

Exploring the Assessment and Grading Practices of Elementary Teachers In Modular Distance Learning

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Abstract: *Assessing and grading students took place as early as the middle 1800s. To this day, teachers continuously assess and assign grades to students. This emphasizes the importance of teachers' assessment and grading practices in teaching-learning processes. Hence, this study explored teachers' assessment and grading practices in modular distance learning. The researchers utilized an exploratory sequential mixed-method design with two phases: qualitative followed by quantitative. For the qualitative phase, the sampling technique used is voluntary sampling. The researchers conducted an open-ended face-to-face interview with the ten selected participants. For the quantitative phase, the sampling technique used is a simple random sampling technique. The researchers developed a survey questionnaire to collect data. Respondents of this study came from the selected public schools in the Division of Pampanga – Guagua West District. Findings show that the factors considered by the teachers in the assessment and grading practices are Mandated Guidelines, Assessment Tools, Student Learning Attitude, and Student Circumstances. All of these factors always influence the assessment and grading of teachers. Moreover, the bases of teachers in assessment and grading practices for modular distance learning are DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020 and Teacher-Made Assessment Tools. Correspondingly, data showed that teachers are highly competent and knowledgeable in all the bases of assessment and grading practices. Lastly, some but not all factors considered by teachers have a significant relationship with the bases of assessment and grading practices.*

Keywords—Assessment, Grading Practices, Modular Distance Learning

CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

Introduction

The world shut down when Covid-19 was detected in China. The rest of the world was affected and this became a pandemic which affected people's lives. In the Philippines, the government implemented a full lockdown in March 2020 following the report of numerous cases (Department of Health, 2020). The way of life was changed to uncertainty, and the different sectors of the economy became affected, most especially the Education sector. From the usual face-to-face classroom set-up, the Department of Education formulated guidelines to adopt other learning modalities suitable to the present situation in the delivery of education, stipulated under Memorandum Order No.18, series of 2020, titled "Policy Guidelines for the Provision of Learning Resources in the Implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP)." This states that the use of the Self-Learning Modules (SLM) will be the primary learning resource for distance learning. This became the solution to deliver education during a public emergency.

As a result of the new educational set-up brought by the pandemic, teachers need to re-analyze their use of assessments and grading practices. Hence, DepEd issued DepEd Order No. 031, s. 2020, a policy that will guide teachers in assessing student learning and their grading practices. This policy provides the principles of implementing effective assessment practices and ensures that all learners are reasonably evaluated and graded during the implementation of distance learning.

This policy is different from the accustomed grading system of DepEd during the face-to-face set-up, as practiced from 2015 until 2019, the system of assessing and grading learners is mandated under DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015 entitled Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K - 12 Curriculum. (Mocon & Nicolas, 2020). It states the policy guidelines for assessing and grading learners in the classroom. They used various processes and measures to assess the learners individually and collaboratively. The raw scores gathered were the basis for grading learners. Summative assessments are classified into three components, each with a specific percentage weight. The first component is the written work component, which may include long quizzes, unit or long tests, essays, written reports, and other written output. This component is weighted 30% for the subjects Languages, AP, and EsP, 40% for subjects Science and Math, and 20% for MAPEH and EPP or TLE. The second component is the performance task, which shows what learners know and can do. It may include skill demonstration, group presentations, oral work, multimedia presentations, and research projects. The third and last component is the quarterly assessment, done towards the end of the quarter. It aims to measure student learning. This component weighted 20% for all subjects such as Languages, AP, EsP, Science, Math, MAPEH, and EPP or TLE.

The new grading system which is DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020, summative assessments are classified into two components: written works and performance tasks. These assessments evaluate students' mastery to determine the grades that teachers would give to students (Faulconer et al., 2021).

Students' grades will be calculated differently in every subject area. For the subject, Languages, AP, and ESP, written works weigh 40%, while performance tasks weigh 60%. The Math and Science subjects are both considered 50%. For MAPEH, EPP, and TLE subjects, 30% is for the written works, while performance weighs 70%.

Assessing and grading students took place as early as the middle 1800s. Educators in North America initially classified children by age and recorded descriptions of their mastery of skills and readiness to learn to advance to the next level (Guskey, 2013). To this day, teachers continuously assess and assign grades to students. This emphasizes the importance of teachers' assessment and grading practices in teaching-learning processes. Assessment allows teachers and students to reflect on how education is best delivered meaningfully. It gathers data on what students have acquired in terms of knowledge, skills, and values (Widiastuti, 2018). Summative assessments are the assessments that the teachers grade, and in modular distance learning, they are classified into two: written works and performance tasks. Written works are the quizzes and long unit tests. In comparison, performance tasks are the application of students' skills and knowledge. On the other hand, formative assessment is a tool that teachers used to close the gap between students to know their strengths and weaknesses. It is not graded but will help learners improve their learning. (Schildkamp et al., 2020). Through a series of assessments, the teacher will assess student learning, known as grading (Adams, n.d.)

Despite the numerous challenges that teachers and students face, learning must continue regardless of the circumstances. Teachers must remember that assessments and grading practices are essential aspects of effective teaching. To achieve this, high-quality assessments must be administered to understand better and address the extent of the gaps in education among students. Teachers' grading practices must also be transparent and mitigate unconscious bias to communicate learning progress and achievement to students, parents, and institutions.

In light of the challenges, information about the study is lacking and has not been addressed in other published references or publications. This study explores the factors, and bases teachers use and consider in their assessment and grading practices. It also aimed to know the perceived level of influence of the assessment and factors in grading practices on the teachers. Furthermore, it aimed to know teachers' perceived level of competence on the bases of assessment and grading practices. Lastly, it aimed to investigate whether there is a significant relationship among the factors and bases that contribute to teachers' assessment and grading practices in modular distance learning.

This study could provide valuable contributions to teachers and other stakeholders for the improvement of assessments and for accurately grading students based on their learning and performance. Furthermore, modular distance learning as a learning modality is being used in the limited face to face

modality as implemented in the Dep Ed and other colleges and universities. It may still be used in the future since there is no assurance that a pandemic will not happen in the future. In addition, no matter what modality we adopt, face-to-face or modular distance learning, assessment and grading practices of the teachers will always be an integral part of the learning process.

