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## Factors Influencing Students Reading Comprehension Difficulties Amidst The Use Of Modular Distance Learning Approach In Mindanao State University Sulu – Senior High School

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### ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to determine the factors influencing students' reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of a modular distance learning approach in Mindanao State University – Sulu Senior High School. It also aimed to understand reading comprehension and the modular distance learning approach. It determines the reading comprehension difficulty level during the modular distance learning approach as perceived by the students when they are classified in terms of the strand. This study used mix – method. Data were gathered through the use of a Focus Group Discussion and a self-made survey questionnaire. Weighted mean and t-test were used. A purposive sampling design was utilized for the selection of the ten MSU – Sulu SHS Teachers and a convenient sampling design was used for the selection of 25% population of MSU – Sulu SHS Students during the school year 2020-2021. The findings of this study revealed that reading comprehension is the ability of the students to analyze, decode, integrate prior knowledge, interpret, and clearly understand the words, sentences, or compositions particularly the content and its contexts. The different strategies used in teaching reading comprehension as well as different strategies that can be used during the modular learning approach were presented. The emphasis on modular distance learning was found that it can be used as an alternative learning approach that uses self-learning modules. It was also revealed that both internal and external factors have influenced students reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of the modular distance learning approach. Students' perception of reading comprehension difficulty level during the modular distance learning approach is difficult. There is no significant difference in students' reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of the modular distance learning approach as perceived by the students resulting in the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

### 1. Introduction

The call for efficient reading comprehension is significant and is a necessity in most of the aspects in learning. During early age, students are taught at school how to read then later trained to comprehend what they read. Though many students have learned to read, Rutzler (2020) showed a disparity by stating

that “the act of reading and the act of comprehending what you read are two very different things”.

Reading comprehension is defined by Veeravagu, et. Al., (2010) as “a thinking process by which the reader selects facts, information, or ideas from printed materials; determines the meanings the author intended to transmit; decide how they relate to



previous knowledge; and judge their appropriateness and worth for meeting the learners' own objectives”

It is evident that every students experience reading comprehension difficulties as Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, & Snowling (2013) and Wong (2011) concluded that “reading comprehension is a critical learning skill to all students”. Nevertheless, it is still necessary for them to learn and master the said skill. As Ruiz (2015) stated that “students need reading comprehension skills to successfully accomplish the educational goals and expectations, which are required in the classroom settings”. In contrast, it has been argued by Hoeh (2015) and Mason (2004) that “not being able to successfully comprehend can prevent students from learning, retaining information that they read, and graduating from school, which will negatively impact different aspects of their lives later on”.

For many years, the traditional face-to-face learning approach has always been used in the educational system. However, due to the deadly Corona Virus Diseased (COVID-19) that is faced by the country today, many things had changed. And that includes the usual face-to-face classes which are no longer permitted just to protect the health and safety of both students and teachers. It is believed that at this time, the impact of COVID-19 has put students' learning at risk. In response to this pandemic, DepEd developed the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) to ensure that learning opportunities are provided to our learners in a safe manner through different learning delivery. (DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019; No. 12, s. 2020)

Presently, all schools in the Philippines is in the state of Distance Learning Education. The school administrations have to determine on what alternative learning delivery methods is feasible, practical and acceptable in their place. As for Mindanao State University – Sulu Senior High School, they used the Modular Distance Learning Approach as an Alternative Learning Delivery Method during COVID-19. In this type of method, the teachers provided

learning guides, self-learning modules, and worksheets for the students.

With this kind of situation, it is imperative to determine factors that makes it difficult for students to comprehend what they read.

Koda (2007) and Negris (2013) pointed out that the degree of learners' vocabulary knowledge, prior knowledge, and grammatical knowledge are some of the significant difficulties influencing the reading comprehension.

Dennis (2008) also elaborates some factors that affect reading comprehension skill. They are complexity of the reading text, environmental influences, anxiety during reading comprehension, interest and motivation, decoding or word recognition speed, and medical problems.

Furthermore, it has been said that the influential factors of the students' reading comprehension may not be separated with the influence of students in learning process. Sadeghi (2007) looked at reading comprehension as related to two main factors, internal and external factors. Internal factors are related to the reader, were things such as cognitive abilities and strategies, background knowledge, and affective characteristics. External factors were identified as text modality, text characteristics, time and place of reading and others.

Thus, the researcher is trying her best to determine factors influencing students' reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of modular distance learning approach.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Related literature**

Reading Comprehension has been simply defined by the K12 Reader Reading Instruction Resources (2018) as act of understanding what you are reading. While the definition can be simply stated the act is not simple to teach, learn or practice. Reading comprehension is an intentional, active, interactive



process that occurs before, during and after a person reads a particular piece of writing. The act of reading cannot be completed without reading comprehension for it is one of the pillars in reading.

In the publication of K12 Reader Reading Instruction Resources (2018), it has been said that When a person reads a text he engages in a complex array of cognitive processes. He is simultaneously using his awareness and understanding of phonemes (individual sound “pieces” in language), phonics (connection between letters and sounds and the relationship between sounds, letters and words) and ability to comprehend or construct meaning from the text. This last component of the act of reading is reading comprehension. It cannot occur independent of the other two elements of the process. At the same time, it is the most difficult and most important of the three.

The reading comprehension value could be felt deeply in childhood especially in adult life. This is why having the correction and necessary steps to make it better during the early years is significant. Failing to solve reading difficulties during students’ early grades dramatically increases the likelihood that the reading difficulties will follow them into their adult years (Ford & Opitz, 2008; Samuelsson, Lundberg, & Herkner, 2004). Sloat, Beswick, and Willms (2007) stated that the majority of students who do not master the skills of reading to learn by the end of third grade will never learn to read well, have more difficulties with the grade level curriculum, need ongoing intensive assistance, and perform less than their classmates’ in reading achievement and curricular knowledge. Thus, the critical role that reading plays in students learning beyond third grade emphasizes the importance of identifying struggling readers in their early grades and providing them with the most appropriate reading strategies (Antoniou & Souvignier, 2007; Sloat, Beswick, and Willms, 2007). In addition, students who fail to master reading skills by the end of third grade, have low motivation for learning, behavioral

challenges, and low academic achievement (Sloat, Beswick, & Williams, 2007)

In the absence of comprehension, our reading is meaningless but just more or less watching symbols on the screen or a books page with our eyes and giving them sound. We can imagine that we are being handed Egyptian hieroglyphics without understanding them. We may appreciate the beauty of their words, the possibility that we can analyze a few meanings from them, but we are not actually reading its content. It has no meaning at all. People read for leisure or for other purposes, but understanding and comprehending will always be the end goal of it. Jeff Wilhelm (scholastic.com, 2020) explains in his article published in the website of Scholastic.com, comprehension requires the reader to be an active constructor of meaning and comprehension always attends to what is coded or written in the text, but it also depends upon the reader's background experiences, purposes, feelings, and needs of the moment. That's why we can read the same book or story twice and it will have very different meanings for us. We, as readers, are an equal and active partner with the text in the meaning-making process of comprehension.

