

Challenges and implementation of the basic education learning continuity plan in the lens of elementary teachers toward enhanced school-based management operation

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Abstract

The Department of Education faced a major shift in teaching and learning from traditional face-to-face to distance learning amidst this COVID-19 pandemic. Basic education learning continuity plan (BE-LCP) was a solution to make education continue among students in the new normal. This study aimed at determining the different challenges and implementation level of the BE-LCP as perceived by the elementary teachers of Inaban Elementary School, Dupax del Norte, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines. This descriptive study was conducted to determine the extent of challenges and implementation of the BE-LCP among 32 teachers. The findings reported that extent of challenges encountered by the teachers in terms of the school's learning modality showed a great concern and issue of the pupils and parents, while teachers conduct of delivery and retrieval of learning modules revealed a larger extent of concerns since not all pupils were reached out. Due to this, the performance and delivery of assessment was a great issue towards school-based management operation. Hence, the implementation of the BE-LCP and the extent of challenges encountered were significantly related with $p=0.006$ at 0.05 level of significance. This means that implementation and extent of challenges encountered were significantly correlated in terms of school-based learning modality, curriculum and instruction, and also stakeholders' participation. For this reason, it is urged that the implementation of the BE-LCP in the school may be sustained to address gaps, issues, and concerns, as well as come up with sound programs, activities and projects relevant to the school-based management operation.

Keywords: Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP), challenges, elementary teachers, implementation, school-based management operation

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1. Introduction

In the Philippine education context, a country-wide school closure was implemented mid-March last year in response to the continuing threats of the virus as schools are considered to be ground zero for COVID-19 virus spread. The Department of Education has introduced its Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) which states the different adoption of various learning delivery options such as blended learnings, distance learnings, and home schooling and other modes of delivery which will be implemented depending on the local COVID Risk Severity Classification and compliance with minimum health standards (DepEd Order No.12, s. 2020). One of the considerations on the implementation of the BE-LCP is the integration of blended learning approach which include pupils have no set schedule for studying and can access many resources as needed. The pupils have the option of choosing their own learning level and style. The pupils learn and play their favorite games, offline and online and also do clay motion storytelling, doing recount pupils knowledge on the subject. In like manner, the pupils are given roles to act as leaders, mentors, or coaches which are a unique contribution of the new learning system to pupils who are active in helping classmates and even team activities. The approach is often contingent on teachers' knowledge and willingness to implement new methods in times of critical situation in the new normal and also to the success of the new learning system.

According to Magsambol (2020), there is a clear divide between those who can and cannot afford the resources required to access the new education platform. With the DepEd's mantra of "no child left behind," the general state of children in the public-school system sends a message of inequality. Learning, on the other hand, cannot be terminated in order to drive the economy. As a result, education institutions have had to take more stringent measures to ensure that they can continue to operate despite the looming threat. Kasrekar (2020) sees one of the main issues as the conduct of classes despite the closure order. Because face-to-face classes are more likely to spread disease, the most feasible solution is online teaching and modular learning. This new learning system presents a challenge to both teachers and pupils because it introduces them to something new. In the midst of the pandemic, this necessitates a 'adopt quickly' response to the new normal in education and learning (Tanhueco-Tumapon, 2020; Edara et al., 2021).

Pupils are empowered to become leaders, coaches, and mentors to fellow pupils as a result of the implementation of the new learning system in education. Pupils participate positively in all activities and have improved behavior toward learning. As an educational trend, the new learning system is connected to a variety of fields of knowledge. Traditional and online learning have been frequently distinguished in the new educational system. Technology quality, online tools, face-to-face support, and students' attitudes and self-regulation are important predictors of learning outcomes, according to a study that looked at the relationship between traits, design features, and learning outcomes.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

Thus, by reviewing the implementation of the BE-LCP this study seeks to determine the challenges and factors affecting the implementation of the learning continuity plan of schools in the elementary basic education of the department. Furthermore, this study seeks to determine the opportunities and strength of the implementation of the learning continuity towards inclusive post COVID-19 education plans. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What is the profile of the elementary teachers as to age, sex, years of service, plantilla position, number of trainings and seminar attended, and geographical location?