Statement of the Problem

The general problem of the study is to explore the assessment and grading practices of teachers in modular distance learning.

Specifically, the following questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the factors considered by teachers in their assessment and grading practices?
2. What are the bases used by teachers in their assessment and grading practices?
3. How may the respondents perceive the level of influence of the factors in assessment and grading practices?
4. How may the respondents perceive their level of competence on the bases of assessment and grading practices?
5. Is there a significant relationship among the factors and bases that contribute to the assessment and grading practices of teachers in modular distance learning?

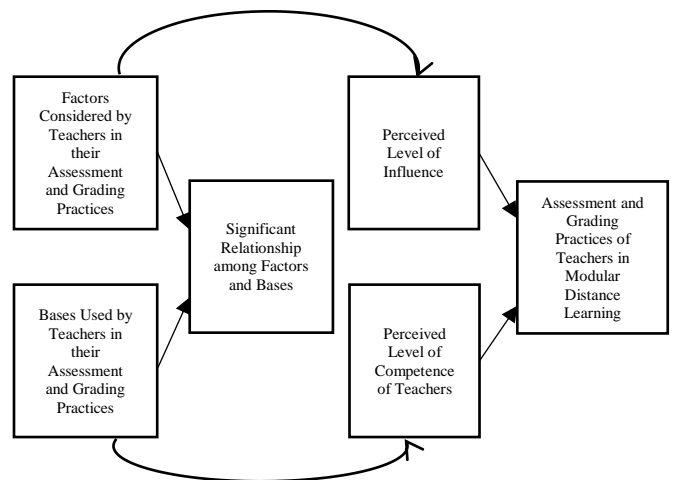
Hypothesis

The formulated alternative hypothesis of the research study is:

All of the factors considered have a significant relationship between the bases of assessment and grading practices of the teachers for modular distance learning.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Study



As shown in Figure 1, the conceptual framework consists of six (6) boxes. First, two of which are the (1) box signifying the factors considered by teachers in their assessment and grading (2) bases of teachers in their assessment and grading practices with pointing arrows toward the third box that represents the significant relations among the two. The other two: Box (4) that contains the perceived level of influence and box (5) perceived level of competence pointing to assessment and grading practices, with the bases and factors used in assessment and grading practices in M L pointing at the perceived level of influence and competence among teachers to signify interconnections and relationships.

Significance of the Study

This study, use of assessment and grading practices in modular distance learning, would be significant and beneficial for the following individuals:

Teachers. The result of this study will serve as guide for teachers in their assessment and grading practices.

Students. This will be a good motivation for them to show better performance since they are the direct beneficiary of this study.

Parents. This will help them understand the assessment and grading practices used by teachers in evaluating their children's performance in school.

Policymakers. This study will allow policymakers to monitor the impact of particular programs to come up with decision that will enhance the grading system used in schools.

Future Researchers. The result of this can be a basis for deeper exploration on the assessment and grading practices of teachers in the new normal setup.

Scope and Limitation

This research will only be limited to studying the following:

The assessment and grading practices of teachers on modular learning modality of distance learning. The study will be limited to five public elementary schools in the Division of Pampanga – Guagua West District.

Definition of Terms

The following terminologies are operationally and theoretically defined to allow a better understanding of the data presented in the research study:

Assessment. According to Zebo Tursunboevna, (n.d.) the process of collecting useful and relevant data and information from various sources to develop insights into students' understanding, knowledge, and takeaways from the educational experience. It is obtained by analyzing student work to check if learning objectives have been met, and it collects information on the knowledge, skills, and values that children have learned.

Assessment Tool. The assessment tool is a method of evaluating the students or learners to determine how much they know their learning capabilities, and skills, and to measure their progress toward their academics in a specific subject.

Competency. Teachers recognize the questions used to assess student learning outcomes. (Suchyadi et al, vol. 01, no. 01, 2019.) It is a set of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to complete a task successfully. This demonstrates the learners' progress in assessing the students' characteristics and skills.

Grade. This is the teachers' evaluation of a student's performance. Grading has the potential to be a reliable and valid measure of achievement if done correctly at the classroom level (Brookhart, 2017). The student's grades determine the feedback after the teacher evaluates and provides the outputs. Teachers can achieve the learning goals of the student after they see the improvement of the learners in grading them.

Grading practices. To better interpret the assessment quality, it must exercise the grading practices as mandated by the DepEd. (Brookhart & Nitko, 2015). These are ways in which teachers evaluate individual students' learning performance. The marks assigned to individual pieces of student work or overall assessments of student performance on report cards are referred to as grading. Teachers' grading practices have received far more attention in the literature than assessment practices. This may be due to the salient and summative nature of grades to students and parents. Grades are one of the ways to measure intellectual progress and are communicated to parents.

Grading system. The Department of Education's computed grades will be used to establish the grading system. This is the component where the teacher evaluates all of the student's submitted class projects. The computed student grades for each subject are also provided in the record list of students' raw and total scores on written works, performance activities, and quarterly assessments (Llego, 2020). A grading system is a process where teachers assess the performance of the students based on their outputs. This system shows the report, documents, and other stuff that are connected to their education to achieve the set learning objectives developed by the administration, faculty, and staff.

Modular Distance Learning. Modular distance learning is a form of learning modality that consists of self-learning modules. In this pandemic, modular distance learning is a new learning platform. Modules are printed copies of content delivered to students for new learning settings. The module is a type of paper with outputs you can answer. Distance learning happens when Covid arises.

Policy Guidelines. Policy guidelines for the use of educational materials, a step activity plan, the development of a module, research networks, and linkages should all be prioritized. (Palines & Ortega-Dela Cruz, 2021). These guidelines provide a standard for quality education needs in learning and teaching that sets expectations and accountability.