Wilhelm also laid strategies he collected from researches to be an active constructor of meaning as reader and simplify it in three points. The strategies are activating prior knowledge, and connect the applicable prior experiences to the reading; setting purposes; predicting; decoding text which means to identify word and sentence meanings; summarizing which refers to bring meaning forward throughout the reading, building on prior information to create new and fuller meanings; visualizing which is the act of seeing characters, settings, situations, ideas, mental models; questioning; monitoring the understanding which is the most salient difference between good and poor readers is that good readers know when and often why they are not comprehending; using clarification and corrective strategies where needed; lastly,



reflecting on and applying the meaning that has been made to new situations. In the presence of these strategies, Wilhelm then provided his three key points that can be analyzed from it. The first is since these strategies are used every time anybody reads, if your kids don't use all these strategies, then these are the ones to teach them first. They have the greatest transfer value. Second is we need to know how to teach these strategies and give them over to students (this is where the featured techniques of think-aloud and action strategies come in). Simply explaining the techniques won't suffice. Students need help in the process of how to do it. Just as explaining how to ski won't be sufficient to get a novice down the hill, neither is explaining a text, or explaining a comprehension strategy, going to do the job in promoting comprehension. Lastly, these strategies are necessary to reading comprehension in all situations, but they are usually insufficient to comprehension. Readers of any text generally go well beyond these general process strategies as they use engagement strategies to create a textual world, move around in it, evaluate it, etc. As students get older and read more sophisticated texts they must also learn how to meet the demands of making meaning with new text structures (argument, classification, satire, definition, fable, etc.) and new task-specific conventions (like those to tip off a reader to irony, symbolism, unreliable narrators, etc.). A reader who reads a satire or an ironic monologue — or even a fable, for that matter — using only general process strategies will not comprehend it. She needs text, and task, specific strategies to notice that a text is ironic, and to know what to do as a result.

It was backed up by the same view and research in reading comprehension. The reading problems that negatively impact students' comprehension could include one or more of the following: inappropriate use of prior knowledge, lack of vocabulary, difficulty of reading fluency, limited knowledge of common text structures (Gersten, Fuchs, Williams, & Baker 2011; Graham & Bellert, 2005), difficulty making inferences

(Hall, & Barnes, 2017; Jimenez-Fernandez, 2015; Sencibaugh, 2007), and unfamiliarity with the appropriate strategy needed to gain meaning from a text (Woolley, 2008). The presence of these factors could result or cause the students or learners from understanding what they are reading and to be successful in the endeavor to life's challenges.

Louis Spear-Swerling (readingrockets.org, 2020) published that patterns of reading difficulty provide an educationally useful way to think about different kinds of reading problems, whether those problems are mainly experiential in nature (e.g., those common among English learners) or associated with disabilities (e.g., those typical of children with dyslexia). Swerling also provided components in reading which are the apparent difficulties faced by students both in face to face class or in modular distance learning. First is out-of-context word decoding (and spelling). Her suggestions to aid this are including at least one assessment containing nonsense words; if nonsense word decoding is weak, assessing pattern of difficulties is useful; and spelling inventories may be useful for screening groups. The second component is oral text reading accuracy. Her suggestion to aid this is the consideration whether the child applies known decoding skills when reading passages or over-relies on context. Third is oral text reading fluency. Her suggestion for this is to consider whether fluency problems involve 1) poor decoding, 2) weak vocabulary/listening comprehension, or 3) both areas. Fourth component is oral vocabulary. Her suggestion is the consideration whether weak vocabulary accounts for weak listening/reading comprehension. Next is listening comprehension (sentences/passages). To aid this, she advised to follow up with multiple measures or more in-depth assessment if needed. Lastly, the reading comprehension. Her suggestion is to answer comprehension questions about passages read and a follow up with multiple measures or more in-depth assessment if needed.



In distance learning like in the modular type, students are often left working independently than in face to face classes. The teachers on the other hand must adjust their way in order to fulfill the end goal of teaching – learning. To do this, the students must be able to understand and comprehend what they read. Catherine Ferguson (edutopia.org, 2020) published that in distance learning, we can teach these skills during synchronous learning as preparation for reading that occurs during asynchronous learning, or we can use our learning management systems to create gateway activities so that students complete pre-reading activities before the reading text is released. We need to intentionally adapt the tools we use in our classrooms to online learning. She also expressed that the teacher must make the vocabulary accessible. Another factor she said was on activating prior knowledge. It is the reading comprehension that improves when we take time to connect the new knowledge to existing knowledge. With online whiteboards, bulletin boards, or documents, we can create mind maps or KWL charts. Next is monitoring students' progress. Students can get lost in the virtual world, but online monitoring tools help keep them on track.

Reading Comprehension difficulties amidst this modular distance learning will take so much from our students because most of the time, they will be dependent on themselves. This research is of big help to school administration, parents, teachers and students on the use of modular distance learning in order not to deviate from learning goals amidst the many factors surrounding the difficulties in reading.

### **Related studies**

Reading comprehension is one of the most complex behaviors in which humans engage (Elleman, Oslund, 2004). This task is undoubtedly difficult to be effectively done without proper knowledge on the reading content and the reading process itself. The study of Aksan et al. (2009) provided that reading

comprehension requires the effective utilization of cognitive structure and the latter requires sentient behaviours by the individual namely, awareness of his own cognition system.

To have a clear grasp, reading comprehension was defined by Kavcar, Oguzkan & Sever (1994) as the perception, making sense of and comprehension of written matters, in more clear words it is to cognize in all respects the information, feelings and thoughts that are desired to be transmitted as they are, without having caused any misunderstandings, in its course and without leaving any doubtful points behind. This meaning will support the notion that the reading process is defeated if it cannot be understood by the reader.

