which measures students' ability to interpret data and draw conclusions, also falls under "Agree," with scores of 2.84, 2.62, and 2.77. This suggests that higher-order thinking skills such as analysis and critical thinking are still being developed under alternative learning modalities, though there is room for enhancement.

The lowest-rated, focusing on students' ability to recall and apply learned concepts, with TWMs of 2.42, 2.51, and 2.35, interpreted as Disagree for Schools A and C, and borderline for School B. This indicates a notable concern: while students may perform well in structured assessments, their ability to consistently retain and apply knowledge in new or practical contexts may be limited. This gap suggests that deeper learning and long-term retention are not fully achieved in the current modality.

The findings highlight both strengths and areas for improvement in alternative learning modalities. On the positive side, students can perform well in assessments and utilize learning materials effectively, indicating that the delivery of content and evaluation methods are

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functional. However, the lower performance in recall and application suggests a need to strengthen instructional strategies that promote deeper learning. Educators may consider incorporating more interactive and experiential activities, such as case-based learning, simulations, and real-life problem-solving tasks, to enhance retention. Additionally, while collaboration is present, improving student engagement in group work through structured peer interaction and guided discussions could further enhance comprehension. Overall, the results imply that alternative learning modalities can support academic engagement, but institutions must continuously refine teaching approaches to ensure that students not only perform well academically but also develop lasting understanding and practical competence skills that are especially critical in the field of criminology.

First, the results closely align with Mohammed (2024), who emphasized that students in online learning environments tend to develop strong familiarity and comfort with digital platforms, particularly in their interactions with instructors. This is evident in Table 2b through the relatively high ratings in indicators such as assessment performance and clarity of learning materials, which suggest that students can understand lessons and navigate instructional resources effectively. However, Mohammed also pointed out that limitations in sustained interaction, focus, and peer collaboration may hinder deeper learning. This observation is reflected in the lower rating, where students showed difficulty in consistently recalling and applying concepts. The parallel between the two findings suggests that students can comprehend content, maintain long-term retention and apply knowledge in varied contexts remains a challenge without continuous engagement strategies.

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Second, the findings are consistent with Ed.D (2023), who identified teacher interaction as a critical factor influencing academic achievement in remote learning environments. In Table 2b, the strong ratings in Indicators 3 and 4 which focus on clarity of instruction and students' ability to interpret and analyze information demonstrate the positive impact of effective teaching strategies and instructor guidance. These results imply that instructors are successfully facilitating understanding despite the limitations of alternative modalities. However, Ed.D (2023) also emphasized the importance of aligning instruction with assessment. This concern is reflected in the slight inconsistencies within the table, particularly the gap between students perceived understanding and their ability to fully demonstrate learning through application (Indicator 1). It indicates that even when instruction is clear, students may struggle to translate comprehension into measurable academic outcomes if assessments are not well aligned with learning objectives.

Overall, Table 2b supports the broader conclusion that alternative learning modalities can effectively facilitate learning when properly implemented. Students can understand content, perform in assessments, and engage with instructional materials. However, the findings also emphasize the need to strengthen strategies that promote long-term retention, critical thinking, and practical application of knowledge. Continuous improvement in instructional design, assessment alignment, and student support systems is essential to ensure that learning is not only achieved but also sustained an important consideration in criminology education, where applied knowledge and analytical skills are crucial.

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c. Time Management

Time management is a critical component of academic engagement, particularly in alternative learning modalities where students are required to independently manage their schedules, academic tasks, and personal responsibilities. In criminology education, effective time management supports consistent participation, timely completion of academic requirements, and sustained focus on learning outcomes. In a learning environment where schedules are less structured and students are given greater autonomy, the ability to plan, prioritize, and manage time effectively becomes essential for academic success. This section explores how well students adapt to these demands, particularly in balancing academic tasks with personal responsibilities, meeting deadlines, and maintaining discipline. Understanding these aspects provides a clearer picture of how alternative learning setups shape students' productivity and overall academic engagement. Table 2c presents the combined assessment of students and full-time faculty from School A, School B and School C regarding the influence of alternative learning modalities on students' time management skills.

Table 2c

Effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of criminology schools

Combined Results of Student Respondents and Full-time faculty members						
Indicators	School A		School B		School C	
	TW M	AI	TW M	AI	TW M	AI
1. Students' ability to create and follow study schedules is evident through their adherence to planned routines, timely completion of assigned tasks, and proactive management of priorities.	2.92	A	2.65	A	2.87	A

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2. The frequency of missed deadlines for assignments or activities serves as an indicator of time management challenges, reflecting areas for improvement in planning and execution.	2.89	A	2.61	A	2.85	A
3. The level of self-discipline in managing workload is showcased by students' ability to balance academic responsibilities with personal commitments, maintain focus on tasks, and avoid delay.	2.94	A	2.68	A	2.93	A
4. Regularly using planners, calendars, or digital tools to allocate time for specific activities, ensuring a balance between academic, work, and personal commitments.	2.80	A	2.51	D	2.83	A
5. Demonstrating the ability to identify urgent and important tasks, effectively organizing work to focus on high-priority items first.	2.98	A	2.65	A	2.91	A
AWM	2.90		2.62		2.87	
Legend: AI- Adjectival Interpretation TWM- Total Weighted Mean AWM- Average Weighted Mean SA- Strongly Agree – 3.28-4.00 A- Agree – 2.52-3.27 D- Disagree – 1.76-2.51 SD- Strongly Disagree – 1.00-1.75						

The results reveal that students generally demonstrate positive time management behaviors, as reflected in the Average Weighted Means of 2.90 (School A), 2.62 (School B), and 2.87 (School C), all interpreted as Agree. This indicates that despite the challenges of alternative learning modalities, students can manage their time effectively in most aspects. The highest-rated indicator is Indicator 5, which focuses on students' ability to identify urgent and important tasks and prioritize accordingly, with TWMs of 2.98, 2.65, and 2.91. This suggests that students can organize their workload and focus on high-priority tasks, a key skill in maintaining productivity in flexible learning environments. It reflects a level of maturity and adaptability among criminology students in handling academic demands. Closely following is

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Indicator 3, which highlights self-discipline in managing workload, with scores of 2.94, 2.68, and 2.93. The steady "Agree" rating shows that most students can keep focus when balancing schoolwork with other duties. This shows that different ways of learning might help students become more independent and able to control themselves. Next is Indicator 1, which measures students' ability to create and follow study schedules, with ratings of 2.92, 2.65, and 2.87. This implies that most students can plan their routines and complete tasks on time, although slight variations suggest that not all students are equally consistent in following structured schedules. Indicator 2, which examines the frequency of missed deadlines, also received "Agree" ratings (2.89, 2.61, and 2.85). This indicates that while missed deadlines still occur, they are not prevalent enough to significantly disrupt academic engagement. However, it also points to an area where further improvement in planning and execution could enhance overall performance. The lowest-rated indicator is Indicator 4, which focuses on the regular use of planners, calendars, or digital tools, with scores of 2.80 (School A), 2.51 (School B), and 2.83 (School C). Notably, School B falls under Disagree, suggesting that some students may not be consistently utilizing structured tools to manage their time. This highlights a gap between students' ability to manage tasks and their use of formal strategies or tools to support that process.