- What is the extent of challenges encountered by the respondents as to learning modality, delivery modality, distribution and retrieval, assessment and monitoring, and school operation and management?
- What is the level of implementation of the BELCP in the lens of elementary respondents?
- What plan of action could be recommended to enhance the BELCP?

1.2 Research paradigm

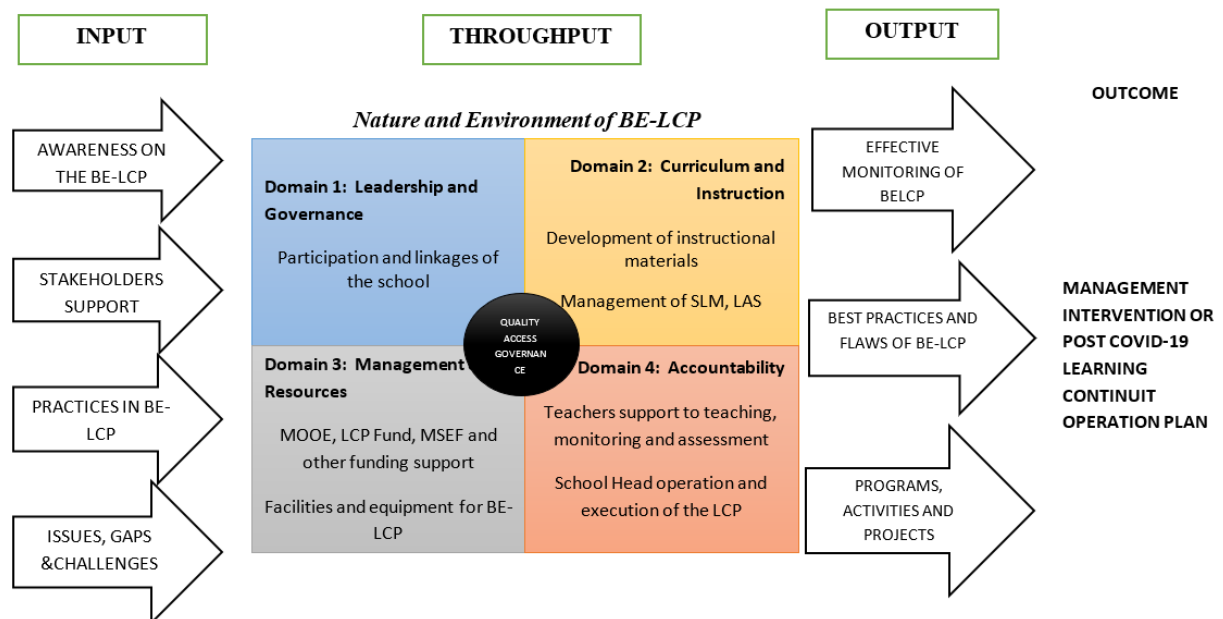


Figure 1. Research paradigm of the study

It can be gleaned from the figure above the conceptual paradigm on the implementation of learning continuity plan. The input of the study will be based on the awareness level of the respondents towards the BE LCP its ins and outs of the implementation of the BE-LCP. In addition, it also input the stakeholders support towards the execution of the BE-LCP including their practices in the schools in terms of the core components and processes involve in the process of implementing programs, activities and projects in context of the learning continuity plan. The understanding of the nature and environment of the BE- LCP is focused on four domains namely the leadership and governance. In this domain underlying the school operation and execution of the learning continuity plan amidst participation of the school stakeholders and also community role. Domain 2 deals on the curriculum and instruction. It underpins the different development and monitoring and management of LAS and SLM distributed to schools. Checking and verifying the content if based on MELCs prescribed. While on domain 3 compose of managing the resources. This include on the production and sorting of the learning materials, distribution to various learning community center and also management of resources such as financial and physical and nonphysical materials. Lastly domain 4 is accountability this may per take on the describing the roles and duties and functions of teachers, school head and parents support and learners accountability on their learning and all other aspects of the learning continuity plan. This study may result to the understanding of the different effective monitoring and implementation of the BE-LCP. The effective practices that could be sustained and flaws that need to be nurtured and enhance as well as understanding the different programs, activities and projects to be carried out for post COVID-19 learning continuity operation plan.