Acronyms

BE-LCP- Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan

Covid-19- Coronavirus Disease 2019

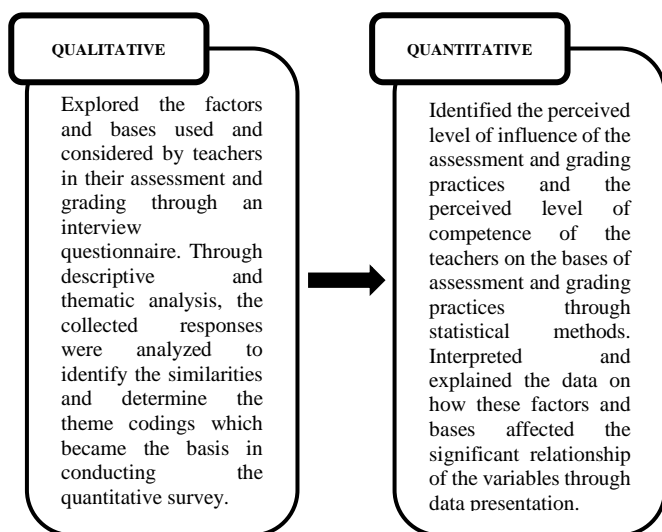
CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

This Chapter covers the research methodology which aims to discuss the design, respondents, instrument, and statistical treatment in the conduct of this study.

Research Design

This study is generally a mixed-method research design. This study has two phases; the qualitative and the quantitative. The study utilized a sequential exploratory design characterized by two distinct phases: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data were collected and analyzed first and then followed by collecting and analyzing quantitative data with a final phase of integration or linking of data from the two separate strands of data (Berman, 2017). The diagram below showed the overall application of the mixed-method sequential exploratory design in this study.

Figure 2. Schematic Diagram of Mixed-Method Sequential Exploratory Design as Applied in this Study



Data Collection – The following procedures indicated in the Data Gathering Procedure Section of this Chapter were done.

Data Analysis – For the qualitative data, from the content analysis which involves coding significant statements, from the qualitative interview, the thematic analysis will be used where the data will be identified, analyzed and reported repeated patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

For the quantitative data, analysis of the data based determined the mean interval and standard deviation were discussed. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was also used to determine the significant relationship of the

factors and bases in assessment and grading practices of teachers in modular distance learning.

Respondents of the Study

This study was an exploratory sequential research design. Thus, the number of respondents was different in the qualitative and quantitative phases. However, the following criteria were established by the researchers for the respondents: 1) Must be a public Elementary Teacher from the Guagua West District of DepEd Division of Pampanga 2) Teachers who utilized modular learning during the pandemic and were willing to share their experiences and practices.

For the qualitative phase of the study, a total of ten (10) qualified respondents participated in the interview. The teachers who qualified on the set criteria and their availability upon coordination with the school principals, have volunteered to take part in the study. The researchers decided to gather data until saturation was met. Marshall et al. (2013) cited saturation as the point in time at which the collection of new qualitative data no longer changes or changes only slightly. It was the point where a recent qualitative interview yields only previously unknown data.

For the quantitative phase, the respondents were seventy-six teachers (76) from the five selected public schools of Guagua West District.

Sampling Technique

In determining the sample for the qualitative phase, researchers utilized the voluntary sampling technique. According to Murairwa (2016), the voluntary sampling technique is a non-probability sampling wherein the selected informants are qualified and showed willingness to participate in the study. Researchers asked the teachers who qualified from the set two criteria; first, they must be public elementary teachers from the five selected schools in Guagua West District of DepEd Division of Pampanga, second, they are teachers who utilized modular learning during the pandemic and were willing to share their experiences and practices in this study.

Slovin's formula was used to determine the quantitative sample size for the second phase. The entire population of the five selected schools in Guagua West District of DepEd Division of Pampanga was ninety-four and seventy-six (76) were randomly chosen. The quantitative data were collected using a simple random sampling technique. It was a method of obtaining information in which every individual in the sample population had a chance to be selected (Acharya et al., 2013).

Research Instruments

Two types of questionnaires were used in this study; one for the first phase and one for the second phase. For the first phase, the researchers adopted a semi-structured, open-ended questionnaire in gathering the needed data. This method usually involves a conversation between the researcher and the key informants, guided by a flexible interview strategy and augmented by follow-up questions, investigations, and

comments (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). The questions in a semi-structured, open-ended questionnaire were asked in systematic order and interviewers were allowed the freedom to diverge slightly from the script (Evans, n.d.). The instrument was created by Majid Nowruzi. It was used in their study titled EFL teachers' classroom grading practices in secondary schools and private institutes: a mixed-methods approach.

For the second phase, the researchers developed a survey questionnaire to collect the needed data. These were formed quantitative questions using quotes, codes, and themes based on the analysis of the first phase, qualitative data. Following the creation of the questionnaire, this was presented to their adviser, statistician, and validators for review and validation. The questionnaire was tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha and validity, and comments and validation were also considered in the final draft.

Table 1. *Reliability of Statistics*

Reliability Test	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
0.924	37

Validation

The second phase instrument for quantitative data was also validated by three knowledgeable persons in the field of assessing students' learning for content validity and reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers sent a letter addressed to the dean of the College of Education to ask permission to conduct the study outside DHVSU. Another letter was sent to the principals of the aforementioned schools for the conduct of the study. When approved, the researchers sent a letter of consent to the key informants before conducting the study. The face-to-face interview was conducted, considering the informant's safety and health protocols. The researchers set the date and the time convenient to the informants.

For the second phase, the researchers collected data through Google form, where the link was sent to the respective principals of the schools in Guagua, Pampanga.

Statistical Treatment of Data

For the qualitative data, content analysis involved the transcription of the record interview, the coding of significant statements, and then the development of themes with the use of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This technique helps to appropriately identify similarities in the answers.

For the quantitative data, Cronbach Alpha reliability was used. Then, for the SOP 2 and SOP 3 descriptive analysis of responses were examined then with the use of the determined mean interval with equivalent numerical response and verbal interpretation, data (as shown in Tables 2 and 3) were run using mean and standard deviation. For the SOP 3, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the

significant relationship of the factors and bases in assessment and grading practices of teachers in modular distance learning.