Comprehension is a complex process that requires an active interaction between the students' background knowledge of the context, the purpose of the reading material, and the level of vocabulary and language used by the authors in order to gain meaning of a text (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001; Hollenbeck, 2011; Jones, Hughes, Donahue, Parker-Katz, Talbott, & Tatum, 2012; Pardo, 2004; RAND Reading Study Group, 2002; Snow & Sweet, 2003; Snow, 2002; Woolley, 2011).

On the contrary, the learner's performance to be unable to comprehend effectively could likely hamper the students learning, retain what they read and reap its purpose – understanding, and at the same time it could have a negative impact to the school where they graduated because of their performance in reading at their workplace. Reading difficulties negatively impact different aspects of students, including their educational progress, self-esteem, attitudes about reading and learning, motivation to read, career choices, social economic status and expectation for future reading success. (Sloat, Beswick, and Wilms, 2007; Woolley, 2011).

The making of assignments, projects, examinations and other endeavor in school routines and academic activities require reading comprehension. However,





without having reading comprehension skills, students cannot accomplish all of that work (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, & Snowling, 2013; Wong, 2011).

The significance of reading comprehension is not for school learning only. Chatman (2015) provided that in order to successfully interact in everyday life, individuals need reading skills to read and understand labels, directions, job application forms, and newspapers.

Equally important, individuals need reading skills in order to be able to have and maintain a job and successfully engage in different daily activities (Hoeh, 2015; Mahdavi, & Tensfeldt, 2013) and live independently (Hoeh, 2015).

The call for the value of reading comprehension becomes alarming and significant when we consider the negative consequences of not being able to comprehend through reading during in critical situations and scenes. For instance, not being able to read and comprehend dosage directions on a bottle of medicine or caution on a container of dangerous chemicals may put the individuals in a very dangerous situation that threaten their safety and lives (Marshall, n.d.). Those who do not possess the ability to understand what they are reading are put at a disadvantage in every educational and personal life situation (Blair, Rupley, & Nichols, 2007).

Tausugs must have a complete or even just an introductory skill in reading comprehension. Reading comprehension is a critical learning skills for all students (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, & Snowling, 2013; Wong, 2011) as it is “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language “(the Rand Reading Study Group, 2022, p. 11).

One of the prevalent issues of reading difficulties in Sulu is the student’s lack of prior experience utilizing prosperous reading comprehension. Difficulties with reading comprehension is one of the most major problems that students with learning disabilities have,

which threatens their academic success (Wolley, 2011). Harris & Sipay (1990) explained that the control of an individual over his reading and reading comprehension is subject to utilization of cognitive strategies and cognitive awareness. When this will be overlooked from a particular perspective, our students in MSU-Sulu will comprehend best from their reading if they are aware of their cognition and metacognition. It was argued by Günes (2000) that understanding comprises of the mental activities such as examination and election, adjudication, translation, commenting, shifting, performing analysis and synthesis and assessment. The research showed that there are noticeable differences upon the cognitive awareness between the good and bad readers when it comes to reading comprehension. As stated by Weir (1998), he said that the good readers use various sorts of metacognition strategies in order to assure that they have achieved better reading comprehension. This contention directs us that in order for a reader to fully understand the text, he must be aware of how his reading process takes place. The literature has revealed that awareness and monitoring of one’s comprehension processes are important aspects of skilled readers (Alexander & Jetton 2000; Makhtari & Reichard 2002).

The process is complex because it requires students to engage in multiple cognitive activities, processes, and skills. These skills involve fluently decoding words, understanding the language syntax, making inferences, using background knowledge, and managing working memory as needed (Fletcher-Janzen, Reynolds, & Vannest, 2013; Hollenbeck, 2011; Kendeou, McMaster, & Christ, 2016; Woolley, 2011).

To break away and avoid these pressing issues especially regarding its long-term negative effects, the teachers must have the need to use and incorporate reading comprehension strategies in their daily routine of instructional practices in order to grasp the increase of reading comprehension level of students.



Although different ways for teaching reading comprehension to students have been investigated by researchers (Ruiz, 2015). Teaching reading comprehension can be done through explicitly teaching students how to utilize particular strategies in order to improve their reading comprehension skills (Stetter & Hughes, 2010). Several reading comprehension strategies have been administrated as effective tools for improving students' understanding of written materials. These strategies include, but not limited to graphic organizers (DiCecco & Gleason, 2002), collaborative strategic reading (Vaughn et al., 2011), peer-assisted learning strategy (Rafdal et al., 2011), story-mapping (Zahoor & Janjua, 2013), and self-questioning (Rouse, Alber-Morgan, Cullen, & Sawyer, 2014).

At present, the entire world is faced by the disturbing pandemic caused by Corona Virus Disease or also known as COVID 19. This pandemic has brought massive changes in all aspects in the way of life of human being – politically, economically and most especially educationally. Currently, MSU-Sulu have resulted to the utilization of Modular Distance Learning. Consequently, MSU-Sulu students faced varieties of reading comprehension difficulties throughout the modular learning.

Modular teaching is a new approach in classroom settings (Sadiq, 2014). Module was defined by Taneja (1998) as a unit of work in a course of instruction that is virtually self-contained and a method of teaching that is based on the concept of building up skills and knowledge in discrete. UNESCO (1988) on the other hand referenced in their measures that a module is a set of learning opportunities organized around a well - defined topic which contains the elements of ordinate dictation, categorical objectives, edifying cognition activities, and evaluation utilizing criterion. A module covers either a single element of subject matter content or a group of content elements composing a discrete unit of subject matter or area of adeptness. A

module has placidly defined, objectives; preferably in behavioural form (Daries, 1981).

Modular teaching is novel in MSU-Sulu however it is not in Asian countries. Sadiq (2014) said that Modular teaching is one of the most widespread and recognizes teaching learning techniques in many countries including other Western countries and Asian region. This modality in teaching is useful in MSU-Sulu as what Sejpal (2013) said that modular teaching considers the individual differences among the learners which necessitate the planning for adoption of the most appropriate teaching techniques in order to help the individual grow and develop at her/his own pace. Aside from being a contingency plan in educational instruction amidst the COVID 19, modular distance learning goal is to provide resources to instructors that will allow them to transform their classrooms into active, student-centered learning environments (Stewart & Wilkerson, 1999).

Regardless of what instruction that the teacher may use, reading comprehension difficulty will be a hindrance to student's development. There are various researches in relevance to this, however, further research about it in the context of this study is lacking. Most especially, the reading comprehension difficulties in modular distance learning.