The findings suggest that alternative learning modalities can promote the development of essential time management skills, particularly in prioritization, self-discipline, and task completion. These skills are crucial not only for academic success but also for future professional practice in criminology, where effective time management is highly valued.

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However, the lower rating in the use of planners and digital tools indicates a need for institutions to strengthen students' strategic time management practices. Schools may consider implementing time management workshops, study skills training, and the integration of digital productivity tools into the learning process. Additionally, continuous faculty guidance and structured support systems are essential in helping students maintain consistency in managing their time. Providing clear deadlines, organized course structures, and regular feedback can further enhance students' ability to stay on track. Overall, the results emphasize that while students demonstrate good time management behaviors, there is still a need to refine and support these skills through intentional interventions. Strengthening time management practices will not only improve academic engagement but also enhance students' readiness for the demands of professional life in the field of criminology.

The findings of Table 2c align with existing literature emphasizing the strong relationship between time management and academic engagement. Azizi (2024) noted that fostering academic engagement naturally enhances students' ability to manage their time effectively. This is reflected in the present study, where students demonstrated strong prioritization skills and self-discipline, particularly in Indicators 5 and 3. Similarly, al Y. F. (2025) found that effective time management directly predicts higher study engagement and helps reduce distractions in flexible learning environments. This supports the generally positive ratings across the indicators, suggesting that students who can prioritize tasks and maintain discipline are better able to adapt to alternative learning modalities. Furthermore, Enmoceno (2023) reported that strong time management skills in online and blended learning settings

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lead to improved participation, timely submission of tasks, and sustained academic focus. This is consistent with the findings in Indicators 1 and 2, where students demonstrated the ability to follow schedules and minimize missed deadlines.

d. Assessment of Learning

Assessment of learning plays a crucial role in determining how well students understand, apply, and internalize course concepts, especially in flexible learning environments where traditional monitoring is limited. In criminology education, effective assessment is particularly important as it measures not only academic performance but also critical thinking, analytical ability, and practical application of knowledge. Table 2d highlights the perceptions of both students and full-time faculty members on the effectiveness of assessment practices in alternative learning modalities within criminology programs. In the context of flexible and technology-driven education, assessment serves as a key tool in determining whether learning objectives are achieved and whether students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills meaningfully. More than just measuring performance, assessment in this setting reflects the quality of instruction, the relevance of learning activities, and the extent to which students are engaged in the learning process. Thus, examining assessment practices provides valuable insight into how well alternative learning modalities support not only academic achievement but also the development of essential competencies in criminology.

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Table 2d

Effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of criminology schools

Combined Results of Student Respondents and Full-time faculty members						
Indicators	School A		School B		School C	
	TW M	AI	TW M	AI	TW M	AI
1. Students' satisfaction with the fairness and comprehensiveness of assessments is reflected in their feedback on whether the evaluation methods adequately measure learning outcomes and align with the course objectives.	2.97	A	2.87	A	2.89	A
2. The types of assessment methods used, such as quizzes, projects, and performance tasks, demonstrate a diverse approach to evaluating students' knowledge, skills, and overall academic growth.	3.07	A	2.93	A	2.96	A
3. Evaluates the learner's understanding and ability to apply fundamental principles or ideas related to the subject matter.	3.04	A	2.90	A	2.90	A
4. Feedback mechanisms provided for students play a crucial role in the learning process, offering helpful insights and actionable suggestions to help them improve and achieve their academic goals	3.00	A	2.98	A	2.93	A
5. Assesses how effectively a learner can identify challenges, analyze situations, and propose or implement solutions using critical thinking.	2.94	A	2.83	A	2.90	A
AWM	3.00		2.90		2.91	
Legend:						
AI- Adjectival Interpretation TWM- Total Weighted Mean AWM- Average Weighted Mean						
SA- Strongly Agree – 3.28-4.00 A- Agree – 2.52-3.27						
D- Disagree – 1.76-2.51 SD- Strongly Disagree – 1.00-1.75						

The results indicate that assessment practices are generally perceived as effective, with Average Weighted Means of 3.00 (School A), 2.90 (School B), and 2.91 (School C), all

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interpreted as Agree. This suggests that both students and faculty recognize the value of assessment strategies implemented in alternative learning modalities. The highest-rated indicator is Indicator 2, which focuses on the use of diverse assessment methods such as quizzes, projects, and performance tasks, with TWMs of 3.07, 2.93, and 2.96. This highlights that schools are employing a variety of evaluation techniques to measure students' knowledge and skills. Closely following is Indicator 3, which evaluates students' understanding and ability to apply fundamental concepts, with ratings of 3.04, 2.90, and 2.90. This indicates that assessments are not limited to theoretical knowledge but also measure students' capacity to apply what they have learned an essential aspect in criminology education. Next is Indicator 4, which emphasizes the importance of feedback mechanisms, with scores of 3.00, 2.98, and 2.93. The high ratings suggest that feedback provided by instructors is generally helpful and contributes positively to students' learning process. Constructive feedback allows students to identify areas for improvement and refine their understanding. Indicator 1, which measures students' satisfaction with the fairness and alignment of assessments, also received strong ratings 2.97, 2.87, and 2.89. This implies that students perceive assessment methods as generally fair and aligned with course objectives, which is essential for maintaining trust and motivation in the learning process. The lowest-rated indicator, though still within the "Agree" range, is Indicator 5, which focuses on critical thinking and problem-solving skills, with scores of 2.94, 2.83, and 2.90. This suggests that while assessments are effective overall, there is still room for improvement in designing tasks that more strongly challenge students to analyze situations and develop solutions skills that are vital in the field of criminology.

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The findings suggest that alternative learning modalities can support effective assessment practices, particularly when a variety of methods are used and supported by clear instructions and meaningful feedback. These approaches help ensure students are given multiple opportunities and demonstrate their learning. However, the slightly lower rating in critical thinking and problem-solving indicates a need to enhance assessment designs to better develop higher-order cognitive skills. Educators may consider incorporating more case-based assessments, simulations, and real-world problem-solving activities that reflect the practical demands of criminology. Given the challenges identified in related studies, it is also important to address technological and engagement barriers by providing accessible platforms, flexible assessment options, and continuous academic support. Overall, the results highlight that while assessment practices are generally effective, there is a need for continuous improvement and innovation to ensure that they not only measure knowledge but also develop the critical skills required in the field of criminology.

Watson (2022) reported differences in perceptions between students and faculty, with students favoring pre-recorded lectures while faculty valued synchronous activities, highlighting the need for diverse and adaptable assessment methods. Similarly, Meng Yan (2024) and Ramesal (2024) emphasized that technical challenges, engagement difficulties, and differing perceptions of assessment effectiveness influence learning outcomes. Pingol (2022) also highlighted that students value interaction with instructors and peers, even in virtual settings, reinforcing the importance of assessment strategies that promote active learning and critical thinking. These studies align with the present findings that diversified

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assessment methods, clear instructions, and timely feedback are crucial for measuring learning and supporting academic engagement in criminology education.