Table 2. *The Mean Interval, Numerical Response, and Interpretation of the Level of the Influence of the Assessment and Grading Practices Factors among Teachers*

Mean Interval	Numerical Response	Verbal Response	Verbal Interpretation
3.26 - 4.00	4	Always	Very High Level of Influence
2.51 - 3.25	3	Sometimes	High Level of Influence
1.76 - 2.50	2	Seldom	Low Level of Influence
1.00 - 1.75	1	Never	Very Low Level of Influence

Table 3. *The Mean Interval, Numerical Response, and Interpretation of the level of Competence of Teachers on the Bases of Assessment and Grading Practices*

Mean Interval	Numerical Response	Verbal Response	Verbal Interpretation
3.26 - 4.00	4	Strongly Agree	Very High Level of Competence
2.51 - 3.25	3	Agree	High Level of Competence
1.76 - 2.50	2	Disagree	Low Level of Competence
1.00 - 1.75	1	Strongly Disagree	Very Low Level of Competence

Table 4. *The Mean Interval, Numerical Response, and Interpretation of the Significant Relationship among the Factors and Bases that Contribute to the Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers in Modular Distance Learning*

Size of Correlation	Interpretation
.90 to 1.00 (-.90 to -1.00)	Very high positive (negative) correlation
.70 to .90 (-.70 to -.90)	High positive (negative) correlation

.50 to .70 (-.50 to -.70)	Moderate positive (negative) correlation
.30 to .50 (-.30 to -.50)	Low positive (negative) correlation
.00 to .30 (.00 to -.30)	Negligible correlation

Ethical Consideration

This study was for academic compliance therefore confidential information will be treated under the Data Privacy Act. None of the personal data will be published in the presentation of the research data. Moreover, the key informants were given a consent letter agreement document to sign. Also, enclosed in the questionnaire through the google forms was the confidentiality portion and consent intended for the respondents before proceeding to the questions proper.

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researchers aim to discuss the results obtained from the data-gathering phase of the study and present the analysis of these data.

Data Presentation

For the qualitative part of the study, Content Analysis, Braun and Clarke's (2006) Thematic Analysis, and Gueta & Janer's (2021) presentation of responses were adapted to identify the factors and basis for the main subject of this study: assessment and grading practices for modular distance learning.

The following themes were the factors considered in the assessment and grading practices during the implementation of modular distance learning:

Theme 1. Mandated Guidelines

Based on the answers, key informants refer to the Department of Education Order No. 31 s. 2020 titled "Interim Guidelines for Assessment and Grading in Light of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan". This was an order that supplemented the DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2020 titled "Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for School Year (SY) 2020-2021 in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic" which laid the framework and guidelines for the learning alternatives including modular distance learning. As the guidelines for the grading system were mandatory and for compliance of teachers, the teachers were bound to assess the students based on summative assessment: Written works and Performance task. (Anzaldo, 2021).

One also mentioned as their influence was, Department Order No. 36, s. 2016 entitled "Policy Guidelines and Recognition for the K to 12 Basic Education Program".

This theme was described as mandated because this was a factor in assessment and grading practice that was legally binding, prescribed by the Department of Education, and

needed to be strictly followed. This was not discretionary; meaning that the teachers need to abide by these prevailing guidelines.

Taking directly from the below statement of a key informant:

"When we assign grades, we follow the grading system (DepEd) because the scores obtained by the students will be recorded. That will be the grade of the students because we follow a grading system, whatever grade they get, is what they will be given." (P6, Q1)

"Whether we like it or not, we will follow the standard grading system from the Department of Education because when we have our deliberation, we present them to the parents for them to see, and we have guidelines from the Department of Education that we follow when it comes to the grading system." (P7, Q2.1)

This explained that grading practices were developed from the mandatory factor which was again DepEd Guidelines. It serves as the concrete policy being followed on the grading practices of teachers as mandated by the DepEd. Again, the standard of measuring the learning even during the pandemic is still being carried and followed.

When asked why do they use this factor, statements below were given:

"Firstly, because it is an order from DepEd kaya whether we like it or not we have to abide..." (P1, Q2)

"Because you really need to follow the grading system provided by DepEd, because parents and also children will ask what grades their classmates got, they are aware of the grades they will get, if we won't follow the grading system given by DepEd, we might be questioned." (P6, Q2)

"We need to use these factors because we need to implement what was given by the DepEd that we need to follow to attain the grades or give the grades to our pupils so we need to consider these factors." (P9, Q2)

Another statement relative to Mandated Guidelines was :

"We have a memorandum from DepEd that is followed nationwide, in general we are bounded by the DepEd Memorandum in giving grades." (P1, Q1)

Theme 2. Assessment Tools

Most of the key informants said that assessment tools were necessary to accurately assess and assign grades. They mentioned that they gave written works and performance task, however quarterly assessments were not included. As cited by Obrador & Base, (2021). DepEd should have a monitoring and assessment tool that can objectively determine the extent to which knowledge and skills have been successfully taught from Grade 1 to Grade 6, and even up to Junior and Senior High School. The assessment tool was a method of evaluating the students or learners to determine how much they know their

learning capabilities, and skills, and to measure their progress toward their academics in a specific subject.

When one of the key informants was asked about what factors does he use to assign grades, he directly answered:

“The factors are the assessments given to the pupils. We all know that we’re still in the pandemic so the assessments we do are the performance tasks of the children and then their written test. So, there is no exam, we only give quizzes and performance tasks and those were graded, but the periodical exams were not given, just before when these were included in their grading system. But because of the pandemic, the periodical exams have been removed but they still have quizzes that need to be accomplished based from their modules.” (P5, Q1)

Sub-theme 1: Summative

Some key informants stated that they always used summative assessment in assigning grades. A key informant also mentioned that after the weekly retrieval of modules, summative assessments were given. This type of assessment was graded and administered at the end of an instructional unit to assess student learning by comparing it to a standard (Kibble, 2016). Summative assessment was a grading of students' work. It was used to assess students' learning, skills, and academic performance.

Coded responses for this sub-theme are as follows:

“We always use assessment, summative test, and performance task, securing and retrieval of modules.” (P2, Q1)

“Assigning grades, so it depends on summative assessments. The written works and performance task. The summative assessment was given after the retrieval of modules. For example, modules were given this week then next week summative assessment will be administered. Because summative assessment are graded. The summative assessment maybe final project or creative portfolio which have corresponding weighted percentage in our grading system from DepEd.” (P7, Q9)

“Summative assessment wherein there are two components to be graded. The written works and performance task when talking about the factors because we have a standard that we follow we only come up with the two factors. The written works which include the summative test, the project and performance task. Those are the activities that we give to our pupils to show that they attain the competency that they need in that particular grade.” (P8, Q1)

Sub-theme 2: Formative

This type of assessment was used to assess student's progress during the learning process (Dwyer, 2017). According to the key informants, the modules given by the district office are what they consider formative assessments. It was not graded however, the key informants still check and record them to assess what needs to be improved and identify

what intervention must be done by the teacher for learners to continually learn.