2. Review of Related Literature

The Department of Education (DepEd) is addressing the challenges in basic education for the school year

2020-2021 through its Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) under DepEd Order No.012, s.2020, as the country continues to grapple with various issues caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The BE-LCP, in particular, has been developed with a legal framework that responds to the "new normal," while also upholding the constitutional mandate to ensure that all people have access to high-quality education at all times (DepEd, 2020).

In addition, the sudden shift on the teaching and learning modality causing burden and pressure to the school owners. Of these requirements the LCP and health and safety protocols caused additional burden and with strict compliance and immediate implementation. The end result of the private schools was come up with framework necessary in the re-opening of the schools (Ancheta & Acheta, 2020). According to Pe and Sumaong (2020) in their study about the implementation of the modular distance learning as an urgent response to ensure continuity of education argued that Philippines is in the process of adapting to the new normal form of education and so continuous innovations of educators and active involvement of the stakeholders are the driving force towards the success of modular distance learning.

Teachers need socio-emotional support to face the extra pressure being put on them to deliver learning in a time of crisis. They also need the tools to adequately communicate health risks and preventive measures to children, without burdening them with anxiety. They are all not ready with the situation that they are facing, which opens the issue of the quality of our education. To improve the quality of education, administrator's needs to provide appropriate trainings and support that will greatly help the teachers in providing quality instruction (Aro, Saban, Villamor, Encina, & Balmores, 2021; Chen et al., 2022).

This paper attempted to describe the difficulties in remote learning of university students in the context of the Philippines amid the COVID-19 crisis. Based on the results, twelve themes were revealed: unstable internet connectivity; inadequate learning resources; electric power interruptions; vague learning contents; overloaded lesson activities; limited teacher scaffolds; poor peer communication; conflict with home responsibilities; poor learning environment; financial related problems; physical health compromises; and mental health struggles. This result provides contextual pieces of evidence on the multifaceted challenges that confront students in a developing country amid the current global crisis. Lastly, parents need to be practically involved in arranging the learning time and space of their children. They should likewise provide all the needed support so that students will eventually survive in this remote education amid the crisis (Rotas & Cahapay, 2020).

In the context of the related studies of this study, the following research studies evolved in the different areas of concern or thematic descriptions. One of which was the modular distance learning modality which discussed about the various learning delivery modalities across foreign and local studies. Furthermore, the study also includes the implementation and pre-planning activities conducted both the higher education institution and also the department of education towards the level of implementation of the learning continuity plan. In addition, to the captured and identified studies, it also focused on determining the challenges, issues, problems with regards to the different challenges amidst the learning delivery, teachers' challenges towards pandemic, parents assisted concerns and problems in the distance learning. These are some of the issues and underpinning factors that had been identified which all grounded in the implementation of the BE LCP implementation.

3. Methodology

Research Design - This study explored the challenges and implementation of the Basic Learning Continuity plan using the quantitative research design. It used the descriptive approach in determining the extent of challenges encountered as well as the implementation of the learning continuity plan.

Research Method - This study used the survey questionnaire which was administered to the respondents with regard to the challenges encountered in the implementation of the BELCP. Aside from that, a document scanning was conducted to determine the best practices, gaps and issues arising in the implementation of BE-LCP. After which, gathering of the survey questionnaire was done after a week from the respondents.

Analysis was done through SPSS and MS Excel using 0.05 level of significance.

Respondents - The respondents of the study were taken from two schools in District 1 of Dupax Del Norte. In like manner, permit to conduct was obtained from the District Office, and the respondents was given letter containing the purpose and intention of the study. A written permission from the target or sample of the respondents of the study was considered and informed that any information gathered to them was treated with utmost confidentiality and the gathered data will only be utilized on this study. Out of this target population of this study, the researcher purposively selected 30 teachers and 2 school heads as respondents of the study.

Research Instrument - In this study the researcher implored a researcher-made questionnaire to gather information on the various challenges and degree of implementation of the BE-LCP. The questionnaire was subdivided into 4 components. First part dealt with the profile of the respondents and second part on the different challenges encountered along implementation of BE-LCP. The tool showed a Cronbach alpha of 0.723. It was validated by school heads and the district supervisor who provided technical assistance to the school.

Statistical Tool - This study it used mean and standard deviation to describe the level of implementation of the BE-LCP.