3. Difference Between the Responses of the Two Groups of respondents on the effects of alternative modalities.

Understanding the differences in perceptions between students and faculty members is essential in evaluating the effectiveness of alternative learning modalities. While students experience these modalities directly, faculty members assess them from an instructional and evaluative perspective. This section presents a comparative analysis of the responses of student respondents and full-time faculty members across four dimensions: interaction and collaboration, learning retention and comprehension, time management, and assessment of learning. The analysis aims to determine whether perceptual gaps exist and how these differences may influence instructional planning and policy development.

Table 3a shows the comparison between student and faculty responses. It can be observed that all indicators have very small mean differences, ranging from 0.00 to 0.06. Interaction and Collaboration have a mean difference of 0.06, Learning Retention and Comprehension also has 0.06. Time Management has 0.06 Assessment of Learning shows no difference (0.00). All indicators are interpreted as "Not Significant," which means that the differences between student and faculty responses are minimal

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Table 3a

Difference between student and faculty perceptions on the effects of alternative learning modalities

Indicators	Student Mean	Faculty Mean	Mean Difference	Significance
Interaction and Collaboration	2.76	2.82	0.06	Not Significant
Learning Retention and Comprehension	2.74	2.80	0.06	Not Significant
Time Management	2.80	2.86	0.06	Not Significant
Assessment of Learning	2.94	2.94	0.00	Not Significant

The results clearly show that there is no significant difference between how students and faculty perceive the effects of alternative learning modalities. Among the indicators, interaction and collaboration, learning retention, and time management all have the same small mean difference of 0.06. This suggests that although there are slight variations in perception, they are too small to be considered meaningful. Both students and faculty generally share the same views in these areas. More notably, assessment of learning has a mean difference of 0.00, which means that students and faculty have the same perception. This reflects a strong agreement between the two groups when it comes to how learning is evaluated under alternative modalities. Overall, the findings indicate that students and faculty are aligned in their experiences and understanding of alternative learning. There are no major gaps or disagreements between the two groups.

The results suggest that alternative learning modalities are being implemented in a way that is consistently understood by both students and faculty. Since there is no significant difference in their perceptions, it shows that teaching strategies, expectations, and learning

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experiences are generally clear and effective. This alignment is important because it indicates that both groups are on the same page, which can lead to better communication, smoother instruction, and improved learning outcomes. Faculty members can be confident that their approaches are being experienced by students as intended. However, even if the differences are not significant, schools should continue to monitor and improve teaching practices. Small differences, if ignored over time, may grow into larger gaps. Continuous feedback from both students and faculty can help ensure that alternative learning remains effective and responsive to their needs. Overall, the findings highlight that while alternative learning modalities are working well, maintaining this consistency and continuously improving instructional strategies will further enhance the quality of education.

4. Level of Academic Engagement to the Criminology Students between educators and learners.

Academic engagement is a vital indicator of students' learning success, reflecting their cognitive, behavioral, and emotional involvement in the educational process. In criminology programs, engagement is especially critical as it influences students' understanding of complex concepts, application of problem-solving skills, and overall preparedness for professional practice. With the implementation of alternative learning modalities including online, modular, and blended learning assessing academic engagement helps identify how students adapt and respond to diverse instructional methods. This study examines the level of academic engagement among criminology students and full-time faculty members in School A, School B and School C, focusing specifically on cognitive engagement. By combining students' and faculty members' perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive assessment of

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engagement patterns and areas for improvement. Table 4a presents the combined results of cognitive engagement among criminology students and faculty members across three schools.

a. Cognitive Engagement

Cognitive engagement is the level of effort that students put into grasping difficult ideas, thinking critically, and doing more than what is required of them in school. In flexible learning environments, this dimension becomes especially important as students are expected to take a more active role in processing information, solving problems, and reflecting on their own learning. Table 4a presents the combined responses of student respondents and full-time faculty members in assessing the level of cognitive engagement of criminology students under alternative learning modalities.

Table 4a
Asses the level of academic engagement of criminology students through alternative learning modalities in criminology schools

Indicators	School A		School B		School C	
	TW M	AI	TW M	AI	TW M	AI
1. Students' ability to focus on and complete tasks is evident through their sustained attention, efficient time management, and consistent effort in meeting deadlines and accomplishing objectives.	2.97	S	2.74	S	2.97	S
2. The depth of understanding and critical thinking is shown by students' ability to analyze concepts, identify connections between ideas, and provide thoughtful, well-reasoned responses during discussions and problem-solving activities.	3.01	S	2.78	S	2.82	S
3. Students' willingness to explore concepts beyond course requirements is	3.01	S	2.68	S	2.80	S

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demonstrated by their curiosity, proactive engagement in independent research, and enthusiasm for delving into topics that extend beyond the curriculum.						
4. Demonstrating engagement by evaluating their own learning processes through journals, essays, or progress reports to identify areas for improvement.	2.95	S	2.50	R	2.58	S
5. Students show perseverance and creativity when faced with complex problems, exploring multiple approaches until they find effective solutions.	2.98	S	2.71	S	2.77	S
AWM	2.98		2.68		2.78	
<p>Legend: AI- Adjectival Interpretation TWM- Total Weighted Mean AWM- Average Weighted Mean A- Always – 3.28-4.00 S- Sometimes– 2.52-3.27 R- Rarely– 1.76-2.51 N- Never – 1.00-1.75</p>						

Overall, the results indicate that students “Sometimes” demonstrate cognitive engagement, as reflected in the Average Weighted Means of 2.98 (School A), 2.68 (School B), and 2.78 (School C). This suggests that while students are generally engaged at a cognitive level, there is still room to strengthen deeper and more consistent intellectual involvement. The highest-rated indicators are Indicators 2 and 3 (tie), both receiving strong “Sometimes” ratings. Indicator 2, obtained TWMs of 3.01, 2.78, and 2.82 in dept understanding and critical thinking. This shows that students can analyze concepts, make connections, and provide thoughtful responses during discussions and problem-solving tasks. It reflects that alternative learning modalities can support higher-order thinking when students are actively engaged. Similarly, Indicator 3, which highlights students’ willingness to explore concepts beyond course requirements, also received high ratings 3.01, 2.68, and 2.80. This suggests that many

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students demonstrate curiosity and initiative by engaging in independent research and extending their learning beyond what is required. This is a positive sign of intrinsic motivation and intellectual interest. Next is Indicator 5, which measures perseverance and creativity in solving complex problems, with scores of 2.98, 2.71, and 2.77. The results indicate that students are generally willing to explore multiple approaches when faced with challenges, showing resilience and adaptability key skills in criminology where problem-solving is essential. Following this is Indicator 1, which focuses on students' ability to focus and complete tasks, with ratings of 2.97, 2.74, and 2.97. This suggests that students can maintain attention and effort in accomplishing academic tasks, although consistency may vary depending on the learning environment and individual circumstances. The lowest-rated indicator is Indicator 4, which involves self-reflection on learning processes, with scores of 2.95 (School A), 2.50 (School B), and 2.58 (School C). Notably, School B falls under Rarely, indicating that students may not consistently engage in reflective practices such as evaluating their progress or identifying areas for improvement. This suggests a gap in deeper meaningful learning.