### **Summary of literature review**

It was revealed that reading comprehension is the act of understanding. Indeed, it is beneficial to the students of MSU-Sulu and the Tausug people in general. This will not only advance us in academics, but also in life at large. Studies provided that there are different strategies to be efficient in reading comprehension. These are activating prior knowledge, connecting the applicable prior experience to the reading, setting purposes, predicting, decoding, summarizing, visualizing, questioning, monitoring, reflecting on, and application of lexis.



Meanwhile, distance learning like in modular type of learning enhances independency in study. For this reason, the teachers should adjust the learning materials and their teaching strategies to the level of their learners. Finally, reading comprehension was revealed that it facilitates distance learning like in modular type of learning.

### **3. Methods**

#### **Research design**

This study used Mix-method research. Cresswell and Clark (2011) defined mix-method research as those studies that include at least one quantitative and one qualitative strand.

#### **Locale of the study**

The setting of the study was conducted at Mindanao State University- Sulu Senior High School Department, situated at the middle of Mindanao State University – Sulu Campus, Capitol Site, Patikul, Sulu.

#### **Respondents of the study**

The respondents of this research were the faculty members and students of Mindanao State University – Sulu Senior High School academic year 2020-2021. The researcher used purposive sampling technique in selecting the ten (10) faculty members. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the total population of students of each strand was selected randomly regardless of their gender and year level.

#### **Research instruments**

A Focus Group Discussion and a Likert Scale Survey Questionnaire serves as the research instruments of this study.

The researcher engaged a focus group discussion with the selected faculty members. A guide questions were prepared and were thoroughly discussed by the participants during Focus Group Discussion.

Moreover, a set of self-made Likert scale survey questionnaire was also used to obtain the needed information from the students. Both research instruments were validated by the three (3) experts in research paneling.

The Likert scale survey questionnaire was divided into three-parts. The first part contains the profile of the respondents. The second part and last part were the close-ended statements with which the respondents indicated check that corresponds to their answers.

The following 4-point Likert scale was used in the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the students.

#### **Sampling procedure**

In this study, the researcher utilized purposive sampling technique to select the 10 faculty members. Random sampling technique was also used to select the twenty-five percent (25%) of the total population of students of each strand.

#### **Data gathering procedure**

Before gathering the data needed, the researcher had presented the guide questions for the Focus Group Discussion and the self-made survey questionnaire to the research adviser for further comments and suggestions. It was send then to the three (3) experts in research paneling for validation purpose.

Upon approval to start conducting the Focus Group Discussion and launching the survey questionnaire, the researcher had send again letters to the equally important individuals. Firstly, the researcher had send letter to the MSU-Sulu SHS Director to get approval to conduct her study on the said department. Secondly, the researcher had send letters to ten MSU-Sulu SHS faculty members who will serve as her participants in the Focus Group Discussion. Lastly,





the research had send letters to the students' respondents.

The questionnaire was administered on the second semester of S.Y. 2020-2021. The researcher expected that the retrieval of the questionnaire must not less than 90 percent.

#### **Statistical treatment of data**

For the analysis of data, the researcher separately analyzed and interpreted the quantitative and qualitative data.

To answer the problem number 1 and number 2, the researcher transcribed the audio recording. Content analysis then was used. Robson (1993) & Yin (1989) stated that, Content analysis enables a systematic coding of data by organizing the information into categories to discover patterns undetectable by merely listening to the tapes or reading the transcripts. Lastly, data were presented by the researcher in a narrative form. To answer the problem number 3 and 4, weighted mean was employed as a statistical tool to determine the factors influencing students reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of modular approach and to find out reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular approach as perceived by students. As for answering the problem number 5, t-test was utilized as a statistical tool to find out the significant difference on reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular distance learning approach as perceived by students when they are classified in terms of strand.

#### **4. Results**

This section presents the findings for the results of the Focus Group Discussions regarding (1) reading comprehension and (2) modular distance learning approach. In addition, it also includes the results in survey on (3) Factors influencing the students reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of modular

distance learning approach and (4) reading comprehension difficulty level during modular distance learning approach as perceived by the students. It also shows the findings of (5) significant difference on reading comprehension difficulty level during modular distance learning approach when students are classified in terms of strand.

#### **Reading comprehension**

This paragraph contains the responses of the Participants during Focus Group Discussion that is about reading comprehension. These includes three sub questions that are: (1) How do you define reading comprehension? (2) What are the reading comprehension strategies you used to improve reading comprehension of the students? and (3) What are the importance of reading comprehension to students?

#### **Definition of Reading Comprehension**

During the Focus Group Discussion, the Participants were asked on how do they define reading comprehension, and their responses are as follows:

Participant 1 stated "Reading comprehension is the ability of an individual to decode the printed text. And that ability to understand not just the thesis statement but also the thought of the written symbols, the written text as a whole." Likewise, Participant 2 also said "Reading comprehension is how the student read with understanding the text, and symbols most especially." In addition, Participant 3 said "Reading comprehension is the ability of the student to understand and analyze what he/she reads." Participant 4 also stated "Reading comprehension is the ability of the students to understand well the context."

Moreover, Participant 5 said "Reading comprehension is the ability of a certain individual to extract meaning or understand the text. And of course, it is also the integration of the experience or integration of what the reader already knows about a



certain text.” Furthermore, Participant 6 also said “Reading comprehension is when the student knows how to integrate their prior knowledge to the text.” Participant 7 stated “Reading comprehension is a matter of understanding, analyzing, and interpreting the text that is being decoded.” Participant 8 also said “Reading comprehension is the ability of an individual to comprehend and understand what he/she is reading.” However, Participant 9 emphasized that “Reading comprehension is not merely just understanding the things that the students have read. But it is somehow the students’ interpretation on the things that they have read.” Lastly, Participant 10 clearly stated “Reading comprehension is when someone can clearly understand the sentence or composition particularly the content and its context.”

Based on their foregoing responses, the participants have almost the same definition of reading comprehension. They have agreed that reading comprehension is more on understanding and integrating prior knowledge to the context of any reading materials.

Kolmar (2021) said that reading comprehension is the ability to process what is being read, understand the meaning the author trying to convey – both textually and sub textually – and make inferences based on prior knowledge. Ferguson (2020) also said that reading comprehension improves when we take time to connect new knowledge to existing knowledge.