The following statements regarding formative were taken from the responses:

“Besides, there’s still formative assessment in the modules that were given by the district office. The module served as the formative assessment for the learners. That’s why when it says formative assessment, here we can see the strengths and weaknesses of the child. Because of that, as teachers we can close the gaps in their learning, that’s the beauty of formative assessment. So, it is one of what I consider when assessing and assigning grades to my pupils. That’s why it is helpful for us teachers to be given modules from the district because from these we can see what is needed to be improved even though they’re just at home and we cannot guide them in real time.” (P1, Q1)

“I also consider these modules as the formative assessments of the child. Their modules are not graded, but we check them to know if the child excels or if they cannot much understand the lesson. In that way, teachers can have intervention so students will really learn even in modular distance learning only. It is because you cannot let pupils to be left behind when they do not understand the lesson that’s why through modules as formative assessment you will see their learning.” (P5, Q1)

Sub-theme 3. Self-Assessment

Self-assessment was a process that took place entirely within the learner (Brookhart, 2016), as the students are the ones who know the most about their work. Coming to one's conclusions regarding the quality of one's own work will almost certainly have a big beneficial impact on learning advancement. Teachers believe that students must reflect on their own learning. This was part of the learners' responsibility to know what extent they learn and develop. Self-assessment according to the key informants, will also help the learners to be more knowledgeable about the grades they deserve, what they got from their teachers because if they know how to assess their own output, then most probably they also know if the grades given to them were accurate.

When one of the key informants was asked about what factors does he use to assign grades, he directly answered:

“Besides the grading system, I also consider the self-assessment of the child. Ofcourse during this pandemic, the parents of the learners are busy, that’s why the child is the one who assesses himself/herself if he or she is learning or what needs to be improved. That’s why I put that in the assessment tool, so that’s the factors I can also consider in assessing assigning grades to them.” (P3, Q.1)

“We also consider their self-assessment in assigning grades, since we're in a pandemic. We are not there as teachers to teach them. That's why the self-assessment of the child is what we really consider to know their feedback about their learning.” (P5, Q.1)

Theme 3. Student's Learning Attitude

It is important to understand the perspective of the students. As stated by OECD, (n.d.), individuals will not be well prepared to learn new skills and information unless they develop the attitudes required for successful adaptation to changing conditions. Key informants also stated that the learner's attitude also influences the assessment and grading practices.

As mentioned by one of the key participants:

"It is because when they are at home, as a teacher I can still assess their student learning attitude. I can see their effort when they submit their modules on time. I really appreciate that because they are really dedicated to learn more; even if it's only modular. Next, when they ask questions if they do not understand something in our group chat, text, or directly to me. With that I can see the effort of a child that he/she really willing to learn that's why truly I consider it." (P8, Q4)

"I consider also sa character ng bata yung linis ng gawa nila at I also consider the character of a child, the cleanliness of his/her work, the creativity, and effort. It is because you can actually see if the child is motivated in answering their modules and the assessment we give. Then in their answers I can also assess their attitude when they come up with their own answers in the questions that are opinion based. For example, in their assessment, I ask what they will feel if tomorrow there will be no pandemic. With that I can really see their own answer and because of that I assessed their attitude. Also, when they answer beyond what is expected of them. It is because now that it is modular, lesser children highly give their effort that's why I'm happy for those children; imagine there's a pandemic but they can still exert effort to their studies that's why I also consider it." (P10, Q4)

Theme 4. Circumstantial Consideration

Dayagbil, et. al., (2021) mentioned that the circumstances of learners should be taken into account. In the study of Capahay & Rotas, (2020), they discussed difficulties being faced in remote learning amid the Covid-19 crisis by their student-respondents. Coded difficulties that were categorized, can be related to the experiences of modular learning students and are to be emphasized: Conflict with home responsibility, poor learning environment, financial related problems, physical health compromises, and mental health compromises. Such were circumstances that are relative to the response as mentioned by the key informants as follows:

"(In assigning grades, when it comes to factors, we use the prescribed grading system of the Department of Education. But before using that, we have to know your student well and you have to be fair in giving grades and give consideration to those who are now like nowadays we are into modular distance learning. Whereas, not all students have access to the internet, especially those in the remote areas of the barangay. I even have one student here, they only have one cellphone in the family and there are five of them who are using it in their

school. So, there were times that he is not able to submit performance tasks required and other requirements that's why we have to be considerate. I can't think of the notion that this child is lazy, but when I learned the fact about his situation, I became considerate. After that we had face-to-face, I totally saw the performance of the child. So, you have to consider those factors." (P4, Q1)

The key informant only explains that partly despite there being a guideline, he somewhat considers the situation-specific in his grading practice. He mentioned, that not all students have access to the internet for them to be able to seek references or tutorials from the internet that will help them understand their module, and for some instances, there is a limited gadget in the family of five children that is why they were not able to fulfill all or complete their requirement. This is just one of the examples of the many mentioned by Rotas & Cahapay, (2020). To name a few, students said that home responsibility affects their focus, students experience financial problems, in their internet, gadget, or seeking other's help expense due to lack of financial resources, students suffer also from distraction with the noise in the surroundings, and worst contracts the Covid-19 disease or suffer from mental health struggle.

Other statements relative to Circumstantial Consideration are as follows:

"We are also considering them to the efforts of the learners. Like for instance, I ask the learners to dance, what will you do? What are the factors or the difficulties they encounter along the way in preparation for their dance or whatever task." (P1, Q1)

"Actually now, we are going to explore deeper, because the DepEd Memorandum is already given when it comes to giving grades and giving assessment and performance tasks or outputs. For now, we are not strict, we are in the new normal and as we all know the parents of the learners are now the teachers inside their home and not literally us teachers. We are being more considerate in giving grades because we are not actually the one who teaches them and guide them, they are doing that on their own, we really don't know if the learners are the one answering the modules or the parents are capable of explaining the task to their child or if the parents can really teach the child accurately. That's why in giving grades or assigning grades to those kinds of outputs that the learners are submitting. We are very considerate or lenient, we are not that strict." (P1, Q3)

On the other hand, the following themes were the bases of the teachers in their assessment and grading practices for modular distance learning:

Theme 1. Department Order No. 31, series of 2020

The Department of Education issued this Interim guideline for Assessment and Grading in light of the BE-LCP. This served as a guide for teachers on the assessment of student learning and the grading system and the Covid-19 crisis as it provided also additional information that has helped teachers to implement effective assessment practices.