The findings suggest that alternative learning modalities can support moderate levels of cognitive engagement, particularly in areas such as critical thinking, curiosity, and problem-solving. Students can analyze concepts, explore ideas beyond the curriculum, and demonstrate persistence when faced with challenges. However, the results also highlight the need to strengthen metacognitive and reflective practices, as seen in the lower rating of self-assessment and reflection. Educators may consider incorporating structured reflection activities such as learning journals, self-evaluation tasks, and guided feedback sessions to

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help students become more aware of their learning processes. Additionally, while students show the ability to think critically and stay focused, these behaviors are only demonstrated “sometimes,” indicating a need for more consistent engagement. This can be addressed by designing interactive and student-centered learning activities, such as case studies, simulations, and collaborative problem-solving tasks that require active participation. Institutions should also provide continuous academic support and scaffolding, ensuring that students are guided in developing higher-order thinking and independent learning skills. Strengthening these areas will not only improve academic engagement but also prepare students for the analytical and decision-making demands of the criminology profession. Overall, the results emphasize that while cognitive engagement is present, it must be continuously nurtured and enhanced to achieve deeper, more consistent, and more meaningful learning outcomes in alternative learning environments.

These findings align with Mazzeo (2025), who emphasized that teacher-student and peer interactions are essential in enhancing higher-order thinking skills. In Table 4a, this is evident in the relatively strong performance of Schools B and C in indicators related to critical thinking, problem-solving, and concept exploration (Indicators 2, 3, and 5). This suggests that when interaction is present, students are more likely to engage cognitively and process information at a deeper level. Similarly, the findings support Dinh (2023), who found that synchronous online learning environments help improve students’ focus and critical thinking abilities. This is consistent with the higher ratings observed in School A, particularly in Indicators 2 and 3, where students demonstrated stronger engagement in analyzing concepts

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and exploring ideas beyond course requirements. The presence of real-time discussions and guided instruction may have contributed to this increased level of cognitive engagement. Furthermore, Prestridge (2023) highlighted the importance of collaborative learning in promoting active knowledge processing and application. This is reflected in the students' ability to explore concepts and persist in solving complex problems (Indicators 3 and 5). However, the lower rating in Indicator 4 (self-reflection) indicates that while students are actively engaging with content, they may not consistently reflect on their own learning processes. This suggests that collaborative activities should be complemented with structured reflection tasks to deepen learning. Overall, these related studies support the findings of Table 4a by demonstrating that cognitive engagement is strengthened through interaction, collaboration, and structured learning environments. At the same time, the results highlight the need for more consistent implementation of strategies that promote self-reflection, sustained focus, and deeper intellectual involvement, ensuring that students move from occasional to more consistent cognitive engagement in criminology education.

b. Behavioral Engagement

Behavioral engagement reflects students' active participation, commitment, and adherence to academic expectations in criminology programs. This dimension assesses how students involve themselves in learning activities, maintain attendance, submit coursework on time, demonstrate enthusiasm, and respect institutional rules. In flexible learning environments, behavioral engagement is the visible acts of students while they are learning, such as attendance, participation, punctuality, discipline and academic activities, this

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dimension is particularly important as it reflects how students translate learning opportunities into active participation and consistent academic behavior. Evaluating behavioral engagement through alternative learning modalities provides insights into the practical involvement of students and the alignment between student and faculty perceptions across School A, School B and School C.

Table 4b

Asses the level of academic engagement of criminology students through alternative learning modalities in criminology schools

Combined Results of Student Respondents and Full-time faculty members						
Indicators Behavioral Engagement	School A		School B		School C	
	TW M	AI	TW M	AI	TW M	AI
1. Participation in online or offline activities is demonstrated through active involvement in group discussions, meaningful contributions to assignments, and consistent engagement in learning opportunities provided both within and outside the classroom setting.	2.93	S	2.57	S	2.82	S
2. Timeliness in the submission of coursework reflects students' commitment to meeting deadlines, showcasing their ability to manage priorities effectively and adhere to academic expectations.	3.01	S	2.71	S	2.87	S
3. Attendance and interaction during scheduled sessions are evident through consistent presence in classes, attentive listening, and active participation in discussions and activities, contributing to a collaborative learning environment.	3.01	S	2.85	S	2.96	S
4. Students demonstrate enthusiasm and dedication through consistent effort, focus, and initiative in pursuing academic goals.	3.05	S	2.98	S	2.95	S
5. Demonstrating consistent respect for established rules and guidelines, actively	3.10	S	3.06	S	3.03	S

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staying engaged in assigned tasks, and maintaining concentration throughout activities without allowing oneself to be distracted.					
AWM	3.02	2.83	2.92		
Legend: AI- Adjectival Interpretation TWM- Total Weighted Mean AWM- Average Weighted Mean A- Always – 3.28-4.00 S- Sometimes– 2.52-3.27 R- Rarely– 1.76-2.51 N- Never – 1.00-1.75					

The overall results show that criminology students “Sometimes” demonstrate behavioral engagement, as reflected in the Average Weighted Means of 3.02 (School A), 2.83 (School B), and 2.92 (School C). This indicates that students generally exhibit positive academic behaviors, although consistency may still vary depending on context and learning conditions. The highest-rated indicator is Indicator 5, which focuses on students’ discipline, rule adherence, and sustained concentration during activities, with TWMs of 3.10, 3.06, and 3.03. This suggests that students are generally respectful of academic rules and can maintain focus during learning tasks. It reflects a strong sense of responsibility and classroom discipline even within alternative learning setups. Next is Indicator 4, which highlights students’ enthusiasm, dedication, and initiative in pursuing academic goals, with ratings of 3.05, 2.98, and 2.95. The results indicate that students show motivation and willingness to engage in their studies, demonstrating effort and commitment despite the challenges of non-traditional learning environments. Following this is Indicator 3, which measures attendance and interaction during scheduled sessions, with scores of 3.01, 2.85, and 2.96. This implies that students generally attend classes regularly and participate in discussions. However, slight variations suggest that engagement levels may differ across schools and individual learners.

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Next is Indicator 2, which focuses on timeliness in submitting coursework, with TWMs of 3.01, 2.71, and 2.87. This indicates that students are generally able to meet deadlines and manage academic requirements, although some delays still occur, particularly in School B where engagement is relatively lower. The lowest-rated indicator, though still within the “Sometimes” range, is Indicator 1, which pertains to active participation in online or offline learning activities, with scores of 2.93, 2.57, and 2.82. This suggests that while students do participate in learning activities, their level of active and consistent involvement in discussions and assignments may still need strengthening, especially in School B where engagement is comparatively lower.

The findings suggest that alternative learning modalities can foster moderate to strong behavioral engagement, particularly in areas such as discipline, rule adherence, and student motivation. Students generally demonstrate responsible academic behavior, indicating that they can adapt to flexible learning environments. However, the lower rating in active participation highlights the need to enhance student involvement in learning activities, particularly in encouraging more consistent and meaningful contributions during discussions and group tasks. Educators may consider implementing interactive teaching strategies, such as collaborative projects, structured group work, and participation-based grading systems to increase engagement. Additionally, maintaining students’ motivation and discipline should be supported through clear expectations, consistent feedback, and supportive learning environments. Strengthening attendance monitoring and participation tracking systems may also help improve consistency across schools. Overall, the results indicate that while

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behavioral engagement is generally positive, continuous efforts are needed to ensure that students are not only present and disciplined but also actively and meaningfully engaged in the learning process, which is essential for success in criminology education.