### **Strategies to improve reading comprehension**

Another question that was asked during the Focus Group Discussion was about the different strategies they used to improve the reading comprehension of their students, and the Participants’ responses are as follows:

Participant 1 stated that “The different strategies that I used for the past three years in classroom for most is I take into consideration the learners”. She also added that “I present them a short story that suits

their level”. Participant 7 said that “the reading comprehension strategies that I used depends on the type of text that the students are going to comprehend” and Participant 8 added that “the reading comprehension strategy to be used actually depends on the subject we teach”.

Additionally, Participants 1 and 3 have agreed with the idea “I gave them a short story to read”. Whereas, Participants 2 and 4 has also the same idea that “I encourage my students to watch educational movies that has English Subtitles” and “I sent my learners videos that is related to my topic”. Aside from this, Participant 7 also confidently said that “I used to provide students with different reading materials every time I enter the classroom”. Participant 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 equally stated “I encourage my students to read” and Participant 6, and 10 clearly emphasize that “I encourage them to use dictionary”.

Moreover, other Participants also suggested different strategies that can be used to improve the reading comprehension of the students. As to Participant 5, he clearly stated that “For the narrative text, I used story map, retelling, and 5W’s. While as for the Expository text, I used structuring, KWL, and graphic organizers”. And then Participant 1 also added to this that “When the day of the discussion comes, we brainstorm the concept of the story, then mapping out the ideas, and then let them get examples based on their own experience”. Participant 10 further added that “they have need to find the synonym or antonym of that word based on their stock knowledge”.

Furthermore, the Participant 3 stated that “I let them analyze the story and ask them to write somethings about it. That way, I can assess if they really understood what the story is all about”. Participant 7 also stated that “After I require them to read something, I either give them on the spot recitation or maybe it happens to be a written works. I require them to sum up all the things that they have understood about the context that they have read”. Just like Participant 7, Participant 8 also further



added that “I ask them what they have understood about the text”. Similar to this, Participant 8 also said that “I often gave them essay questions because I believe that we will know if the students really read the module we have given them”. In addition, Participant 10 further said that “...the words that they have identified they will be using it or they are going to use it in a sentence. And from sentence they will use it into paragraph”. Relative to this, Participants 3, 6, 8, 9, 10 agreed that encouragement and motivation as what Participant 8 said “is a big factor in improving the reading comprehension of the students”.

Lastly, Participant 10 concluded that “If there is one strategy that can really improve the reading comprehension of the students that is actually reading. Just like what Participant 9 said, because in reading it unlocks the potential of the students. In fact, no less than Bill Gates on average he actually finish reading 500 books per month, what more the students and like us.”

As shown on their responses above, the participants have presented different reading comprehension strategies. However, there are some of them who have used common strategies, whereas some used their own kind of strategy in improving reading comprehension of their students.

Lenz (2012) stated that reading comprehension is an area of reading which requires understanding of strategies that contribute to its development. It is suggested to teach reading comprehension skills and strategies at all levels of reading development. Teachers at every grade level and every subject area should always be planning how reading assignments will help students develop and practice skills and strategies.

### **Importance of reading comprehension**

As to the question that was about the importance of reading comprehension to students that was asked

during the Focus Group Discussion, the Participants’ responses are as follows:

Participant 1 stated “The importance of reading comprehension to the students in this time of pandemic for me is paramount to as a critical thinking because reading comprehension is a basic requirement for every learner in order for them at the end of the day to answer their modules”. Participant 2 also said “Reading comprehension is very much important to us in fact it is a basic requirement to all student when entering school.” He further added “I think if you have or there is no reading comprehension you are somewhat traveling without destination in the world of reading.”

Moreover, Participant 6 clearly stated “I believe that reading comprehension is important or essential for it help students understand anything” which was also agreed by all other participants. In addition, Participant 4 also said “Reading comprehension is very essential for students because they cannot understand their module if they can’t comprehend well what they are reading.” Likewise, Participant 2 also said “if they do not understand their module they cannot answer the given activities to them.” Lastly, Participant 10 stated “If English is a universal language, reading comprehension is a universal asset to students”.

Based on their given responses above, the respondents have clearly stated that reading comprehension is indeed important to students for it helps students in many ways especially in understanding any reading materials.

Texas Education Agency (2020) have pointed out that the major goal of reading comprehension instruction is to help students develop the knowledge, skills and experiences they must have if they are to become competent and enthusiastic reader. In addition, Rutzler (2020) have emphasize that having excellent reading comprehension skills is crucial. It increases the enjoyment and effectiveness of reading



and help not only academically, but professionally, and in a person's personal life.

### **Modular distance learning approach**

This paragraph contains the responses of the Participants during Focus Group Discussion that is about modular distance learning approach. These includes three sub questions that are: (1) How do you define modular distance learning approach? (2) What are the different strategies you used during modular distance learning approach? and (3) What are your suggested resources that can help to improve students learning during modular distance learning approach?

### **Definition of modular distance learning approach**

During the Focus Group Discussion, the Participants were asked on how do they define modular distance learning approach, and their responses are as follows:

Participant 8 stated "MDLA is a form of distance learning that uses self-learning modules based on the MELCs. Which means that the things that we are going to teach the student will be the most needed topic or subject that they really need to know." Participant 2 also said "It is a type of learning where learners utilized self-learning modules be it in printed or digital format or in an e-book." Likewise, Participant 4 also said "MDL is defined as teachers gives learning materials to the students. And they are the one to learn on their own. And as a teacher we need to evaluate them or put in evaluations, questions to follow up if they really learn something."

Moreover, Participant 2 also said "In MDLA students and teachers does not perform face-to-face interaction for they are geographically separated from each other." Participant 6 has the same idea with Participant 2 as he said "MDLA is used by students and teachers who are not together physically so the students learn by their own." Participant 1 further added to what Participant 2 and Participant 6 stated, as she also said "MDLA also is a self-learning module

meaning they learn on their own. That is why we need that reading comprehension." In addition, Participant 3 said "MDLA is a type of learning wherein the students could still learn or get a source of information even if they are not in the actual classroom or in school. "

Furthermore, Participant 1 said "MDLA I think it's the only alternative learning approach that is suitable for the learners here in Lupah Sug." Participant 7 emphasize that "MDLA is the most appropriate, applicable, and easy to access type of learning at this times. Especially here in the Lupah Sug since face to face is highly discourage and online class is not that good because of poor internet connection." She further added "MDLA I believe is the very ideal type of learning here in Lupah Sug." Participant 5 added "MDLA in particular it is an alternative delivery moods during the pandemic as experience by everyone in particular here in the Philippines." Meanwhile, Participant 9 also said "In times of pandemic, this is the most useful type of learning that our students could actually use. So with the help of the modules made by the professors/their professors/their adviser they could unlock their knowledge, they could free themselves to use it as a tool for them to pass."