4. Results and Discussion

The results of the study reported on the different effective implementation of the BE-LCP and its challenges encountered were captured on the constant monitoring and evaluation of the learning continuity plan. The respondents profile showed that the mean age of the respondents was 39.47. While most of them were female with a share of 84.37% compared with male respondents, 15.63%. In addition, the respondents' years of service is 10.84 on the average, while most of them have the plantilla position of Teacher III, and with an average of 5 trainings attended.

Table 1

Level of implementation of the learning continuity plan

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Learning delivery modality	3.26	0.10	Implemented
Assessment monitoring	3.14	0.06	Implemented
Curriculum Implementation	3.18	0.24	Implemented
Stakeholders participation	3.12	0.03	Implemented
School-based operation and management	3.25	0.12	Implemented
Overall Mean	3.19	0.24	Implemented

Legend: 4- Fully implemented; 3- Implemented; 2-Partially implemented; 1-Not implemented

It can be gleaned from the table above that the overall mean on the implementation of the learning continuity plan obtained a mean= 3.19 which was implemented across the different areas of the learning continuity plan. It implies that there was an implementation of the different identified key areas such as learning delivery modality of the school that is printed modular as well as the giving of assessment every learning competency was evident. While every end of the quarter the implementation of the curriculum was obtained based on the learning competencies delivered as well as the mean percentage grade obtained by the learners every end of the quarter. In addition, the stakeholders' participation was well seen in all the program, activities and projects identified in the learning continuity plan obtaining an overall school-based operation and management in the new normal. Hence, the learning continuity plan in the schools was implemented in line with the identified annual improvement plan of the schools.

Table 2

Extent of challenges on the implementation of learning continuity plan

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Learning modality	4.13	0.11	Large extent
Delivery modality	4.04	0.14	Large extent

Table 3 ... continued

Distribution and retrieval of modules	4.02	0.16	Large extent
Assessment monitoring and conduct	4.00	0.21	Large extent
School-based operation and management	3.97	0.24	Large extent
Overall Mean	4.03	0.16	Large extent

Legend: 5-Very large extent; 4- Large extent; 3- Neutral; 2- Little extent; 1- Very little extent

The extent of challenges as perceived by the teachers showed an overall mean of 4.03. It means that the challenges obtained caused large extent on the implementation of the learning continuity plan. It was evident because of indicators such as learning modality the presence of synchronous and asynchronous approach showed a limited number of learners participating in the synchronous. While in terms of delivery modality two-third of the sample respondents were into printed modular approach as delivery modality since most of the geographic locations of the learner were in the upland. In terms of distribution and retrieval of modules, results showed large extent since the school established different learning centers for the distribution and retrieval. Moreover, on the assessment and monitoring conducted greatly extended on the late submission of the anecdotal record and submission of their summative test. Lastly, the school-based operation and management was greatly affected on the limited resources provided in the MOOE and also the limited number of partners or lack financial resource to implement different programs, activities and projects.

Table 3

Significant correlation of implemented learning continuity plan and extent of challenges obtained.

Indicator	Mean	df	t-critical	p-value	Remarks
Extend of challenges	4.03	60	2.814	0.006*	Significant
Implementation level	3.19				

Legend * p<0.05

The above table showed the implementation of the BE-LCP and the extent of challenges encountered was significantly related at $p=0.006$. This means that implementation and extent of challenges encountered were significantly correlated in terms of school-based learning modality, curriculum and instruction, and also stakeholders' participation. It implies that the level of implementation of the learning continuity plan as to the programs, activities and projects showed a great extent of the challenges and underpinning factors relative to the implementation of the learning continuity plan by the teachers, school heads and the stakeholders.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The extent and implementation of the basic education learning continuity plan was said to have significant relation in line with encountered challenges and the level of implementation of the learning continuity plan. The profile of the study reported that mostly employees or teachers in the elementary were female with a plantilla position with more excellent years in service. The extent of challenges was evident in terms of learning modality, delivery modality, distribution and retrieval of modules, assessment, monitoring and school based management operation. Each of the underlying indicators reported with minor factors or issues which had been addressed by the school head and teachers in the school. Thus, resulting to implementation of all the indicators resulted to a great impact on the learning continuity plan. It is further recommended that the identified challenges in the implementation must be addressed immediately so they may not affect the implementation of the programs, activities and projects in the new normal. Furthermore, school participation to the community may be strengthened to establish linkages and obtain resources in the execution of the different programs, activities and projects.

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