Mazzeo (2025) highlights that strengthening teacher-student and peer interactions significantly enhances student engagement. This is reflected in the present findings, particularly in the variation observed across schools, where School B shows relatively lower engagement levels compared to Schools A and C. Such differences suggest that increasing opportunities for collaborative activities, guided discussions, and peer interaction may help improve consistency in students' behavioral involvement. Similarly, Dinh (2023) found that synchronous online learning and adequate technical support contribute to improved attention, participation, and compliance with academic requirements. This is consistent with the higher behavioral engagement observed in School A, where students demonstrated stronger participation, punctuality, and interaction in learning activities. The result implies that when learning environments are more structured and supported in real time, students are more likely to remain actively engaged. Furthermore, Wang (2024) emphasized the importance of emotion regulation and multi-dimensional teacher support in promoting sustained academic engagement. This supports the findings of Table 4b, particularly in indicators related to enthusiasm, discipline, and task completion, where students generally received "Sometimes" ratings. It suggests that consistent feedback, recognition of student effort, and supportive instructional practices are essential in strengthening behavioral engagement and academic responsibility across all criminology schools. Overall, these studies reinforce the findings of

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Table 4b by showing that behavioral engagement is not solely dependent on student effort but is also significantly shaped by the quality of instructional support, interaction opportunities, and learning environment structure.

c. Emotional Engagement

Emotional engagement plays a vital role in the learning process, as it reflects students' interest, motivation, and sense of belonging within the academic environment. In alternative learning modalities, emotional engagement becomes even more significant, as students rely on internal motivation, peer interaction, and supportive learning environments to remain engaged. Table 4c presents the level of emotional engagement of criminology students from School A, School B, and School C, as assessed through combined responses of student respondents and full-time faculty members.

Table 4c

Asses the level of academic engagement of criminology students through alternative learning modalities in criminology schools

Combined Results of Student Respondents and Full-time faculty members						
Indicators Emotional Engagement	School A		School B		School C	
	TW M	AI	TW M	AI	TW M	AI
1. A positive attitude toward learning and course content is demonstrated by students' enthusiasm, willingness to actively participate in activities, and their open-minded approach to acquiring new knowledge.	3.11	S	3.00	S	2.92	S
2. An emotional connection to instructors, peers, and the subject matter is reflected in students, mutual respect for others' perspectives, and a deep appreciation for the relevance of the topics being studied.	3.07	S	2.98	S	2.92	S

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3. The level of motivation and interest in alternative learning methods is evident through students' eagerness to explore diverse approaches, such as interactive tools, hands-on projects, and experiential learning, to enrich their educational experience.	3.04	S	2.89	S	2.68	S
4. Active participation in class discussions, extracurricular activities, or group projects reflect students' feelings connected and valued within the learning community.	3.07	S	3.01	S	2.89	S
5. Positive relationships are displayed through supportive interactions, empathy, and collaboration with classmates and responsiveness to instructors' guidance.	3.04	S	2.99	S	3.00	S
AWM	3.06		2.91		2.88	
Legend: <i>AI- Adjectival Interpretation TWM- Total Weighted Mean AWM-Average Weighted Mean</i> <i>A-Always – 3.28-4.00 S- Sometimes– 2.52-3.27 R- Rarely– 1.76-2.51 N-Never – 1.00-1.75</i>						

The overall results indicate that criminology students “Sometimes” demonstrate emotional engagement, as shown in the Average Weighted Means of 3.06 (School A), 2.91 (School B), and 2.88 (School C). This suggests that while students generally exhibit positive emotional responses toward learning, the level of engagement varies depending on the indicator and school context. The highest rated indicator is Indicator 1, which reflects students’ positive attitude toward learning and course content, with TWMs of 3.11, 3.00, and 2.92. This indicates that students generally show enthusiasm, openness, and willingness to participate in academic activities. It suggests that, despite the challenges of alternative learning modalities, students maintain a generally favorable outlook toward their studies.

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Next is Indicator 2, which measures the emotional connection to instructors, peers, and subject matter, with scores of 3.07, 2.98, and 2.92. The results imply that students feel a sense of respect and appreciation within their academic environment. This emotional connection helps support a positive learning atmosphere and contributes to sustained engagement. Following this is Indicator 4, which focuses on students' feelings of belonging and connection through participation in class discussions and group activities, with ratings of 3.07, 3.01, and 2.89. This suggests that students generally feel included and valued within the learning community, although slight differences across schools indicate varying levels of engagement. Next is Indicator 5, which highlights positive relationships, empathy, collaboration, and responsiveness to instructors, with TWMs of 3.04, 2.99, and 3.00. The findings show that students maintain generally healthy relationships with peers and instructors, which supports a supportive and cooperative learning environment. The lowest-rated indicator is Indicator 3, which refers to students' motivation and interest in alternative learning methods, with scores of 3.04 (School A), 2.89 (School B), and 2.68 (School C). While still interpreted as "Sometimes," this indicates that some students particularly in School C may experience lower motivation in engaging with interactive tools, experiential learning, and other alternative learning strategies. This suggests a need for more engaging and innovative instructional approaches.

The findings suggest that alternative learning modalities can foster moderate emotional engagement among criminology students, particularly in terms of positive attitudes, relationships, and a sense of belonging. Students generally maintain favorable emotional

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responses toward their learning experiences, which is essential for sustaining participation and academic persistence. However, the lower motivation toward alternative learning methods indicates a need to strengthen instructional strategies that enhance student interest and engagement. Educators may consider integrating interactive activities, simulations, gamified learning, and experiential approaches to make learning more engaging and meaningful. In addition, maintaining emotional engagement requires continuous teacher support, encouragement, and meaningful interaction, as these contribute to students' sense of connection and belonging. Strengthening peer collaboration and creating inclusive learning environments can further enhance emotional engagement across all schools. Overall, the results emphasize that while emotional engagement is generally present, it must be continuously supported and enhanced through innovative, interactive, and student-centered teaching strategies to ensure sustained motivation and active participation in criminology education under alternative learning modalities.

The results of Table 4c, which indicate that criminology students "sometimes" demonstrate emotional engagement (AWM = 3.06), are strongly supported by related literature emphasizing the role of interactive and student-centered learning in shaping learners' motivation and emotional involvement. In particular, the moderate scores observed in students' exploration and motivation toward alternative learning methods (Indicator 3) align with findings from Han (2024) and Werede Tareke Gebregergis (2025). Both studies emphasize that interactive learning experiences such as hands-on projects, digital tools, and experiential activities significantly enhance students' motivation and emotional engagement.

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This is reflected in Table 4c, where students show comparatively lower but still positive engagement in exploring alternative learning approaches, particularly in School C (TWM = 2.68). The findings suggest that while students are generally receptive to alternative modalities, their level of enthusiasm increases when learning experiences are more engaging, varied, and participatory. Furthermore, Han (2024) and Werede Tareke Gebregergis (2025) highlight that exposure to diverse instructional strategies fosters enthusiasm, resilience, and proactive participation, which are essential components of emotional engagement. This supports the present study's results, where students demonstrate positive attitudes, emotional connection, and collaborative relationships, but still show variability in motivation when engaging with alternative learning tools. Overall, the alignment between Table 4c and these studies suggests that emotional engagement in criminology education can be significantly strengthened through the consistent use of interactive, experiential, and technology-enhanced learning strategies, which encourage students to become more emotionally invested and actively involved in their learning process.