Apart from this, Participant 1 said "In MDLA we make used of modules that is not exactly individualized but it is contextualized meaning we make use of our knowledge on how to augment the level of learning of our students to our subject." Participant 10 also clearly said "MDLA literally speaking, it is actually distributing printed materials to the students whether it is for free or with payment." He also agreed with what Participant 1 have said, as he further added "And I also agree with Participant 1 when she said that when using modules, the teachers actually localize the content of the subject matter because we cannot really explain the content of the book especially in the subject matter it is also actually under the umbrella of distance learning because MDLA happens when student and teachers do not



meet in the classroom so it could be supported by virtual approach or let say phone calls, text messages, and other approaches.”

As shown on their responses above, the respondents have defined modular distance learning approach differently. However, their ideas have similarities as they have mentioned that it is a type of approach that the teachers and students are geographically separated thus they gave self-learning modules.

Llego (2020) stated that “Modular distance learning involves individualized instruction that allows learners to use self-learning modules (SLMs) in print or digital format/electronic copy, whichever is applicable in the context of the learner, and other learning resources like Learner’s Materials, textbooks, activity sheets, study guides and other study materials.”

### **Strategies in modular distance learning approach**

Another question that was asked during the Focus Group Discussion was about the different strategies they used during modular distance learning approach, and the Participants’ responses are as follows:

Participant 1 stated “In MDLA we have taken into consideration the media literacy of our students.” Then Participant 4 said “Actually in finding strategies of course we need to consider first the interest of the students.” Whereas, Participant 5 said “Actually with regards to this one I think it depends on the connectivity that we have.”

In addition, Participant 5 also said “For the offline handy instructional materials to the students is very much appropriate for the offline especially when the area has a limited connectivity or accessibility to the internet so you can use offline mode in delivery of learning to students what we called MDLA.” However, Participant 8 said “I gave my students modules and at the same time I provide video or send them link from the Youtube to watch.” Just like Participant 8, Participant 9 also said “In my case last semester, I was

handling MIL aside from the fact that I have given them modules I also used the strategy of Participant 8, I let them watch video from YouTube. Aside from that, I also have this application of MIL that I had downloaded the e-book.”

Relative to this, Participant 4 also stated “Nowadays the interest of the students is in technologies like for example movies. So if they want movies we need to find a movie wherein that is related to our subject. In addition, I also use videos that will serve as a supplementary idea to my students.” On the other hand, Participant 3 said “instead of giving link of videos, what I did is I make my own a video presentation about the artwork that I want them to do and upload it to Youtube.” He further said “Of course when I make a video I put explanations in it. I demonstrate how to do such thing.”

Moreover, Participant 7 said “Of course just like everyone I utilize the production of module, distribution of modules and the retrieval of activities is really under regarded matter during this pandemic time.” As Participant 2 said “Since we are using self-learning modules during MDLA, the strategy that I used if the students do not understand the content and ask question/s to me, I simply give them answers or examples by making solutions then taking a picture of it and sent it to our group chat.” While Participant 6 said “Well, I just encourage my students to read during modular distance learning approach.”

Furthermore, Participant 7 said “One of my strategies is also to give supplementary explanations, idea to students thru group chatting and answering their question and curiosities regarding their modules.” In the same way, Participant 10 also said “Personally I am only using social media like fb, YouTube, group chat, under Facebook. And text messages and phone calls.” He further said, “But other teachers based on my survey they are using google classroom, zoom application, google meet and then the system.”





Based on their given responses, the participants have used different kind of strategies during modular distance learning approach. Though they used different strategies they still share common goals and that is to help students to learn something even at this time of pandemic.

Llego (2020) stated that in Modular Distance Learning, “The teacher takes the responsibility of monitoring the progress of the learners. The learners may ask assistance from the teacher via e-mail, telephone, text message/instant messaging, etc. Where possible, the teacher shall do home visits to learners needing remediation or assistance. Any other member of the family or other stakeholder in the community needs to serve as para-teachers.”

#### **Suggested resources in modular distance learning approach**

As to the question that was about their suggested resources to improve students learning during modular distance learning approach that was asked during the Focus Group Discussion, the Participants’ responses are as follows:

Participant 1 said “May I suggest that the resources that we must develop and improve at this time of Pandemic is human resources at that. Why? Because info nowadays in the digital era is readily available and is free. Everything you need. You need to answer this particular subject, we have the applications, we have internet links, we have resources, we have this so called networking, everything is readily available it is upon us human to access this thing it is in virtual space.” As to Participant 4, she said “The students need the guidance of the teachers while using the different resources like Google, YouTube, Facebook, Messenger.” This statement of Participant 4 was agreed by Participant 7, 9 and 10.

Relative to this, Participant 6 stated “In my subject, one of my suggested resources is YouTube because they can watch the works of social workers.” Likewise,

Participant 2 said “In my subject math, I advise my students watch videos in YouTube so that they will learn how to solve problems.”

Moreover, Participant 3 stated “In my subject aside from video presentation. I gave them page in FB that is related to our topic. So that they can get more information. And of course the google”. Just like Participant 3, Participant 6 also said “I also uploaded the video made by my past students then let the new students watch it. They can relate to what social workers is.”

On the other hand, Participant 5 said “With regards to this suggested learning resources during MDLA as a research teacher I tried to find resources in the internet but it is quite hard to search and to find resources because it gives you different type of information.”

Participant 8 said “Since my subject is Personal Development and Disaster Readiness Risk Reduction, usually I hate to make module that is lengthy and yet students will not understand. So I make sure that what is inside the module is understandable. Aside from the module I also used pictures for example in my subject, I put the pictures on it and put a short explanation along with that. Then if ever they have question, I am also open for question.”

Based on their foregoing responses, it is evident that the participants have suggested learning resources that suits the kind of situation that both teachers and students are facing during modular distance learning approach.

Llego (2020) have enumerated the suggested platforms/resources/mechanism to be used in modular distance learning approach. And these are (1) The use of Learning Resources/Modules in multimedia (slides, video and audio files), (2) Digital Packets (Learning Materials), (3) The use of e-learning materials, and (4) The use of computer-based learning resources.