Relevant responses to this are as follows:

“Because we are under DepEd we follow guidelines in assessing grades to the pupils. So, we follow DepEd Order No. 31 s. 2020.” (P8, Q3)

“The DepEd orders once again, these DepEd orders particularly the DepEd order No. 31 s. of 2020 which is now the interim guidelines in assessment for the new normal during the pandemic. This is now the new DepEd Order that we follow in considering the factors in solving the grades of our pupils. (P9, Q3)

Theme 2. Teacher-Made Assessment Tools

Key informants stated that they rely their grading based on their teacher-made assessment. As one key informant stated, it is one of their responsibilities as a teacher to construct, assessment tools that evaluate students learning ability. It was one way of determining whether or not learning has been achieved. Teachers do not just copy the activities from the book or internet and administer them to the students to assess their learning (Gareis & Grant, 2015). Before administering assessments, there were a lot of steps and principles to follow and take into consideration. It ensured that assessment tools accurately measure what needs to be assessed.

Related responses for teacher-made assessment tools are as follows:

“The factors that we are using in assessing and assigning grades includes the assessments that I created. One of the tasks that the teachers need to do is to construct our own assessment tool that will really assess the learnings of the child. For example, we always use assessment tools included in the summative assessment like essay, slogan, posters.” (P2, Q3)

“As we are in the middle of the pandemic, we cannot say that we can already assess the child in just a piece of module. That’s why we teachers create or construct our own assessment tool for the sake of the child’s learning progress. For us to know if the child can really understand the lesson at the end of the week. These assessment tools are also based on the lessons on modules that came from MELC.” (P6, Q3)

“I am fond of opinion based, for example essays that will come up with the pupils understanding not only the objective type. Wherein this type of assessment will help the learner take a stand on its own work answers/opinion.” (P8, Q3)

Descriptive Analysis on the Perceived Level of the Influence of the Factors of Assessment and Grading Practice

Table 5. *Perceived Level of the influence of Mandated Guidelines in Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers*

Theme: Mandated Guidelines	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
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1. I follow the DepEd order because it is mandated.	3.96	0.196	Always
2. I use the DepEd order because it is comprehensive and I fully understood it.	3.92	0.2714	Always
3. I implement the DepEd order to be fair in assessing and giving grades to the students.	3.84	0.4337	Always
4. I follow the DepEd order to assess if students attained the competency that they need in a particular grade.	3.88	0.431	Always
5. I follow the DepEd Order to accurately give feedback on the learner’s progress to their parents.	3.86	0.4533	Always
Grand Mean	3.89	0.3571	Very High

The respondent’s perceived level of influence of Mandated Guidelines in the assessment and grading practices of teachers is presented in Table 5. Findings have shown that mandated guidelines always influence the assessment and grading practice.

Generally, it shows that they always follow the DepEd Order because it was mandated (M=3.96, SD=0.1960), they always use the order because it is comprehensive and it is fully understood (M=3.92, SD=0.2714), they always implement the DepEd Order to be fair in assessing and giving grades to students (M=3.84, SD=0.4337), to assess if students attained the competency they need to always follow the guidelines (M=3.88, SD=0.4310), and they always follow the DepEd Order to accurately give feedback to parents on the learner’s progress (M=3.86, SD=0.4533).

Overall, having a computed grand mean of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 0.3571, respondents were always influenced by the mandated guidelines in the assessment and grading practices.

Table 6. *Perceived Level of the influence of Assessment Tools in Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers*

Theme: Assessment Tools	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1. I use the prescribed standard assessment tool provided by the Division Office or District Office as it is (100%) in assessing and assigning grades to students.	3.71	0.4849	Always
2. I construct my own assessment tools based on the (MELC) competency prescribed by DepEd.	3.63	0.5123	Always

3. I use a standardized rubrics provided by the Division Office or District Office in assessing and grading the performance tasks of my students.	3.54	0.5987	Always
4.I construct my own rubrics for assessing and grading the performance tasks of my students.	3.42	0.6979	Always
5. I consider student self-assessment in assessing and assigning grades to my students.	3.53	0.5994	Always
6.I give my assessment every week.	3.39	0.6548	Always
7. I give my assessment every month.	2.99	0.9729	Always
Grand Mean	3.46	0.6458	Very High

The respondent’s perceived level of influence of Assessment Tools in assessment and grading practices is presented in Table 6. Data have shown that Assessment Tools were always considered given that in all questions the calculated mean equates to that they always considered this factor. In the use of the prescribed standard assessment tool provided by the Division Office or District Office as it is (100%) accurate in assessing and assigning grades to students, there is always an influence (M=3.71, SD=0.4849). Teachers are always influenced to construct their own assessment tools on the MECL Competency (M=3.63, SD=0.5123). Teachers always used the provided standardized rubrics in assessing and grading performance tasks (M=3.54, SD=0.5987). Teachers always considered self-assessment tools in assigning grades to students (M=3.53, SD=0.5994). They always give an assessment every week (M=3.39, SD=0.6548) while they sometimes give an assessment monthly (M=2.99, SD=0.9729).

With a grand mean of 3.46 and a standard deviation of 0.6458, this means that overall, Assessment Tools influenced assessment and grading practices.