5. Significant Relationship Between Academic Engagement of Criminology Students and Full time Faculty Members

The Overall Mean Academic Engagement scores of students (X) and full-time faculty members (Y) from Schools A, B, and C were paired and used for the correlation analysis.

School	Student Overall Mean (X)	Faculty Overall Mean Y
A	3.05	2.93
B	2.89	2.74
C	2.87	2.86

School	X	Y	X ²	Y ²	XY
A	3.05	2.93	9.3025	8.5849	8.9365

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B	2.89	2.74	8.3521	7.5076	7.9186
C	2.87	2.86	8.2369	8.1796	8.2082
Σ	8.81	8.53	25.8915	24.2721	25.0633

Where:

- **X** = Student engagement means
- **Y** = Faculty engagement means
- **N = 3 schools**

$$r=0.36$$

The overall mean scores of students' academic engagement and faculty academic engagement from the three schools were paired and subjected to correlation analysis. The computed Pearson r value was $r = 0.36$, indicating a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. This result suggests that higher levels of academic engagement reported by students tend to correspond with higher levels of engagement observed and assessed by faculty members. The positive direction of the correlation reflects consistency between student self-reports and faculty evaluations across the three participating institutions. Although the strength of the relationship is moderate, it indicates that students' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement under alternative learning modalities is meaningfully aligned with faculty perceptions. At the 0.05 level of significance, the computed correlation coefficient supports the rejection of the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between the academic engagement of criminology students and full-time faculty members. Therefore, the findings confirm that student engagement and faculty assessments are significantly related under alternative learning modalities.

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These findings underscore the importance of faculty involvement, instructional strategies, and institutional support in enhancing student engagement. The observed relationship highlights that when faculty members actively design, facilitate, and monitor alternative learning modalities, students are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of academic engagement. This aligns with existing literature emphasizing the critical role of instructor presence and instructional quality in sustaining student engagement in flexible and technology-mediated learning environments.

6.Challenges of Alternative Learning Modality that Affect the Academic Engagement of Criminology Students

The transition to alternative learning modalities has provided flexible and adaptive means for criminology education. However, this shift has also introduced notable challenges that hinder academic engagement. This section discusses the technological, instructional, and flexibility-related barriers that affect students’ engagement based on the perceptions of both students and faculty respondents from the three criminology institutions.

a. Technological Accessibility

Technological accessibility refers to the availability, usability, and adequacy of digital tools, internet connectivity, and learning platforms that support students’ participation in academic activities. In modern educational settings, particularly under flexible and blended learning environments, access to technology plays a crucial role in ensuring that students can fully engage with instructional materials, complete academic tasks, and participate in virtual learning activities. Examining this aspect is essential in determining whether technological resources are sufficient to support effective learning and equal educational opportunities

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among criminology students across different schools. Table 6a presents the level of technological accessibility of criminology students in relation to the implementation of alternative learning modalities.

Table 6a
Challenges of alternative learning modality that affect the academic engagement the criminology students and the 3 criminology schools

Students and Faculty Members								
Indicators	School A		School B		School C		TF	Rank
	F	Rank	F	Rank	F	Rank		
1. Limited or unreliable internet connection, especially in remote areas, poses significant challenges for students, hindering their ability to participate in online classes, access digital resources, and communicate effectively with instructors and peers.	111	1	294	1	100	1	505	1
2. A lack of access to necessary devices, such as computers, tablets, or smartphones, restricts students' capacity to engage in modern educational activities and utilize technology-driven learning tools.	104	2	258	2	87	2.5	449	2
3. Difficulty navigating and utilizing digital platforms among students unfamiliar with technology highlights the importance of providing guidance and training to ensure equitable access to online learning environments.	83	4	231	3	80	4	394	4
4. High costs associated with maintaining technology, such	99	3	229	4	87	2.5	415	3

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as purchasing mobile data or upgrading devices, create financial barriers that can limit students' ability to sustain their participation in technology-based education.								
5. Some online systems may be overly complicated or not user-friendly, leading to frustration and reduced engagement	73	5	22 7	5	79	5	37 9	5

The results of Table 6a show that the most significant challenge in terms of technological accessibility is limited or unreliable internet connection, which ranked 1st overall (TF = 505). This was consistently identified across all three schools, with School B recording the highest frequency (F = 294). This indicates that unstable internet connectivity remains the most critical barrier to students' participation in online learning activities, affecting their ability to attend virtual classes, access materials, and communicate effectively. The second major challenge is the lack of access to necessary devices such as computers, tablets, or smartphones, ranking 2nd overall (TF = 449). This suggests that many students are still unable to fully engage in technology-based learning due to insufficient or shared access to essential devices, limiting their academic participation and performance. Next is high cost associated with maintaining technology, such as mobile data and device upgrades, which ranked 3rd overall (TF = 415). This reflects the financial burden experienced by students in sustaining participation in alternative learning modalities, particularly in maintaining internet connectivity and updating technological tools. The fourth challenge is difficulty navigating and

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utilizing digital platforms, ranking 4th overall (TF = 394). This indicates that some students lack sufficient digital literacy skills, which affects their ability to effectively use online learning systems and participate fully in academic tasks. School B recorded the highest frequency for this indicator, suggesting a need for additional training and orientation in digital tools. The least ranked but still relevant challenge is the complexity or non-user-friendly design of online systems, with the lowest total frequency (TF = 379). Although it ranks last, it still contributes to student frustration and reduced engagement, especially when platforms are not intuitive or require advanced technical skills.

The findings suggest that technological accessibility remains a major barrier to effective academic engagement in alternative learning modalities. The dominance of internet connectivity issues and lack of devices highlights the urgent need for institutional and government support in improving digital infrastructure and providing students with adequate learning tools. To address these challenges, schools may consider implementing technology support programs, such as device lending schemes, internet subsidies, or partnerships with local service providers to improve connectivity. In addition, training programs focused on digital literacy and platform navigation are essential to help students maximize the use of available learning systems. Furthermore, educators should consider simplifying learning platforms and providing user-friendly instructional guides to reduce frustration and improve accessibility. Flexible learning materials that can be accessed offline or with low data usage may also help mitigate connectivity issues. Overall, the results emphasize that without adequate technological accessibility, students' ability to fully participate in alternative learning

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modalities is significantly affected. To make sure that criminology students at all schools have fair, welcoming, and useful learning experiences, we need to deal with these problems.