## Factors influencing students reading comprehension difficulties

This section contains factors that may influence the students reading comprehension difficulties specifically amidst the use of modular distance learning approach.

The table 1 shows the two main factors. These are the internal and external factors. Each factor encompasses with ten different statements with its corresponding mean and descriptive interpretation respectively.

Table 1. Factors influencing students reading comprehension difficulties

Statement	Mean	Descriptive
Interpretation		
Internal Factors		
I am not motivated to comprehend what I am reading	2.52	Agree
I experience medical problems	2.52	Agree
I have poor critical thinking skills	2.56	Agree
I have poor ability in decoding the text	2.59	Agree
I have no interest on the topic of the reading material	2.09	Disagree
I have poor knowledge on the content of the reading material	2.60	Agree
I have poor knowledge on reading comprehension strategies	2.54	Agree
I don't like to comprehend what I am reading	2.22	Disagree
I have insufficient effort to comprehend what I am reading	2.63	Agree
I have poor vocabulary	2.80	Agree
GRAND MEAN	2.507	Agree
External Factors		
I am easily distracted when at home	2.77	Agree
I am experiencing family problems	2.87	Agree
I do not have adequate learning resources at home to help me understand the text	2.67	Agree
I have no guidance from my parents	2.19	Disagree
I have no guidance from my teachers	2.12	Disagree
Poor quality of reading materials (Ex. Font size, Font style, color, spacing, etc.)	2.54	Agree
The light condition at home is not conducive for reading and comprehending	2.62	Agree
The noise at home is not conducive for reading and comprehending	2.66	Agree
The reading activities/exercises given by the teachers is inadequate	2.62	Agree
The text is complicated	2.58	Agree
GRAND MEAN	2.564	Agree
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>2.5355</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 1-1.49 – Strongly Disagree; 1.5-2.49 – Disagree; 2.5-3.49 – Agree; 3.5- 4 – Strongly Agree



The result revealed on Table 1 that with a grand mean of 2.5355 the respondents agreed that there are factors influencing students reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of modular distance learning approach and these factors are the internal and external factors.

In summary, there are only four statements out of twenty which does not influence students reading comprehension difficulties during modular distance learning approach and these are: Students' (1) likes in comprehending, their (2) interest on the topic of reading materials, and the guidance given to them by their (3) teachers and (4) parents.

As shown on Table 1, with the grand mean of 2.507 the respondents agreed that the Internal Factors influence the students reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of modular distance learning approach. The result of the survey showed that the respondents agreed that their Vocabulary, effort in comprehending, knowledge on the content of the reading materials, ability in decoding the text, critical thinking skills, knowledge on reading comprehension strategies, medical problems, and motivation are some of the factors that influence their reading comprehension difficulties during modular distance learning approach. However, the respondents disagreed that their likes in comprehending and their interest on the topic of reading materials influence their reading comprehension difficulties during modular distance learning approach.

On the other hand, the table 1 also shows that the respondents also agreed with a grand mean of 2.564 that the External Factors influence the students reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of modular distance learning approach. The result of the survey showed that the respondents agreed that family problems, distractions, learning resources, noise, activities/exercises given light condition, type of text, quality of reading materials are some of the factors that influence their reading comprehension difficulties during modular distance learning approach. Nevertheless, the respondents disagreed that they have no guidance from their teachers and parents.

Lenz (2012) stress that students reading comprehension is affected by the reader's knowledge of the topic, knowledge of language structures, knowledge of text structures and genres, knowledge of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, their reasoning abilities, their motivation, and their level of engagement.

### **Reading comprehension difficulty level as perceived by students**

This section contains the perception of students on reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular distance learning approach.

The table 2 below encompasses with twenty different statements with its corresponding mean and description respectively.



Table 2. Reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular distance learning approach as perceived by students

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
Motivating myself to comprehend what I read	2.73	Difficult
Avoiding distractions when reading and comprehending	2.80	Difficult
Setting reading goals at home	2.57	Difficult
Following my time schedule to read	2.65	Difficult
Learning reading comprehension strategies from teachers	2.55	Difficult
Understanding the given instructions	2.50	Difficult
Increasing my reading comprehension level	2.68	Difficult
Receiving guidance from teachers	2.54	Difficult
Exerting effort on reading comprehension activities	2.63	Difficult
Seeking help from others	2.59	Difficult
Understanding the words in the reading materials	2.64	Difficult
Understanding the ideas in the text	2.57	Difficult
Grasping relationship of ideas inside the reading materials	2.74	Difficult
Understanding the sequences of the ideas	2.73	Difficult
Detecting the cause and effect relationship from the content	2.74	Difficult
Generally interpreting the message inside the reading materials	2.60	Difficult
Evaluating the text	2.62	Difficult
Applying the ideas I learned in reading to real life situations	2.55	Difficult
Formulating and rethinking the ideas in the reading materials	2.63	Difficult
Gaining vocabulary and Knowledge	2.58	Difficult
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>2.632</b>	<b>Difficult</b>

Legend: 1-1.49 – Very Easy; 1.5-2.49 – Easy; 2.5-3.49 – Difficult; 3.5-4 – Very Difficult

Based on table 2, with the grand mean of 2.632 the result shows that the respondents reading comprehension difficulty level during modular distance learning approach falls under “difficult”

category. Which means that it is difficult for the students to perform reading comprehension during modular distance learning approach.



The finding shows on Table 2 states that it is difficult for the respondents to motivate themselves to read and exert effort on reading comprehension activities. Likewise, it is also difficult for the respondents to follow their time schedule to read and set reading goals when at home because they see it difficult to avoid different kinds of distractions especially at home. Moreover, it is also difficult for the respondents to receive guidance from the teachers and learn some reading comprehension strategies from them. Just like how difficult it is to reach out to their teachers during modular distance learning approach, it is also difficult for the respondents to seek help from others.

The result further shows that understanding the words, ideas and sequence of ideas, and even the given instructions in reading materials is also difficult for the respondents. In addition, the respondents find it difficult also to apply the ideas they learned to real life situations, generally interpret and evaluate the

context, and formulate and rethink the ideas in the reading materials. Furthermore, the result also shows that it is difficult for the respondents to grasp the relationship of ideas inside the reading materials and detect the cause and effect relationship from its content. It was also evident that it is difficult for the respondents to gain vocabulary and knowledge that could increase their reading comprehension level during modular distance learning approach.