Table 7. *Perceived Level of the influence of Student Learning Attitude in Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers*

Theme: Student Learning Attitude	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1.I give points when I see the learner is very enthusiastic to learn by frequently asking questions	3.83	0.3791	Always
2.I give extra points when I can see their sense of responsibility based on their willingness to submit the modules on time.	3.63	0.5123	Always

3. I assess their learning attitude by the learners' responses to the questions that require their own words/answers.	3.8	0.4007	Always
4. I give credit to the learners' effort going an extra mile or answering beyond what is expected.	3.83	0.4127	Always
Grand Mean	3.77	0.4262	Very High

The respondent's perceived level of influence on Student's Learning Attitudes in assessment and grading practices is presented in Table 7. From the above-calculated mean, it shows that teachers always give extra points when learners show enthusiasm (M=3.83, SD=0.3791) when the student is responsible and willing (M=3.63, SD=0.5123), and they go an extra mile (M=3.83, SD=0.4127) in the modular distance learning. While teachers always assess learning attitude on responses in modules that required their own wording (M=3.8, SD=0.4007).

Having a grand mean of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 0.4262, a student’s learning attitude was always considered in assessment and grading practice.

Table 8. *Perceived Level of the Influence of Circumstantial Consideration in Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers*

Theme: Circumstantial Consideration	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1. I give extra consideration in assessing and assigning grades to learners who live far away (5km-10km) from schools when setting deadlines for passing their school work.	3.61	0.6341	Always
2. I give extra consideration in assessing and assigning grades to those learners who had to move residence due to the pandemic and have difficulty submitting their school work.	3.66	0.5305	Always
3. I give extra consideration in assessing and assigning grades to those learners who do not have the financial capability to afford school supplies that they need to accomplish their projects and other school-related works.	3.67	0.5975	Always
4. I give extra consideration in assessing and assigning grades to those learners who have poor health, learning disabilities, and comorbidities (e.g asthma, diabetes, dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia	3.79	0.4104	Always
Grand Mean	3.68	0.5431	Very High

For the theme: Circumstantial Consideration, as presented in Table 8 result shows that the respondents always consider this in all of the indicators under factors or influences in assessment and grading practices. As demonstrated by the responses, the overall respondents always consider students' circumstances such as living far away (M=3.61, SD=0.6341), moving out of residence due to pandemic (M=3.66, SD=0.5305), financial incapability (M=3.67, SD=0.5975), and a poor health condition such as learning disability and comorbidity (M=3.79, SD=0.4104).

In general, it showed that respondents always considered student circumstances in assessment and grading practices (Grand Mean=3.68, SD=0.5431).

Descriptive Analysis on the Perceived Level of Competence of Teachers on the Bases of Assessment and Grading Practice

Table 9. *Perceived Level of Competence of Teachers in DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020 as basis of Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers*

Theme: DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1. I am extremely knowledgeable about DepEd Order No. 30, 2021.	3.5	0.5033	Strongly Agree
2. I am proficient in accurately following the DepEd Order No. 30, 2021.	3.46	0.5018	Strongly Agree
3. I attended seminars and training on how to implement the DepEd Order No. 30, 2021.	3.47	0.5026	Strongly Agree
4. I am proficient in following the process of computing grades based on the DepEd Order No. 30, 2021.	3.58	0.4970	Strongly Agree
5. I am proficient in using the assessment tools provided by the Division office/District office.	3.54	0.5018	Strongly Agree
6. I am proficient in creating my own assessment tool based on the competency (MELC) that is prescribed by DepEd.	3.45	0.5005	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	3.5	0.5011	Very High

As for this part of the discussion, the researchers are to interpret data for the Teachers' level of competence on the determined bases in assessment and grading practices for modular learning. The level of competence or knowledge in DepEd Order No. 31, series of 2020, is presented in Table 9. It

shows that generally, they are strongly knowledgeable of the said DepEd Order (M=3.5, SD=0.5033) and that they are strongly competent in following it (M=3.46, SD=0.5018). Moreover, mostly attended training and seminars regarding D.O. 31, s. 2020 (M=3.47, SD=0.5026). Consequently, teacher-respondents, in general, are strongly competent in the use of assessment tools (M=3.58, SD=0.4970) and in creating own assessment tools (M=3.54, SD=0.5018) as provided and prescribed by the Department of Education and lastly, proficient in creating own assessment tool based on the competency (MELC) (M=3.45, SD=0.5005)

Generally, it is perceived that teachers were highly competent or knowledgeable of the Department having a result of 3.5 for the grand mean and 0.5011 for the standard deviation.

Table 10. *Perceived Level of Competence of Teachers in Teacher-Made Assessment Tools as basis of Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers*

Theme: Teacher-Made Assessment Tools	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1. I am proficient in constructing assessment tool methods that assess all domains (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) of learning.	3.5	0.5033	Strongly Agree
2. I am proficient in accurately constructing assessment tool that aligns with the learning objectives of the subject.	3.43	0.4989	Strongly Agree
3. I am proficient in constructing assessment tool that touches on real-life situations and emphasizes practicability.	3.47	0.5026	Strongly Agree
4. I am knowledgeable on what is (Table of Specifications TOS) all about.	3.39	0.492	Strongly Agree
5. I am proficient in constructing (Table of Specifications TOS) to ensure that my assessment tool measures the content that a test intends to measure.	3.49	0.5031	Strongly Agree
6. I am knowledgeable about Bloom's Taxonomy.	3.49	0.5031	Strongly Agree
7. I am proficient in constructing different types of assessment tools based on what is needed to be assessed.	3.49	0.5031	Strongly Agree
8. I am proficient in creating rubrics to set standards on how the learner should be graded in accordance with their performance.	3.41	0.4947	Strongly Agree

9. I am proficient in administering, scoring and interpreting the results of teacher-made assessment tools.	3.58	0.497	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	3.47	0.4998	Very High

Table 10 features the perceived level of competence of the teachers in making their own Assessment Tools, one of the determined themes of bases for the assessment and grading practices. From the result, it can be shown that they are highly competent in the construction of assessment tools that assess all learning domain (M=3.5, SD=0.5033), constructing assessment tools that aligns with the learning objective (M=3.53, SD=0.4989), that touches real-life situations, and are practical (M=3.47, SD=0.5026), that assesses what is needed to be assessed (M=3.49, SD=0.5031). They are also highly competent in creating rubrics to set standards on how learners should be graded following their performance (M=3.41, SD=0.4947). Moreover, they are highly knowledgeable about what is TOS (M=3.39, SD=0.492) and are highly competent to create it (M=3.49, SD=0.5031). Additionally, they are highly knowledgeable of Bloom's Taxonomy (M=3.49, SD=0.5031).