The findings on technological accessibility align strongly with existing literature emphasizing connectivity and access as critical determinants of student engagement in alternative learning modalities. The identification of poor internet connectivity as the primary challenge (TF = 505) supports Wu (2023) and Villegas (2024), who found that reliable internet access is essential for sustaining class participation, interaction, and satisfaction in online learning environments, particularly in geographically disadvantaged areas. Similarly, the lack of access to appropriate devices mirrors the findings of Cascayan (2021) and Alam (2024), which highlight device scarcity and technical limitations as major barriers that reduce students' ability to engage consistently in online classes. Moreover, difficulties in navigating digital platforms are consistent with Chan (2024), who emphasized that perceived ease of use and technological readiness significantly influence students' emotional engagement and learning outcomes. Collectively, these studies support the present findings that technological barriers substantially hinder academic engagement, underscoring the need for strengthened infrastructure, device support, and digital literacy initiatives in criminology education.

b. Instructional Quality

Instructional quality plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of alternative learning modalities, as it directly influences students' understanding, motivation, and overall academic engagement. In the context of flexible and distance learning, instructional quality refers to the clarity of learning objectives, organization of course materials, effectiveness of teaching

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strategies, timeliness and usefulness of feedback, and the instructor’s ability to facilitate meaningful interaction despite physical separation. High instructional quality helps students develop competence and confidence in learning tasks, while poor instructional design and delivery may lead to confusion, reduced participation, and lower engagement. Therefore, examining instructional quality is essential in understanding how alternative learning modalities affect the academic engagement of criminology students, particularly in ensuring that learning experiences remain structured, interactive, and supportive across different delivery methods.

Table 6b
Challenges of alternative learning modality that affect the academic engagement the criminology students and the 3 criminology schools

Students and Faculty Members								
Indicators	School A		School B		School C		TF	Rank
	F	Rank	F	Rank	F	Rank		
1. Instructors may lack sufficient training or experience in delivering online or alternative learning methods, leading to challenges in adapting traditional teaching approaches to digital or hybrid environments.	78	4	221	1.5	74	4	373	3
2. Reduced opportunities for personalized feedback and interaction with students can hinder the development of meaningful connections and tailored guidance, impacting overall learning outcomes.	83	3	221	1.5	77	1.5	381	2
3. Ineffective or outdated teaching materials that fail to engage students result in a diminished interest in course content and limited	68	5	203	5	67	5	338	5

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opportunities for active learning and participation.								
4. Difficulty in ensuring consistency and maintaining standards across alternative learning setups creates difference in instructional quality, affecting students' ability to achieve uniform academic progress.	93	1	216	3	77	1.5	386	1
5. Students may receive delayed or insufficient feedback on their performance, affecting their ability to improve and stay motivated.	87	2	206	4	75	3	368	4

The results of Table 6b show that the most significant challenge under instructional quality is inconsistency in maintaining instructional standards across alternative learning setups, which ranked 1st overall (TF = 386). This indicates that differences in teaching approaches and delivery methods across schools may affect the uniformity of students' learning experiences and academic progress. Students may find it difficult to achieve consistent learning outcomes when instructional quality varies significantly. The second major challenge is reduced opportunities for personalized feedback and interaction, ranking 2nd overall (TF = 381). This suggests that limited teacher-student interaction in alternative learning environments affects students' ability to receive tailored guidance, which is essential for improving understanding and academic performance. Next is lack of sufficient training or experience among instructors in delivering online or alternative learning, which ranked 3rd overall (TF = 373). This indicates that some educators may still be adjusting to digital teaching methods, which can affect the effectiveness of instruction and students' overall engagement in learning activities. The fourth challenge is delayed or insufficient feedback on student

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performance, with a total frequency of 368, ranking 4th overall. This reflects students' concerns about the timeliness of academic feedback, which is important for identifying mistakes, improving performance, and maintaining motivation in learning. The least ranked challenge, although still significant, is the use of ineffective or outdated teaching materials, which ranked 5th overall (TF = 338). While it received the lowest frequency, it still indicates that some instructional resources may not fully engage students or promote active learning, thereby limiting their academic interest and participation.

The findings suggest that challenges in instructional quality significantly affect the academic engagement of criminology students in alternative learning modalities. The results highlight that inconsistencies in teaching standards and limited interaction are the most critical concerns, emphasizing the need for stronger instructional alignment across schools. To deal with these problems, schools should make sure that teachers have access to ongoing professional development programs, especially in digital pedagogy, online teaching practices, and learner-centered training. Training can enable teachers better adapt to different types of learning environments and make their lessons more consistent. Also, it is important to make feedback systems stronger. To help students keep track of their progress and stay motivated, teachers should provide them feedback that is timely, clear, and helpful. Learning support can also be improved by giving students more chances to contact with each other in a more personal way, like through office hours, mentoring sessions, and small group discussions. Moreover, schools should regularly review and update instructional materials to ensure they are engaging, relevant, and aligned with current learning needs. Ensuring consistency in

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teaching standards across different modalities will also help promote fairness and equal learning opportunities for all students. Overall, the results emphasize that improving instructional quality is crucial in enhancing student engagement, learning outcomes, and academic success in criminology education under alternative learning modalities.

The instructional quality challenges identified in Table 6b particularly the lack of instructional consistency, limited personalized feedback, and insufficient faculty training are strongly supported by existing literature. Wu (2023) emphasizes that effective use of synchronous platforms enhances student engagement only when instructors are pedagogically prepared to facilitate interaction and provide clear guidance, aligning with the high ranking of instructional inconsistency in this study. Similarly, Phan (2024) highlights that faculty readiness and institutional support significantly influence students' online learning behaviors and engagement, reinforcing the need for continuous professional development among instructors. Moreover, Alam (2024) found that delayed feedback and limited instructor preparedness negatively affect motivation and engagement, which corroborates the present findings showing feedback-related concerns as a major instructional barrier. Collectively, these studies affirm that strengthening faculty training, instructional consistency, and feedback mechanisms is essential to improving instructional quality and sustaining academic engagement in alternative learning modalities.

c. Flexibility

Flexibility is a defining feature of alternative learning modalities, allowing students to manage their academic responsibilities alongside personal, family, or work-related obligations.

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However, while flexibility offers opportunities for autonomy, it may also introduce challenges that affect students' academic engagement. Flexibility in learning is meant to allow students more power over when, where, and how they do their schoolwork. While this approach supports individualized learning and accommodates diverse student circumstances, it may also introduce difficulties in maintaining structure, focus, and consistent academic habits. This section examines how the flexible nature of alternative learning environments can both support and hinder students' engagement, particularly in relation to their ability to manage time, maintain discipline, and sustain academic productivity.

Table 6c
Challenges of alternative learning modality that affect the academic engagement the criminology students and the 3 criminology schools

Students and Faculty Members								
Indicators	School A		School B		School C		TF	Rank
	F	Rank	F	Rank	F	Rank		
1. Students often struggle to balance learning with other responsibilities, such as work commitments or household tasks, which can negatively impact their academic engagement in alternative learning modalities.	102	1	248	1	103	1	351	5
2. The flexibility provided by alternative learning modalities may result in poor time management, as students might find it challenging to prioritize academic tasks, leading to reduced engagement and participation.	95	3	228	3	74	5	397	2

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3. Adapting learning schedules to accommodate the diverse needs of students presents significant challenges, as their varying personal circumstances may hinder the effectiveness of these alternative methods.	83	4	22 5	4	82	3	39 0	3
4. The lack of structure in alternative modalities may result in reduced motivation and focus, as students can find it harder to stay disciplined and maintain a steady learning routine.	82	5	20 8	5	77	4	36 7	4
5. Students may struggle to maintain focus due to varying study conditions, such as distractions at home or lack of a dedicated study space.	10 1	2	23 6	2	98	2	43 5	1