**Significant difference on reading comprehension difficulty level**

This section contains the significant difference on reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular distance learning approach as perceived by students. Likewise, the reading comprehension difficulty level as perceived by each strand was also presented.

Table 3. Reading comprehension difficulty level

	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>P-value Decision</b>		
Grand Mean	Equal variances assumed	-1.299	333	.195	Accept the null hypothesis

The P value is the smallest level of significance for which the observe sample statistic tells the researcher to reject the null hypothesis. If P value is less than or equal to the (alpha), then it rejects the null hypothesis. If P value is greater than the (alpha), it accepts the null hypothesis.

In Table 3, t-test was used to determine the significant difference on reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular distance learning approach as perceived by students when they are classified in terms of strand.

The .05 level of significance was used. The p-value is 0.195 which is greater than .05 level indicating that no significant difference exists. Thus, it means that the null hypothesis is accepted. This result implies that there is no significant difference on reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular distance learning approach as perceived by students whether they are taking GAS or STEM Strand. For the mean value, see table 4.





Table 4. Reading comprehension difficulty level according to strand

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
GRAND MEAN	GAS	2.60	Difficult
	STEM	2.67	Difficult

Legend: 1-1.49 – Very Easy; 1.5-2.49 – Easy; 2.5-3.49 – Difficult; 3.5-4 – Very Difficult

## 5. Discussion

This study aimed to determine the factors influencing students reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of modular distance learning approach. This study also tried to know what is reading comprehension and modular distance learning approach. It explored further to find out the reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the used of modular distance learning approach as perceived by the students. This study also tried to investigate if there is a significant difference on reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the used of modular distance learning approach as perceived by students when they are classified in terms of strand.

Data were gathered through the use of Focus Group Discussion and self-made survey questionnaire. The researcher used purposive sampling technique for the selection of the ten Faculty Members of MSU-Sulu SHS that serves as the participants for Focus Group Discussion.

The random sampling technique was used to get the twenty-five (25%) population of students of MSU-Sulu SHS that serves also as the respondents for the survey. The guide questions used in the Focus Group Discussion and the self-made survey questionnaire was validated by the three (3) experts in research panelling. All the qualitative data were transcribed, analyzed and presented narratively. Weighted mean and t-test were used for the interpretation of quantitative data.

With the careful analysis of data collected, the following significant findings were revealed:

### Reading Comprehension

Based on the gathered data through Focus Group Discussion, the following are the findings about reading comprehension:

#### Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is defined as the ability of the students to analyze, decode, integrate prior knowledge, interpret and clearly understand the words, sentence, or compositions particularly the content and its contexts.

#### Strategies to Improve Reading Comprehension

The different reading comprehension strategies they used to improve the reading comprehension of the students are as follows:

They take into consideration the kind of learners they have. They will see to it that the reading materials they will provide and the strategy they will use suits the interest of their students.

In addition, the kind of strategies they used depend on the subject they taught and the type of text of the reading material they gave. Some of the participants let their students read stories or any reading materials, while as some, let their students watch videos or movies that has English subtitles. There are also participants who provided different reading materials and encourage their students to read and use dictionary. Moreover, the 5W's, brainstorming, finding synonyms and antonyms, graphic organizers, KWL, retelling, story map, and structuring, are also some of the suggested reading comprehension strategies to be used in improving the reading comprehension of the students.



Moreover, the participants always let the students analyze the context and gave an assessment and evaluation to students in a form of written works like essay, reflection paper and even sentence constructions. By giving these kind of assessment and evaluation to students, the participants can have better insights if their students understand well what they have read or if they have learned something out of the reading materials given.

Above all, it was also made mentioned and agreed by the participants that encouragement and motivation to students to read, read, and read is an effective strategy to improve the reading comprehension of their students for it was concluded that “in reading it unlocks the potential of the students”.

### **Importance of Reading Comprehension**

With regards to importance of reading comprehension to the students, all the participants have almost the same idea during the Focus Group Discussion. Reading comprehension is vital as they say for it is a basic requirement for every learner when entering school. Likewise, this reading comprehension is also essential for it helps students understand their modules and any other reading material especially at this time of pandemic. If students do not have reading comprehension, they will not understand what is inside their module. And this will result to difficulty in answering the worksheets given to them and failing the subject in general. It was clearly stated that “If English is a universal language, reading comprehension is a universal asset to students”. Therefore, reading comprehension is indeed vital to every student.

### **Modular distance learning approach**

The following are the findings during Focus Group Discussion about modular distance learning approach:

### **Definition of modular distance learning approach**

Modular distance learning approach is defined as an alternative learning approach that uses self-learning modules be it printed or digital format or an e-book. The content of subject matter in modular distance learning approach is actually localized and contextualize by the teachers and is based on the MELCs.

In this type of approach, teachers and students are geographically separated which means that they do not meet in the classroom. Hence, the teachers give learning materials to students whether with payment or for free and the students will be the one to learn on their own. However, modular distance learning approach can be supported by any other approaches. This type of approach is “the most appropriate, applicable, and easy to access type of learning at this times. Especially here in the Lupah Sug since face to face is highly discourage and online class is not that good because of poor internet connection”.

### **Strategies in modular distance learning approach**

The different strategies they used during modular distance learning approach are as follows:

They have taken into consideration first the media literacy of the students, consider the interest of their students and also depends on the connectivity that they have.

The most commonly used strategy during modular distance learning approach based on their responses is the production and distribution of instructional materials such as modules and e-book.

The use of social media such as Facebook, messenger for group chats, and Youtube are also in demand at this time. Likewise, the use text messages and phone calls are also accommodating when using modular distance learning approach.

There are some participants who make their own video presentation about the subject. On the contrary, there are also participants who only encourage their students to read.



## **Suggested resources in modular distance learning approach**

The suggested learning resources that will help improve students learning during modular distance learning approach are as follows:

The human resources, different resources such as Google, Youtube, Facebook, Messenger, Video presentations made by the past students, and the self-learning module.

The following significant findings of this study was also revealed: a) Both Internal and External Factors influence the students reading comprehension difficulties amidst the use of modular distance learning approach, b) The reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular distance learning approach as perceived by the students is in the “difficult” category, c) There is no significant difference on the reading comprehension difficulty level amidst the use of modular distance learning approach as perceived by students when they are classified in terms of strand.

## **6. Conclusion**

Based on findings of the study, Reading comprehension is indeed vital to students most especially at this time of pandemic where majority of the schools are using modular distance learning approach as an alternative learning method.

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