With a grand mean of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 0.4998, generally, the Teacher-Respondents were highly competent in making their own assessment tools.

Table 11. *Significant Relationship among the Factors that contribute to the Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers in Modular Distance Learning*

Bivariates	r	p-value	Verbal Interpretation
Mandated Guidelines and DepEd Order No.31	0.180	0.120	No correlation
Assessment Tools and Dep Ed Order No. 31	0.435	0.000	Low positive correlation
Student Learning Attitude and DepEd Order No. 31	0.363	0.001	Low positive correlation
Circumstantial Considerations and DepEd Order No. 31	0.182	0.116	No correlation

Given the p-value of the relationship between Mandated Guidelines and DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020 is 0.120, which shows that was no significant relationship between the two. It can also be interpreted that, as the level of influence of Mandated Guidelines increases or decreases, there was no direct or indirect effect on the level of competence of teachers. Nothing changes as to their level of competence or knowledge with DepEd Order as they were always influenced with the

Mandated Guidelines. Another factor that had shown no correlation with the DepEd Order is the Circumstantial Consideration with a p-value of 0.116. Circumstantial consideration of teachers to the students shows no relationship with the DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020 which serves as their basis in the assessment and grading. The level of influence of students' circumstances has nothing to do with the Teacher's level of competence to DepEd Order as a basis.

Among the four, only the Assessment Tools and Student Learning Attitude with a p-value of 0.000 and 0.001 respectively showed low positive correlation with the DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020. There was a significantly low relationship among these two; the level of increase of influence of assessment tools and student's learning attitude increases or decreases, meaning their perceived competence on DepEd Order was perceived to increase or decrease by a little amount.

Table 12. *Significant Relationship among the Bases that contribute to the Assessment and Grading Practices of Teachers in Modular Distance Learning*

Bivariates	r	p-value	Verbal Interpretation
Mandated Guidelines and Teacher Made Assessment Tool	0.166	0.152	No correlation
Assessment Tools and Teacher Made Assessment Tool	0.426	0.000	Low positive correlation
Student Learning Attitude and Teacher Made Assessment Tool	0.334	0.003	Low positive correlation
Circumstantial Considerations and Teacher-Made Assessment Tool	0.295	0.010	Negligible positive correlation

For Table 12, it can be seen that there is a direct low positive correlation with Assessment Tools and Student Learning Attitude with the Teacher-Made Assessment Tools having the p-value of 0.000 and 0.003 respectively. While Circumstantial Consideration had a negligible positive significant relationship between Teacher-Made Assessment Tools with a p-value of 0.010. Lastly, Mandated guidelines has no significant correlation with the Teacher-Made Assessment tools with the p-value of 0.152.

Mixed Analysis

Being an exploratory sequential research which aimed to have an in-depth study of the assessment and grading practices for the modular distance learning, from the qualitative phase which was interview, there were four coded themes as factors considered in the assessment and grading of teachers and these were; (1) Mandated Guidelines, (2) Assessment Tools, (3) Student's Learning Attitude, and (4) Circumstantial Consideration had shown a high level influence with their assessment and grading practices as these were always considered by the respondents based on the answers derived from the quantitative phase. Also, from the two namely; (1) Department Order No. 31, s. 2020 and (2) Teacher-Made Assessment Tools were determined as the bases for their assessment and grading. Based on the results from the

quantitative survey, it showed that there was a high level of competence or knowledge in the information, implementation, and administration of the two bases.

While there was a high influence among the factors in the assessment and grading practices, only two of which, Assessment Tools and Student Learning Attitude had shown a significant positive relationship with the DepEd Order while the other two have been found to have no significance with this basis. Lastly, the two factors mentioned to have a positive relationship with Teacher-Made Assessment together with the Circumstantial Consideration but its significance was negligible. Again for Teacher-made Assessment Tools, mandated guidelines have shown no significant relationship to this basis.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

The following were the significant findings after the analysis on the data collected:

1. Based on the qualitative responses, the following themes from the coded responses were developed as factors in the assessment and grading practices were determined; (a) Mandated Guidelines (b) Assessment Tools which consist of Formative, Summative, and Self-Assessment (c) Student's Learning Attitude (d) Circumstantial Consideration.

2. Based on the qualitative responses, the following themes from the coded responses were developed as the bases of Teachers in Assessment and Grading Practices for modular distance learning; (a) Department Order No. 31, s. 2020 (b) Teacher-Made Assessment Tools.

3. The above-mentioned factors always had an influence on the assessment and grading of teachers and the teachers were generally highly competent on the bases of assessment and grading practices.

4. Among the four determined factors, only two; the Assessment Tools and Student's Learning Attitude specifically, had shown a positively low significant relationship with the bases of assessment and grading practices namely DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020 and Teacher-Made Assessment Tools. Circumstantial Consideration had shown a negligible positive relationship with the Teacher-Made Assessment while it showed no relationship with the Mandated Guidelines at all. Lastly, Mandated Guidelines showed no significant relationship with the two bases of assessment and grading of teachers.

Conclusion

Based from the summary of findings, the following conclusions were made:

1. The factors considered by the teachers which influenced their assessment and grading practices were the Mandated Guidelines, Assessment Tools, Student Learning

Attitude, and Student Circumstances (also coded as Circumstantial Consideration in this study).

2. The bases of teachers in assessment and grading practices for modular distance learning were the DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020 and Teacher-Made Assessment Tools.

3. In all of the aforementioned bases of assessment and grading practices, teachers are highly competent and knowledgeable.

4. Not all factors considered by teachers have significant relationship with the bases of assessment and grading practices.

Recommendations

1. The DepEd may consider the following suggestions for all elementary and high school teachers to ensure quality education for all:

a. Highlighting and emphasizing circumstantial consideration not only to students but to the teachers coming from remote, mountainous or island regions of the country, by providing an intensive extension of help and assistance to them to ensure that learning is not compromised.

b. Continuously develop and provide the necessary seminars for learning and development and monitoring to sustain the high level of competence in the implementation of modular learning, to ensure the delivery of truthful assessments to the student's learning.

c. Provide and extend financial assistance to teachers especially in the materials and technology resources for them to deliver quality education while the pupils are in their homes.

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