The results of Table 6c indicate that the most significant challenge related to flexibility is difficulty maintaining focus due to distractions at home or lack of a proper study environment, which ranked 1st overall (TF = 435). This suggests that many students struggle to concentrate on their studies because of environmental distractions and the absence of a dedicated learning space, which directly affects their engagement in academic activities. The second major challenge is poor time management resulting from flexible learning arrangements, ranking 2nd overall (TF = 397). This indicates that while flexibility allows students to learn at their own pace, it also leads some learners to struggle in prioritizing tasks, which can result in delayed submissions and reduced participation. Next is difficulty adapting learning schedules to diverse student circumstances, which ranked 3rd overall (TF = 390). This reflects the challenge of accommodating students with different personal responsibilities,

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such as work or family obligations, making it difficult to implement a uniform and effective learning schedule for all learners. The fourth challenge is lack of structure in alternative learning modalities leading to reduced motivation and discipline, with a total frequency of 367, ranking 4th overall. This suggests that some students may find it difficult to stay motivated and maintain consistent study habits without a structured classroom environment. The least ranked but still significant challenge is difficulty balancing academic tasks with other responsibilities such as work or household duties, which ranked 5th overall (TF = 351). Although it received the lowest ranking, it still highlights the reality that many criminology students are managing multiple responsibilities that affect their academic engagement.

The results show that while flexibility is a big plus of different ways of learning, it also comes with big problems that can make students less interested in school. The most important problem is that the setting is distracting and there isn't a good place to study, which makes it hard for students to focus and learn well. To address these challenges, institutions may consider promoting structured yet flexible learning strategies, such as scheduled check-ins, guided learning plans, and time management workshops. These can help students develop better discipline while still benefiting from flexible learning arrangements. Additionally, educators should provide clear timelines, consistent reminders, and structured learning activities to help students stay on track. Encouraging students to create dedicated study spaces and develop personal study routines. Schools may also consider offering academic counseling and student support programs to help learners balance academic demands with personal responsibilities. Strengthening these support systems can reduce the negative effects

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of flexibility while maximizing its benefits. Overall, the results emphasize that flexibility must be carefully managed and supported to ensure that it enhances rather than hinders academic engagement, discipline, and learning effectiveness among criminology students.

The findings show that flexibility, although meant to help students, also creates challenges that affect academic engagement. The main difficulty across the three schools is students' inability to stay focused due to distractions in their home study environments. Other challenges include balancing schoolwork with work and household duties, poor time management, and reduced motivation caused by the lack of structure. These results support Kulusakli (2025), who found that while flexible learning can improve engagement, too much or poorly guided flexibility can reduce students' behavioral and cognitive engagement, especially when self-discipline is weak. This explains why flexible schedules often lead to procrastination. Similarly, Cott (2025) noted that flexibility increases student satisfaction, but academic success still depends more on students' preparation and attentiveness than on flexibility alone. This aligns with the finding that flexibility becomes less effective when students struggle with routine and responsibility. In addition, Villegas (2024) reported that students in flexible learning settings face home distractions, mental health concerns, and difficulties in maintaining study habits, even though they prefer flexible and online options. This confirms that flexibility-related challenges are common across institutions.

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Conclusions

This study was conducted to determine the effects of alternative learning modalities on the academic engagement of criminology students in the Province of Albay, guided by the specific objectives of the research. Based on the findings, several conclusions were drawn.

First, criminology institutions implemented various alternative learning modalities, including modular, online, blended, synchronous, and asynchronous approaches. These modalities were adopted to ensure continuity of instruction and to provide flexible learning opportunities for both students and faculty.

Second, the results revealed that alternative learning modalities have a significant effect on the academic engagement of criminology students in terms of interaction and collaboration, learning retention and comprehension, time management, and assessment of learning. While these modalities promote flexibility and accessibility, the level of engagement varies depending on the learning environment, instructional strategies, and available institutional support.

Third, a significant difference was found between the responses of students and faculty members, indicating variations in their perceptions and experiences of alternative learning modalities. This suggests that engagement and learning outcomes are viewed differently depending on one's role in the teaching-learning process.

Fourth, criminology students' level of academic involvement was often measured in terms of their thoughts, actions, and feelings. Students showed that they were interested in learning by paying attention to lessons, taking part in academic activities, and staying

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emotionally connected to the process. The consistency of engagement, however, varied among variables, indicating that more enhancement is necessary to attain elevated and enduring engagement levels.

Fifth, the study found a strong link between how alternative learning techniques are delivered and how engaged students are in their studies. This means that how lessons are taught has a big effect on how involved, motivated, and successful students are in their learning.

Sixth, several challenges affecting academic engagement were identified, particularly in terms of technological accessibility, instructional quality, and flexibility. Issues such as unstable internet connection, limited access to learning devices, inconsistent instructional practices, and difficulties in managing flexible learning schedules were found to hinder students' full engagement in academic activities.

Finally, based on these findings, an alternative learning modality engagement framework for criminology students was developed. This framework is intended to guide institutions in enhancing academic engagement by improving instructional delivery, strengthening interaction, and addressing the identified challenges in alternative learning environments.

The study ultimately determines that alternate learning modes substantially affect the academic involvement of criminology students. But their usefulness depends on how well they are put into practice, how well they are supported, and how much the quality of the teaching and technology continues to improve.

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Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the academic engagement of criminology students under alternative learning modalities:

First, on the delivery methods of alternative learning modalities: Criminology institutions are encouraged to continuously review and strengthen the implementation of modular, online, blended, synchronous, and asynchronous learning. These modalities should be clearly structured, consistently applied, and aligned with learning outcomes to ensure effective and meaningful learning experiences.

Second, on the effects of alternative learning modalities on academic engagement: Faculty members should adopt learner-centered instructional strategies that enhance interaction and collaboration, such as virtual discussions, group activities, and interactive tasks. Learning materials should be designed to improve comprehension and retention, while structured schedules, reminders, and balanced workloads should be provided to support students' academic performance.

Third, on differences in perceptions between students and faculty: Institutions should establish regular consultation mechanisms, feedback systems, and faculty development programs to address perception gaps between students and teachers. This will help align instructional practices with students' needs and improve the effectiveness of learning delivery.

Fourth, on cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement: Teachers are encouraged to integrate engaging and interactive learning activities that promote critical thinking, active

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participation, and emotional connection. Reflective tasks, collaborative projects, and real-life criminology applications should be emphasized to strengthen overall student engagement.

Fifth, on the relationship between delivery methods and academic engagement: Schools should carefully design and select learning modalities that promote flexibility, interaction, and student autonomy. Blended and interactive approaches should be prioritized, as these have the potential to enhance academic engagement more effectively than purely independent learning methods.

Sixth, on challenges affecting academic engagement: Institutions should address technological accessibility by improving internet support systems, providing learning devices where possible, and offering technical assistance to both students and faculty. Instructional quality should be enhanced through continuous faculty training on digital pedagogy, while flexibility should be balanced with structure, clear guidelines, and academic monitoring.

Finally, on the proposed engagement framework: The proposed alternative learning modality engagement framework should be adopted, implemented, and continuously evaluated by criminology institutions as a guide for improving academic engagement. Future researchers are encouraged to test and refine this framework in other academic programs or regions to further validate its effectiveness and applicability.

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